

**BETWEEN EGYPTOLOGY AND “EGYPTOMANIA”:
ANCIENT EGYPT IN SELECTED WESTERN
NOVELS AND FILMS, 1990 TO 2020**

**Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Arts)
Jadavpur University, Kolkata**

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"BETWEEN EGYPTOLOGY AND 'EGYPTOMANIA': ANCIENT EGYPT IN

SELECTED WESTERN NOVELS AND FILMS, 1990 TO 2020"

submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the Supervision of _____
PROFESSOR NILANJANA GUPTA

And that neither this thesis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere / elsewhere.

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Anirban Ray

Contents

Title	Page No.
Certificate	
Acknowledgements	i-iii
Contents	iv-viii
Preface	ix-xi
List of Figures	xii-xiii
Chapter One: Introduction	1-62
1.1 Egyptology and “Egyptomania”	1
1.2 The Primary Texts for Study: Justifications	3
1.2.1 Stephen Sommers’s Films and Max Allan Collins’s Novelizations: <i>The Mummy</i> (1999) and <i>The Mummy Returns</i> (2001)	3
1.2.2 Roland Emmerich’s <i>Stargate</i> (1994); <i>StarGate</i> (1994, 1995) by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, and James Matthew Henry Lovegrove’s <i>The Age of Ra</i> (2009, 2015)	5
1.2.3 Arwen Elys Dayton’s <i>Resurrection</i> (2001) and James Thornton’s <i>Sphinx: The Second Coming</i> (2014)	6
1.2.4 Rick Riordan’s <i>The Kane Chronicles</i> (2010–2012)	7
1.3 The Trajectory of Arguments in the Chapters Two to Five	9
1.4 Literature Review	13
1.5 Methodology of Study	17
1.6 Egyptology and “Egyptomania”: Concepts and Scope	19
1.7 Egyptology: Features	21
1.7.1 Architecture and Funerary Consciousness	21
1.7.2 Arts	22
1.7.3 Afterlife Transition	24
1.7.4 Writing	25
1.8 “Egyptomania”: Features	26
1.8.1 Films	26
1.8.2 Arts	27
1.8.3 Popular Culture	28
1.8.4 Pyramid Mysteries	29
1.9 Egyptology and “Egyptomania” Differences	31
1.9.1 Translation	31
1.9.2 “Alternative” Ideas	32
1.10 Egyptology, Egyptomania, Literatures in English	33
1.10.1 Science Fiction and Fantasy	34
1.10.2 “Material Culture”	35

1.10.3 “Afrocentrism”	36
1.10.4 Uniqueness of the Ancient Egyptian Deities	37
1.10.5 Zoomorphism	37
1.10.6 “Differently Abled” and “Gender Fluid” Deities	39
1.10.7 Embalmmment	41
1.10.8 Communication with the Deities	43
1.10.9 Geographical Representation	44
1.10.10 “Divine Age” as a Theme	46
1.10.11 Sarcophagus	49
1.10.12 Cartouche	50
1.10.13 Symbolic and Composite Glyphs	51
1.10.14 Magic	53
1.10.15 The “Rosetta Stone”	54
1.11 Approaches towards Ancient Egypt	55
1.11.1 Museums	55
1.11.2 Films	56
1.12 Objectives	58
1.12.1 Reading and “Recontextualization”	58
1.12.2 Interpretation of Recurring Myths in Western Imagination	58
1.12.3 Interpretation of Ancient Egypt as a Consciousness	59
1.12.4 “Sublime” and “Grotesque”	60
1.12.5 Repetition of Ancient Egyptian Themes in Fiction	62

**Chapter Two: Stephen Sommers’s Films and Max Allan Collins’s
Novelizations: *The Mummy* (1999) and *The Mummy
Returns* (2001): Funerary Magic and the Underworld 63-113**

2.1 Introduction	63
2.2 A Comparison of Plot Summaries	63
2.3 Literature Review	68
2.4 Methodology and Argument	69
2.5 Importance of Osiris and Anubis	71
2.6 “ <i>Hom-Dai</i> ”: Mythical Implications	74
2.7 Imhotep and Ankh-su-namun	79
2.8 Hamanaptra and the “Oasis of Ahm Shere”	85
2.9 Ancient Egypt and Evelyn	95
2.10 Archaeology and World Saving	100
2.11 Conclusion	110

Chapter Three : Roland Emmerich’s *Stargate* (1994), *StarGate* by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black (1994, 1995), and James Matthew Henry Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra* (2009, 2015): Interpreting, Questioning, and Resisting the Deities **114-181**

3.1	Introduction	114
3.2	Plot Summaries	115
3.2.1	<i>Stargate</i> , <i>StarGate</i>	115
3.2.2	Lovegrove’s <i>The Age of Ra</i>	117
3.3	Literature Review	118
3.4	Methodology and Argument	120
3.5	“Alternative Egyptological” Approaches	121
3.6	References to Ancient Egyptian Mythology	123
3.6.1	Rebellion and Chaos	123
3.6.2	Nut, Geb, Shu and Tefnut	125
3.6.3	Ra	127
3.6.4	Anubis	133
3.7	Significance of “Senet”	135
3.8	Cartouche	137
3.9	Egyptian Stellar Mythology	140
3.10	Aquatic Passages in the Stellar Skies	142
3.11	The Stargate Machine	148
3.12	Ra’s Sarcophagus Machine	150
3.13	Gadgets and Weapons	153
3.14	Abydos	156
3.15	“Freegypt”	157
3.16	Human Bodies: Usages	162
3.17	Human-Divine Interaction and Conflicts	166
3.17.1	Daniel, O’Neil, Sha’uri and Skaara against Ra	167
3.17.2	Osiris and David	170
3.17.3	Seth and Stephen	173
3.18	The Challenges in Archaeology	176
3.19	Conclusion	178

Chapter Four: Arwen Elys Dayton’s *Resurrection* (2001) and James Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (2014): Ancient and Modern Egypt, Alien Humans, and “Multiverse” **182-242**

4.1	Introduction	182
4.2	Plot Summaries	183
4.2.1	Dayton’s <i>Resurrection</i>	183
4.2.2	Thornton’s <i>Sphinx: The Second Coming</i>	184
4.3	Literature Review	185
4.4	Methodology and Argument	187

4.5	Aliens and Mythical Bodies	191
4.6	Botany and Technology	199
4.7	Building Material	208
4.8	The Great Pyramid	210
4.9	Evolution of the Cult of Osiris in <i>Resurrection</i>	218
4.10	The “Rostau” in <i>Sphinx: The Second Coming</i>	225
4.11	The Sphinx and the God Amun-Ra	230
4.12	Conclusion	237

**Chapter Five: Rick Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* (2010-2012):
Humans, “Maat,” and the Ancient Egyptian Deities** **243-307**

5.1	Introduction	243
5.2	Brief Overview of Riordan’s <i>The Kane Chronicles</i>	248
5.3	Literature Review	254
5.4	Argument: Recontextualization of “Maat” in Fiction	255
5.5	Deities and Humans United for “Maat”	264
5.5.1	Horus-Carter	264
5.5.2	Isis-Sadie	266
5.5.3	Ra-Khepri-Nephthys-Zia	270
5.5.4	Anubis-Walt	273
5.5.5	Osiris-Julius; Set-Amos	275
5.6	The Benevolent Anomalies: Bes, Taweret and Neith	279
5.7	Bast	285
5.8	“Maat” and Obelisk	287
5.9	Relevance of Mythology and Magic Retold	292
5.10	Ancient Egypt and the World	300
5.11	Conclusion	304

Chapter Six: Conclusion **308-370**

6.1	Recurrence of Ancient Egyptian Themes	308
6.2	Hieroglyphs in “Mythopoeia”	319
6.3	Technical Marvels	322
6.4	“Neters”	323
6.5	Symbols	324
6.6	Body, Jewels and Armor	327
6.7	Body and Organs	328
6.8	“Heka”	330
6.9	Museums in “Mythopoeia”	332
6.10	Religion and Liberalism	333
6.11	Mythic Ecosystem	334
6.12	The Aliens and “The Different”	336
6.13	The “Grotesque”	338

6.14 The Deities and Humans	339
6.15 “Maat” and the Balance	341
6.16 Ancient and Modern Egypt between Other Worlds and Earth	344
6.17 Ancient and Modern Egypt between Deities and Humans	345
6.18 Osiris-Cult and Its Popularity	348
6.19 The Funerary Space	349
6.20 Retellings of Ancient Egyptian Myths	350
6.21 Myth and Material	352
6.22 Myth and Archaeology	353
6.23 Myth and Aliens	354
6.24 Myth and Science Fiction	356
6.25 Relevance of Myths	359
6.26 Ancient Egyptian Artistic Legacy	361
6.27 Expansions in Egyptology	363
6.28 “Egyptomaniac” Extensions	364
6.29 Architecture and Fiction	366
Bibliography	371-406

Preface

Egyptology is not institutionally known much in India, though Indians are certainly fascinated about ancient Egyptian history and do look forward to vacation/tour in Egypt if they could afford it. Films provide one essence of Egypt, but touring and studying Pharaonic history yield different experiences and an actual trip to the sites in Egypt is essential for understanding the different variations in artistic expressions for a civilization that lasted steadily and has left its influences globally.

The title of the Thesis, “Between Egyptology and ‘Egyptomania’: Ancient Egypt in Selected Western Novels and Films, 1990 to 2020,” provides a particular period from which the primary texts (films and novels) have been chosen. This is because this period, as we have seen, progressed considerably in computer animation, digital and virtual arts, and considerable interest in electronic games have risen. Tourism has widened, and sites in Egypt are receiving maintenance. Popular culture has broadened and it has taken “Egyptomania” to creative endeavors, which are helping in reclaiming interest in ancient Egypt. I have kept the word “Egyptomania” in quotes because it is seen with mixed opinions, between commercial and creative, but not usually tied with an institutional curriculum. I have outlined the differences between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” in the Introduction Chapter.

Literature and fiction are not tied with strict empirical methodologies, though certain features are definitely classifiable in terms of generic difference. The thesis tries to take a comparative approach, in applying Egyptology and “Egyptomania” and see if it is possible to bring architecture, mythology, fiction together. The thesis is not theoretical in approach; the methodology in general relies heavily on the comparison of contexts. The strength of the Thesis thus lies in its interdisciplinary nature, in the comparative study between reliefs,

objects and text. Throughout the thesis, with citation and references to Egyptologists, novelists, and film directors, Egyptological context and the “Egyptomaniac” “recontextualization have been studied with balanced importance. I have self-cited myself as well, since the Thesis has been built upon years of discussion, speculation, and concepts in the Thesis could be found similarly in my previous publications as well. Please see the Bibliography for the details.

The illustrations of ancient Egyptian arts, architecture, and objects, and the textual and filmic references are equally important. Since I have heavily relied upon textual reading and information, footnotes have been provided copiously to help the readers connect with the text.

The topic of “Egyptomania” has however been addressed by eminent scholars, and there are important publications devoted to the studies on the films and fiction featuring ancient Egypt. Matthew Coniam, *Egyptomania Goes to the Movies: From Archaeology to Popular Craze to Hollywood Fantasy* (2017) is a valuable publication.¹ While writing this Preface on March 7, 2022, after more than two months of qualifying in my Pre-submission seminar (held on December 20, 2021), I also discovered that a very good publication, a collection of articles/Chapters, exists that feature different aspects of ancient Egypt: *Ancient Egypt in the Modern Imagination: Art, Literature and Culture* edited by Eleanor Dobson and Nichola Tonks (2020).² Since the topic of ancient Egypt is so influential, it is possible that some of the ideas in this Thesis had been in the thoughts of previous scholars and discussed/published. I have thereby cited the sources which I came across in the last few years that helped me to develop comparisons, arguments, and infer ideas. It is possible that

¹ Matthew Coniam, *Egyptomania Goes to the Movies: From Archaeology to Popular Craze to Hollywood Fantasy* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2017).

² Eleanor Dobson and Nichola Tonks, eds., *Ancient Egypt in the Modern Imagination: Art, Literature and Culture* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

the similar information might exist, provided by different scholars as par their contextual requirements. The thesis thus is a humble addition to this ever growing field, and in some instances the comparisons might not seem much congruent; however this is a step taken for further development.

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List of Figures

Chapter, Figure number, Title of figure	Page No.
Chapter One	
1.1 Pharaoh Crowned by Nekhbet and Wadjet	12
1.2 Detail from the Kilt of Cleopatra VII's son Caesarion	23
1.3 The Pharaoh and Hapi-figure	40
1.4 Offering-carriers from Temple of Hathor, Dendera	45
1.5.1 and 1.5.2 The Pharaoh Carrying the Crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt	47–48
1.6 Bound Figures and Cartouches from Abydos	57
Chapter Two	
2.1 Wepwawet, Osiris, and Seti I	65
2.2 Seti I on a Litter	71
2.3 Reliefs from the Temple of Hathor, Dendera	77
2.4 Scorpion and “Djed Pillar”	95
2.5 Pharaoh Holding Heh-figure	99
Chapter Three	
3.1 Ramesses II and the Falcon god	138
3.2 Scene of Sunrise from Dendera Ceiling	144
3.3 “Seven Cows” and “Four Paddles”	149
3.4 Horus, Hathor, and the “Nine Bows”	159
Chapter Four	
4.1 The God Nefertum and Seti I	197
4.2 Ti Holding Papyrus	205
4.3 “Ished” Tree and Seti I	207
4.4 Representation of the “Double Lion” Motif	229
4.5 Sphinx-figure	231
4.6 Atum, Amun, and Seti I	233
4.7.1 and 4.7.2 Seti I and Ramesses II before Amun-Ra and Mut	234-235

Chapter Five

5.1 Seti I Gives “Maat”-figurine	246
5.2 Relief Showing Pharaoh Piercing a Snake	251
5.3 The Goddess Seshat and Frog-symbolism	263
5.4 Striking Scenes, Edfu temple	265
5.5 Hippotamus Harpooning Scene, Edfu Temple	268
5.6 Pharaoh Installing Obelisks before Horus	289
5.7 Ramesses II before Osiris, Isis, and Horus	296
5.8 Ramesses II between Seth and Horus	302

Chapter Six

6.1 The “ <i>sema-tawi</i> ” and Hapi(s)	310
6.2 Horus-falcon on “ <i>serekh</i> ”	313
6.3 Osiris and Solar Disk	318
6.4 Hieroglyph over Bread, Mastaba of Kagemni	321
6.5 Detail of Hieroglyphs from Edfu Temple	326
6.6 Birds from Mastaba of Kagemni	331
6.7 Goddesses on the Columns, Philae Temple	335
6.8 Thoth and the “Eye of Horus”	343
6.9 Divine Pairs from Kom Ombo Temple	345
6.10 Rectangular Scene-arrangement, Edfu Temple	347
6.11 Horus and Osiris, Edfu Temple	351
6.12 Reliefs Showing the Body of Osiris, Dendera Temple	356
6.13 Reliefs Showing Ramesses II, Abydos	366

All the photographs have been taken by Anirban Ray during his visit to Egypt in 2019. For each photograph, Ray expresses genuine courtesy to the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Egypt, for the preservation of archaeological sites, temples, mastabas, tombs, and Museums. The photos taken by the researcher have been used for academic purpose to support arguments.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Egyptology and “Egyptomania”¹

Ancient Egypt has been interpreted and represented through two broad approaches, namely Egyptology and “Egyptomania.” As Thomas Schneider notes, Egyptology is a scientific discipline, institutionally studied in the White West,² with major contributions made by the English, the French, the Germans, and the Americans. Kathryn A. Bard notes that the Egyptology involves different specializations, involving on-site excavation, museum studies, translations of hieroglyphic texts, and it is a fact-based scientific discipline that studies different aspects of ancient Egyptian civilization, including art, mythology, material culture, architecture, warfare, societal, and political aspects.³ Bob Brier and Ronald H. Fritze in their individual books have elaborated that “Egyptomania” involves “receptions” of ancient Egyptian culture, arts, mythology in popular culture, paintings, performances in different contexts; these contexts are not always authentic in connection with the ancient Egyptians.⁴ “Egyptomania” might not be appreciated by many Egyptologists, since many of the empirical data are appropriated with creative misinterpretation but “Egyptomania” can be of interest for any visual and performing artist and for a candidate of English since analyses of Literature in the Twenty-first century has become inclusive of other disciplines

¹ In my previously published articles relevant to this Thesis, the distinction between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” and the correlation between the two are important aspects. See footnote no. 43 of this Introduction chapter for the publication details of these articles; they are also listed in the Bibliography for this thesis.

² Thomas Schneider, “Introducing the New Editor of Near Eastern Archaeology: Egyptology Past, Present, and Future—A Reflection,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 75, no. 1 (March 2012): 56–59, accessed January 21, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5615/neareastarch.75.1.0056>.

³ Kathryn A. Bard, *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 1–329.

⁴ Bob Brier, *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1–208; Ronald H. Fritze, *Egyptomania: A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 1–426.

like psychology, philosophy, sociology, history, archaeology, studies in mainstream texts as well as popular culture.

The Ancient Egyptians constituted a self-conscious race and acquired a unique existence through their shared beliefs which displayed both uniformity as well as diversities. Ramona Louise Wheeler and translator Diana Janeen Pierce observe that there was deep attachment for their native land in the minds of the ancient Egyptian but it is interesting that in the Antiquities, the use of the name “Egypt” is attributed to the non-Pharaonic culture looking at Egypt.⁵ Ancient Egypt had been continuously interpreted by surrounding and visiting cultures; the initial interpreters being the Classical Greeks, to whom the European civilization is attributed. As it was in the ancient world, the White West still remains the major interpreter of ancient Egypt through the discipline of Egyptology. Science fiction and fantasy written predominantly by the White writers acquaint the readers with influence of archaeological discoveries in Egypt. Their representations of ancient Egypt involve recontextualizations and re-depictions of ancient Egyptian myths, arts, and culture. This has enabled comparative studies of ancient Egyptian aspects in Egyptology and “Egyptomania” which I shall apply in the textual analyses in the four main Chapters (Two to Five).

As students of Literatures in English we get introduced to critical thinking, “history of ideas” through the Classical theories propounded by Plato and Aristotle and we study the application of those theories in the Greek plays in which mythology plays so important roles. Greek myths have been kept alive through the European Renaissance, through the Neoclassical and the Romantic texts and literature which students have engaged with and internalized. The students of Literature study these institutionally, and may pursue a parallel fascination for other non-Greek myths reflected in games, movies, but do not get much

⁵ Ramona Louise Wheeler and Diana Janeen Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian: A Modern Guide to The Religion and Philosophy of Ancient Egypt: Expanded Edition Including The Egyptian Horoscope*, 3rd. ed. (1996; USA: Wildside Press, 2005), 14.

scope to interpret the pantheons of non-White civilizations academically. Unlike the Greek mythology which survives in canonical literature and also in translation of the Greek literature, ancient Egyptian myths still remain distant in the eyes of Literature departments unless required for specific applications. This thesis tries to probe into ancient Egyptian myths intrinsically studied in Egyptology and widely represented both creatively and incorrectly in “Egyptomania.” The thesis applies insights from the myths in the studies in science fiction and fantasy texts and films. The thesis has chosen relevant texts and films and attempts to argue the importance of myths and arts by pursuing a comparative balance between Egyptology and “Egyptomania,” thereby bringing literary studies close to these two specific fields. The most important question this thesis raises is to analyze why ancient and contemporary Egypt holds so much attention in popular culture/fiction; the findings will be argued applying different aspects of Egyptology and “Egyptomania.” I expect that since popular culture has accepted Egypt so intriguingly, institutional Literature departments might increasingly focus on Pharaonic civilization with rigorous attention, since attention usually had been given to the Classical and Eurocentric Studies so far.

1.2 The Primary Texts for Study: Justifications

The Chapters Two to Five shall argue and apply different concepts discussed in reference to Egyptology and “Egyptomania” and also indicate why the primary texts have been compared in terms of shared features involving art, mythology and the Egyptian deities. Methodology shall involve references to myths and their western retellings, and discussion of Egyptian art as carriers of information shall be supported with photographic illustrations.

1.2.1 Stephen Sommers’s Films and Max Allan Collins’s Novelizations: *The Mummy* (1999) and *The Mummy Returns* (2001)

Stephen Sommers’s films *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* and Max Allan Collins’s subsequent novelization of the two films have been selected because they explore

the well-identified mummy-obsession.⁶ Chapter Two shall argue how the mummy fascination revisits the Osiris-cult, which had not received much scholarly attention so far. The mummy is one of the most recurring tropes in “Egyptomania,” and *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* repeat many established attributes like mummies carrying curses, mummies threatening White Egyptologists, perceived in the category of mummy fascination including the colonial anxieties over the “Orient,” and the Mummy being interpreted as the “Orient[’s]” invasion of the West.⁷ I have taken a different approach, comprising study of myths, and have argued in favor of the connection between the mummies and the Osiris-cult. References shall be used on the ideas concerning the body in Egyptian funerary thought, involving the roles of the gods Osiris and Anubis, and the connections with funerary architecture/objects and the scarab beetle. The chapter also argues how museum spaces and architectonic sites are ambivalent in terms of the discoveries of Pharaonic “wealth” and funerary objects. The chapter shall also discuss the use of magic and the concept of power attributed in the ancient Egyptian afterlife as discussed in Egyptology and how these trigger the “Occidental” interest as reflected in “Egyptomania” as well as anxieties. The depictions of Egypt in these two novels and films are mostly popular depictions of archaeology but they also offer newer studies in/on the Egyptian concepts regarding magic and funerary arrangements. It will also be discussed how “Egyptomania” interprets the Egyptian deities in an ambivalent manner; the Egyptian deities depicted in these texts is detached and frightening but its involvement is required by humans of the “Orient” and the “Occident” for the balance between the Living and the Dead.

⁶ Stephen Sommers, dir., *The Mummy*, screenplay by Stephen Sommers, story by Stephen Sommers, Lloyd Fonvielle, and Kevin Jarre (1999; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 1999), DVD; Stephen Sommers, dir., *The Mummy Returns*, screenplay by Stephen Sommers, written by Stephen Sommers (2001; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 2001), DVD; Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 1999), 1–256; Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy Returns* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001), 1–288. In the footnotes having references both to Sommers’s film(s) and Collins’s novel(s), I have placed the director first, since the novels were written after the films. The bibliography lists the sources alphabetically.

⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

1.2.2 Roland Emmerich's *Stargate* (1994); *StarGate* (1994, 1995) by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, and James Matthew Henry Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* (2009, 2015)

Roland Emmerich's *Stargate* and James Matthew Henry Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* have been chosen for discussion in Chapter Two because the two texts look at the "Egyptomaniac" representation of the Egyptian deities headed by the solar cult through the spirit of human dissent.⁸ The fictional recontextualizations of the Egyptian solar cult drive the plotlines of *Stargate* and *The Age of Ra*. Some attributes are shared between the two texts. First, military involvement is seen in both: soldiers are sent to explore the planet Abydos in *Stargate* and in *The Age of Ra* the human soldiers are involved in warfare and are influenced by the divine Egyptian factions.⁹ Second, Ra in *Stargate* is revealed as a malevolent alien hosted in the human body, controlling technology and silencing history; Ra in *The Age of Ra* is shown as a troubled authority-figure unable to bring other deities and humans together in peaceful coexistence.¹⁰ Third, both the texts seem to explore the potential of the human body through which divinity as a construct/condition could be interpreted and questioned. Lastly, ancient Egypt through the solar-cult is seen as the beginning of human civilization in *Stargate* and alternate future of it in *The Age of Ra*.¹¹ The texts are thus compared on the basis of the solar cult and the characterizations of the deities. While *Stargate* is an intriguing piece of science fiction, *The Age of Ra* has elements of both technological advancement as seen in science fiction and mythology retold as seen in

⁸ Roland Emmerich, dir., *Stargate*, written by Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich (1994; Los Angeles, California: Centropolis Entertainment [Centropolis Film Productions] / Carolco Pictures; Paris: StudioCanal [Le Studio Canal+] 1995), Film DVD; Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, *StarGate* (1994; reprint, London: Puffin Books, 1997), 1–193; James Matthew Henry Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra* (Special edition) (2009; reprint, Oxford: Solaris, 2015), 15–329. In the novel by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, "Stargate" is spelled as "StarGate." The title of the novel is given as *StarGate* in the chapters, footnotes, bibliography. In the footnotes having references to both the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel, I have placed the director first, since the novel was written after the film. The bibliography lists the sources alphabetically.

⁹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193; Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

¹⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193; Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

¹¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193; Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

“mythopoeic” fantasy. The military involvement and solar cult are also common features for which these two texts are discussed in comparison in Chapter Two.

1.2.3 Arwen Elys Dayton’s *Resurrection* (2001) and James Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (2014)

Arwen Elys Dayton’s *Resurrection* has been selected because the novel provides the concept of a galactic spread of humanoid aliens catering to the science fictional theme of “pansmermia” as noted by James A. Herrick,¹² and interactions between the alien humans and the earthly humans occur in ancient and modern Egypt in Dayton’s *Resurrection*.¹³ Thereby in this novel science meets mythology and influences it, as reflected in the use of the cults of Osiris and Isis. Dayton’s *Resurrection* is an interesting study of the human penchant for myths, and how technological miracles and deification are interlinked.¹⁴ The Osiris-Isis characters are shown as presenting aspects of human nature such as the urge to be venerated, the desire for the prolongation of life span and the prospect of immortality.¹⁵ James Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* has been chosen because it is a unique blend of science fiction and science fantasy, dealing with the concept of the “Multiverse” and the existence of the godlike civilization whose residents are *divine* by our human standards.¹⁶ Connections are established with these alien worlds through ancient and modern Egypt, and their concerns for the welfare of our world as well as for the entire galaxy constitute the plots. The entities from the godlike civilization manifest through the images of the Great Sphinx and the Egyptian deities.¹⁷ They are so enigmatic that even the mediating, highly sentient, evolved and psychic aliens who are observing us are astonished, intrigued, and

¹² See James A. Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies: How Science and Science Fiction Forge New Religious Beliefs* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2008), 226–227.

¹³ Arwen Elys Dayton, *Resurrection* (Las Vegas, NV: 47North, 2001), 1–422.

¹⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

¹⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 128–407.

¹⁶ James Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (London: Barbican Press, 2014), 8–348.

¹⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–291.

somewhat alarmed, at the reawakening of the Egyptian deities.¹⁸ These two novels are studied together in chapter Four to discuss the potential of using ancient and modern Egypt as spaces in which our Earth interacts with other planetary worlds and species. The Egyptian pantheon represented and depicted in these Dayton's text and Thornton's text are cerebrally evolved extraterrestrials and they choose Egypt for their manifestation on Earth; this projects a blend of "Egyptomania" and "alternative" theories in Egyptology.¹⁹

1.2.4 Rick Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* (2010–2012)

Rick Riordan's trilogy, *The Kane Chronicles*, has been chosen for discussion in Chapter Five because the three novels are based on important aspects of ancient Egyptian beliefs. In his three novels in the trilogy, *The Red Pyramid*, *The Throne of Fire*, and *The Serpent's Shadow*, Riordan has creatively recontextualized the Egyptian magic and the magicians, the amulets and emblems, the functions of the important deities, and the contributions of ancient Egypt in terms of state-building and worldview.²⁰ These constituent elements are all effectively bound by the two most important aspects in the Egyptian religion. First, the trilogy recontextualizes the story of Horus's conflict with Set, and the allocation of the affairs of the Underworld in their respective places by upholding Osiris's position.²¹ Second, it highlights the themes of the revival of Ra, the restarting of the mythical solar transit and the confrontation with Apophis, which were crucial in the ancient Egyptian world-balance.²² The first and the second elements allude to the Osiris-cult and the Solar-cult (Ra) respectively; both the cults are linked with the firm balance of "Maat," the

¹⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 39–346.

¹⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422; Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

²⁰ Rick Riordan, *The Red Pyramid* (2010; London: Puffin Books, 2011), 1–514; Rick Riordan, *The Throne of Fire* (2011; London: Puffin Books, 2012), 1–446; Rick Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow* (2012; London: Puffin Books, 2013), 1–401.

²¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

²² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

ancient Egyptian concept of harmony and justice, as Stephen Quirke notes.²³ Riordan presents the deities in the human realm, thus Egyptian magic and spells are important throughout the trilogy. We see in Riordan's fiction the globalized world with all the modern technological aspects and mainstream culture but beneath the surface, the world has continued the ancient Egyptian systems, keeping the cults alive secretly.²⁴ Riordan creates a global state in which the interactions between the Egyptian deities and humans are diminished and the legacy of ancient Egypt and the dutiful preservation of the same are pursued by the secret magicians from diverse nations and belonging to different ethnicities.²⁵ It shall be argued how the trilogy projects an excellent balance between Egyptology and "Egyptomania" and sums up significant concepts of Egyptian mythology and worldview, especially referring to the cults of Osiris and Ra which are often repeated as tropes in fiction and films concerning the myths of ancient Egypt.

The writers and directors chosen for study are based professionally in the White West, hailing from United States and Europe. Through their creative interpretations, speculation, application of "alternative theories," ancient Egypt has been revisited in different contexts and through innovative approaches. It can be argued that their visions are largely based on the contributions made in the field of Egyptology in the Euro-American institutions, which they have studied, researched and manifested in newer thoughts. Egyptology is a prestigious discipline through which Europe and especially the United States have made their archaeological expertise known. Excavations had been funded from the "Occidental" institutions and a lot of technological expertise had been put in the studies of Pharaonic history. Egyptology has now become a multifaceted science, especially

²³ Stephen Quirke, *The Cult of Ra: Sun-Worship in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 23–54.

²⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

towards the end of the Twentieth century. With the growth of digital technology, forensic science, chemical knowledge involved in the restoration of ancient art, and the sophisticated arrangements made for mobile exhibitions in Western museums, Egyptology has become a globalized phenomenon. Yet, conspicuous differences exist between systematic studies of artifacts and commercial, artistic expressions of Egyptian art and culture. The Egyptologist and the independent Egypt-inspired artist/scholar might remain separate; though nowadays, many big budget films, for the sake of authenticity might work with professional experts in Egyptology.

The four chapters from chapter Two to chapter Five shall argue (i) why the ancient Egyptian myths and arts are popular and relevant in the Twenty-first century, (ii) how the archaeological discoveries continue to enrich our perspectives regarding Egyptian legacies, (iii) how the Western imagination exhibit ambivalent perceptions regarding ancient and contemporary Egypt, and (iv) how and why ancient Egyptian art and myths are so fluid and contextually rich that they can be used in different genres of fictional writing and popular culture. The thesis has chosen texts from the last three decades (1990s to 2020) while the secondary literature from Egyptological discipline have been selected from both old and recent books and journals to include the established and re-thought Egyptological perspectives for arguments in the thesis.

1.3 The Trajectory of Arguments in the Chapters Two to Five

The four main chapters from chapter Two to chapter Five have been arranged to show the progression of arguments addressing the “Egyptomaniac” fascination and speculation at work in Western science fiction and fantasy.

Chapter Two, discussing *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* (two films, two novels based on them) discuss the elements regarding ancient Egypt that attract the general non-Egyptological public/readers/viewers: (i) mummies, (ii) tombs, and (iii) museums.

Drawing reference to the funerary spells and practices, this chapter shall argue how “Egyptomania” and Egyptology have looked at the funerary aspects of ancient Egypt and how the West has generated an apprehensive yet somber perception surrounding the mummies in fiction.

Chapter Three discussing *Stargate* (film and novel *StarGate* based on it) and *The Age of Ra* novel shall explore the issues surrounding the interpretation of objects unearthed, as accounted in *Stargate*, and modified use of Egyptian objects as seen in *The Age of Ra*. The arguments shall address the human dissent reflected towards the Egyptian pantheon. This is a development from chapter Two in which the deities like Anubis are also shown as ambivalent. Chapter Three shall discuss the Western recontextualization regarding the solar cult and the architecture and objects connected with it, extending it to an alien planet, as seen in *Stargate*, and speculating the existence of the solar importance in future Earth, as seen in *The Age of Ra*, experiencing a religious return to ancient Egyptian beliefs.

Chapter Four, discussing the novel *Resurrection* and the novel *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, further explores the “Alternative Egyptology”²⁶ linked with the deities as alien visitors, as also seen in *Stargate*. *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* weave brilliant speculative narratives surrounding the possibility of extraterrestrial help concerning ancient Egyptian progress in science and engineering. In the argument, the Great Pyramid of Giza will be cited, its purpose, mystery concerning inner chambers will be mentioned, and it will be accounted how Egypt becomes the conduit between Earth and other galaxies/“Multiverse.” Simultaneously, topics of body, natural science, and genetic evolution shall be linked with the Egyptian mythology and pantheon.

²⁶ For information regarding this term, see Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 9–10. Fritze refers to many insights regarding different theories/concepts throughout his book.

Chapter Five, discussing the three novels of *The Kane Chronicles* combines different points discussed in the previous three Chapters: magic, science, architecture, and human-divine interaction through studies involving both Egyptology and “Egyptomania.” The setting is the entire world, and the Trilogy deals with the continuation of the ancient Egyptian heritage, mostly by the American and the European agencies. Thus as Heather K. Cyr aptly notes, the “Occident” is again represented as the “successor” of the ancient “Orient” (and Egypt) in Riordan’s Trilogy.²⁷

Genre-wise, the four Chapters from Two to Five are also arranged to show how Egyptology and “Egyptomania” can be applied in different genres of fiction. *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* in chapter Two are primarily “archaeological fantasy” with elements of supernaturalism, adventure-type romance, the emphases being on mythology and magic. *Stargate* and *The Age of Ra* discussed in chapter Three can be seen as war-oriented science fiction with emphasis on technology showcased as almost magical. *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* are science fiction; *Sphinx: The Second Coming* has occasional elements of science fantasy, in which the godlike civilization’s residents are so evolved that they can perform cosmic-level changes with their will and bodies.²⁸ *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in Chapter Five is again a return to magic and spells, but in a globalized setting, in which the pantheon’s deities adapt to the Twenty-first century fashion and lifestyles. The humans lead a dual existence: they get (ancient) Egyptianized by studying Egyptian magic, by using staffs, and by wearing Egyptian clothing in Riordan’s Trilogy.²⁹ The logic of selecting these texts and devising the arrangement

²⁷ Heather K. Cyr, “Pyramids in America: Rewriting the ‘Egypt of the West’ in Rick Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles Series*,” *Mythlore* 38, no. 1 (135) (Fall/Winter 2019): 131–152, *Special Issue: Mythopoeic Children’s Literature*, accessed April 10, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26809397>; Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

²⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

elaborated above is to argue that “Egyptomania” is generically fluid; it can recontextualize Egyptian aspects in different genres with ease. These recontextualizations, if studied along with Egyptology can promise fruitful research on the reception of antiquities in the globalized academia in which generic boundaries are broken through creative writing and interdisciplinary scholarship.



Figure 1.1 Pharaoh Crowned by Nekhbet and Wadjet

Egyptology and “Egyptomania” share a common interest regarding the interpretations of the depictions of the pantheon in Egyptian archaeological sites. In the relief shown above from the Temple of Kom Ombo shows the pharaoh Ptolemy XII given crown by Nekhbet on his right (our left) and Wadjet on his left (our right) and Haroeris witnesses.³⁰ The pharaoh was supposed to have these goddesses as his protectors. There are different visual/artistic variations of this relation between the two goddesses and the pharaoh

³⁰ For information regarding these two goddesses, see Aude Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology* (1999; Reprint, New York: Todtri Book Publishers, 2002), 66–67, 76. For information regarding the image, see José das Candeias Sales, “Political Ideas Expressed by Visual Narratives: The Case of the Ptolemaic Egyptian Temples,” *BAEDE, Boletín de la Asociación Española de Egiptología* 28 (2019): 102–105, accessed March 8, 2022, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/346227016_Political_ideas_expressed_by_visual_narratives_the_case_of_the_Ptolemaic_Egyptian_temples_in_BAEDE_Boletin_de_la_Asociacion_Espanola_de_Egiptologia_num_28_Madrid_Asociacion_Espanola_de_Egiptologia_201

but the representation provided here is unique because the “pschent” crown - the ancient Egyptian crown for the composite double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt³¹ is tied with a band showing the papyrus and the lotus flowers on the two edges. The image is relevant because it can be argued citing Aude Gros de Beler’s observation that Egypt held feminine power in high reverence; the goddesses Bast, Neith, and Sekhmet, were all warrior-figures.³² In Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*, Bast fights Apophis and protects the Kane children, while Nekhbet challenges Carter and Sadie separately and finally accept their guidance.³³ In the science fiction film *Black Panther* (2018) directed by Ryan Coogler, even the technologically advanced African state Wakanda reveres Bast; Wakanda thereby respects mythical ties with ancient Egypt even being a science-based culture, and the Wakandan king has powerful female bodyguards (like the two vigilant goddesses depicted in this image) who accompany him in his mission to the West.³⁴ The legacy of women-protectors lives on in popular culture, inspired considerably by the mythical worldview of the Egyptians. Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

1.4 Literature Review

Egyptology is a vast field, in which the different interconnected aspects have been thoroughly written upon, and the majority of the publications are extremely specialized and meant for academically trained Egyptologists. My goal is to compare Egyptology and “Egyptomania” taking basic concepts and applying them in the exploration of the themes in Western science fiction and “mythopoeic” fiction featuring ancient Egypt hence I have perused works which are informative and written for non-Egyptologists as well.

³¹ Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 119.

³² Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 26, 64, 86.

³³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

³⁴ Ryan Coogler, dir., *Black Panther*, written by Ryan Coogler and Joe Robert Cole, based on *Black Panther* by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby (Burbank: Marvel Studios, 2018), Film.

The scholarship of Jeremy Naydler is particularly enriching. I have been much assisted by the concepts discussed in Naydler's *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* and *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts: The Mystical Tradition of Ancient Egypt*. In *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* Naydler explains Egyptian concepts of resurrection and the sections in the Underworld as expressed in the *Book of the Dead* and the funerary texts.³⁵ In *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts*, Naydler provides detailed readings of the *Pyramid Texts* ("Utterances") and attempts interdisciplinary interpretations of the mysticism bringing in architectonic symbolism, the arrangements of the Utterances, and the magical means of interaction with the deities.³⁶ Naydler's scholarship benefits non-Egyptologists as well since he provides an overview about Egyptian beliefs philosophically along with illustrative analyses. I have been able to apply the comparison between iconography and beliefs, and science fiction and fantasy elements inspired by Naydler.

"Egyptomania," which was seen earlier as rather non-academic visual and popular cultural expressions, has been given much scholarly attention in the recent decades. Bob Brier in his book *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* has provided required information regarding the growth of "Egyptomania" in Europe and in the United States through the acquisition of ancient Egyptian obelisks, museum collections, and analyzes the visual attraction elicited at the sight of the Egyptian mummies.³⁷ Brier's studies have particularly helped in the discussion of the architectonic significance of "Maat" connected with obelisks in Rick Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in chapter Five. Fritze's book *Egyptomania: A History of Fascination, Obsession*

³⁵ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1996), 1–301.

³⁶ Jeremy Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts: The Mystical Tradition of Ancient Egypt* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2005), 1–453.

³⁷ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 1–208.

and *Fantasy* is an exhaustive discussion of the phenomenon of “Egyptomania.” Fritze has given significant examples of reception of ancient Egypt since the Classical Period, has noted the influence of Tutankhamun, and has added a very crucial chapter noting fictional imagination in texts and films carrying the influence of “Egyptomania.”³⁸

I have selected secondary critical literatures which provide “alternative theories” regarding ancient Egyptian architecture, science, and mythical beliefs. Christopher Dunn’s books *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt: Advanced Engineering in the Temples of the Pharaohs* and *The Giza Power Plant: Technologies of Ancient Egypt* provide newer approaches to the evidence of advanced engineering and the speculations regarding the purpose behind the erection of the Pyramids other than the funerary one held traditionally in academic Egyptology.³⁹ These “alternative” insights have been especially helpful for addressing the speculations regarding the Great Pyramid of Khufu given in *Stargate* discussed in chapter Three, and *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* discussed in chapter Four.

Apart from architectonic and technological marvels, Judy King in her book *The Isis Thesis: A Study Decoding 870 Ancient Egyptian Signs* provides in great detail the hidden sciences behind the Underworld Books, with their complex sections and iconographies, all secretly coded with Pharaonic knowledge regarding genetic preservation.⁴⁰ This speculative yet insightful information can be fruitfully studied along with Egyptological magic, studied by Bob Brier and Geraldine Pinch. Brier in his book *Ancient Egyptian Magic: Spells, Incantations, Potions, Stories, and Rituals* and Geraldine Pinch in her book *Magic in Ancient Egypt* provide much information on funerary spells, the connection

³⁸ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 1–426.

³⁹ Christopher Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt: Advanced Engineering in the Temples of the Pharaohs* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 1–345; Christopher Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant: Technologies of Ancient Egypt* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear & Company, 1998), 1–272.

⁴⁰ Judy Kay King, *The Isis Thesis: A Study Decoding 870 Ancient Egyptian Signs* (2004; reprint, Gaylord, Michigan: Envision Editions, 2015), 1–378.

between scientific thought and magic, and objects dealing with mystic rites.⁴¹ This information have been helpful in interpreting depictions and explorations of Egyptian magic in *The Mummy* and in *The Mummy Returns* discussed in chapter Two, in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* discussed in chapter Four and in *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in chapter Five.

Despite the abundance of Egyptological literature and popular cultural recontextualizations of Egyptian art and culture in media, studies in Egyptian symbolic art, magic and mythology have not been much applied in readings of full length science fiction, fantasy, and “mythopoeic” novels in Literature departments. This might be due to the paucity of access to Egyptology journals and also because Egyptology is a detailed and developed discipline in its own corpus and scope; hence it is difficult for a non-Egyptologist to locate instant relevant information in the midst of Egyptology’s huge pool of data. I feel that it will be a fruitful contribution to add Egyptology and “Egyptomania” further in the already established field of “Science Fiction Studies” in the academia enriched with writings by Carl D. Malmgren, James Herrick, Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr., etc. on the features of science fiction and fantasy.⁴² An approach to science fiction and “mythopoeic” texts with a balance in application between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” would also fill the need for the representation of the “Oriental” past, and the studies in Egyptian Antiquities. It will also explore how the Western writers have fictionally, imaginatively, and speculatively engaged with this field in the midst of continued flux of archaeological news in Egypt. Egyptian archaeology had been globalized since the discovery of Tutankhamun’s tomb.

⁴¹ Bob Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic: Spells, Incantations, Potions, Stories, and Rituals* (1980; New York: Quill, 1981), 10–296; Geraldine Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 9–182.

⁴² Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr., *The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 2008), 1–294; Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies*, 11–281; Carl D. Malmgren, *Worlds Apart: Narratology of Science Fiction* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991), 1–196.

1.5 Methodology of Study

The Thesis seeks to address three research questions⁴³:

(i) How are the principal features of ancient Egyptian antiquities received in the field of Egyptology and in the scope of “Egyptomania”?

(ii) Could “popular culture,” mostly in the forms of archaeological/fantasy films, science fiction, and “mythopoeic” fantasy be studied using insights from Egyptology and trends from “Egyptomania,” both being held in a comparative balance?

(iii) What are the reasons behind the popular obsessions regarding Egyptian art and mythology that are instrumental behind the films and the novels being produced having ancient and modern Egypt as themes more than any other ancient civilization?

To discuss the questions considered above, the methodology shall involve textual studies of selected films and novels, mostly produced in the White West. The methodology shall include the following four approaches, and throughout the thesis the comparative applications between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” shall be pursued:

(i) Studies of the Egyptian deities shall be pursued, especially the solar and funerary cults, and the recontextualization of the beliefs shall be traced in the plots of the films and/or novels selected.

⁴³ Some of my article publications are focused on the theme of “recontextualization” and thus are relevantly connected with the methodology pursued in this Thesis. In these articles I have gradually developed the comparative studies bringing Egyptology and “Egyptomania” together. See for example, Anirban Ray, “Ancient Egyptian Art and Architecture in *Asterix and Cleopatra* and *Asterix and Obelix: Mission Cleopatra*,” in *Proceedings of National Conference on “Innovation in Visual Arts” (NCIVA’17): Theme: “Imagination, Experience and Expression in Visual Arts”*: 23rd March, 2017 Amity University, Uttar Pradesh, eds. Pradeep Joshi, Geetika Kaw Kher, Soujit Das, Kaushik Lohani, and Varun Sahai (New Delhi: Excellent Publishing House, 2017), 3–11; Anirban Ray, “Between ‘Transhumanism’ and ‘Posthumanism’: The Mummy-‘Transformers’ of Seth Kearsley’s *Mummies Alive! (1997)*,” in *Disaster, Holocaust and Dystopian Literature: Concepts and Perspectives*, eds. Parul Mishra, Rajarshi Mukherjee, and Shreya Chakrabarty (Delhi: Upanayan Publications, 2020), 224–233; Anirban Ray, “Cleopatra VII Philopator’s Final Moments: Depictions in Five Paintings,” *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics* 42, no. 2 (2019): 126–137; Anirban Ray, “Visuals and Narration in *The Prince of Egypt* (1998),” *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature* 55 (2018–2019): 115–140; Anirban Ray, “*X-Men: Apocalypse* (2016): Youth-centric Theoretical Discussions,” in *International Conference on Youth in Changeable World. Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives: Ain Shams University, Cairo-Egypt: 1st - 3rd April 2019*, ed. Soheir Safwat (Cairo: Ain Shams University [?], 2019), 439–453. This Thesis extends these studies further, with references to films and novels.

(ii) Iconographies and roles of ancient Egyptian deities and beliefs shall be studied, since the deities have been drawn as characters in the plots of the texts selected. Photographic evidences from the Egyptian arts depicted on papyri, temple walls, and objects in display shall be incorporated to discuss the sources/contexts of the arts and icons which have been recontextualized and reinterpreted in the selected films and in the novels. Through the comparisons between the ancient Egyptians' beliefs regarding their pantheon and the Western writers' readings of the same pantheon, the perceptions of the West regarding Egyptian ritual texts, arts, magic, and religious architecture can be studied.

(iii) The Egyptian pantheon's uniqueness shall be discussed, in terms of zoomorphism, description of the mystic cartographies, the hieroglyphic accounts, and the symbolic interpretations of the divine. These studies shall try to uncover the possible parallels between the concepts in the Egyptian myths that generate the cooperation between the deities, and the recurring themes in science fiction and "mythopoeic" fantasy that generates the fascination as well as distance between ancient Egypt and the West. The parallels shall include discussions of technology, magic, travels in different dimensions, human interactions with the extraterrestrials, and with Nature's mutations and evolutions.

(iv) The relevance of the Egyptian worldview and the beliefs shall be discussed. Egyptian consciousness is very much alive, through institutional studies, artistic experiments, cinematic productions, fiction, and tourism. The thesis takes an interdisciplinary approach to argue in favor of the importance of the novels and the films selected for study, expecting the academia, especially the Literature and the Comparative Literature departments, to expand their horizons beyond the usual focus on the "Eurocentric" studies in the Antiquities, Western Classicism and the Renaissance.

I shall next discuss further the differences between Egyptology and "Egyptomania," since the two are connected in the thesis's methodology. For the convenience of the readers,

while the important aspects addressed in the two fields are briefly discussed, I shall also briefly hint how the discussed components catering to Egyptology and “Egyptomania” are applied in the textual discussions in the chapters Two to Five.

1.6 Egyptology and “Egyptomania”: Concepts and Scope

The Egyptian deities hold much interest in both Egyptology for the studies of ritual texts and arts and “Egyptomania” for the unique symbolism, emblems, ideograms used in the depiction of the deities. To the ancient Egyptians, their deities resembled living conscious beings; they were considered integral in cosmic, political and daily events. Horus was one of the most important deities linked with the creation of the very state of Egypt and her authority. Michael A. Hoffman notes that only by honoring the “Horus of Nekhen” could the pharaoh proceed to emphasize his royal position.⁴⁴ The cults of Horus and his parents Osiris and Isis have inspired many fiction writers. Thus in “Egyptomania” Horus is a major icon; in the primary texts selected in the thesis, Horus appears in different roles: Horus is Ra’s henchman in *Stargate* and *StarGate* novel,⁴⁵ and he is Carter’s hosted deity/warrior-guide in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*.⁴⁶ Apart from Horus, Osiris had his importance recognized throughout ancient Egyptian history. Historically, the “dual monarchy,” referring to the administration over the Upper Egypt and the Lower Egypt as Henri Frankfort cited by Hoffman⁴⁷ observes, might have been a result of ancient struggles between Northern Egypt and Southern Egypt and was mythically ramified by Osiris to whom the united Egypt belonged when he was believed to have lived on Earth.⁴⁸

Egyptologists interpret that Osiris’s myth was “political[ly]” constituted through elaborate

⁴⁴ Michael A. Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs: The Prehistoric Foundations of Egyptian Civilization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 127–128. “Nekhen” was an ancient Egyptian place of political and religious importance.

⁴⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 113–159.

⁴⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴⁷ Henri Frankfort cited in Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, 335. See Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, 335, for the elaboration of the concept.

⁴⁸ Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, 335.

funerary ritual and tomb design to assert Pharaonic authority over the land and its people.⁴⁹ This administrative motivation behind deification has been brilliantly depicted in *Resurrection* by Dayton who turns the alien Captain into the venerable Osiris-figure amidst the Egyptians⁵⁰; the Captain eventually proceeds to oversee the construction of the Great Pyramid.⁵¹ In every chapter I shall refer to the important Egyptian deities and their roles in mythology and the usage of these myths in the Western imagination.

Egyptology and “Egyptomania” also treat the same figures from ancient Egypt in different contexts and interpretations. As Hoffman notes, the pre-dynastic legendary Scorpion King was not only a powerful leader, but as attested in Egyptology, he had also been a keen patron of art. There is Egyptological evidence of canal-cutting, a sign of social and economic progress, attributed to the Scorpion King.⁵² Hoffman also perceives that the inclusion of the scene of irrigation on the “Scorpion Macehead” crafted under his instruction manifests the King’s appreciation of artistic talent; it also establishes his kingly character and recognized “kingship.”⁵³ However, “Egyptomania” has turned the Scorpion King into an ambivalent character, as we see in *The Mummy Returns* studied in the thesis. We see him as evil, having gained powers through Anubis’s agency and thus he must be defeated and contained in the realm of magic at all cost by the White protagonists, who curiously hail from North America and England.⁵⁴ The Egyptologically-dignified Scorpion King becomes in “Egyptomania,” as Evelyn in *The Mummy Returns* says, the source of fear for the ancient Egyptians⁵⁵; thus the film rewrites the character of the legendary king regarding whom

⁴⁹ Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, 335.

⁵⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–54, 67–95, 128–135, 277–283, 323–328, 266–276.

⁵¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 323–328.

⁵² Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, 313.

⁵³ Hoffman, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs*, 313–317, fig. 73, fig. 74.

⁵⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

⁵⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6.

paucity of Egyptological data exists.⁵⁶ The thesis will thus argue how fruitful comparative studies of the Egyptian deities and mythology in reference to Egyptology and “Egyptomania” are possible. This comparative study can be applied in science fiction and fantasy texts and can be used to argue why Egypt is such a powerful presence in fiction.

1.7 Egyptology: Features

J. Leclant mentions that there exists several distinguished yet interconnected fields in the very subject of Egyptology; it is expected from a single Egyptologist to master specific aspects, and the contribution of his/her pursuit lies in the linking of procedures with the vast data available in the collective scope of Egyptology.⁵⁷ Thus the science fiction and fantasy based on ancient Egypt have a huge variety of data to collect material from. I shall briefly discuss some basic constituents of Egyptology which shall be used in the thesis’s methodology.

1.7.1 Architecture and Funerary Consciousness

Egyptian architectures are massive in scale and full of extensive texts and reliefs except the Pyramids of the Giza complex; they are rich sources of speculative studies. Architecture and art of ancient Egypt were predominantly funerary. J. Leclant notes that the energy of the Egyptians were mostly channelized towards a desired future in the “afterlife”; a sort of economic drainage happened tomb-ward; thus the artists and the scribes devised expressions meant for the veneration of the deities and the Underworld’s journey.⁵⁸ This obsession with the afterlife has left its strong impact on “Egyptomania.” We see the entire funerary city Hamanaptra fictionalized in *The Mummy*, where Pharaonic wealth is supposed to rest for eternity in the mortuary space; Hamanaptra draws the Whites, and this attraction

⁵⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

⁵⁷ J. Leclant, “The Nile Valley,” in *Larousse Encyclopedia of Archaeology*, ed. Gilbert Charles-Picard, trans. Anne Ward, 2nd ed. (1969, 1972; London: Chancellor Press, 1983), 209.

⁵⁸ Leclant, “The Nile Valley,” 216.

is both for material looting and academic interest.⁵⁹ The desire to find an intact tomb loaded with treasure could be perceived as a dream for any Egyptologist as well for the entire scholarly community, and any discovered “treasure” adds to the identity of ancient and contemporary Egypt in terms of study and visit.

1.7.2 Arts

Both Egyptology and “Egyptomania” show their interest in the appreciation of ancient Egyptian art that has been received in copious manner for our studies; thus stele, sculpture, and papyrus stand out in their unique layouts, figures, and symbols. Schuyler Van Rensselaer perceives that psychologically ancient Egyptian art appeals to us, be it preserved in collections or existing out there in the open; every object in Egyptian art served the purposes of “aesthetic” and “utilitarian” values and the two were joined in symbolism.⁶⁰ Van Rensselaer notes that the importance of an object as a specimen of archaeology as well as art gets blended in Egyptological studies.⁶¹ Thus Egyptology has been able to generate individual interpretations of different classes of Egyptian material culture and arts. Van Rensselaer perceives that Egyptology has been able to provide us material evidences from different strata of ancient Egyptian society, and because Egypt has a long lasting history we have been able to justify the artistic excellence and feel amazed at the unique physical conditions in which their culture flourished, which in nature and expression was very different from other contemporary non-Egyptian cultures or any other culture in any other time period.⁶² This enables me to compare an icon and its expression in the Egyptological context with the “Egyptomaniac” expressions in different texts and movies, thus

⁵⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256.

