

E4a – Week 2, Monday

**The eternal body:
mummification**

HPAH5085/6085

Exhibiting the Past: Ancient Egypt, death
and modern representation

Dr Katharina Zinn

Reading

- ❑ Taylor: Death. 46-91.
- ❑ Ikram. Death. 47-76.
- ❑ Ikram, Salima, 2010, Mummification. In J. Dieleman, W. Wendrich (eds.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, Los Angeles.
- ❑ C.A.R. Andrews, *Egyptian mummies* (London, The British Museum Press, 1984)
- ❑ F. Janot, *The Royal Mummies: Immortality in Ancient Egypt* (Vercelli, White Star, 2008)

Disclaimer at the start

- ❑ LBC News ; **The term mummy is 'dehumanising' and should no longer be used, museum says in bid to protect ancient Egyptians**
 - 21 January 2023, 16:31 | Updated: 21 January 2023, 17:31
 - <https://www.lbc.co.uk/news/mummy-offensive-dehumanising-banned-ancient-egypt-museums-edinburgh/>
- ❑ A National Museums Scotland spokesperson said: "Where we know the name of an individual we use that, otherwise we use 'mummified man, woman, boy, girl or person' because we are referring to people, not objects."
- ❑ "The word 'mummy' is not incorrect, but it is **dehumanising**, whereas using the term 'mummified person' encourages our visitors to think of the individual."

