

Week 2, Friday

Talking to mummies

– life, death and the eternal body
in ancient Egypt

HPFY3007

Talking to the Dead

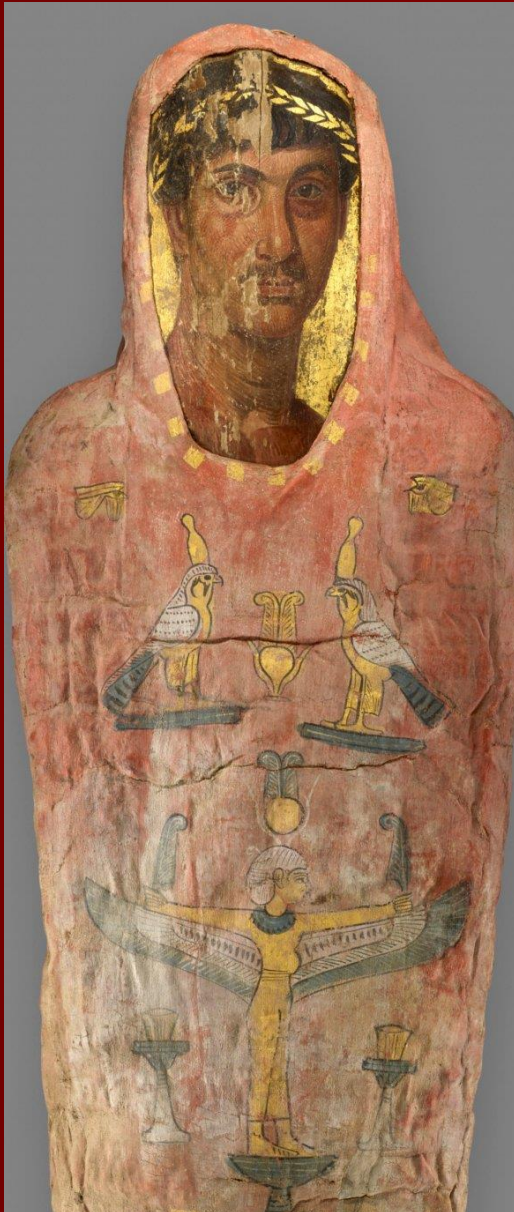
Dr. Katharina Zinn

Associate Professor in Egyptian Archaeology and Heritage

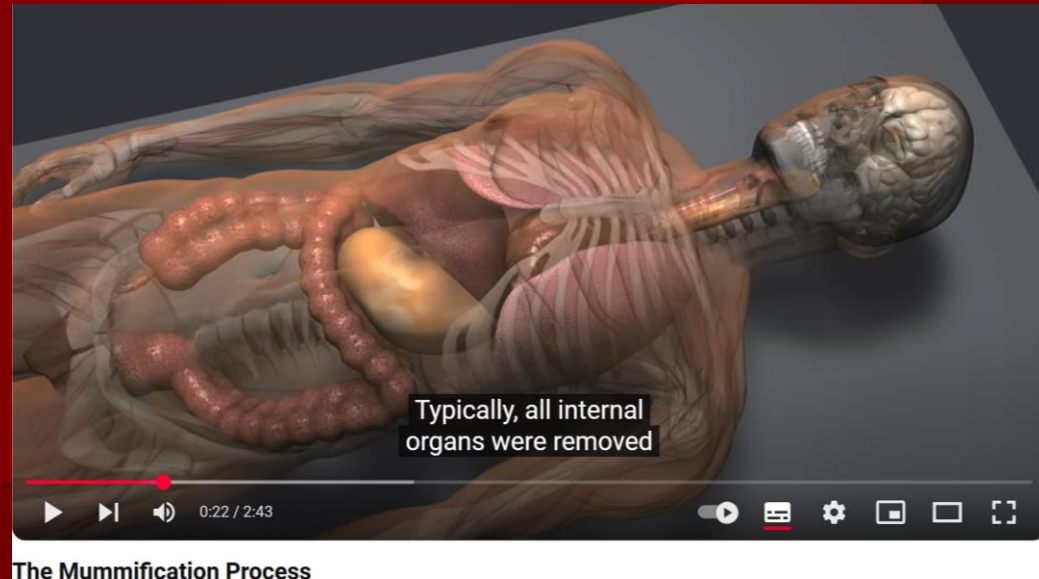
Disclaimer

- We will be looking at human remains

Herakleides – Getty Museum



How to make Herakleides' mummy?



The Mummification Process

Mummies around the world: The Tollund Man



- Bog mummy
- Hanged?
- Sacrifice to the gods?



21st cent. Mummies –Papua New Guinea



- mummified family members often part of the community and are included in village celebrations
- family carries an ancestor back to the cave above their village

Chinchorro culture, Chile



- 282 Chinchorro mummies found
- Black mummies 5,000 BC-2,800 BC
- Red mummies 2,000 BC-1,500 BC

- **Natural mummification:** 29% (7020 BC-1300 BC) → soil rich in nitrates, aridity of hot Atacama Desert, salts halt bacterial growth
- **The black mummy technique:** taking the dead person's body apart, treating it, reassembling it → head, arms, legs, skin removed; body was heat-dried, flesh / tissue stripped from bone (using stone tools); bones dried by hot ashes or coal; reassembled, body covered with white ash paste → forming face, add skin and hair, painted with black manganese
- **The red mummy technique:** remove internal organs and brain, covered with a clay mask