⁶⁰ Schuyler Van Rensselaer, “Ancient Egypt in America,” *The North American Review* 218, no. 812 (July 1923): 123, accessed February 15, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25113069>.

⁶¹ Van Rensselaer, “Ancient Egypt in America,” 123.

⁶² Van Rensselaer, “Ancient Egypt in America,” 117–123.

recontextualizations of Egyptian art and culture are possible in many creative contexts and with newer interpretations.



Figure 1.2 Detail from the Kilt of Cleopatra VII's Son Caesarion, from the Rear Facade of Hathor Temple, Dendera.

Richard H. Wilkinson observes that Greco-Roman reliefs show unique experimentations with hieroglyphs, crowns and regalia.⁶³ In the image above, we see a pharaoh, possibly Caesarion himself, smiting a group of foes; the act also constitutes the preservation of “Maat,” the Egyptian force of Universal Order,⁶⁴ all minutely carved on the kilt. Dress codes as depicted in ancient Egyptian art also constitute an important factor in communicating Pharaonic symbolism and influences “Egyptomania” considerably. In Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in chapter Five, the dresses of the protagonists who are American and British alter magically to ancient Egyptian on their journey on Ra’s solar barque; to channelize “Maat” an individual needs to be dressed like an ancient Egyptian.⁶⁵ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

⁶³ Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 46–47.

⁶⁴ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 46.

⁶⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 328–332.

1.7.3 Afterlife Transition

Ancient Egyptian deities have provided a lot of inspiration for White western fiction writing. Egyptian religion is full of shamanism, mysticism, magical conflicts, objects, and control of power and routes for the deceased. A highly intriguing feature of the Egyptian beliefs involves the celestial and subterranean transition of the soul following demise. A major section of the spells from the Old Kingdom deal with celestial transition; Jan Assmann notes that the transit of the soul to the “northern sky” involves sorcery and power.⁶⁶ Assmann informs that from the Second Millennium B.C. onwards the *Coffin Texts* brought two important changes: (i) other than the royalty the common subjects were also provided knowledge regarding the afterlife, and (ii) Re who was given prominent position in the Old Kingdom is henceforth made to interact with Osiris in the “netherworld.”⁶⁷ The two cults, of Ra and Osiris, were merged in the funerary premise. I shall argue applying this Egyptological information regarding funerary thoughts to discuss how the Western fiction writers are able to use mythical landscapes. These mythic details are vividly described in the Egyptian papyri, in the *Pyramid Texts* as well as featured in the symbolic diagrams visible on the inner and on the outer sides of the coffins discovered and studied in Egyptology. Riordan in *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in Chapter Five recontextualizes the geography of the contemporary West (North America) in the mythic universe of ancient Egypt, represented through his protagonists’ journeys, following the mystic routes described in the Egyptian Osirian cult and Ra-cult.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Jan Assmann, “Death and Initiation in the Funerary Religion of Ancient Egypt,” in *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, eds. J. P. Allen, J. Assmann, A. B. Lloyd, R. K. Ritner, and D. P. Silverman, *Yale Egyptological Studies* 3 (New Haven: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1989), 143.

⁶⁷ Assmann, “Death and Initiation,” 143. “Re” is another spelling for “Ra.”

⁶⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

1.7.4 Writing

The Egyptian hieroglyphic system is a linguistic invention and development of precision. From the anthropological perspective, the written script is powerful for development from a tribal existence to a sophisticated culture. Leclant accounts that the beginning of the Third Millennium B.C. saw three major changes: (i) the political “unification” of Lower and Upper Egypt, (ii) the creation of the written hieroglyphic script, and (iii) the benefits derived from “system[atic]” agriculture.⁶⁹ Leclant notes that the invention “of writing” was immensely important for the pursuit of the political stability and survival using natural resources, allowing edicts and messages regarding administration and recording of the measurements of lands to be conveyed in written script.⁷⁰ Thus writing system is important in Egyptology, and it can be argued that the hieroglyphs are often experimented with, in forms, shapes, fonts, and contextual usages in “Egyptomania.” Often we might see inaccurate depictions of hieroglyphs in cover illustrations of books, posters, in paintings, and in architecture, or in background settings used in commercial films. Despite inaccuracies, the visual impact of the hieroglyphs as something distinctly ancient Egyptian remains unquestioned. The incorporation of hieroglyphs in decoration irrespective of its purpose generates a strong intriguing sensation. The power of the hieroglyphs, as Egyptologists note, was realized and respected throughout the ancient Egyptian history. I shall argue how in *Stargate* discussed in chapter Three the power of writing controls the plotline: the malevolent alien Ra prevented the Egyptians from remembering their history, so that the alienated Egyptians are not reminded of their ancestry in earthly Egypt.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Leclant, “The Nile Valley,” 213.

⁷⁰ Leclant, “The Nile Valley,” 213.

⁷¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

1.8 “Egyptomania”: Features

While Egyptology offers concise methodologies for studies in the different aspects of the Egyptian civilization, “Egyptomania” is a vast field of possibilities and involves independent scholars who might not even have a “working knowledge” in hieroglyphs which is considered very integral in Egyptology. Without the institution-based constraints, “Egyptomania” offers greater freedom to the artists and writers to approach ancient Egypt, and these approaches might blur the binaries in perceptions distinguishing the “Occident” from the “Orient.” I shall briefly discuss some features of “Egyptomania” in connection with the primary texts selected and the methodology used.

1.8.1 Films

It can be argued that films are major carriers of “Egyptomania” since the White characters project the White reception of “Oriental” and Egyptian antiquities. In films, the privatization of archaeology matters: Kevin McGeough observes that the receivers of the “popular film” do not get the accurate picture of the coordination between “institutions,” “funding,” regulating agencies, and archaeologists.⁷² McGeough notes that the expenses for carrying forward excavations seem to arrive from affluent sectors with an objective to secure the world from an impending crisis posed by archaeological discovery.⁷³ In *Stargate* discussed in chapter Three, a tussle is seen between a government-led military investigation and Catherine’s father’s legacy; he unearthed the Stargate.⁷⁴ The White characters tend to bear a lot of knowledge regarding Egyptian antiquities through which they tend to exert control over Egyptian sites and findings. McGeough observes that in commercial films, the archaeologists are attributed much “knowledge” regarding “material culture” and linguistic

⁷² Kevin McGeough, “Heroes, Mummies, and Treasure: Near Eastern Archaeology in the Movies,” *Near Eastern Archaeology* 69, no. 3/4 (September-December 2006): 175, accessed February 15, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25067670>.

⁷³ McGeough, “Heroes, Mummies, and Treasure,” 175.

⁷⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 6–61.

interpretations which are employed to interpret the histories leading to the present contexts of the archeological discoveries in the plots.⁷⁵ I shall argue in the following chapters that translations of Egyptian texts by the White fictional Egyptologists involve the power of knowledge and the knowledge of power: Daniel in *Stargate* and Evelyn in *The Mummy* and in *The Mummy Returns* change the fates of the world through translations of hieroglyphs and the studies of the Egyptian artifacts.⁷⁶ Thus it can be argued that in “Egyptomania,” the Egyptologists are treated as heroes and world-saviors. This is what the Mummy films, bearing the influence of “Egyptomania,” show us; I shall argue how Egypt houses assets that can be risky as well as beneficial for the world, and these assets must be carefully ordained and maintained.

1.8.2 Arts

Egyptian arts constitute the most important expressions of mythical events and of members of the pantheon. Art appeals to the Egyptologists for classification, cataloguing, interpretation and is also very influential in “Egyptomania” in terms of creative appropriation, re-contextualization. Egyptian art exists in various forms. They exist in large scale in the heritage sites; they can also be found in museums and public spaces. Thus it can be argued that the locations of ancient Egyptian art create centers of ancient Egyptian consciousness. It has also been argued by scholars like Fritze, Brier, and Stephanie Moser that the Euro-American acquisition of Egyptian artifacts involve “Occidental” notion of power and identity and by acquiring Egyptian art the West attempts to assert its identity as the researcher and interpreter.⁷⁷ This will be argued in chapter Five borrowing Cyr’s

⁷⁵ McGeough, “Heroes, Mummies, and Treasure,” 177.

⁷⁶ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193; Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

⁷⁷ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 1–208; Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 1–426; Stephanie Moser, “Reconstructing Ancient Worlds: Reception Studies, Archaeological Representation and the Interpretation of Ancient Egypt,” *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 22, no. 4 (December 2015): 1263–1308, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43654234>. For information regarding the Western involvement in Egyptology, see

observation and in reference to Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* in which the ancient Egyptian art located in Europe and America have been referred to; the long-lastingness of Egypt is reflected in the acquisition of "needles" - the popular term used for the Egyptian obelisks installed in London and in New York for the strengthening of political and national image.⁷⁸ Thus "Egyptomania" inspires fiction writers to address the Western sense of control and study of Egyptian art and artifacts.

1.8.3 Popular Culture

Studying ancient Egypt and the depictions of that in fiction and films involve (i) different cultures involving the discoverer and the discovered, (ii) the past cultures like the Pharaonic, and (iii) the cultures of the contemporary world and Egypt. Alice Stevenson notes that the tremendous influence of the discovery of Tutankhamun in "Egyptomania," popular culture, and market industry touched different kinds of archaeology, "cinematic" props and "Art Deco" architecture.⁷⁹ It can be mentioned that in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* the King Tutankhamen hangs as a memory since Carter's name bears testimony to Howard Carter, the discoverer of Tut's tomb.⁸⁰ Thus emphasis was put on labeling, categorizing, restoring of material exhibits on the part of the Egyptologists, who are usually very careful regarding the empirical authenticity of their findings.⁸¹ Fiction and fantasy thereby distinguish between museum spaces in terms of availability of information which an archaeologist might use. Stevenson notes that while public display for non-Egyptologists becomes the museum's motive, institutional (Egyptological) scope of studies seem to get

Elliott Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 1–309.

⁷⁸ Cyr, "Pyramids in America," 140.

⁷⁹ Alice Stevenson, "A Golden Age? (1922–1939): Collecting in the Shadow of Tutankhamun," in *Scattered Finds: Archaeology, Egyptology and Museums* (London: UCL Press, 2019), 153.

⁸⁰ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 161–178.

⁸¹ Stevenson, "A Golden Age? (1922–1939)," 145–180.

distinguished from it.⁸² The popular cultural representations of Egyptian artifacts are mostly attributed to commercial films and novels. This shows that there exists much difference between systematic study in Egyptological scholarship and commercial investments in “Egyptomania”-driven films and novels.

1.8.4 Pyramid Mysteries

Obsession and intrigue regarding the Giza Pyramids remain very crucial in “Egyptomania” and the pyramids have occupied space in nearly every text studied in this thesis. In the “alternative” approaches in Egyptology, numerical and statistical coincidences are often seen as manifestations of the mystic knowledge possessed by the Egyptians. Peter Lemesurier points out that the “*perimeter*” of the “*Great Pyramid*” amounts to “36,525” “*Primitive Inches*”; this number is coincidentally the number of books legendarily attributed to Hermes Trismegistus (the “Greek name” given to the Egyptian god of wisdom and writing, Thoth) as Manetho accounted and Iamblicus cited.⁸³ Thus numerical significance is traceable in the pyramid-structure. This information can be kept in mind while discussing *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in chapter Four in which the “Ikosikaitricon,” a highly mysterious cavity within the Great Pyramid is perceived as a numerical and architectonic mystery created by the extraterrestrial intelligence.⁸⁴ Lemesurier accounts that there also exist “Freemasonic” interpretations regarding the inner architecture and calculations of the Great Pyramid: while the “Queen’s Chamber” represents the spaces for (i) “Rebirth,” (ii) “Moon,” and (iii) “Regeneration,” the “King’s Chamber” stands for “Resurrection.”⁸⁵ Lemesurier notes that the “King’s Chamber[’s]” “coffer” symbolically provides “immortality,” and the “Grand Gallery[’s]” elevation/symbolic calculation assures

⁸² Stevenson, “A Golden Age? (1922–1939),” 147.

⁸³ Peter Lemesurier, *The Great Pyramid Decoded* (Dorset: Element Books Limited, 1997), 16.

⁸⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–171.

⁸⁵ Lemesurier, *The Great Pyramid Decoded*, 33.

immortality.⁸⁶ Thus the interior architecture of the Great Pyramid is meant for “soul-evolution.”⁸⁷ Lemesurier’s information regarding the spiritual functions symbolically intended in the inner architecture of the Great Pyramid reminds us of Qaa in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* getting a vision while lying in the sarcophagus in the “King’s Chamber” and experiencing the communication into the mystic.⁸⁸ The geographical calculations regarding the Great Pyramid also are of considerable inquiry. Charles Piazzi Smyth’s study cited and contextualized by Robin Derricourt notes that Future-divination concerning the World and “astronomical” studies involving temporal calculations related to the World’s events could be found coded in the dimensions of the Great Pyramid.⁸⁹ Smyth cited by Derricourt also demonstrated that towards both the East and the West, the geographical extensions of the hemispheres extending from the location of the Great Pyramid are approximately the same in dimension, proving the Great Pyramid’s centralized position on Earth.⁹⁰ Thus Pyramid calculations awe us; their architectural mysteries are attributed to pre-Pharaonic intelligence, as shown in the novels *StarGate*, *Resurrection*, and *Sphinx: The Second Coming*. Pyramids, according to the plots of these novels, bridge the past with the future, magic with science, the mysteries with the engineering, and Earth with the alien planets. These pyramid-studies might not be concomitant with the standard empirical theories of Egyptology, but these findings can be of extreme interest for the writers, directors, and the readers, since these tend

⁸⁶ Lemesurier, *The Great Pyramid Decoded*, 34.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Lemesurier, *The Great Pyramid Decoded*, 34; Lemesurier, *The Great Pyramid Decoded*, 34.

⁸⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 18–30.

⁸⁹ Robin Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined: The Remarkable Legacy of Egypt and the Ancient Near East* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 60. See also Charles Piazzi Smyth, *Life and Work at the Great Pyramid During the Months of January, February, March, and April, A.D. 1865* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1867).

⁹⁰ Figure 2.3 *The Great Pyramid as the Geographical Centre of the World*, According to Charles Piazzi Smyth, 1877, in Robin Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined: The Remarkable Legacy of Egypt and the Ancient Near East* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2015), viii, 61. For the original source of the image, see Charles Piazzi Smyth, *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1864), plate 20. See also Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined*, 60–63.

to generate a lot of speculation regarding the building mechanism of the Pyramids and their hidden intended purposes.

1.9 Egyptology and “Egyptomania”: Differences

I shall briefly wind up this discussion of the differences between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” by referring to two major aspects: (i) the knowledge of the hieroglyphs and (ii) the consideration of parallel but speculated theories. The hieroglyphic translations can provide the scholar fact-based, authenticated accounts of ancient Egyptian history. The establishment of hieroglyphs as a proper linguistic medium immediately attaches importance to the artifacts, since they are now seen as specimens of study, and not as objects of mystery, though there are copious examples of magical objects discovered in excavation. The second aspect is that Egyptology is not a monolithic discipline and many independent scholars have challenged the age-old theories regarding ancient Egyptian engineering. The “alternative” approaches constitute interactive spaces in which limitations of institutional Egyptology and the speculations in “Egyptomania” meet.

1.9.1 Translation

The forms and the patterns of the artifacts are important in Egyptological studies and they are sources of visual experiments and contextual appropriation in “Egyptomania.” Translation from Egyptian hieroglyphs to languages used mostly by White scholars is also a major difference between Egyptology and “Egyptomania,” since in “Egyptomania” the image and hieroglyphic text might not accurately complement each other, but the two are essential in Egyptian art and must be simultaneously studied by an Egyptologist. Jennifer Westerfield notes that Egyptology has incorporated museum studies⁹¹; we can argue that “Egyptomaniac” depictions of Egypt also consider the Museum spaces as important for

⁹¹ Jennifer Westerfeld, “Decipherment and Translation: An Egyptological Perspective,” *CR: The New Centennial Review* 16, no.1, *Translation and the Global Humanities* (Spring 2016): 31, accessed April 9, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.14321/crnewcentrevi.16.1.0029>.

showing the protagonists engaging with Egypt's past and mysteries. It can be argued that, in *The Mummy* discussed in Chapter Two, the means to restrict Imhotep's rising is "discovered" by the White protagonists not in any funerary site in Egypt but in a "tablet" kept in the Cairo Museum, and the Museum was itself built by the Whites.⁹² The power of translation and the natural skill of the protagonist in translation remain very recurrent in fiction. Evelyn in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* stresses her job in terms of translation⁹³; Daniel in *Stargate* discussed in chapter Three is given a job as a translator in the military base,⁹⁴ and in *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in chapter Five Sadie's translation skills alarm and intrigue her during her magic-learning lessons.⁹⁵ The translation into hieroglyphs through machine technology assists the alien Captain in becoming god-like in Hetepheres's eyes as seen in *Resurrection*⁹⁶ discussed in chapter Four. Thus even in "Egyptomania," the authenticities of translation are revered because the results open up ancient Egyptian knowledge to the scholars.

1.9.2 "Alternative" Ideas

Science fiction on ancient Egypt often uses insights taken from "alternative" ideas regarding Egyptian engineering skills, science and wisdom which question the orthodox hypotheses in White academic Egyptology. Christopher Dunn points out that the Classical Greek world is believed to be more sophisticated than that of the ancient Egyptians.⁹⁷ Regarding the studies in massive Egyptian architecture and sculpture as well as highly sophisticated examples of art, Dunn notes that "circumstantial evidence" is important because of the dearth of empirically verified tools found in excavation capable of erecting

⁹² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 190–195.

⁹³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

⁹⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 7–61.

⁹⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 23–199.

⁹⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 132–135.

⁹⁷ Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt*, 39.

such intricate as well as monumental works in ancient Egypt.⁹⁸ Even applying our current technology, as Dunn informs us, we might not be able to repeat conveniently ancient Egyptian architectural capacity.⁹⁹ Dunn thus notes that it seems plausible to estimate the possible knowledge of intricate machinery possessed by the ancient Egyptians which might have been influential behind their projects; however Western Egyptology is considerably resistant to such ideas.¹⁰⁰ This silence and tension have been taken up in “Egyptomania” which has attributed technological marvels to ancient Egypt. In *Stargate* discussed in chapter Three this tension has been addressed. Daniel expresses his awe at the sight of the “cover stone” containing the machine Stargate; the “cover stone[’s]” age is found to predate the institutionally studied Egyptian civilization while the Stargate machine in shape and structure tends to resemble nothing associated with ancient Egypt at all.¹⁰¹ Dunn also believes in the presence of the pre-Pharaonic culture lost to a catastrophe¹⁰² which is echoed in the hypothesis inspiring Daniel in *Stargate* to believe that the Pyramids were not built by the ancient Egyptians but by some unidentified agency.¹⁰³ This pre-Egyptian building agency behind the Pyramids is also highlighted in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* discussed in Chapter Four, attributed to the aliens from a godlike civilization.¹⁰⁴

1.10 Egyptology, “Egyptomania,” Literatures in English

The following aspects are discussed briefly to acquaint the reader about the comparative study between “Egyptomania” and Egyptology and how the impact of the two can be found in the primary texts chosen and studied in the thesis.

⁹⁸ Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt*, 183.

⁹⁹ Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt*, 239.

¹⁰⁰ Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt*, 245, 1–239.

¹⁰¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–14, 31–51.

¹⁰² Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt*, 335.

¹⁰³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 15–67.

¹⁰⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

1.10.1 Science Fiction and Fantasy

Ancient Egypt has been a much repeated theme in science fiction and fantasy, and the two genres have individually dealt with the speculations about scientific possibilities and supernaturalism. In this context, Carl D. Malmgren's theoretical discussion regarding science fiction and fantasy become relevant if connected with the receptions of Egyptian antiquities. Malmgren notes that while creating worlds of different premises, the speculation is expected to adhere to the "principles or laws" established hitherto.¹⁰⁵ Patrick Parrinder quoted and cited by Malmgren perceives that anthropomorphism remains as a standard of perception while creating aliens, because we are unable to think of an identity/place that defies all human experience.¹⁰⁶ In Chapter Three I shall mention this in connection with *Stargate* in which the alien chooses the prehistoric "Egyptian" human Ra as a host¹⁰⁷; I shall argue how the deities appear in humanoid forms in the *The Age of Ra*.¹⁰⁸ Malmgren notes that in science fiction, spaces of action could be unique and provide functional spaces to fictional "actants" or characters, and the spaces might project physical realm of unique features and different laws of nature to engage with.¹⁰⁹ In chapter Four I shall argue this in connection with the Divine Temple in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* which has heightened dimensions and is situated in a different space.¹¹⁰ I shall argue how the "actants" could be of different categories; it could be someone more-than-human as the "Lightbringer" in *The Age of Ra*, a composite creature-being Ra in *Stargate*, or an empowered human or an

¹⁰⁵ Malmgren, *Worlds Apart*, 13.

¹⁰⁶ Patrick Parrinder, "Characterization in Science Fiction: Two Approaches: 2: The Alien Encounter: Or, Ms Brown and Mrs Le Guin," *Science Fiction Studies* 3, part 1 (March 1976) reprinted in *Science Fiction: A Critical Guide*, ed. Patrick Parrinder (London: Longman, 1979), 150, quoted in Malmgren, *Worlds Apart*, 13. See Malmgren, *Worlds Apart*, 13, for elaboration. I have paraphrased the section quoted by Malmgren from Parrinder.

¹⁰⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁰⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 204–291.

¹⁰⁹ Malmgren, *Worlds Apart*, 16.

¹¹⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 179–291.

extraterrestrial like Pruit and Adaiz in *Resurrection*.¹¹¹ Malmgren also notes that the machine-human interaction is a crucial scope in “gadget SF,” a genre in which the technology is perceived in an ambivalent manner, and the technological “invention” is able to bring societal complexities.¹¹² In reference to the “invention” trope, I shall mention how the bio-suit of Pruit in *Resurrection* is an example of technological interface that changes the abilities of the human-species¹¹³; I shall also mention how in *Stargate* the wormhole device brings the alien world and the world of the Egyptians together, changing the histories of galactic settlements and civilizations.¹¹⁴ I shall refer to the texts chosen and argue how the ancient Egyptian context is permeable in both science fiction and fantasy. It will also be argued how Egyptian ethos is a fertile subject for speculation for the writers of science fiction and “mythopoeic” fantasy.

1.10.2 “Material Culture”

The objects excavated in Egyptian sites and displayed in Museums are sources of visual experiments in “Egyptomania.” Artifacts, of different classifications of Egypt are rich in visual symbolism; the most potential sources of objects are the tombs. In this context, as Brier, and Nicholas Reeve note, Tutankhamun’s intact tomb can always cited as an example of a miracle in Egyptological excavation since it provided a lot of material for studies in art and mythology for Egyptologists and for visual appropriations in “Egyptomania.”¹¹⁵ Brier informs that “Egyptomania” features an obsession with Tutankhamun; the obsession of course draws inspiration from the material objects found in Tutankhamun’s tomb.¹¹⁶ Kathryn Bard mentions that the discovery of the intact Tutankhamun’s tomb is important

¹¹¹ Malmgren, *Worlds Apart*, 16–18.

¹¹² Malmgren, *Worlds Apart*, 19.

¹¹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

¹¹⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹¹⁵ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 161–178; Nicholas Reeves, *The Complete Tutankhamun: The King, The Tomb, The Royal Treasure* (1990; reprint, London: Thames & Hudson, 2008), 1–224.

¹¹⁶ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 161–178.

because of the potential studies regarding symbolic and funerary objects found in the tomb which have enriched our understanding of the Egyptians' highly complicated mythology.¹¹⁷ Each object would be supplied with hieroglyphs. Thus the hieroglyphs were not just functional in expression but they also have artistic merit. Bard perceives that ancient Egypt progressed steadily into a sophisticated culture because hieroglyphs aided political governance as well as financial control even as early as in the predynastic period.¹¹⁸ Thus hieroglyphs were integral in the material culture. In chapter Two I shall argue that the mummy films show objects, and also include scenes of the characters engaged in the translation of the hieroglyphic texts because translation opens up the world of ancient Egyptian science, magic and ritual.

1.10.3 “Afrocentrism”¹¹⁹

Through Egyptology and “Egyptomania” ancient Egyptian contribution to the White world can be rethought; there had been many instances of knowledge flowing to the Classical world in the antiquities from ancient Egypt. Gerald Massey cited by Chisanga N. Siame notes that “Afrocentrism,” a concept stressing Africa as the source of civilizations of the world and “Afrocentrism” tends to locate the root of Classical knowledge in Egypt, also raises the hypothesis that hieroglyphs might have contained source-words that evolved in future languages like English.¹²⁰ Citing Massey, Siame notes that the African name “Menya” might have echoed “Menes” the legendary first Dynastic Egyptian pharaoh.¹²¹ Such characters and identities are influential in “Egyptomania”; in support it can be argued that in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in chapter Five, the White British girl

¹¹⁷ Bard, *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*, 55.

¹¹⁸ Bard, *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*, 117.

¹¹⁹ See the discussion of this concept in Ray, “*X-Men: Apocalypse* (2016),” 446–447.

¹²⁰ Gerald Massey, *A Book of the Beginnings*, vol. 1 (Secaucus, NJ: University Books, 1975), cited in Chisanga N. Siame, “Katunkumene and Ancient Egypt in Africa,” *Journal of Black Studies* 44, no. 3 (April 2013): 253, accessed April 10, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23414670>; Siame, “Katunkumene and Ancient Egypt,” 253.

¹²¹ Massey, *A Book of the Beginnings*, 1: 39, cited in Siame, “Katunkumene and Ancient Egypt,” 260; Siame, “Katunkumene and Ancient Egypt,” 260.

Sadie seems to have discovered a facial similarity between Menes and her father even though in the Trilogy's current time the siblings identify themselves as British and American.¹²² This indicates that "Egyptomaniac" fiction regarding Egypt wishes to believe that Egypt is the source of many bloodlines and Egypt exists in the world in many undiscovered identities.

1.10.4 Uniqueness of the Ancient Egyptian Deities

As indicated in the Methodology, the thesis seeks to argue the reasons behind the obsession with Egyptian mythology perceived in "Egyptomania," leading to the recontextualizations of Egyptian themes in films and fiction. An Egyptologist like Vincent Arieh Tobin have argued that the ancient Egyptians were flexible regarding their beliefs, and parallel existences of different versions of myths regarding deities were accommodated in the ancient Egyptian world.¹²³ This is a remarkable feature to learn from, since our current world is torn by religious intolerance, purposeful interpretation/use of religious texts, and fundamentalism. Some unique attributes of Egyptian deities are discussed below, which have been used for arguments in the chapters Two to Five.

1.10.5 Zoomorphism

Zoomorphism is a well-known trait in Egyptian pantheon for expressing divine energy and functional roles; the composite bodies of the Egyptian deities set them apart from other pantheons. Hieroglyphs contain objects, living creatures, symbols which might be of composite nature. H. Te Velde notes that the hieroglyphs, though a viable human-based language, also involves non-human species, reflected in about 176 "hieroglyphs in Gardiner's *Signlist*."¹²⁴ Te Velde notes that the Greeks were flabbergasted with the "animal

¹²² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 159–195.

¹²³ Vincent Arieh Tobin, "Mytho-Theology in Ancient Egypt," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 25 (1988): 169–183, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40000877>.

¹²⁴ Herman Te Velde, "A Few Remarks upon the Religious Significance of Animals in Ancient Egypt," *Numen* 27, no. 1 (June 1980): 76, accessed February 15, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3269982>.

head[ed]” representations of the divine in ancient Egypt.¹²⁵ The Classical world was unable to grasp fully the symbolic association established by the Egyptians with each species. For example, Harold M. Hays observes that jackal-headed Anubis’s funerary role is initiated in terms of the body’s embalmment,¹²⁶ which is an inverse-association of jackals’ predation of human bodies. By “inverse-association” I mean that the fear of the canines was shifted to the deification of the canines through Anubis, who bearing the jackal-head and the human body was expected to be benevolent towards humans and assist in embalmment and in the deceased’s afterlife journey. Michael Rice argues that Egyptian art, representing the abstract with animal-images can be seen as “archetypes,” for example the symbol of “*serekh*,” the decorated rectangular shape in Egyptian art representing a building carries the falcon above it and this combination of the bird and the building constitutes Pharaonic royalty in the “collective unconscious” of the ancient Egyptians.¹²⁷ Thus it can be argued that zoomorphism and the depictions in hieroglyphs feature a unique pantheon and help establish interaction between animal and humans. I shall argue the importance of Anubis as a character in the texts chosen for study and will show how the Western writers have projected Anubis as both a friend and an adversary. It can also be argued that it becomes a creative move on the part of Thornton to depict the alien-identities reaching prehistoric Egypt in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* and embodying themselves in the lion, the baboon, the crocodile, and the falcon; the lion manifested himself as the Great Sphinx.¹²⁸ The four main chapters shall discuss the symbolism of the non-human species in understanding Egyptian

¹²⁵ Te Velde, “A Few Remarks,” 76.

¹²⁶ Harold M. Hays, “Funerary Rituals (Pharaonic Period),” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, 2010), 5, accessed April 10, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf65w>.

¹²⁷ Michael Rice, *Egypt’s Making: The Origins of Ancient Egypt 5000–2000 BC*, 2nd ed. (1990; reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 266.

¹²⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17, 8–348.

zoomorphism and argue how this mythical trait inspires human-nonhuman interaction in “mythopoeic” fantasy and science fiction.

Upper Egypt was perceived in connection with vulture and lotus; Lower Egypt was perceived in connection with cobra and papyrus.¹²⁹ The crocodile and the falcon are opposite forces, united in the twin-temple of Kom Ombo. It can be argued that Riordan in *The Kane Chronicles*, discussed in chapter Five, recontextualizes the opposition between the two deities and shows Horus embodied in Carter engaging with Sobek in *The Red Pyramid*.¹³⁰ Ancient Egyptians did not distinguish between human identity and animal existence: kingship is visually connoted through non-human figures. We are all important in the ecosystem, contrary to the belief of placing humans at the apex. Hieroglyphs make this human-nonhuman interaction possible.

1.10.6 “Differently Abled” and “Gender Fluid” Deities

In terms of physical forms/appearances, the pantheon represents the open-mindedness of the ancient Egyptians. Many of the Egyptian deities are not pleasant in terms of Classical / “Occidental” aesthetic standards yet they perform crucial roles in the Egyptian pantheon. For example George Hart notes that the Nile-flooding was represented by the obese androgynous body of the god Hapy/Hapi¹³¹; his function was more important than his looks in the Egyptian perception. Keeping such an example in mind, it shall be argued that the Egyptian considerations regarding bodily forms were inclusive of instances of norm-breaking. Applying this, I shall argue in Chapter Five, how in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*, Bes the dwarf-god, Taweret the hippopotamus-goddess, and Neith the bi-

¹²⁹ For information regarding the duality noticed here, see Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 66–67, 76.

¹³⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 282–391.

¹³¹ George Hart, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 61. See also Ray, “Ancient Egyptian Art and Architecture,” 9.

gendered goddess are depicted as important allies to Carter and Sadie.¹³² I shall argue in this context how the “grotesque” can be important in science fiction and fantasy, and thus the ancient Egyptian pantheon can be used effectively in these genres.

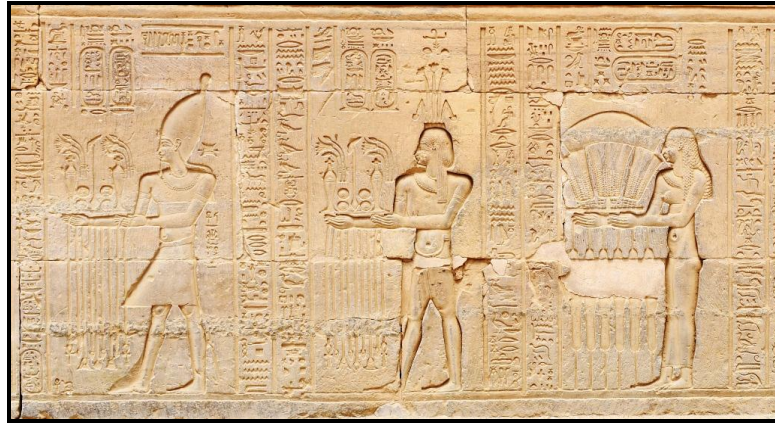


Figure 1.3. The Pharaoh and Hapi-figure

Unlike other cultures, Egyptians were accommodative and open minded and incorporated in their corpus beings of “differently-abled” faculties and/or having deformities. In the image above, the relief from Kom Ombo temple we see on the left a Pharaoh followed by the androgynous Hapi-figure in the middle followed by a female offering-carrier. While the king has the masculine physique according to the established norms of Egyptian art, Hapi’s obesity and hanging breast are visible. It is a unique relief, showing the pharaoh, a deity, and a represented figure standing together, and different body-shapes are acknowledged. Because ancient Egypt respected bodily differences, it can be argued that we can create fictional “differently-abled” characters having connection with Egyptian symbolism and pantheon. Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

Another reason to consider Egyptian pantheon’s uniqueness is that the Egyptian wisdom recognized gender-fluidity in terms of spiritual transition in the Afterlife, and this involves the partaking of the gender of the god Osiris. Theresa Wilshusen observes that the identities of the male deities Re as well as Osiris could be absorbed by an ancient Egyptian

¹³² Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

woman in her afterlife transit through an alteration of gender; citing Kathlyn Cooney, Theresa Wilshusen informs us that for identification with male divinities of “creat[ion]” the woman has to partake the male essence.¹³³ Wilshusen notes that the concept of “[g]ender fluidity” seems to have entered the funerary accounts in the New Kingdom when feminine and masculine traits were both necessitated in rebirth; thus sexual balance was recognized by Egyptians and afterlife transit requires the capacities of both the female and the male.¹³⁴ Keeping this Egyptological information in mind, we shall discuss how gender-fluidity can be of interest in “Egyptomania,” and in Chapter Three we shall mention how in the film *Stargate* the alien Ra’s identity exhibits gender-fluidity and he is seemingly immortal, having his body healed repeatedly through technology.¹³⁵ Kathlyn M. Cooney cited by Wilshusen also informs us that “transgender” epithets were also recognized in ancient Egypt: the coffin might be provided with texts that attributed the coffin of a woman of an “androgynous” nature.¹³⁶ This highly interesting notion shall be applied in chapter Three to argue how the technological device, the sarcophagus, repeatedly expands the life of the effeminate Ra.

1.10.7 Embalmmnt

An argument behind the Western obsession with the Egyptian mummification process involves the ingenuous application of chemical science in the preservation of the bodies. The complexities of the Egyptians’ ritual practices especially interest the Egyptologists. Salima Ikram, an Eastern Egyptologist, mentions that the “70 day” long biochemical process of the embalmmnt was held analogous with the seventy-day long

¹³³ Theresa Wilshusen, “The Gender Veil from Egyptian Identity: The Findings of an Artist,” *International Journal of Management and Applied Science (IJMAS)* 4, no. 5 (May 2018): 6, accessed April 10, 2021, http://www.ijaj.in/journal/journal_file/journal_pdf/14-469-15325816286-9.pdf.

¹³⁴ Wilshusen, “The Gender Veil,” 8.

¹³⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–139, 175–186.

¹³⁶ K. M. Cooney, “Where does the Masculine Begin and the Feminine End? The Merging of the Two Genders in Egyptian Coffins during the Ramesside Period,” in *Ehrenmord und Emanzipation: Die Geschlechterfrage in Ritualen von Parallelgesellschaften, Geschlecht - Symbol - Religion series*, ed. B. Heininger (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2009), cited in Wilshusen, “The Gender Veil,” 7; Wilshusen, “The Gender Veil,” 7.

invisibility of the Sirius-constellation the re-visibility of which marks the “New Year” for the ancient Egyptians.¹³⁷ This fascinates the Egyptologists, since it can be argued that the mummification not only concerns the deceased individual but also cosmic observation/knowledge. This can be remembered in connection with the film *The Mummy* (discussed in Chapter Two)¹³⁸ in which Imhotep’s awakening involves solar eclipse and meteorological changes in Egypt. Ikram notes that the embalming involved Egyptian science regarding the prevention of putrefaction, thus the body’s natural compositions were also studied.¹³⁹ Ikram explains that the addition of the “gold leaf” for covering the deceased’s face “symbolic[ally]” attributed to the mummy the deities’ golden flesh; the embalmment also involves the elevation of the human to the deity Osiris.¹⁴⁰ This transition intrigues the lovers Imhotep Anck-su-namun in *The Mummy*¹⁴¹; I shall argue in Chapter Two how funerary process is perceived in “Egyptomania” as means of gaining supernatural powers.

The Osiris-transition is often a recurring motif: I shall argue in Chapter Two how Imhotep in *The Mummy* as the high priest of Osiris attempts the resurrection of Ankh-su-namun. In chapter Four, I shall argue how in *Resurrection* the alien Captain enacted the role of Osiris while bringing technology to ancient Egypt.¹⁴² In chapter Three I shall argue how the renewal of life is a prominent theme in *Stargate*, keeping in mind the account of the Osiris-image carved in the sarcophagus-machine used for body-healing.¹⁴³ Following the translation of the funerary texts, the Egyptologists have established the ritual and magical importance of the human body in the mummification process. For example, Christina Riggs notes that in funerary practice the entirety and intactness of the body were considered

¹³⁷ Salima Ikram, “Mummification,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, University of California: 2010), 2, accessed April 10, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nwz18>.

¹³⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 174–204.

¹³⁹ Ikram, “Mummification,” 1–2.

¹⁴⁰ Ikram, “Mummification,” 2.

¹⁴¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 3–25.

¹⁴² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 128–407.

¹⁴³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 174–175, 1–193.

important and the “Coffin Text Spells 761 and 762” seek to reanimate organs by divine identification, that is to establish connection between the organs and with specific deities and to enlist their protection.¹⁴⁴ “Egyptomania” however occasionally tends to perceive this transition in a grotesque manner. This shall be argued in chapter Two in connection with *The Mummy* in which Imhotep’s body could be seen as a grotesque inversion of the mummification which involves taking out organs from others’ bodies for assimilation.¹⁴⁵ For the ancient Egyptians, the mummified form was held in much reverence. Riggs notes that the embalmed body might lack physical mobility but deities like Min, Osiris, even Ptah were also represented as shrouds, indicating that the embalmed body had divine resonance as well.¹⁴⁶ Supported by this Egyptological information, we can argue that the mummy was seen not as inert but it was thought to be dormant awaiting resurrection. But in “Egyptomania” the mummy is ambivalently seen as much empowered, and can inflict curses.

1.10.8 Communication with the Deities

A copious amount of Egyptian art shows interaction between deities and humans, comprising mostly venerating scenes, which have been studied contextually in Egyptology. The members of the Egyptian pantheon were represented in symbolic as well as figurative manner. Jan Assmann notes that the Pharaoh’s actions of “official” nature involve communication of “sacred meaning”; the forms and expressions taken by the deities also

¹⁴⁴ Christina Riggs, “Body,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Elizabeth Froid and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, University of California, 2010), 3, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz0025nqg2>. Riggs has cited Terence DuQuesne, Adolf Erman, Nadine Guilhou in connection with this information; see Terence DuQuesne, “La Deification des Parties du Corps: Correspondances Magiques et Identification avec les Dieux dans l’Égypte Ancienne,” in *La Magie en Égypte: À la Recherche d’une Définition: Actes du Colloque Organisé par le Musée du Louvre les 29 et 30 Septembre 2000*, ed. Yvan Koenig (Paris: La Documentation Française, 2002), 237–271; Adolf Erman, *Zaubersprüche für Mutter und Kind aus dem Papyrus 3027 des Berliner Museums, Abhandlungen der Königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (Berlin: Reimer, 1901); Nadine Guilhou, “Les Parties du Corps Humain dans les Textes de la Pyramide d’Ounas: Pensée Religieuse et Pratiques Funéraires,” in *Études sur l’Ancien Empire et la Nécropole de Saqqâra Dédiées à Jean-Philippe Lauer, Orientalia Monspeliensia* 9, eds. Cathérine Berger el-Naggar and Bernard Mathieu (Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 1997), 221–229.

¹⁴⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–247.

¹⁴⁶ Riggs, “Body,” 4.

involve “signification.”¹⁴⁷ The Pharaoh thus permeates the divine and the human worlds; applying this I shall argue that in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* Carter’s human establishment and Horus’s divine coronation in two realms are shown simultaneously.¹⁴⁸ According to Assmann the ancient Egyptian mythology uses “symbolization” to communicate with the deities removed physically from human beings following the human rebellion against Ra.¹⁴⁹ This difference created between deities and humans according to Egyptian mythology influences the plotlines in *Stargate*¹⁵⁰ and in *The Kane Chronicles*¹⁵¹ which I shall discuss in chapter Three and Five respectively. Assmann notes that since the deities are physically distant but functional, elaborate rituals are devised by the Egyptians, in which the “cult” is established, over which the “state” presides, and “sacred signification” was used¹⁵² and was used for communication with the divine.¹⁵³ Egyptology devotes considerable attention to these scenes of interaction with the divine, represented in papyri and temples’ walls. Keeping this information in mind, I shall argue that in “mythopoeic” fiction, the western writers can project individual characterization to the Egyptian deities since they could be conceived in both abstract and concrete manner. I shall argue in my chosen primary texts how the protagonists physically interact with the Egyptian pantheon, and since most of the protagonists are the Whites, there exists a sense of power play between the pantheon and the protagonists.

1.10.9 Geographical Representation

Egypt as a physical space was conceived uniquely by the ancient Egyptians in symbolic architecture and representations. It can be argued that the Egyptians were very

¹⁴⁷ Jan Assmann, “Semiosis and Interpretation in Ancient Egyptian Ritual,” in *Interpretation in Religion*, eds. Shlomo Biderman and Ben-Ami Scharfstein (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1992), 89.

¹⁴⁸ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 394–395.

¹⁴⁹ Assmann, “Semiosis and Interpretation,” 91.

¹⁵⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁵¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁵² Quoted in Assmann, “Semiosis and Interpretation,” 92.

¹⁵³ Assmann, “Semiosis and Interpretation,” 91–92.

geographically conscious because habitable lands were sparse and thus resources were carefully used. Naydler notes that the ancient Egyptian geographical divisions were constituted as individual provinces, known as “nomes”¹⁵⁴; these were carefully designated and Egyptologists have studied much information regarding the “nomes” from the scenes of conveyance of offerings from the provinces as represented in temple art.¹⁵⁵ Keeping this Egyptological information in mind, I shall discuss the space-consciousness in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* in Chapter Five. Riordan has pursued a unique sense of “Egyptomania” in which the entire world comprising the “Occident” and the “Orient” is divided into “nomes,” as they were in ancient Egypt, and each “nome” has a specific headquarter for the magicians who practice Egyptian magic.¹⁵⁶ We shall argue this as an instance of ancient Egyptian “diffusion” of culture, which is an important concept in “Egyptomania,” which believes in the global spread of ancient Egyptian features.¹⁵⁷



Figure 1.4. Offering-carriers from Temple of Hathor, Dendera

¹⁵⁴ See Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 263.

¹⁵⁵ See Richard H. Wilkinson, “Anthropomorphic Deities,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2008), 1–9, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz000rz52f>.

¹⁵⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁵⁷ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 1–426.

Three offering carriers, from the many such figures depicted in the temple of Hathor, Dendera can be seen in the image above. The figures are designated by the glyphs/insignia above their heads forming an intricate classification-system or typology unique to the Egyptian figures in reliefs and art. It can be argued that in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* discussed in Chapter Four the Egyptian deities appear as individual beings.¹⁵⁸ The figure on the left carries the “ka” symbol upon his head, which has a disk upon the “Djed pillar,” referring to a possible conjunction of the essences of the deities Re and Osiris while the “ka” represents “vital essence”¹⁵⁹ probably of these two gods. The female figure in the middle carries crossed arrows and a shield upon her head which remind us of the goddess Neith.¹⁶⁰ These figures are thus both abstract and concrete; they can be viewed as individual humans as well as representations of the places they hail from. It is unique how the ancient Egyptians figuratively represented particular “nomes,” the geographical provinces in ancient Egypt, and each is personified like a human offering-carrier. In *The Kane Chronicles* the ancient Egyptian consciousness pervades the entire world, since the world is secretly divided into 360 “nomes.”¹⁶¹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

1.10.10 “Divine Age” as a Theme

It can be argued that Egypt appeals to practitioners of “Egyptomania” because this land tends to defy time. Edward F. Malkowski notes that Egypt had been thought to have a long period of mysterious rule by the deities.¹⁶² In Egyptian kingship, as Klaus P. Kuhlmann notes, the throne involves both divine and human agencies; human enthronement indicates

¹⁵⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 204–209.

¹⁵⁹ Peter Keegan, *Graffiti in Antiquity* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 141.

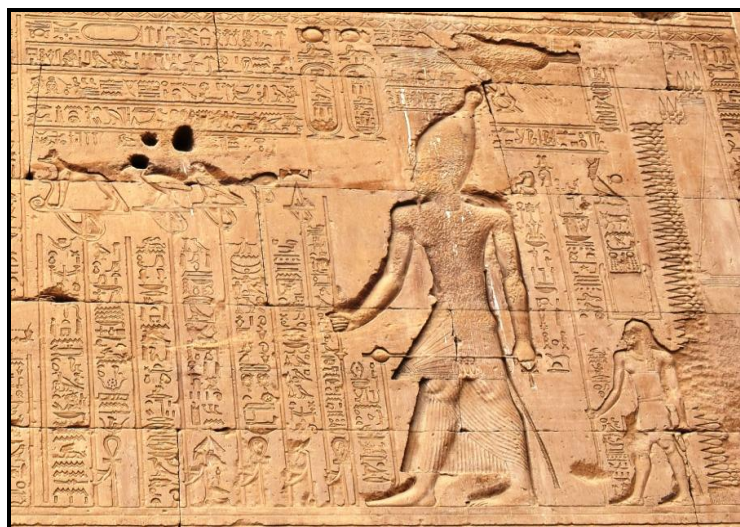
¹⁶⁰ Barbara S. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses of Egypt* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 50.

¹⁶¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 52–53.

¹⁶² Edward F. Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE: The History, Technology, and Philosophy of Civilization X* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 244–249.

the “sun god” Ra’s weight borne by the primordial mound.¹⁶³ Kuhlmann notes that this auspicious moment led to the creation of universal balance, and was known to the Egyptians as the “first time”¹⁶⁴ noting the pristine moment in the beginning.¹⁶⁵ The enthroned pharaoh is a powerful image in “Egyptomania” and is reflected in the sets designed for big budget films on ancient Egypt. I shall argue this in chapter Three in connection with *Stargate* in which we see Daniel and O’Neil witness the alien Ra advancing to his throne in his spaceship at daybreak.¹⁶⁶ Memories of the “Divine Age” is also a powerful influence in the Egyptian consciousness; in chapter Five we shall discuss how in Riordan’s *The Red Pyramid* Sadie sees the “Age of the Gods” and learn about the mythic history of Osiris’s entrapment by Set.¹⁶⁷ The Age of the Egyptian Deities is thus a mythic spatial-temporal time that inspire science fiction and “mythopoeic” fiction.

Figure 1.5.1 and 1.5.2: The Pharaoh Carrying the Crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt



Sacred architectures of Egypt as discussed earlier always link the pharaoh with the deities and the sacred emblems, and emit mystic aura. In the image above (Figure 1.5.1) and

¹⁶³ Klaus P. Kuhlmann, “Throne,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, ed. Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, University of California, 2011), 2, accessed April 10, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz0026w9gt>.

¹⁶⁴ Quoted in Kuhlmann, “Throne,” 2.

¹⁶⁵ Kuhlmann, “Throne,” 2.

¹⁶⁶ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 113–119.

¹⁶⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 170–177.

below (Figure 1.5.2), the Pharaoh is crowned with the distinct Crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt respectively. Before him the scepters “was,” meaning “power” and “ankh,” meaning “life”¹⁶⁸ are shown anthropomorphically with arms holding staff carrying animal and bird figures. Particularly interesting are the “ka” figures behind the pharaoh, seen in both the images, representing the pharaoh’s “vital spirit”; it is noteworthy that the “ka” hieroglyph comprises two raised arms joined at the base upon the figures’ heads.¹⁶⁹ Hence we see the “ka”-figures carrying tall insignia upon their heads, with the crowned Horus-falcons at the top of each attributing the authority over Egypt. The temples are important for textual and visual information for both Egyptology and “Egyptomania,” and the temples are made powerful by the psychic resonance emitted from the reliefs and the symbols. This architectonic power shall be discussed in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in which an Egyptian temple is required to reanimate the Sphinx who provides cosmic knowledge for survival.¹⁷⁰ It can be argued that the reliefs also remind the viewers about the re-enactment of the auspicious times of the deities by the ruling pharaoh. Photos taken on April 7, 2019.



¹⁶⁸ Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 78, 118.

¹⁶⁹ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 185, 193–200.

¹⁷⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 204–348.

1.10.11 Sarcophagus

Another Egyptian object that can be argued as an art as well as a device is the sarcophagus. Brier notes that the mummy-fascination in “Egyptomania” can never be separated from the sarcophagus; the sarcophagi and the mummies hold equal importance for the reader and the audience.¹⁷¹ Sarcophagus is an empowering machine. J. H. Taylor cited by Kathlyn M. Cooney notes that the transformation from the mortal to the god-like existence is made possible by magical texts and images on a sarcophagus; a very interesting aspect is that the Egyptian women experienced masculine gendering in Osiris-transformation through the coffin’s capacity.¹⁷² This means that the Egyptian woman was treated as a masculine entity when she partakes the essence of the god Osiris during her afterlife journey. In chapter Three I shall link this point in connection with the effeminate Ra’s life prolonged in his sarcophagus-machine, as shown in *Stargate*. Egyptologists have learned that the body was a composite object in Egyptian funerary beliefs. Cooney notes that the dead body, known to the ancient Egyptians as “*Khat*”¹⁷³ is supposed to contain within it (i) “*ren*,” meaning information magically contained within a person’s name, (ii) the shadow of the person or “*shut*,” (iii) the moving soul of the deceased, known as “*ba*,” and (iv) the deceased’s “divine essence,” known as the “*ka*.”¹⁷⁴ Thus the mummy along with the sarcophagus can be argued to be similar to an electronic drive containing stored data. The “*akh*” according to the Egyptians represents the state of resurrection.¹⁷⁵ Thus it can be argued following Cooney’s observation that the Osiris-associated dead was protected by the

¹⁷¹ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 179–192.

¹⁷² J. H. Taylor, *Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 2001), 214–217, cited in Kathlyn M. Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death: A Case Study of Coffins from Ramesside Period Egypt,” *New Eastern Archaeology* 73 (2010): 228. For elaboration, see Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 228. See also Kathlyn M. Cooney, *The Cost of Death: The Social and Economic Value of Ancient Egyptian Funerary Art in the Ramesside Period*, *Egyptologische Uitgaven* 22 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2007), 18–21. Cooney elaborates the information.

¹⁷³ Taylor quoted in Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 231.

¹⁷⁴ Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 230–231.

¹⁷⁵ Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 229.

coffin or the sarcophagus; the word “*neb-ankh*” in ancient Egyptian meant “lord of life”¹⁷⁶ and was used for the sarcophagus-protected dead person and was perhaps linked with the life-protecting capacities of the sarcophagus.¹⁷⁷ In terms of gender, it can be argued as “gender-fluid” as the Sarcophagus was a multilayered object merging the feminine and the masculine traits of the deceased human.¹⁷⁸ The decorated sarcophagus is thus a recurring trait in “Egyptomania,” since it links the Egyptian deities with the human body and it is like the symbolic device granting powers and resurrection to the deceased in the afterlife.

The value of eyes and vision were very important in ancient Egyptian beliefs; deities of both sexes projected their energies through optical faculties. On Kawit’s sarcophagus kept in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, we see two pairs of eyes one of which is represented on the door of a facade.¹⁷⁹ The eyes face east, expecting sunrise and resurrection along with it.¹⁸⁰ It can be argued here that the sarcophagus enables the senses of the dead persons to experience reanimation. We shall argue in chapter I that in *The Mummy*, eyes are the first organs claimed by Imhotep after his reawakening,¹⁸¹ which can be kept in mind while interpreting the practice of the eyes represented on the eastern sides of the Egyptian coffins containing the mummies, as noted by Brier.¹⁸²

1.10.12 Cartouche

Cathie Spieser notes that in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, the cartouche is an interesting integration of glyphs and object, and it is also an amalgamation of the abstract

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 233.

¹⁷⁷ Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 233.

¹⁷⁸ Cooney, “Gender Transformation in Death,” 225–237.

¹⁷⁹ “Sarcophagus of Kawit,” *Tour Egypt*, accessed March 8, 2022, http://www.touregypt.net/egyptmuseum/egyptian_museum14.htm.

¹⁸⁰ See Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 121, 132–133.

¹⁸¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 146–147.

¹⁸² Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 121, 132–133.

and the concrete, used for writing names.¹⁸³ The cartouche is the oval shaped structure containing the glyphs that constitute the name of the Egyptian person.¹⁸⁴ It thereby consolidated the importance of the throne in connection with human identity. The cartouches are also interesting since they could be used to interact between divine essence and human essence: Spieser observes that the cartouche could assign the pharaoh his fate of union with the sun, it could also establish the features of the divinity within the pharaoh's physical body; it could also enable association of the deities with the humans, if it is used to enclose the names of the deities themselves.¹⁸⁵ The fiction writers have used Egyptian cartouches to extend inclusion of representations. Thus in *The Age of Ra* novel discussed in chapter Three the English Westwynter family members wish to eternalize themselves by acquiring the family-cartouches.¹⁸⁶ In Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* discussed in chapter Five the Kane siblings found their family cartouche in the long chain of names thus indicating their connection to the ancient Egyptians.¹⁸⁷ Both these novels thereby project "Egyptomania" in which the popular attraction for the Egyptian cartouches is indicated. In fact, many tourists visiting Egypt might order artistic commissions of having their names written in hieroglyphs enclosed within cartouches on papyri. This expresses the desire to feel and register like an ancient Egyptian or to become a part of the Egyptian consciousness, which constitutes a feeling not quite experienced in the visits to other countries.