Mummified persons

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



Abydos



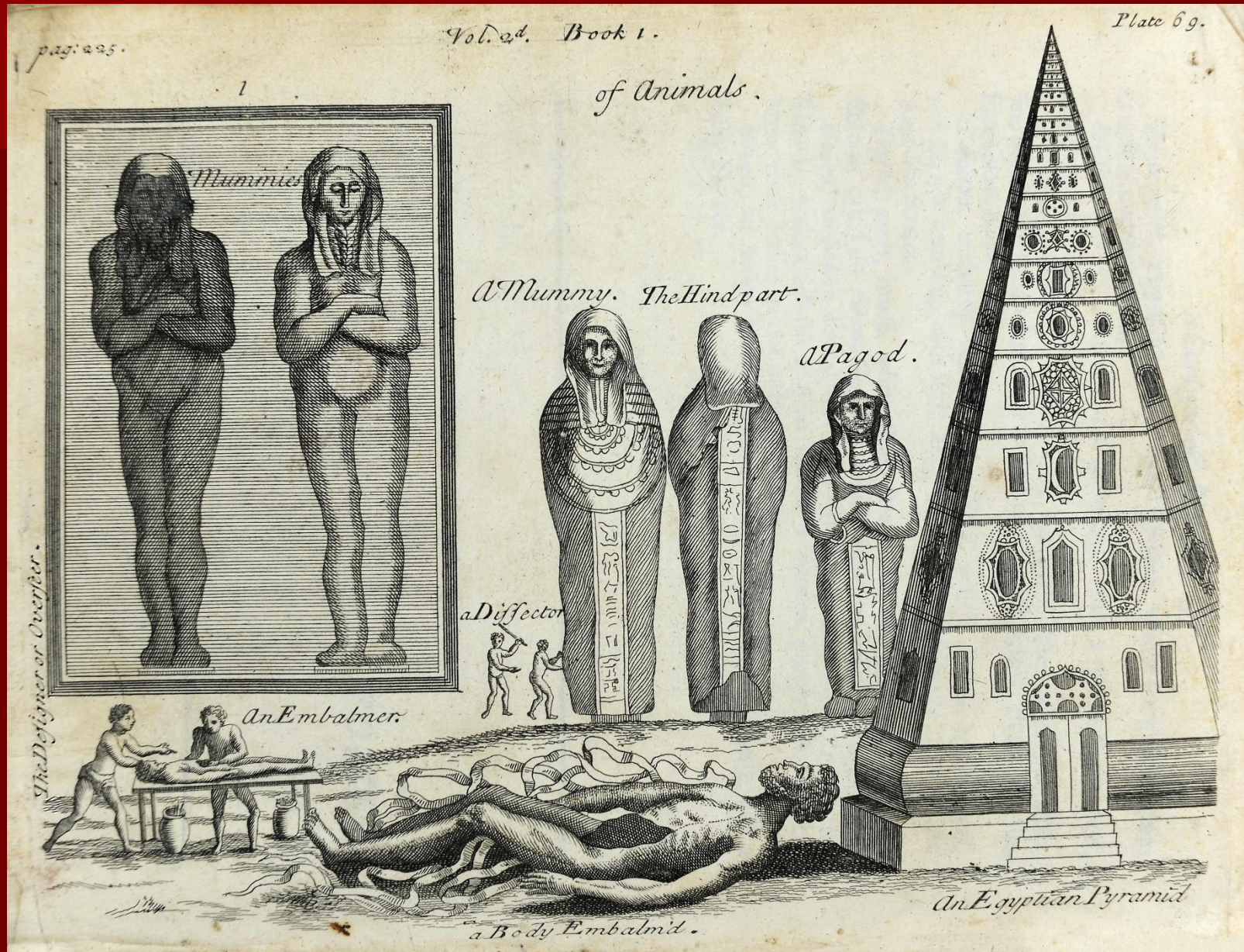
Mummified person: Elder Lady

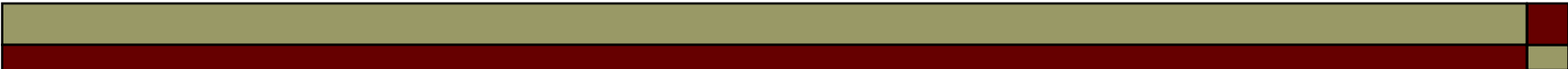
Maybe Queen
Tiye,
Wife of
Amenhotep III
and mother of
Akhenaton,
grandmother
Tutankhamun



A compleat history of druggs, written in French by Monsieur Pomet : to which is added what is further observable on the same subject, from Messrs. Lemery and Tournefort, divided into three classes, vegetable, animal and mineral, with their use in physick, chymistry, pharmacy and several other arts : illustrated with above four hundred copper cutts : done into English from the originals. . London: 1712.

A compleat history of druggs, written in French by Monsieur Pomet





Why create a mummified body?

- ❑ Simple:
- ❑ To preserve the body for the afterlife
- ❑ Why?
- ❑ → see session on constitutional parts

Mummified person and the / one body after death

- ❑ word 'mummy': not of Egyptian origin, derived from the Arabic 'mumiyah,' (= body preserved by wax or bitumen)
- ❑ Mummified person = 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
- ❑ Can be human or animal, natural preservation or as cultural artifacts to preserve the dead

Ginger - A reconstructed Egyptian grave-pit

- Predynastic Egyptian Man: Said to be from Gebelein, Egypt, Late Predynastic period (3400 BC)
- bodies placed in shallow desert graves (direct contact with sand) → no decay (hot dry sand absorbed water) → bacteria cannot breed and cause decay → body is preserved.



Mumiyah as medicine

- ❑ Arabic physicians believed „mummy resin“ as being curative and medicamental (knew medicative character of natural bitumen)
- ❑ Detached the idea of a dead human from the artefact in front of them – this idea lived on
- ❑ Good conservation of body → idea: body itself has mustic and preserving powers
- ❑ Trade with „mummies“ to Europe
- ❑ Processed into medicine



Mumiyah as medicine

- ❑ Not enough mummies for large demand
- ❑ Faked mummies were sold
- ❑ Chemists stressed out „real Egyptian mummy“ (*Mumia vera aegyptica* or *aegyptiaca*).



✓ Orijinal Ürün
✓ Yetkili Satıcı



Unfortunately, this “tradition” lives on



Ürünümüz Bakanlık



TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

NATURAL TABLETS

- ONE-COMPONENT NATURAL TABLETS
- MULTI-COMPONENT NATURAL TABLETS
- WITH THE CONTENT OF MUMIA
- MEDICINAL MUSHROOMS IN TABLETS
- MINERALS, TRACE ELEMENTS
- ESSENTIAL AMINO ACIDS