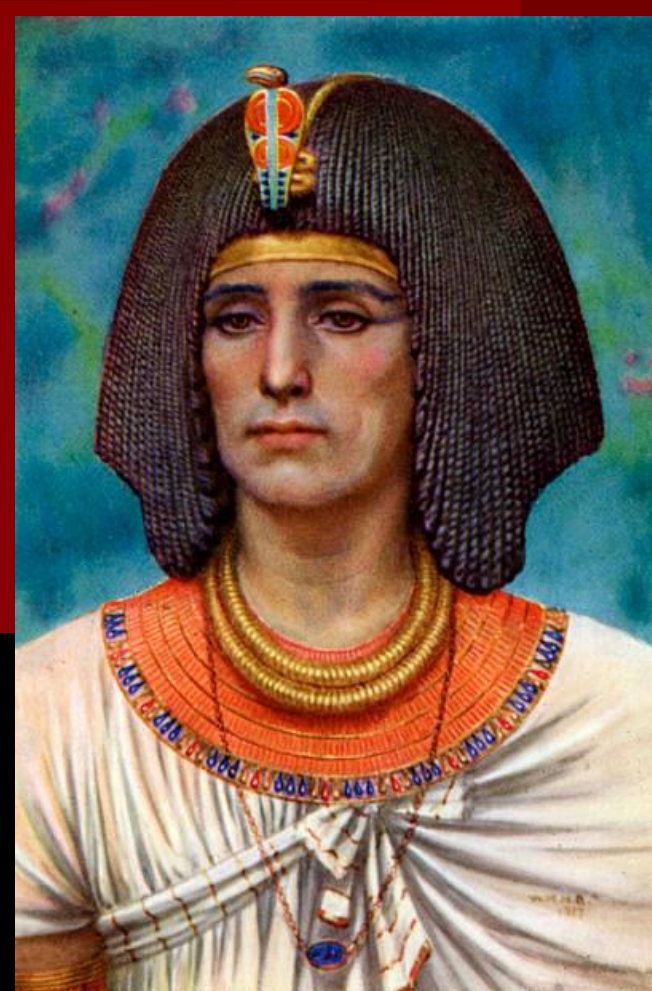
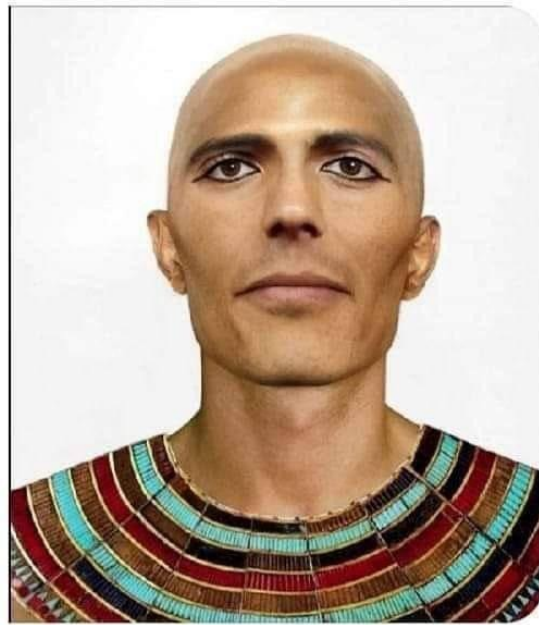
Mummies

**Seti I (Cairo Museum
CG6107; JE2)**



**Maybe Queen Tiye,
Wife of Amenhotep
III and mother of
Akhenaton,
grandmother
Tutankhamun**





Reconstructing the
face of Seti I
WHY?

Mummy

- ❑ word 'mummy': not of Egyptian origin, derived from the Arabic 'mum(iyah),' (= body preserved by wax or bitumen)
- ❑ mummy = corpse whose skin and flesh have been preserved by either intentional or incidental exposure to chemicals, extreme cold, very low humidity, or lack of air when bodies are submerged
- ❑ Mummies = humans or animals, natural preservation or as cultural artifacts to preserve the dead

The mummy – Ancient Egyptian Beliefs

- ❑ **Seen as the eternal body!!!!**
- ❑ funerary customs and beliefs of the ancient Egyptians called for preservation of the body and ample provisions for the after-life
- ❑ = envisaged as continuation of existence before death



Nesperennub: priest in the temple of Karnak (Thebes), fan-bearer to the King BM EA 30720, 22nd dyn. (800 BC)

Outer Coffin



Inner case



Nesperennub

CT-Scan: jewellery and amulets



- As protection and to give power in the afterlife
- large pectoral (chest ornament): winged sun-disc
- stone 'heart' in the shape of a scarab beetle
- wedjat eye on his throat

m



**bowl stuck to back of head
runny resin should be
caught by bowl, resin
cooled → bowl got stuck,
workers couldn't get it off,
wrapped up the body
quickly, hoping nobody
would notice**



**model of Nesperennub's
face, made from a copy
of his skull. Pegs were
put into the skull copy to
show how deep the flesh
should be. Then clay was
used to make the skin,
muscles and eyes.**





Mummification process



image courtesy Seth Smoot

HERITAGE-KEY.COM

Coffin of priest Djedbastiuefankh (El-Hiba, Late Period)

- Below: preliminary washing of corpse
- Above: body lying on lion-shaped table with natron, attended by embalmers (one = jackal-headed Anubis)
- top: finished mummy



TT23 Tjay (Sheikh abd al-Qurna, Luxor) - scribe of royal dispatchers under Merenptah