1.10.13 Symbolic and Composite Glyphs

It can be argued that Hieroglyphs always continue to intrigue us since they are incomparable with linear alphabet-based expressions we are so familiar with. As Cyril

¹⁸³ Cathie Spieser, "Cartouche," in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Elizabeth Froid and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, University of California, 2010), 1–10, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf61t>.

¹⁸⁴ Spieser, "Cartouche," 1–4.

¹⁸⁵ Spieser, "Cartouche," 4.

¹⁸⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 171–172.

¹⁸⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 97–98.

Aldred notes, the ancient Egyptians would often provide textual information with images in their art which has helped Egyptologists to interpret the subject matters of the arts.¹⁸⁸ For example, as Alan H. Gardiner notes, the “Narmer Palette” of the very First Dynasty is important to the Egyptologists because the innovative experiments covered on the hieroglyphs on it engender fruitful research on the usage of glyphs and symbols.¹⁸⁹ Egyptologists have argued the importance of the Palette in terms of its divine iconography, the representation of Narmer, the first pharaoh, and his opponents. The Palette shows the figures and the glyphs in a well coordinated to form meaningful interpretation. It can also be argued that Egyptian hieroglyphs provide instances of visual juxtapositions; for example, Gardiner observes that due to the closeness in sounds for the word denoting “thousand”¹⁹⁰ in hieroglyphs and the word denoting a particular “water plant” in hieroglyphs, the depiction of six such plants on the “Narmer Palette” was sufficient to denote the number “six thousand”¹⁹¹ which is the number of the human opponents indicated in the Palette.¹⁹² This provides us a deep semiotic potential which goes hand in hand with visual juxtapositions. Gardiner argues that the human arm of the falcon Horus is represented above the six plants, since the Egyptian artist wished to indicate that “six thousand”¹⁹³ imprisoned people from another nation had been led by Horus for presentation before the king.¹⁹⁴ Thus, it can be argued that Egyptological studies of Egyptian art intrigue us for such symbolic coordination between art and glyphs. “Egyptomania” is equally instrumental in reusing many examples of ancient Egyptian art for the fluid interference between figures and glyphs. Keeping this dual

¹⁸⁸ See Cyril Aldred, *Egyptian Art in the Days of the Pharaohs: 3100–320 BC* (1980, 1985; reprint, London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 11–30.

¹⁸⁹ Alan H. Gardiner, “The Nature and Development of the Egyptian Hieroglyphic Writing,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 2, no. 2 (April 1915): 72, accessed January 16, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3853896>.

¹⁹⁰ Quoted in Gardiner, “The Nature and Development,” 72.

¹⁹¹ Quoted in Gardiner, “The Nature and Development,” 72.

¹⁹² Gardiner, “The Nature and Development,” 72–73. See also Ray, “Ancient Egyptian Art and Architecture,” 8.

¹⁹³ Quoted in Gardiner, “The Nature and Development,” 72.

¹⁹⁴ Gardiner, “The Nature and Development,” 72.

importance in mind, it can be seen that in *The Red Pyramid* Riordan shows the importance of the “Narmer Palette” that releases the mythic monsters but along with that it also prompts the goddess Bast to materialize in human form for the protection of Sadie and Carter.¹⁹⁵

1.10.14 Magic

Ancient Egyptian magic has been much discussed in Egyptology since the usage of magic pervaded all aspects in an Egyptian’s life, including healing practices. Magic was essential in everyday dealing, as means of interaction with the Egyptian deities and accessing power from the deities. Egyptologists are fortunate to acquire copious amount of texts and spells and these texts majorly deal with funerary subjects. Jan Assmann notes that Egyptian magic could be applied in an ambivalent manner and goals and personal magic might be contrary to religious vocation observed in rituals for the collective society.¹⁹⁶ It can be argued that this aspect is the premise for imbalance between the living and the dead which I shall discuss in chapter Two in connection with *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*. Magic in the ancient Egyptian sense enabled humans to access divine agencies. Deities can be invoked magically for human protection; for example, A. H. Gardiner’s studies of Egyptian papyri cited by Assmann¹⁹⁷ also include one text concerning Horus; Annie Gasse cited by Assman notes that the safeguarding of physical body was assured by utterance of spells in this text linked with Horus.¹⁹⁸ Interestingly, this can be linked with the

¹⁹⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 104–113.

¹⁹⁶ Jan Assmann, “Magic and Theology in Ancient Egypt,” in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar & Symposium (Studies in the History of Religions 75)*, eds. Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 3–5.

¹⁹⁷ A. H. Gardiner, *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum, Third Series: Chester Beatty Gift*, vol. 1 (London: British Museum, 1935), 75–76, cited in Assmann, “Magic and Theology,” 8. For elaboration, see Assmann, “Magic and Theology,” 8.

¹⁹⁸ Annie Gasse, “La Litanie des Douze Noms de Re-Horakhty,” *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archeologie Orientale* 84 (1984): 189–227, cited in Assmann, “Magic and Theology,” 8. For elaboration, see Assmann, “Magic and Theology,” 8.

importance of Horus in *The Mummy*, in which Horus's statue houses the *Book of Amun Ra* to curb the powers of Imhotep.¹⁹⁹

1.10.15 The “Rosetta Stone”

The “Rosetta Stone” is our interpretative link with Ancient Egypt and will remain always an icon of Egyptological discovery that changed our concepts regarding hieroglyphs. Before that the scholarly communities were not aware of the linguistic status of the hieroglyphs. As Keith Schoville notes, the hieroglyphs were supposed to contain unknown mystic “wisdom” and were thus held in reverence in the Classical world.²⁰⁰ The importance of the “Rosetta Stone” lies in the re-establishing of the wealth of “knowledge” achieved by the Egyptians.²⁰¹ Thus it can be argued that “Rosetta Stone” is important as a source of Egyptological studies as it helped in the decipherment of hieroglyphs²⁰² and in “Egyptomania” it is associated with a lot of symbolic association. It is noteworthy that in *The Kane Chronicles* Riordan shows very aptly that the “Rosetta Stone” is used for calling Osiris.²⁰³ Riordan thus recontextualizes the “Rosetta Stone” in fiction; since Egypt was rediscovered with it,²⁰⁴ he imagines it as a summoning device for a divine member from the Egyptian pantheon, thereby projecting a very interesting instance of “Egyptomania.”²⁰⁵ The interpretation of hieroglyphs thus becomes important in the plots. I shall mention in Chapter Two how in *The Mummy* and in *The Mummy Returns* the act of deciphering controls the interactions between the worlds of the Living and the Dead. In chapter Three I shall mention

¹⁹⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 190–195.

²⁰⁰ Keith Schoville, “The Rosetta Stone in Historical Perspective,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 12, no.1 (2001): 4, *Andrews University*, accessed April 10, 2021, https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Journal_of_the_Adventist_Theological_Society/2001/2001_01.pdf.

²⁰¹ Schoville, “The Rosetta Stone,” 2.

²⁰² Schoville, “The Rosetta Stone,” 1–21.

²⁰³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 17–28.

²⁰⁴ Joyce Tyldesley, *Egypt: How a Lost Civilization Was Rediscovered* (2005; reprint, London: BBC Books, 2008), 50–67.

²⁰⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 17–28.

that the decipherment of the glyphs become crucial for activation of the *Stargate* machine.²⁰⁶ Thus hieroglyphs are so influential that writers/directors can use them in different genres of fiction.

1.11 Approaches towards Ancient Egypt

As indicated in the Methodology and in the reasons stated behind the selection of the primary texts, it is also important to assess the perspectives generated towards ancient Egypt. Two very important aspects are discussed below: the museums and the films. It can be argued that both of these carry features of Egyptology and “Egyptomania” since the settings garner attention from readers/viewers from both inside and outside the field of Egyptology.

1.11.1 Museums

It can be argued that Museums play an integral part in fiction related to Egypt as these spaces of collections control the legacies of ancient Egypt. Bob Brier mentions that the practice of the West enriching itself with the material discoveries had been regulated and restricted by Egyptian government.²⁰⁷ This means that transportation of material artifacts to the West or any other countries are regulated by Egyptian authorities. This Egyptological concern has been reflected in “Egyptomania” as well. In *The Mummy* this tension is shown: Dr. Bay, the native Egyptian curator, tries to regulate/control Evelyn’s findings.²⁰⁸ It can be argued that “popular culture” has tried to re-orient ancient Egyptian arrangements of objects, which in ancient Egypt were carefully ordained with specific objectives. Harry Burton cited by Brier had the vision to proceed with the photographic documentation after discovery of Tutankhamun’s treasures without disturbing the orientation of the objects, which make us aware that the Egyptians had a purpose behind placements of ritual things.²⁰⁹ The audience/viewers and the non-Egyptologists feel a pull towards the museums because we are

²⁰⁶ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 15–61.

²⁰⁷ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 193.

²⁰⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 40–50.

²⁰⁹ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 195.

amazed at the stacking of Egyptian exhibits and we cannot fully fathom the gap between Egyptological facts and fancy generated in “Egyptomania.” This instability is full of awe and hence it fits in the creation of plots for science fiction and “mythopoeic” fantasy.

1.11.2 Films

Use of texts, cartouche in films on ancient Egypt is not always authentic. In the history of Egyptology knowledge in different contexts has however grown with misinterpretation. Brier notes a highly interesting point that the French soldiers misconstrued the shape of the cartouche, which constitutes the oval within which the Egyptian Pharaonic names were written, as a kind of arms, thus the word “*cartouche*” meaning “cartridge”²¹⁰ in French was accepted for the Egyptian oval-structure used for writing Pharaonic names.²¹¹ The cartouche is used as the shape for Ra’s sarcophagus in *Stargate*²¹²; it tends to be Egyptologically correct because the sum total of a person is conceived in the name within the cartouche, but it also uses “Egyptomania” to fuse the technological device along with the ritual object, the sarcophagus, for eternally preserving the person.²¹³ This contextual shift is very intriguing for the students of humanities; in science fiction, the misreading of objects like the sarcophagus also involves the interpretation of the unknown technology. In other words, an Egyptologist studying Egypt needs to think like an ancient Egyptian too, and I shall argue this point that ancient Egypt intrigues us because her unknown mysteries create a sense of alienation.

Films on ancient Egypt show many cartouches which might not correctly refer to the particular periods in which the films are set. Brier mentions that the cartouche and the Egyptian funerary practice were shown wrong in the film *The Mummy* directed by Terence

²¹⁰ Quoted in Brier, *Egyptomania*, 58.

²¹¹ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 57–58; see also Fig. 8.

²¹² Emmerich, *Stargate*.

²¹³ See Spieser, “Cartouche,” 1–10.

Fisher (1959).²¹⁴ However, the films are also crucial in recreating the architectonic marvels of Egypt. Brier also accounts that the reconstruction of highly ornate Egyptian temples in published plates by the “savants” (i.e. French scholars) working for the *Description de l’Egypte* containing the plates showing Egyptian art and architecture had inspired much visual romanticism orientalizing Egypt from Nineteenth century onwards.²¹⁵ Thus reconstruction of temples as a theme becomes significant in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, in *The Mummy*, and in *The Mummy Returns* studied in the thesis because in these texts the writers envision ancient Egyptian architecture in their pristine states.

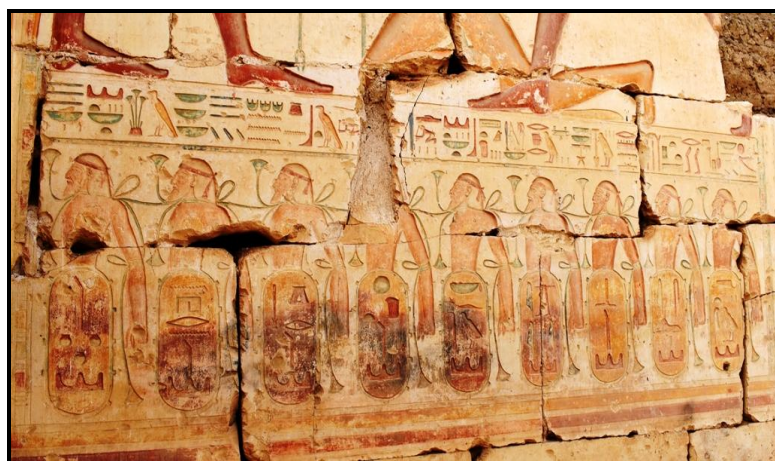


Figure 1.6 Bound Figures and Cartouches from Abydos

Relief from the temple of Ramesses II, Abydos in the image above shows the foes of Egypt tied by necks and bound by the hands from behind, the foes being intriguingly depicted as “visual compounds.” This is because the figures are depicted till the waist, while the names of their corresponding provinces depicted in the cartouches below their waist show edges resembling a fort’s barricaded wall. This becomes coincidentally relevant in the misinterpretation of the “*cartouche*” (as “ammunition”) by the French soldiers, who gave the oval structure the name “*cartouche*,” as Brier notes²¹⁶; thus the ancient Egyptian shape of the

²¹⁴ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 183.

²¹⁵ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 60–66.

²¹⁶ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 57–58.

cartouche has a war-connection in interpretation, as indicated by the image here. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

1.12 Objectives

A balanced study of art, archaeology, and literature, and also the renewal of the Egyptian studies along with the Classical and the Renaissance Studies will be fruitful. Though Egyptology is predominantly White-pursued, still the inclusion of Egyptian studies shall open up newer perspectives on the ancient history of Africa and the “Orient.”

1.12.1 Reading and “Recontextualization”

It is interesting thus how ancient Egypt was rescued from oblivion, re-discovered, restored and her legacy was studied and pursued even by the Whites, even in the Antiquities, by the Classical world.²¹⁷ The prospects of Egyptology remain open, since newer sites are being discovered in Egypt. Finding an intact tomb works as a trope, as an anxiety, as a hope for both specialists and lay people. For researchers and audience; it can be argued that an intact tomb is a chosen feature in fiction, thereby creating scope for both material adventure and academic pursuit. Egyptological fiction has not been much studied in mainstream “literature” but has been potentially explored in “popular culture” and in speculative fiction. Thus science fiction on ancient and modern Egypt could also be seen as rewriting and reviving of Egyptian history, though mostly from the White perspective since Egyptology being the White discipline has created the methodologies for the studies in Egyptian antiquities. I shall argue that fictional premise involves power and wealth in both qualitative and material sense.

1.12.2 Interpretation of Recurring Myths in Western Imagination

Retelling of Egyptian myths in fiction through recontextualization is possible because the Egyptians perceived their deities viscerally as well as symbolically. Etim E.

²¹⁷ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 25–107; Brier, *Egyptomania*, 19–42.

Okon argues that the divine families constituted of couples and a male/female issue tends to humanize the deities in which occasionally the goddess's importance surpasses that of her husband's.²¹⁸ Edward McNeil Burns quoted by Okon notes that it was easier for the Egyptians to compare him/herself and the sufferings of Isis as well as her painstaking reviving of her husband Osiris.²¹⁹ Okon perceives that the accumulated power of Horus and the fertility provided by Osiris being the embodiment of vegetation flourishing after Inundation also appealed since they were merged with statecraft and survival.²²⁰ These three deities and their interactions had such resonances that their myths are still relevant in both Egyptology and "Egyptomania" and I shall argue in chapters Two to Five how the divine myths surrounding Osiris-Isis act as ingredients for plots by Western writers.

1.12.3 Interpretation of Ancient Egypt as a Consciousness

Another reason why ancient Egypt arguably remains so intriguing is because Egypt throughout prehistory, ancient, medieval and colonial history had accumulated human knowledge and perception. Robert Bauval and Ahmed Osman note that Egypt in the prehistoric times had been occupied by the Saharan "Star People" who showed their observation skill regarding the celestial bodies by erecting "stone circles" and also creating architecture based on calculations of terrestrial and stellar positions.²²¹ Egyptological facts have inspired "Egyptomaniac" speculation about the external forces instrumental in the creation of ancient Egyptian civilization; I shall argue regarding the considerations by fiction-writers of the possibilities of the presence of external agents in ancient Egyptian developments. A. H. Gardiner quoted by Bauval and Osman notes that magical capacities

²¹⁸ Etim E. Okon, "Religion and Politics in Ancient Egypt," *American Journal of Social and Management Sciences* 3, no. 3 (2012): 93, accessed April 10, 2021, DOI:10.5251/ajsms.2012.3.3.93.98.

²¹⁹ Edward McNall Burns, *Western Civilizations: Their History and Their Culture*, vol. 1, 8th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1973), 35, quoted in Okon, "Religion and Politics," 94. I have paraphrased Okon's quoted section from Burns's book.

²²⁰ Okon, "Religion and Politics," 93–94.

²²¹ Robert Bauval and Ahmed Osman, *The Soul of Ancient Egypt: Restoring the Spiritual Engine of the World* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2015), 9.

were most significant in Egyptian thought; hence it is argued that “religion” as a concept did not exist in Egypt.²²² It is due to this fluidity of Egyptian “religion”²²³ that the magic potential has helped Western writers to recontextualize the Egyptian magic in fictional settings. Bauval and Osman perceive that Heka involved cosmic and nature powers accessed by the priesthood, thus “*natural religion*” could be tied with Heka.²²⁴ I shall mention and argue, applying this Egyptological insight in the chapters Two, Three, and Five, how the human-performed “Heka” or magic can control the deities through architectonic spaces. Another important view noted by Bauval and Osman is that the Modernism in the White West as well as Egypt has evolved in connection with “Egyptomania” which has appropriated many artistic styles as well as concepts of mysticism from ancient Egypt.²²⁵ This expresses how we are never far from Egypt, at least not in terms of consciousness; the legends of ancient Egypt are always contemporary amidst us. I shall argue with references to the novels chosen in this thesis and show how ancient Egypt is believed to exist in current times through secret societies and this generates a lot of speculation.

1.12.4 “Sublime” and “Grotesque”

It can be argued that the Egyptian pantheon’s divine members, when used as characters in science fiction and fantasy, can elicit visual and sensory perceptions of a different kind from the readers/viewers. Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr. notes that “sublime and grotesque” are sometimes attributed to uncovering of secrets; the interpretation/perception of the “sublime or grotesque” would require different modes of sensual engagement and acquisition of knowledge.²²⁶ Discussion of Egyptian mysteries can terrify us and fill us with

²²² A. H. Gardiner, “Egyptian Magic,” in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T & T Clarke, 1973), 263, quoted in Bauval and Osman, *The Soul of Ancient Egypt*, 41. I have paraphrased the quoted section by Bauval and Osman from Gardiner’s text.

²²³ Quoted in Bauval and Osman, *The Soul of Ancient Egypt*, 41.

²²⁴ Bauval and Osman, *The Soul of Ancient Egypt*, 41.

²²⁵ Bauval and Osman, *The Soul of Ancient Egypt*, 90.

²²⁶ Csicsery-Ronay Jr., *The Seven Beauties*, 8–9.

awe. Csicsery-Ronay Jr. notes that the “grotesque” involves a loss of “control” at the discovery of the unknown and diverse entities which lie behind apparently known registers.²²⁷ I shall apply this in chapter Two and argue how Imhotep the undead and the Scorpion King the half-human indicate the rupture of the boundaries of human and non-human, creating “grotesque.”²²⁸ The mummy films construe the “grotesque” as the source of “attraction” as well as revulsion; in *The Mummy* Evelyn is both fascinated and terrified by Imhotep.²²⁹ Csicsery-Ronay Jr. notes that the “sublime” involves the attempted perception of the magnanimity of the external spectacle which requires widening of human capacities.²³⁰ The Sphinx in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* through its galactic spread elicits awed responses from humans and aliens alike in the novel.²³¹

The “sublime” and the “grotesque” often involve alien atmosphere and habitats. So it can be argued that science fiction and mythology both involve studies and observation of Nature in different parameters. Mark Rose notes that physical Nature came to be seen as separate despite the understanding of humans as one of the natural species.²³² In both science fiction and “mythopoeic” fiction more-than-human characters blur the divide between humans and the physical nature. Rose notes that the superhero figure implying “transformation” involves “self-alienation” from the normalized humans and the extraterrestrial can also be construed as a metaphor for dehumanization; thus in either case we may have a “superman” figure, or we may have a beast.²³³ I shall apply these concepts and argue that the ancient Egyptians conjoined the two concepts, and the science fiction and

²²⁷ Csicsery-Ronay Jr., *The Seven Beauties*, 146.

²²⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

²²⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 128–247.

²³⁰ Csicsery-Ronay Jr., *The Seven Beauties*, 146.

²³¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

²³² Mark Rose, *Alien Encounters: Anatomy of Science Fiction* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1981), 98.

²³³ Rose, *Alien Encounters*, 179.

mythopoeia incorporate such beliefs. Science fiction expands known nature and known parameters.

1.12.5 Repetition of Ancient Egyptian Themes in Fiction

The contribution of the thesis lies in the application of the comparative study between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” in chosen science fiction texts and mythopoeia to explore the uniqueness of ancient Egypt as recurring inspiration behind writers and directors. Egypt is thus unique, inviting, always raising questions, projecting mysteries, and all such stimuli require attention. Even in the ancient world, Egypt was unique; Joseph Campbell notes that the Egyptians even in the Predynastic period had started displaying their uniqueness apart from the Asians in the Southern West by developing a unique mythology and patterns of visual expression.²³⁴ It can be argued that the deities developed by the ancient Egyptians had been so important in peoples’ lives that the Egyptian deities had been universalized. Campbell argues that the Osiris-Isis couple thus represented the ideal farming couple and through them their Egypt was a leap from worldly savagery to planned civilization: vine, fruits, barley as well as wheat grew in Egypt and the procedures of harvesting them were mythically attributed to Osiris and Isis.²³⁵ Keeping the popularity of the myths in mind, it shall be argued why and how Osiris-Isis myths are revisited by Western writers. Thus ancient Egypt is wondrous, miraculous, and literature and art continue to repeat that sense of wonder. The scope of the thesis is limited to selected science fiction texts and films produced in the final decade of the Twentieth century and the first two decades of the Twenty-first century and argue with textual references and visual illustrations, why and how ancient Egypt recurs in “Egyptomania,” mostly through her art, magic, ritual practice constantly referring back to the deities.

²³⁴ Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1960), 423.

²³⁵ Campbell, *The Masks of God*, 424.

Chapter Two

Stephen Sommers's Films and Max Allan Collins's Novelizations: *The Mummy* (1999) and *The Mummy Returns* (2001): Funerary Magic and the Underworld

2.1 Introduction

The duology of films, *The Mummy* directed by Stephen Sommers (1999) and *The Mummy Returns* directed by Stephen Sommers (2001) followed by the two novelizations based on the two films (both *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* are authored by Max Allan Collins in 1999 and 2001 respectively with close observation of the source-films) because of their reference to funerary magic, have been generally received as supernatural in genre, concerning archaeological fiction/adventure.¹ However the settings of the two films and the two novels, if studied simultaneously, might provide fresh insights on bringing out individual attributes of on-site archaeology, modification of Egyptological data, and apprehensive and mystic knowledge. I shall address these aspects with reference to ancient Egyptian funerary information discovered in Egyptology and visual / “mythopoeic” re-contextualizing of the same elements through “Egyptomania.”

2.2 A Comparison of Plot Summaries

Imhotep (played by Arnold Vosloo in both *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*), serving as ancient Egypt's instructor on funerary regulations followed in the cults of Osiris

¹ Stephen Sommers, dir., *The Mummy*, screenplay by Stephen Sommers, story by Stephen Sommers, Lloyd Fonvielle, and Kevin Jarre (1999; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 1999), DVD; Stephen Sommers, dir., *The Mummy Returns*, screenplay by Stephen Sommers, written by Stephen Sommers (2001; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 2001), DVD; Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 1999); Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy Returns* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001). In the footnotes having references to both the film(s) and the novel(s), I have placed the director first, since the novels were written after the films. The bibliography lists the sources alphabetically. “Hamunaptra” in the film *The Mummy* is spelled as “Hamanaptra” in *The Mummy* novel.

See also Karl Freund, dir., *The Mummy*, screenplay by John L. Balderston, story by Nina Wilcox Putnam and Richard Schayer (Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 1932), Film, for comparative study, since there are common elements in both the films.

Some of the concepts discussed in this Chapter with references to two films, for example, the co-working between the White characters and the native Egyptians, the theme of reincarnation, and the roles of the Egyptologist and the archaeologist have been previously discussed in one published chapter in an edited book, see Anirban Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists’ in Fictional Imagination: Three Case Studies,” in *Redefining Identities, Cultures and Literatures*, ed. Vasant Harkal, vol. 1 (New Delhi: Creative Books, 2016), 156–169. In chapter Two in this thesis, I have elaborated the issues further with more references to mythology.

and Anubis, is sentenced to suffer the punishment of “Hom-Dai” for the dual sins of murdering the fictional Pharaoh Seti I (played by Aharon Ipale in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*) and attempting to “resurrect” Anck-su-namun (played by Patricia Carola Velásquez Semprún in both *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*), his secret lover and Seti I’s mistress.² Imhotep turns into an “undead” following the punishment³ and is accidentally revived by Evelyn Carnahan (played by Rachel Hannah Weisz in both *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*),⁴ the fictional daughter of Howard Carnahan, recounted in M. A. Collins’s *The Mummy*⁵ and *The Mummy Returns*,⁶ who is later captured by Imhotep to repeat the ritual initiated three thousand years ago in the treasure-loaded mortuary site entitled Hamanaptra, in which Evelyn’s organs and sacrifice would provide Anck-su-namun’s spirit with a new body.⁷ Evelyn thereby becomes the conduit between an ancient “Oriental” curse and the “Occidental” (White) obsession regarding it but she is also the “Occidental” means to check the “Oriental” curse. The ancient Egyptians themselves had attempted to restrict Imhotep’s rituals through the Pharaoh’s trained class of bodyguards, whose future, though pursuing Islam, are well versed with the glitch created in the Egyptian funerary pantheon through the abilities of Imhotep.⁸ The preventive knowledge for curbing Imhotep is laid down in the fabled *Book of Amun Ra* - whose existence had been a matter of conjecture in the Eurocentric (fictional) “Bembridge” community of experts.⁹ Evelyn’s gradual unlocking of Imhotep’s secrets were first thwarted by her employer Dr. Terence Bey (played by Erick Avari in *The Mummy*) - a native intellectual, working with undercover intelligence with Ardeth Bay (played by Oded Fehr in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*) the “Med-jai”

² Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–25.

³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–25, 131.

⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 140–146.

⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–42.

⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1.

⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 186–195, 208–247.

⁸ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256.

⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–256.

leader.¹⁰ On the other side the Eurocentric agents have formed a coalition in which the French and the Americans plan to appropriate Imhotep's treasures.¹¹ Upon resurrection, Imhotep consumes their bodies' organs to facilitate self-regeneration; this renewal can also be perceived as the White obsession and fear regarding the antiquities of ancient and "Oriental" Egypt, getting reawakened through "Occidental" scholarship.¹² Imhotep's attempt to resurrect Anck-su-namun fails and his powers are claimed by Anubis whose appearance is prompted by Evelyn's reading from the *Book of Amun Ra*.¹³ Richard [Rick] O'Connell (played by Brendan James Fraser in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*) then mortally stabs Imhotep.¹⁴ Hamanaptra sinks at the accidental triggering of a "kill switch" mechanism designed and provided in its architectural layout, along with the abysmal Pharaonic treasures.¹⁵



Figure 2.1. Wepwawet, Osiris, and Seti I

¹⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–256.

¹¹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–256.

¹² Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–256.

¹³ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 204–247.

¹⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 204–247.

¹⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 248–256.

Reliefs showing Wepwawet and Osiris, from the Temple of Seti I in Abydos; on the left, Seti I is touched affectionately by Wepwawet, who has a jackal head like that of Anubis.¹⁶ On the right, within the cavity, Osiris is seen venerated by Seti I. J. Viaud notes that the Anubis-like jackal-headed god Wepwawet served as Osiris's "lieutenant" during Osiris's world-conquest.¹⁷ Likewise, in *The Mummy Returns*, we see the deified canine motif through the presence of the "Army of Anubis" with which the Scorpion King and later Imhotep and Anck-su-namun aim for world-domination.¹⁸ The anthropomorphic cult of Osiris maintained a close connection with the zoomorphic cult of Anubis. Likewise, in M. A. Collins's *The Mummy*, it can be argued that the "warrior priests of Anubis" are cooperative with Imhotep, since Imhotep serves Osiris who is also mythically Anubis's father.¹⁹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

In *The Mummy Returns* we find that Evelyn has inherited her father's mansion, thereby upgrading from a stumbling yet promising scholar to an independent, financially stable, conscious archaeologist supported by her husband Rick O'Connell and her son Alex (played by Freddie Boath).²⁰ She had been constantly harrowed by dreams which hinted magical objects and possessions linked with past-life experiences.²¹ Evelyn and O'Connell uncover the "Bracelet of Anubis" worn by the fabled Scorpion King (played by Dwayne Douglas Johnson) and the "Spear of Osiris."²² The Curator-cultist Baltus Hafez (played by Alun Armstrong) and Meela, the reincarnated Anck-su-namun with partial memory, recover

¹⁶ Rosalie David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1981), 36, 39.

¹⁷ J. Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," in *Larousse Mythologie Générale*, ed. Félix Guirand, *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (1996; reprint, London: Chancellor Press; Reed Consumer/International Books Ltd, 1997), 16–17.

¹⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288. See Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

¹⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 3–25.

²⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 51–83. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

²¹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 9–37.

²² Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 38–96.

the cocooned body of Imhotep, along with the *Book of the Dead* and the *Book of Amun Ra*.²³ Baltus resurrects the deformed Imhotep while Alex is kidnapped for wearing the “Bracelet,” which acts as a guide to the fabled “Oasis of Ahm Shere.”²⁴ The Oasis contains the Golden Pyramid commissioned by the Scorpion King, which has the key to revive the “Army of Anubis” and the dormant Scorpion King.²⁵ Evelyn and Meela get back their individual memories of their Pharaonic past-lives as Nefertiri and Anck-su-namun respectively initiated by Imhotep’s magic.²⁶ Their memories go back to the acrobatic performances ripe with power struggle in fictionalized Seti I’s court where Nefertiri and Ankh-su-namun pursued their fates individually as the safe-keeper of the “Bracelet of Anubis” and the concubine-cum-body shielder of Seti I.²⁷ The arrangement fuels Nefertiri’s and Evelyn’s revenge further, as she witnessed her father’s murder at the hands of Anck-su-namun and Imhotep, shown in *The Mummy*’s opening sequences²⁸ and the arrangement effects her destiny through lifetimes.²⁹ Imhotep’s supernatural powers are claimed by Anubis as he explores the inner chambers of the Golden Pyramid.³⁰ O’Connell is finally able to identify himself as the destined “Warrior”; wields the “Spear of Osiris” as the designated weapon brought to his realization by the “Med-jai” Chief Ardeth and impales Scorpion King with it.³¹ The underworld opens up from within the Golden Pyramid which sucks the entire building from inside, along with Imhotep, the Scorpion King, Meela and the Oasis;

²³ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 38–96.

²⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2–6, 84–109, 170–288.

²⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 84–109, 170–288.

²⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 170–184.

²⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 170–184.

²⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 3–11.

²⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 170–184.

³⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 241–144.

³¹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 250–285.

O'Connell, Jonathan, Evelyn, and Alex escape with Izzy's timely assistance (played by Shaun Parkes).³²

2.3 Literature Review

I received important insights from the article “Unwrapping The Mummy: Hollywood Fantasies, Egyptian Realities” by Egyptologist Stuart Tyson Smith in which he notes the incorporation of Egyptological materials in *The Mummy*.³³ S. T. Smith's information is relevant because he assisted the film company (The Universal) with hieroglyphic utterances. Comparison between Egyptological scholarship in (i) funerary beliefs, (ii) embalmment, (iii) the depiction of death-linked culture and (iv) the mummies in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* has been pursued by S. T. Smith.³⁴ S. T. Smith notes that these popular renditions unite the “adventurer” and the “archaeologist” in one identity and project the “Orient” as full of riches, awe and unknown possibilities.³⁵ S. T. Smith has appreciated, in *The Mummy*, (i) the veracity of “*Sah-Netjer*” as linked with mummification, (ii) the true historic presence of the “Med-jai,” and (iii) the carnivorous “Apshai beetles” - a specific category of predatory beetles mentioned in the *Book of the Dead*.³⁶ S. T. Smith also notes the contextualization of the “Pyramid Text Spell 373”³⁷ in *The Mummy Returns* used by Imhotep to bring life to his embalmed guards; S. T. Smith points out that the Spell was instead reserved for regeneration for the deceased in the world beyond the mortal.³⁸ Thus the Egyptological insight has been recontextualized “Egyptomaniacally” to evoke horror by the revival of the dead body. I shall

³² Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 275–288.

³³ Stuart Tyson Smith, “Unwrapping The Mummy: Hollywood Fantasies, Egyptian Realities,” in *Box Office Archaeology: Refining Hollywood's Portrayals of The Past*, ed. Julie M. Schablitsky (2007; Reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 16–33.

³⁴ S. T. Smith, “Unwrapping The Mummy,” 16–33.

³⁵ S. T. Smith, “Unwrapping The Mummy,” 18.

³⁶ S. T. Smith, “Unwrapping The Mummy,” 29.

³⁷ See Miriam Lichtheim, ed., *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings. Volume I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms* (1976; Reprint, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 75–76.

³⁸ S. T. Smith, “Unwrapping The Mummy,” 22–23, 31.

utilize S. T. Smith's trajectory of information,³⁹ expand it further to emphasize the importance of the Osirian and the Anubian connections which want discussion in available critical literature on the films and novels discussed.

In conclusion to her article entitled "Repeating Death: The High Priest Character in Mummy Horror Films," Jasmine Day compares Indiana Jones with *The Mummy* as well as *The Mummy Returns*, in which elements of mummy-fascination have been linked with material acquisitions of antiques.⁴⁰ The beetle has also received critical attention in David Huckvale's book *Ancient Egypt in The Popular Imagination: Building a Fantasy in Film, Literature, Music and Art* (2012) in which he has mentioned the "horror" of bodily consumption by scarabs, which is a feature equally crucial in Richard Marsh's novel *The Beetle* (1897) and Sommers's *The Mummy*.⁴¹ The current chapter shall communicate that (i) the iconographic contexts of funerary objects in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*, (ii) the interpretations regarding the divine motives, and (iii) the combined efforts of the West and the East in precluding Imhotep and the Scorpion King with references to specific scenes in the two films and the two novels need more attention with newer information drawn from Egyptology and "Egyptomania."

2.4 Methodology and Argument

From the comparison of the plot-summaries, it can be perceived that unlike other "Egyptomaniac" fiction and films depicting encounters with the mummies, we do not see a strictly defined "mummy" at work. Despite the titles of Sommers's movies and M. A. Collins's novels based on the films, Imhotep's body and *being* do not feature the attributes

³⁹ S. T. Smith, "Unwrapping The Mummy," 16–33.

⁴⁰ Jasmine Day, "Repeating Death: The High Priest Character in Mummy Horror Films," in *Histories of Egyptology: Interdisciplinary Measures*, ed. William Carruthers (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), 222, 215–226.

⁴¹ David Huckvale, *Ancient Egypt in The Popular Imagination: Building a Fantasy in Film, Literature, Music and Art* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 2012), 160–161.

of a mummy, since he is not embalmed and his organs are not preserved. His tongue is extracted and he is just exteriorly bandaged, becoming a Pharaonic version of the “undead.”⁴² Upon resurrection, his body functions as a mobile humanoid infection⁴³ which gradually gains subjectivity/subject-position. Interestingly, he does possess intelligence to locate his hosts.⁴⁴ From that perspective, the study needs to focus on the magical / “mythopoeic” agents that reconstitute both the persona and the identity of Imhotep. The study shall include references to the ancient Egyptian deities invoked and the processes employed to preclude Imhotep’s movements. It can be argued that by gaining a re-constituted mobile faculty on Earth, Imhotep posits a “glitch” in the mortuary transition leading to the blessed Afterlife believed by the ancient Egyptians. Imhotep ironically acquires the supernatural faculties as long-term consequences of “Hom-Dai” (the transition can be seen as adverse “side-effects”), which rather make a farce out of the justice meted out to him in Pharaonic times.⁴⁵ The Scorpion King too gets upgraded to a monstrous hybrid creature, part insect and part human, by the dictates of Anubis creating a burden for the world to encounter.⁴⁶ It shall thus be argued that the close reading of the two films and the two novels reveal fanciful recontextualizations of ancient Egyptian myths but these occasionally “Egyptomaniac” applications are also Egyptologically relevant. The emphases will be on architectonic spaces, on material objects, on “Oriental”-“Occidental” fissures in terms of collections, and finally on the truce between the “Occident” and the “Orient” to stop the pan-global threats posed in the two filmic and textual duologies.⁴⁷

⁴² Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 20–25.

⁴³ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 142–204.

⁴⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 142–204.

⁴⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 20–25.

⁴⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6, 172, 264–280.

⁴⁷ See Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.



Figure 2.2 Seti I on a Litter

Relief from the Temple of Seti I in Abydos, showing the pharaoh seated on a litter and is receiving recognition even from the divine personages: three jackal-headed deities at the back and three falcon-headed deities in the front carry the king's royal weight.⁴⁸ It can be argued that the canine motif along with the falcon motif is thus used in association with the royalty; the “Army of Anubis” is desired for world-dominion by the Scorpion King, and later by Imhotep and Anck-su-namun.⁴⁹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

2.5 Importance of Osiris and Anubis

In *The Mummy* the assassination of the deified Seti before the Osirian priests constitutes a powerful moment proving his mortality before his religious subjects.⁵⁰ The priests are also shaken to see that Imhotep, the religious servant of Osiris could actually harm Seti, considered as the royal successor of Osiris.⁵¹ As Peter Robinson notes, the gods Ra as well as Osiris are involved in terms of the demised person's transit; the need was to provide the deceased sustenance having the aim of rejuvenation ensured through accurate

⁴⁸ Dan Richardson and Daniel Jacobs, *The Rough Guide to Egypt* (London: Rough Guides, 2013), 248.

⁴⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2–6, 97–102, 127–129.

⁵⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 5–9.

⁵¹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 5–9. See also Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (1989, 1991; reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 20–22. See also Anirban Ray, “Visuals and Narration in *The Prince of Egypt*,” *Jadavpur Journal of Comparative Literature* 55 (2018–2019): 121–123.

rituals.⁵² From that perspective, Imhotep's desire to regain Anck-su-namun seems to be having its justification since Imhotep had carefully served both Seti and Osiris,⁵³ and he had been particularly motivated by the common belief that Osiris had been given a second existence following resurrection enabled by the magic of Isis.⁵⁴ However, his fate is sealed because he assassinates Seti⁵⁵; in this context it can be argued that Osiris was specially honored by Seti in his temple in Abydos, and the famous list of seventy-six pharaohs are all held lawful in Osirian jurisdiction in terms of authorized claim over the ancient Egyptian throne.⁵⁶ In a fictional sense, the murder of the Pharaoh in *The Mummy*⁵⁷ is a direct clash with Osirian kingship, and in *The Mummy Returns* the Scorpion King is removed by the use of "Spear of Osiris"⁵⁸ having the "Djed pillar" in its structure representing resurrection.⁵⁹ It indicates that resurrection is meant for the blessed dead, not for the ones who disturb law and justice.⁶⁰ The cults of Ra and Osiris are brought together; the fictional *Book of Amun Ra*, an "Egyptomaniac" construct, maintains the balance of the transmission of souls and blocks unauthorized appropriation of souls, which Imhotep attempts to do in Sommers's *The Mummy* and M. A. Collins's *The Mummy*.⁶¹ It can be argued that in Sommers's *The Mummy* Anubis's statue is set guarding over Imhotep's sarcophagus⁶² as Anubis is the conveyor of souls⁶³ while the sculpted Horus-figure is chosen as the repository of the *Book of Amun Ra*⁶⁴

⁵² Peter Robinson, "As For Them Who Know Them, They Shall Find Their Paths': Speculations on Ritual Landscapes in The 'Book of The Two Ways,'" in *Mysterious Lands (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, eds. David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke (London: UCL Press, 2003), 144.

⁵³ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 5–9.

⁵⁴ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 16–19.

⁵⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 5–9.

⁵⁶ Kemp, *Ancient Egypt*, 20–22. See Ray, "Visuals and Narration," 121–122.

⁵⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 5–9.

⁵⁸ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 271–280.

⁵⁹ For "Djed," see Aude Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology* (1999; reprint, New York: Todtri Book Publishers, 2002), 78–79, 118–119.

⁶⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns* 267–278.

⁶¹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 226–241.

⁶² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 23–25.

⁶³ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 25.

⁶⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 194–195.

as Horus is the giver of kingship contextualized in the ancient Egyptian royalty sanctioned also by the dual authorities of Osiris and Ra.⁶⁵

As per Viaud's studies, both Osiris and Anubis are perceived as crucially linked with the Judgment of the demised, Osiris being the judge while Anubis being the carrier of the souls to the space of Judgment.⁶⁶ Anubis removes Imhotep's supernatural powers in *The Mummy*⁶⁷ and *The Mummy Returns*⁶⁸; however he plays an ambivalent role in assisting Scorpion King in *The Mummy Returns*.⁶⁹ Ardeth explains that the deities pursue their own methods in maintaining the cosmic balance which is beyond human cognition.⁷⁰ It is the "Spear of Osiris" that is lethal against the Scorpion King; the judging attribute of Osiris is "Egyptomaniacally" and aggressively projected through a fictionalized weapon.⁷¹

Osirian culture is aware of the extent of the sacrilege Imhotep and his priests are committed despite their sacred posts, that is, to reclaim and detour the deceased Anck-sunamun from the path of Osirian judgment.⁷² Hamanaptra's internal architecture also seems to reverse the sacredness associated with the embalming procedures deeply rooted in the cult of Osiris. John A. Wilson recounts that in ancient Egyptian funerary practice (i) the process of bestowing eternal life and (ii) taking the beatified form involves an elaborate process containing rituals as well as physical events.⁷³ For pursuance of rituals, the lector priest's profession involves adherence to the scripted rites and constituents; Adriaan De Buck cited by Wilson notes that the god Anubis, as per "Spell 60," is acknowledged as the provider of

⁶⁵ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 11–23, 41–43.

⁶⁶ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 16–42.

⁶⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 245–247.

⁶⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 241–244.

⁶⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6.

⁷⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 172.

⁷¹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:38:00–01:55:40; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–278.

⁷² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 14–25.

⁷³ John A. Wilson, "Funeral Services of the Egyptian Old Kingdom," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 3, no. 4 (October 1944): 210, accessed Nov. 26, 2016, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/542993>.

these ingredients.⁷⁴ The inversion of the purities involved in the mummification process is seen in *The Mummy* film and novel and *The Mummy Returns* film and novel.⁷⁵ The fluidic substance in the moat in Hamanaptra is full of decomposing essence; the onlooker is projected “his own mummified corpse” in the reflection in the fluid’s sentient intelligence.⁷⁶ The husk of Anck-su-namun’s body gathers the dark fluid along with her spirit,⁷⁷ but despite its cursed properties, it is supposed to provide regenerative abilities to the revived body.⁷⁸ Thus the watery transit and medium between the life on Earth and the underworld as believed in ancient Egyptian mindset are recontextualized as horrific and putrid in the Western films. Robinson notes that in ancient Egyptian practice chemicals were indispensable in mummification; for example on “Heqata’s Coffin,” we see representations of “*snw* vases” (a specific type of funerary vase) meant for storing the “efflux of Osiris”⁷⁹; this “efflux” constitutes special “putrefact[ing]” fluids holding body-sustaining potential taken out during embalming method and finds mention in “Spell 1080” of the *Coffin Texts*.⁸⁰ It can be argued that the chemical involvement, aiming towards preservation, and elaborated in Pharaonic funerary practices, have been modified in the duologies for the heightening of the horror and the gothic. Hamanaptra thereby is a projection of the West’s apprehensions and misconceptions regarding ancient Egyptian funerary alchemy and architecture.

2.6 “*Hom-Dai*”: Mythical Implications

Imhotep’s reanimation can be argued as an “Egyptomaniac” expression of supernatural mutation. The biochemical ingredient granting powers is a major feature in

⁷⁴ Wilson, “Funeral Services,” 210. See Adriaan De Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts, Vol. 1: Texts of Spells 1-75*, OIP, vol. 34 (Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1935), 252.

⁷⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy*; Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

⁷⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 18.

⁷⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 19.

⁷⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 20.

⁷⁹ Quoted in Robinson, ““As For Them Who Know Them,”” 156.

⁸⁰ Robinson, ““As For Them Who Know Them,”” 156.

science fiction and fantasy. For example, James A. Herrick mentions that the sentient species are supposed to contain the potential of “Vril” as perceived by Edward Bulwer-Lytton in his novel *The Coming Race*.⁸¹ The aim of gaining wisdom across the cosmos is assisted by the “life force”⁸² as Herrick notes.⁸³ In *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace* (directed by George Lucas) the natural abilities in connection with “the force” is made possible by “medi-chlorine”⁸⁴ in Anakin Skywalker’s (played by Jake Matthew Lloyd) blood, thus the element of magic is perceived at an organic level.⁸⁵ This can be arguably compared to the powers invested by the carnivorous scarabs turning Imhotep into an “undead.”⁸⁶ It can thus be argued that the constituent factors augmenting powers can be seen in both fantasy, “mythopoeic,” and science fiction.

The passage to the Egyptian Afterlife is a complex process in terms of the Egyptian funerary practices. The “*hom-dai*” projects an interesting example of paramedical, magico-religious mutation. Walter Federn notes and quotes Gertrud Thausing’s observation that the deceased is enabled assimilation with a singular essence of energy and/or different essential energies, and the proper utterance of charmed words are required for spiritual “transformation” following demise.⁸⁷ Imhotep’s priestly assistants go through physical torture of entombment in living state and like a reverse of the “Opening of the Mouth” ritual,

⁸¹ James A. Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies: How Science and Science Fiction Forge New Religious Beliefs* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2008), 183. See Edward Bulwer-Lytton, *The Coming Race* (1871; Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002).

⁸² Quoted in Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies*, 184.

⁸³ Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies*, 184.

⁸⁴ Quoted in Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies*, 184.

⁸⁵ Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies*, 184. See George Lucas, dir., *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*, written by George Lucas (Los Angeles, California: 20th Century Fox, 1999), Film.

⁸⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 14–25.

⁸⁷ Gertrud Thausing, *Der Auferstehungsgedanke in Ägyptischen Religiösen Texten, Sammlung Orientalischer Arbeiten 16* (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1943), 22–43, cited and quoted in Walter Federn, “The ‘Transformations’ in the Coffin Texts: A New Approach,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 19, no. 4 (October 1960): 245, accessed November 29, 2016, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/543830>; see Federn, “The ‘Transformations’ in the Coffin Texts,” 245, for elaboration.

Imhotep's tongue is separated in the most gruesome manner,⁸⁸ depriving him of speech needed during trial in the Egyptian Afterlife. The ancient Egyptian priests performed the "Opening of the Mouth" ritual to return the faculties of speech to the deceased before internment in the tombs.⁸⁹ The scarabs' consumption of his flesh in the sarcophagus ironically re-establishes the Greek (mis)interpretation of the word "sarcophagus" meaning the agent that consumes flesh.⁹⁰ The Classical (mis)interpretation has been however suitably and "Egyptomaniacally" recontextualized to create supernatural funerary horror.

There seems to be an odd mixture of the pure and the grotesque in the mystic iconography of the Pharaonic beliefs in the underworld. Bodily produces and fluids are seen as involved in the transition process and are not separated, which create a sense of horror and disgust in our aesthetic standards. John Gwyn Griffiths notes that the re-moistening of the corpse is ritually linked with Osiris's bodily "discharges."⁹¹ Griffiths notes that the Pharaoh as well as Osiris is considered beneficiaries of "[l]ibations"; the Pharaoh's body is supposed to receive Osiris's "discharges" for preservation.⁹² In contrast, infectious "liquid" is smeared while bandaging Imhotep's wounds and bodies, indicating the reverse of the preservation fluids.⁹³ Thus the Osirian privilege is denied to Imhotep since he kills Seti, the legitimate ruler sanctioned mythically by Osiris. A companionate interaction is established between beetles and Imhotep's body as both get engaged in mutual consumption generating a curse, thereby becoming the "undead."⁹⁴ The "*hom-dai*" is a peculiar curse since it affects the entire humanity, giving Imhotep strange mortuary abilities.⁹⁵ It raises a question regarding

⁸⁸ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 22.

⁸⁹ Geraldine Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 62, 84, 104, 182.

⁹⁰ Pat Remler, *Egyptian Mythology A to Z* (2000, 2006; reprint, New York: Chelsea House, 2010), 41.

⁹¹ John Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and His Cult* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 46.

⁹² Griffiths, *Origins of Osiris*, 46.

⁹³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 23. Note that ironically, Imhotep is devoted to Osiris.

⁹⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 23–25.

⁹⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 23–25.

the ambivalent nature of a fictional ancient Egyptian practice, which ushers a global threat/pandemic.

It can be argued that the usage of the scarabs in the two films and in the two novels also “Egyptomaniacally” modify the ancient Egyptian beliefs regarding the beetles in terms of creative and mortuary cycles. R. P. Dow quoted and cited by Harry B. Weiss drew analogy between the 30 “days of the celestial month”⁹⁶ and the 30 “dentation of the fore tibiae of the scarab.”⁹⁷ These temporal significances along with the anatomy and the reproductive cycle of the scarab can be applied in the context of the “*hom-dai*” and an explanation behind Imhotep’s undead-state can also be inferred. It can be argued that the beetles, working like paranormal gadgets, consume Imhotep’s physical frame but provide his memory, identity, and vital essence with temporal energy. This leads to a repetitive renewal; hence Imhotep’s deformed body is kept dormant with memories intact. Imhotep can be perceived as a mobile consciousness and a hub of organic flesh simultaneously.



Figure 2.3 Reliefs from the Temple of Hathor, Dendera

⁹⁶ R. P. Dow, “The Testimony of the Tombs,” *Bulletin of the Brooklyn Entomological Society* 11 (1916): 25–33, quoted in Harry B. Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” *The American Naturalist* 61, no. 675 (July-August 1927): 355, accessed May 18, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2456388>.

⁹⁷ Dow, “The Testimony of the Tombs,” 25–33, quoted in Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 355.

In the image above, the detail from the wall of the Temple of Hathor, Dendera, shows symbolic, functional application of funerary beliefs through animals and insects. In the top register, we see two walking canines; in the middle register we see two baboons, and in the register below we see two scarabs between two apparently mummified, crouched figures. The association between beetles and embalming has been established here, by the incorporation of the “heart-scarab.”⁹⁸ However, this assisting connection is altered in the conceptualization of the “*hom-dai*” that Imhotep is fated to; in that scenario he is consumed by the carnivorous scarabs.⁹⁹ And like the canines present above in this relief, in *The Mummy* an odd coincidence can be noticed regarding the statue of Anubis gazing down over the sarcophagus of Imhotep “buried alive.”¹⁰⁰ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

Weiss informs us that the deceased’s heart pursues a self-journey through the “Duat,” the ancient Egyptian Underworld, and is reunited with his/her body.¹⁰¹ This reunion occurs in Osiris’s Hall since the connection between immortality and the scarab is strong, the scarab amulet provided with the demised fills the gap of the missing natural heart and enables the deceased to qualify in Osiris’s judgment.¹⁰² Weiss thus explains that the *Book of the Dead*’s Chapter 30 provides a mechanism: the heart is silenced so that it might not expose the deceased before Osiris.¹⁰³ Indeed a material recontextualization of the above can also be seen in *The Mummy* regarding the scarabs as the Warden Gad Hassan falls prey to

⁹⁸ Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 354–363.

⁹⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 14–25.

¹⁰⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 14–25, 114, 134–136.

¹⁰¹ Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 360.

¹⁰² E. A. Wallis Budge cited in Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 360–363; E. A. Wallis Budge, *Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection* (London, Philip Lee Warner; New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1911). Weiss elaborates the information, see Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 360–363. See also Anirban Ray, “Between ‘Transhumanism’ and ‘Posthumanism’: The Mummy-‘Transformers’ of Seth Kearsley’s *Mummies Alive!* (1997),” in *Disaster, Holocaust and Dystopian Literature: Concepts and Perspectives*, eds. Parul Mishra, Rajarshi Mukherjee, and Shreya Chakrabarty (Delhi: Upanayan Publications, 2020), 226–231.

¹⁰³ Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 362–363.

greed and tries to collect the scarabs from the wall.¹⁰⁴ In contrast to their “mythopoeic” purpose in Osiris’s Hall, the scarabs in *The Mummy* cause the victims to yell out, forcing their greed to be punished by internal hemorrhage and tissue rupture, making the organs, including the heart, bleed out internally.¹⁰⁵ With the host of beetles rendering Imhotep “undead,” he is reconstituted as a carrier of intelligent sensations. As an inversion of relocation in the Afterlife, and as a subversion of the funeral provision of the “heart-scarab” in the ancient Egyptian context, Imhotep’s undead body is loaded with heart-carried memories and knowledge.¹⁰⁶

2.7. Imhotep and Ankh-su-namun

Imhotep’s body is kept under the cold stare of Anubis - a pagan deity; thus even “*Med-jai*,” the followers of Allah, could trust Anubis as a Divine assistant, since Imhotep is a collective threat irrespective of religious, temporal and spatial registers.¹⁰⁷ Thus he is a pan-Egyptian figure, an image of terror spanning over Pharaonic Egypt and beyond; this terror had been initiated through his ritual punishment and later projected through his rising. In *The Mummy Returns* it is accounted that Imhotep was assigned supervision over the erection of the dual temples of Ammon as well as Ammon-Ra; the dual deities who preside over demise and functional life.¹⁰⁸ This makes the temple-complex appear similar to Kom Ombo dedicated to the dual deities Haroeris and Sobek of contrasting personalities, as Richard H. Wilkinson notes.¹⁰⁹ The boisterous O’Connell apparently does not bear any

¹⁰⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:46:30–00:48:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 108–109.

¹⁰⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 108–109.

¹⁰⁶ This perception can be drawn applying the information provided by Weiss, “The Scarabaeus of the Ancient Egyptians,” 360–363.

