

I want my mummy



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Summary:

When we think of Egyptians, most of us would conjure up images of Tutankhamun - who ruled from 1333 until his death as a teenager in 1323 BC; and Queen Cleopatra - who ruled Egypt from 51 to 30 BC and is famous for her beauty and her love triangle with the Roman warlords Julius Caesar and Mark Antony (not her twenty year reign). In films, Cleopatra is usually played by a white, blue eyed, black haired actor, not an African woman. Many European children will have dressed up for the day in a bedsheet and a hair towel, when looking at Ancient Egypt in school.

For many people, the first time they will see a dead body is when they visit a museum and see an Egyptian mummy. However, these aren't 'mummies' - they are people, whose bodies underwent a mummification process, and have been transported abroad.

What does DNA tell us about modern day Egyptians, and their ancestors' histories, travel and trade routes, and religions?

* images used are presenter's own unless stated *

The Rosetta Stone

- 1799 - discovered in Rashid, the Nile Delta, by a French officer during the Napoleonic campaign in Egypt
- granodiorite stele inscribed with 3 versions of a decree issued in Memphis, Egypt in 196 BC during the Ptolemaic Dynasty on behalf of King Ptolemy V Epiphanes
- Hieroglyphics, Ancient Egyptian Demotic script, Ancient Greek
- key to deciphering Egyptian scripts - the lowest script is in Ancient Greek

Colonialisation

- 1799 - Rosetta Stone discovered
- Giovanni Belzoni (1778 - 1823) - Abu Simbel & Ramses II bust
- fascination with romance of Egypt
- Cleopatra (love triangle)
- Pyramids, River Nile, desert
- notion of harem (exotic and erotic)

- excursions - Thomas Cook Travel Company
- 1882 - British invasion of Egypt
- Lord Cromer changed laws about education
- British army officers held positions
- 1922 - Howard Carter discovered tomb - boy king Tutankhamun
- 'Mummies' - avenging mummy trope + gory fascination
- artefacts & human remains to museums

Amelia Edwards (Amelia Ann Blanford Edwards)

born 7 June 1831, Islington, London

- travelled along River Nile - discovered & excavated an unknown temple at Abu Simbel
- then studied ancient Egypt - history, archaeology & learned to decipher hieroglyphics
- book: *'A Thousand Miles up the Nile'* (1876), illustrated with her own watercolours
- neglect of ancient monuments & vandalism by tourists - campaign for scientific excavation & protection
- 27 March, 1882 - formed the Egypt Exploration Fund (Society)

Died 15 April, 1892, Weston Super Mare

Grave: Grade II Listed Building, Number: 1439170, listed: 23-Sep-2016

- location: St Mary's Church, Bristol, UK
- architectural interest: unusual use of Egyptian symbolism in a C19th funerary monument
- historic interest: commemorating the life & accomplishments of Amelia Edwards
- social interest: buried with female companion Ellen Drew Braysher

Egyptology

- Egypt Exploration Society (1882) - *mission is to support & promote Egyptian cultural heritage, because we envisage a world where the cultural heritage of Egypt is preserved for posterity*
- International Association of Egyptologists - *a non-profit making organization which unites the efforts of persons, scholars and supporters, willing to work within its frame for the promotion of Egyptology; founded in 1947 in Denmark; Headquarters in Turin, Italy*
- Theban Mapping Project - American Research Center project

Future of Egyptology:

- should the name ('Egyptology') be changed
- should Egyptology be practiced in different way(s)
- should it be discontinued

Mummification

- المسلمة بالتفصيل
- the stages of washing and shrouding the Muslim woman in detail
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSYGFIFBnOs> Posted 1 February, 2020
- *the demonstration uses a plastic dummy*

Literature theme - avenging mummy

- 1818 - *'Frankenstein'* Mary Shelley
- 1827 - *'The Mummy'* Jane Webb (Jane C Loudon)
- 1840 - *'The Mummy's Foot'* Theophile Gautier
- 1845 - *'Some Words with a Mummy'* Edgar Allen Poe

- 1903 - *'The Jewel of Seven Stars'* Bram Stoker
- 1932 - *'The Mummy'* - An ancient Egyptian priest - Imhotep (Boris Karloff) is revived when an archaeological expedition in 1921 finds his mummy. He had been mummified alive for trying to resurrect his forbidden lover, princess Ankh-es-en-amon. After an ancient life-giving Scroll of Thoth was read aloud, Imhotep escapes from the archaeologists & prowls Cairo seeking the modern reincarnation of Ankh-es-en-amon.

Tutankamun

- predecessor - Akhenaten
- 1922 - Howard Carter discovered intact tomb
- considered the greatest moment in the history of archaeology
- 5,000+ of the most exquisite objects surviving from the ancient world
- wood, stone, ceramics, precious metals, art, gold
- every item was present in the tomb for a reason - items the king would need for his journey to an eternal afterlife

DNA

	Daughter	1	2	3
Africa	21.9	37.8	47.6	41.0
Middle East	17.1	33.3	29.8	46.5
Jewish	-	16.4	15.9	10.8
Europe	30.3	8.4	-	1.7
Other		-	6.7	-
Asia		4.1	-	-
Total		100	100	100

Egyptian friends' DNA

Implications

- my daughter's Nubian southern Egypt paternal DNA reflects a mix of Nigeria - Cairo Salt Route, Iberian (Spain & Italy) & Middle Eastern Islamic roots
- my friends' northern Egypt DNA reflect a mix of North African, Middle East Islamic & Jewish roots
- Egyptian DNA
- reflect different histories

Ethical dilemmas

- disconnection between modern & ancient Egyptians
- 'our mummies, their ancestors'
- ancient Egyptian beliefs & wishes
- 'violences' - mummified human remains - un-wrappings & autopsies
- human remains - treated as objects, artefacts, race-science subjects, public attractions
- taken to museums - glass cabinets
- care - grounded in respect, dignity & fulfilment of the wishes of the dead & the living
- sensitively, ethically, practically & emotionally care for ancient Egyptian human remains
- consultation with descendants - claims of living communities

- repatriation

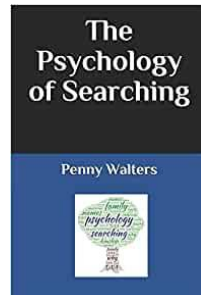
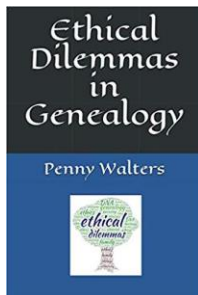
Useful resources

- **Translation:** any language to Arabic; Arabic to any language <https://translate.google.com/>
- **FamilySearch wiki:** www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Egypt_Genealogy
- **Google maps:** <https://www.google.com>
- **Wikipedia:** <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt>
- **Egyptian Government website:** can order birth, divorce, marriage & death certificates; use "subjects" under electronic services; need to already have the information to order & will need language translating capability in your browser <http://www.egypt.gov.eg/english/home.aspx>
- **National Archives of Egypt:** [NAE - National Archives of Egypt -Home](http://www.nae.gov.eg/)
- **The National Archive, UK:** [Search results: Egypt | The National Archives](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/)
- **My Heritage:** Arabic translation

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'Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy' 2019. ISBN: 9781724038241

'The Psychology of Searching' 2020. ISBN: 9781687167262

Both available on Amazon in paperback or kindle

Please also see my accompanying Roots Tech Connect presentation: *'Births, Marriages and Deaths in Egypt'*