Mummification Tools



- BM:
- Bronze hook to remove brain
- pincer



- Dissecting knife (dega), one found in tomb Tutankhamun

Mummification Tools

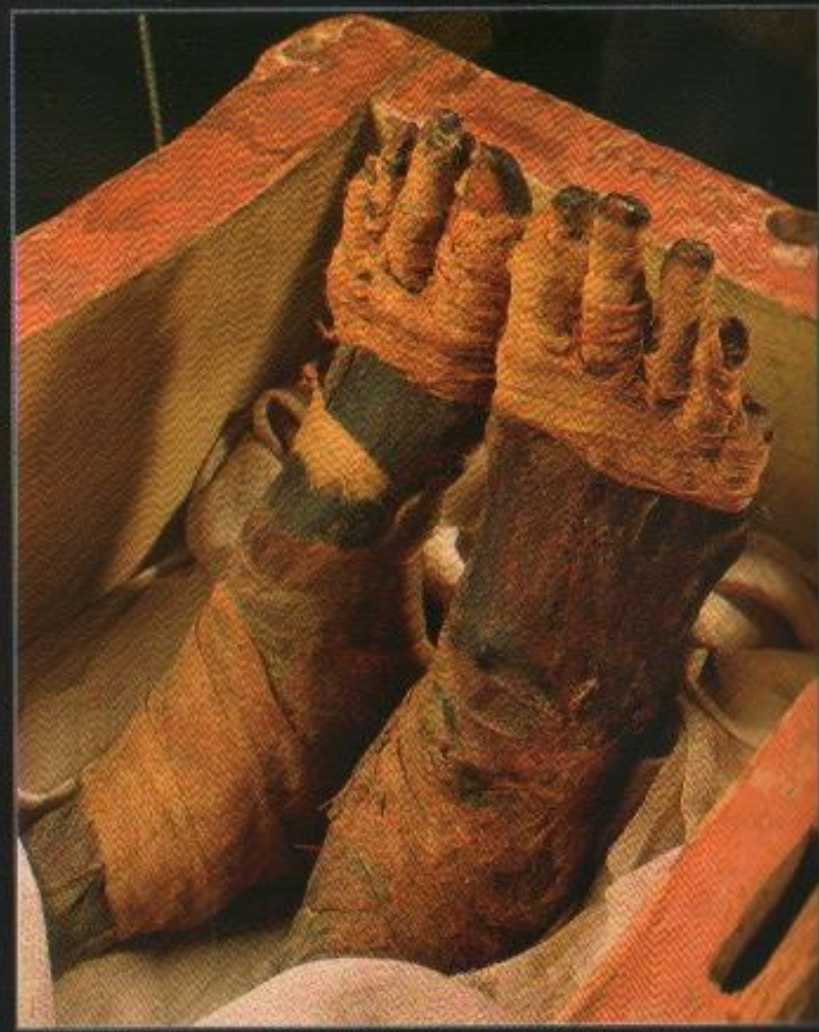
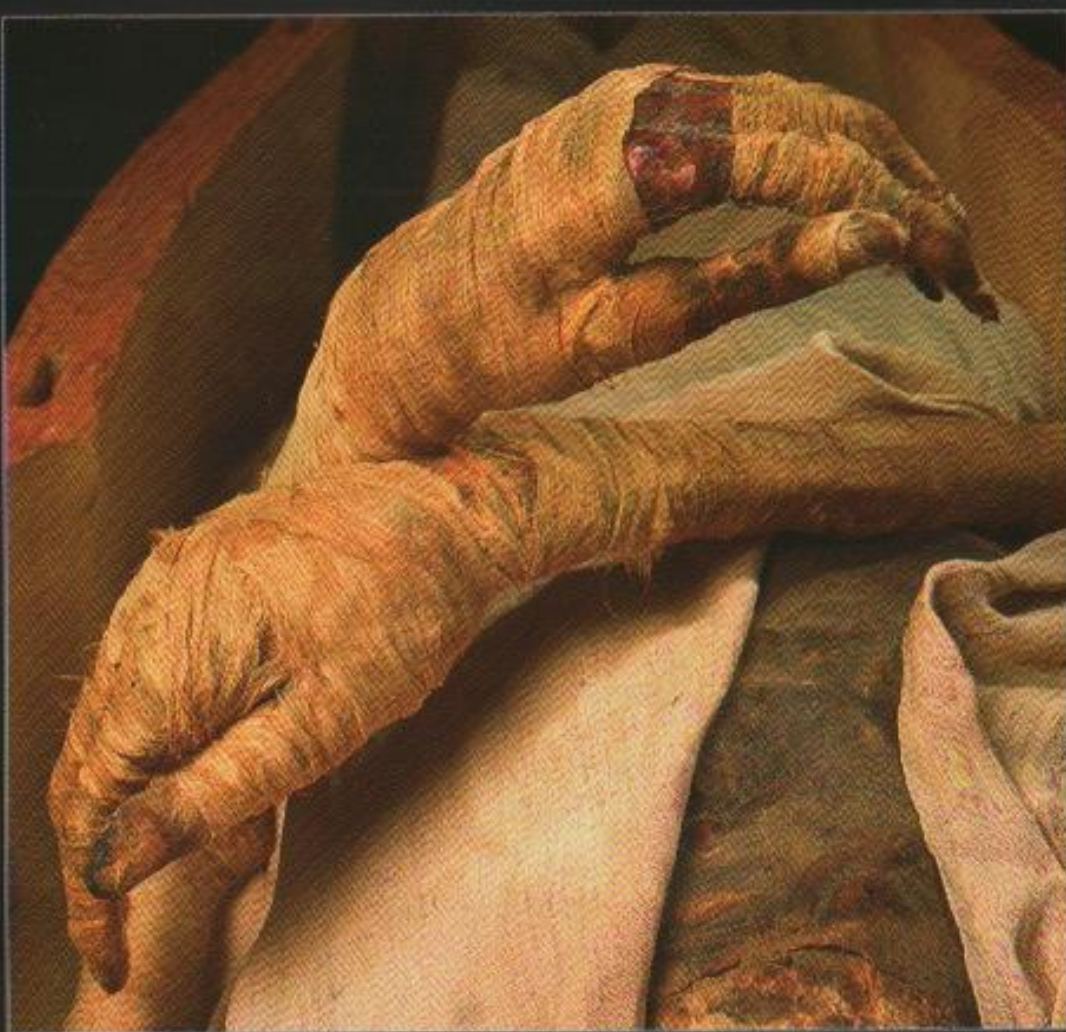
Bowl with open bag of natron (BM)



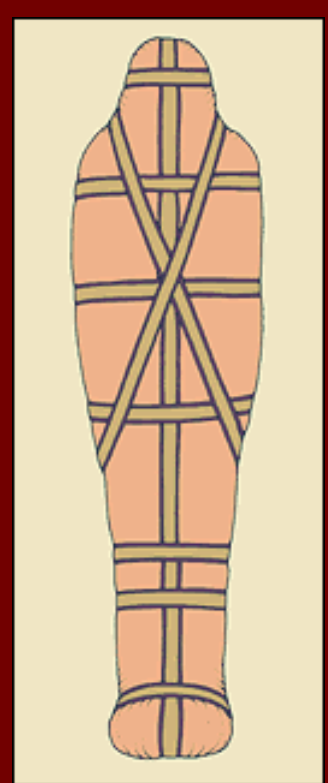
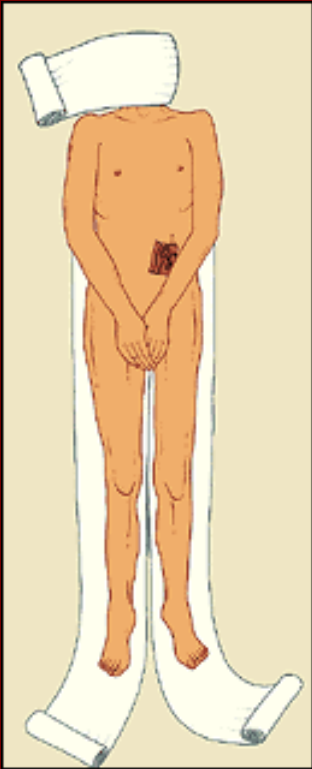
Nostril spoon



Carefully wrapped fingers and toes



Wrapping



Mummification as ritual: priest reads spells out loud



Talking to the Dead – human and material remains

Archaeology of Death?

- ❑ Physical remains of the dead (bone, skin, other tissue)
- ❑ Materials of the past meant for the afterlife – specific production process?
- ❑ Entangled pasts – funerary practices and beliefs

Archaeology of Life?

- ❑ Information of the **lived** past: demography, diet, environment, health, body alterations, ...
- ❑ Grave goods – info about production processes, used materials, the way to live your life
- ❑ Customs: cremation, fully body burial, sacrifice, ... → ALWAYS within their actual lived context