¹⁰⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy*; Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 25; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 277.

¹⁰⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 9.

¹⁰⁹ Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 209–210.

reverence towards the shrine excavated by Evelyn, attributed to Imhotep's workmanship.¹¹⁰ However his son Alex, having inherited the discerning eye of detailed observation from his mother, finds a coincidental similarity between an emblem on the temple-relief and his father's "tattoo."¹¹¹ The emblem combines the "Eye of Horus" inserted in the pyramid constituted by ascending "falcon's wings" and descending "mariner's compass."¹¹² In Sommers's *The Mummy Returns*, the emblem is different, having the Eye accompanied with a disk and a triangle.¹¹³ The presence of the composite symbol with fusions of the Pharaonic and the Western agents tend to create a site that dissolves "Occidental" and "Oriental" boundaries. Evelyn also has her personal engagement with ancient art; she is introduced as cleaning the "hieroglyph story"¹¹⁴ in which the image from a duel depicts the skills of two royal women.¹¹⁵ It is later revealed that she was viewing the architectonic representation of her own previous self.¹¹⁶ She is "Egyptianized" not only in dress but also in her reflexive self-control in dislodging the snake creeping up while excavating.¹¹⁷ Evelyn's dexterous handling of the snake rivals Meela's handling of an asp with expertise but threatening demeanor¹¹⁸; they both have been *ancient Egyptianized*, merging "Oriental" beauty with exotic lethality.¹¹⁹

Imhotep's regeneration through consumption of bodies evokes the gradual recollection of bodily strength linked with post-death stages perceived in the funerary beliefs expressed in the Old Kingdom's *Pyramid Texts*. R. O Faulkner notes that according to *PT* "400a," Pharaoh Wenis supports himself by consuming deities and humans for sustenance;

¹¹⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 9–11.

¹¹¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 12–13.

¹¹² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 13.

¹¹³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 13.

¹¹⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 14.

¹¹⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 14.

¹¹⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 14, 174–184.

¹¹⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 14.

¹¹⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 74–79.

¹¹⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns* 14, 74–79.

PT “403c” says that people’s spiritual entities are consumed by Wenis, along with utilized magic.¹²⁰ Faulkner notes that the funerary magic supports Wenis in his digestion and absorption of each deity’s wits and cerebral prowess and he is able to extend his life eternally.¹²¹ It can be argued that in *The Mummy*, this absorbing power has been “Egyptomaniacally” applied in the absorption of intellectual and physical essences of the explorers by Imhotep.¹²² In *The Mummy Returns*, the re-regenerating Imhotep materializes his guards/assistants from dust to pursue the O’Connells.¹²³ Interestingly Imhotep’s spells of regeneration empowering muscular and bone-growth is reminiscent of the “Utterance 373” in Teti’s Pyramid.¹²⁴ Faulkner notes that universal commotion ensues when Wenis displays his monstrosity in consuming the deities for sustenance; these assimilations turn him into an Omnipotent “Deity” himself.¹²⁵ Imhotep dreams to gain that state of omnipotence in Ahm Shere, thinking he could resist the corrective spells and/or weapons.¹²⁶ Thus the Egyptological studies of the *Pyramid Texts* can be considered in “Egyptomaniac” expressions of the Mummy’s powers; these expressions are rather Western. The duologies of the two films and the two novels, *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*, appropriate the idea of enormous power to create the “Oriental” versions of two sublime yet monstrous super-villains, Imhotep and the Scorpion King.

In a relief from one side of Taho’s Sarcophagus in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo, a ram-headed god, possibly Efu Ra, faces four “Ba”-birds perched on oval cartouches

¹²⁰ R. O. Faulkner, “The ‘Cannibal Hymn’ from the Pyramid Texts,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 10, no. 2 (July 1924): 98, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3854235>. See also Ray, “Between ‘Transhumanism’ and ‘Posthumanism,’” 229–230.

¹²¹ Faulkner, “The ‘Cannibal Hymn,’” 98.

¹²² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 143–204.

¹²³ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 00:35:24–00:48:29; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 97–126.

¹²⁴ Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings. Volume I*, 75–76. See also Anirban Ray, “Satyajit Ray’s ‘The Sahara Mystery’: a Case Study of Human-Monster-God Transition,” *Spring Magazine on English Literature* 4, no.1 (2018): 20–21, <http://www.springmagazine.net/v4n105/>.

¹²⁵ Faulkner, “The ‘Cannibal Hymn,’” 102.

¹²⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 127–129.

containing mummified figures; another oval cartouche on the same sarcophagus contains a figure without arms but with an erect phallus, indicating potential reservoir of life-generating force.¹²⁷ In this context it can be argued that the jackal-headed and the ram-headed deities are visibly depicted on the buildings of Thebes in the opening scenes of Sommers's *The Mummy*. The shadow of Anck-su-namun stabbing herself is cast upon a wall containing a painted image of a ram-headed god amidst other deities.¹²⁸ Anck-su-namun takes her life to escape prosecution but wishes to be resurrected by Imhotep.¹²⁹ As Viaud informs, the ram-headed Efu Ra represents the post-sunset solar deity gradually progressing towards rebirth¹³⁰ while the "ram-headed" Khnum, as the potter, manufactures new bodies using the "potter's wheel."¹³¹ The inclusion of the ram-headed images can be interpreted as iconographic modes of referring to death and resurrection in Sommers's *The Mummy*. Thebes is indeed perceived as the space that houses the living humans in the overall funerary ambience in Sommers's *The Mummy*.

Imhotep in *The Mummy* thereby disturbs the conditions set by the ancient Egyptian deities and followed by the priesthood/believers; he represents human empowering possibilities through the status of the undead, but also not semi-divine. Pinch notes that the bird Benu is venerated as Osiris's "manifestation"; it was one of the first manifested creatures according to ancient Egyptian mythology, and is a symbol of renewal.¹³² The stork glyph is mentioned again in *The Mummy Returns*, occurs in the *Book of the Dead*, and it is

¹²⁷ Regarding this sarcophagus, see Gaston Maspero and Henri Gauthier, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Nos 29307-29323: Sarcophages des Époques Persane et Ptolémaïque* (Le Caire: Imprimerie de L'Institut Français D'Archéologie Orientale, 1939), 1–17, Plate III, *Internet Archive*, uploaded by Alain_Dautant, November 28, 2015, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://archive.org/details/MasperoSarco1939>.

¹²⁸ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00.

¹²⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:00:30–00:07:00; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 4–25.

¹³⁰ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 11–13, 19.

¹³¹ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 37.

¹³² Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 117–118.

read and uttered by Alex to bring Evelyn back to life.¹³³ Interestingly, resurrection implies preservation of (White) identity, and the revived Evelyn considers her regenerated body as “a new woman.”¹³⁴ She uses the same words to validate her unique position as a female scholar, as an Egyptologist, in an otherwise men-dominated field during the time in which the film is set, as attested in *The Mummy*.¹³⁵ The two designations fuse the ancient Egyptian and the progressive White Woman in one identity. In *The Mummy* Evelyn is the quintessential “[N]ew [W]oman” who is intelligent cerebrally but lacks much physical strength,¹³⁶ while in *The Mummy Returns* she experiences resurrection, remembers her past life and regains her ancient Egyptian fighting skills.¹³⁷ *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* thus consider the issue of renewal in the two separate registers of spiritual conveyance and bodily growth. Because each organ was considered separate in mummification ritual, it becomes significant that Imhotep tries to reconstitute himself with different organs taken from mostly white people in *The Mummy*.¹³⁸ The “regenerat[ing]” Imhotep in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* is a curious mixture of both infection and cure; he constitutes a “curse” reconstituted as immortality.¹³⁹ Imhotep is thus not only a product of an ancient Egyptian crisis but also a world-predicament; thus “*Med-jai*” hold the White Egyptologists Carnahans in contempt, considering both father and daughter as lacking intelligence and pragmatic sense in playing with ancient spells and causing the world to brace the Pharaonic curse.¹⁴⁰ Imhotep poses a pan-religious curse, and the pagan and the monotheistic resistance must unite to preclude his growth.¹⁴¹ Thus Ardeth and Rick prepare

¹³³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 250–257.

¹³⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 255–257.

¹³⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256. See also Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

¹³⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256.

¹³⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:06:37–01:13:20; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

¹³⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 128–204.

¹³⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

¹⁴⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 40–154.

¹⁴¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

by their respective faiths: Ardeth invokes Allah's protectiveness while Rick claims to dispatch the Creature for Judgment in the "Kingdom" of God.¹⁴²

Since the restoration of life along with its memories and aims (love and/or retribution) is more important than materiality, the transactional agents do not hold much intrinsic value in the funeral space beyond their magical exercise, at least for the native cultists. For example, the economic importance of the golden *Book of Amun Ra* whose hieroglyphs exhibited benevolence apparently does not impress Meela.¹⁴³ She feeds the book to the scarabs,¹⁴⁴ symbolically returning it to Kherpi, represented through scarab-form, to connote the first form of the sun god as he reveals himself, indicating "metamorphosis" and resurrection.¹⁴⁵ Meela's role is essential for the completion of the Egyptianization of Evelyn as well, through their competitive relationship in terms of martial skills.¹⁴⁶ Meela is equally ambitious; as Anck-su-namun, she and Imhotep share mutual plans for global dominion, using the Anubian army following the assassination of the "Scorpion King."¹⁴⁷ The armed martial play/fight between Anck-su-namun and Evelyn is thus a display of mutual recognition, memories of ancient skills embodied in "twentieth-century women['s]" bodies.¹⁴⁸ Evelyn's physical presence in the male dominated sites of excavation intrigues Rick in Sommers's *The Mummy*.¹⁴⁹ Likewise, the precise yet deadly blows rendered by Meela in Sommers's *The Mummy Returns* unsettle the vain and proud Jonathan who could only protect himself incompetently against her with his shabby blows. Both men find it

¹⁴² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 155. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

¹⁴³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 43–46.

¹⁴⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 43–46.

¹⁴⁵ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 10–11, 13.

¹⁴⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

¹⁴⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 127, 1–288.

¹⁴⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 174–184, 253–260.

¹⁴⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 51–256.

difficult to factor in the women's anomalies since their heteronormative male cerebral faculties essentially desire to stereotype them as dependent women only.¹⁵⁰

2.8 Hamanaptra and the "Oasis of Ahm Shere"

Hamanaptra in the two films and the novels is constituted as a sort of mortuary laboratory; Evelyn becomes its discoverer as well as a vessel for dark "resurrection" ritual, since her organs are required by Imhotep for employment in the "resurrection" of Anck-sunamun.¹⁵¹ The potent guardian god presiding over this fictionalized counterpart to the "Valley of the Kings" is Anubis, and the franchise re-contextualizes the funerary roles played by the canine deities in the Egyptian pantheon. Terence DuQuesne cited by Linda Evans notes that the underground route traversed by the demised is given direction by Wepwawet as his name means "Opener of the Ways"¹⁵² thus he is linked with trajectories.¹⁵³ Anubis, who is similar to Wepwawet, is the only god the Scorpion King invoked as the last resort to preserve his life in the scorching desert heat,¹⁵⁴ and indeed the Pyramid dedicated to Anubis opens up the route to the underworld.¹⁵⁵ Despite being a deity strongly connected with demise, Anubis pursues a reverse decision of prolonging Scorpion King's life. Murry Hope notes that the iconography of canine headed manifestation linked with routes (ruled by Wepwayet) and later Anubis might be compared with the cult of Akhantuiah venerated by the Atlanteans.¹⁵⁶ In this aspect it can be argued that the Scorpion King establish rituals having echoes of cultures beyond ancient Egypt, as we see his followers identifying themselves by

¹⁵⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:42:27–01:55:40; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 250–266.

¹⁵¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 175–179, 213–14, 205–247.

¹⁵² Quoted in Linda Evans, "The Shedshed of Wepwawet: An Artistic and Behavioural Interpretation," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 97 (2011): 104, accessed February 19, 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23269890>.

¹⁵³ Evans, "The Shedshed of Wepwawet," 104. Evans mentions T. DuQuesne in footnote in connection with this information, see Terence DuQuesne, "Openers of the Paths: Canid Psychopomps in Ancient Egypt and India," *JAC* 10 (1995): 41.

¹⁵⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6.

¹⁵⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 277–285.

¹⁵⁶ Murry Hope, *The Sirius Connection: Unlocking the Secrets of Ancient Egypt* (1990, 1996; reprint, Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1997), 178.

scalping, following an Akkadian “custom.”¹⁵⁷ The possibility of incorporation of foreign cultures in ancient Egyptian mindset can also be supported by the mythological fact provided by Viaud that Wepwawet (or Upuaut) as well as Anubis provided services to Osiris during his civilizing mission in Asia.¹⁵⁸

Anubis and Horus are both intrinsically connected with the preservation of Osiris whom Imhotep serves: Viaud notes that according to mythology Isis was assisted by Anubis in the bandaging of Osiris’s corpse and thereby constituting the medical procedure of embalming¹⁵⁹ and Horus lends his protection even before his birth as seen in the relief in Abydos Temple.¹⁶⁰ The “Anubis statue” is located at the East of Horus statue¹⁶¹; this is “Egyptomaniacally” appropriate in terms of mythical kinship because Horus’s birth could only be possible following Osiris’s resurrection and Anubis assisted in that process.¹⁶² Jeremy Naydler observes that the solar essence is embodied in Horus and Osiris’s identity lives within Horus.¹⁶³ Naydler notes that the falcon species constitutes the shared essence of Ra as well as Horus whose father is also considered to be Ra, beside Osiris.¹⁶⁴ Naydler perceives that the regeneration of the sun is staged in the celestial habitat of the falcons; thereby Ra’s regeneration follows the demise of Osiris, linked through the bodily transition through Horus.¹⁶⁵ This can be applied to argue that the ancient Egyptians hid the *Book of Amun Ra* under Horus’s statue, which Evelyn identifies using her scholarship.¹⁶⁶ The book

¹⁵⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 221–222, 237–238.

¹⁵⁸ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 16, 25–27.

¹⁵⁹ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 25.

¹⁶⁰ Bettina L. Knapp, *Women in Myth* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1997), 12–13. See also Anirban Ray, “‘Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment’: An Egyptological Study,” *Teresian Journal of English Studies* 13, no. 3 (July–September 2021): 22–38.

¹⁶¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 195, 214.

¹⁶² Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 18–19, 20–25.

¹⁶³ Jeremy Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts: The Mystical Tradition of Ancient Egypt* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2005), 312.

¹⁶⁴ Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 312.

¹⁶⁵ Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 312.

¹⁶⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 190–195, 214, 231.

does claim life, through the agency of Anubis,¹⁶⁷ but the sculpted essence of Horus, as the shared conduit between Osiris and Ra, contains it.¹⁶⁸ Hamanaptra thereby offers a potential space for the archaeologists to review their knowledge of the Egyptian deities, and also enable cultists to harness and twist the mystic powers.¹⁶⁹

In *The Mummy Returns*, the punishment for defiling the chest containing the “Bracelet of Anubis” is drowning in water, caused by the architectonic mechanism of the temple enabling the chamber to be filled up by the Nile’s torrents.¹⁷⁰ Imhotep provides the vision of Meela’s past life through manipulating the reflection in a small reservoir in Karnak; Evelyn simultaneously gets her counterpart of the vision while flying in Izzy’s balloon.¹⁷¹ Leonard H. Lesko notes that in ancient Egyptian thought the sky was thought as watery.¹⁷² Thus water is a magical conduit through which the transference of spirit and restoration of memories occur.

In *The Mummy Returns*, the creation of “Ahm Shere” Oasis¹⁷³ is an innovative work of myth-creation in which the role of Anubis is revisited in terms of terrestrial alterations, though his domain consists mainly of the routes through the underworld.¹⁷⁴ While enduring the desert heat, Anubis is invoked (since the desert is also his domain as it is the natural habitat of the canines,¹⁷⁵ and following the promise of “[a] pyramid of gold” the Scorpion King gains the horrendous Anubian army and the “Oasis of Ahm Shere” for his survival,

¹⁶⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 244–247.

¹⁶⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 190–195, 214, 231.

¹⁶⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256.

¹⁷⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 00:04:40–00:16:53; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 23–37.

¹⁷¹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:06:37–01:13:20; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 170–184.

¹⁷² Leonard H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 118.

¹⁷³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6.

¹⁷⁴ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 25.

¹⁷⁵ See Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner, “Wepwawet in Context: A Reconsideration of the Jackal Deity and Its Role in the Spatial Organization of the North Abydos Landscape,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 43 (2007): 139–150, accessed June 14, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27801611>.

with vegetation and water.¹⁷⁶ The other deities seem to be silent witnesses as Thebes gets demolished by the Scorpion King with the “warriors” provided by Anubis.¹⁷⁷ The main problem thus seems to be attributed to the whimsical temperament of Anubis, who causes shifting dunes to be the repository of the Anubian army following the appropriation of Scorpion’s soul by him.¹⁷⁸ Along with the Oasis, the addition of the Golden Pyramid appears to be an “Egyptomaniac” construction of the West’s fascination for the Pyramid and the material fascination for Pharaonic gold.

The Great Pyramid of Giza has inspired the British scholars and their investigation considerably. The British antiquarian mind was much awed by the structure and symbolisms behind the Great Pyramid. Francis O’Gorman notes that the calculation of the Earth’s dimensions was symbolically incorporated in the mathematical harmony of the Great Pyramid, as noted in Charles Piazzi Smyth’s *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid*.¹⁷⁹ Smyth cited by O’Gorman notes that the so called “British units” were found to have been legitimized in the Pyramid’s measurement, thus British essence was linked with the Pyramid of antiquity, thereby *justifying* British “jurisdiction” over the Pyramid.¹⁸⁰ *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* do refer to Egyptological breakthroughs in the British colonial rule in terms of tomb discoveries and studies in ancient Egyptian antiquities. This “Occidental” preoccupation is embedded in *The Mummy* and in *The Mummy Returns*. Evelyn is given precedence as she is half-British, but the fact that she owns her father’s estate in London¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 00:00:22–00:04:36; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 4–5.

¹⁷⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 00:00:22–00:04:36; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 4–5.

¹⁷⁸ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 00:00:22–00:04:36; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 6.

¹⁷⁹ Francis O’Gorman, “‘To See the Finger of God in the Dimensions of the Pyramid’: A New Context for Ruskin’s ‘The Ethics of the Dust’ (1866),” *The Modern Language Review* 98, no. 3 (July 2003): 568, accessed July 24, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3738285>. See also Charles Piazzi Smyth, *Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid* (London: Alexander Strahan, 1864).

¹⁸⁰ O’Gorman, “‘To See the Finger of God,’” 568. O’Gorman also cites Simon Schaffer’s information in connection with Smyth, see Simon Schaffer, “Metrology, Metrication, and Victorian Values,” in *Victorian Science in Context*, ed. Bernard Lightman (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997), 438–474.

¹⁸¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 51–96.

and her post of “the first female curator” of “the Cairo Museum of Antiquities”¹⁸² seems to be echo of the establishment of British scholarship in the very capital of Egypt.¹⁸³

Ardeth Bay describes the “golden pyramid” like a “point of no return” that has claimed many lives.¹⁸⁴ The Scorpion’s King’s Pyramid seems to be the ultimate transposition of “Occidental” fears and obsessions about ancient dangers in Egypt. In style and structure it conflates (i) the Giza-Pyramids containing intriguing internal geometric handling of stones as noted by Christopher Dunn¹⁸⁵ but without hieroglyphs, as noted by Erich Von Däniken¹⁸⁶ and (ii) the Saqqara-Pyramids containing elaborate *Pyramid Texts* assisting the deceased pharaoh on his afterlife journey.¹⁸⁷ In argument it can be stated that the Scorpion King’s Pyramid is (i) a container of weapons, (ii) a repository of underworld-creatures beneath it, (iii) a control-hub of magical forces, and (iv) a conduit with the Egyptian Hell/Underworld.¹⁸⁸

The “Golden Pyramid” in Sommers’s *The Mummy Returns* and M. A. Collins’s *The Mummy Returns* is an arbitrary object of jurisdiction that appropriates supernatural agencies, turns them into instruments, and manipulates their energies. These alterations often happen between bodies and material/architectonic objects. Baltus wishes to be an assisting agent to the rising supernatural power embodied in the Scorpion King; Baltus carries the Bracelet like a “key.”¹⁸⁹ He is an accomplished scholar with unreasonable temperaments. Ironically, his mania with the ancient curses and chain of events is contrasted with his empirical Egyptological scholarship with which he has gifted the (White) world the “guidebook” to

¹⁸² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 255.

¹⁸³ Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

¹⁸⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 159.

¹⁸⁵ Christopher Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt: Advanced Engineering in the Temples of the Pharaohs* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 137–167.

¹⁸⁶ Erich von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx: The Newest Evidence of Extraterrestrial Contact in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Berkley Books, 1996), 264.

¹⁸⁷ See Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 2–453.

¹⁸⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 224–288.

¹⁸⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 238.

the “Egyptian collection” preserved in the British Museum.¹⁹⁰ This indeed is a powerful intellectual contribution, since it involves data regarding the contexts and significances of catalogued objects in one of the most well recognized museums in the world. The Golden Pyramid thereby stores anticipations for unlocking powers that go beyond the White-charted knowledge of ancient Egypt.

While treading over Anubis’s representation, Imhotep’s supernatural abilities are reduced so that same importance is given to the Scorpion King and Imhotep as opponents.¹⁹¹ Just as Imhotep and the Scorpion King are figures beyond time and space, the Golden Pyramid is also a space in which the concepts of fate as perceived in different faiths are considered, breaking down the boundaries between the monotheistic and the polytheistic religions. For example, Alex conflates the “good book” (an obvious reference to the *Holy Bible*) with the *Book of the Dead*, and commits apparent blasphemy by using the *Book of the Dead* to bring his mother’s soul back, though he does not suffer any judgment meted out by the Egyptian deities.¹⁹² Ardeth too invokes Allah as his “Med-jai” army is left to combat the “fifty thousand Anubis warriors” raised by Curator’s unlocking.¹⁹³ Thus there tends to be no conflict between his professed belief (Islam) and his service to Egypt by resisting Imhotep and the Scorpion King, because the concern for Pharaonic Egypt he shows is also meant for the world quintessentialized within the space of modern Egypt.¹⁹⁴ The Golden Pyramid, too, is recognized as a hub of vigilance. Within the Pyramid “a medieval knight” is reflected within a cartouche and it is interesting how in the Crusades, the “*Knights Templar*” were vigilant in the Oasis.¹⁹⁵ They pursued the ancient Egyptian system of nomenclature by writing a non-Egyptian name within the ancient Egyptian cartouche, inviting the protection

¹⁹⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 238.

¹⁹¹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:37:37–01:38:31; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 242–243.

¹⁹² Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:40:12–01:49:24; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 244–257.

¹⁹³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 247–249.

¹⁹⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy* 39–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 49–288.

¹⁹⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–280.

given by the Egyptian cartouche for eternity.¹⁹⁶ It can be argued thus that ancient and modern Egypt is represented as the unity of consciousnesses of the “Occident” and the “Orient” through collective fears and the resistance to those.¹⁹⁷ The text here reveals that Egypt enables the “Orient” to collaborate with the “Occident.” The White “*Knights Templar*” worked probably in assistance with, or being aware of the ancient Egypt-originated “*Med-jai*”; Ahm Shere and Hamanaptra were respectively under the vigilance of the “*Knights Templar*” and the “*Med-jai*.”¹⁹⁸ And if we consider the role of Horus as the benevolent protector of Egypt subduing Seth the god of Chaos with the harpoon as noted by Pinch,¹⁹⁹ we can link Rick’s use of the “Spear of Osiris” with Horus’s use of a pointed weapon.²⁰⁰ This is because, as Osiris’s son, Horus is the deity from whom the pharaohs inherit kingship.²⁰¹ That interpretation can be used for argument and it is supported by the textual information that the mark on Rick’s arm indeed features the “Eyes of Horus.”²⁰² Thus *The Mummy Returns* “Egyptomaniacally” links the West and the East through the Crusade, thereby establishing the White American masculinity at par with, and almost appearing to be the future correspondent of the ancient Egyptian notion of the benevolent masculine force linked with Osiris and his son Horus.²⁰³ This observation is guided by the fact that all pharaohs in terms of mythical doctrine represent Horus in living bodies and all pharaohs become Osiris as deified deceased as noted by Henri Frankfort.²⁰⁴ The instructions for defeating the Scorpion King also turn the “[G]olden [P]yramid[’s]” inner structures into

¹⁹⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–280.

¹⁹⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–280; this concept, elaborated here, had been mentioned earlier in Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

¹⁹⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–280.

¹⁹⁹ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 145.

²⁰⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–280.

²⁰¹ Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (1948; reprint, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 180–185.

²⁰² Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 13, 95–96, 267–280.

²⁰³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

²⁰⁴ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 181–189.

a neutral space.²⁰⁵ Within the “[G]olden [P]yramid[’s]” inner structures, guided by the reliefs, the Scorpion King is pierced with the “Spear of Osiris” and the gap between human/insect, the living and the otherworldly dematerializes, returning the Anubian army to “black sand” and also creating a vacuum suction, drawing in the Pyramid.²⁰⁶

Relief on Thotortious’s sarcophagus in Egyptian Museum, Cairo, visually sums up the interaction between Osiris and Ra; the sun god Ra is seen seated on his boat, on his back we see the bird Bennu,²⁰⁷ that is auspicious to both Osiris-cult and Ra-cult as noted by Moustafa Gadalla.²⁰⁸ Osiris faces the sun god, the “Djed pillar” stands behind him, and two baboons on each side of the boat raise their arms showing reverence.²⁰⁹ This pictorial representation coincidentally is very relevant for the study of the deities in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* since Alex completes the invocation from the *Book of the Dead* to reclaim his mother Evelyn’s soul.²¹⁰ He is successful after identifying the stork glyph which can be linked with the immortality of Bennu given the form of a stork.²¹¹ Also the “Djed Pillar” of Osiris present in the “Spear of Osiris” is wielded by O’Connell to impale the Scorpion King and push him to the Underworld.²¹²

What intrigues us is that the inscriptions within the “Golden Pyramid[’s]” inner structures provide directions for a meeting with the Scorpion King, as if it expected from the

²⁰⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 271–280.

²⁰⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–285.

²⁰⁷ Gaston Maspero and Henri Gauthier, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Nos 29307-29323: Sarcophages des Époques Persane et Ptolémaïque* (Le Caire: Imprimerie de L’Institut Français, D’Archéologie Orientale, 1939), 83–88, Plate XXVII.

²⁰⁸ Moustafa Gadalla, *Egyptian Cosmology: The Animated Universe: Expanded Third Edition* (1997; Greensboro, NC: Tehuti Research Foundation, 2018), 127.

²⁰⁹ Maspero and Gauthier, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Nos 29307-29323*, 83–88, Plate XXVII.

²¹⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:40:12–01:49:24; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 253–257.

²¹¹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 253–257. For the stork-connection, see Moustafa Gadalla, *The Egyptian Hieroglyph Metaphysical Language* (2016; updated, Greensboro, NC: Tehuti Research Foundation, 2018), 48–49.

²¹² Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:38:00–01:55:40; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–278.

astute soldiers to survive the encounter within the pyramid.²¹³ Props, decorations, mapping within the Pyramid are intricately worked out, creating a funerary museum of uncatalogued exhibits in the space of death. The “bracelet” provides guidance to its wearer as well as bestows the gift of ancient Egyptian speech.²¹⁴ These indicate that ancient Egyptian magic is not made available conventionally; one has to invite assimilation with its essence in order to essentialize it. Also, bestowal of spiritual, divine, and magical essence through material items is frequently noted in ancient Egyptian art. Statues and human bodies interact in terms of material transitions and empowerment; for example, the entrance to Scorpion King’s chamber is adorned with “life-size golden scorpion statues” and it is described as “repository of arms.”²¹⁵ Art and power are intrinsically linked, and the scorpion and the jackal are very significantly reciprocated. For example, while stepping over a scorpion-representation between two statues of Anubis, Imhotep’s powers are removed.²¹⁶ Likewise, upon activation by the curator Baltus with the “Bracelet of Anubis” the shadow of a scorpion floats seemingly over the desert and settles over the sands to generate the “[A]rmy of Anubis.”²¹⁷ An argument may be forwarded to project the mythological connection between the two creatures in terms of breathing and living. Referring to Mona Haggag’s studies, Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner observes that sometimes in ancient Egyptian ritual art, a male human victim, whose asphyxiation is attributed to his trachea being smashed by a biting jackal.²¹⁸ Thus the figures are sometimes produced to pursue violent magical practices. For example, as Wegner notes, the canine deity Wepwawet is a fierce protector of Osiris, invoked against the god’s opponents; another canine god Anubis extends his vigilance over the bodies receiving

²¹³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 250–251.

²¹⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 250–252.

²¹⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 261–262.

²¹⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 241–244. In Collins’s book, Anubis-representation is noted while Imhotep’s powers are removed.

²¹⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 237–240, 245–249.

²¹⁸ Wegner, “Wepwawet in Context,” 147. See also Mona Haggag, “Some Unpublished Wax Figurines from Upper Egypt,” in *Ancient Alexandria between Egypt and Greece*, eds. William Vernon Harris and Giovanni Ruffini, *Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition* 26 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 231–240.

embalmmment and also ensures the purity of the necropolis.²¹⁹ On the other hand, Pascal Vernus perceives, asphyxiation also results from scorpion poisoning, and the scorpion goddess Serqet's functions, include besides the curing of poison, the regulation of breathing process.²²⁰ Both the canine Anubis and scorpion Serqet serve funerary functions as Moustafa Gadalla notes: while embalmmment is overseen by Anubis, Serqet's duty is exercised towards the safeguarding of the intestines of the deceased duly stored in the "canopic jar."²²¹ Thus Egyptological information can be given for argument in the context of the "Egyptomaniac" recontextualization of the jackal represented through Anubis and scorpion represented through Serqet to curb the masculine, supernatural powers of Imhotep.²²²

The Scorpion King's Pyramid turns out to be a composite space of conflict as well as balance between the "Occident" and the "Orient," as well as an architectonic space of justice. Anck-su-namun meets her poisoned death in the "keyroom" which also enables the curator Baltus earlier to awaken the Scorpion King.²²³ The scorpions in the "moat" devour her, seemingly having sensed the identities of Meela and Anck-su-namun in one body and registering her as an adversary of the Scorpion King.²²⁴ The implosion of the Underworld's portal creates a suction-force and it takes all natural and architectonic registers into oblivion.²²⁵ Just as the "kill switch" mechanism submerges Hamanapatra in *The Mummy*,²²⁶

²¹⁹ Wegner, "Wepwawet in Context," 147.

²²⁰ Pascal Vernus, *The Gods of Ancient Egypt*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (New York: Tauris Parke Books; George Braziller, 1998), 35. See also Anirban Ray, "Devotion and Fear: 'Zoomorphic' Bodies/Identities of Anubis, Sobek, Selket, Taweret, and Sekhmet" (Oral Presentation, "The Diseased Body in Art & Literature," National Level Webinar Organized by Department of English & IQAC, Asannagar Madan Mohan Tarkalankar College, Asannagar, Nadia, India, July 30, 2020), slide 11.

²²¹ Moustafa Gadalla, *Egyptian Divinities: The All Who Are the One* (2001; Greensboro, NC: Tehuti Research Foundation, 2003), 94; see Ray, "Devotion and Fear," slides 10–14.

²²² Sommers, *The Mummy*; Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

²²³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 281–282.

²²⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 281–282.

²²⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 277–285, 283.

²²⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 249–256.

the “[G]olden [P]yramid” is made to dematerialize in the terrestrial “Black Hole”-like phenomenon, leaving no possibility of resurgence.²²⁷



Figure 2.4 Scorpion and “Djed Pillar”

In the image above, the detail from the wall relief from the Temple of Seti I in Abydos shows eight standards carrying objects and creatures; the second standard from the left supports a scorpion over it and it is held by an anthropomorphic “Djed Pillar” from below.²²⁸ In Sommers’s *The Mummy Returns*, we see that the “Djed Pillar” forms the middle section of the “Spear of Osiris” which is used by Rick to impale the Scorpion King, providing a cinematic, coincidental “Egyptomaniac” re-contextualization of the negative connection between the Djed and the Scorpion.²²⁹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

2.9 Ancient Egypt and Evelyn²³⁰

Evelyn identifies the “preparation room” known as “*Sah-Netjer*” in connection with the calculated mirror lighting system used in ancient Egypt.²³¹ Thus her studies bring out the technological aspect to balance it with the supernatural ambience created in the cinematic

²²⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 277–285.

²²⁸ David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos*, 90–92.

²²⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 01:38:00–01:55:40; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–277.

²³⁰ See Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169. My published article discusses the character of the Egyptologist in the context of Sommers’s films which feature mythology and magic, and I have discussed the theme of reincarnation in connection with memory and archaeology. The section “Ancient Egypt and Evelyn” in this chapter discusses the points further.

²³¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 97–101.

“Egyptomania.”²³² The “Bembridge scholars” are speculative of the presence of the *Book of Amun Ra* beneath Anubis’s statue; Evelyn’s identification of its location beneath the statue of Horus establishes her individual achievement in the male-dominated world of Egyptology.²³³ Interestingly her findings regarding the connection between the Book and the sculptures involving male deities aid the presumably male dominated professional world of Egyptology and it is a significant evidence of her erudition and versatility. Evelyn proves the male Egyptologists wrong, which proves that she is more capable than the “Bembridge scholars” and it also implied that they feared that they could be outdone by her in Egyptology.²³⁴ Following the presence of Imhotep’s sarcophagus under Anubis’s statue, Evelyn guesses his social rank and/or his status as a criminal.²³⁵ She takes a forensic attitude in archaeology which however is intrinsically connected with mythology and magic.²³⁶ Evelyn notices that the safeguarding, auspicious hieroglyph constraints are denied representation in Imhotep’s coffin.²³⁷ She thus studies the coffin as an artwork, and as praxis of revised spells. Evelyn’s desire to decipher her dreams have inspired and prepared her for the visit to the temple of built by Imhotep.²³⁸ She is able to open the “passageway” guided by her visionary instinct and she is granted the vision of the richly decorated “*antechamber*” and a glimpse of her previous life and assigned task.²³⁹ Evelyn is able to identify the

²³² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 97–101.

²³³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 97–101, 174–179, 196–204. See also Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

²³⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 97–101, 174–179, 196–204.

²³⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 112–114, 133–137.

²³⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 112–114, 133–137.

²³⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 135.

²³⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 16–24.

²³⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 18–24, 174–184. See also Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

scorpion engraved in the disc carried to the war by the Scorpion King, turning the account, held as a “myth” into an empirically verified data with the presence of the disk.²⁴⁰

By creating a fictional non-fiction in the Egyptological/“Egyptomaniac” reference to the Scorpion King in the “Prologue,” *The Mummy Returns* tries to address the West as the resistance to the potential ancient evil.²⁴¹ The West needs to prepare itself through institutional scholarship. Dr. O’Connell’s academic and characteristic traits are mutually compared.²⁴² Her efficient librarianship brings together volumes written on ancient Egypt by European writers, thereby creating a cerebral, academic counterpart to the physical, political mapping of Egypt.²⁴³ Evelyn recreates ancient Egypt through institutional studies, like Manetho of Antiquity who first created the Pharaonic chronology of ancient Egypt.²⁴⁴ The texts consulted in this chapter validate in their fictional world the empirical beliefs held by Evelyn which are required for the preclusion of the curses surrounding Imhotep and the Scorpion King.²⁴⁵ Evelyn’s journey upgrades her to the post of the “curator of the British Museum,” the space in which, like other Museums in Europe and the Americas, “Oriental” knowledge is catalogued and contained empirically.²⁴⁶ Evelyn tends to take a logical standpoint to the figure of the Scorpion King as a source of fear in the “collective consciousness” of the ancient Egyptians.²⁴⁷ She pursues her exploration in material culture (looking at the objects) to empirically validate the existence of the Scorpion King.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 21–22.

²⁴¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1, 1–288.

²⁴² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6. For Egyptologically affirmed chronology of Pharaonic dynasties, see Cyril Aldred, *Egyptian Art in the Days of the Pharaohs: 3100–320 BC* (1980, 1985; reprint, London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 7–9.

²⁴³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1.

²⁴⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6. See also Aldred, *Ancient Egypt*, 7–9.

²⁴⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

²⁴⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1.

²⁴⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2.

²⁴⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2–37.

Scorpions are represented on the shields and banners and also in the bejeweled bracelet worn by the Scorpion King.²⁴⁹ By stating the concluding “date” of Scorpion’s invasion as “3112 B.C.,” a date preceding the dynastic rule initiated by Narmer,²⁵⁰ the sequel film and novel *The Mummy Returns* fictionally exhibit crisis cropping up in ancient North Africa and the adjoining ancient Middle East.²⁵¹ The Middle Eastern and North African conquest is pursued by the Scorpion King, to be resisted by Thebes, the Egyptian city which hires expert soldiers from Sumer.²⁵² Thus Thebes is considered as a place that breathes with life and security, a point asserted in *The Mummy*.²⁵³ In *The Mummy Returns* Thebes is seen as a cautious checking force trying to resist Scorpion King’s growing might bringing death and suffering.²⁵⁴ Thebes is able to send the defeated Scorpion King to the killing aridness of the Sahara desert²⁵⁵ before getting demolished by a second assault by the Scorpion King aided by Anubis’s canine army.²⁵⁶ From the departure of Scorpion King to the desert, the fictional realm moves into the mythical realm in bringing the divine intervention of Anubis, thereby creating a similar anomaly like Imhotep turning into an “undead” following the “*Hom-dai*”²⁵⁷ in *The Mummy*.²⁵⁸ Evelyn is the conduit, a catalyst to discover the “Bracelet,” and later it is revealed to have been under her custodianship in her past life as Seti’s daughter Nefertiri.²⁵⁹ Thus the sequel is about the “return” to protect the world by submitting and attributing the “Occidental” self to the memories of Pharaonic Egypt, and to brace the ancient Egyptian curses in order to uproot the consequences once for

²⁴⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2.

²⁵⁰ For the list of Pharaonic Dynasties, see Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 7–9, 31–36.

²⁵¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2–3.

²⁵² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 2–3.

²⁵³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–25.

²⁵⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–6.

²⁵⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 3.

²⁵⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 3–6.

²⁵⁷ As seen in M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–25.

²⁵⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 3–6.

²⁵⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 175–184.

all.²⁶⁰ Evelyn thus opens her own history prompted by her “dreams of Egypt”²⁶¹ and the narrator indicates that O’Connell’s passion for Evelyn gets intertwined with the importance of archaeological work in Egypt.²⁶² O’Connell, a believer of facts, tries to distinguish phenomenologically between a “vision” and a “dream” and he feels discomfort regarding Evelyn’s unusual feelings associated with Egypt.²⁶³ Thus it can be argued that the “Egyptian connection” is a powerful psychic force that influences the “Occidental” self to question its own boundaries of cognition.



Figure 2.5 Pharaoh Holding “Heh”-figure

In the image above, a relief from the Temple of Hathor in Dendera shows the Pharaoh on the right worshipping Horus in his young form, or Ihy/Harpokrates/Harsomtut, son of Hathor.²⁶⁴ The King holds in his left hand the signs of “life” symbolized by “Ankh,” “stability” symbolized by “Djed,” and “power” symbolized by “Was.”²⁶⁵ In the right

²⁶⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

²⁶¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 16.

²⁶² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 16, 9–37; Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

²⁶³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 9–37, 19, 170–184. See also Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

²⁶⁴ For Ihy/Harpokrates/Harsomtut, see George Hart, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 70–72, 77–78.

²⁶⁵ Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 78–79, 118–119.

hand he holds the image of the god Heh.²⁶⁶ It can be observed that in the film, Heh's image holding the mirror is used in the distribution of light.²⁶⁷ This "system" is researched by Evelyn to locate the "*Shah-Netjer*" chamber.²⁶⁸ The god Heh bears the mirror that reflects light, connecting the mirrors in succession, lighting up the whole chamber.²⁶⁹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

2.10 Archaeology and World Saving

Arguably, the two films and the two novels thereby project two features: (i) ancient Egypt is mysterious and projects apprehensions, and (ii) the West and the East need to let go of mutual prejudices in "Egyptomaniac" depictions of Egyptology in the cinematic context. Citing Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, Elliott Colla observes, Egypt suffers from an "identity crisis" under colonization by the British and the means of regaining her identity involved embracing the Pharaonic strength existing in the public memory.²⁷⁰ This Pharaonic power is contextualized organically/viscerally in *The Mummy*, but in a negative way featuring "Occidental" fears. When the regenerating Imhotep consumes the organs of the White explorers, their sentience and vitality are drawn into the regenerating ancient Egyptian being.²⁷¹ Imhotep's rising is also a kind of fictionalized ancient Pharaonic revival but it is ruled by fear and supernatural dominion. It can be argued that this attachment to the past remains alive through the "secret society" of the "Med-jai" who practices Islam, which however is opposed to the ancient Egyptian pantheon²⁷²; but this attachment is a mixture of fear as well as reverence posed by the supernatural threat initiated in antiquity through the

²⁶⁶ For iconography of the god Heh, see Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 42.

²⁶⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 100.

²⁶⁸ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 100.

²⁶⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy*.

²⁷⁰ Elliott Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities: Egyptology, Egyptomania, Egyptian Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 148–149.

²⁷¹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 143–204.

²⁷² Sommers, *The Mummy*; Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 177; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 277. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

identity of Imhotep. This trauma is contextualized in the volatile scenario of archaeological expeditions, and the films and the novels bring out the differences of viewpoints towards archaeology in the midst of political upheaval between the two World Wars, in which the events of the two films and the two novels are set. An odd contradiction is noticed regarding the racial identity of the perpetrators and their perception towards ancient ruins. While the native Tuaregs, being more resistant to the desert climate than the French soldiers, are indifferent to Hamanaptra in terms of scholarship, yet they render indirect guardianship to the site by frequenting the adjoining areas.²⁷³ This sense of propriety is not always present amidst the European “garrison.”²⁷⁴ Even O’Connell has a dismissive yet matter-of-fact attitude towards ancient Egypt.²⁷⁵ O’Connell’s empirical observation is however considered by Dr. Bey and Ardeth.²⁷⁶ O’Connell’s description of Imhotep’s sand-transformation is taken with gravity by Dr. Bey, who knows the natural and elemental symptoms and signs of supernatural movement and shifts.²⁷⁷ Thus it can be argued that the fictionalized archaeology in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* involves an odd mixture of observation and beliefs.

Evelyn is a combination of the two. She has registered a curious, passionate interest textually connected with ancient Egypt; she also approves Eurocentric empirical investigation but not its enforced acquisitive tendencies, though she does endorse temporary “borrowings” of material things for independent observation.²⁷⁸ Evelyn suffers from financial difficulties and we find a reversal of West-East economic exchange.²⁷⁹ She serves the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, the Egyptological hub of mediation between the West and

²⁷³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–39.

²⁷⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–39.

²⁷⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–39.

²⁷⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 176.

²⁷⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 176.

²⁷⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–50, 174–195.

²⁷⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–50.

Egypt, as a librarian and as a translator under Dr. Terence Bey, who had offered her the post honoring the Egyptological contribution made by her parents.²⁸⁰ Her penchant in *The Mummy* is more towards textual studies, not so much towards the on-site finding of objects.²⁸¹ This however gets upgraded in *The Mummy Returns* to full-fledged excavation, extended beyond the perusal of texts on the Scorpion King to validate his existence. She unites within her identity her mother's features and her father's scholarship and applications of "Oriental" and "Occidental" generalizations which she initially finds difficult to balance.²⁸² Her brother Jonathan is projected as a foil to her, as he lusts materially. Evelyn urges Jonathan to display some reverence, carrying the burden of uneasiness associated with Tutankhamun's tomb unearthed by her father fictionally recontextualized.²⁸³ The map of Hamanaptra with Seti's seal is present in the "eight-sided key" box found by Jonathan.²⁸⁴ Interestingly, it evokes the ancient Egyptian tale of Setne inviting life-threatening crisis following his theft of the Book written by Thoth from the tomb of Neferkaptah.²⁸⁵ Coincidentally the number eight is auspicious to Thoth²⁸⁶ and can be interpreted as access to secret knowledge. The Setne-story is related to the Ramesside Dynasty as Setne was the son of Ramesses II and grandson of Seti I²⁸⁷ and hence is not irrelevant in my discussion. The urge for collection of manuscripts and material objects of power drove the ancient Egyptians of the New Kingdom; likewise they drove the Egyptologists of the Twentieth century in the duologies studied in this Chapter. Evelyn's skill in identifying the cartouche of Seti I in the

²⁸⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–50. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

²⁸¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41.

²⁸² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–50, 123–127.

²⁸³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–50.

²⁸⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 47–48.

²⁸⁵ Geraldine Harris, *Gods and Pharaohs from Egyptian Mythology* (Italy: Eurobook, 1982), 92–102. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

²⁸⁶ Moustafa Gadalla, *Egyptian Mystics: Seekers of The Way*, 2nd ed. (2003; reprint, Greensboro, NC: Tehuti Research Foundation, 2018), 159.

²⁸⁷ Harris, *Gods and Pharaohs*, 92–102.

discovered map²⁸⁸ is again a filmic, “Egyptomaniac” projection of the initial developments of Egyptological studies. The translations/identifications of the cartouches by Jean-François Champollion constituted the groundbreaking moments in the decipherment of hieroglyphs.²⁸⁹ The British Egyptologist E. A. Wallis Budge wrote *The Book of the Kings of Egypt* (1908) in two volumes reproducing the hieroglyphic cartouches of Egyptian kings.²⁹⁰ Evelyn, as a half-British female translator, is expected to live up to her predecessors’ reputation.²⁹¹ Her reasoning faculty does not initially consider the validity of the curses and she wishes to validate the existence of Hamanaptra.²⁹² Hence she does not have any hesitation in appropriating the key even from Dr. Bey who attempts to brush away the possibility of the funeral city’s existence by considering it a “myth.”²⁹³

The obsession with the discovery of the mortuary objects connected with Imhotep dilutes the boundaries between fear and admiration for the material treasure, their constitution, and usages. Imhotep is a heavy liability for the ancient Egyptians who wished to subject him to eternal damnation.²⁹⁴ The measures left by the ancient Egyptian, ironically preclude convenient comprehension. The “Occident” is initially unable to understand the mechanism of visual-verbal functionality in the architectonics of Imhotep’s material treasure. For example, as Dr. Allen Chamberlain notices, a contradiction is noticed in the context of the “most monstrous curse” on Imhotep’s container communicated through “lovely, colorful

²⁸⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 48.

²⁸⁹ Keith Schoville, “The Rosetta Stone in Historical Perspective,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 12, no.1 (2001): 15–16, *Andrews University*, accessed April 10, 2021, https://www.andrews.edu/library/car/cardigital/Periodicals/Journal_of_the_Adventist_Theological_Society/2001/2001_01.pdf.

²⁹⁰ E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of The Kings of Egypt*, vol. 1 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1908); E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of The Kings of Egypt*, vol. 2 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., 1908).

²⁹¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 48, 41–50, 174–195.

²⁹² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 48–49.

²⁹³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 48–50.

²⁹⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 14–25, 113–115, 133–137.

hieroglyphs.”²⁹⁵ Regarding the recourse to the gruesome measures taken by the ancient Egyptian mechanics for securing funerary treasures, Dr. Allen Chamberlain (played by Jonathan Hyde) corrects Isaac Henderson’s (played by Stephen Dunham) negative assumptions and emphasizes that the ancient Egyptians should not be considered “savages” because they were achievers.²⁹⁶ Dr. Chamberlain, translating the hieroglyphs, identifies the possible advancement of the curse through the insect mode and elaborates that the “defilers[’]” body parts would give the collecting Imhotep power over the earth.²⁹⁷ Thus Imhotep is resurrected appropriating the organic forms, bodies from the West (North America) and from the North (Europe).²⁹⁸ Jeremy Naydler, examining the ancient Egyptian beliefs, observes that at demise, the body turns “singular” but as an animated spiritual entity it constitutes distinct “psychic” actions.²⁹⁹ In the light of this, it can be argued that the husk of Imhotep can be seen as a potential cocoon in which the essences of others can be drawn in and internalized. He is a walking humanoid reservoir whose identity is simultaneously singular and multiple.

Bob Brier notes that in funerary art, the eyes on the sarcophagus provide visual faculty to the deceased to perceive the sunrise.³⁰⁰ The desire of the demised was to find a place on the sun-boat, supported by the belief that Ra’s “lotus bark” holds a place for the “deceased.”³⁰¹ Eyes are the carriers of cognition, of spiritual awakening, of regeneration. The ancient Egyptian artists showed the annihilating potential as well as the safeguarding

²⁹⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 129.

²⁹⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 00:53:32–00:57:40; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 29–130.

²⁹⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 130–204.

²⁹⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 130–131.

²⁹⁹ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1996), 190.

³⁰⁰ Bob Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic: Spells, Incantations, Potions, Stories, and Rituals* (1980; New York: Quill, 1981), 121.

³⁰¹ Robinson, ““As For Them Who Know Them,”” 146.

functions of the freely existing “wedjat eye.”³⁰² In *The Mummy*, we see that the eyes and the tongue are the first organs that are claimed by the risen Imhotep.³⁰³ In Sommers’s *The Mummy Returns*, the emblem on Rick’s wrist and on the wall of the Temple built for Ammon Ra excavated by the O’Connells also feature the “Eye of Horus” along with the circle and the triangle.³⁰⁴ The Eye thus links the sun and the sense of sight together.

It can be argued that the duologies, in the midst of fear and supernatural aggression, bring a pan-religious harmony and cooperation. Colla notes the centuries of coexistence of multiple faiths in Egypt and their fissures: with the monotheistic pursuit of Godhead, Egypt’s Pharaonic past attracted negative evaluation.³⁰⁵ However, this somber atmosphere did never preclude the mummy-obsession and collection of antiquities from the Eighteenth century to the Twentieth century. It is interesting to note in this context here, that in *The Mummy* the rogue Beni (played by Kevin James O’Connor) believes in religious tokenism and carries emblems from different religions.³⁰⁶ He is recruited by the regenerating Imhotep since he can converse in Hebrew, which can be linked again with the conflict between the Pharaoh and non-Egyptians.³⁰⁷ Despite the ambivalent religious conceptions, White colonization brought a lot of impetus for studies in antiquities and interestingly the fruits of such studies were deemed as important by the Egyptians even if the corpus of such studies (that is ancient Egypt) differed in religious beliefs and identities. Colla notes that the intellectual circles would always attribute the genesis of Egyptological studies to the British Museum’s custody of the “Rosetta Stone,”³⁰⁸ but in the second thought, a “moral” dilemma also exists because the Egyptian natives commanded a more legitimate authority over the

³⁰² Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 183.

³⁰³ Sommers, *The Mummy*, 01:01:58–01:04:10; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 146–147, 155.

³⁰⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*, 00:04:40–00:16:53; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 13, 95–96.

³⁰⁵ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 74.

³⁰⁶ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 156–157.

³⁰⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 157.

³⁰⁸ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 76.

Stone since the terrestrial source of the Stone is undoubtedly Egypt.³⁰⁹ This kind of dilemma has been reflected in *The Mummy*. It can be argued by citing Dr. Bey's silence on the existence of Hamanaptra and his attempts to keep information undisclosed even from Evelyn, the White Egyptologist.³¹⁰ Dr. Bey is an interesting personality; he belongs to the "Med-jai" (Islamic in faith) and is also a legitimate local intellectual, knowing Pharaonic history meticulously.³¹¹ The "Med-jai" deserves appreciation because they do not lust after the immense Pharaonic riches of Hamanaptra though they do realize their antique and material values. Their secrecy is concerned more about the danger posed by Imhotep, than the Eurocentric expeditions. The narrative further reveals that Evelyn is as interesting as Dr. Bey in being suspended in the contrast and connection between the "Occident" and the "Orient." Evelyn's elevation to the post of the British Museum's Curator³¹² can be justified from her mixed parentage,³¹³ since she is born of an "Egyptian woman,"³¹⁴ and as later revealed, was a royal Pharaonic Egyptian woman in her past life.³¹⁵ Thus Evelyn can mock Beni because Beni is only after material treasure and assists Imhotep in the hope of gaining more,³¹⁶ while Evelyn "borrows" the artifacts for scholarly study and application of magic to preclude Imhotep.³¹⁷

Colla observes that the overall picture of the Egyptian nation in the world of scholarship in terms of arts, aesthetics and administration-scenarios was met with acclaim following the cataloging of Tutankhamen's treasures.³¹⁸ In argument it can be noted that the

³⁰⁹ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 76, 1–309.

³¹⁰ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 48–50.

³¹¹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 48–50, 174–178, 190–195. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

³¹² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1.

³¹³ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 42–44, 126.

³¹⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 126.

³¹⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 175–181. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

³¹⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy* 182–185, 205–221. In *The Mummy* both Evelyn and Beni are explorers.

³¹⁷ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 46–50, 142–144, 190–195, 236–247.

³¹⁸ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 175–176, 172–226.

novel *The Mummy* fictionally makes Evelyn and Jonathan the children of Howard Carnahan,³¹⁹ which somehow is the reason behind the grudging acceptance of Evelyn's employment by Dr. Bey in the Cairo Museum.³²⁰ Interestingly, as Colla notes, the dislocation of items from the burial site of Tutankhamun was met with cries of legitimate, national ownership by the contemporary Egyptian citizens who might have been ignorant of the nation's pagan history.³²¹ This distancing of the natives from the fruits of findings is unjustified but is held on the ground of the absence of academic acumen amidst the natives. It can be argued that similar social hierarchy between the workers and the sponsors is somehow maintained in the two duologies studied in this chapter. The corrosive substance ejected upon the opening of Imhotep's containers claims the local diggers' lives in *The Mummy* while the French Egyptologist positions himself at a safe distance.³²² Likewise, the scarabs consume the native diggers in *The Mummy Returns*; it is a sight witnessed with "objective detachment" by the curator Baltus.³²³ Interestingly Meela in *The Mummy Returns*, conscious of her role, though guided by pure self-interest, does threaten Jonathan to yield to her Egyptian right for containment of treasure.³²⁴ Her knowledge of mystic Egyptian secrets, as Ardeth remarks, is threatening because men, primarily the White men, are unaware of those.³²⁵ The "*Med-jai[s]*" are the predecessors of Dr. Bey and Ardeth; they continue to pursue that legitimate but pagan service, enabling them to justify their roles as pan-Egyptian protectors against Imhotep.³²⁶ The Egyptian thinker Rifā'ah Rāfi' al-Ṭaḥṭāwī cited by Colla emphasized the resistance of transportation of discovered ancient Pharaonic objects beyond Egypt's border which usually transpire in case of European "Egyptology" in the White

³¹⁹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–47, 126.

