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Rundle Foundation e-Newsletter | Edition 2

3 September 2021

Welcome

Message from the ACE Director

Dear Member,

I trust that despite the current public health orders in your location, you and your families remain safe and well. For our part, as another month in lockdown grinds on, all Macquarie Egyptology teaching will now remain online for the rest of the semester. Given the social distancing restrictions that will emerge post-lockdown, most – if not all – of our events are likely to continue on zoom for the remainder of 2021. So stay tuned!

We are hopeful that 2022 will bring better fortunes, and to that extent are already planning next year's Rundle Foundation program. Please contact me with any particular ideas or suggestions. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy reading about the project of our colleagues Dr Alexandra Woods and Dr Nicolle Leary, both working (remotely) on archival material in the Griffith Institute at Oxford. It's fair to say that Egyptology globally is in a period of significant reflection, and we welcome the debate generated by *Antiquity in the Archive*.

In the meantime, please join us on 8 September to hear Dr Camilla Di Biase-Dyson deliver the next presentation in the Rundle Lecture Series.

Best wishes, Dr Karin Sowada
Australian Centre for Egyptology

In this issue

- Antiquity in the Archive – Macquarie University and the Griffith Institute, Oxford
- Proportion and the Portrayal of Cattle
- Lecture Series – Lecture 6, 2021

Antiquity in the Archive

Alexandra Woods



Photograph of a mounted watercolour, drawn and measured on site by John E. Newberry, January 1893 from the collection of the Griffith Institute Archive. It depicts a representative sample of the frieze and geometric pattern in the barrel-vault ceiling in the tomb of Khnumhotep II, Tomb 3, Beni Hassan, Egypt (GI-WD-scenes-100). Reproduced with permission of The Griffith Institute, University of Oxford. Photo: A. Woods. © The Griffith Institute, University of Oxford. All rights reserved.

The Collection and Curation of Archaeological Archives in Egyptology. A Case Study on Beni Hassan, Egypt.

A new collaborative project between the [Griffith Institute](#), Oxford University, and the Department of History and Archaeology, Macquarie University. The project team includes [Dr Alexandra Woods](#) (Project Lead & Senior Lecturer, Macquarie University), [Dr Nicolle Leary](#) (Research Affiliate, Macquarie University) and [Dr Julia Hamilton](#) (Research Affiliate, Leiden University).

Following the wider trends of late 19th century colonial cultural practice and drawing on imperial rhetoric surrounding preservation, the [Egypt Exploration Fund](#) (EEF, now Society) established the Archaeological Survey of Egypt in October 1890 with the intention to: “map, plan, photograph and copy all the most important sites, sculptures, paintings and inscriptions yet extant, so as to preserve at least a faithful record of these fast-perishing monuments.” (A. Edwards, 15 October 1890, *The Times*). At the recommendation of [Francis Llewellyn Griffith](#), the first Superintendent of the Archaeological Survey of Egypt, the EEF committee chose the site of [Beni Hassan](#) in Middle Egypt to initiate the survey. Led by [Percy E. Newberry](#), over 3 seasons the team selectively cleared and recorded the 11th and 12th Dynasty tombs in the upper cemetery at Beni Hassan (winter 1890, 1892–1893) in addition to the nearby 12th Dynasty tombs at Deir el-Bersha (winter 1891–1892). The chief result of the mission to Beni Hassan was the publication of the first volumes of the [Archaeological Survey of Egypt](#) (vols 1–2, 5, 7) between 1893–1900. Over 260 documentary records known from Beni Hassan are currently housed in the [Griffith Institute Archive](#) (GIA), Oxford University, including watercolours and various publication materials; however the majority are not digitised and therefore inaccessible to researchers, students and the wider public.

As Egyptology slowly moves to (re-)contextualise and confront the colonial legacy of excavation in Egypt, recent discussions on historic and future relationships between Egyptian archaeology and museums, libraries, and archives have become increasingly important. Such discussions recognise the nature of archives as a source of the discipline’s own history and the imperative of critically analysing how an archive is assembled, creates value, and structures (archaeological) knowledge. In Egyptology, archives are rarely viewed as colonial sites of encounter where Western voices are privileged at the expense of indigenous visibility and participation – sentiments echoed by the recent works of [J.A. Baird & L. McFayden](#), [W. Carruthers \(ed\)](#), [C. Riggs](#), [A. Stevenson](#) and H. Abd el-Gawad.