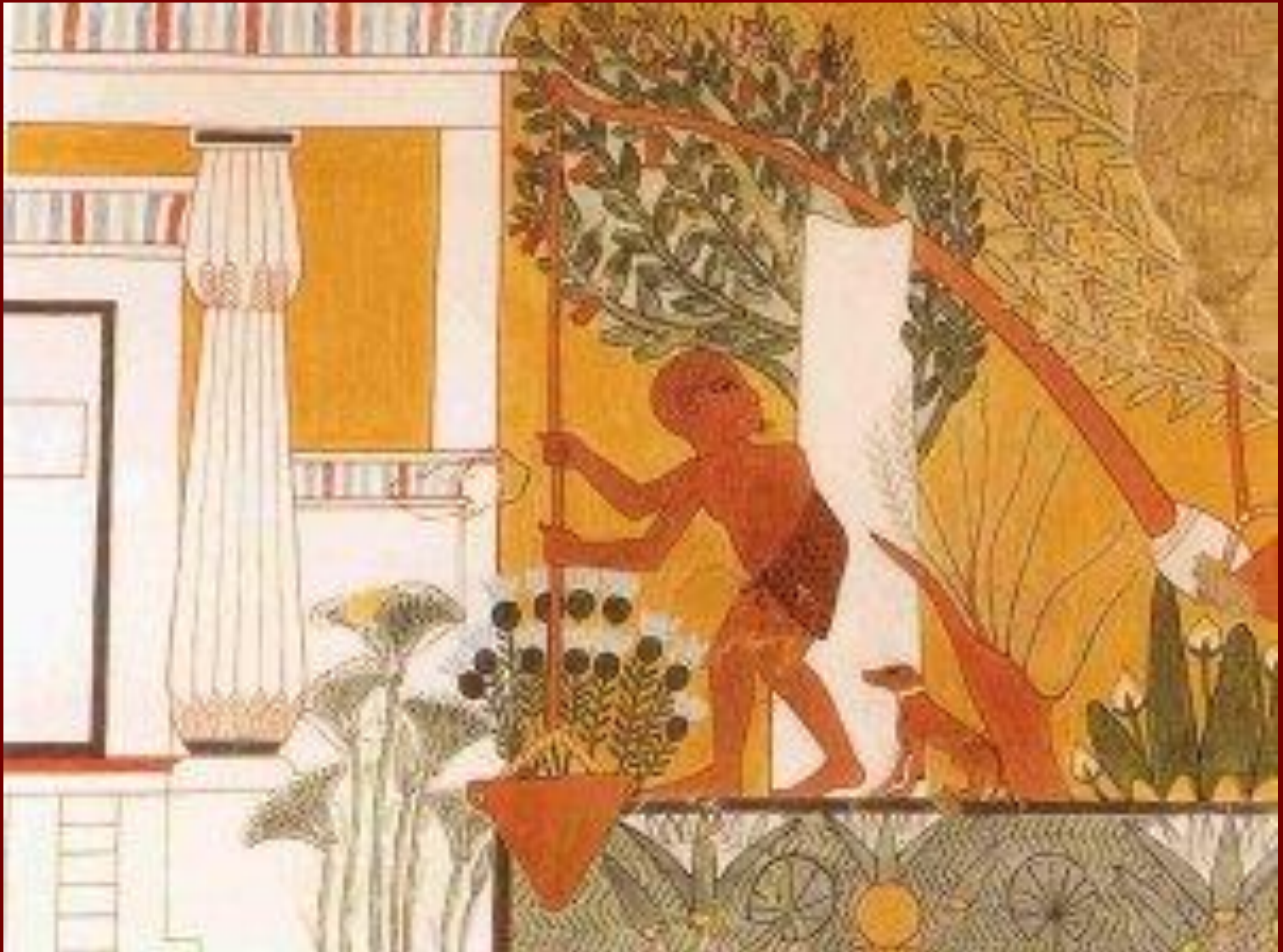
We are lucky! – Information resources

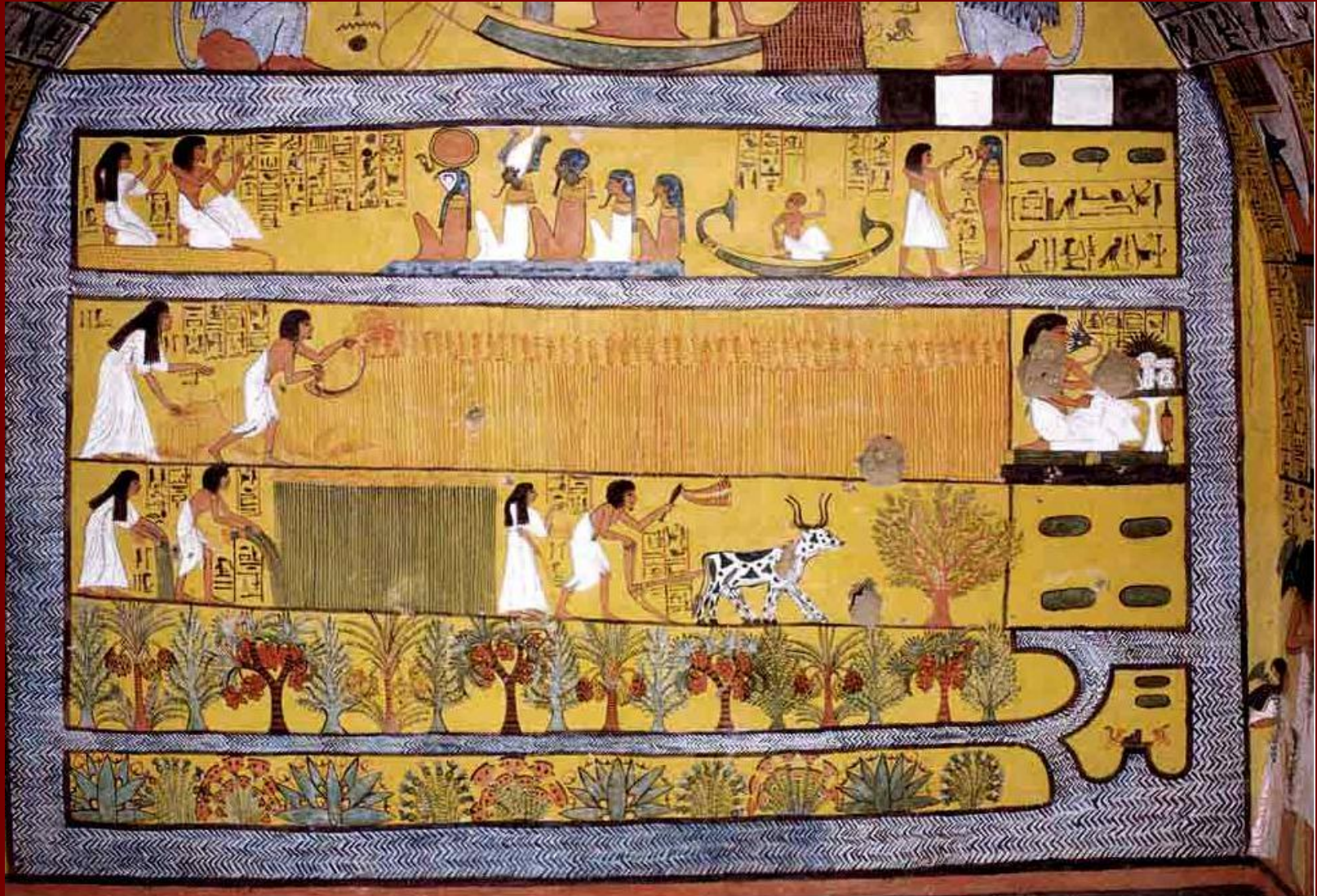
- Means huge amount of information about daily life in ancient Egypt (found in the tombs)
 - Grave goods
 - The bodies
 - Anything attached to the bodies
- Detailed and colourful scenes on tomb walls (reliefs): provide information on wide range of topics
 - Dress
 - Agriculture
 - Architecture
 - crafts and food production