³²⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–45.

³²¹ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 175–176, 172–226.

³²² Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 110–112.

³²³ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 39–42.

³²⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 74–79.

³²⁵ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 87–89.

³²⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 177, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288. See also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

West.³²⁷ It can be argued in this context that a fatal narrative justice is offered in the two films and in the two novels studied in this chapter. The abundant golden treasures of both Hamanaptra and Ahm Shere are lost towards the endings of *The Mummy*³²⁸ and *The Mummy Returns*³²⁹ respectively. The treasures are lost to both Egypt and to the world, creating a huge loss in Egyptological scholarship and curating. Simultaneously it removes the opportunities of smuggling and “black market” circulation of antiques, even in the fictional premise.

Egypt in the world of these texts, in their modern setting is in the twilight of British occupation, and the Muslim ruler is influenced by the “British army.”³³⁰ In a potentially volatile space, the public tends to develop attachment to superstition; it can be argued that the museum-space is perceived as an energy center for both good and evil. The directions to stop Imhotep are provided in a relic in the Cairo Museum.³³¹ Later the cultists carry Imhotep’s body to the British Museum to revive him within the museum’s grid of funerary power, instrumented through the mummies in the sarcophagi and in the exhibits.³³² The reversal of agent and space is interesting. The “Occidental” faculty represented by Evelyn works with the native Dr. Bey to locate the existence of the *Book of Amun Ra*.³³³ Later the “Oriental” villainess Meela teams up with the curator-turned-cultist Baltus to pursue the ritual in the British Museum, one of the hubs of the colonizers’ intellectual empire, thereby impacting the West by reviving Imhotep and impacting the “Occident” from within.³³⁴ Having seen the supernatural regeneration of Imhotep and his magic-empowered absorption

³²⁷ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 125.

³²⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 248–256.

³²⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 277–285.

³³⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 161.

³³¹ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 190–195.

³³² Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 98–109.

³³³ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 191–195.

³³⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 98–108.

of organs, even the empirical Evelyn is inclined to believe in magical cures.³³⁵ The boisterous O'Connell likewise suggests the use of the *Book of the Dead* for the preventive "incantation"³³⁶ indicating the penchant for logic and beliefs concerning ancient Egyptian magic influencing the Egyptian space.

It can be argued that the duology also efficiently weave the entitlements and predicaments of the White characters that must let go of racial pride to preclude the dual crisis posed by Imhotep and the Scorpion King. Ardeth explains how the global destruction will be eventually caused by the "chain reaction" initiated by Alex upon his possession of the "Bracelet of Anubis."³³⁷ This also leads to the reappearance of the Scorpion King.³³⁸ This emergency implies that (i) the artifacts do not distinguish the host/wearer/user in terms of color; (ii) it does give precedence to the "Occident" by initiating a world-crisis in which the opponent is an ancient Egypt-oriented figure, and (ii) the crisis awaits solution/saving by the "Occidental" agent who is destined to trigger it.³³⁹ Alex's participation is however justified. The bracelet seems to have sensed his knowledge of hieroglyphs, enabling the visual to be in tune with the textual. He has a reasonable memory and is able to identify the artifacts and also the compartments of the British Museum according to the exhibits.³⁴⁰ Thus his cerebral faculties rival those of Meela's. Ardeth and O'Connell acknowledge each other as bound by destiny despite Rick's haughty masculinity.³⁴¹ O'Connell is also attributed the "Masonic mark" as the "Knight Templar": he is a divinely appointed guard for humanity, and the mark can be perceived as the fusion of the Eastern and the Western beliefs.³⁴² Alex becomes a conduit for the Scorpion King to break into the living world, but Alex's life is

³³⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 163–164, 174–175, 190–195.

³³⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 179.

³³⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 90.

³³⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 91.

³³⁹ See Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

³⁴⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 94.

³⁴¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 84–96.

³⁴² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 95–96.

supposed to be consumed when the “golden pyramid” is bathed in morning light.³⁴³ Baltus is a victim of his own scholarship; like Beni in *The Mummy* believing in material faith and opportunism,³⁴⁴ Baltus changes masters, shifting from Imhotep to the Scorpion King.³⁴⁵ It is ironic how he endures physical pain as a “karmic balance” just like Beni.³⁴⁶ Beni is indifferent when Imhotep consumes others’ life-forces³⁴⁷; Baltus observes indifferently when the hired native diggers are consumed by the scarabs.³⁴⁸

2.11 Conclusion

Colla notes that the White scholars, observing the local Egyptian lack of interest in ancient history, justified their acquisition of material findings for initiating academic pursuits over the field.³⁴⁹ This observation is reflected in Evelyn’s pride over library-management; her efficiency with hieroglyphs’ translations is the motivation she cites in support of her post in the Cairo Museum.³⁵⁰ In reference to Rifā‘ah Rāfi‘ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī’s observation, Colla notes that the identity of the “Egyptian” that is the national identity of the citizens of modern Egypt was sought to be forged by learning to co-exist with Islamic consciousness and yet not being ignorant of the “Pharaonic past.”³⁵¹ Citing Colla’s insight it can be argued that Dr. Bey and Evelyn thereby left their differences aside, and engaged in translation-performance to locate the magical means of resisting Imhotep.³⁵² It is interesting how considerations regarding the ancient Egyptian spells, and calculations involving the Egyptian deities bring an Islamic native man and a White Christian female scholar together. Ancient Egyptian culture thus can be argued as capable of uniting both the “Occidental” and

³⁴³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 88–95, 138.

³⁴⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 157, 182–184, 205–235.

³⁴⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 220–222.

³⁴⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 157, 182–184, 205–235.

³⁴⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 167–168.

³⁴⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 41, 209.

³⁴⁹ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 123, 1–309.

³⁵⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 41–45.

³⁵¹ Colla, *Conflicted Antiquities*, 123–124.

³⁵² Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 191–195.

“Oriental” forces/agencies. The natural right to archaeological findings possess by the Egyptian citizens do concern Evelyn as well, and her conscience is pricked when she collects ancient treasures. However, as the plot structures communicate, the borrowings and/or acquisitions and accidental hoardings/transportation seem to be crucial in terms of encountering the evil. This can be argued by citing the case of Jonathan. Despite his callousness he is tremendously important in the duology. The Key to open (i) the *Book of the Dead* and (ii) Imhotep’s sarcophagus in *The Mummy*,³⁵³ and the “Spear of Osiris” in *The Mummy Returns* are initially collected by him.³⁵⁴ But when (i) Evelyn studies the Key³⁵⁵ and the Book and utilizes them in *The Mummy*,³⁵⁶ when (ii) Alex gets connected and guided by the “Bracelet of Anubis”,³⁵⁷ and when (iii) Rick wields the “Spear of Osiris” after observing and imitating the wall-relief seen inside the Pyramid-structure in the “Oasis of Ahm Shere” in *The Mummy Returns*,³⁵⁸ the acquisitions by the Whites are transformed into cerebral knowledge beyond their material status, and are employed by both the White warriors and the Egyptian natives for global concerns.³⁵⁹

It can be argued that empirical observation is crucial in Egyptology. The two duologies, though supernatural in plot with heavy usage of cultist magic, do provide appreciation for (i) Pharaonic engineering mechanism, (ii) the studies in the natural habitat, and (iii) the chemical processes in reference to mummification.³⁶⁰ Evelyn’s investigation of the deformed corpse of Imhotep is objective.³⁶¹ The eerie atmosphere of the funeral chamber is heightened by her observation of the nail-marks on the coffin’s inner lid and the

³⁵³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 46–48.

³⁵⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 70–71.

³⁵⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 46–47.

³⁵⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 142–144.

³⁵⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 57–62.

³⁵⁸ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 271–278.

³⁵⁹ See Ray, “The ‘Identities’ of ‘Egyptologist-Archaeologists,’” 156–169.

³⁶⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

³⁶¹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 133–137.

symptoms of putrefaction in process, leading to her inference that Imhotep received a forced burial in living condition.³⁶² Evelyn is also sufficiently empirical to dismiss the swarm of locusts as a “curse” initiated by her reading from the *Book of the Dead* and interprets the swarm as a movement of insect-migration.³⁶³ Imhotep’s movement is manipulated by sand; the “Med-jai” community is aware of this mechanism and gravely considers O’Connell’s observation of the sand movements to detect Imhotep’s supernatural presence in the surrounding habitat.³⁶⁴ These points can be argued as balances between Egyptology and “Egyptomania” in terms of studies of bodies and weather since in Egyptology the mummies’ biochemical data and the geology of the archaeological sites are also important. Thus the penchant for fear and belief in magic and/or cult are heightened by the gothic atmospheres of Hamanaptra in *The Mummy* and of Ahm Shere in *The Mummy Returns* which result in the outmatching of empiricism by magic.³⁶⁵

Western Egyptologists have produced rigorous translations of the versions of the ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead*; however, in “Egyptomaniac” popular culture meant for commercial public entertainment, it is more like a witchcraft-book. The “spells” of the *Books of the Dead*, which were elaborately conceived for overcoming perils in the journey towards the Afterlife,³⁶⁶ are re-conceived as generators of visual horror. The ancient Egyptian ordered universe and our contemporary understandings of law and order are much temporally and spatially distanced. Though both are structured, we believe more in visual investigation, following studies and symptoms, which otherwise were incorporated in a complex network of symbols and spells for an ancient Egyptian. It can be argued that the two movies and the two novels also urge us to experience a primal understanding of fear,

³⁶² M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 133–137.

³⁶³ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 142–145.

³⁶⁴ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 177–179, 188–195.

³⁶⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288.

³⁶⁶ Bob Brier, *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 130–140.

which must be re-exposed to understand how the ancient Egyptian worldviews constituted means to handle deepest fears regarding physical suffering and the Afterlife. Thus Imhotep reminds us that memories remain embedded in our beings and bodies. Evelyn and O'Connell are combinations of cerebral and physical labour, while Dr. Bey, Ardeth Bay, and the "Med-jai" genetically carry values of coded service. Ancient Egypt, though shown as apprehensive and uncharted, still regulates exits and access to the Afterlife. Egypt (both ancient and modern) is universalized, to which different religious believers, "Occidental" and "Oriental" characters pursue re-visits to understand the fears concerning existence and possibilities of redemption. This bringing together of ethnicities is helpful in internalizing the memories from the past, and these acceptances have to be released beyond esoteric circles and include study groups from both the West and the East.³⁶⁷ *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* thus provide interesting balance between Egyptology and "Egyptomania" on ancient Egyptian funerary speculation and project a composite perception, fusion of fear and admiration, towards Egyptian discoveries concerning the tombs and the mummies.

³⁶⁷ See Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 156–169.

Chapter Three

Roland Emmerich's *Stargate* (1994),

StarGate by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black (1994, 1995), and

James Matthew Henry Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* (2009, 2015):

Interpreting, Questioning, and Resisting the Deities

3.1 Introduction

Materiality, in the shapes of tools, offerings, and even weapons serve the politically led belief-systems, because wars have been fought for the propagation, restoration, and the protection of the practiced religions. Military aggression and archaeology which might involve excavation and studies of religious sites are also mutually connected and occasionally academic scholars/expeditions require security/military permits and/or monitored travels. In popular fiction, the archaeologist-protagonists are also sometimes adept in physical combat. The films/fiction involves (i) finding hidden treasures, (ii) handling threats from esoteric groups, and (iii) negotiations with local/international military seemingly controlling the discovered artifacts. *Stargate*, directed by Roland Emmerich (1994), and the eponymous novel *StarGate* based on the screenplay by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and “adapted” in novelization by Sheila Black (1994, 1995) provide intriguing contexts in which military and archaeology learn to co-exist and interpret the true nature/identities of the apparent mythological beings as individuals equipped with high-tech devices.¹ Since such endangering discoveries lead to the exposure of millennia-old

¹ Roland Emmerich, dir., *Stargate*, written by Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich (1994; Los Angeles, California: Centropolis Entertainment [Centropolis Film Productions] / Carolco Pictures; Paris: StudioCanal [Le Studio Canal+] 1997), Film DVD; Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, *StarGate* (1994; reprint, London: Puffin Books, 1995), 1–193. In the novel by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, “Stargate” is spelled as “StarGate.” Thus the title of the novel is given as *StarGate* in the chapters, footnotes, bibliography. In the footnotes having references to both the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel, I have placed the director first, since the novel was written after the film. The bibliography lists the sources alphabetically.

secrets/premises; both the interpreters and the discoveries require vigilant protection. When the knowledge from the past, archived in the museums/collections and/or scattered in the ruins start affecting the present living realities, then the military and/or esoteric communities internalize that knowledge from the antiquities in their planning, strategies, and combat, as seen in *The Age of Ra* by James Matthew Henry Lovegrove (2009, 2015). In Lovegrove's novel humans are engaged in pan-global conflicts in the factions influenced by their patron Egyptian deities.² This constitutes an irony because they all believe in the same Egyptian deities in the world fictionalized by Lovegrove.³ In this chapter, by analyzing mythical attributes in the context of technology with references to Egyptology and "Egyptomania," I shall argue how the ambivalence in the human-divine relationships has been featured through the registers of archaeological investigation and tensions of warfare.

3.2 Plot Summaries

3.2.1 *Stargate*, *StarGate*

Daniel Jackson (played by James Spader) is an exceptionally gifted linguist and an unconventional Egyptologist hypothesizing that the pharaohs of the Old Kingdom Fourth Dynasty as demarcated in Egyptology were not the builders of the Pyramids in the Giza Necropolis, leading to his academic isolation amidst his fellow scholars.⁴ He is recruited by Catherine Langford (played by Viveca Lindfors) for the task of translations of the hieroglyphs on a mysterious metallic ring discovered by her father in 1928 in Giza, which was later moved to American military safekeeping.⁵ Daniel identifies the glyphs on the ring's "cover stone" predating Pharaonic culture as referents to the constellation Orion, which makes him eligible in the military team's eyes to access the actual object identified as

² James Matthew Henry Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra* (Special edition) (2009; reprint, Oxford: Solaris, 2015), 15–329.

³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 15–24.

⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 6–57.

the Stargate protected within the “cover stone.”⁶ With equal poise, he identifies the seventh of the hitherto determined classified six symbols on the Stargate, which are “dialed” to generate a portal within the Stargate to travel through a wormhole.⁷ Daniel is allowed to travel with Colonel Jack O’Neil (played by Kurt Russell) the military leader, and other chosen soldiers.⁸ They reach the planet Abydos, where the presence of an even bigger pyramid validates Daniel’s strongly believed hypothesis that the ancient Egyptian civilization on Earth was an “inheritance” from an extraterrestrial source.⁹ The team is received by the Abydonian humans as “gods” and the local chief Kasuf’s (played by Erick Avari) daughter Sha’uri (played by Mili Avital) takes Daniel to a secret hieroglyph-filled space from which Daniel infers that their deity Ra (played by Jaye Davidson) is not a divine being but an enslaver of the Egyptians for technology sustained with minerals.¹⁰ Ra arrives along with his god-feigning minions and discovers the bomb O’Neil has brought; Ra plans to strengthen the bomb with his “mineral” technology, and dispatch to Earth to initiate an amplified nuclear explosion capable of ending human civilization.¹¹ Daniel, O’Neil, Sha’uri, and her brother Skaara (played by Alexis Cruz) team up to resist Ra, who gets destroyed in the atmosphere as the bomb is reverted to his spaceship through the vessel’s own teleporting device, connected to the Pyramid’s temple.¹² Daniel successfully identifies the symbol from Skaara’s drawing and activates the Stargate on Abydos’s side.¹³ While O’Neil returns to Earth, Daniel decides to stay back with the natives, indicating a key turning point in the history of Abydos’s extraterrestrial, human, and also Egyptian civilization.¹⁴

⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 29–57.

⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 29–57.

⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 29–67.

⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 52–70.

¹⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 76–193.

¹¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 85–193.

¹² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 100–193.

¹³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 154–193.

¹⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 182–193.

3.2.2 Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra*

The Egyptian deities, headed by Ra, had removed all other deities and hold dominion over the entire humankind.¹⁵ Their victory is attributed to the four deities of the “First Family”: Shu and his wife Tefnut, and Nut and her husband Geb.¹⁶ However, there is no peace either in the heaven or on Earth; the human factions are at war according to the wills of the divine proprietors Osiris, Isis, Set, Nephthys, Anubis, and the Sons of Horus holding dominions over different parts of the Earth wrecked with political instability and armed clashes continue.¹⁷ Seth chooses a human minion, Steven Westwynter, fusing him with his own divine essence, enabling Steven to become the “Lightbringer” holding sway over “Freegypt”; “Free” in the sense of religious freedom and also not being under international authorities.¹⁸ The “Lightbringer[’s]” dissenting influence upon the Egyptian deities worshipping humans sends ripples in the Egyptian Heaven centralized around Ra’s solar boat because the casualties in the world’s human military factions also affect the patron deities.¹⁹ David, Steven’s brother, a soldier and a religious believer but not a fanatic, joins the “Freegyptian” resistance because he emotionally, but also with doubt, supports his brother, presumed to be dead.²⁰ Ra ultimately discovers Seth’s designs and threatens him; Horus joins Seth while Nephthys gains the support of Osiris and Isis.²¹ The celestial changes have immediate influence upon Earth as Seth abandons the “Lightbringer.”²² The “Lightbringer[’s]” human followers are disillusioned to see through him and Steven is given the death sentence by the higher authorities.²³ The disheartened Ra visits the mentally

¹⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

¹⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

¹⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 78.

¹⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 109–127, 15–329.

¹⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 181–329.

²² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 275–317.

²³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 275–317.

fragmented David in human disguise and commends the human strength to impact the deities, realizing the deities' limitations and incapability of attaining universal peace and balance.²⁴

3.3 Literature Review

Though Roland Emmerich's *Stargate* (1994) was followed by a series of productions elaborating the alien worlds, deified extraterrestrials, and galactic conflicts, this chapter limits itself to the discussion of the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel (1994) because of their initiation of the important themes regarding alien technology and recontextualization of the Egyptian deities with the application of "Egyptomania." Frederic Krueger, drawing references to the views of Erich von Däniken and Zecharia Sitchin, has highlighted the speculations of "ancient astronauts" interpreting the divine vessels of the deities as advanced ships and the celestial routes of the deities, which are certainly incorporated in *Stargate*.²⁵ Ronald H. Fritze has classified *Stargate* as a work of "Egyptomania" and has observed the connection between advanced helmets resembling "animal heads" thereby creating the identities of deities.²⁶ Fritze also infers how *Stargate* attributes the design and purpose of the ancient "Egyptian sarcophagi" to the reviving device used by the extraterrestrial race from which Ra hails, and how the pyramids were just an architectonic necessity for enabling the pyramid-spaceship to alight upon.²⁷ Fritze has thus pointed out the "Egyptomaniac" influence in *Stargate* based on funerary purpose and architectonic inventions.²⁸ Thomas A. Dowson notes that *Stargate* has also been interpreted as narrative of resistance to the

²⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 323–329.

²⁵ Frederic Krueger, "The Stargate Simulacrum: Ancient Egypt, Ancient Aliens, and Postmodern Dynamics of Occulture," *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt* 1 (2017): 47–74, accessed May 9, 2021, <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/view/40164>.

²⁶ Ronald H. Fritze, *Egyptomania: A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 353–354.

²⁷ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 354.

²⁸ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 353–354.

seemingly divine authority by the Western masculine armed forces.²⁹ Citing Lynn Meskell's views on the queerness in Ra's characterization, Dowson has very intriguingly interpreted the same-sex tension between Ra and Daniel, thereby clearly pitting the "Oriental" and the alien with the norm-abiding masculine prowess of the West.³⁰

James Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* (2009) has not been extensively worked upon. Thomas M. Wagner classifies the text as "military SF adventure" and has aptly noted that lack of harmony exists amidst the Egyptian deities, their indifference towards humans engaged in mutual slaughter.³¹ Jasper de Joode has pointed out the creative co-working of military gadgets and "mythopoeic" elements associated with the deities.³² Though the text contains the elements which have been subject of studies in "Egyptomania," like the ancient Egyptian concepts of cartography, funerary practice and the Egyptians' perspectives regarding the temperaments of the deities, Lovegrove's novel needs to be given more attention in terms of reinterpretation of the deities' nature and use of mythical objects in connection with war-technology.

The available critical literature provides important insights regarding the "reception" of ancient Egypt in Western eyes which involves both fear and fascination. However the plots of the three primary texts discussed in this chapter can be studied further with references to the Egyptian concepts of resurrection, celestial travel, and "gender-fluidity" which have not been much discussed in corroboration with Egyptological data. I have attempted a comparative study of the *Stargate* film, the *StarGate* novel, and *The Age of Ra*

²⁹ Thomas A. Dowson, "Queering Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt," in *Sex and Gender in Ancient Egypt: "Don Your Wig for a Joyful Hour,"* ed. Carolyn Graves-Brown (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2008), 33.

³⁰ Dowson, "Queering Sex and Gender," 33–34. See also Lynn Meskell, "Consuming Bodies: Cultural Fantasies of Ancient Egypt," *Body and Society* 4, no. 1 (1998): 63–76.

³¹ Thomas M. Wagner, "The Age of Ra 2009: James Lovegrove," *sff180: Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Reviews*, accessed May 9, 2021, http://sff180.com/reviews/l/lovegrove/age_of_ra.html.

³² Jasper de Joode, "Fantasy Book Review: *The Age of Ra* by James Lovegrove," *Fantasy Book Review*, accessed May 9, 2021, <https://www.fantasybookreview.co.uk/James-Lovegrove/The-Age-of-Ra.html>.

to discuss (i) the Western recontextualization of the Egyptian deities, especially the character of Ra, (ii) the theme of revival (of Daniel in the *Stargate* film and in the *StarGate* novel), and restoration of health of David in *The Age of Ra*, (iii) the “Egyptomaniac” modification of the weapons used and most importantly, (iv) the nature of resistance posed against the deities by the humans.³³ These four issues shall be discussed with reference to Egyptological literature and “Egyptomaniac” expressions.

3.4 Methodology and Argument

Three recurring attributes emerging from the two summaries can be summed up. First, the plots involve the characterizations of Ra and the depictions of the members of the Egyptian beliefs. Ra in the two novels *StarGate* and *The Age of Ra* and in the film *Stargate* are different in personality and species. Second, the technological usage is tied with the mythic structures. Third, the predicaments and perseverance of the humans caught in the military warfare in direct or in indirect conflicts with the Egyptian deities are shown. This chapter shall explore the genesis of Ra in the film *Stargate* and the novel *StarGate* and the characters of the deities around Ra in *The Age of Ra*. Arguments will be produced to contextualize the technology described in the two novels in concomitance with mythic sources/parallels in the Egyptian belief-systems and sets of iconography, and religious texts. I will also look at how the humans are caught in oscillation between doubt and faith upon the realization of the deities’ natures, motives and requirements. Even the supernatural powers are challenged/questioned by human courage. Another point argued would be to show how humans tend to take recourse to the material-usage and empowerments in their interaction with the deities. This ambivalence establishes the material-bonding as one of the features of human consciousness, and through the undertaking of technology humans choose

³³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

to dissent, and to question the deities. In that context I shall study Egyptian mythology in the contexts of shaping of gadgets and/or devices, and usages of material technologies.

3.5 “Alternative Egyptological” Approaches

The “alternative” insights from scholars on prehistoric Egypt which inspire/influence popular “Egyptomania” have proclaimed the emergence and development of Egyptian culture as going back to several millennia earlier, from which the *Stargate*-plots gather their inspiration.³⁴ Edward F. Malkowski states that although the first pharaoh Narmer’s coronation year is given in Egyptology as “3100 BCE”; he was supposed to have been preceded by the mysterious class of rulers entitled as the “Shemsu Hor” since “14,800 BCE.”³⁵ Thus the “Egyptomaniac” “receptions” of Egypt tend to create “ancient” Egypt as more ancient, mystic, and hidden than what Egyptology calculates. We can immediately link here Daniel’s amazement that the “cover stone” of Stargate considered more than 8,000 years old precedes the Egyptologically classified Pharaonic civilization.³⁶

In the *Stargate* film and *StarGate* novel, Daniel, O’Neil, and the military members are welcomed as “Neteru” which they infer from the necklace worn by Daniel given to him by Catherine containing the “Eye of Ra” symbol.³⁷ Citing Ignatius Donnelly, Murry Hope notes that “Shemsu-Hor” was produced from the union between the native communities and the deified/semi-deified figures who might have started settlement in Egypt in between “30,000 BC” and “15,000 BC.”³⁸ This hypothesis might be argued to refer to Sha’uri’s

³⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

³⁵ Edward F. Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE: The History, Technology, and Philosophy of Civilization X* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 217.

³⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:14:54–0:15:41; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 15–24, 29–67.

³⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:20:54–0:33:30, 0:43:53–0:54:00; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 57, 77–103.

³⁸ Murry Hope, *The Sirius Connection: Unlocking the Secrets of Ancient Egypt* (1990, 1996; reprint, Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1997), 17. See also Ignatius Donnelly, *Atlantis, the Antediluvian World* (London: Low, Marston and Co., 1884).

relationship with Daniel; thus the two humans from two planets are coupled together and indeed Daniel is received as a god by the Abydonian-Egyptians on Abydos.³⁹

I shall next argue regarding the solar and divine connections as reflected in Old Kingdom's architecture. Massimiliano Nuzzolo observes the two stages recognized in Egyptian festivities surrounding the king's "solar rebirth."⁴⁰ First, Nuzzolo explains that Horus's terrestrial personification was observed through the pharaoh's form; the "*sd* festival" for commemorating the pharaoh's rule was observed, and the "funerary complex" saw the regulated symbolic performances of "death and rebirth."⁴¹ Second, as Nuzzolo notes, the connection between Ra and the pharaoh was perceived with reference to the "pyramid complex."⁴² Interestingly, the alien-kingship in *Stargate* involves Ra and Horus; in the film it can be observed that the Pyramid-temple is the alien Ra's stronghold and Horus is one of his strongest guards.⁴³ It may be argued that *Stargate* uses the pyramid-motif receiving the solar rays as the identification-"symbol" for Earth while aiming at the planet Abydos, thus "Egyptomaniacally" applying the importance of the pyramid in the sun-veneration.⁴⁴ In *The Age of Ra*, it can be argued that the Westwynter Family installs a "Solar Barque" in their estate to maintain a strong votive connection with the sun god Ra.⁴⁵ Nuzzolo states that according to the "matrix[es]" linked with Osiris and Ra, the places Abydos and Heliopolis are symbolically remembered in the temple layout.⁴⁶ Echoing this, Nuzzolo notes that in the "east-west axis of the" New Kingdom Temple-symbolism, the

³⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 77–193.

⁴⁰ Massimiliano Nuzzolo, "The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty: A Reassessment," *Studien Zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 36 (2007): 222, 217–247, accessed October 24, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25157803>.

⁴¹ Nuzzolo, "The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty," 222.

⁴² Nuzzolo, "The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty," 222.

⁴³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–188.

⁴⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–55.

⁴⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 171–172.

⁴⁶ Nuzzolo, "The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty," 233.

southern part of the “Temple of Million[s] of Years”⁴⁷ was connected with the “funerary cult” and the shrine’s northern section was connected with the “sun cult.”⁴⁸ Though this elaborate arrangement developed over centuries, the importance of the sun in temple settings had been always there since the earliest times of ancient Egyptian culture. Keeping this in mind we can justify Horus’s importance as the bodyguard in Ra’s Pyramid-spaceship. In the character of Horus, as Nuzzolo observes, the Pharaonic authority was realized in connection with the Pyramid; similarly the personification of Ra was considered within pharaoh in connection with the solar shrine.⁴⁹ These Egyptological data may be used to argue the fictionalization of the Egyptian solar religion in *Stargate*: (i) Abydos was the relevant name for the planet which Ra uses for mining, and (ii) a “*million years*” as a unit of calculation is used to indicate the space distance at which he is positioned away from Earth.⁵⁰

3.6 References to Ancient Egyptian Mythology

In this section I have drawn comparison between events in ancient Egyptian mythology held crucial in terms of the creation of the structured world, and the recontextualization of the myths in the two texts selected.

3.6.1 Rebellion and Chaos

As J. Viaud notes, Ra’s gentle daughter Hathor shifted to the destructive Sekhmet-form who slew the rebellious human subjects who challenged the divine kingship of Ra; unfortunately her self-control failed as her blood lust aggravated.⁵¹ After ensuring human survival following the dissipation of Sekhmet’s rage, Ra distanced himself from the earthly

⁴⁷ Quoted in Nuzzolo, “The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty,” 233.

⁴⁸ Nuzzolo, “The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty,” 233.

⁴⁹ Nuzzolo, “The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty,” 233.

⁵⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 32–33, 33–193.

⁵¹ J. Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” in *Larousse Mythologie Générale*, ed. Félix Guirand, *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (1996; reprint, London: Chancellor Press; Reed Consumer/International Books Ltd, 1997), 11, 36.

residents.⁵² Ra's transportation to the heavens can be argued as the source-motif of the abandonment of Ra's governing post on Earth as indicated in *Stargate*.⁵³ The *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel thereby recontextualize the myth of the rebellion by humans in the context of economic and material persecution caused by the alien-human chief Ra as he puts humans in bondage to acquire the mineral.⁵⁴ Daniel discovers the *alien* humans are the Egyptians/people from prehistoric Egypt engaged in manual labour in mining on the planet Abydos and they seem to have been still in the pre-industrial age except that the technology belongs to Ra only.⁵⁵

Egyptian mythology provides the accounts of chaos. The character of Ra as per mythology is not free from discontent; the sole authority of Ra has also been diluted. Egyptologist John Baines informs us that the general benevolent world-structure was generated by the solar deity to whom the gods and goddesses were subservient.⁵⁶ On the other hand, there were parallel interpretations of the cosmos as Baines notes: the cosmos was maintained by the cooperation between the divinities and the "sun god" in which the latter seeks individual assistance from the other deities.⁵⁷ Thus, science fiction writers can infer that Ra is not actually independent, though he is placed at the apex. We find the echo of this in *The Age of Ra* in which Anubis upholds the vision that the world is full of unique creatures, and he and Ra are respectively associated with the demise and creation affecting all forms of life.⁵⁸ Interestingly in *The Age of Ra*, we do see that Ra, despite being the highest authoritarian figure seems to have given up hope for the cessation of skirmishes

⁵² Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 36.

⁵³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–193.

⁵⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–193.

⁵⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–193.

⁵⁶ John Baines, "Society, Morality, and Religious Practice," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 186.

⁵⁷ Baines, "Society, Morality," 186.

⁵⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 184.

amidst the deities.⁵⁹ In *StarGate*, interestingly, in ancient times, humans broke Ra’s edict and recorded the tale of humans rebelling against Ra, who tries to silence memorization through written hieroglyphic script.⁶⁰ The *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel indicate that the act of rebellion constituted the strength of the humans to question the claim over resources; thus the myth has been recontextualized in the material and technological registers in science fiction.⁶¹

3.6.2 Nut, Geb, Shu, and Tefnut

Lovegrove’s descriptions of the “First Family” constituted of the deities Nut, Geb, Shu, and Tefnut, communicate the cosmological aspects they embody.⁶² Since the deities are also “characters” in his novel, Lovegrove creatively develops their mindsets based on the elemental roles attributed to them.⁶³ As Geraldine Pinch notes, space is not materialized initially between Geb (Earth) and Nut (Sky) due to their passionate hug and the creation of multiple entities was not aimed at due to the couple’s prolonged desire of unification.⁶⁴ Lovegrove creatively employs this Egyptological information. Despite Ra’s decree causing the separation of Nut and Geb,⁶⁵ the four cosmic gods seem to be a glob in the “*Palace of Unity*”; Geb and Nut appear to be of same gender, with femaleness seen in Geb.⁶⁶ Geb’s occasional erect phallus in iconography indicates that his inertia of physical desire continues as he stares up at Nut⁶⁷; in Lovegrove’s novel Ra perceives Geb’s unscrupulous nature that he had sexually violated Tefnut who might have encouraged it partially.⁶⁸ The divine bed seems to be an encapsulated zip of the world and the four deities seem to be united in one

⁵⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–329.

⁶⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–193, 105–108, 107.

⁶¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 97–193.

⁶² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

⁶³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–144.

⁶⁴ Geraldine Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 65.

⁶⁵ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 65.

⁶⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

⁶⁷ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 65.

⁶⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143.

body, their ideograms seen as distinguished as they position themselves separately.⁶⁹ Pinch observes that Shu's separation of Nut from Geb made the solar transit possible, bringing forth the "the perfect moment"⁷⁰ initiated through Ra's "first sunrise"; it caused the primordial lightlessness to disperse.⁷¹ Lovegrove's Tefnut, Geb, Nut, and Shu, could thereby reason that the deities could exhort humans to feel gratefulness for the water, fecundity, wind, and unrestricted view of stellar beauty and clear firmament.⁷²

Lovegrove's "The First Family" is thus an ambivalent concept of enforced unity, which precludes its own fulfilment of expressions through four distinguished selves.⁷³ However, the members are deified aspects of climate and meteorology, and through them the ancient Egyptian structuring of the cosmic laws is manifested. James P. Allen notes that Atum's farthest limit is represented by Shu in the ancient Egyptian thought.⁷⁴ It was speculated, as J. P. Allen accounts, that the cosmic region "above Nut's body" does not receive light and even the gods have no knowledge about that aquatic space.⁷⁵ This Egyptological information is reflected in *The Age of Ra*. Interestingly, Steven has this realization while pondering upon the night sky, inferring that Ra only is one stellar individual while the cosmos is beyond even the sun god's reach, initiating his disbelief in the Divine omnipotence.⁷⁶ The ancient Egyptians were pragmatic enough to separate the unknown boundless space from the domain inhabited by the deities and even the deities have their spaces demarcated. Thus it can be argued that *The Age of Ra* manifests Lovegrove's close reading of Egyptian mythology concerning the elementary genesis of the

⁶⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–144.

⁷⁰ Quoted in Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 65.

⁷¹ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 65.

⁷² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 146.

⁷³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 64.

⁷⁴ James P. Allen, "The Egyptian Concept of the World," in *Mysterious Lands (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, eds. David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke (London: UCL Press, 2003), 25.

⁷⁵ J. P. Allen, "The Egyptian Concept of the World," 27.

⁷⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 116–117, 109–127.

world, constituting water (Tefnut), sky (Nut), earth (Geb), and air (Shu) through the odds and incongruities of the four deities, the author has creatively retold the peculiarities in the deities, and their humanoid oddities.⁷⁷ Since the deities seem to be more abstract in their expressions of the elemental states of matter, they could pervade space and time and encapsulate the terrestrial and the celestial, the visible and the unseen, the manifested and the latent.⁷⁸ This might have factored in their victory over the “*other deities*,” who they sought, ambushed, encountered, and subjugated.⁷⁹

3.6.3 Ra

Aylward M. Blackman mentions that in ancient Egypt the Heliopolitan “predynastic” royalty was legitimized by perceiving the solar manifestation within the pharaoh’s body,⁸⁰ implying that the pharaoh was seen as an embodiment of Ra. It can be argued that we see this bodily association with the divine power through the mask of Ra in the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel. The technology of the shifting metal of the mask seems almost mystical, as the metal appears to shimmer and seems to get absorbed in front of “his face” as his mask-hidden face is revealed.⁸¹ Blackman observes that the rituals in Egyptian solar shrines observed adherence to hours, like the ritual of the morning coinciding with the unclosing of the temple doors to receive rays of rising sun.⁸² This practice linked with the solar cult as been cinematically shown in *Stargate* film. The Pyramid-spaceship showcases scenes evocative of this ritual in which the windows of the ship are opened to let the light enter Ra’s throne room, which bears a golden essence, and Daniel and O’Neil are all made

⁷⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

⁷⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

⁷⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

⁸⁰ Aylward M. Blackman, “The House of the Morning.” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 5, no. 3 (July 1918): 153, accessed August 31, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3853654>.

⁸¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:20:10–1:24:27; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120.

⁸² Blackman, “The House of the Morning,” 154.

to attend the court in the morning.⁸³ This is reminiscent of having a sight of the god in the morning ritual observed in the Egyptian temple, as Blackman notes.⁸⁴ Thus it can be fruitful to read “Egyptomaniac” cinematic depiction and Egyptological information together.

The first and the second registers from the “Third Division” from the *Book of Caverns* represented in the Tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings have been discussed with notes and plates/diagrams by Alexandre Piankoff in his two volume publication *The Tomb of Ramesses VI*.⁸⁵ As identified by Piankoff, we see a supine god enclosed within “an oval” in the “*First Register*” and a “ram-headed god” in the “*Second Register*” from the “Third Division” needing a “staff” to balance on, showing Efu Ra.⁸⁶ As we learn from Piankoff, Efu Ra is the personified Night Sun experiencing fatigue of old age, and leading the solar disk behind him to bring light into the subterranean world.⁸⁷ What intrigues us is that in Egyptian mythology the sun god goes through ageing and needs regeneration; Ra similarly regenerates in the *Stargate* film and *StarGate* novel.⁸⁸ The solar disk is perceived as a distinguished object from the wielding/associated deity, implying that cosmos has been structured by the deities who are responsible for its maintenance, yet the cosmos extends beyond the deities, which is a dissenting perspective projected throughout Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra*.⁸⁹

The *Stargate* film visually features an ambivalent engagement with the gender of Ra. *The Age of Ra* also refers to the effeminacy of the god Geb.⁹⁰ Rhomas A. Dowson reads the “stereotypical” elements in *Stargate* and identifies the Western masculine roughness in the

⁸³ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:20:10–1:24:27; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120, 127–131.

⁸⁴ Blackman, “The House of the Morning,” 148–165.

⁸⁵ Alexandre Piankoff, trans., *The Tomb of Ramesses VI: Texts*, ed. N. Rambova, introd. Alexandre Piankoff (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), 1: 66–72. Volume 1 is the “*Texts*” volume.

⁸⁶ Piankoff, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI*, 1: 66–72.

⁸⁷ Piankoff, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI*, 1: 66–72.

⁸⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 127–129, 175–185.

⁸⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁹⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 143–149.

plot as exhibited by O'Neil and other members of the military team but is contrasted with Daniel's nerdy nature.⁹¹ Daniel's low immunity against cough and cold, his scholarly awkwardness, and visual predicament manifested by spectacles are noted; however he is required to destroy Ra, within whom effeminacy and paedophilia are perceived along with his dalliance with Daniel who both fascinates and enrages Ra.⁹² Daniel, carrying the "Eye of Ra" amulet given by Catherine, infuriates Ra because Daniel, as Ra rightly infers, might replace him and threaten his singular authority.⁹³ Our contemporary perspectives regarding queer preferences are still deeply rooted in prejudice and hatred because we are incapable of thinking liberally like the ancient Egyptians. We learn from Viaud that the Egyptians established equal status for the two sexes so much that they thought of Ra - the most powerful/prominent male deity - as capable of existing as the goddess Rat within whom his essence is maintained in a different gender.⁹⁴ Pinch notes that the Eye goddess who is Ra's daughter, could exist in oppositions; her weeping is life-generating while her flaming vision is life-destructing.⁹⁵ Hence the "Eye of Ra" is a recurring symbol in the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel, representing Ra's masculine and feminine aspects, but unfortunately the Egyptian perception of "gender-fluidity" depth might elude the audience and the readers might be willing to focus on the effeminacy of Ra.⁹⁶

This discomfort regarding femaleness within and around the male sex and masculinity are hinted in both the *Stargate* film, the *StarGate* novel and *The Age of Ra*. The nerdy Daniel feels awkward in the beautiful Sha'uri's presence initially and Skaara develops a masculine obsession for O'Neil; but probably it is a pubescent attraction of a boy for the

⁹¹ Dowson, "Queering Sex and Gender," 27–34.

⁹² Dowson, "Queering Sex and Gender," 27–34. See also Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120, 127–131.

⁹³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120, 127–131.

⁹⁴ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 10–11.

⁹⁵ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 129.

⁹⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

physically strong man.⁹⁷ The robust Seth in *The Age of Ra* expresses his contempt for the god Hapy who he calls a “*girly man*”⁹⁸ which is again based on the androgynous portraiture of Hapi iconographically as a man having swollen tummy and hanging breasts.⁹⁹ However, as Geraldine Pinch notes, Seth himself according to the ancient Egyptian text “Contendings of Horus and Seth” had a homosexual encounter while continuing his conflict with his nephew Horus; Seth ejaculates in Horus’s hands having taken Horus to his bed and Horus in retaliation made Seth consume lettuce containing Horus’s seminal fluid.¹⁰⁰ Lovegrove remembers that aspect between two very masculine deities in *The Age of Ra* in which the dalliance between Seth and Horus is depicted on Ra’s boat and their tryst continues to such an extent that towards the end of the novel Horus forms a resistance against Osiris and Isis - his own parents, probably in a coalition with Seth.¹⁰¹ We may interpret this with a reference to a deviation in the norm endorsed in ancient Egyptian mythology, since the mythical consolidation of Egypt involves the peace following the conflict between Set and Horus. Keeping the connection between Horus and Set in mind, we may argue that archaeological evidence in Egyptology does have a specimen depicting the intimacy between these two gods as hinted in Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra*¹⁰²; Joan Ann Lansberry notes that a stele in Cairo Museum (accession number “JE 33896”) shows the Set-animal and the Horus-falcon, the zoomorphic manifestation of the two deities, sharing mouth-to-beak contact, symbolically indicating the combination of Upper Egypt, the domain of Seth, and Lower

⁹⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 77–106, 153–155, 182–193.

⁹⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 270.

⁹⁹ Thelma K. Thomas, *Late Antique Egyptian Funerary Sculpture: Images for this World and the Next* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2000), 65.

¹⁰⁰ Geraldine Pinch, *Egyptian Myth: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 81–82. See also Anirban Ray, “Bram Stoker’s *The Jewel of Seven Stars*: Sexual, Creative and Aesthetic Aspects from Ancient Egyptian Mythology,” in *Theorizing Sexuality in English Literature*, eds. Sunil K. Mishra and Rituparna Mukherjee (Delhi: Upanayan Publications, 2021), 55–56.

¹⁰¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 250–252, 323–329.

¹⁰² As hinted in Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 250–252, 323–329.

Egypt, the domain of Horus, under the King's dominion.¹⁰³ Such symbolic index often eludes our "comfort zones" hence we end up stereotyping ancient Egypt, and it can be argued that fictional imagination has grown more about ancient Egypt than about other cultures because we have received unique material specimens from excavations in Egypt. These Egyptological insights have been creatively appropriated in "Egyptomaniac" popular culture.

Insights from Malkowski's scholarship¹⁰⁴ may be borrowed to argue how the threat and attempted dispatch of the enhanced bomb by Ra to Earth through the Stargate¹⁰⁵ is a science fictional recontextualization of the myth of the massacre of humankind by the lioness-headed goddess Sekhmet in Egyptian mythology who rampaged the humans rebelling against her father the sun god Ra's authority.¹⁰⁶ Citing Paul LaViolette's studies, Malkowski elaborates and explains that the "cosmic superwave" resulting from the explosion of "gamma rays" in the "galactic core" appears as a blue-colored light in the atmosphere, which the ancient Egyptians might have interpreted as Ra's "punish[ing] ['Eye']" having cataclysmic changes.¹⁰⁷ We see that the teleporting device used by Ra in his pyramid spaceship uses a "blue light"¹⁰⁸; the explosion of Ra's spaceship also sends out a blue radiation in the space over the planet Abydos and in the planet's atmosphere as shown in *Stargate*.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ Fig. 1-7 "[K]issing" Horus and Set Cairo Museum, JE 33896, in Joan Ann Lansberry, *Images of Set: Changing Impressions of a Multi-Faceted God* (Oxford: Mandrake of Oxford, 2013), 14, 174, "Traced [by Joan Ann Lansberry] from photo by Francesco Raffaele," URL mentioned as: <http://xoomer.virgilio.it/francescoraf/hesyra/Khasekhemwy.html>; Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 14–15.

¹⁰⁴ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 238–239.

¹⁰⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:27:07–1:31:54, 1:45:44–1:46:15; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 129–131.

¹⁰⁶ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 11, 36.

¹⁰⁷ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 238–239. See Paul LaViolette, *Earth Under Fire* (Rochester, Vt.: Bear & Co., 2005), 88–89, 161–165.

¹⁰⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 01:48:00–02:00:16; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 116–117, 180–181.

¹⁰⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 01:50:00–02:00:16; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 187–188.

In Egyptian mythology the gods and the goddesses also suffer from insecurity like us humans. Pinch elaborates that the “Sole Eye” felt wrath out of insecurity, to find that a nascent visual organ had been developed by her father Ra which caused him momentarily to experience lack of vision.¹¹⁰ Pinch notes that the Sole Eye’s anger abated when she was given a position on Ra’s forehead; rivaling the other divinities, she gained tremendous destructive potential in the form of the “Uraeus.”¹¹¹ It can thus be argued that the anger felt by the “Sole Eye” finds a creative echo in *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel through the anger experienced by Ra to see Daniel possessing the “Eye of Ra” neck medallion, an obvious sign of godhead,¹¹² and quite fittingly the beams fired by Ra’s guards’ gliders¹¹³ remind us of the fiery aspect of the Eye, the “Uraeus” that inflames Ra’s opponents.¹¹⁴

The bovine face does appear in Ra’s spaceship and Ra also wears the solar disk set between two cow’s horns, which represent the attributes of Hathor, before planning to dispatch the bomb Earth-bound.¹¹⁵ L. Kákósy notes that though Ra saved humankind from the clutches of Sekhmet, the registers of the divinities and the humans, and the terrestrial and the celestial were henceforth differentiated mutually from that cataclysmic event onwards.¹¹⁶ Sekhmet’s episode is intriguing to both Egyptologists and “Egyptomaniacs,” and has generated ingenuous interpretations. Hope interprets the Sekhmet-episode astrophysically: the destructive potential of a mobile comet was linked with Sekhmet, conceived as the “Eye of Ra” and the “nuclear winter” causing death and possible extinction of many Earthly species could have been communicated through the myth of Ra’s depressed self-covering.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 67.

¹¹¹ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 129.

¹¹² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 120, 129–131, 142–146.

¹¹³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 67, 122–126.

¹¹⁴ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 11.

¹¹⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*.

¹¹⁶ L. Kákósy, “Ideas about the Fallen State of the World in Egyptian Religion: Decline of the Golden Age,” *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 17, no. 2 (1964): 209, accessed July 3, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23656852>.

¹¹⁷ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 225.

The *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel creatively use this myth; indeed Ra was planning to send a “sun” to earth, reflected in the enhanced nuclear explosion.¹¹⁸ Iconographically the sun-orb kept between the bovine horns placed upon Hathor’s head link her with both the sun and the cow with the name “Het Heru” she is revered as Horus’s sacred residence.¹¹⁹ From that logic, we can argue that Horus serves the Pyramid-spaceship as Ra’s guard and Ra also possesses the personalities of Hathor.¹²⁰ Hope notes that, amidst Hathor’s other aspects, Hathor is a geographical mistress, watching over the distant “Land of Punt”; her mining authority could be associated with the title “Goddess of Turquoise.”¹²¹ This mythical detail can be applied in *Stargate* plot because mining is the chief context for Ra’s visits to Abydos.¹²² In *The Age of Ra*, we see the “Lightbringer” conducting mass gathering in Hatshepsut’s Deir el-Bahri temple which features Punt.¹²³ Thus it can be argued that the *Stargate* film, the *StarGate* novel, and the *The Age of Ra* creatively re-contextualize the interpretation of Hathor as an icon of material enrichment, of celestial and terrestrial authorities.

3.6.4 Anubis

In Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra*, Ra bears a sense of fear regarding Anubis’s place because its mortuary realm is in stark contrast to his life giving heat and light; similarly Ra’s presence emits light that causes momentary stress in Anubis’s eyes.¹²⁴ The sensory difficulties experienced by the gods prove that the elemental states of the universe pre-exist the divine genealogies; the deities have merely positioned themselves as the authority

¹¹⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 01:48:00–02:00:16; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 127–131.

¹¹⁹ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 45–46.

¹²⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 113–138.

¹²¹ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 46. See also Anirban Ray, “‘Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment’: An Egyptological Study,” *Teresian Journal of English Studies* 13, no. 3 (July-September 2021): 31–32.

¹²² Devlin, Emmerich and Black, *StarGate*, 76–188.

¹²³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–187; Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 176–179.

¹²⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 181–187.

figures to regulate them. As the presiding deity over death, which is the most determining shift occurring to living beings, the lack of honesty is not supported by Anubis, because as the soul-carrier¹²⁵ he cannot approve partiality to any being.¹²⁶ This insistence in the character of Anubis reminds us of the depictions of Anubis in the *Book of the Dead of Papyrus of Hunefer*, where he leads the deceased to the Hall of Judgment and is shown working upon the Divine Scales so that they are in balance.¹²⁷ In *The Age of Ra*, Ra is given a sight of “Iaru” by Anubis, where the dead are lost in harvesting work.¹²⁸ We learn from Ragueh that at death, animal-essence is thus channelized towards the pursuit of botanical energy; thereby Egyptian mythology, being eco-critically aware, speaks in favour of the preservation of vegetation. As we learn from Cherine Abou Zeid Ragueh, the vision of the ancient Egyptian Underworld is agrarian in ambience, connecting solar and Osirian presences together.¹²⁹ Ragueh mentions that in the *Amduat*’s (or “*Imy-Duat*,” the Egyptian Book describing the sections in the Underworld) “Sixth Division” male deities are seen as engaged in “reaping” of wheat, the plant being perceived as Osiris’s “members”¹³⁰ and the spirits and humans consume this “bread of wheat” remembering Osiris’s physical frame.¹³¹ Ragueh notes that despite the regenerative notion of the greenery, even the sun god during his entry in the Underworld witnesses areas of mortality; like the corpse of Osiris, the “evening” sun-god “*Iuf-Ra*” also is perceived as a corpse.¹³² This is reflected in Anubis’s understanding that passage to the Underworld initiates the termination of vital signs in the

¹²⁵ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 16–17, 25, 41–42.

¹²⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 183, 181–187.

¹²⁷ The Trustees of the British Museum, London, *Papyrus of Hunefer: The God Thoth at the Last Judgment Scene (Detail)*, ca. 1285 BC, The British Museum, EA 9901/3, London, in *Egypt: The World of the Pharaohs*, eds. Regine Schulz and Matthias Seidel (Konigswinter: Könemann, 2004), 350–351, illustration no. 44.

¹²⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 184–187.

¹²⁹ Cherine Abou Zeid Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain Represented in God ‘Nepri’ and His Affiliate Gods of Grain: ‘Osiris’ and ‘Renenutet,’” *Journal of the Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality* 13, no. 2 (December 2016): 3, accessed May 7, 2020, https://jaauth.journals.ekb.eg/article_48016_58197fd2c61691eca2b91ff34d71ec79.pdf.

¹³⁰ Quoted in Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 3.

¹³¹ Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 3.

¹³² Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 4.

terrestrial body.¹³³ Anubis foresees that the humans will never stop violence, and Ra's brilliance will be temporary before the aeons ahead.¹³⁴ As a liminal deity, Anubis infers what the head of the deities Ra identifies as determined fatalism that oblivion is the ultimate turning of events¹³⁵; even the deities are limited and confined in their jurisdictions in the midst of boundless space and its mysterious expanse.¹³⁶

3.7 Significance of “Senet”

“Senet,” the game invented by the ancient Egyptians, features in the *Stargate* film, *StarGate* novel, and *The Age of Ra* featuring power shifts and staking for life and identity. Peter A. Piccione notes that the motif of the ancient Egyptian “Senet” game reflected the Egyptian “religious” psyche where the player represents every zealous but not entirely scrupulous individual wishing to be in the company of Re-Horakhty to gain afterlife's securities in the game; thus the “Senet” projects a human in interaction with the deities.¹³⁷ Piccione observes that the “squares” of the “Senet” board gained association with the deities and the strokes in the game reminded the players of the challenges faced in the deceased's underworld journey, thus the mapping of the underworld had been reflected in the “Senet.”¹³⁸

A section from the Coffin of Khonsu kept in Egyptian Museum Cairo shows Khonsu and his wife enjoying a moment of togetherness while playing the “Senet.”¹³⁹ The depiction of the “Senet” on the coffin proves the importance of the underworld perceived in the game. Before the couple is “*Meher-weret*,” the sky-cow, positioned upon a body of water, referring

¹³³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 183–184, 1–187.

¹³⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 185.

¹³⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 181–187.

¹³⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

¹³⁷ Peter A. Piccione, “In Search of The Meaning of Senet,” *Archaeology* 33 (July-August 1980): 56, 55–58, accessed May 7, 2020, http://www.piccione.people.cofc.edu/piccione_senet.pdf.

¹³⁸ Piccione, “In Search of The Meaning of Senet,” 56.

¹³⁹ Jürgen Liepe, *Funeral Sledge of Khonsu*, in *The Sun: In Myth and Art*, compiled and presented by Madanjeet Singh (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 333, plate 462.

to the watery abyss¹⁴⁰; upon her bovine head we see the sun disk inserted between horns linking her with Hathor, and the Divine Eye appears above.¹⁴¹ The composition coincidentally reminds us of the scene in the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel in which Ra plays “Senet” wearing the sun disk behind his head while his guards engage with the rebels, led by Daniel and O’Neil.¹⁴² The reference to this image is needed for justifying the religious and funerary importance of the “Senet” game.