Therefore, the *Antiquity in the Archive* project aims to theorise and critique the development and cultural effects of a (digital) archaeological archive using the Beni Hassan material in the Griffith Institute, Oxford University, as a case study. In alignment with the ‘archival turn’ in the humanities and the shift from viewing ‘archive–as–source’ to ‘archive–as–subject’, the project intends to treat the documentation on Beni Hassan within the GIA repository as historical artefacts with complex conditions of production. The documentation will be read and interpreted both as a historical source for the context and provenience of archaeological remains at the site, as well as remnants of the broader political, theoretical and societal circumstances and/or conditions that influenced the archaeological recording processes. Digitising and publishing the archive in an online fora will open

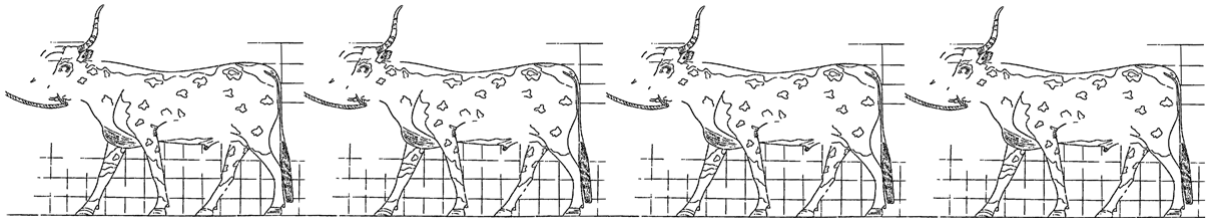
the research to citizens, provide a valuable store of knowledge and, in turn, publicise the archive's cultural legacy.

Twitter [@MQAAlexW](#)

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Proportion and the Portrayal of Cattle



From the tomb of Amenemhat: Kanawati and Evans, Beni Hassan, vol. III, pl. 105, Australian Centre for Egyptology: Reports 40 (Oxford: 2016).

Dr Nicolle Leary is an early career researcher at Macquarie University and currently a member of the new *Antiquity in the Archive* collaborative research project led by Dr Alexandra Woods. She recently published an article in a special issue of *Arts* (2021) on *Animals in Ancient Material Culture* (vol. 2), which drew upon research from her doctoral thesis on the figural proportions of animals in Old and Middle Kingdom elite tomb imagery. Dr Leary completed her PhD at Macquarie in 2020 (congratulations, Nicolle!), and has been involved with the Department of History and Archaeology as a lecturer and tutor in Egyptological studies.

Nicolle Leary, "Fit for the Job: Proportion and the Portrayal of Cattle in Egyptian Old and Middle Kingdom Elite Tomb Imagery" in *Arts* 2021 – special issue: *Animals in Ancient Material Culture* (vol. 2).

[Read the article now](#) →

Lecture Series 2021 – Lecture 6

Please join us for the upcoming event, via Zoom.

Did you know that the Egyptians spoke in metaphors?

Wednesday 8 September 2021, 6:30pm – 8:00pm AEST

Dr Camilla Di Biase-Dyson (Macquarie Un4/6)

Register now

Please join us for this lecture by Dr Camilla Di Biase-Dyson who will speak about her research into the metaphorical language of ancient Egypt. How can we study Ancient Egyptian metaphors? Are they anything like English ones? Why were they used? What about visual metaphors? By starting to answer these questions, we can get closer to how the Ancient Egyptians wrote, drew... and thought!



Dr Camilla Di Biase-Dyson is a Macquarie Alumna who completed her PhD in 2008. Her doctoral research on ancient Egyptian literature and linguistics led to postdoctoral fellowships in Germany with both the research network TOPOI, a 'Cluster of Excellence' focused on ancient world studies, and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Camilla was appointed as Junior Professor for Egyptology at the Georg-August-Universität, Göttingen, from 2012 to 2019. During this time, she also continued her work with TOPOI as an Associate Fellow and later as a Senior Research Fellow. Her research has focused on areas of metaphor, spatial terminology, ancient Egyptian literature and Egyptian medicine. In 2020 she returned to Macquarie University to take up the post of Lecturer in Egyptology as a member of staff in the Department of History and Archaeology. We look forward to you joining us on the night for this wonderful lecture.

Our Lecture Series 2021 continues ... next lecture

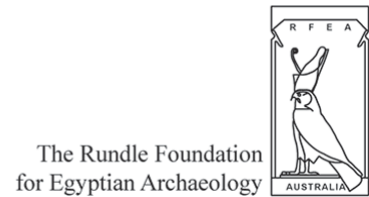


**Building Bridges with Timber:
Egypt and the Levant in the Bronze Age**

Wednesday 13 October 2021, 6:30pm – 8:00pm AEST

Dr Anna-Latifa Mourad, Macquarie University Research Fellow in the Department of History and Archaeology and well-known to the Rundle community, will present on fascinating topic relating to her research interests on Egypt and the Levant in the Bronze Age. Details with the link to register and the zoom link will be made available to members directly and in the next e-Newsletter.

Contact us



[The Australian Centre for Egyptology](#)

The Rundle Foundation for Egyptian Archaeology
25 Wally's Walk, Building B, Level 1
Macquarie University NSW 2109 – Australia

Email: egypt@mq.edu.au

Phone: +61 2 9850 8848

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