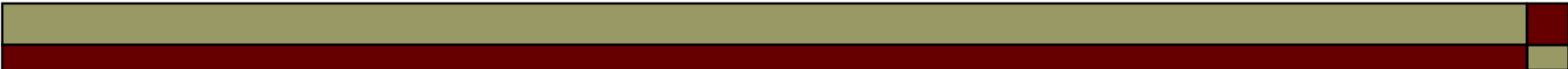
TT55: Ramose (Funerary) Banquet scene



TT217, Ipuw: Garden with shaduf

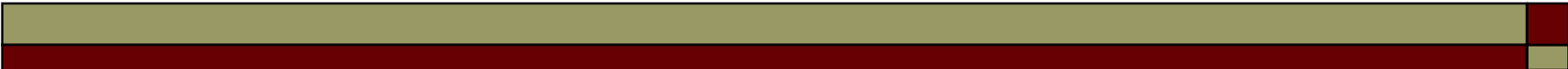






Supplies

- ❑ tomb-owner continues after death occupations of this life
- ❑ everything required packed in the tomb along with body
 - writing materials
 - clothing, wigs, hairdressing supplies
 - assorted tools, depending on the occupation of the deceased (often model tools rather full size – cheaper, less space) → magically transformed into real thing



Supplies

- Food provided
 - Real food (offerings)
 - depicted on the walls (magically transformed to supply if expected regular offerings would cease): items which the tomb owner would have eaten in his lifetime and hoped to eat in the after-life
- representations of food, along with the accompanying prayers were thought to supply the tomb owner once the actual food offerings stopped

Who is surviving in the afterlife?

- The Constituent Parts of Personality: Egyptians believed, that personality consisted of several constituent parts (principal elements)
- **Principal Elements!**
- **Body** (mummy $s^c\dot{h}$, corps $\underline{h}^ct \rightarrow$ replaces $\underline{h}t$ – body owned by the living person, but also image / statue twt)

Who is surviving in the afterlife?

□ The Constituent Parts of Personality

□ **Principal Elements!**

- **Body** (mummy *sḥ*, corps *ḥt* → replaces *ht* – body owned by the living person, but also image / statue *twt*)

□ **several more constituent parts – “soul” aspects?**

- **Ka**

- **Ba**

- Mummy served as vessel for the soul/spirit components **Ka** and **Ba**, who returned to the mummy every night to rest

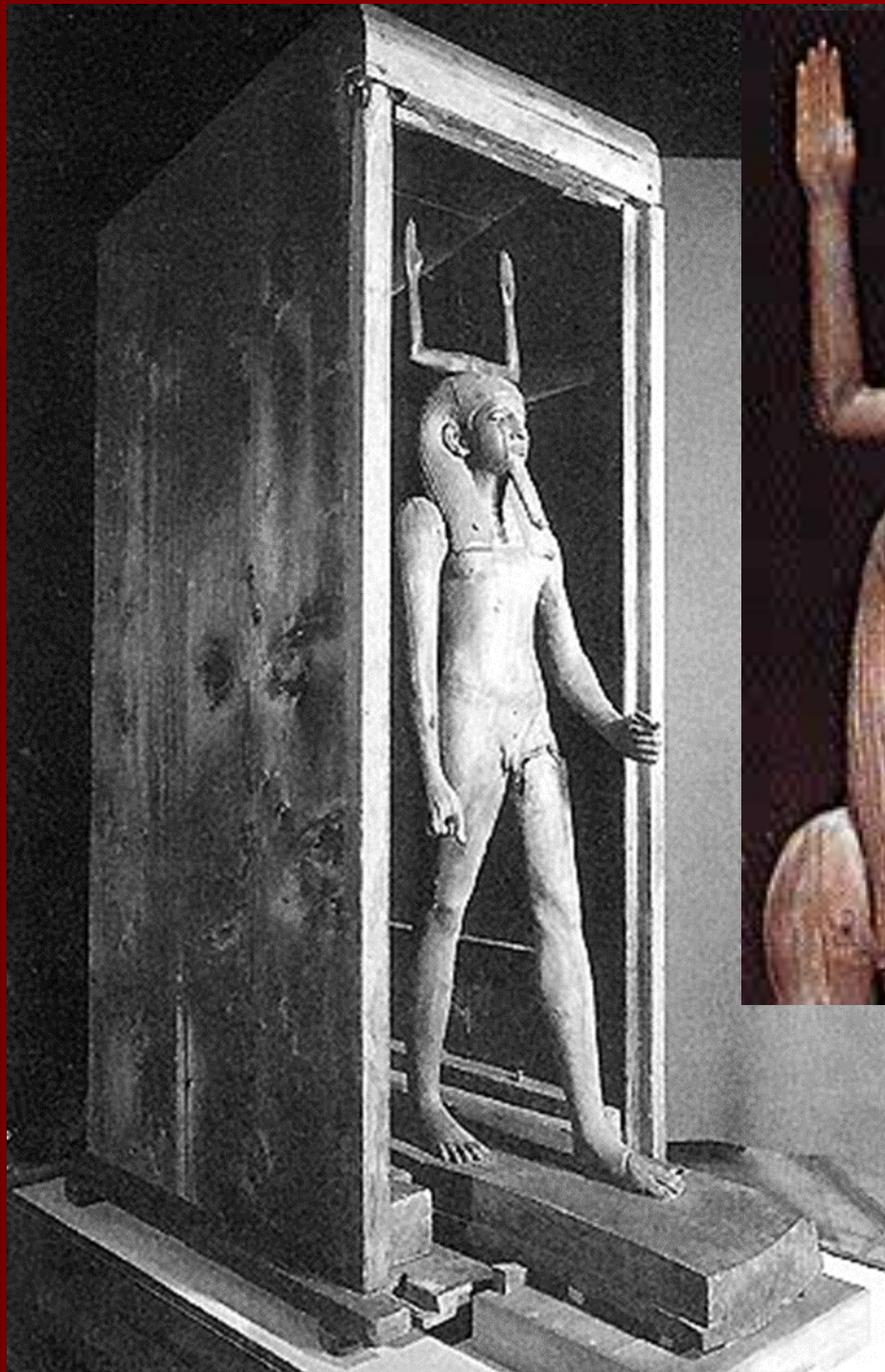
- **Akh** → relaying on the *jb*-heart (Weighing of the heart)

- **Name** (*rn*)

- **Shadow** (*šw*)

Ka statue

King Hor,
13th dyn.



Ka

- ❑ thought that the creator god Khnum created a person's **Ka** when he created the person on his **potter's wheel**.
- ❑ **Ka** followed the person like a shadow or a double all through life
- ❑ but when the person died, the **Ka** returned to its heavenly abode
- ❑ dependent on food offerings, either real ones or carved as depictions on tomb walls



Pap. Ani (BM)



- DECEASED COUPLE SEATED BEHIND THEIR BAS ON A TEMPLE OR TOMB ROOF.