These religious insights regarding the “Senet” game may be used to argue for the notions of staking and assertion of will and fate in the primary texts discussed in the chapters Two to Five. David’s father makes a fruitful business out of marketing “Senet” and opens a company supplied with people trained in law and commerce to repetitively protect copyright and also manage distribution.¹⁴³ Thus in the novel’s fictional world all of which worships the Egyptian deities, the religious aspect of the “Senet” becomes materialized in commercial venture. The “Lightbringer” challenges David to “Senet” playing and David realizes that the “Lightbringer” is actually his own brother Steven, having noticed Steven’s skills as a “Senet”-player.¹⁴⁴ Through business, the Westwynter family have gained expertise in all the possible moves in the game; the mutual recognition of the brothers’ skills through performance in “Senet” is indicative of professional acumen existing in their family blood as well as their affinities shared with Egyptian mindset and religiosity, because they inhabit the world ruled by the Egyptian deities.¹⁴⁵ Ironically David survives in the divine-versus-humans gaming in “Senet,” while the “Lightbringer,” the master-player

¹⁴⁰ Jürgen Liepe, *Funeral Sledge of Khonsu, Showing the Adoration of the Celestial Cow Meher-weret*, in *The Sun: In Myth and Art*, compiled and presented by Madanjeet Singh (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 331, plate 461; see also Ray, ““Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment,”” 32–33.

¹⁴¹ For the mythological connection, see Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 11, 23, 25, 36.

¹⁴² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 168–169.

¹⁴³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 76–77.

¹⁴⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 103–107.

¹⁴⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 76–77, 103–107.

who is played with all along by the cunning Seth has to pay with his life as Seth ceases his scheming against the deities through him.¹⁴⁶

3.8 Cartouche

The cartouche, as discussed in the Introduction chapter (chapter One) is an oval structure, vertically and/or horizontally depicted in ancient Egyptian art and writing containing the names of the pharaohs and queens.¹⁴⁷ It has been used significantly in the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel for enclosing the glyphs (“symbols”) of the constellations used for opening the wormhole, as well as for the shape of the sarcophagus-machine used by Ra.¹⁴⁸ Cathie Spieser notes that the Egyptian hieroglyphic “root Sn (*Shen*)” is communicated through a circular outline, and it may be argued that the “Egyptian *shen*-ring” is the source of the oval-structure of the cartouche.¹⁴⁹ It can be argued that the “Egyptian *shen*-ring” can also be associated with the Stargate-ring in terms of its technological marvel of travel across the galaxies,¹⁵⁰ thereby permitting the domain of the sun-god, with which the Pharaonic authority was analogous, to expand.¹⁵¹ In terms of the *Stargate* plots, it fits with the plotline of the alien Ra expanding his domain over other planets in the galaxy.¹⁵² Spieser notes that the cartouche outlines everything that is lit and is created with solar essence, the creator being the solar orb.¹⁵³ The pharaoh is equated with the sun through this cartouche in terms of space and time, that is, the length of rule; while the physical body of the king watching over the kingdom is expressed through his figurative bodily representation, the deified identity of the pharaoh iconographically is manifested

¹⁴⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

¹⁴⁷ Cathie Spieser, “Cartouche,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Elizabeth Froid and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2010), 1–10, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf61t>.

¹⁴⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁴⁹ Spieser, “Cartouche,” 1.

¹⁵⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁵¹ Spieser, “Cartouche,” 2.

¹⁵² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁵³ Spieser, “Cartouche,” 2, 1–10.

through the name within the cartouche.¹⁵⁴ Lovegrove factors in the solar connection desired by the well-to-do families in the fictional world-setting ruled by the Egyptian deities. The “family estate” shows the Westwynters’ devotion for the deities; the incorporation of the “replica Solar Barque” stationed in the lake links the Westwynter family with the temple cult and architecture, thereby honoring the “Age of Ra.”¹⁵⁵ Simultaneously, the presence of the sphinx and the “pyramid folly” as well as the sphinxes in the family estate also Egyptianize the Westwynter family which is believed to be protected against the exterior forces.¹⁵⁶ The architectonic association is an expression of “Egyptomania,” and it is hinted that the presence of a hieroglyphic cartouche could also attest the respect of an important family in David’s ancient Egyptian deities venerating world irrespective of the races.¹⁵⁷



Figure 3.1 Ramesses II and the Falcon God

In the image above the relief from the Temple of Seti I in Abydos shows Ramesses II before the god Horus engaged in a reciprocal interaction. Horus provides him with life and durability while the king draws a protective measured boundary around the sacred shrine he

¹⁵⁴ Spieser, “Cartouche,” 2, 1–10.

¹⁵⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 171–172.

¹⁵⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 171–172.

¹⁵⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 171–172.

has built.¹⁵⁸ The boundary is in the shape of an oval, reminding us of the cartouche, used here to define both the shrine through a glyph and image, as well as to give it security. The sacred vulture, flying over the king carries the “*shen*-ring” to bestow security to the king; this representation accurately sums up the connection between the circular “*shen*-ring” elongated to an oval cartouche; both are depicted in hieroglyphic writing to provide protection.¹⁵⁹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

The ring, implying the circle or the disk is also a recurrent symbol in Egyptian thought. For example, the circle plays an important role regarding the structuring of the world as visible on Wereshnefer’s sarcophagus-lid kept in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and studied by Egyptologist James P. Allen, who interpreted it as an ancient Egyptian example of cartography.¹⁶⁰ We may argue that the positioning of the Stargate in Egypt is fictionally relevant because Egyptians have left highly symbolic visual representations of their physical understanding of the cosmos. In the *Stargate*-universe, the Stargate on Abydos and on the Stargate on Earth act as devices enabling travel in and out of our world, through Egypt.¹⁶¹ J. P. Allen observes that Egypt for the Egyptians of course had the privileged centralized position in the universe.¹⁶² As perceived in J. P. Allen’s information, the circularity of our Earth was iconographically represented by the highly evolved minds of the Egyptian artists working on the sarcophagus commissioned for Wereshnefer, attributing to it the status of a very early example of global map.¹⁶³ The relevance of J. P. Allen’s observation of Wereshnefer’s sarcophagus in connection with our discussion of *Stargate* is that the horizon-goddesses are also present in the diagram represented on the cover stone containing the Stargate-machine. It can thus be perceived that

¹⁵⁸ Rosalie David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1981), 24–27.

¹⁵⁹ Spieser, “Cartouche,” 1–10.

¹⁶⁰ J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 28–29.

¹⁶¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁶² J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 29.

¹⁶³ J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 29.

the wormhole journey through the Stargate takes place between the two corners of the known galaxy.¹⁶⁴ The custom of enclosing the geographical names in cartouches¹⁶⁵ can also be seen in the use of cartouche containing the glyphs of the constellations, etched on the cover stone.¹⁶⁶

3.9 Egyptian Stellar Mythology

The very word “Stargate” implies constellations, celestial journey; in argument for the Stargate’s Egyptian connection we may cite examples of stellar importance from Egyptian religion. Egyptian mythology connects the brilliance and lastingness of the stars with the identities and afterlife transitions of the pharaoh, as R. O. Faulkner notes.¹⁶⁷ The pharaoh is also seen as the “Lone Star”; he is seen pursuing the journey, in the form of a hawk and was identified with Venus, as per *Pyramid Text* 1048.¹⁶⁸ As per Faulkner’s studies, the “Morning Star” is fathered by the Pharaoh, believed to be in the company of the “Circumpolar Stars,” as per *Pyramid Text* 1001 and *Pyramid Text* 1104 respectively.¹⁶⁹ Thus Egyptian mythology connects the two extremes together; (i) the human visceral and spiritual Pharaonic identities, and (ii) the cosmic stars “light years” away from the Earth; these two perspectives are linked in terms of stellar accounts. .

Faulkner specifies that the sky goddess Nut is supposed to have assisted the pharaoh (the deified king) and Re-Harakhti’s (the sun god) in their aquatic routes in the sky, as per *PT* 1048-1049.¹⁷⁰ It is worth mentioning here that in the blueprints of the “cover stone” containing the Stargate, (i) the sky-goddess Nut and the earth-god Geb are represented on

¹⁶⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁶⁵ J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 29.

¹⁶⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 31–55.

¹⁶⁷ R. O. Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion in the Pyramid Texts,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 25, no. 3 (July 1966): 161, accessed April 3, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/543263>.

¹⁶⁸ Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion,” 161.

¹⁶⁹ Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion,” 160.

¹⁷⁰ Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion,” 160.

either sides of the cartouche containing the glyphs of star-constellations (Orion) while (ii) Ra is mentioned as positioned in the sky “*million years*” away.¹⁷¹ The pharaoh emanating a stellar golden luster joins as the rower of Re according to “*PT 889*”¹⁷² and we may observe in this context that in *Stargate*, Ra’s technology enabling the stellar journey through the Stargate makes usage of gold and quartz.¹⁷³ Faulkner perceives the pre-Renaissance assertion of human supremacy realized amidst the stellar sphere in the ancient Egyptian beliefs: even the sun-god is threatened with suspension of rowing service if the Pharaoh had been barred entry in the solar region by the sun god, as per *Pyramid Text* 1438-1439.¹⁷⁴ This highly powerful insight may be cited to remind us of Daniel’s clash with Ra in *Stargate*, and Ra feels enraged to see Daniel wearing his necklace thereby generating rivalry for veneration from the Abydonians.¹⁷⁵

The pyramids are indicators of cosmic significance for the Egyptians and were tied with the divine identities. Stephen Quirke notes that by the Third Dynasty, Egyptians had started naming the “pyramids [complex]”; Netjerkheth’s “Step Pyramid” was called “Horus is the star at the head of the sky.”¹⁷⁶ This resonates in the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel in which Horus remains the principle warrior of Ra.¹⁷⁷ Quirke notes the Egyptian connection between the sun and the stars through the status of the pharaoh; during his earthly reign, the subjects see him as one solar identity, but following demise, the pharaoh finds his establishment amidst the eternal “circumpolar stars.”¹⁷⁸ The *Stargate* is an apt realization of similar sun-star connection through the imagery of the Pyramid-spaceship; Ra stresses his

¹⁷¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:13:00–0:14:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 40, 44.

¹⁷² Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion,” 154.

¹⁷³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 44–64.

¹⁷⁴ Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion,” 156.

¹⁷⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:27:07–1:36:00; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁷⁶ Stephen Quirke, *The Cult of Ra: Sun-Worship in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 116.

¹⁷⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–193.

¹⁷⁸ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 117.

singular status as the sole god in *Stargate*.¹⁷⁹ However, the sun god is a star amidst many other stars; Steven realizes this in *The Age of Ra* while floating in the Aegean observing the night sky.¹⁸⁰ In the light of the above discussion, it can be argued that the *Pyramid Texts*, conveying the stellar importance are also textually relevant for our studies in providing the comparison between mythology and science fiction because the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel involve the Pyramid-structure as a machine, as a vessel, as a glyph/symbol; Daniel also engages himself in exploring the mystery behind the Pyramids of Giza attributed to the Old Kingdom in the Pharaonic history.¹⁸¹ Similarly, the observation of the cosmos, divine energy, and the stellar identities remain important in the understanding of the deities in *The Age of Ra*.¹⁸²

3.10 Aquatic Passages in the Stellar Skies

Upon activation of the “seventh symbol” which constituted pyramid lit by the solar light, representing Earth, the wormhole is opened within the ring-portal of the Stargate, and the merging of the light beams generated from the circular body of the ring generates a vertical wall of fluid which the traveller crosses to enter the wormhole.¹⁸³ Intertextually, as we learn from academic Egyptology, translations of religious hieroglyphic texts involving celestial and underworld travels of the deceased have communicated the importance of water and aquatic bodies in connection with the skies and in the underworld in Egyptian beliefs. In Egyptian mythology as studied by Egyptologists, the descriptions of journeys across the heavens seem to resemble aquatic voyages. J. P. Allen notes that the Egyptians perceived the aquatic domain (“the Winding Waterway”) as composing the “the two

¹⁷⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–138, 1–193.

¹⁸⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 109–127.

¹⁸¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

¹⁸² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

¹⁸³ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:20:54–0:33:30; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–64.

skies”¹⁸⁴; these constitute (i) the “Fields of Reeds”¹⁸⁵ and (ii) the “Field of Offerings,”¹⁸⁶ corresponding to the Southern and the Northern sections respectively of the nocturnal sky.¹⁸⁷ In this context we can argue that Ra getting rejuvenated in the sarcophagus machine in *Stargate*¹⁸⁸ is a unique recontextualized account of the Egyptian connection between Ra and Nut, the sky-goddess and the sarcophagus’s personification. Consumption by Nut indicating sunset and death is a necessary pre-requisite of solar rebirth on the next day and Ra was thought to sail on the sky-river.¹⁸⁹ We learn from Leonard H. Lesko that the freedom of locomotion was made possible for stellar bodies balanced on boats, carried by the aquatic realm of the divine feminine’s, apparently the goddess Nut’s abdomen; Nut’s body and the sarcophagus “personified” by her were linked by symbolic structure and ritual/magical mechanism.¹⁹⁰ The terminologies from the ancient Egyptian texts like (i) the “Doors Thrown Open” possibly representing vagina, (ii) the “Nurse Canal” probably referring to the birth canal, (iii) the “Winding Waterway” reminiscent of uterus and menstruation), and (iv) the “Field of Reeds” evoking arteries and veins often resemble gestation which could be associated with the embalmed body in the sarcophagus expecting rebirth as Ra is reborn every day.¹⁹¹ This can be argued as the filmic and the fictional recontextualization of the sarcophagus as the machine for rejuvenation in *Stargate*,¹⁹² keeping in mind the daily rebirth of Ra from Nut, who is also the protectress of the sarcophagus.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁴ Quoted in J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 24.

¹⁸⁵ Quoted in J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 24.

¹⁸⁶ Quoted in J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 24.

¹⁸⁷ J. P. Allen, “The Egyptian Concept of the World,” 24.

¹⁸⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–131, 174–175, 184–185.

¹⁸⁹ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology” 10–16.

¹⁹⁰ Leonard H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 118–119. See also Ray, “Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment,” 32–33.

¹⁹¹ L. H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies,” 118–119.

¹⁹² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–131, 174–175, 184–185.

¹⁹³ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 16.

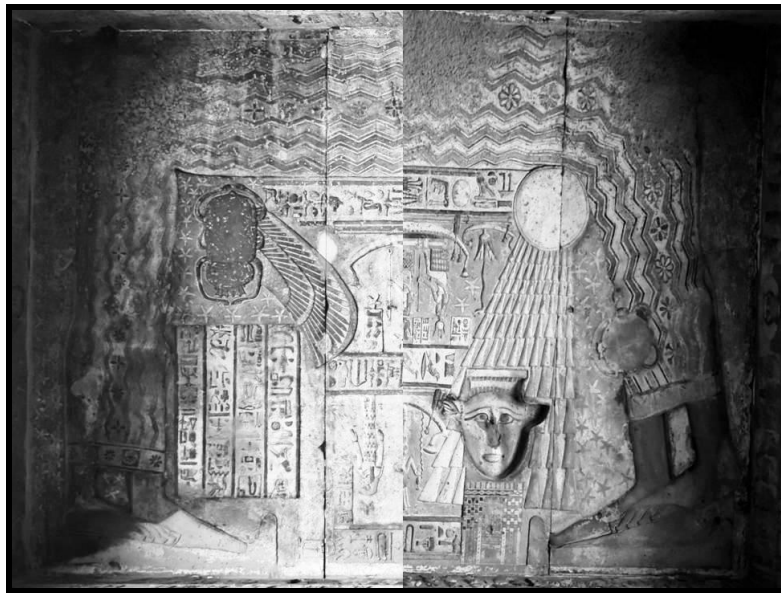


Figure 3.2 Scene of Sunrise from Dendera Ceiling

In the collated images above, details from the “Astronomical ceiling” from the Temple of Hathor, Dendera, show sunrise. On the left we see the phenomenon of dawn, represented by the winged scarab beetle, the Khepri, the personified rising sun.¹⁹⁴ On the right the risen solar disk illuminates the face of the goddess Hathor. The wavy patterns on the sky-goddess Nut’s robe giving birth to the sun in both the scenes remind us of her aquatic nature. L. H. Lesko notes that the sky was imagined as containing the sky-river enabling Ra and the stars to travel.¹⁹⁵ Interestingly in *Stargate*, travelers enter the fluidic wall to travel through the wormhole.¹⁹⁶ The shape of the winged beetle also bears similarity with the aerial fighting “gliders,” the firing “*udajeet*” deployed by Ra in *Stargate*.¹⁹⁷ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

The space, its registers, and its beings received a lot of speculation in ancient Egypt. As Jose M. Serrano observes, “*ḥnmmt*” meaning the “sun-folk” is the designated title for a

¹⁹⁴ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology” 10–13.

¹⁹⁵ L. H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies,” 118.

¹⁹⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 44–64.

¹⁹⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 122–124, 167.

class of deified residents in ancient Egyptian mythology, who frequently find mention in the *Pyramid Texts* featuring the Old Kingdom's theology.¹⁹⁸ Serrano informs that the "PT 509" gives interesting stellar details encountered by the journeying Pharaonic spirit; the "Morning Star"¹⁹⁹ acts as a guide, the heavenly aquatic realm is crossed, and the celestial expanse which is perceived as iron-made is covered in the journey.²⁰⁰ Interestingly in *Stargate* we see that the team journeys across the galaxy after having entered the fluidic (mercuric [?]) portal formed within the circular ring of the Stargate-machine.²⁰¹ The Egyptological detail is relevant here because the archaeological setting in *Stargate* - referring to the Giza complex/necropolis - is institutionally connected with the "Pyramid Age," linked with the Fourth Dynasty of the Old Kingdom.²⁰² The "Winding Waterway" mentioned in the *Pyramid Texts* and possibly referring to the celestial river is familiar to the "*ḥnmmt*"²⁰³; in Lovegrove's novel Seth is present as one of the members in the Day-Barque and in the Night-Barque of Ra, tasked with the burden of overcoming Apophis.²⁰⁴ Serrano notes that the pharaoh's safe celestial passage, as per "Pyr. 1565-7," from the earth to the celestial realm spatially occurs by "The Winding Waterway" which Kurt Sethe has identified as the Egyptian Milky Way.²⁰⁵ Serrano notes that the corpus of the *Pyramid texts* is to attribute the ownership over the cosmic unknown to the pharaoh, whose celestial "enthronement" following earthly demise makes him equal to the gods, even surpass them.²⁰⁶ It can be argued, keeping this in mind, that in *Stargate*, Ra also visits different planets with his

¹⁹⁸ Jose M. Serrano, "Origin and Basic Meaning of the Word *Ḥnmmt* (The So-Called 'Sun-Folk')," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 27 (1999): 353–368, accessed November 17, 2017, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25152809>.

¹⁹⁹ "PT 509" quoted in Serrano, "Origin and Basic Meaning," 356.

²⁰⁰ Serrano, "Origin and Basic Meaning," 356.

²⁰¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–64, 190–193.

²⁰² Cyril Aldred, *Egyptian Art in the Days of the Pharaohs: 3100–320 BC* (1980, 1985; reprint, London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 45–77.

²⁰³ Serrano, "Origin and Basic Meaning," 357.

²⁰⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 47–52, 219–224.

²⁰⁵ Serrano, "Origin and Basic Meaning," 357.

²⁰⁶ Serrano, "Origin and Basic Meaning," 357.

Pyramid-spaceship and establishes his dominion, but also realizes that the humans have progressed to the point of inventing nuclear weapon.²⁰⁷ We learn from Serrano that as per “PT 463” the mortals and the immortal “heavenly” entities are distanced from each other by the Entrances of Heaven.²⁰⁸ In *Stargate* plot we see that Daniel reinterprets the hieroglyphs on the “cover stone,” points to the phrase “*door to heaven*” to be read as “Stargate” and explains later to the military team that the machine was “[s]ealed and buried” by the Egyptian rebels to prohibit natives from being sent to Abydos by Ra.²⁰⁹ Hence portals, which were important in Egyptian mythology, could be used as a device in science fiction as well.

In the solar hymn entitled “Assmann Hymn A” noted by Quirke, Ra is venerated with aquatic rites, and the “Waterway of the Two Knives” is his path of transit.²¹⁰ We may interpret the title “Waterway of the Two Knives” as a mythic equivalent of the wormhole. Though the “Two Knives” remind us of weapons and encounters, in the present context they may be interpreted as the two Stargate-Rings momentarily disintegrating the molecules in the beginning of the journey, carrying them and reconstituting them while reaching the end of the wormhole, ending the journey and appearing at the ring of the receiving Stargate on Abydos.²¹¹ Like Ra travelling across the length of the sky-river, Daniel and O’Neil travel to “Cirrian galaxy”; their journey described as occurring across the length of the “known universe.”²¹² G. A. Wainwright notes that the Egyptians also made an analogy between metal, stars, and sky, and with resurrection; by rule, the priest who performed the “Opening

²⁰⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–137.

²⁰⁸ Serrano, “Origin and Basic Meaning,” 358.

²⁰⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 33–34, 105–139.

²¹⁰ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 66.

²¹¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 61–64.

²¹² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 49–64, 190–193.

of the Mouth,”²¹³ that magically restored sensory faculties in the embalmed body before its internment in the tomb, was perhaps nominated from Letopolis, “the thunderbolt city” in ancient Egypt.²¹⁴ Wainwright explains that the Egyptians observed that in terms of causing havoc, lightning is a very powerful agent and an analogy was drawn between the lightning and the priest’s “open[ing]” of the “closed” mouth of the deceased, since it was believed that meteorites falling through lightning yield iron.²¹⁵ We may argue that the light descending from the metallic spaceship of the alien enters the body of the pre-Egyptian boy Ra who gets his speech activated with the alien embodiment since before being appropriated by the alien he does not interact much with his fellow beings.²¹⁶ Wainwright notes that the deceased’s mouth can be exploded in the sense of opening by bringing it close to “*bʿ3*,” the “thunderbolt material”²¹⁷ Citing Adolf Erman, Wainwright explains that the hieroglyphic word “*ššd*” was used for fearsome stellar identities; an example of such star annihilating life is told in the Egyptian “Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor.”²¹⁸ In the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel the light from the Pyramid-spaceship fused the alien and Ra, the pre-Egyptian together.²¹⁹ Drawing these associations together, we may argue that physical bodies are transformed into energies while travelling through the Stargates, but the Rings, like the protection given by the cartouches we discussed earlier, also restore the bodies with their memories intact at the other end of the wormhole.²²⁰ The materialization of molecules at the receiving gate also requires the preservation of consciousness, with the same degrees of faculties kept intact.²²¹

²¹³ Quoted in G. A. Wainwright, “Iron in Egypt,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 18, no. 1/2 (May 1932): 6, accessed September 7, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3854899>.

²¹⁴ Wainwright, “Iron in Egypt,” 6–7.

²¹⁵ Wainwright, “Iron in Egypt,” 6–7.

²¹⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 104–108, 132–139.

²¹⁷ Wainwright, “Iron in Egypt,” 8.

²¹⁸ Wainwright, “Iron in Egypt,” 8. See also Adolf Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, trans. Aylward M. Blackman (London, Methuen: 1927), 32–33.

²¹⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 104–108, 132–139.

²²⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 49–64, 190–193.

²²¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 63, 59–64.

3.11 The Stargate Machine

The number seven, so important in Egyptian magic and funerary corpus,²²² has been incorporated in the Stargate's design.²²³ Peter Robinson notes that "seven gates" are positioned in the path towards the realm of the "external existence" in the underworld which the deceased travels through to reach Osiris's realm.²²⁴ The Stargate-machine similarly uses seven symbols for the opening of the wormhole to reach Abydos; it is also interesting that the name of the planet has an auspicious connection with Osiris²²⁵ and each symbol has to be interpreted and activated in sequence.²²⁶ The Stargate-machine opens up different branch of studies that include astrophysics, since it involves the prospects of interstellar travel.²²⁷ "Egyptomaniacally," the Stargate-machine is also a norm-breaking hieroglyphic case-study, a cornerstone in palaeography, and a technological marvel uniting religious symbolism and energy transmission.²²⁸ As envisioned in Egyptian magic, it activates the energy invested in the hieroglyphs, generating a pathway.²²⁹ In *Stargate* we see that the scholars have initially studied the unique outer glyphs on the "cover stone" but shrugged off any potential for further interpretation.²³⁰ The institutional silence regarding investigation is thus again cinematically projected. By giving the interpretation in the number of years ("[a] *million years*"), Daniel gives a quantification of distance between Ra and Earth; thus through correct translation the mysterious artefact is transformed into a usable material and artefact

²²² Warren R. Dawson, "The Number 'Seven' in Egyptian Texts," *Aegyptus* 8, no. 1/2 (July 1927): 97–107, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41213913>.

²²³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 37–50.

²²⁴ Peter Robinson, "'As For Them Who Know Them, They Shall Find Their Paths': Speculations on Ritual Landscapes in The 'Book of The Two Ways,'" in *Mysterious Lands (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, eds. David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke (London: UCL Press, 2003), 152–153.

²²⁵ Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization* (1989, 1991; reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 20–22.

²²⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–64.

²²⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 31, 1–193.

²²⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 32–64, 1–193.

²²⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 32.

²³⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 32.

capable of empirical study.²³¹ The word Stargate sounds technologically more precise than the mystically resonant “door to heaven.”²³² However, the Stargate’s mechanism involves sound, beams, and “force fields” which resemble a ritual of energy and technology.²³³ Thus we may argue that in *Stargate*’s universe, scientific potential is so advanced that it appears magical, divine.²³⁴ Initiating the Stargate-machine resembles a temple ritual meditation in opening up the path to a celestial world.²³⁵ People travel through the Stargates but still cannot fully fathom it; following the departure of Ra, the standalone machine upon discovery seems more strange and unconnected with Earth’s devices and cultural contexts.²³⁶ It becomes a liminal object, which is extraterrestrial, alien, and cosmic.



Figure 3.3 “Seven Cows” and “Four Paddles”

A very compact depiction from the Temple of Ramesses II in Abydos showing the sun god Ra, and the “Seven Cows” who represent the “Great Bear” Constellation.²³⁷ Gerald Massey notes that the Cows sometimes are accompanied by the personified “four paddles”

²³¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:13:00–0:14:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 33.

²³² Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:13:00–0:14:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 33, 1–193.

²³³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–43, 1–193.

²³⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

²³⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–64, 190–191, 1–193.

²³⁶ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–64, 190–191, 1–193.

²³⁷ See Gerald Massey, *The Natural Genesis*, vol. 2 (1883; New York, NY: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 2:1–3.

that are used to row the Boat of the Sun God for mythical information.²³⁸ The number seven is important as seven symbols are to be used to generate the wormhole through the Stargate.²³⁹ The Bull is also in the representation, depicted right after the sun god in the first register in the image. This is relevant in *Stargate* because the machine's ring in the course of activation also refers to the "constellation Taurus" which symbolizes the bull and ultimately concludes with the Earth-symbol.²⁴⁰ Also the Solar Boats, one for the Day and one for the Night are two very important foci of actions in *The Age of Ra* and the Paddles represent the sky as a watery route, connected with the importance of fluid energy in both the novels.²⁴¹

Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

3.12 Ra's Sarcophagus Machine

Before interpreting Ra's sarcophagus as a prototype of a pod to enable the body to revive I feel it important to study the purpose of the ancient Egyptian sarcophagi. They provide necessary spells for the deceased during his/her underworld travel, as known from Robinson's extensive observation of the Egyptian Coffins.²⁴² Robinson notes that in some el-Bersheh coffins for example, the goddess Nut might be sculpted as a visual reference in the coffin or the coffin-lid might be perceived as the material counterpart to the celestial vault.²⁴³ Apart from the protection of the body, the sarcophagus also provides directional assistance and cartography. The sarcophaguses' floors might have the texts of *Book of The Two Ways* to provide an "underworld"-transit following a cartography and as Erik Hornung cited by Robinson describes, a "cosmography" with an earthly equivalent of the solar-transit

²³⁸ Massey, *The Natural Genesis*, 2:1–3.

²³⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–64.

²⁴⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 48.

²⁴¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁴² Robinson, "As For Them Who Know Them," 154, 139–159.

²⁴³ Robinson, "As For Them Who Know Them," 142. See also J. P. Allen, "The Egyptian Concept of the World," 23–30.

of Ra on sun-boat, thus assisting the demised to navigate his/her way through the subterranean.²⁴⁴

Egyptian deities are projected through emblems. In *The Age of Ra* we see that David dreams of his parents as Isis and Osiris sharing physical intimacy.²⁴⁵ Osiris in David's dream sends healing essence from the corn materialized from the "Djed."²⁴⁶ Robinson notes that the complex iconography placed at the coffin's head refers to the liminal state experienced by the deceased, between sleep and dream, aiming to ascend as Ra in sunrise.²⁴⁷ Ra's Sarcophagus-machine in *Stargate* has the resurrection-narration of Osiris depicted on it, thereby contextualizing the mythology in the machine-mechanism.²⁴⁸ Indeed the presence of these symbols and deities, all providing magical protection, turns the sarcophagus into a machine-like object still retaining ritual aura. *The Age of Ra* recontextualizes the amulets as ambivalent gadgets, while the humans are torn against each other by the deities.²⁴⁹ In *The Age of Ra* novel the deities ideologically are at odds.²⁵⁰

These mythological details become relevant for realizing Ra's sarcophagus-machine as a mytho-technological invention. Daniel's bodily strength and visions seem to have been intensified by the sarcophagus.²⁵¹ He experiences resurrection like an ancient Egyptian. Ra's sarcophagus is a highly sensitive device; resembling solar phototropic influence upon the plants, the sarcophagus uncloses in a floral pattern.²⁵² Very interestingly, as we learn from Jeremy Naydler, the *Book of the Dead* refers to a spell for the deceased to turn into a lotus,

²⁴⁴ Robinson, "As For Them Who Know Them," 142. See also Erik Hornung, *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Afterlife*, trans. David Lorton (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1999), 11. Robinson also elaborates the information.

²⁴⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 173–174.

²⁴⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 263–265.

²⁴⁷ Robinson, "As For Them Who Know Them," 146.

²⁴⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 175.

²⁴⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁵⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁵¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–128.

²⁵² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 95.

and a human head above the lotus constitutes a “regeneration” motif in Egypt.²⁵³ The idea of “ka” becomes valuable for Ra because his sarcophagus seems to restore his “ka.”²⁵⁴ Daniel’s observation is drawn to Isis’s toils in locating Osiris’s body parts and the latter being given second life by the former, both richly represented on the machine.²⁵⁵ Ra’s sarcophagus is thus both formatively functional as well as aesthetically semiotic; it technologically functions (that is, healing injured bodies) what it mythologically depicts - resurrection of the deceased.²⁵⁶ In this context it is worthwhile to discuss the ritual mechanism involving the gods Ra and Osiris in connection with resurrection. Zsuzsanna Vègh informs us that the formula “*wn-hr*” is included in the coffins, projecting the deceased’s desire to be manifested as Re, accompanying in the solar circuit and having a glimpse of the god.²⁵⁷ Citing A. Lohwasser, Vègh notes that Osiris’s renewal is assisted by Ra is also expressed in a form of “*wn-hr*” formula.²⁵⁸ This practice may be contextualized here to argue that “Egyptomania” in *Stargate* in reference to sarcophagus-machine does show some consistency regarding Egyptian funerary practice and thought. The depiction of Osiris in Ra’s machine indicates a science fictional recontextualization of the dual importance of Ra and Osiris in Egyptian mythology.²⁵⁹ Also, the “cover stone” containing the Stargate-machine is provided with the glyphs representing Orion.²⁶⁰ We learn from Faulker that the deceased Pharaoh becomes a celestial agent and participates in influencing seasonal and meteorological changes while being in the company of Sothis and Orion (a form of Osiris) as per PT “882-883,” “186,”

²⁵³ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1996), 177–178.

²⁵⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Emmerich, Devlin, and Black, *StarGate*, 135.

²⁵⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 95, 175–178, 84–185.

²⁵⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 175.

²⁵⁷ Zsuzsanna Vègh, “Solar Cult in Abydos During the Middle Kingdom,” *Egittp e Vicino Oriente* 39 (2016): 15, accessed July 31, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26490802>.

²⁵⁸ Vègh, “Solar Cult in Abydos,” 15.

²⁵⁹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 95, 175–178.

²⁶⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 40, 44.

“959,” and “819-822.”²⁶¹ Thus here is another argument to discuss the Osiris-Ra connection established by material culture linked with *Stargate*.²⁶² Ra’s machine has its limitations; it can heal and regenerate tissues but cannot re-fill blood count, hence while bleeding, Ra felt pain and fear.²⁶³ Ra’s only attachment is the life-rendering machine; we may here consider the Egyptian obsession with death so intimately connected with the object sarcophagus²⁶⁴ and why artists and scribes would provide elaborate planning, invest time and energy to build them.

3.13 Gadgets and Weapons

We may note that in the *Stargate* film and *StarGate* novel, the alien species produced machine art that bears equilibrium between functionality and aesthetic looks.²⁶⁵ The alien’s assimilation of different species involves the appropriation of the hosts’ temperament and that requires the selection of a species that understands fear, obedience and service.²⁶⁶ Ra discovers that he can use his technology and healthy bodies of humans to serve him as trusted bodyguards.²⁶⁷ The metallic armour used by Ra’s bodyguards is ingenious devices; for example, the claws and helmet of Anubis, which can retract at will, lead Daniel to consider the users of such technology as “cyborgs.”²⁶⁸ Quartz tends to be the life-source of Ra’s technology; he kills his opponents by the molecular structure being dislocated in the lobes of the brain by the Quartz.²⁶⁹ The mask of Ra becomes the separating medium between the godhead created by Ra from the human and Ra devised mythology to use it as a

²⁶¹ Faulkner, “The King and the Star-Religion,” 161.

²⁶² Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

²⁶³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 95, 175–178, 184–185.

²⁶⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 181, 184–185.

²⁶⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

²⁶⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120, 132–146.

²⁶⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120, 132–146.

²⁶⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 116, 109–120, 132–146, 177.

²⁶⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 37–67, 148.

cabinet filled with humans posing as deities to run the administration.²⁷⁰ The material forming the masks is capable of following human instructions,²⁷¹ which generates a mystical awe, since it seems to have an intelligence of its own. Ra's technology is more quartz-oriented than atomic,²⁷² which may be explained by his recognition of humans' atomic power, as indicated by the presence of the bomb.²⁷³

The "udajeet," the winged vehicles used by Ra for combat and sent for raids on Nagada reminds us of the solar chariot used by "Horus Kings" as accounted in the "alternative" theories regarding Egypt's mythical past.²⁷⁴ We may argue, following Erich Von Däniken that a curious functional similarity is noticeable between the satellites with outstretched fins and the disk balanced between open wings; thus the "Eye of Horus," ever vigilant, can be structurally associated with the spacecrafts of extraterrestrials.²⁷⁵ One Edfu temple text accounted by Heinrich Brugsch and cited and quoted by Von Däniken describes the assistance provided by Re-Harmachis to "Hor-Hut" to attack the adversaries; the "Hor-Hut" turned militant, took the initial form of the wing-attached orb, to engage with the opponents.²⁷⁶ These inscriptions remind us of the image of Ra's winged flights ("udajeet") deployed in massacring the natives of Abydos using fiery beams.²⁷⁷ In *The Age of Ra*, we see that the use of amulets is outlawed internationally, as the factions endorse armed flights more than the latent power sources.²⁷⁸ It is an interesting aspect balancing divine omnipotence and human perseverance. The ritual and magical aspects have been replaced by

²⁷⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–148, 134.

²⁷¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 118, 109–139.

²⁷² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 37–67, 129.

²⁷³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–131.

²⁷⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:24:27–1:26:45; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 123. See also Erich von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx: The Newest Evidence of Extraterrestrial Contact in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Berkley Books, 1996), 165.

²⁷⁵ Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 67.

²⁷⁶ Heinrich Brugsch, *Die Sage von der Geflügelten Sonnenscheibe nach Altägyptischen Quellen* (Göttingen: Dieterichsche Buchhandlung, 1870), cited and quoted in Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 165. Von Däniken also explains the information; see Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 165.

²⁷⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:24:27–1:26:45; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 123, 121–126, 167.

²⁷⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 100.

technology while the deities are watching, and they communicate through visions, essence and energy.²⁷⁹

However, technology inspired by ritual seems to retain their devotional fervour. In *The Age of Ra*, there seems to be sombre humour regarding the priests fondling the “Saqqara Bird” used by the aerial military.²⁸⁰ The occasional hallucination-oriented priests are unable to distinguish them as devices, which turn the iconographic aspect significant - that is, the symbolic shapes are closely linked with the veneration of the divine and the sacred.²⁸¹ In Egyptian thought, as Simson Najovits notes, the “*ba*” is seen as the “mobile” spirit of the deceased, depicted as a human-headed bird, and is possessed by all species, divine or mortal.²⁸² Lovegrove creatively recontextualizes the spiritual essence of the “*ba*” as a technological weapon. In *The Age of Ra*, The military largely uses the “*ba*”-lance and the structure of the lances differ amidst the factions, depending upon their patron deity.²⁸³ Science and mythology are thus not at odds; the “*ba*”-energy can be used conveniently because it refers to the stellar and solar energy.²⁸⁴

A detail from western side of Taho’s sarcophagus in Egyptian Museum Cairo shows four “*Ba*”-birds having positioned themselves and venerating Efu Ra, the personified Sun of the Night, shown as a ram-headed god²⁸⁵ above the male mummified bodies lying within oval cartouches.²⁸⁶ The cartouches remind us of the cartouche-shaped sarcophagus-machine

²⁷⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁸⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 111.

²⁸¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 111.

²⁸² Simson Najovits, *Egypt, Trunk of the Tree: A Modern Survey of an Ancient Land: Vol. II: The Consequences: How Egypt Became the Trunk of the Tree* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2004), 2: 49–53.

²⁸³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁸⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 117, 15–329.

²⁸⁵ For Efu Ra, see Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 10–11, 19.

²⁸⁶ For information regarding this sarcophagus see Gaston Maspero, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos 29301-29303, Sarcophages des Époques Persane et Ptolémaïque T.1, Fasc. 1* (Le Caire: Imprimerie de L’Institut Français D’Archéologie Orientale, 1908), Plate VIII, *Internet Archive*, uploaded by Alain_Dautant, October 12, 2015, accessed March 15, 2022, <https://archive.org/details/MasperoSarcophages11/page/n13/mode/2up>.

of Ra in his spaceship in *Stargate*.²⁸⁷ In the frieze of Taho's sarcophagus we see the repetitive motif of recumbent jackals, reminiscent of Anubis, one of the armed subjects serving Ra in *Stargate*.²⁸⁸ The "Ba"-birds standing on the ovals indicate the spiritual release from the corpses²⁸⁹; ironically the "ba" energy used in *The Age of Ra* is an ambivalent appropriation of the spiritual energy, used as weapons to destroy living bodies.²⁹⁰ The melting of cells through energy is also meted out by Ra in *Stargate* with his Quartz as a means of punishment.²⁹¹

3.14 Abydos

Insights from hieroglyphic texts and funerary information from ancient Egypt can be cited to discuss the ancient Egyptian resonance on the fictional planet Abydos in *Stargate*.²⁹² James P. Allen notes that the word "*ḥ3st*" depicted by "three hills" in hieroglyphs not only represents the foreign nations but also the elevation of the desert, curiously associating the unknown with the sense of aridity.²⁹³ The planet Abydos where the descendents of ancient Egyptians were sent is indeed a desert planet, and located at the charted universe's distant corner.²⁹⁴ The name Abydos, reminding us of a city in Upper Egypt containing Seti I's monument dedicated to Osiris²⁹⁵ is used to name the desert planet in *Stargate*. The name Abydos in the context of the film and the novel can be perceived as an ironic inversion of its ancient Egyptian connection. Osiris is the hope for the ancient Egyptians in the afterlife as

²⁸⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*.

²⁸⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 88–89, 113–185. See also Maspero, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire*, Nos 29301–29303, Plate VIII.

²⁸⁹ Najovits, *Egypt, Trunk of the Tree*, 2: 51–52.

²⁹⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

²⁹¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 147–148.

²⁹² Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 62–193.

²⁹³ J. P. Allen, "The Egyptian Concept of the World," 23. See also Ray, "Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment," 31.

²⁹⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–193.

²⁹⁵ Kemp, *Ancient Egypt*, 20–22.

he grants them an agrarian paradise.²⁹⁶ But on Abydos the Egyptians from Earth have spent millennia as industrial miners and without writing and memory, Abydos could not progress as Earth did.²⁹⁷ Jeremy Naydler notes that the “coronation dais” providing seat to the Pharaoh and placing himself in times of the ancient Egyptian “Sed Festival” commemorated the creative force emanating from the “primordial mount,” that signalled the first moment of Creation, thereby constituting the dais as the symbolic structure which was colossally expanded later into the Step Pyramid.²⁹⁸ The Pyramid thereby becomes symbolically important for both Abydos representing the end of the journey and Earth representing the beginning of the journey in *Stargate*.²⁹⁹ Henri Frankfort notes that the pharaoh within whom the falcon-headed Horus is represented is also referred to as jackal-headed Upwaut who enacted revenge following Osiris’s demise.³⁰⁰ The jackal-headed sentinel resembling Anubis or Upwaut and the hawk-headed Horus both serve Ra, who revives like Osiris, in his sarcophagus in Abydos in *Stargate*; the importance of Horus and Anubis, who like Upwaut is also jackal-headed, is thereby relevant in *Stargate* both Egyptologically and “Egyptomaniacally.”³⁰¹

3.15 “Freegypt”

Lovegrove creatively imagines the post-apocalyptic “Freegypt” as the very reverse of the ancient land of Kemet; it is devoid of religious ardour, but is also a space for human emancipation.³⁰² I have attempted to interpret the position of “Freegypt” in the war-raided

²⁹⁶ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 16–20.

²⁹⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 72–193.

²⁹⁸ Jeremy Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts: The Mystical Tradition of Ancient Egypt* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2005), 91–92, 377. See also William Brede Kristensen, *Life Out of Death: Studies in the Religions of Egypt and of Ancient Greece*, trans. H. J. Franken and G. R. H. Wright (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1992), 111.

²⁹⁹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 64–193.

³⁰⁰ Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (1948; reprint, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 204.

³⁰¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–193.

³⁰² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 186–187, 15–329.

world ruled by the Egyptian deities in *The Age of Ra* by citing the ideas ancient Egyptians themselves had regarding the position of their nation in the universe as they mythically conceived. As David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke note, the ancient Egyptians believed that they were privileged in being closer in hierarchy to their deities.³⁰³ O'Connor and Quirke observe that the non-Egyptians and other species were considered distant, while the “human” realm was protected by the borders of Egypt and was headed by the Pharaoh, favoured by the deities, at the apex of whom is Ra.³⁰⁴ We see how the foreigners, for example the Westwynter brothers, get involved in the fissures caused within the deities.³⁰⁵ Ra and the deities are troubled by Seth’s exploitation of the “Lightbringer” (Steven).³⁰⁶ O'Connor and Quirke state that in ancient Egyptian cartography the world has Egypt at its “point” of beginning; the foreigners’ chaotic forces are seen as obstacles undermining the solar cult and the Pharaonic kingship stemming from it.³⁰⁷ The close-knit world of Egypt itself has turned “godless” in “Freegypt” and Ra’s position in the deities encounters obstacles and questionings.³⁰⁸ Thus *The Age of Ra* is a fictional retelling of the mythically accounted predicaments faced by the sun god from (i) the divine realm, that is, the disruption caused by Seth to his siblings for the throne of Egypt,³⁰⁹ and from (ii) human agencies and “free will,” that is the rebellion of humans against the sun god.³¹⁰ Interestingly, Lovegrove balances chapters between humans and the deities speaking and acting amidst

³⁰³ David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke, “Introduction: Mapping the Unknown in Ancient Egypt,” in *Mysterious Lands (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, eds. David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke (London: UCL Press, 2003), 11–12.

³⁰⁴ O'Connor and Quirke, “Introduction: Mapping the Unknown,” 11.

³⁰⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

³⁰⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 41–329. It is highly relevant in this context to argue here that Seth is mythically associated with the foreign lands and their dangers uncharted to the Egyptians; see Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 19–20.

³⁰⁷ O'Connor and Quirke, “Introduction: Mapping the Unknown,” 12–13.

³⁰⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 186–187, 15–329.

³⁰⁹ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 16–20.

³¹⁰ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 11.

themselves, thus the immortal and the mortal agencies are distinguished.³¹¹ Though “Freegypt” is “godless,” the reverse of ancient Egypt, “Freegypt” is still the sum total of human perseverance, of dissent and of human will, capable of questioning the deities; “Freegypt” is thus a psychic hub, which gives representation to all irrespective of time and place.³¹²

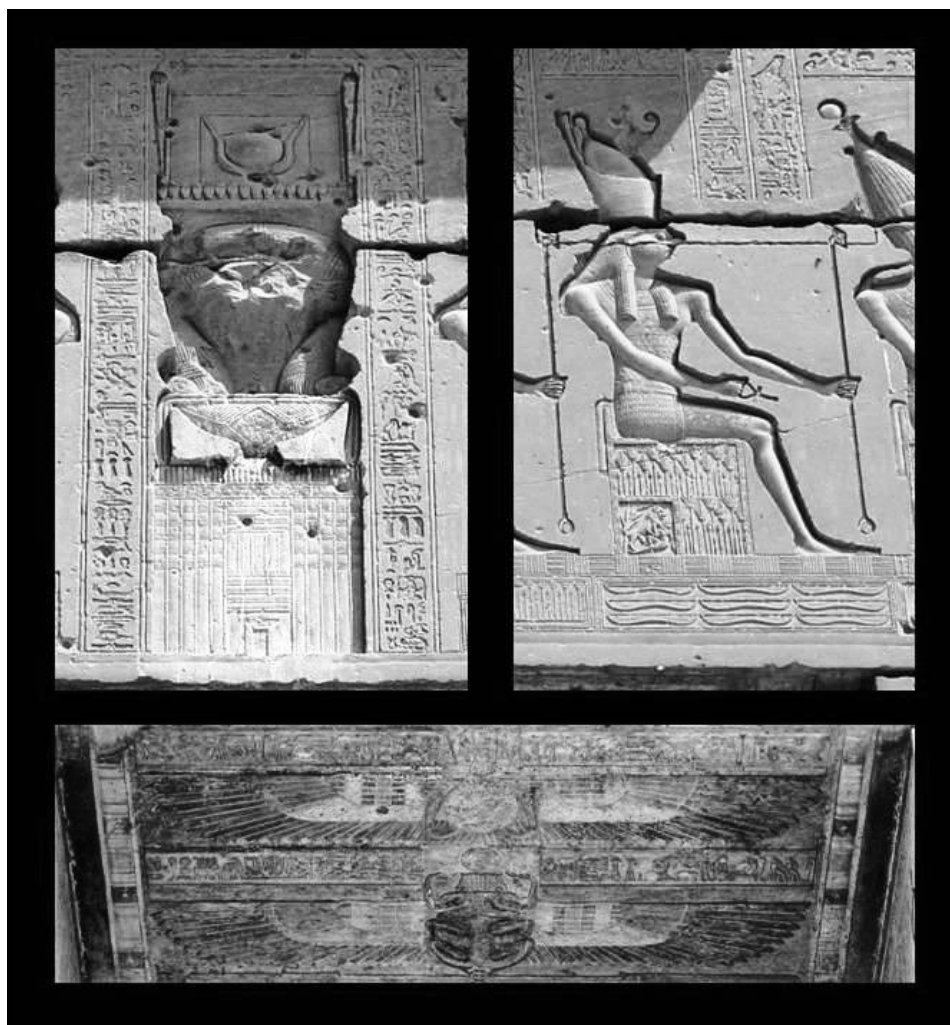


Figure 3.4 Horus, Hathor, and the “Nine Bows”

In the image above, three details from the Gate to the Temple of Hathor in Dendera show representations of the Divine Couple. On the above left, we see the frontal

³¹¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329. It is interesting that the chapters referring to the deities in Lovegrove’s novel are written in italics, creating a different world of divine voices.

³¹² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

representation of Hathor, positioned between two facade-like structures. The facade above encloses her disk set between the two horns, and the facade below represents the palace-facade. On the above right we see Hathor's husband Horus enthroned upon the "Nine Bows" that, as O'Connor and Quirke note, represent symbolically the regions (the "foreign lands"³¹³) of the world according to the ancient Egyptian cartography.³¹⁴ This indicates the Egyptian deities' supremacy over the world through Egyptian consciousness, which is the premise in Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra*, though Egypt is "Freegypt," separated from the deities.³¹⁵ The image below shows the ceiling within the Gate, showing (i) the winged solar disk facing the Temple and (ii) the winged scarab beetle, Khepri, facing the exterior. The Temple thus denotes ancient Egypt as a divinely blessed land to whom a pivotal position in the cosmos is given. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

Even if the deities are abandoned by "Freegyptians," the memories of the ancient Egyptian temples remain; the "Temple of Hatshepsut" at Deir el-Bahri is used as the venue to attend the "Lightbringer[']s" message.³¹⁶ Hatshepsut's temple is a devoutly religious shrine, yet it is unique from all other Egyptian temples because of the subject matters of its reliefs and decorations. Citing D. M. Dixon, Stephen P. Harvey notes that Hatshepsut endeavoured to re-create "a Punt in Egypt" by collecting the seeds of trees for gifting incense to Amun³¹⁷; her expedition to Punt was not just for ritual needs but also for Egypt's prosperity.³¹⁸ In *The Age of Ra*, it is perceived that commercial transactions between Upper

³¹³ Quoted in O'Connor and Quirke, "Introduction: Mapping the Unknown," 12.

³¹⁴ O'Connor and Quirke, "Introduction: Mapping the Unknown," 11–12.

³¹⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 186–187, 15–329.

³¹⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–95.

³¹⁷ D. M. Dixon, "The Transplantation of Punt Incense Trees in Egypt," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 55 (1969): 55–65, cited in Stephen P. Harvey, "Interpreting Punt: Geographic, Cultural and Artistic Landscapes," in *Mysterious Lands (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, eds. David O'Connor and Stephen Quirke (London: UCL Press, 2003), 82; Harvey, "Interpreting Punt," 82.

³¹⁸ Harvey, "Interpreting Punt," 82.

and Lower Egypt have developed in the regime of the “Lightbringer.”³¹⁹ The entire Earth in the novel can be interpreted as the Greater Egypt, with continental headquarters under different deities.³²⁰ As perceived in Richard H. Wilkinson’s information, Hatshepsut gave importance to her sailors and soldiers, depicting the voyage of the former, and the joyous march of the soldiers - a unique aesthetic choice from the Queen valuing humanity in balance with the propitiation of the divine.³²¹ “Lightbringer[’s]” war tactics furnished in the walls of the “Temple of Hatshepsut” constitute an ironic contrast to the decoration of Punt-voyage as instructed by Hatshepsut.³²² Simultaneously Lovegrove’s choice of the temple as setting seems significant because just as Hatshepsut put up a false appearance of that of a male pharaoh,³²³ the “Lightbringer,” who is actually Steven, also hides his face in a mask.³²⁴

In *The Age of Ra*, “Freegypt” is put under the administration of “Secular People’s Font” responsible for administering “Freegypt”³²⁵; it seems to be a comparatively peaceful state, as compared with the devastation and carnage noticed in other continents and nations where deities fight each other through numerous political and armed parties.³²⁶ The novel explores the ambivalent relationships humans have with the divine. Even if the deities are forsaken, the practices invented for cultic worship and propagation of religion are reduced to basic activities like the mandatory study of hieroglyphs in the world in the novel.³²⁷ This particular activity was only reserved for sacred documentation and used by priests and

³¹⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 72.

³²⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

³²¹ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 176–179.

³²² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–107.

³²³ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 176–179.

³²⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–107, 89–292.

³²⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 64.

³²⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 65, 11–329.

³²⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 66, 99–107, 11–329.

educated scribes in ancient Egypt³²⁸; in the novel it becomes a sort of globalized expression. Rituals regarding death in the novel have accepted ancient Egyptian practices. The Underworld has also evolved into the ancient Egyptian version and the non-believing “Freegyptians” are also appointed in “Iaru” in harvesting tasks shared with the non-Egyptian international believers.³²⁹ Because of her godlessness, “Freegypt” stands as a model for the entire world³³⁰; every “Freegyptian” is a free human being, trying to find a position of equality, without hierarchy.³³¹

3.16 Human Bodies: Usages

As observed, the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel project significant perspectives on the organic body in terms of predation, hosting, which ultimately could be used as a potent means of colonization leading to the shaping of the civilization itself.³³² The importance of possession has been foreshadowed in the *StarGate* novel which begins with the pre-dynastic Egyptian boy Ra initiated into a “hunting ritual” practiced through art in which he is taught to visually concentrate on the prey and possess it.³³³ Ironically, he himself would be preyed upon and assimilated³³⁴ by the alien who chooses Ra for Ra’s distrust in fellow humans, having a fearless but detached temperament.³³⁵ Throughout the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel the “Eye of Ra” recurs as a potent symbol of vigilance and occurs as depictions on medallion and necklace; occasionally the eyes of the alien Ra are seen glowing unnaturally through the human eyes of the host-body of Ra.³³⁶ Eberhard Otto notes that in the history of art linked with the development of religious practices, the rituals have

³²⁸ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 11–30.

³²⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 187, 181–210, 11–329.

³³⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 64–65, 186–187.

³³¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 11–239.

³³² Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

³³³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 2–3.

³³⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 4–5, 104–108.

³³⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–3.