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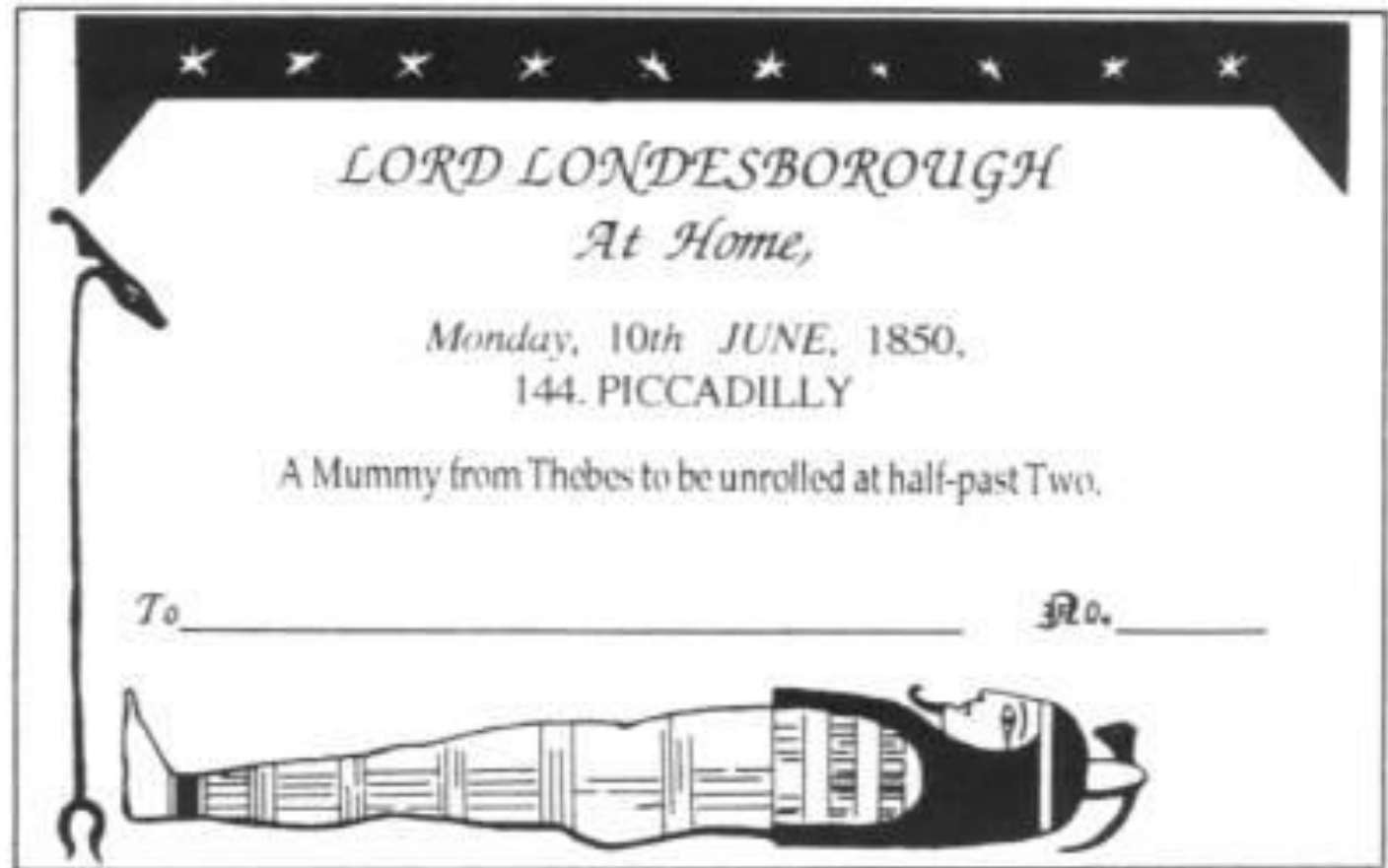
GOLDEN MUMIO CLEAN 30TBL.



100% PURE ALTAI MUMIO 60TBL. ALTAIBIO

Mummies as souvenir

- Unwrapping of a mummy as High Society event



Mummified bodies in Museums:

Conserving the body of a Predynastic Egyptian



- Went on display March 1900
- splitting of skin (probably caused when originally dried out)
- 1980s needed treatment: skull – skin had lifted
- remaining hair was very brittle and poorly attached

Mummified bodies in Museums:

Conserving the body of a Predynastic Egyptian

- Human remains need → conserved with particular care



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

**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.**



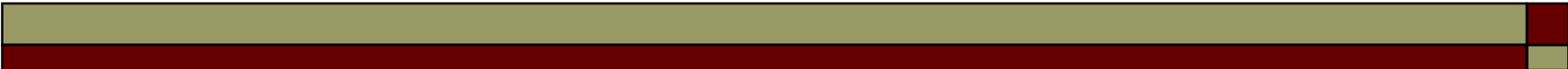
Unwrapping mummified Wah

Photograph by the Egyptian Expedition, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1940



- 20 years after Wah and his burial equipment shipped to New York, mummy X-rayed
- revealed dark shadows around Wah's neck, wrists, and ankles, indicating jewellery