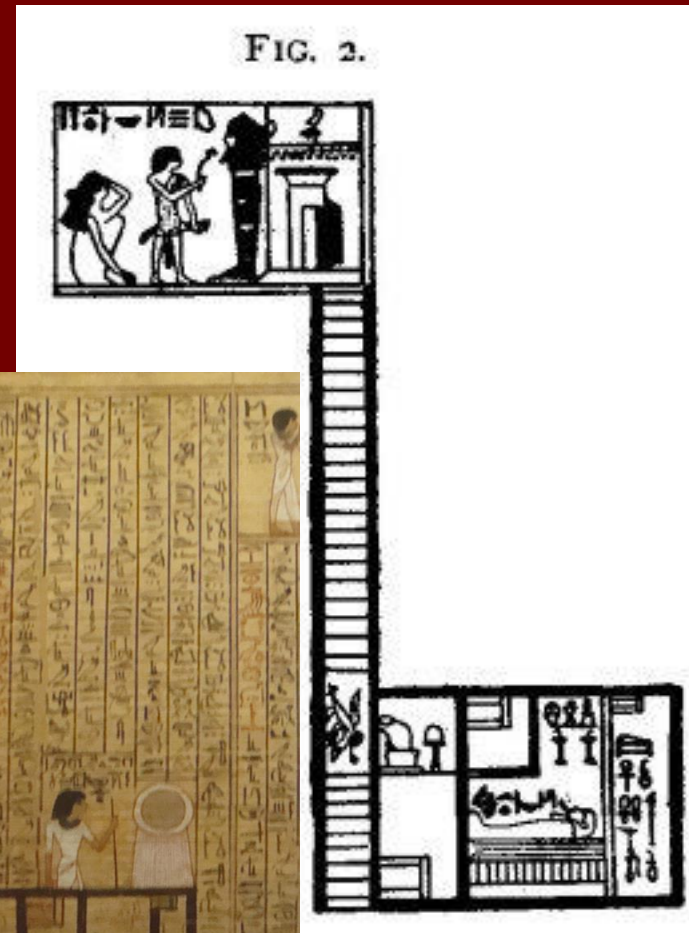


Ba



- sometimes discussed as equal to our concept of the soul
- BUT: refers to all those non-physical qualities that make up the personality of a human
- **Ba** = aspect which can leave the tomb → physical body could no longer do this → **Ba**, transformed into a bird with a human head, could fly between the tomb and the underworld
- **Ba** had physical needs, like food and water

Ba returning to tomb (from funerary papyrus Neb-Qed)



Akh

- an ancestor
= form in which blessed dead lived on in the afterlife (fully resurrected and glorified form)
- result of union between the **Ba** and the **Ka**
- **Akh** lived on unharmed for eternity
- Divine form
- often translated as "spirit" or "spirit form"



Name (ren)

- very important part of an individual
- regarded as a living part of the individual
- Name = perfect expression of the person or thing in question
- newborn child had to get a name immediately or it would not come properly into existence



Throne name and birth name of Seti I:

- Men-Maa-Re (Eternal is the justice/order of Re)
- Seti Mery-n-Ptah (The one to Seth belonging, beloved by Ptah)



SUN



Shadow (šw)

- ❑ **Shadow** also a living, essential part of the individual
- ❑ Climatic and geographical situation: **shadow** = blessing and protection from the burning rays of the sun
- ❑ Also entity with power, and which could move at great speed



