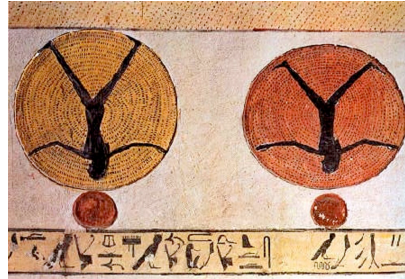


# CLE223: Ancient Egyptian Religious Beliefs and Practices



Mondays 9-10  
Thursdays 9-10  
TB2 2007-08

**Dr. Kasia Szpakowska**  
Keir Hardie 111  
tel (on campus) x3104  
K.Szpakowska@swansea.ac.uk

This module will provide an overview of Ancient Egyptian religious beliefs and practices. Students will explore the intellectual thought as well as the manifestation of those beliefs in the practices of the royal, elite, and non-elite of Ancient Egypt. The students will also learn how to overcome the particular problems inherent in studying an ancient civilisation with no living witnesses.

There are two main textbook that you must read in their entirety. These will be supplemented by Egyptian texts in translation, and other secondary literature that will be provided in class. It is important that you do the readings **BEFORE** the class session so that we can discuss them, and ask any questions you might have concerning them. This will not simply be a lecture class—your active participation in discussion groups during the class-time is expected. The Egyptians were dynamic, lively, and complex individuals and so too should you be. By the end of the module you will have learned how to approach Egyptian religion in a scholarly yet sensitive way.

## **Required Books:**

- Assmann, J. (2001) *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*. 1st English-language , with revisions and additions. Ed. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Hornung, E. (1996) *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The one and the many*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Pinch, G. (2004) *Egyptian Myth: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Study Pack (available at the department office)
- For reference you should also have either Hart, G. (2005) *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*. 2nd Ed. London & New York: Routledge **OR** Pinch, G. (2002) *Egyptian Mythology: A guide to the gods, goddesses, and traditions of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

### Highly Recommended:

- Hornung, E. (1992) *Idea into Image: Essays on Ancient Egyptian Thought*. New York: Timken Publishers, Inc. [B141 HOR]
- Hornung, E. (1990) *The Valley of the Kings. Horizon of Eternity*. New York: Timken Publishers.
- Pinch, G. (1994) *Magic in Ancient Egypt*. London: British Museum Press. [BF1591 PIN]
- Pinch, G. (2002) *Egyptian Mythology: A guide to the gods, goddesses, and traditions of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Quirke, S. (1992) *Ancient Egyptian Religion*. New York: Dover Publications. [BL2441.2 QUI]
- Quirke, S. (2001) *The Cult of Ra: Sun-Worship in Ancient Egypt*. London: Thames & Hudson. [BL2450.R2 QUI]
- Stein, R. L. and P. L. Stein (2007) *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. 2nd Ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Wilkinson, R.H. (2003) *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*. London: Thames and Hudson.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Assessment:

- 2500-word Essay: 40% - **16 April 2008**
- 2-hour Exam: 60%

### Essay - 40%

Reminder: Your sources must include at least 7 publications, not including the textbooks. These must include journal articles, chapters in edited books, and catalogues.

- ◇ Do NOT use Budge
- ◇ Do NOT use the internet (unless it is an online museum catalogue website, authorised by me in advance)
- ◇ DO use specific evidence to support your case
- ◇ Do download the Essay Writing Guide available on Blackboard under Course documents for further information

### Topic:

Please select **three to five artefacts** from the Egypt Centre **and/or texts** (not from the Egypt Centre), that you think best exemplify Ancient Egyptian religion during **ONE SPECIFIC time period** (Pre-Dynastic, Early Dynastic, Old Kingdom, FIP, Early Middle Kingdom, Late Middle Kingdom, Early New Kingdom, Amarna Period, Ramesside Age, TIP [or be more specific: Nubia, Saite], Late Period, Ptolemaic, or Roman). Discuss why you chose them, what they reveal concerning the topic, and the people who used them. Be sure to include a separate page with the catalogue entries for any artefacts (the do not count toward the word count and should be

attached to the end). **NOTE: It is NOT the job of the Egypt Centre to do your research for you!** If you wish to see any information that they may have on the artefacts other than what is available on the MODES database, please make an appointment to see them, and let them know no later than the end of week 3.