³³⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:27:07– 1:31:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

their sources in the primitive world in which rearing of cattle as well as “hunt[ing]” were important.³³⁷ The possible means of hunting of animals for rituals was made possible through archery, and Kurt Sethe cited by Otto deconstructed the hieroglyphic word “ššr” as usage of arrow in ritual killing.³³⁸ The Stargate’s ring can be seen as an aiming device through which enslaved human subjects and weapons of destruction may be aimed and transferred.³³⁹ Otto notes that in the Abydos Temple in Egypt, Ramesses II is seen as immobilizing the animal so that the ritual slaughter might take place.³⁴⁰ In the Pyramid-monument of Abydos, Ra arranges for a visual display of slaying O’Neil and his military comrades, appointing Daniel to execute his orders.³⁴¹

Ra has a mysterious ability to understand animals’ minds and the novel projects the fear associated with powers of glyphs to bring life to the animals.³⁴² Ra while incorporating the aliens also appropriates the mask-wearing practice performed by the members of his tribe preserved in Ra’s cerebral memory. Following that Ra combining the personalities of the alien and the host devises high-tech shifting animal-masks imitating the animals of Earth’s species to cover the faces of his guards to infuse fear amidst his subjects, who misinterpret them as gods.³⁴³ The *Stargate* plots thus provide studies of technology having their roots in primitive/ancient practices. The masks later evolved as elaborate constituent parts of costume. Daniel also observes from the anthropological point of view that human civilization implies control over animals; thus the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel can

³³⁷ Eberhard Otto, “An Ancient Egyptian Hunting Ritual,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 9, no. 3 (July 1950): 169, accessed April 28, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/543040>.

³³⁸ Kurt Sethe cited in Otto, “An Ancient Egyptian Hunting Ritual,” 172; Otto, “An Ancient Egyptian Hunting Ritual,” 172.

³³⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

³⁴⁰ Otto, “An Ancient Egyptian Hunting Ritual,” 173.

³⁴¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–131, 140–146.

³⁴² Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–3.

³⁴³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 132–139, 1–193.

be argued as anthropological narratives, focusing on the interaction between humans and animals in performative power-play.³⁴⁴

Though the ancient Egyptians believed strongly in zoomorphism, the human body-structure remains pivotal in their veneration of the divine and they were much concerned about the empowerment of the human deceased. The love for the preservation of the human body in the Afterlife remains paramount. In the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel we see that the sarcophagus-machine and its regenerative abilities work wonders with the human species valued by the alien.³⁴⁵ Daniel realizes that the human body of Ra wielding the identity/being of Ra is as ancient as ten millennia; with the combination of the earthly Ra and the otherworldly alien Ra it has essentially become composite, immortal, and divine. Ra attributes the genesis of his earthly domain to the *Homo Sapiens* species whose bodies accept quick and convenient medical treatments.³⁴⁶ The *Stargate* novel provides the details that Ra's physical and psychological attributes assist in the birth of the "god" Ra.³⁴⁷ Ra's movements are agile, while his psyche is full of scrutiny and suspicion which also enable the moves and strategies of the alien after he possesses Ra.³⁴⁸ Thus the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel imply that an alien species' self-deification is connected with humans, and with Egypt.³⁴⁹ The transpiration of this transition results in the genesis of the Egyptian deities, all orchestrated by Ra.³⁵⁰ Ra does not have any particular goal having lost all close human ties; thus his mind is like an emotional vacuum efficiently filled up by the alien.³⁵¹ Ra's revulsion at his fellow species and his suicidal resoluteness make him advance to

³⁴⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 73–76, 1–193.

³⁴⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:27:07–1:31:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 127–131, 174–175, 184–185.

³⁴⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 128, 104–108, 174–175, 184–185.

³⁴⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 132–139.

³⁴⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 132–139.

³⁴⁹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

³⁵⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 131–139.

³⁵¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 131–139.

accept the descending light from the alien's Pyramid-spaceship during the latter's visit, leading to the genesis of the human-alien symbiont.³⁵² After ten millennia, by the nuclear explosion of the pyramid-spaceship triggered by Daniel and O'Neil, both the human body of Ra and the hosted alien are destroyed without any scope of re-possession.³⁵³

Walter Federn accounts that it was considered a cerebro-spiritual transition for an ancient Egyptian to have his/her identity realized as the reborn Re, and the Egyptians thought it was possible to see one's identity as not different from cosmic energies.³⁵⁴ The alien's species seem to be incapable of dreaming, hence the concept of the "superhuman" is attributed to a unique ability of dreaming in the species (in this case, the humans) which might not possess physical power but they are susceptible to visions and miracles.³⁵⁵ Ra's species possess technical gifts but no feelings while the humans are insufficiently equipped in terms of materiality because they have conscience.³⁵⁶ We may observe here that the alien in Ra utilizes the dreaming potential of the human cerebro-neural system fully; thus it is the human nature hosted by him that enables him to be transformed into a "god."³⁵⁷ Ra projects the appearances of zoomorphic deities to be obeyed by everyone; the spectacle dissolves the senses of logic, creating apprehensions in humans.³⁵⁸

The world in *The Age of Ra* has accepted the Pharaonic funeral practices as "makeshift managements" and the roles of the deities are fully recognized.³⁵⁹ In the "Reanimation Facility" shaped like a pyramid the mummification rituals are pursued along

³⁵² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–51, 131–139, 104–108.

³⁵³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 182–188

³⁵⁴ Walter Federn, "The 'Transformations' in the Coffin Texts: A New Approach." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 19, no. 4 (October 1960): 246, 247–257, accessed November 29, 2016, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/543830>.

³⁵⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 132–139.

³⁵⁶ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 132–139.

³⁵⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–139.

³⁵⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 132–139.

³⁵⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–210, 15–329.

with the canopic storage of organs.³⁶⁰ Thus the funerary practices and pyramid-architecture are resorted to, in the aid of technology for warfare.³⁶¹ As we learn from Bob Brier, the ancient Egyptian medical error regarding the consideration of the brain as unnecessary led to the removal of it during the embalming process.³⁶² This is featured in *The Age of Ra* in which the removal of the brains of the soldiers leads to the loss of spontaneous decision, thus the brain-removed re-animated warriors lack any sentience.³⁶³ With the power-usage of “ba” on both their organs and their bodies the mummies could be used as “undead” fighters by the Nephthysians, the followers of Nephthys, to cause fear to the “Freegyptian desecrator-terrorists” for disbelieving in Egyptian faith.³⁶⁴ The prospect of using the “undead” is taken as demeaning by the “Lightbringer”,³⁶⁵ perhaps also because he respects the sanctity of the body irrespective of its position dictated by religion. Hence he interprets the re-utilization of the corpses as another expression of divine indifference and insult of human dignity by the users.³⁶⁶ Thus Lovegrove’s novel refers to the ancient Egyptian rituals but also simultaneously critiques the technological re-application of those in the needs of warfare.³⁶⁷

3.17 Human-Divine Interaction and Conflicts

This section notes how in the two texts the humans encounter the idea of godhead and attempt to understand technology and cosmic boundlessness as going beyond the supposed omnipotence believed to be centering around the deities only. However in terms of

³⁶⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197.

³⁶¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–210.

³⁶² Bob Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic: Spells, Incantations, Potions, Stories, and Rituals* (1980; New York: Quill, 1981), 67–95.

³⁶³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–198.

³⁶⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–198.

³⁶⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 199.

³⁶⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–210.

³⁶⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–210.

this encounter, the texts have also made interesting use of ancient Egyptian beliefs and symbols.

3.17.1 Daniel, O’Neil, Sha’uri and Skaara against Ra

As O’Connor and Quirke note, in ancient Egyptian beliefs there was a restriction on the attempts to access and read Divine knowledge; no individual including even the pharaoh was supposed to gain Thoth’s written corpus of wisdom.³⁶⁸ The *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel contextualize this containment of “knowledge” used to generate the apprehensions surrounding the cult of Ra.³⁶⁹ The prehistoric Egyptians stranded on Abydos pay for their Earthly (Egyptian) fellows’ rebellion; they were barred from writing hieroglyphs and remembering their history of space-travel, enslavement, and removal from their original home.³⁷⁰ The Pyramid, as the port of Ra, has been used to threaten Sha’uri’s people but she learns to overcome her fear and initiates assistance to Daniel to locate the “seventh symbol” for Earth.³⁷¹ Sha’uri’s and Skaara’s realizations are profound since they realize that there is no true divinity in connection with Ra and the “guards” who serve him.³⁷² Daniel’s exposing of Ra’s non-divine status to the people of Abydos is instrumental through unmasking of Horus.³⁷³ It reflects upon the role of the masks in Egyptian religion as the boundary between the human and the divine is determined by their usage,³⁷⁴ since animal-heads were supposed to show non-human powers in the deities.³⁷⁵ Skaara is shown inscribing the conflict between O’Neil, his fellow soldiers, and armed followers of Ra.³⁷⁶ Interestingly both are technologically advanced to Skaraa’s people and he realizes their

³⁶⁸ O’Connor and Quirke, “Introduction: Mapping the Unknown,” 1.

³⁶⁹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 32–188.

³⁷⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 94–139.

³⁷¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 100, 121–155.

³⁷² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 130–167.

³⁷³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 153–154.

³⁷⁴ See Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 153–154.

³⁷⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 158.

³⁷⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 154–155.

alienness, if not their divinities.³⁷⁷ This act of visual memory is very important in the Egyptian worldview because the auspicious histories were documented. Daniel aptly realizes that a Pharaonic civilization might blossom beyond Earth following the arrival of human soldiers on Abydos from Earth just as the alien's arrival from space on Earth marked the birth of Earthly Egypt in the past.³⁷⁸ Thus Egypt resembles nodes in the shifts of time, and represents repeated pattern of cultural shifts, development and downfall that can affect the global history of the planet. While the alien's arrival in Egypt ushered religion and civilization, Daniel and O'Neil's arrival on Abydos (Nagada settlement) promises technological revolution.³⁷⁹

Ra's threats enable humans from two different planets to bond, study, and share technology. The Stargate, as a machine, remains separate from the Pyramid temple complex; it is a communication-machine while the Pyramid temple is a structure for landing, a platform for reception.³⁸⁰ The dwelling place of the gods in Egyptian temple is not applicable here; it is just the entry port of Ra.³⁸¹ The duty assigned to Daniel is to provide a safe return transit; it initially does not involve archaeology.³⁸² Thus *Stargate* provides an interesting account of archaeology of alien artefacts, applying methodologies in decipherment of texts beyond the Earth, in outer space.³⁸³ The absence of hieroglyphs in Abydos's Pyramid-Temple thus threatens any promise of return to Earth, without any coordinates for generating the wormhole.³⁸⁴ For humans, the Stargate-machine thus carries the essence of archaeological studies and technical investigation, but it is in the

³⁷⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 113–155.

³⁷⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5, 154–155, 64–193.

³⁷⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

³⁸⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 68–120, 1–193.

³⁸¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 68–120, 1–193.

³⁸² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 51–193.

³⁸³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

³⁸⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 64–155.

custodianship of the military.³⁸⁵ Interestingly the Stargate-machine defies any proper assimilation³⁸⁶ since it elicits different responses from the members of the exploring group from Earth.³⁸⁷ Daniel infers that the pyramid had been constructed to enable the pyramid spaceship to rest on it.³⁸⁸ This knowledge fascinates Daniel from an engineering perspective too. But for O’Neil it constitutes a threatening enemy-territory; he is entrusted with the mission to use the nuclear bomb to destroy anything in Abydos if required.³⁸⁹

It is noticeable that Daniel and O’Neil - men of very contrasting temperaments - bond over their individual clashes with Ra and his guards.³⁹⁰ It is noteworthy that the two men’s responses are different at the sight of the guards serving Ra.³⁹¹ Daniel is amazed to encounter the real-life materialization of Horus seen only in Egyptian art and the high-tech attributes and headdresses they are equipped with.³⁹² O’Neil realizes that fate has ordained his ultimate fight with Ra’s champion Anubis who also seems to have treated O’Neil as a worthy rival.³⁹³ For Daniel it is a sublime moment to see the figures of his empirical studies present in flesh-and-blood, while for O’Neil, the opponent is an opponent even if he includes the supposed divinity within him.³⁹⁴ Since the usage of hieroglyphs had been criminalized by Ra,³⁹⁵ his warrior Anubis has no issue in tearing pages of a book of assisting with interpretation of hieroglyphs belonging to Daniel.³⁹⁶ O’Neil witnessing this feels a surge of vengeance as he attacks Anubis, implying that O’Neil, despite being a soldier, has pursued his own journey of understanding the value of scholarship.³⁹⁷ The cooperation

³⁸⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 64–155.

³⁸⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 68–70.

³⁸⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–70.

³⁸⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 68–120, 110–111.

³⁸⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 112, 109–188.

³⁹⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 15–193.

³⁹¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–120.

³⁹² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 113, 109–120.

³⁹³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–181.

³⁹⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–181.

³⁹⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 94–155.

³⁹⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 179.

³⁹⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 179.

between the two men reaches the climax when both Daniel and O'Neil simultaneously learn to use Ra's teleportation device against him; they dispatch the bomb to Ra's Pyramid-spaceship, destroying him along with it.³⁹⁸ The *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel thus prove that archaeology involves both armed exploration/combat and scholarship.³⁹⁹ Daniel translates Ra's history and alien-association to O'Neil thereby preparing the colonel's mind about the inevitable encounter with another organic alien, but not a "god."⁴⁰⁰ O'Neil comes to realization that Daniel has limited resource to work with to figure out the means to return to Earth but he is the most adept person in such a task; in fact Daniel surpasses O'Neil in the sense that he also pursues the spirit to fight if required, and we see him learning to use the lances used by Ra's guards.⁴⁰¹

3.17.2 Osiris and David

David, beneath his soldierly masculinity is a tender man and tormented by conscience; the "Lightbringer" pricks David's faith regarding Osiris as well as Isis's involvement in Petra-bombing which David survived, just as Steven survived the explosion of the *Immortal* navy ship he was on⁴⁰² leading to the changes in their thinking.⁴⁰³ David realizes that the "Lightbringer" is his brother presumed to be dead and his surprise is expressed by the swearing of the names of Isis, associated with the protective "Blood Knot" and the regenerative "Djed-pillar" of Osiris.⁴⁰⁴ Thus the embodiments of the Divine Couple seem to be construed mostly through their symbols that become crucial in the novel's material culture. Hence even though David is not obsessed with the business with amulets and material culture he does bear respect for the deities associated with respective symbolic

³⁹⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 168–188.

³⁹⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

⁴⁰⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–188.

⁴⁰¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–159, 51–193.

⁴⁰² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 109–127.

⁴⁰³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 102.

⁴⁰⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 104–107.

attribute.⁴⁰⁵ Lovegrove brilliantly recontextualizes the conflict between the divine brothers Seth and Osiris from Egyptian mythology in the conflict between Steven who becomes the “Lightbringer” as Seth’s tool and David whom Osiris heals and communicates to cease his military involvement against the deities.⁴⁰⁶ Thus *The Age of Ra* is a creative fictionalization of the Egyptian myth involving Osiris-Seth rivalry in the war-driven Earth having advanced tools of destruction.

Ancient Egyptian funerary art shows rich network of protective symbols and deities in charge of protection of the deceased. The “Djed pillar” can be complemented with “Tyet.”⁴⁰⁷ David in *The Age of Ra* swears the names Isis and Osiris by referring to “Tyet,” sacred to Isis, and “Djed,” sacred to Osiris, respectively.⁴⁰⁸ Osiris sends a healing vision to him with his “Djed” symbol.⁴⁰⁹ Such material studies are relevant for both *Stargate* film, *StarGate* novel, and *The Age of Ra*, as ancient Egyptian arts represent the coordination between amulets, symbols, the Eye, and the deities linked with death and resurrection.

David had earlier witnessed his parents’ sexual lovemaking which caused him both revulsion and awe.⁴¹⁰ The vision constitutes the juxtaposition of the bodily frames of Isis and Osiris in the respective bodies of his mother and father, the indicative headgears floating over his parents’ heads distinguish the divine essences of the two deities superimposed in their bodies.⁴¹¹ Emotional as well as spiritual manipulation are thus pursued by Isis and Osiris who express their discontent at David’s assistance to the “Lightbringer”, his own brother who himself experience manipulation by Set.⁴¹² David is torn between his religious

⁴⁰⁵ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁴⁰⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁴⁰⁷ For the information on these symbols, see Aude Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology* (1999; reprint, New York: Todtri Book Publishers, 2002), 118.

⁴⁰⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 104–107.

⁴⁰⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 263–265.

⁴¹⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 173, 172–174.

⁴¹¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 173, 172–174.

⁴¹² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 174, 172–174, 15–329.

beliefs and military duty, and realizes, to his utter distress, that the lives of the humans do not mean much to the deities which makes him question his faith.⁴¹³

The significant move occurs following David's injury: Osiris appears carrying his Djed pillar, develops it into a corn stalk and bestows healing vision and peace upon David.⁴¹⁴ Applying Frankfort's study we may argue that Lovegrove has creatively applied the ancient Egyptian connection between vegetation and resurrection through the cults of Osiris and Min.⁴¹⁵ Frankfort notes that the personification of fecundity in flora and in fauna as well as in human was celebrated through the persona of Min, who was the divine receiver of the "harvest festival."⁴¹⁶ Frankfort informs that the pharaoh's "Ka" ("vital force"⁴¹⁷) was the receiver "of the sheaf of emmers"; the pharaoh was supposed to share the forces of Min and Horus.⁴¹⁸ We can validate the mythology in this context because David feels the positive impact of the vision of Osiris with his corn upon his healing body,⁴¹⁹ and David's "ka" receives the regenerating power symbolized in the corn through the agency of Osiris.⁴²⁰ Min's deified parents were thought to be Isis and Osiris by the theologians of the Middle Kingdom.⁴²¹ Thus this Egyptological information is relevant in *The Age of Ra* in establishing the connection between the god Min, the pharaoh as the beneficiary of life-renewing harvest,⁴²² and David who envisions his parents sharing the images of Osiris and Isis.⁴²³ Frankfort notes that Min is also regarded as child of Osiris and Isis.⁴²⁴ Like the

⁴¹³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 204–205, 15–329.

⁴¹⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 263–265.

⁴¹⁵ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 188–189.

⁴¹⁶ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 188.

⁴¹⁷ Quoted in Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 62.

⁴¹⁸ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 189.

⁴¹⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 263–265.

⁴²⁰ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 188–189.

⁴²¹ Adol Erman, *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, trans. Aylward M. Blackman (London, Methuen: 1927), 137, and Hermann Kees, *Der Götterglaube im Alten Ägypten*, 3rd ed. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1977) cited in Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 189. Frankfort weaves the information in his elaborate writing; see Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 189.

⁴²² Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 188–189.

⁴²³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 172–174.

⁴²⁴ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 188–189.

emmer-receiving Min in ancient Egyptian ritual,⁴²⁵ David receives the life-giving vision of “Djed” and corn from Osiris.⁴²⁶

Cherine Abou Zeid Ragueh observes that the corn was manufactured by Osiris from his body fluid, as per a text from Dendera Temple.⁴²⁷ An analogy was drawn between (i) Osiris collapsing following the blows inflicted by Seth, and (ii) the grains being thrown on the ground; the vegetal transformation from the injured Osiris brought nutrition to the living world.⁴²⁸ Ragueh notes that the sowing itself involves a symbolic violence: Seth’s overpowering of Osiris was reflected in the seeds trampled over “by goats or pigs” while the seeds’ germination and resurfacing were manifested in Osiris’s regeneration.⁴²⁹ Ragueh infers that the “resurrection” of the demised was made sure by the provision of grains, in which the essence of Osiris was supposed to have been present.⁴³⁰ Thus in argument of the recontextualization of fertility myths in Lovegrove’s novel, we may perceive Seth-Osiris conflict reflected in David who is disillusioned in warfare, yet he is given healing vision by Osiris; he assists his brother Steven, working under the influence of Seth.⁴³¹ Lovegrove, by incorporating the corn and the “Djed pillar” in David’s dream has also made use of the symbolization of “stability” by “Djed” in Egyptian beliefs⁴³² to indicate David’s healing.⁴³³

3.17.3 Seth and Steven

Seth’s ambivalent nature has attracted a lot of Egyptological discussion. Kákosy observes that Seth’s antagonistic nature manifested preceding even any name was given to

⁴²⁵ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 188–189

⁴²⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 263–265

⁴²⁷ Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 2. See also Aylward M. Blackman, *The Temple of Bîgeh, Les Temples Immergés de la Nubie* (Le Caire: IFAO, 1915), 4.

⁴²⁸ Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 2. See also R. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts*, vol. 1 (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1994), 254.

⁴²⁹ Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 5.

⁴³⁰ Ragueh, “The Blessing of Grain,” 8. See also Adriaan De Buck, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts, Vol. 2: Texts of Spells 76–163. OIP*, vol. 49 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), Spell 102.

⁴³¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–317.

⁴³² Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 118.

⁴³³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 263–265.

him; the Ennead's practice of holding tribunal was itself initiated to deal with negativity caused by Seth.⁴³⁴ This implies that preceding Seth, the deities believed in the given benevolence in the world-order. Kákosy notes that Seth was thereby hailed as the agent of negativity which led humans to be tainted with aggression and despair.⁴³⁵ Lovegrove fictionalizes the disrupting nature of Seth through Seth's interactions with Steven.⁴³⁶ Seth perceives that humans are capable of dissent, like his own lawlessness amidst the deities. Steven's quest begins following the shipwreck, which is later perceived as an evidence of the divine indifference.⁴³⁷ Steven realizes that every stellar authority cannot be attributed to Ra and the boundless span of the universe dwarfs Ra⁴³⁸; thereby he learns to separate a representative body from the independently existing physical body occurring in cosmos and nature.⁴³⁹ Seth visits the starving Steven and sustains him, passing his divine "essence" on a regular basis subjecting Steven to bodily pain because the organic builds of humans and deities are different.⁴⁴⁰ However, Seth's powers transform Steven radically. By means of "Sethian" essence, Steven gains eloquence in speech and charisma⁴⁴¹; the bond between Seth and Steven is indicated by the Seth-animal-mark stamped on Steven's face, thereby requiring the mask to keep it hidden.⁴⁴² The masked face and the unexposed skin of the "Lightbringer" not only conceals his identity but also dissolves his individuality, rendering him a "Freegyptian" "Everyman," like a prophet whose face is not revealed in representation.⁴⁴³

⁴³⁴ Kákosy, "Ideas about the Fallen State," 213.

⁴³⁵ Kákosy, "Ideas about the Fallen State," 213–214.

⁴³⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 109–329.

⁴³⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–141.

⁴³⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 116–117.

⁴³⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 116–117.

⁴⁴⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 283–292.

⁴⁴¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 109–317.

⁴⁴² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 281–302.

⁴⁴³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 92, 15–329.

In the celestial realm, Ra interrogates and intimidates Seth by showing him the cosmic watery “*emptiness*” representing non-existence.⁴⁴⁴ The region travelled by the two gods seems to have been identified by the ancient Egyptians as “*qbḥw*”: Anthony J. Spalinger notes that “*qbḥw*” was thought to exist in the Northern cosmos as a realm of lack of light, and of chaotic nature.⁴⁴⁵ Indeed Set is shown by Ra from a great distance, how minute the world looks, in the cosmic darkness.⁴⁴⁶ Ra shows the cosmic truth to Set that despite the millions of years of life given to the gods, they are still miniscule to the endless cosmos and its patterns.⁴⁴⁷ We may note here that a similar realization dawns upon Steven during his survival in the Aegean that Ra is not the unique sun-deity, and there are countless suns.⁴⁴⁸ Ra ultimately exposes, before the deities, Set’s assistance provided to the “Lightbringer.”⁴⁴⁹ On Earth Steven’s body is aimed at with “Setic” “*ba* lances,”⁴⁵⁰ disintegrating the same body that housed the essence of the god Seth.⁴⁵¹ Lovegrove thus recontextualizes the role of Seth as an inflictor of physical injuries; Viaud informs us that according to mythology Seth cut his way out through Nut’s uterus, injured and hacked Osiris’s body and gorges out the eyes of Horus.⁴⁵² Steven the “tragic anti-hero” gets exploited by Seth, and Steven in turn misdirects the humans; yet Steven considers the years of his leadership orchestrated by Seth as self-liberating and offering him a temporary sense

⁴⁴⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 219–220.

⁴⁴⁵ Anthony J. Spalinger, “Nut and the Egyptologists,” *Studien Zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 41 (2012): 364–365, accessed February 25, 2022, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41812233>. Spalinger cites the studies made by Elmar Edel regarding “*qbḥw*,” see Elmar Edel, *Zu den Inschriften auf den Jahreszeitenreliefs der "Weltkammer" aus dem Sonnenheiligtum des Niuserre, NAWG, phil.-hist Klasse 1963.1* (Göttingen, 1964), 105–111.

⁴⁴⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 219–222.

⁴⁴⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 219–220.

⁴⁴⁸ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 219–220.

⁴⁴⁹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 306–308.

⁴⁵⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 317.

⁴⁵¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 109–325.

⁴⁵² Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 19–20.

of sublime freedom, which he rightly believes as every human's entitlement.⁴⁵³ Set is thus considered to be the divine dissenter, disrupting the harmony established by the deities.⁴⁵⁴

3.18 The Challenges in Archaeology

Erich von Däniken's ideas regarding the extraterrestrial influence had been ambivalently received by scholars, but his perspectives on mystery regarding pyramid-construction finds echo in Daniel's quest regarding the builders of the pyramids in *Stargate*.⁴⁵⁵ Von Däniken points out that Howard Vyse's fraud of writing Khufu's name in the Great Pyramid to indicate Khufu as the builder was also conveniently detected since he did not take adequate caution in correcting the error in the orthological classification by John Gardner Wilkinson in *Materia Heiroglyphica* which Vyse consulted.⁴⁵⁶ Von Däniken's reference to Vyse is significantly relevant because Daniel refers to Vyse's claim as a "fraud" and asserts that Vyse used the "misspelled" version of Khufu's name from the *Dictionary of Hieroglyphs* published by Wilkenson in 1906.⁴⁵⁷ Thus it can be argued that *Stargate* is an "archaeological science fiction," and a fictionalized narrative of the errors committed in the history of Egyptology.⁴⁵⁸ The lack of scholarly evidence thus opens up the scope of fictional imagination in which the extraterrestrial agency behind the creation of the pyramids can be appropriated by writers and filmmakers.

The "seventh symbol" is provided below the cartouche containing the six constellation-"symbols" for establishing connection.⁴⁵⁹ Thus *Stargate* reminds us of the Egyptian use of the cartouche in the context of high-tech code of activation. The earth is represented in the "seventh symbol" indicating that Earth is destined to be visited by aliens

⁴⁵³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 314–317, 15–329.

⁴⁵⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 47–329.

⁴⁵⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

⁴⁵⁶ Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 209.

⁴⁵⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 19–20.

⁴⁵⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 15–67, 1–193.

⁴⁵⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*, 0:15:45–0:20:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 42–51.

and Egypt becomes the entry port through which aliens arrive on earth.⁴⁶⁰ Daniel's archaeologist mind finds it difficult to assimilate the technological miracle in context of Pharaonic Egypt, thus the Stargate for him remains *within* but also *beyond* Egypt.⁴⁶¹ The "cover stone" is sculpted in semblance with the Stargate which makes us question the anomaly: why would the ancient Egyptian rebels, in order to stop Ra from coming to earth, leave indirect hints on the "cover stone" that makes it possible to reach him by future humans? Ra seems to have foreseen that as he remarks to Daniel later that the humans committed a grave error in unearthing and activating the Stargate.⁴⁶² We may infer that the ancient Egyptians, while rebelling against Ra, were able to separate the concept of the divinity from the alien.⁴⁶³ Having identified the usage of Ra's technology but not its mechanisms, the Egyptians hoped that it would be interpreted in future; they perhaps anticipated another rebellion by future humans to stop Ra once for all.⁴⁶⁴ This anticipation seems to have formed the back story to the *Stargate* plot, leaving the viewers and readers to consider that the ancient Egyptians who came in future generations following the rebellion tried to modify their memory. They tried to suppress the fears by continuing the elaborate mythologies surrounding a solar deity who is rather benevolent, picturing a different one connected with well-meaning zoomorphic deities having features of non-human Earth-species.

Von Däniken is also observant of the downgrading of the engineering of the pyramid-building by the pharaohs after Khufu.⁴⁶⁵ Daniel reaching Abydos realizes the difference of dimensions between the Giza Pyramids on Earth and the Pyramid on Abydos;

⁴⁶⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 48, 42–51.

⁴⁶¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 47, 32–67.

⁴⁶² Emmerich, *Stargate*, 1:27:07– 1:31:54; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 129, 127–139, 102–108.

⁴⁶³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 102–108, 127–139.

⁴⁶⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–108.

⁴⁶⁵ Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 141–142.

the latter dwarfs the Great Pyramid of Khufu on Earth.⁴⁶⁶ The presence or absence of hieroglyphs also determines the degrees of *Egyptianness*, and the distinction between the earthly and the extraterrestrial Egypt also come up.⁴⁶⁷ Daniel infers that the Pharoanic civilization on Earth gradually de-evolved following the departure of Ra, as the connection with technology even if its context was exploitative was lost.⁴⁶⁸ This reminds us of Von Däniken's observation of the reduced heights of the pyramids after Khufu. The Luxor obelisk and the Karnak obelisk are found similarly outside the Pyramid-temple on the planet Abydos but all these structures are devoid of hieroglyphs on Abydos.⁴⁶⁹ Khufu's Pyramid seems to be one-third of the Pyramid on Abydos, proving Daniel's theories correct regarding the Abydos-pyramid having worked as the source of inspiration for the Pyramids of Giza, and also indicating that the Egyptian engineering on Earth gradually deteriorated following the Old Kingdom.⁴⁷⁰

3.19 Conclusion

The comparative studies of the *Stargate* film, the *StarGate* novel, and *The Age of Ra* communicate that through survival-struggles humans develop an ambivalent attitude towards the Godhead. The humans oscillate between conviction and disbelief; the latter having originated from misery in the times of mass destruction/deaths. This sense of human dissent/resistance may be instrumented through technology, turning religion into “makeshift arrangements,” commercial and material enterprises. The *Stargate* film, the *StarGate* novel, and *The Age of Ra* novel deal with this questioning of the Godhead, and the studied texts do so by understanding and using technology. In the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel

⁴⁶⁶ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 65–69.

⁴⁶⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 65–67.

⁴⁶⁸ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 65–193.

⁴⁶⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 66–69.

⁴⁷⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 14–24, 66–67. See also Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 141–142.

technology works as the primal force for the establishment of the Godhead,⁴⁷¹ while in *The Age of Ra*, technology echoes myths, and recontextualizes the ritual objects/premises, thereby embracing what we may phrase as “technological rituals and rites.”⁴⁷²

The human body is the important conduit between the humanity and the Egyptian deities, and the vessel through which beliefs are pursued. This empowered body suffers from insecurity simultaneously while having access to power. Ra in the *Stargate* film and in the *StarGate* novel and Ra in *The Age of Ra* are unsettled by (i) the rivals Daniel and O’Neil,⁴⁷³ and (ii) the dissenter “Lightbringer” respectively.⁴⁷⁴ The discrepancy is between bodily divinity, and humanness based on technological marvels. The ancient Egyptians imagined their deities in a curious material way. We learn from Michael Rice that the Egyptian mythology describes the forming materials of the Re’s hair, bones, and flesh as being constituted of lapis lazuli, silver, and gold respectively.⁴⁷⁵ In *The Age of Ra* we see the military applying the spiritual energy and ritual objects in forms of metallic weapon (the “ba-lance”) and the mummified recycled corpses as re-animated soldiers.⁴⁷⁶ In *The Age of Ra*, the “Lightbringer[’s]” body and face are hidden which mystify him creating a sublimated human figure.⁴⁷⁷ Likewise in the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel the alien is hosted in the human body of Ra and the result constitutes more than an alien and more than a human.⁴⁷⁸ His minions’ heads are hidden within shifting metal gears creating the identities of the unidentifiable and frightening deities and semi-deities.⁴⁷⁹ Body, along with technology, sustains the icons of belief in the “cults” shown in the film and the two texts.

⁴⁷¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

⁴⁷² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁴⁷³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–193.

⁴⁷⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–329.

⁴⁷⁵ Michael Rice, *Egypt’s Making: The Origins of Ancient Egypt 5000–2000 BC*, 2nd ed. (1990; reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 219.

⁴⁷⁶ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 197–210, 15–329.

⁴⁷⁷ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 89–329.

⁴⁷⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

⁴⁷⁹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 88–193.

The most integral aspect linking the three plots of the texts studied (the *Stargate* film, the *StarGate* novel, and *The Age of Ra*) involves the “idea(s)” revolving around ancient Egypt, though they provide “alternative” views of the ancient Pharaonic world, also diluting its essence as we conceive of. In the *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel Abydos is under Ra’s control, though the inhabitants have worshiped their atrocious Lord for millennia without truly knowing his identity.⁴⁸⁰ Enslaved, they had embraced their identity as Abydonians, until the human team from Earth arrives.⁴⁸¹ “Exo-Egyptian” might be a term that can be applicable in their case. This interestingly complicates (i) the nature of “return,” (ii) the identities of the human travelers from Earth, and (iii) the beginning and the endings of the transits from Earth to Abydos and back. Daniel’s journey through the Stargate to Abydos is his psychic “return” to the fragmented Egypt-originated community who is in his research and thoughts; it also implies his *union* with the world of his scholarship and finding a place in it, implying Ra’s removal.⁴⁸² O’Neil’s military companions must “return” to Earth, and Daniel’s allocation of the “seventh symbol” enabling that return is also a driving force in the plot.⁴⁸³ Curiously the humans on Abydos get a dual status: (i) they have human descendants alienated from ancient and prehistoric Egypt from Earth, and (ii) they are also technically *Egyptians* but in a different part of the galaxy.⁴⁸⁴ While the military heads back to home on Earth, obviously creating grounds for future complications through periodic investigations/negotiations, Daniel is expected to *seed* the Abydonians with prospects of culture, education, and technology.⁴⁸⁵ Daniel and the Abydonians are humans as well as aliens to each other simultaneously. This might initiate repetition of historical progress,

⁴⁸⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 62–193.

⁴⁸¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 76–193.

⁴⁸² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 15–193.

⁴⁸³ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 62–193.

⁴⁸⁴ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 62–193.

⁴⁸⁵ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 90–108, 154–155, 182–193.

ultimately establishing the benevolence of the humanoids across the universe.⁴⁸⁶ It can be argued that *Stargate* is about one's inner journey as well. Daniel experiences self-fulfillment as he becomes one of the members of the "exo-Egyptian," on the planet Abydos.⁴⁸⁷ O'Neil regains zeal for living; he was experiencing depression following his son's death.⁴⁸⁸ Even the alien is forced to revert back to his non-human body in his final moments but both Ra and the alien perish in the explosion.⁴⁸⁹

"Freegypt" on the other hand is a post-apocalyptic/post divine province on Earth. In this Earthly setting, "return" is reflected in the Pharaonic beliefs pursued by the humans and their lives controlled by the Egyptian deities; like the "Eye of the Storm" "Freegypt" attempts to maintain its peace, however the place gets tied up in conflict with the Egyptian deities again, through the "Lightbringer."⁴⁹⁰ "Freegypt" becomes a zone of self-assessment, through which both the humans and the deities regulate mutual power-plays; despite secular convictions, "Freegypt" connects every human through shared beliefs in the Egyptian afterlife, through shared practices/uses of magical-cum-technological gadgets.⁴⁹¹ Individual convictions can be explored, the futilities of life as well as the strengths for living can be understood through "return" to "Freegypt"; "Freegypt" is a space of exchange between godlessness and religious fervor; she equally epitomizes human strength, and nurtures the human will to survive, discover human attachment and trust even when the deities could not establish peace or harmony amidst themselves.⁴⁹²

⁴⁸⁶ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 90–108, 154–155, 182–193.

⁴⁸⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 62–193.

⁴⁸⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 25–193.

⁴⁸⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 187–189.

⁴⁹⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁴⁹¹ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

⁴⁹² Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 15–329.

Chapter Four

Arwen Elys Dayton's *Resurrection* (2001) and

James Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (2014):

Ancient and Modern Egypt, Alien Humans, and "Multiverse"

4.1 Introduction

Egyptology involves ancient Egyptian rituals, anatomy, astronomy, geometry, and architecture particularly. The Great Pyramid's building secrets still mystify scholars, scientists, architects, engineers and constitute a current topic of debate. In this chapter, the theme of extraterrestrial contact in ancient and modern Egypt shall also receive critical attention, but would also include aspects of physical, chemical, and biological/botanical sciences with reference to genesis and expansion of the cults of the gods, especially Osiris and Amun-Ra. In Arwen Elys Dayton's *Resurrection* (2001) a fictional account of the growth of Osiris-figure and an exploration of the theme of "resurrection" mythologized through funerary beliefs resulting from offshoots of lost science is noticeable.¹ The Osiris-figure in this novel is woven around a human-alien who brings technology to ancient Egypt. In James Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (2014) the author's fictional imagination surrounds the enigmatic and much debated figure of the Great Sphinx of Giza connected with the cults of the gods Atum and Amun-Ra²; both occupied prominent positions as "Primordial Creator(s)" in ancient Egyptian mythology. The Sphinx in this novel is the awakened being who is capable of causing changes at the cosmic level.³ This chapter shall discuss these deities through the lens of Egyptian science and mysticism and discuss the representation of deities as conduits between Earth and other alien worlds.

¹ Arwen Elys Dayton, *Resurrection* (Las Vegas, NV: 47North, 2001), 1–422.

² James Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (London: Barbican Press, 2014), 1–348.

³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–348.

4.2 Plot Summaries

4.2.1 Dayton's *Resurrection*

The Kinleys, the human-aliens from the planet Herrod, are threatened by the Luciens, the “nonhuman” species from the asteroid Galea.⁴ To ensure survival, the Kinleys send Pruitt Pax to Earth to retrieve the technology of “The Eschless Funnel” that had rendered travel in their ancient past exceeding the velocity of light possible.⁵ “The Eschless Funnel” was employed by the ancient Kinley Survey “Mission” comprising ancient Kinley scientists five millennia ago (in Earth’s temporal standards) to visit ancient Egypt during the reign of the Fourth Dynasty pharaoh Sneferu and Queen Hetepheres, indicating that in chronological order, the Kinley civilization is older than those of Egypt and Earth.⁶ The ancient Kinley team got stranded in ancient Egypt being unable to receive any rescue assistance due to the planetary war between the Kinleys and the Luciens.⁷ The stranded alien-humans accustomed themselves to ancient Egyptian lifestyles, even to the point of the Kinley Captain developing a physical relationship with the ancient Egyptian queen Hetepheres, which later however was approved by the pharaoh Sneferu, since the Captain, thanks to the technological acumen he and his team had brought to Egypt, had been raised to the position of the Egyptian god Osiris.⁸ The Kinley-visit thereby helped in the growth of the Osiris-cult; the Kinleys built the Great Pyramid as a “beacon” to assist future Kinley visitors in locating the cave-chamber in whose “stasis tanks” the hibernating / “sleeping” bodies of the ancient Kinley team await in Egypt.⁹ Meanwhile the Luciens had also been aware of the “Eschless” technology in the novel’s current timeline and recruit two “brothers” – Lucien Enon-Amet and his adoptive human brother Adaiz-Ari birthed from

⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 14–21, 27–37, 423.

⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 24–26, 1–422.

⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 24–26, 54, 69–85, 1–422.

⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 91–95, 136–141.

⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 180–191.

⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 323–328.

Kinley gene, and dispatch the duo to Earth to appropriate the technology from Pruitt.¹⁰ Pruitt's alien-identity gradually gets exposed to the Earthly human, Eddie the Egyptologist; they develop a relationship and Eddie assists her to locate the Kinley cave.¹¹ Pruitt retrieves the ancient Kinley notes regarding the "The Eschless Funnel" after having the Engineer, the ancient Kinley interpreter and user of "The Eschless Funnel" awakened from hibernation / "sleep" and healed, and Adaiz also learns the value of life after his visit to Earth full of humans identical to him.¹² Pruitt and Adaiz, following mutual confrontations, decide together to send the "Eschless" technological secret to both the Kinleys and the Luciens, at which the novel concludes with the hope of negotiation and peace between the two alien races.¹³

4.2.2 Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming*

The Great Sphinx of Giza is the stony embodiment of an alien energetic being arriving from a highly powerful alien civilization whose deity-like residents are capable of "control[ing] entire universe *sans* instrumentalities."¹⁴ This civilization is classified as belonging to "Level 6" by the "Consilium"; the "Consilium" is an organization of sophisticated aliens more advanced than the humans on Earth, classified as a civilization of "Level 2"¹⁵ by these developed aliens represented from different worlds.¹⁶ However the Sphinx chooses prehistoric Egypt as the space to materialize himself in, rather than on any other planet, and with assistance from his enigmatic associates, constructs the Great Pyramid and inserts an "Ikosikaitrion."¹⁷ Within it the "genetic signature" of humans is contained in the polygon, implying an "intelligence test" for the future humans to intercept.¹⁸ Mustapha,

¹⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 27–37, 260–264, 288–355.

¹¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218, 238–276.

¹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 409–417.

¹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 409–422.

¹⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–159, 345–346.

¹⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 152, 141–159.

¹⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 145, 141–159.

¹⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–15.

¹⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–8, 11, 8–348.

Wolfgang, Cliff investigate the “Ikosikaitrion” and complete the empty spaces with “slashes” matching human Genetic code.¹⁹ Following the entries the ancient Egyptian deities materialize and they instruct the chemical rites to be performed in a colossal basin which brings out the living Sphinx.²⁰ The rising of the Sphinx causes great tension across the “Multiverse.”²¹ The benevolent aliens Wanre and Saiki, despite their apprehensions regarding the Sphinx and concern for alien life-forms, assist the Earthly humans against the malevolent alien symbionts Benben and Bulbul who wish to utilize the Sphinx and harness the chaotic psychic energy of the “Lord of the Galaxy,” the Black Hole at the Milky Way’s center.²² However the Sphinx stops Benben as well as Bulbul,²³ overpowers the armed superpowers of the Earth,²⁴ and initiates Cliff into the cosmic secret and the threat posed by the Black Hole.²⁵ The Sphinx then dematerializes from Giza, expands across the galaxy to push the stars into the Black Hole to provide time for Earth’s ponderings about the means of survival from the impending cosmic crisis.²⁶ Thus the Sphinx from whom the Egyptian deities in the novel originated, despite his terrifying nature, proves helpful and humbles the aliens as well as the humans by the indication of the presence of a near-divine world of which he is a resident.²⁷

4.3 Literature Review

Dayton’s *Resurrection* and Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* have not been significantly commented upon so far by researchers. However, there is an enriched literature developed with the “alternative” approaches beyond institutional Egyptology in terms of

¹⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 35–195.

²⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 208–210, 218–226, 240–247, 274–277, 294–296.

²¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 204–348.

²² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 320.

²³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 140–290, 275–284.

²⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 313–314.

²⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 310–312, 315–321, 326–327.

²⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 317–321, 338–348.

²⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–159, 317–346, 338–348.

biochemistry, astronomy, climate change associated with the evolution of human civilization in the Nile Valley, which are perceived in these two novels, and which I shall pursue. Christopher Dunn in his book *The Giza Power Plant: Technologies of Ancient Egypt* has pursued extensive exploration regarding the “purpose” of the Great Pyramid in terms of applications of physics in terms of energy, vibration, and hydraulic pumping.²⁸ René Adolphe Schwaller de Lubicz has painstakingly observed the Great Karnak Temple Complex dedicated to the Divine Triad Amun-Ra, Mut, and Khonsu and recorded his observation regarding human physiological symbolism represented in the architecture of the temple complex in his two volume work *The Temple of Man: Apet of the South at Luxor*.²⁹ The complicated mythological rituals also inspire us to ponder about the attributes and properties of the “*neters*,” meaning the deities or “energy beings” of the Egyptian deities. R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz and John Antony West, as Robert M. Schoch accounts, through their separate detailed researches on the cultivation of knowledge of the ancient Egyptians have argued that these cerebral gifts were adapted from a pre-existing culture that had enriched ancient Egypt with potential.³⁰ Judy Kay King in her very interesting book *The Isis Thesis: A Study Decoding 870 Ancient Egyptian Signs* has studied the complex symbolism in ancient Egyptian tombs’ paintings depicting the *Netherworld Books* and in her very original studies she has tried to show ancient Egyptian knowledge about building proteins, the cellular structures of organic bodies, and passing of genes.³¹ Such empirical knowledge, as

²⁸ Christopher Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant: Technologies of Ancient Egypt* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear & Company, 1998), 1–265.

²⁹ R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man: Apet of the South at Luxor*, trans. Deborah Lawlor and Robert Lawlor, illus. Lucie Lamy, vol. 1 (1957; reprint, Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1998); R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man: Apet of the South at Luxor*, trans. Deborah Lawlor and Robert Lawlor, illus. Lucie Lamy, vol. 2 (1957; reprint, Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1998).

³⁰ Robert M. Schoch, “The Writing on the Wall,” in *Origins of the Sphinx: Celestial Guardian of Pre-Pharaonic Civilization*, by Robert M. Schoch, and Robert Bauval (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2017), 242. See also John Anthony West, *Serpent in the Sky: The High Wisdom of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), 197.

³¹ Judy Kay King, *The Isis Thesis: A Study Decoding 870 Ancient Egyptian Signs* (2004; reprint, Gaylord, Michigan: Envision Editions, 2015), 1–378.

King believes and argues with illustrations in her book, had been offered through highly wise priesthood and reserved for the arts in the funerary space and meant for the initiates to comprehend. “Alternative Egyptology” has also considered the very important subject of climate/geomorphological changes in the Nile Valley, and studies communicate that the Sahara Desert was preceded by wildlife in the Northern Africa, as noted by Robert M. Schoch in the book *Origins of the Sphinx: Celestial Guardian of Pre-Pharaonic Civilization* which is coauthored by Robert Bauval,³² and also noted by Edward M. Malkowski in his book *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE: The History, Technology, and Philosophy of Civilization X*.³³ It has to be kept in mind that Egyptology does not just cover the studies of the artificial artifacts left by the ancient Egyptians but also the role played by “climate change” and geography of the Northern Africa and the Nile Valley without which the ancient Egyptian civilization would not have developed. These approaches shall be cited in analyzing the novels by Dayton and Thornton to infer that science fiction centering on ancient Egypt incorporates parallel scholarships which are not always covered by institutional Egyptology. This bringing together of “alternative” approaches and creative writing can justify the inclusion of such fiction for incorporation in the mainstream institutions.

4.4 Methodology and Argument

Both *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* refer to the interactions between humans and aliens which raise queries regarding the cosmos-wide genesis of life forms.³⁴ Sir Francis Crick of Watson and Crick Fame cited by James A. Herrick have communicated the “Pansmeria hypothesis”; Sir Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe cited by Herrick have also noted the attribution of evolution of life to “bacteria and viruses” aimed at Earth

³² Robert Bauval, “Horus Who Dwells in the Horizon,” in *Origins of the Sphinx: Celestial Guardian of Pre-Pharaonic Civilization*, by Robert M. Schoch and Robert Bauval (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2017), 200–201.

³³ Edward F. Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE: The History, Technology, and Philosophy of Civilization X* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 42–53.

³⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422; Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–398.

by extraterrestrial sentient races.³⁵ In Dayton's *Resurrection* Eddie asks Pruitt about the mystery behind the fact that the humans species had evolved on the two different planets³⁶; in Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, different aliens come to the realization of the importance of shared survival.³⁷ Both the novels thereby consider space as extensively life-fertile and hope for mutual sharing.

It will be argued that Dayton's novel and Thornton's novel manifest the authors' knowledge in the critical literature involving "radical"/"alternative" Egyptology, that refers to the pre-Pharaonic/dynastic geophysical and climatic changes in the Nile Valley as well as the theories introduced regarding astronomical calculations required during the designing of the "Giza Necropolis."³⁸ Occasionally, institutional as well as "radical Egyptology" have pointed out that the phonetic and pictographic natures of the hieroglyphic literature often pose challenges in interpretation and translation because of the mystic, lost meanings which are gradually being uncovered. Hence there might be indication in later dynastic Egyptian knowledge about the pre-Pharaonic, extraterrestrial heritage, climate change and alterations in the stellar position "hidden" in the corpus of hieroglyphic texts. The methodologies for this Chapter thereby involve biology, botany, chemistry and physics layered in ancient Egyptian mythology. The "Netherworld Books" left by the Egyptians shall be referred to, especially *The Book of the Caverns*, the *Book of Amduat*, and *The Book of Aker* in the tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings, Egypt. These texts can be referred to while considering speculative beyond-Earth astrophysical communication with the "Rostau," the ancient Egyptian heaven associated with "neters" or energy-beings. For studies in Dayton's

³⁵ James A. Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies: How Science and Science Fiction Forge New Religious Beliefs* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2008), 226–227.

³⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 238–259.

³⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

³⁸ For the insights, see Bauval, "Horus Who Dwells," 200–201; John M. Bunker and Karen L. Pressler, *The Book of Aker: The Complete Translation of the Book of Aker from the Tomb of Ramesses VI* (Churubusco, IN: Bunker Pressler Books, 2013), 6, 287; Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx: A Quest for the Hidden Legacy of Mankind* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1996), 3–352; Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 42–53; Schoch, "The Writing on the Wall," 234–269.

Resurrection, (i) contribution from extraterrestrial, botanical, anatomical, and engineering science enmeshed with Egyptian cult of Osiris and (ii) the desire to preserve the body and experience reawakening shall be analyzed.³⁹ It shall be argued that the connections with botany and anatomy are involved in ancient Egyptian religious iconography and worldview. In Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming* it shall be argued how the concept of the aliens as evolved beings is applied in case of the "neters" in the Egyptian beliefs which pervade different universes.⁴⁰

Herrick perceives that regarding race science fiction has highlighted tropes like (i) emergence of earth-changing race/species, (ii) explorations of ancestors from evolved races birthing humans, (iii) continental accounts of extinct races hoarding knowledge or treasure, (iv) evolution of faith by races changing places, and (v) competition between races even in terms of supernatural, spiritual races.⁴¹ These themes shall be kept in mind while arguing how Egyptology and "Egyptomania" merge in the two novels discussed in this chapter. In *Resurrection* the Kinleys' technology contextualized in Osiris-cult creates ancient structures.⁴² In *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the knowledge for life's survival has been passed through reincarnation, science has been communicated through mystic ritual, and cosmic knowledge is shared between different alien species.⁴³

Keeping in mind the visits of aliens and humans from other star-systems and planetary bodies, the initiation of cults of newer deities in ancient Egypt could comprise an interesting study. Zsuzsanna Vègh observes that the god Amun's cult turned important later in Egyptian history, in the Middle Kingdom.⁴⁴ Osiris highlighted in *Resurrection* and Amun

³⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

⁴⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁴¹ Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies*, 163.

⁴² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

⁴³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁴⁴ Zsuzsanna Vègh, "Solar Cult in Abydos During the Middle Kingdom," *Egittp e Vicino Oriente* 39 (2016): 9, accessed July 31, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26490802>.

in conjoined form with Ra highlighted in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* were both developed later in the Egyptian beliefs.⁴⁵ These flexibilities of roles attributed to the deities in ancient Egyptian mythology inspire us to extend the scope of each deity to the larger dimensions constituting natural paradigms; hence they are not just bound in individualities.⁴⁶ Jan Assmann notes that the “[H]ymn” composed in approximately “1400 BCE” makes an interesting observation that there is a *spoken* communication amidst Amun-Re’s body parts implying that each body-part bears an independent agency, and Amun-Re is a collective nexus of different consciousnesses.⁴⁷ Assmann perceives that the communication proceeds to the formation of terrestrial space, sky and the divinities; they were given existence through Amun-Re’s uttered words, and the “Two Lands” of Upper and Lower Egypt attribute their origin to his heart-envisioned agency.⁴⁸ Thus in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, Amun-Ra as the manifested extension from the alien Sphinx becomes Mustapha’s guide and connects Egypt on Earth with the cosmos.⁴⁹ The Egyptologically studied Fourth Dynasty will receive attention for arguments in terms of arts, sciences, and the rise of Osiris. It shall be argued how the expressive modes as well as shifts in worldviews reflected in arts from this Dynasty invite speculations.⁵⁰ Thus this chapter shall argue, with reference to ancient Egyptian mythology and art, the importance of biological and astronomical studies supporting the potential of ancient and modern Egypt as chosen loci for extraterrestrial communication, evolution, and the nexus of technological breakthroughs.

⁴⁵ J. Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” in *Larousse Mythologie Générale*, ed. Félix Guirand, *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (1996; reprint, London: Chancellor Press; Reed Consumer/International Books Ltd, 1997), 29–32.

⁴⁶ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 210–211.

⁴⁷ Jan Assmann, “Creation through Hieroglyphs: The Cosmic Grammatology of Ancient Egypt,” in *The Poetics of Grammar and the Metaphysics of Sound and Sign (Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 6)*, eds. S. La Porta and D. Shulman (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 19–20. Assmann gives the spelling of “Amun-Ra” as “Amun-Re.”

⁴⁸ Assman, “Creation through Hieroglyphs,” 19–20.

⁴⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁵⁰ See Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–407. The writer has shown much interest in the Fourth Dynasty.

4.5 Aliens and Mythical Bodies

As Maulana Karenga notes, according to ancient Egyptian thought, the function of the Creator involves terrestrial modification by materializing and constituting land, and bodily stationing by taking an upright posture upon an aquatic space.⁵¹ Karenga notes that the mound from which the entire cosmos received its extension represents not only a physical place but also the embodied identity of the Creator.⁵² In Egyptian beliefs bodily identity as well as creation is important. Karenga observes that rather than physical laws, the organic processes are involved in ancient Egyptian myths of creation, like sexual climax, ejection of sputum or wind sneezed out.⁵³ Thus ancient Egyptian deities are perceived in the cellular level, and even biochemically. Karenga thus notes that the Nun has been described as the “*ocean of possibilities*” and “millions”⁵⁴ of occurrences are attributed to Nun, which was “pregnant” and “inert” simultaneously.⁵⁵ Thus Nun can be seen as a “mythopoeic” counterpart to the cosmos full of life-potential.

While Dayton’s *Resurrection* recounts the narrative of a highly advanced race of humans “deified” by a lesser Earthy human community,⁵⁶ Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* refers to a different alien species, genetically evolved, who created a near-divine society beyond human comprehension.⁵⁷ Thornton brilliantly interprets the cerebral capacity and physical manifestations of the divinities as products of evolution; the aliens of the much evolved Civilization seem unperceivable and devoid of attachment.⁵⁸ Even the deities appearing in the novel, despite their helpfulness, maintain a detached and calm demeanor.