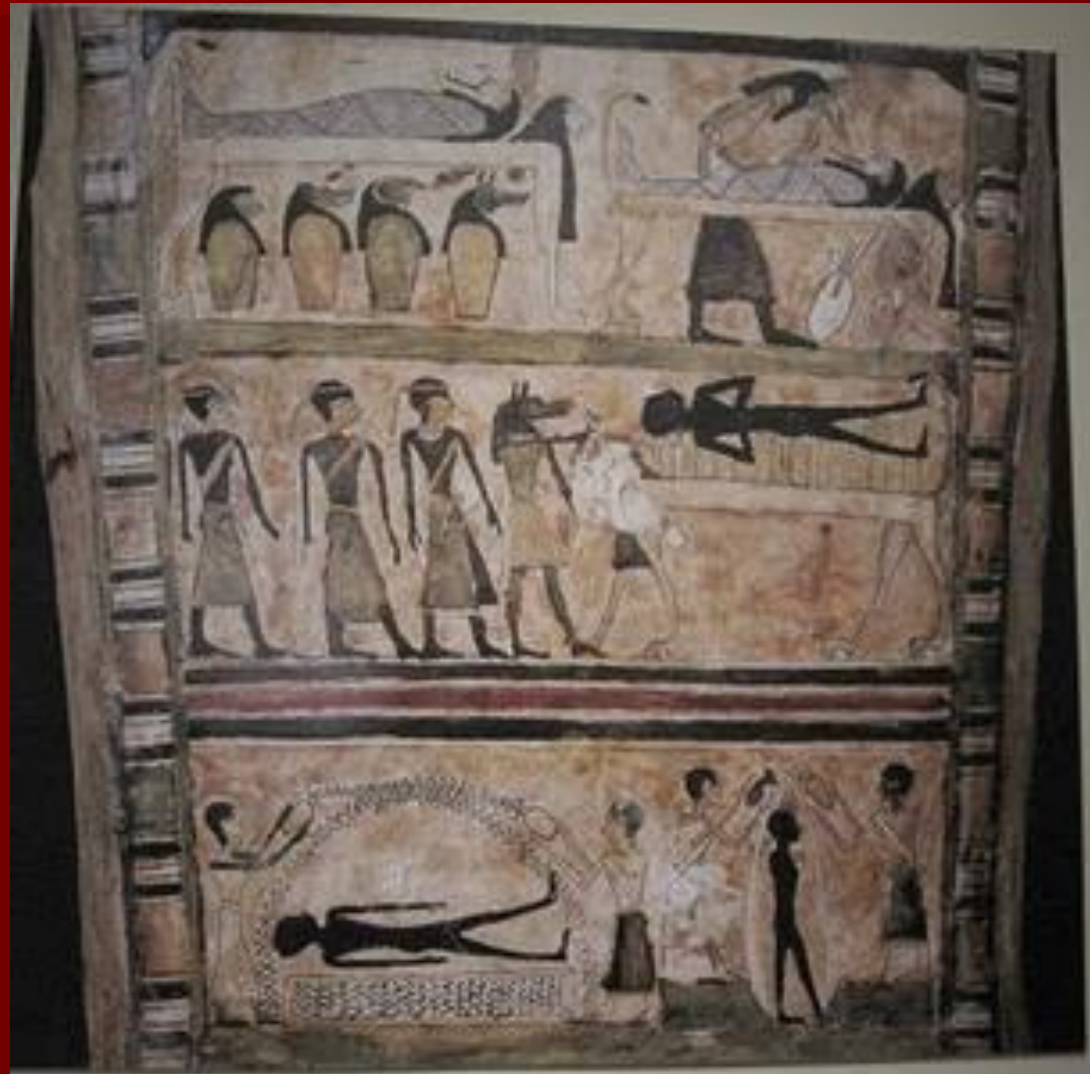


Unwrapping of Wah's mummy

- Decision to unwrap Wah:
 - linen shrouds carefully removed, cartonnage mask (with stylized wig + broad collar necklace visible)
 - center photo: layer of bandages soaked in resin (as protection of body from malevolent spirits)
 - Below : 4 bead necklaces
 - another layer of resin-soaked bandages (wrapped separately around arms and legs, preserving the mummy's human form)
 - broad collar and anklets of turquoise-blue beads partly stuck in the resin
 - When completely unwrapped, given to the American Museum of Natural History for study