• **YOU WILL NOT BE HANDLING THESE ARTEFACTS SO DO NOT ASK THE EGYPT CENTRE TO ALLOW YOU ACCESS.**

- You may choose any of the artefacts that are on display or in their catalogue which is now accessible at the Egypt Centre or online through their website.
- If you choose texts, you may choose your translation, but it must be recent and by a reputable scholar.
- You should ALSO be using catalogues and parallels to help you find more information on these types of artefacts and/or.
- This IS an essay, so you need to have a proper introduction and conclusion, etc... All the normal rules apply!

**Exam - 60%**

- Brief definitions
- Identifications of major deities, iconography, and symbols
- Text analysis
- Artefact interpretation
- Essay question

## SYLLABUS

(Specific readings found in the study pack are noted. Along with these texts you are expected to read Assmann's *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt* in its entirety by the end of the semester. You should also read Pinch's *Egyptian Myth: A very short introduction*. This is a tiny book, and should only take a couple of hours.)

**READING QUESTIONS:** For every reading, you must post one or two THOUGHTFUL questions or comments on the discussion board (in the appropriate forum) by NOON of the day before class. We will discuss these in class.

1. Introduction
  - te Velde, H., P.J. Frandsen and E. Winter (2003) 'The History of the Study of Ancient Egyptian Religion and its Future', in *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists, Cairo 2000*. Vol. 2 (ed., Hawass, Z.), Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press: 42-47.
2. How we study religion
  - Chapter 1 in Stein, R. L. and P. L. Stein (2007) *The Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft*. 2nd Ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
  - Pinch, G. (2004) *Egyptian Myth: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
3. Historical introduction
  - Hornung, Chapter 1

4. Terms for 'God'
  - Hornung, Chapter 2 & 3
5. Manifestations of the Gods
  - Hornung, Chapter 4
6. Characteristics of the Divine
  - Hornung, Chapter 5
7. Divine - Human interaction
  - Hornung, Chapter 6
8. Classification of the Pantheon
  - Horning, Chapter 7 & 8
9. Royal practices: Cult of the Sun
  - Online materials
10. Royal practices: Temple cults
  - Shafer, B.E. (1997) 'Temples, Priests, and Rituals: An Overview', in *Temples of Ancient Egypt*. (ed., Shafer, B. E.), Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 1-30. [BL2450.T2 SHA] 1-9
11. Priests
  - Shafer, B.E. (1997) 'Temples, Priests, and Rituals: An Overview', in *Temples of Ancient Egypt*. (ed., Shafer, B. E.), Ithaca: Cornell University Press: 1-30. [BL2450.T2 SHA] 9-28.
12. Personal Piety
  - Baines, J. (1991) 'Society, morality, and religious practice', in *Religion in Ancient Egypt*. (ed., Shafer, B. E.), Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press: 123-200.
13. Domestic practices
  - Stevens, A. K. (2003) 'The material evidence for domestic religion at Amarna and preliminary remarks on its interpretation', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 89: 143-68.
14. Seminar 1: *The material manifestation of religion (Egypt Centre)*
15. Magic
  - Ritner, R.K. (1995) 'The Religious, Social, and Legal Parameters of Traditional Egyptian Magic', in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*. (eds., Meyer, M. and P. Mirecki), Leiden, New York, Köln: E.J. Brill: 43-60. [BF1591 ANC]
16. Divination
  - Ray, J.D. (1981) 'Ancient Egypt', in *Divination and Oracles*. (eds., Loewe, M. and C. Blacker), London: George Allen & Unwin: 174-190.
17. Pyramid Texts
  - Online
18. Coffin Texts
  - Online
19. Book of the Dead
  - Online
20. Royal Afterlife Books
  - Online
21. Religion through the Ages
  - DuQuesne, T. (2003) 'Ancient Egyptian religion and its relevance in today's world', *DE* 56: 11-24.