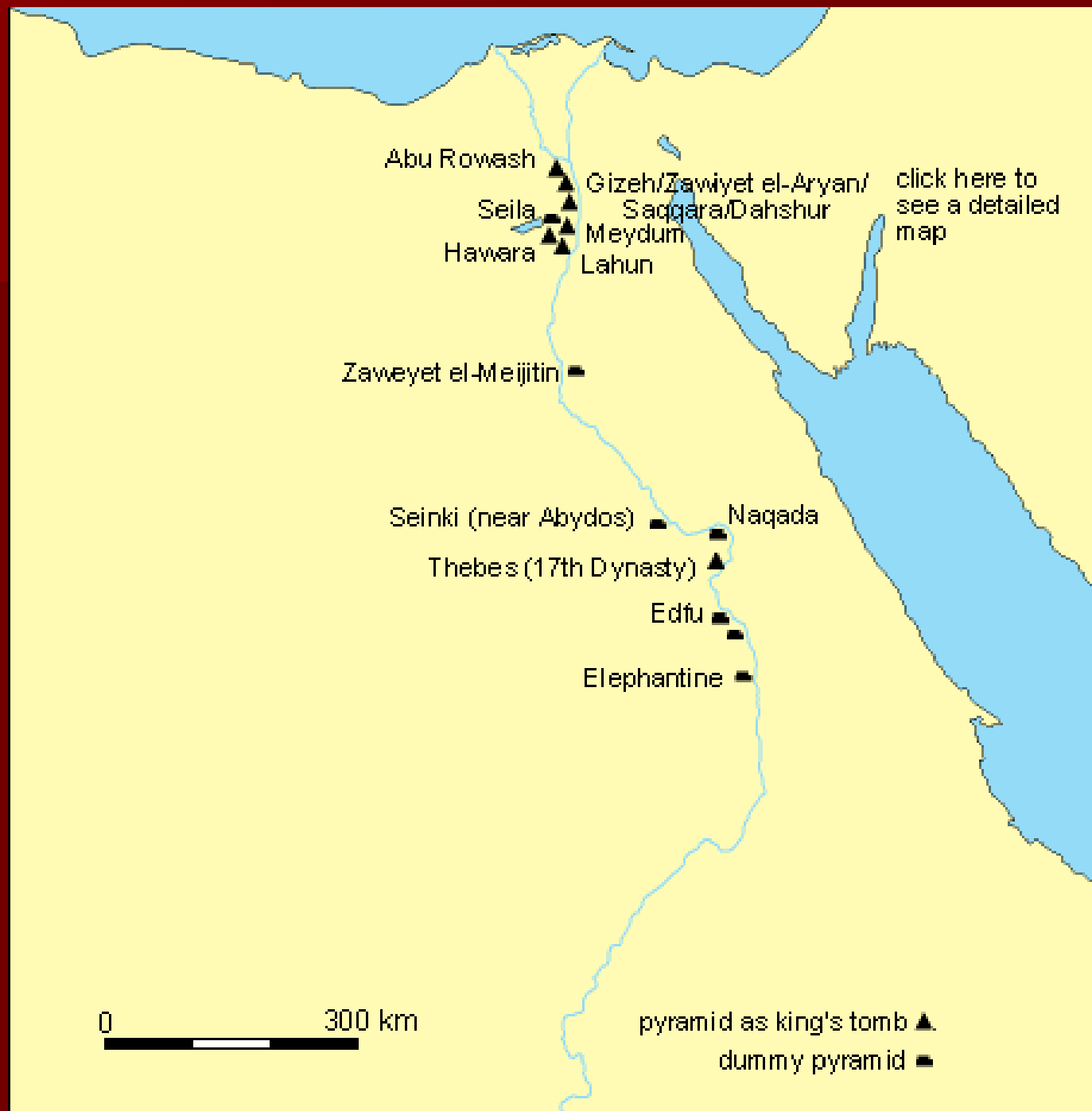
Places to talk to the dead

TOMBS

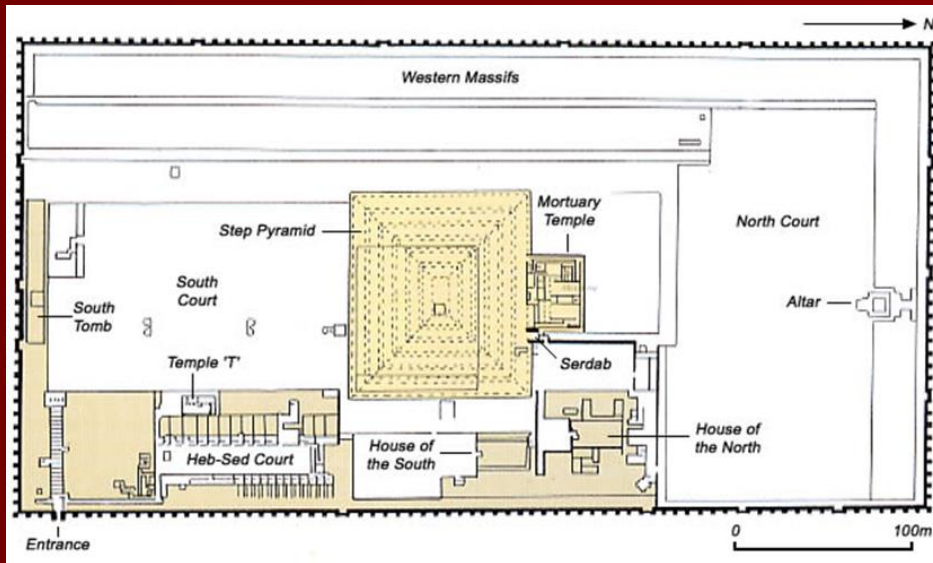
Giza - Plateau



Royal tombs OK: Map of pyramids

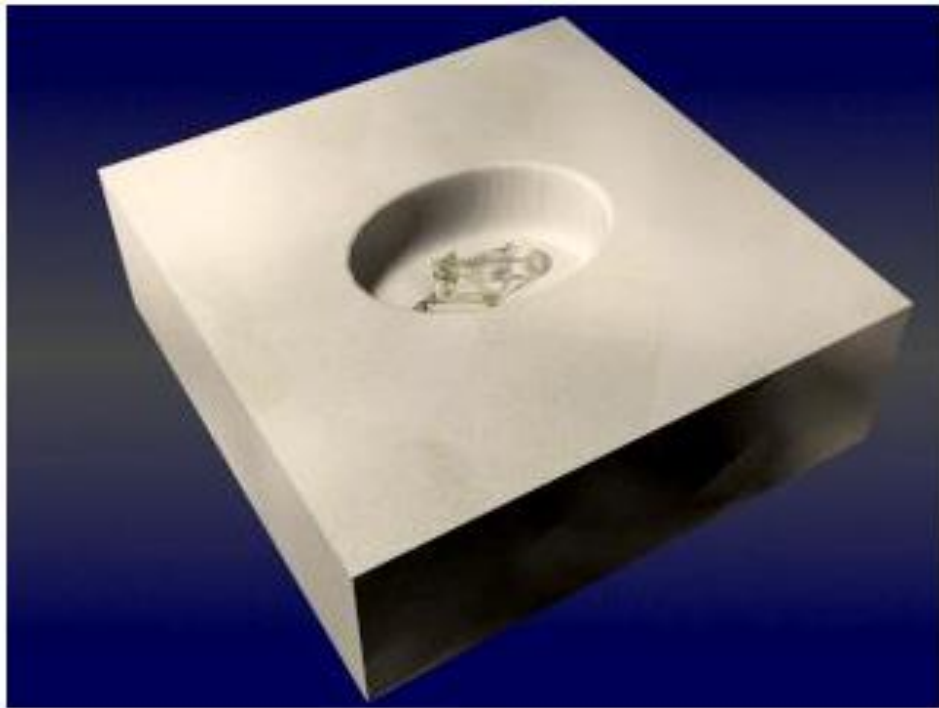


Djoser Pyramid Sakkara



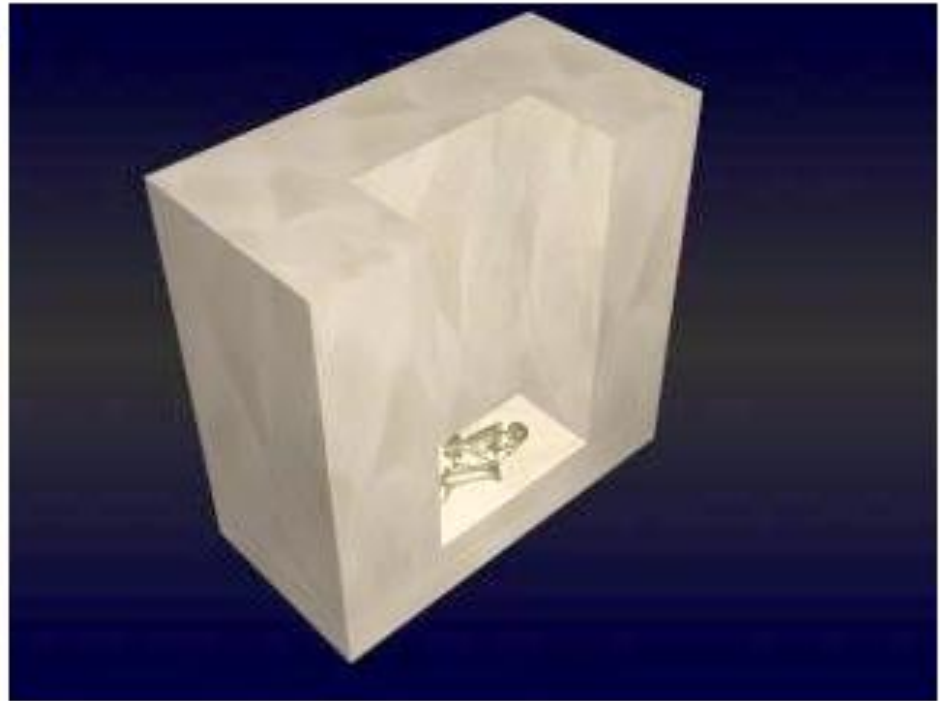
Surface Burial (Pre- and Early Dynastic Egypt):

easiest way to bury a person; earliest time: very common for all people; later = normal way to bury poorer people