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

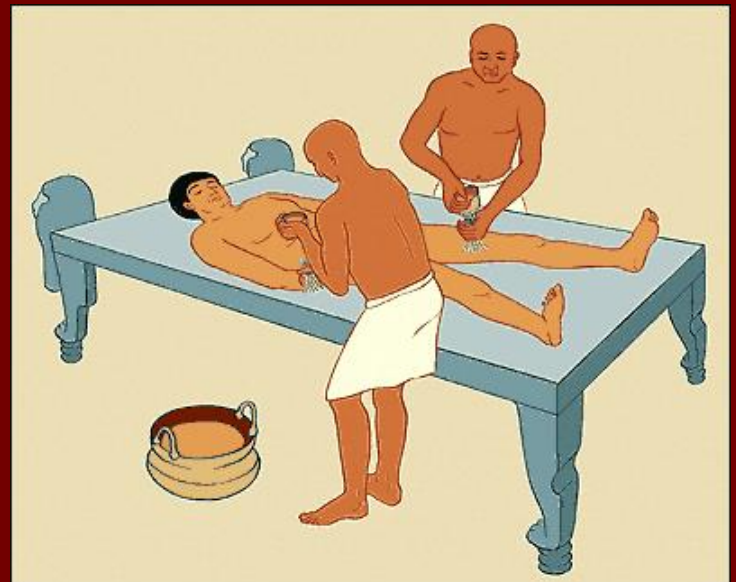
- Below: preliminary washing of corpse
- Above: body lying on lion-shaped table with natron, attended by embalmers (one = jackal-headed Anubis)
- top: finished mummified Djedbastiuefankhy



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



Mummification process



Embalming Table



Mummification Tools



- BM:
- Bronze hook to remove brain
- pincer



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

Mummification Tools

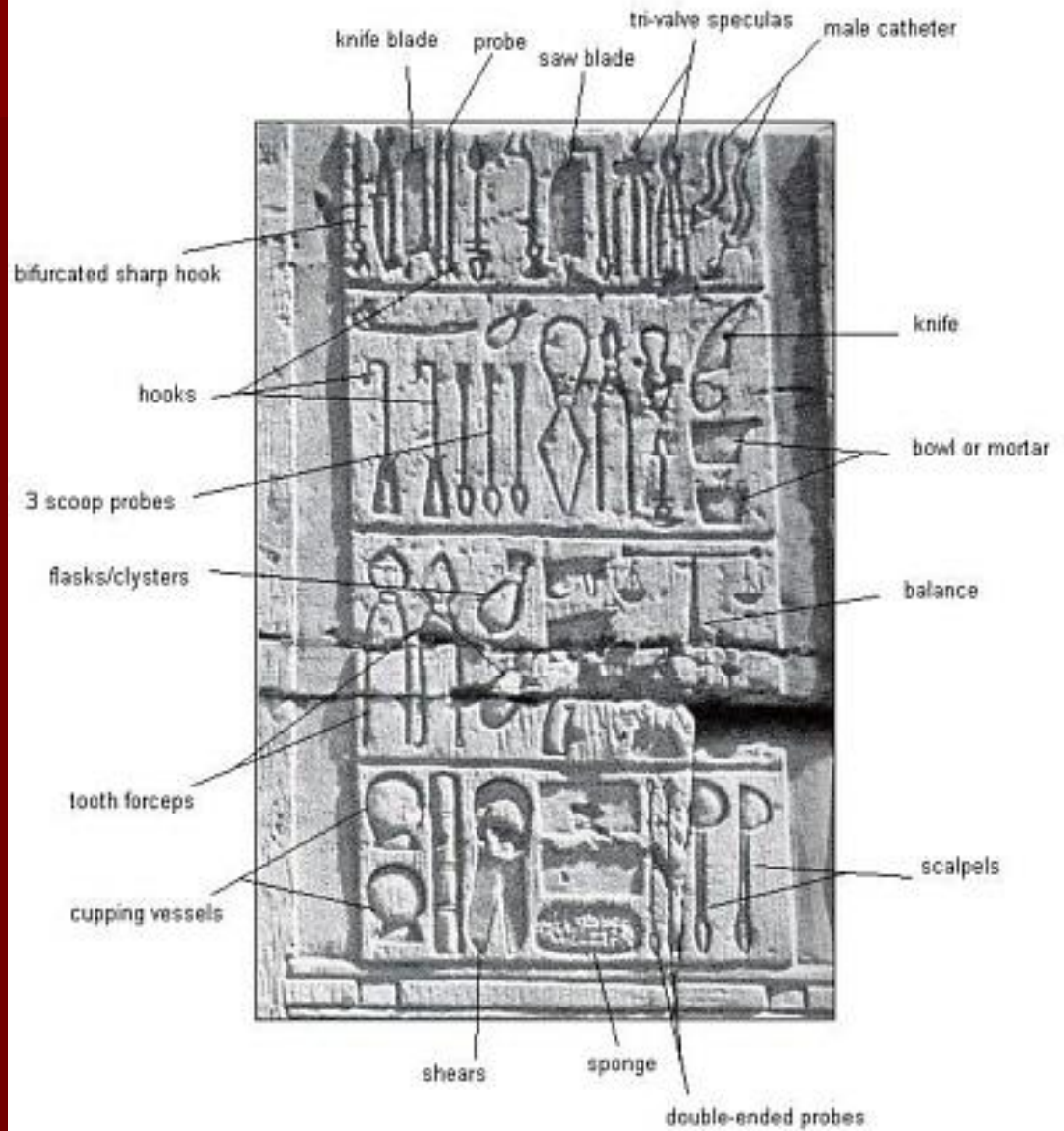
Bowl with open bag of natron (BM)



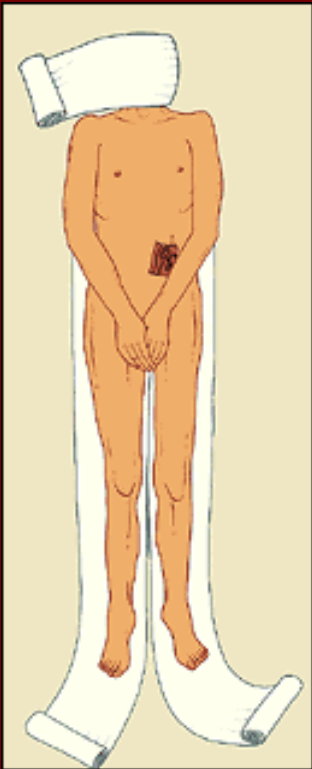
Nostril spoon



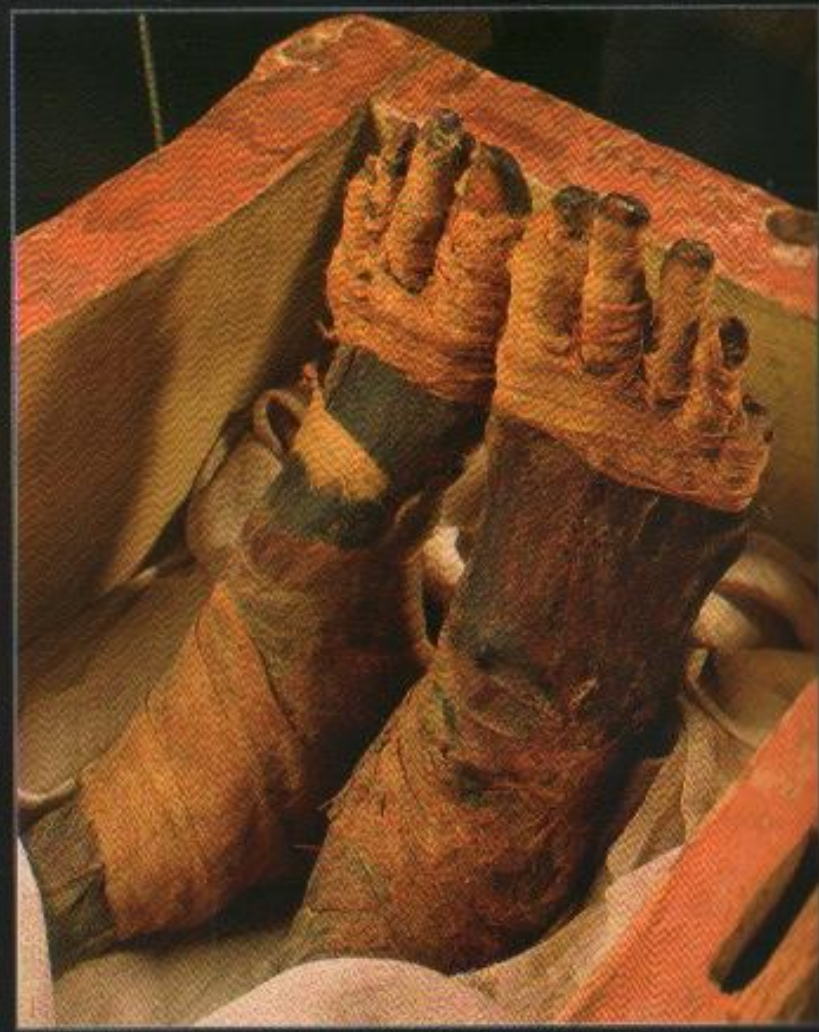
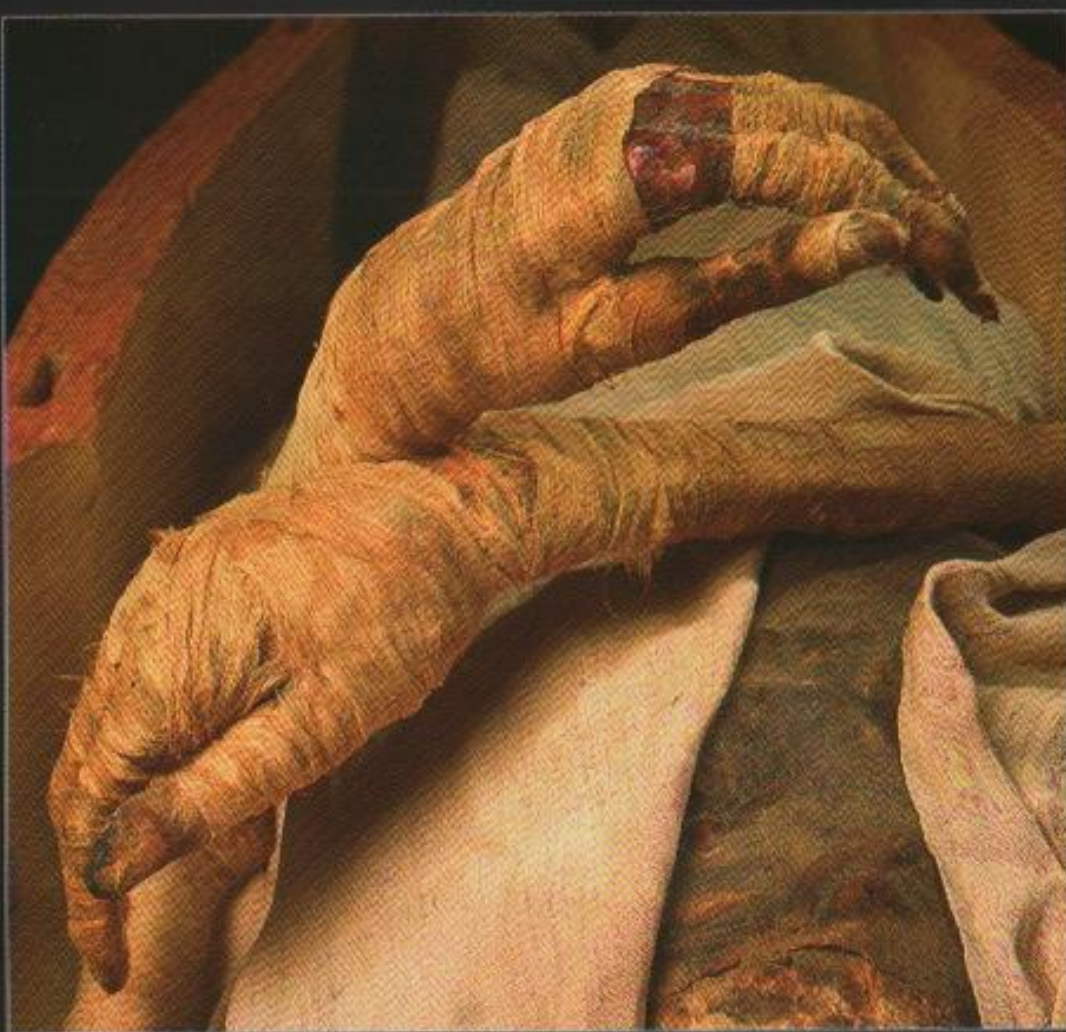
Kom Ombo Medical Relief



Wrapping



Carefully wrapped fingers and toes





Golden
finger
sheets and
sandals
- wives of
ThIII
MMA)

Artificial / prosthetic
wooden/leather right thumb
- used also during lifetime?