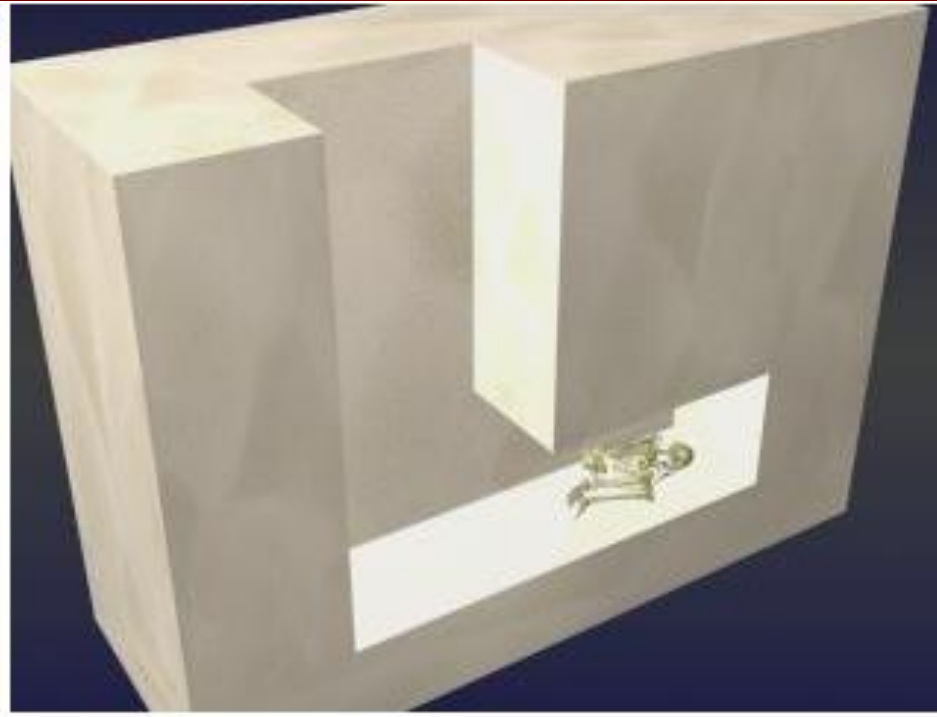
Shaft Tombs (from 3rd dyn.)

modest burials

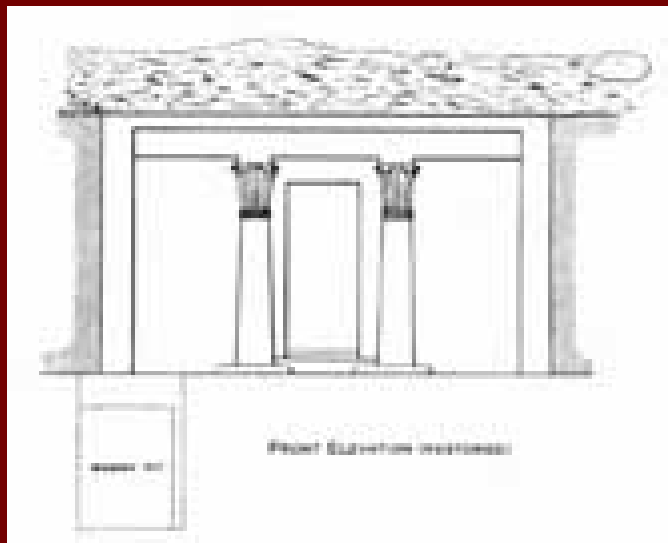
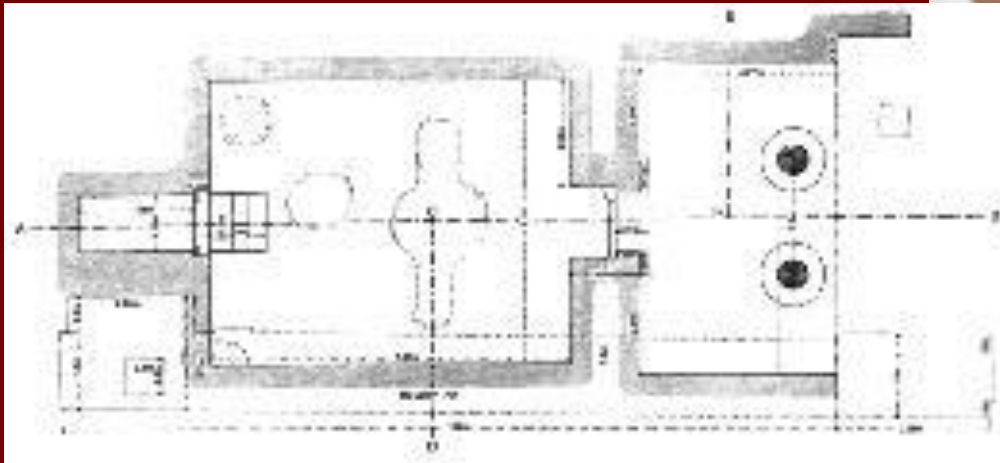
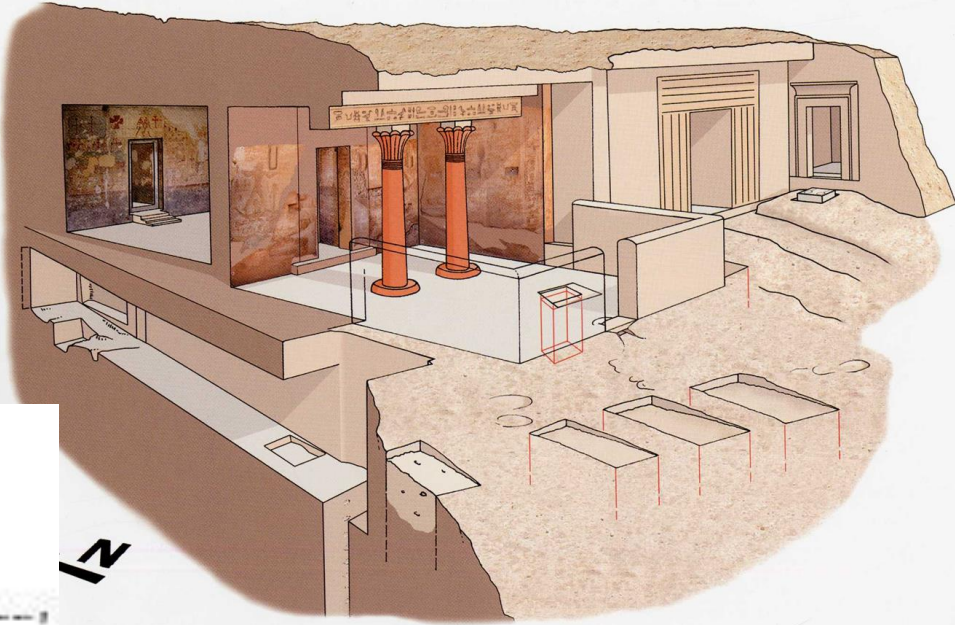


Variation: Shaft Tomb with Chamber:

most common tomb type for Egyptian upper class in OK,
sometimes also for less wealthy people; some tombs
have two or more chambers



Tomb of Nomarch Djehutjhotep



Tomb and Temple in NK



KV17 Seti I



Sarcophagus Seti I Sir John Soane's Museum London

- <http://explore.soane.org/section/sepulchral>