Mummification as ritual: priest reads spells out loud



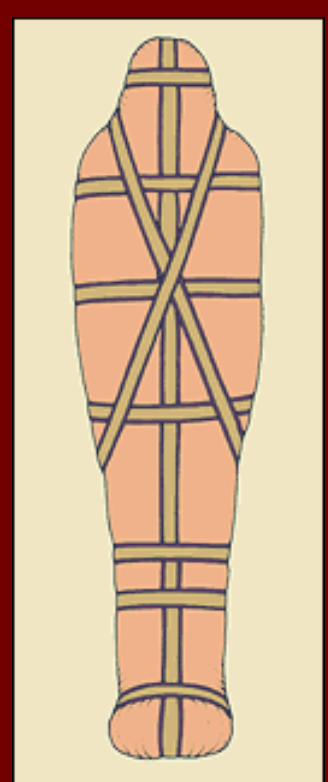
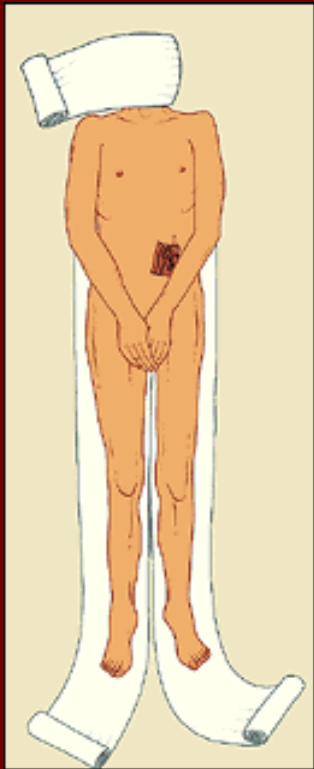
TT23 Tjay – overseeing the ritual



TT23 Tjay – wrapping the mummy



Wrapping



Nesmutaatneru, Museum of Fine Arts Boston



- Mesh of pearls
- Images of 4 sons of Horus
- Winged heart scarab



Embalming Cache (tomb?)

KV 63 (time Tutankhamun)



Embalming Cache KV 63 (time Tutankhamun)

**Bed and pillows
exhibited in
Mummification Museum
Luxor**



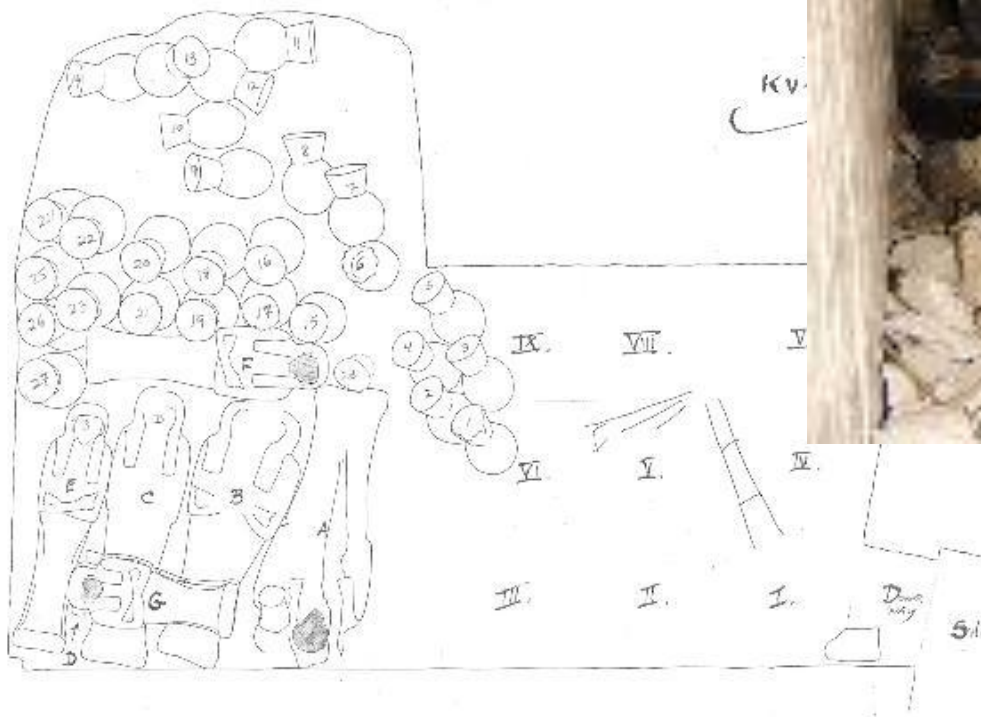
**Floral collar found in
coffin**



Embalming Cache (tomb?)

KV 63 (time Tutankhamun)

Tomb or cache???



<http://www.kv-63.com/>

Ethical issues with mummified humans – “without informed consent?”

- ❑ Dehumanising by treating as an object (mummy instead of mummified person)
- ❑ Removal of mummified bodies from Egypt
- ❑ Display of mummies in museums
- ❑ Conservation of mummies
- ❑ Research on / with mummies
- ❑ Mummy autopsy (latest case of voice reconstruction – report [here](#)) – what is necessary?
- ❑ Will need discussion and engagement