⁵¹ Maulana Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 182–183.

⁵² Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 182.

⁵³ Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 180.

⁵⁴ Quoted in Karenga, *Maat: The Moral Ideal*, 178.

⁵⁵ Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 178.

⁵⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

⁵⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁵⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

Despite the iconographic emphasis on animals in Egyptian art, the deities chose to manifest before “Mustapha, Maria, and Cliff” in their “copper-gold” colored human bodies with individually distinct physiognomies, having the height of “three meters,” which reminded the viewers of Ramesses II in sculpted stone.⁵⁹ Thus the Egyptian deities get linked with nature and cosmos, carrying physics-defying powers inside their human-like bodies. They appear ancient but they are also the link to the future through their provisioning of genetic knowledge. In this context, the painstaking analyses drawn between the Egyptian deities and biochemical insights by Judy Kay King are remarkable and deserve citation for the speculated ancient Egyptian knowledge about genes and cells hidden behind the symbolic myths and arts.

King notes that the return to Atum the primordial creator symbolically represents the return to the phase preceding the stellar as well as solar creating agencies.⁶⁰ King observes that gluons as well as photons might have pervaded the primeval ocean Nun⁶¹ which according to the Egyptian myths is supposed to contain the seeds of life forms, as Viaud notes,⁶² and Egyptian mythology does suggest the return to Nun at the end of Time, as Geraldine Pinch informs.⁶³ King believes that the ancient Egyptians pursued “studies of the biochemistry of nucleic acids with particular regard to recombinant-DNA.”⁶⁴ The Underworld “Duat” is imagined as an “energy funnel” in which the “*neter*” (Divine)-state perceived as “a being of matter and light” is taken by the dead individual following his/her union with Ra.⁶⁵ Applications of King’s studies inspire a significant approach to Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in viewing the divinities as evolved genetic beings; they turn

⁵⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 205.

⁶⁰ King, *The Isis Thesis*, 307.

⁶¹ King, *The Isis Thesis*, 307.

⁶² Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 11.

⁶³ Geraldine Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 89.

⁶⁴ King, *The Isis Thesis*, 350.

⁶⁵ King, *The Isis Thesis*, 160.

out to be supreme scientists.⁶⁶ For example, the goddess Mut beckons Mustapha, Cliff, and Maria to explore the inner genetic structure of the humans.⁶⁷ The gods keep Amun-Ra, the source of life in the center and their dance is observed and identified by Cliff as patterned like the DNA, implying that the deities are highly sentient beings associated with the double DNA.⁶⁸ Following divine guidance the chemical experiment is initiated and the product, like a ritual, is brought to the deities as an offering.⁶⁹ This initiates the Sphinx to rise in its animated form and the locus for that ritual is in the temple materialized by Amun-Ra as a laboratory for a sort of cosmic transmutation.⁷⁰

Murry Hope's researches say that the Earth witnessed "paradigm shift[s]" in the period referring to the "Age of Cancer" ("8,000 BC") and witnessed the contributions left by the "five Neters."⁷¹ Their technology as Hope recounts included the use of gravity-defying efficient space-vehicle and "laser" used in leaving messages.⁷² A similar alien connection is seen in Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in terms of the flaming "message" appearing on the alabaster stela in the Sphinx Temple covered with "flam[ing]" glyphs.⁷³ The glyphs bear "turquoise" blue hue, urging the humans to invoke the nine deities of the "Ennead" group constituted of the deities Amun-Ra, Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Mut, and Khonsu,⁷⁴ by uttering their "True Names" for the sake of divine assistance in a time of approaching crisis.⁷⁵

Hope connects electromagnetic transmissions tending to be erratic with the manifestation of the god Seth, while the terrestrial pull of the Earth is assimilated with

⁶⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 209–312, 8–348.

⁶⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 209, 208–312.

⁶⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 220–233, 245.

⁶⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 243, 220–245.

⁷⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 246–247, 266–296.

⁷¹ Murry Hope, *The Sirius Connection: Unlocking the Secrets of Ancient Egypt* (1990, 1996; reprint, Shaftesbury, Dorset: Element Books, 1997), 66, 64–67.

⁷² Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 66–67.

⁷³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 179–185.

⁷⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 65–70, 183, 189–190, 204–205, 242–246, 274.

⁷⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 179–193.

Horus.⁷⁶ Hope recounts that radioactive transmissions are associations with aquatic personifications of Nephthys as well as Osiris; both are surpassed by the energy embodied in Isis.⁷⁷ Hope thus brilliantly infers that the belief-system of the ancient Egyptians constitutes the veneration of the physical, energy forces empirically studied in a laboratory-like ambience⁷⁸ but this knowledge was probably kept secret under the practice of ritual, myths, and arts. It can be argued, applying Hope's information that similar energy-forms are taken by the Egyptian deities in their visits to Giza in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.⁷⁹ Thornton, in his retelling of the Horus-Seth conflict through the alien Wanre-Benben confrontation identifies the “*neters*” as energy-manifestations.⁸⁰ Seth represents “entropy”⁸¹; Wanre impersonating Horus and Benben impersonating Seth⁸² confront each other with the explosive exchanges with bolts and solar disks.⁸³ Seth's pig-incarnation is compared with a “nuclear reactor.”⁸⁴ Thus the powerful aliens take recourse to physics as the manifestation of divine energy, but even they must conform to the mythical roles played out by the deities in the Egyptian pantheon and the iconographic manifestations taken by the deities.⁸⁵

Egypt thereby poses a great mystery even to the worlds beyond Earth; the discovery of the “polygon” in the Great Pyramid invites the aliens' scrutiny but the different alien characters in the novel respond differently according to their individual temperament.⁸⁶ The wise Wanre is interested because the polygon defies any identification with the objects built in the astronomically charted worlds.⁸⁷ However the volatile Benben is unable to trace the

⁷⁶ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 164.

⁷⁷ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 164.

⁷⁸ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 164–165.

⁷⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁸⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 172–174, 256–260, 275–291.

⁸¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 249, 273.

⁸² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 248.

⁸³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 172–284.

⁸⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 272.

⁸⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–398.

⁸⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 102–140, 141–155.

⁸⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 142.

genesis of Egyptian deities⁸⁸ which proves the unique identities and biological status of the Egyptian deities, and jumps to consider Earth as an emerging “threat” for the alien-composed “Consilium.”⁸⁹ It can be argued that *Sphinx: The Second Coming* is a remarkable shift from other science fiction stories featuring aliens; in the plot Earth has been chosen as a beneficiary for receiving one of the highest spiritual and cosmic knowledge capable of achieving near infinite cerebral empowerment.⁹⁰ This comes from a seemingly divine civilization which in the ancient past moved past other developed alien worlds to reach the primitive Earth, through prehistoric Egypt, and turned the land into the most potential meeting space between Earth and “Multiverse.”⁹¹

The human/humanoid body resembles a kernel to which other alien species may be added to infuse the faculties of different species, but the humanoid body remains at the forefront. Thus, even though in Dayton’s *Resurrection* the human Adaiz grows up as a brother to the Lucien Enon-Amet, he is able to master the spiritual teachings of the *Book of Katalla-Oman*, the spiritual guidebook for the Lucien race, more efficiently than Enon-Amet, implying that the human body-frame is more conducive to spiritual perception and exercises.⁹² Dayton’s description of the raising of the Enon-Amet and Adaiz as siblings⁹³ is remarkable and may be reflection of the open-mindedness of the ancient Egyptians imagining divine families consisting of couples and their children belonging to different temperaments and species. Hope notes that the god Ptah in an embalmed appearance as the “Master Mason” presides over reconciliation and construction, purified by the raging destructive fire of his wife the lioness-headed goddess Sekhmet; Nefertem is the product of their union (a union of reverse temperaments) and presides over medical arts and

⁸⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 155, 150–160.

⁸⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 41, 150–160.

⁹⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–398.

⁹¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–398.

⁹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 27–37, 165, 162–173, 414–417.

⁹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 27–411.

regeneration.⁹⁴ Ptah is accounted in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* by Thornton as a deity conceived by the Sphinx to communicate with the Egyptians.⁹⁵ It can be noted here that in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the Sphinx shaped by the alien-entity embodied in the creature lion arrives in Egypt along with another alien-entity embodied in the bird falcon,⁹⁶ and Nefertum as seen in ancient Egyptian art features a combination of these two Earth species chosen by the aliens. Egypt thus enables inter-alien, even inter-galactic assimilations inspiring the sentient living beings to pursue inner quests. Lucien-human Adaiz's mind experiences a mixture of appeal as well as fear of seeing someone appearing like himself, that is the Kinley-human Pruitt, even though she belongs to his enemy race, the Kinleys, intrigues him.⁹⁷ This ambivalent confusion within Adaiz, seeking his assimilation with identical humans yet bound with duties for his home-world of non-human Luciens occurs during his visit to Egypt on Earth, where he is forced to confront his fragmented identity and move towards self-acceptance and his need for cessation of conflicts with the Kinleys, comprising human versus non-human conflicts.⁹⁸

In Dayton's *Resurrection*, the ancient Egyptians are quite fascinated by the skin colour and the hair colours of the alien human-Kinleys; it can be argued that the inclusive scope of Egyptian beliefs held room for the representation of these "golden-haired" celestial humans.⁹⁹ The primary communications between the Kinleys and the ancient Egyptians happen through medical treatment which the Kinleys offered; thus the transition towards deification is initiated through the medical wonders.¹⁰⁰ It is interesting that the Egyptian

⁹⁴ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 47. "Nefertem" has also been spelt as "Nefertum" by scholars.

⁹⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 32.

⁹⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17.

⁹⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 166, 162–173.

⁹⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 27–422.

⁹⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 72.

¹⁰⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 67–85.

veneration of the Kinleys includes their space-vessel *The Champion*,¹⁰¹ since the material existence of an aerial transport is a manifestation of the mythological account of the celestial barge in which the god Ra transits through the sky as Stephen Quirke notes.¹⁰² The miracle of a transport exceeding light velocity is also a massive breakthrough for the Kinley themselves; such an invention is respected as a “creation myth”¹⁰³ but is also perceived as “a technological flash.”¹⁰⁴ Dayton’s authorial vision is noteworthy here: “miracle” constitutes an abstract wonder as well as a tangible materialization; the temporal and spatial existence of the viewer result in (i) either utilitarian ownership and use for the achiever, the scientist, the Kinleys, or (ii) in zealous veneration for the religious believer, the myth-maker, predominantly the ancient Egyptians.

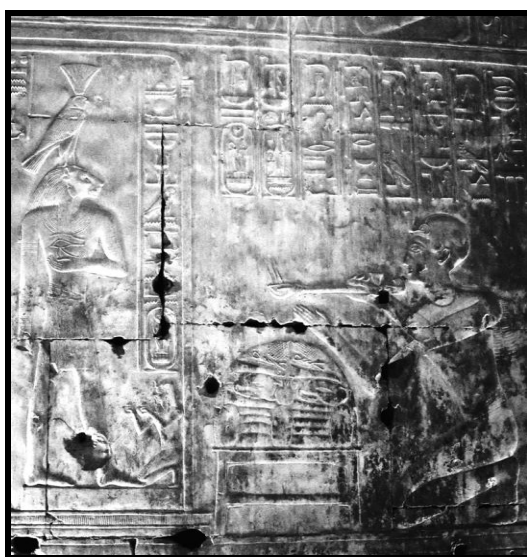


Figure 4.1 The God Nefertum and Seti I

In the image above, the god Nefertum (or Nefertem, or Nefer-Atum) is venerated by Seti I, from a relief in Abydos Temple. Edouard Naville quoted by Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval note that Nefer-Atum is given an occasional composite manifestation

¹⁰¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 87.

¹⁰² Stephen Quirke, *The Cult of Ra: Sun-Worship in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 35–48, 66–69.

¹⁰³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 25.

¹⁰⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 250–251.

comprising the following features: (i) the Horus-hawk, which occasionally has (ii) an open lotus (or plume) balanced on its head, the hawk is (iii) placed upon a leonine (or human) head, or lotus upon human head.¹⁰⁵ It can be argued that in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the falcon hosting the alien identity addresses the Earth as the “most promising planet in [the humans’] universe”¹⁰⁶ and his companion the alien-embodied Lion decides to materialize himself as the Sphinx, chosen for his “indwelling.”¹⁰⁷ Jeremy Naydler notes that as per “Utterance 249” the renewed Unas the pharaoh is personified by Nefertem as a “solar child” whose seat is in the lotus.¹⁰⁸ Drinking, engagement with rhythm and music are integral parts of honoring the goddess Hathor; it is noteworthy that Hathor’s vengeful form is the lioness-goddess Sekhmet, Nefertem’s mother¹⁰⁹; Jeremy Naydler perceives that ancient Egyptian merry-makers would often carry a lotus flower to initiate renewal at the spiritual level, having placed it “on their heads.”¹¹⁰ Thus it can be argued that Nefertem bears the divine gene from his mother Sekhmet and his iconography constitutes the symbolic link to the beginning of the cosmos, in connection with the creator gods Atum and Ra. Notably the leonine manifestation retains cosmic connection in Egyptian mythology. It can be also be perceived that in Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the reverence of the Egyptian deities also takes place through animals, birds, and humans, and the Sphinx is the powerful being combining alien, the Earthy leonine and the Earthly human.¹¹¹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

¹⁰⁵ Edouard Naville, “Le Sphinx III,” *Sphinx* XXI (1924), 13, quoted in Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 155; Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 155. I have paraphrased the quotation given from Naville by Hancock and Bauval.

¹⁰⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 10.

¹⁰⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 10–17.

¹⁰⁸ Jeremy Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts: The Mystical Tradition of Ancient Egypt* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2005), 238.

¹⁰⁹ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 47.

¹¹⁰ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1996), 177.

¹¹¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

4.6 Botany and Technology

It can be argued that *Resurrection* is a significant reflection of “environmental awareness” since Dayton describes the Kinley technology based on botanical resources.¹¹² Since the Kinleys visit ancient Egypt in the Old Kingdom it also becomes relevant to consider a connection between Kinley technology and ancient Egyptian art, since as per the plot, the Kinleys cause royal genetic mixture while settling in the ancient Egyptian society.¹¹³ Egyptian art shows interesting utilization of plant-imitated styles in decoration. For example, as Rosalie F. Baker and Charles F. Baker III note, the “reed bundles” are inspiration behind the pillars’ shapes in Djoser’s monument in Saqqara which is a recognized Old Kingdom monument site; thus the architect Imhotep followed the reed-style for making the walls more durable, thus the primary vegetative material as a style is merged with the stone-engineering by Imhotep.¹¹⁴

This Egyptological data becomes relevant since the involvement of reed in Kinley technology described in Dayton’s *Resurrection* inspires interesting comparative studies between Kinley reliance on biological technology, emphasis on reed¹¹⁵ and the symbolic, iconographic and ritual importance of reeds in ancient Egyptian mythology and religion. Pruitt’s ship contains reed-made cribs with nourishing “biofluid” in which the astronauts’ bodies remain immersed.¹¹⁶ Their bodies’ vital functioning and maintained by “reedy arms,” and their chests are connected with “breatharm[s].”¹¹⁷ It is further noted that for image and information access the Kinleys also utilize reeds; the reeds’ “biological” cells provide a

¹¹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11, 55–63, 1–422.

¹¹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 69–407.

¹¹⁴ Rosalie F. Baker, and Charles F. Baker III, *Ancient Egyptians: People of the Pyramids (Oxford Profiles)*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 23.

¹¹⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11, 55–63, 1–422.

¹¹⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–10.

¹¹⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–10.

“display” upon which data are reflected.¹¹⁸ The “stasis tanks” in the Cave built by the Kinleys on Earth are filled with “greenish brown” “thick grease” which coats the hibernating / “sleeping” bodies for millennia.¹¹⁹ Thus it can be argued that the highly advanced plant-technology or technology inspired by plant-structures sustains their existence, and Kinley botanical science is primal and had advanced over time.¹²⁰

Since the Kinleys settle in ancient Egypt, the studies in the importance of plants in ancient Egyptian art and mythology deserve parallel attention to Kinley use of botanical technology. Similar to the fictional Kinley stress on botany, it can be argued that the reed and the botanical nourishment had been essential for ancient Egyptian survival since the beginnings of the development of agricultural system supported by the Nile’s inundation. Gerald Massey notes that the ancient Egyptian communities essentially fed on reed, and gradually came to use reed as a means of transport and for terrestrial symbolism.¹²¹ Massey notes that the nomenclatures of “papyrus reed” and “lower Egypt” were identical (“Uat”),¹²² meaning that the geophysical conception of Lower Egypt was semiotically equivalent with the papyrus reed. It may be argued that in *Resurrection* the Kinleys’ arrival in Memphis in Lower Egypt fictionally connects the reed-symbolism and the arrival of the reed-using alien Kinleys.¹²³ Massey notes that the Egyptian “oasis” covered with “papyrus reed[s]” reflected a terrestrial “heaven”; its celestial counterpart is the “field of the reeds” perceived as the blessed destination of the ancient Egyptian deceased.¹²⁴ It seems that reed was one of the primary natural agents with which the Egyptian nation was birthed.¹²⁵ In Egyptian

¹¹⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 4.

¹¹⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 265–270.

¹²⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

¹²¹ Gerald Massey, *Ancient Egypt: The Light of the World*, Book 5 [Part I], *The Sign-Language of Astronomical Mythology* (1907; New York: Cosimo Classics, 2007), 5: 201–203.

¹²² Massey, *Ancient Egypt*, 5: 202.

¹²³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–407.

¹²⁴ Massey, *Ancient Egypt*, 5: 202, 5: 208.

¹²⁵ Massey, *Ancient Egypt*, 5: 201.

mythology, as Massey notes, the papyrus marsh was the place of concealment and shelter for the divine child Horus indicating the connection between reed and human birth.¹²⁶ This can be used for the supportive argument for the reference to the Kinley reed-associated “cribs” as protective cavities for astronauts.¹²⁷ Ogden Goelet Jr. notes that the “*Per-wer*” “shrine” essentially found in Northern Egypt alludes to the sarcophagus-shape as well as the “green-stripped walls” making it appropriate for verdure and funerary aspects of Osiris.¹²⁸ In argument it can be observed that the Kinley Captain, working with the plant-technology, can be interpretatively connected with the cult of the vegetation-deity Osiris.¹²⁹ Pruitt’s ship is instructed to “regenerate” the suffered cerebral cells of the Engineer, which also gives the ship a life-saving quality.¹³⁰ Leonard H. Lesko’s information can be noted in this context that as per the *Pyramid Texts*’ “Utterance 264” Horus is supposed to avail the “reed” for celestial aquatic travel.¹³¹ Goelet Jr. informs that in the *Book of the Dead* of Ani, the god Khepri, representing the rising sun, is represented as positioned upon the boat and its prow is attached with a reed mat.¹³² Hence, the reed as used in the Kinley spaceship can be found represented in the celestial vehicle used by the Egyptian deities; the connection becomes valid if the “alternative” theories given by Erich von Däniken are followed in perceiving the deities as aliens.¹³³ L. H. Lesko further notes quoting *Pyramid Texts*’ “Utterance 264” that aquatics and celestial travel are stressed; the pharaoh gets rejuvenated by the divine agency

¹²⁶ Massey, *Ancient Egypt*, 5: 201–203.

¹²⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11.

¹²⁸ Ogden Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature and Tradition which Constitutes *The Book of Going Forth by Day*,” in *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Book of Going Forth by Day*, by Scribes and Artists Unknown, “With Additional Translations and a Commentary by” Dr. Ogden Goelet Jr., introd. Carol A. R. Andrews, ed. Eva Von Dassow, 137–170, “In an Edition Conceived and Produced by” James Wasserman (1994; reprint, San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 1998), 156.

¹²⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–407.

¹³⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 410–411.

¹³¹ Leonard H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 98–99.

¹³² Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” plate 10, p. 160.

¹³³ Erich von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx: The Newest Evidence of Extraterrestrial Contact in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Berkley Books, 1996), 1–278.

in the celestial eastern zone where he journeys through the inundation of “the Winding Waterway”¹³⁴ following the unlocking of the “Nurse Canal” implying gestation and birth.¹³⁵ This interestingly sounds like the Kinleys travelling in spaceship within “cribs” supplied with “biofluid.”¹³⁶

The nourishing connection between reeds and “*Hetep*” hieroglyph sign is extended towards the jurisdiction of space in the Egyptian afterlife. L. H. Lesko notes that the direction West is linked with the “Field of Hetep” and the horizon where sunset occurs, while the horizon of sunrise and the “Field of Reeds” are perceived as the personified East.¹³⁷ Hope notes that the deities, like humans, require sustenance; the botanical nutrition provided by “Sekhet-hetep[’s]” fields in close proximity with the sacred lake forms their diet.¹³⁸ This again evokes in our minds the image of the “biofluid” in the reed-linked “cribs” developed by the Kinleys.¹³⁹ Hope perceives that the fields are reflections of the terrestrial Egypt; in the ancient Egyptian afterlife, the water is never a scarcity due to well-planned canal system, and barley as well as wheat specially seem to be irrigated in abundance in such fecundity.¹⁴⁰ Keeping the above mytho-physical worldview in mind, it can be argued here that natural Order is brought to Egypt by the deity-like aliens by changing the agriculture and engineering using technology. The Lion, the alien-human son of fathered by the Captain and mothered by the Archaeologist make home in Egypt and develop strong emotional connection with Egypt¹⁴¹; the Lion develops canal-irrigation, applying alien insight of his own race for the development of economy and prosperity of Egypt and

¹³⁴ Quoted in L. H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” 98–99.

¹³⁵ L. H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies,” 98–99; L. H. Lesko cites Kurt Sethe and R. O. Faulkner for “Utterance 264”; see Kurt Sethe, *Die Altägyptischen Pyramidentexte* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908), secs. 342–350, 1: 183–185, and R. O. Faulkner, trans., *Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), 185–187.

¹³⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11.

¹³⁷ L. H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies,” 120.

¹³⁸ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 116.

¹³⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–2, 1–11.

¹⁴⁰ Hope, *The Sirius Connection*, 116.

¹⁴¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 70, 86–88.

Earth.¹⁴² Thus the Egyptian expressions regarding water and irrigation in mythology can be found in *Resurrection*'s plot featuring fertility and vegetative advancement in Egypt.¹⁴³ The ancient Kinleys give a new life to the Egyptians¹⁴⁴ and the current Kinley Pruitt returns to Egypt to save her own homeland, struggling with a damaged ecosystem, on the brink of planetary war.¹⁴⁵

In Osirian cult, as Eltayeb Abbas accounts, the water's agency of creation are connected with the Inundation, and is poured over the corpses as an "elixir" for cooling and nourishing them.¹⁴⁶ Water and human vital system should also be brought in discussion to establish the importance of botanical and biological awareness. The Kinley "cribs" are supplied with "biofluid" and "arms" are inserted inside the bodies.¹⁴⁷ It can be noted here that ancient Egyptian medical sciences were aware, though limitedly, of the circulatory system; Robert K. Ritner notes that the ancient Egyptians thought that channels originate from the heart and merge "at the anus" and the Egyptian physicians used the hieroglyphic word "*mt.w*" meaning "tubes"¹⁴⁸ for them.¹⁴⁹ Dayton's *Resurrection* thus inspires the readers to contemplate on the history of ideas; in Dayton's fictional context the Kinley science might have been rudimentarily observed by the Egyptian doctors serving Sneferu and Khufu in the plot.¹⁵⁰ Naydler notes that the trachea was thought by the Egyptians to be an organ maintaining "harmonious unity" between the two lungs; thus the trachea as a symbol was appropriated by the Egyptian artists for tying the papyrus and lotus plants for symbolic

¹⁴² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 361–362.

¹⁴³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 361–362.

¹⁴⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 42–328.

¹⁴⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

¹⁴⁶ Eltayeb Abbas, "The Tomb of Osiris and Skyscapes of Death in the Book of the Two Ways," *Abgadiyat* 13 (2018): 39.

¹⁴⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11.

¹⁴⁸ Quoted in Robert K. Ritner, "The Cardiovascular System in Ancient Egyptian Thought," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 65, no. 2 (April 2006): 100, accessed October 17, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/504985>.

¹⁴⁹ Ritner, "The Cardiovascular System," 100.

¹⁵⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–407.

unification of Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt.¹⁵¹ The unifying symbol, “*sema-tawy*” also looks like stylized tubes attached to a structure that looks like a device. Thus the Kinleys are described as pursuing technology in close connection with botanical observation; likewise the ancient Egyptians were keen in their observations on plant-life and the use of botanical motifs in their art and architecture.

According to Barbara Mendoza the “*Hetep*” symbol constitutes a “rectangular [reed] mat” upon which “a single loaf of bread” is kept.¹⁵² The “*Hetep*” sign bears different interpretations, like the establishment of peace, satisfaction, though the primary meaning implies “offering”¹⁵³ as Mendoza informs.¹⁵⁴ It may be argued citing Mendoza’s information that as per Egyptology the artists “by the Fourth Dynasty” had started receiving commissions for preparing “Table of Offerings” keeping in mind the “funerary usage.”¹⁵⁵ The nourishing aspect of “*Hetep*” needs to be perceived along with the symbol “*shen*” which represents protective enclosure, “encircling,”¹⁵⁶ and “*sema-tawy*” symbol in terms of vitality. Schwaller de Lubicz notes that the blood’s “reanimation” and “spirit[ual]” “fixation” are attributed to the respiration made through the lungs and the trachea, the latter constituting the glyph sign “*sma*” (or “*sema*”) that constitutes the striped vertical pole gradually getting broadened from below to above.¹⁵⁷ This pole-like structure is used in the conjoining of “Upper and Lower Egypt” represented respectively by Hapi-figures holding lotus flower and papyrus flower as Schwaller de Lubicz notes.¹⁵⁸ The references to “*Hetep*” symbol and

¹⁵¹ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 269, Fig. 12.5.

¹⁵² Barbara Mendoza, *Artifacts: From Ancient Egypt* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2017), 141.

¹⁵³ Quoted in Mendoza, *Artifacts: From Ancient Egypt*, 141; Mendoza, *Artifacts: From Ancient Egypt*, 141.

¹⁵⁴ Mendoza, *Artifacts: From Ancient Egypt*, 141.

¹⁵⁵ Mendoza, *Artifacts: From Ancient Egypt*, 141. Note that a major part of Dayton’s novel *Resurrection* is set in the Fourth Dynasty.

¹⁵⁶ Cathie Spieser, “Cartouche,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Elizabeth Froid and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2010), 1–2, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf61t>.

¹⁵⁷ Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man*, 2: 563.

¹⁵⁸ Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man*, 2: 563.

“sema-tawy” symbol have been provided here to connect the botanical link with water. In argument it can be pointed out that the Kinleys use “breatharm[s]” to sustain themselves in their spaceship, in the protective reed cribs.¹⁵⁹ Thus a connection between the Kinley science and the Egyptian plant-symbolism for the preservation of life can be established.



Figure 4.2 Ti Holding Papyrus

The image above shows a relief from the tomb of the Fifth Dynasty official Ti in Saqqara showing Ti standing on boat and holding papyrus in his two hands. The backdrop is covered with the “papyrus-thicket” depicted in vertical lines representing papyrus stalks or reeds. Citing Samuel Mercer, Naydler mentions that papyrus uprooting is linked with the Nile’s flooding as well as with royal strength; the papyrus is also perceived as fecundity symbol/motif.¹⁶⁰ Elizabeth Thomas notes that the “Fourth Dynasty” of the Old Kingdom saw, for the “first” time, the representations of “spearing and fowling” by the artists¹⁶¹ indicating the importance given to the visually recorded observation of plant-life. E. Thomas perceives that the marsh plants in ancient Egyptian art were drawn full of life with “frog,

¹⁵⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11.

¹⁶⁰ Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 265. See also Samuel A. B. Mercer, trans., *The Pyramid Texts*, vol. 2 (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1952), 178.

¹⁶¹ Elizabeth Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 45 (December 1959): 38, accessed May 16, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3855461>.

grasshopper, butterfly, and dragonfly” by the artists in the Old Kingdom.¹⁶² This needs to be remembered in argument for the memory of the “First Time” depicted in the *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in which the alien-identities appear in prehistoric Egypt full of wildlife and vegetation before the formation of the arid desert.¹⁶³ Having these botanical and mythological associations in mind, the image of Ti in connection with the papyrus reeds is thus relevant for discussion in this chapter because the plot of *Resurrection* is set during the Fourth Dynasty visited by the alien Kinleys who have mastered botanical technology, specially building gadgets with reed.¹⁶⁴ Photo taken on April 5, 2019.

The nutrition provided from the plants and aquatics are also extended to other species in Egyptian art and iconography. Quirke notes that the sycamore, held sacred to the goddess Hathor, is also connected with the creator god Atum’s residence, indicating that botanical “symbolism” go hand in hand with architectonic “symbolism” in Hathor’s Temple in Iunu.¹⁶⁵ An observation in comparison can be brought from *Resurrection*, in which the Lion’s house’s building material is cedar, and sycamore-motif is used in installing “wooden pillars.”¹⁶⁶ This textual detail can be cited to argue that the love for plants is perceived amidst the Kinleys of whom the Lion is a member. Marie-Louise Buhl notes that Hathor’s precedence over the “Southern Sycamore”¹⁶⁷ led to one of her manifestations as the “tree-goddes.”¹⁶⁸ The “arms” supplying sustenance to the hibernating / “sleeping” Kinleys,¹⁶⁹ can be linked with the mythological depictions of Hathor, her body resembling a circuitous extension from the branches of the trees offering aquatic nourishment to the deceased having

¹⁶² E. Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh,” 42.

¹⁶³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17, 58–61, 317–321.

¹⁶⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

¹⁶⁵ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 104–105.

¹⁶⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 361.

¹⁶⁷ Quoted in Marie-Louise Buhl, “The Goddesses of the Egyptian Tree Cult,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 6, no. 2 (April 1947): 86, accessed May 8, 2020, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/542585>.

¹⁶⁸ Buhl, “The Goddesses of the Egyptian Tree Cult,” 86.

¹⁶⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–2.

arrived in “Duat,” the afterlife, as Goelet Jr. notes.¹⁷⁰ In Egyptian beliefs, as Abbas notes, “Duat” refers to both subterranean and terrestrial zones, to both the underworld and the astral place.¹⁷¹ Another very important botanical species is the “Ished” tree. Buhl perceives that the god Amun-Re, the same deity who guides Mustapha in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* to awaken the Sphinx,¹⁷² as per Egyptian myths selects the “Ished”-fruit for the writing of the Pharaonic name while the king is present with the god Atum in front of the “Ished”-tree, as depicted in the Temple of Medinet Habu.¹⁷³



Figure 4.3 “Ished” Tree and Seti I

Relief from the Temple of Seti I, Abydos, showing Seti I in the vicinity of the “Ished” tree, between the gods Ptah (left) and Horus (right).¹⁷⁴ Quirke informs that the “[I]shed” and its interpretation are valued as political necessities felt by the New Kingdom Pharaohs, to communicate that the deities have full support for their accession to the throne by leaving the royal names on the “Ished[’s]” leaves.¹⁷⁵ In the image both Ptah and Horus carry reed pens for guaranteeing long reign to the pharaoh; Ptah’s pen is held in the image of

¹⁷⁰ Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” 163.

¹⁷¹ Abbas, “The Tomb of Osiris,” 32–45.

¹⁷² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 18–321.

¹⁷³ Buhl, “The Goddesses of the Egyptian Tree Cult,” 89.

¹⁷⁴ Rosalie David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1981), 36–37.

¹⁷⁵ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 108.

the god Heh – the personified “Eternity”¹⁷⁶ indicating eternal reign to the glorious king.¹⁷⁷ Thus, the image of the flourishing tree is analogous with prosperous administration spanning over many, many human years, implying the pharaohs’ vigorous health. The reed pen also reinstates the importance of the reed, offering guaranteed health through visual and written communication. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

4.7 Building Material

In their adaptation to lifestyle in ancient Egypt, the Kinley Survey Team pursued chemical and engineering experiment and enriched ancient Egypt with building technology.¹⁷⁸ This contextualization of technology reminds us of the mystery involving the engineering prospects perceived in the Old Kingdom leading to speculations since such feats were not encountered in later periods of Egyptian history. By means of “emulsion” and provision of “catalyst,” rock-formation through “mold”-development is ingeniously made possible under the Engineer’s supervision.¹⁷⁹ The Captain is also attributed the construction of the Great Pyramid¹⁸⁰; as Osiris he is responsible for erecting a calamity-withstanding venerable structure to be used as a “stone beacon.”¹⁸¹ Its “central chamber” is ingeniously built and is equipped to respond to any vibration¹⁸² thereby the auspicious and the technical are merged. Due to its close proximity to the “sleepers’ cave” containing the hibernating / “sleeping” bodies of the Kinleys, the site of the Giza necropolis is selected.¹⁸³ However, architecture must conjoin with religion; though the Pyramid is just seen as a “communications purpose” a significant requirement is aimed for the establishment of the

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 42; Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 42.

¹⁷⁷ David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos*, 36–37.

¹⁷⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 86–95.

¹⁷⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 90–91.

¹⁸⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 323–328.

¹⁸¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 325, 323–328.

¹⁸² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 325–326.

¹⁸³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 326.

Captain's identity as Osiris.¹⁸⁴ Like the Pyramid Temple, the Osiris Temple is also a remarkable Kinley achievement: "dark-gray marble" exhibiting great degree of polish equal to the perfection of laser-execution, with no anomaly or rough handling, is used for Osiris's "temple" dating to the "Fourth Dynasty."¹⁸⁵ The chemical/physical property of the Kinleys is later studied after five millennia by the Egyptologist Eddie who is fascinated with the dexterous finish of the constructed monument.¹⁸⁶

Ancient Egypt as a beneficiary of fictional Kinley technology speaks about Dayton's creative application of the "Egyptomaniac" speculation about the ancient Egyptian uses of stones for building purposes.¹⁸⁷ Though the Giza Pyramids are not decorated, the stones used for its building purpose were sanctioned remembering religious symbolisms in mind. In this connection, Jeremy Naydler's insight regarding the choices of the varieties of stone for the pharaoh Pepi's Pyramid built after Khufu can be cited.¹⁸⁸ It is worthy of mention for arguing that the understanding of the use of geological science was in harmony with the religious mindset of the ancient Egyptians of the Old Kingdom during which the Kinleys visited Earth in *Resurrection*.¹⁸⁹ Alabaster, as R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz cited by Naydler observes, was chosen for Unas's sarcophagus chamber owing to the stone's "milky" complexion.¹⁹⁰ Citing Richard Wilkinson, Naydler notes that the choice and use of "black granite" for the sarcophagus might have been due to the color black's connection with rebirth, reawakening, and fecundity.¹⁹¹ Citing R. Wilkinson, Naydler notes that limestone, as

¹⁸⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 326.

¹⁸⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 114.

¹⁸⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 114–119.

¹⁸⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–407.

¹⁸⁸ Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164.

¹⁸⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–407.

¹⁹⁰ R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science: The King of Pharaonic Theocracy*, trans. André VandenBroeck and Goldian VandenBroeck (Rochester Vt.: Inner Traditions International, 1982), 102, cited in Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164. Naydler himself also elaborates the connection between the stone and milk in terms of vitality; see Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164.

¹⁹¹ Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164; Richard H. Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic in Ancient Egyptian Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 109, cited in Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164.

building block of pyramid, was considered to be “pure” in terms of its “white[ness].”¹⁹² Thus it can be argued that the studies of chemical properties were in tune with ritual aesthetics and funerary associations of color imply that the ancient Egyptians established ritual, symbolic connection between the organic processes and the raw material occurring in the environment beyond human bodies.

This deep chemical understanding leads one to ponder about the possible origins of such highly developed knowledge. As Von Däniken accounts, the content of an intriguing Egyptian stele in Sehel the discovery of which is attributed to C. E. Wilbour in 1889, talks about a dream-communication between the god Khnum and the pharaoh Djoser, in which Djoser is bestowed upon by Khnum an engineering secret behind the production of stones with chemical procedure.¹⁹³ The god Khnum, like a scientist, provides the formula for coalescing stones; their “binding agents” were supposed to be produced from chemical ingredient.¹⁹⁴ This communication renders Imhotep and Djoser as shareholders of chemical and engineering secrets.¹⁹⁵ Von Däniken’s information in reference to Dayton’s description of the alien Kinley Engineer experimenting with artificial production of rocks in ancient Egypt in *Resurrection*¹⁹⁶ maybe kept in mind for arguing in favor of “Egyptomaniac” application of “alternative” theories in fiction supporting cultivation of ancient Egyptian science inherited from external/alien sources.

4.8 The Great Pyramid

The Great Pyramid’s true purpose remains an enigma, and both *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* speculate extraterrestrial connections with the mechanisms

¹⁹² Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164; R. H. Wilkinson, *Symbol and Magic*, 109, cited in Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 164.

¹⁹³ Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 143.

¹⁹⁴ Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 143–145.

¹⁹⁵ Von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx*, 143–145.

¹⁹⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 88–92.

involved in its construction, which is also much speculated in “Egyptomania.” Bafflement regarding the Pyramids transpires miraculously from the harmony between their sheer sizes and the minuteness of calculations involving every stone in them. Malkowski aptly remarks that the accuracies of the placements of challenging raw materials like granite and limestone leading to the construction of the huge scale monuments raises queries regarding the Egyptian builders’ capabilities and methodologies behind such huge projects.¹⁹⁷ The alternate theories evolve from the “negative evidence” as Malcowski calls it, rising from the context of the pyramids not revealing any conventional signs of instruments used for their construction.¹⁹⁸ This paucity of information is also taken up by Thornton in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*: even the ancient Egyptian priest Unas asserts that the Pyramids are of divine origin but he is uncertain if they fell in the category of the Egyptian pantheon.¹⁹⁹ Such considerations, almost verging on the register of questioning, if not apostasy, places Unas in the long line of illustrious beings whose wisdom is secret and awaits lifetimes for application and enactment.²⁰⁰ Qaa, whose name sounds like the ancient Egyptian word “ka,” meaning “vital force”²⁰¹ is initiated by Unas into the religious mystics of receiving Amun-Ra’s message while taking a reclining position in the sarcophagus of King’s Chamber.²⁰² The sarcophagus is, interestingly, intended as a “capacitor” by the alien-creators.²⁰³ Thus divine vision is interpreted as a kind of energy-communication. In one ancient Egyptian *Pyramid Text*, as L. V. Žabkar notes, the god Atum is requested to transmit his “ka” to

¹⁹⁷ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 67.

¹⁹⁸ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 66.

¹⁹⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 18–30, 27, 29.

²⁰⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 18–30.

²⁰¹ Quoted in Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (1948; reprint, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 62.

²⁰² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 18–30, 27–30.

²⁰³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 14.

enclose both the Pyramid, its commissioner pharaoh, and his “Ka”²⁰⁴ protected in it.²⁰⁵ “Utterance 600” of the *Pyramid Texts* provides Atum’s “protect[ion]” to the pharaoh in the manner similar to Tefnut as well as Shu being enclosed in Atum’s embrace.²⁰⁶ In the same way, Qaa is flooded with golden essence while receiving his vision in the sarcophagus.²⁰⁷ It can be argued that material and energy merge in ancient Egyptian sacred jewellery thus Mustapha’s “breastplate” manifests the nine deities of the Ennead.²⁰⁸

The internal calculation of the Great Pyramid involves association with the stars. Citing V. Trimble, A. Badawy, R. Stadelmann, the Egyptologist Maarten J. Raven notes that in the pyramid of Khufu, Orion’s transit was made visually accessible for the pharaoh through “south shafts” while the “circumpolar stars” / “pole star[’s]” visual angle was aligned through the “north [air] shafts.”²⁰⁹ Mark Lehner cited by Robert Bauval notes that “Duat,” represented in the hieroglyph system as a circle enclosing a star, has terrestrial and aquatic registers where Osiris resides; Osiris himself has a stellar connection with Orion, which is “Duat”-linked.²¹⁰ It can be argued that Dayton applies this connecting function played by the Great Pyramid through the Kinleys’ knowledge of vibration-based communication. The Great Pyramid built by the Kinleys is intended for “message”

²⁰⁴ Quoted in L. V. Žabkar, “Adaptation of Ancient Egyptian Texts to the Temple Ritual at Philae,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 66 (1980): 132, accessed July 31, 2017, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3856396>.

²⁰⁵ Žabkar, “Adaptation of Ancient Egyptian Texts,” 132.

²⁰⁶ Žabkar, “Adaptation of Ancient Egyptian Texts,” 134.

²⁰⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 27–30.

²⁰⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 204–206.

²⁰⁹ Maarten J. Raven, “Egyptian Concepts on the Orientation of the Human Body,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 91 (2005): 39, accessed November 17, 2017, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3822392>; See also Virginia Trimble, “Astronomical Investigation Concerning the So-Called Air-Shafts of Cheops’ Pyramid,” *MIO* 10, no. 2/3 (1964): 183–187; Alexander Badawy, “The Stellar Destiny of Pharaoh and the So-Called Air-Shafts of Cheops’ Pyramid,” *MIO* 10, no. 2/3 (1964): 189–206; R. Stadelmann, “Die Sogenannten Luftkanäle der Cheopspyramide. Modellkorridore für den Aufstieg des Königs zum Himmel,” *MDAIK* 50 (1994): 285–294.

²¹⁰ Mark Lehner, *The Complete Pyramids* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 29, cited in Robert Bauval, “The Place Where the Gods Are Born,” in *Origins of the Sphinx: Celestial Guardian of Pre-Pharaonic Civilization*, by Robert M. Schoch, and Robert Bauval (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2017), 213; Bauval, “The Place Where the Gods Are Born,” 213.

“transmission”²¹¹; it is meant to “redirect” any external user-generated transmission to the “sleepers” cave and activate the mechanisms concerning the waking of the hibernating / “sleeping” Kinleys.²¹² The purpose of “amplif[ying]” as well as passing on any intercepting “sound” by the Great Pyramid proves its ingenuity as a giant “beacon.”²¹³ Thus the Osiris-stellar connection becomes relevant, since the Kinleys come from the stars, and the alien Captain becomes Osiris in Egypt.²¹⁴

In ancient Egyptian art, as we learn from Pinch, the “Primeval Mound,” the solid point of cosmic “center,” is represented symbolically with “*benben* stone” kept in Heliopolis which is fashioned like a “pyramidion.”²¹⁵ The god Tatjenen is present in the “Primeval Mound” and both the gods Amun and Ptah are considered manifestations of Tatjenen.²¹⁶ In *Sphinx: The Second Coming* both the gods Ptah and Amun-Ra are conceived by the Sphinx.²¹⁷ Thornton, however, uses the name “Benben” which is Egyptologically identified as the “primeval mound”; the name is “Egyptomaniacally” used for the malevolent alien which lives with Bulbul in a symbiotic relationship.²¹⁸

Dayton’s fictional representations may be inspired by physical studies pursued on the building material of the Great Pyramid. Malkowski notes that granite was particularly used to generate “a full sound through its resonance” and its generation was the motivation behind the granite chamber’s erection.²¹⁹ In argument, it may be remembered citing

²¹¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 96–102.

²¹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 96–102.

²¹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 96–97, 102.

²¹⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–407.

²¹⁵ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 180. See also Anirban Ray, “X-Men: Apocalypse (2016): Youth-Centric Theoretical Discussions,” in *International Conference on Youth in Changeable World. Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives: Ain Shams University, Cairo-Egypt: 1st - 3rd April 2019*, ed. Soheir Safwat (Cairo: Ain Shams University [?], 2019), 448.

²¹⁶ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 180.

²¹⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 32–34, 274–275, 8–348.

²¹⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 39–47, 141–149, 157–160, 172–178, 39–337.

²¹⁹ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 176, 175–187.

Malkowski that the word “*Per-Neter*,” meaning the “house of nature,”²²⁰ was used for referring the pyramids in ancient Egypt, indicating their possible knowledge in their empirical application.²²¹ Thus “Egyptomania”/“alternative Egyptology” inspires us to reinterpret the ancient Egyptian names for meanings not covered by institutional Egyptology.

The Great Pyramid has attracted generations of mathematical surveys since its outer and inner structures are manifestations of superb calculative harmony. In terms of the enigma of physics and mathematics at work within and around the Great Pyramid, Christopher Dunn’s detailed observations of the peculiarities of the inner chambers of the Great Pyramid are essential for discussion.²²² Dunn’s studies are also relevant in terms of re-interpretations of the purpose of the Great Pyramid, which Dayton has fictionally contextualized in *Resurrection*.²²³ A remarkable harmony is noticeable, as Dunn notes, between Earth’s weight and that of the Great Pyramid’s calculation according to Charles Piazzi Smyth’s calculation bringing out the result that the Pyramid is “10¹⁵ integer of the Earth’s weight.”²²⁴ In Dayton’s *Resurrection*, Pruitt’s sense of admiration of the Pyramid indicates that not only its builders but its position in Egypt had enabled the structure to fulfil its intended purpose.²²⁵ Thus if the Pyramid is an architectonic wonder; its wondrous nature is facilitated by its unique position in the natural location-wise wonder of Egypt.

Tom Danley’s experiments and Dunn’s observations communicate that the Earth’s internally generated “vibrations” could be accessed by the superb architectonics of the Great Pyramid²²⁶; this reminds us of the Kinley-objective in *Resurrection* to build the Pyramid as a “beacon” to locate the Kinley-cave by means of

²²⁰ Quoted in Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 184.

²²¹ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 184–185.

²²² Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant*, 125–218, 1–265.

²²³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218, 323–328.

²²⁴ Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant*, 131–132. See also Charles Piazzi Smyth, *The Great Pyramid: Its Secrets and Mysteries Revealed*, 4th ed. (New York: Bell Publishing Company, 1978), 285–287.

²²⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218, 323–328.

²²⁶ Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant*, 139–149.

responding to vibration.²²⁷ By applying “Matrix tuner,” “tests” were pursued in the King’s Chamber by Dunn; his repeated examinations confirmed that the intensity of the “reverberation” depends on the force of the causal “hum[ming].”²²⁸ In connection with Dunn’s experiment, Pruitt’s testing of the impact of her uttered sound while occupying the sarcophagus in *Resurrection* can be noted.²²⁹ Dunn has noted the steps devised by the ingenious ancient Egyptians to acquire the granite’s oscillations in the King’s Chamber acting as “power center” following the harnessing of the terrestrial vibration.²³⁰ Similarly, Dunn explains that the “granite box” (the sarcophagus) was supposed to have received “microwave energy” that found its way into “the chamber.”²³¹ These insights may be cited to note how both the alien-human Pruitt in *Resurrection* and the ancient Egyptian Qaa in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* perceive the energy flow while momentarily lying in the sarcophagus.²³² For Pruitt it is an assessment of ancient technology²³³; for Qaa it is a mystic message from the Divine.²³⁴ Both are the interpretations of the energy felt. Similarly both *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* communicate to the readers the importance of scientific studies in “alternative Egyptology”; the questions regarding Egypt broaden the scope of speculative investigation.

While Eddie’s appreciation is aimed at the polished finish and “bright[ness]” Pruitt expresses her amazement at the “geometric” accuracy of the building ratified by Eddie’s observation regarding its placement in terms of the cardinal “points” and the “Earth’s axis,” which makes Pruitt happy thinking of the accomplishments of the members of the “survey

²²⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–210, 216–218, 323–328.

²²⁸ Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant*, 141.

²²⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 217.

²³⁰ Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant*, 160.

²³¹ Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant*, 186–189.

²³² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 26–30.

²³³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218.

²³⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 26–30.

crew” who are her predecessors.²³⁵ Even though Pruitt is an alien human, the Great Pyramid for her resembles a sort of homecoming; it reminds her of the architectonic connection with the ancient achievers of her race.²³⁶ Through Pruitt, Eddie, and the Great Pyramid, two human-oriented worlds (Herrod and Earth) meet, and the readers get a glimpse of the universal notion of humanity.²³⁷ For Eddie, who yet is unaware of Pruitt’s alien origins, the Pyramid is a timeless achievement of *human* endeavour, implying humans of Earth.²³⁸ It can be argued that Eddie sees the Great Pyramid as the *miracle* achieved by the *Earthly* humans and the Pyramid also reiterates Egypt’s unique position on Earth, since even though the Kinleys built it, ancient Egyptian labour was involved in its construction. It can be inferred that something like the Great Pyramid does not exist even in the Kinley home planet Herrod, since the requirement for such a project never rose. The Great Pyramid is thus the only example of its type in the Universe, present only in Egypt, on Earth. Likewise, the Great Pyramid’s “Ikosikaitrigon” also constitutes the only specimen of its kind in Egypt and the “Multiverse,” as perceived in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.²³⁹ The characters’ fragmented understandings help the readers to comprehend the wholeness of humanity. Both Eddie and Pruitt are anatomically human; their visit to Egypt helps to establish the understanding of human perseverance. Pruitt’s “transmitter” instructs the Pyramid to “vibrate” and she receives the “sleepers’ cave[’s]” “coordinates,” having matched with “frequency” determined by the “survey team.”²⁴⁰ It is interesting how the Earthly human Eddie’s suggestion turns out to be a blessing. The Herrod-human Pruitt is able to connect by allowing

²³⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 214.

²³⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218.

²³⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218, 323–328.

²³⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218.

²³⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–105.

²⁴⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 216–17.

herself to occupy the sarcophagus in her repose²⁴¹; thus it can be argued that *Resurrection* connects the humans from two different planets through the Great Pyramid in Egypt.

However, the Great Pyramid's true purpose remains unknown to the ancient Egyptians themselves. It appears as the "most beautiful creation" to Khufu.²⁴² in his ignorance of its actual usage as a "beacon."²⁴³ Khufu adds "a stone sarcophagus in the central room"²⁴⁴ which is interesting in the sense that the sarcophagus assists as the conduit between the worlds, between science and mysticism. The sarcophagus in the "King's Chamber" has been recontextualized by both Dayton and Thornton and it remains religiously and technologically ambivalent. In *Resurrection* it claims Khufu's life while he is immersed in the concoction filled within it hoping to emulate the purpose of "stasis tanks" thereby indicating misuse and misunderstanding of technology.²⁴⁵ It however enables Pruitt to be aware of the "sleepers' cave[s]" "location" while she lies in the sarcophagus and applies her transmitter's function.²⁴⁶ In *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the Scorpion King is accounted as lying in the sarcophagus and receiving the "vision" for uniting the Upper Egypt and the Lower Egypt.²⁴⁷ Qaa under Unas's guidance is led to the "the Opening of the Heart" while he positioned himself in the sarcophagus²⁴⁸ and has a vision of gold entering his body and occupying him.²⁴⁹ Even Cliff takes repose inside the sarcophagus and feels the flood of "golden light" and sees himself standing seeing Thutmose IV's "Dream Stela" before him.²⁵⁰ For the ritual-believer Khufu, it is an attempt to attain divine immortality.²⁵¹

²⁴¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 216–17.

²⁴² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 404.

²⁴³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 325.

²⁴⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 404.

²⁴⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 404–407.

²⁴⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 216–218.

²⁴⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 27.

²⁴⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 25–30.

²⁴⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 28.

²⁵⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 301–12.

²⁵¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 402–407.

For Pruitt, the conscious user of technology it is the instrument to link with her predecessors.²⁵² The characters from the two novels pursue their individual quests by sharing the same sarcophagus in the Great Pyramid, each with his/her individually different approach. Khufu wishes for “resurrection”²⁵³; the Scorpion King seeks the direction for unification²⁵⁴; Qaa is in search of mystic initiation and understanding²⁵⁵; Pruitt is pursuing the mission for the survival of her home-world²⁵⁶, and Cliff is sought for the survival of the entire galaxy.²⁵⁷ Thus Egypt truly emerges in these two science fiction novels by Dayton and Thornton as the meeting space between Earth and other worlds / “Multiverse.”

4.9 Evolution of the Cult of Osiris in *Resurrection*

Osiris’s origins have led to speculations in terms of royalty, anthropological perspectives, and the observations regarding the ecosystem of the Nile Valley. The attribution of Osiris to a humanoid alien, bringing technology and beliefs together, is one of the key constituents in the plot of *Resurrection*.²⁵⁸ Keeping in mind the novel’s apt title, the premise of new life is a strong element in Egyptian beliefs, and it shall be fruitful to argue with insights on the Osiris-cult in connection with architectural context. H. Rieke cited by J. Gwyn Griffiths notes that the Egyptological observation of performed funeral rituals linked with the pharaoh’s post-death phases having Osiris-resurrection theme went hand-in-hand with modifications with architecture; both these perspectives were developments amidst the “royal” family during Sneferu’s reign in the Fourth Dynasty in the Old Kingdom.²⁵⁹ It can

²⁵² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218.

²⁵³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 402–407.

²⁵⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 27.

²⁵⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 27–30.

²⁵⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 2018–218.

²⁵⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 310–348.

²⁵⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

²⁵⁹ Herbert Rieke, *Bemerkungen zur Ägyptischen Baukunst des Alten Reichs* (Beiträge zur Ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde, 5) (Cairo, 1950), 127, cited in John Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and His Cult* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 43. Griffiths also elaborates the connection, see Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris*, 43.

be argued here that since Dayton places the timeline of the novel fictionally during Sneferu's reign, a study of the growth of Osiris-cult becomes relevant in terms of alien-human connection.²⁶⁰

It is interesting that *Resurrection* is a unique study of the two-way process between humanity and divinity: (i) the upgrading of an alien-human to a deity, and (ii) simultaneous downgrading of the human reasoning for the sake of sustaining a cult.²⁶¹ In this context, the genesis of the Osiris-cult in the Old Kingdom is required to be studied in terms of architecture and astronomy. Bauval notes that pre-“Fifth Dynast[ic]” mention of Osiris is missing in the Old Kingdom; the Osiris cult seemed to have gained importance much after the Pyramid-builders.²⁶² Thus Dayton chooses the Fourth Dynasty as the temporal setting quite aptly for her fictional narrative.²⁶³ However, as Bauval notes, the Fourth Dynasty's religious literature has references to Horus and Isis; this leads to the possibility of Osiris being added bringing “stellar religion” in the existing “solar religion”; thus the *Pyramid Texts* provide “solar rebirth” as well as “stellar rebirth” to the deceased pharaoh.²⁶⁴ Massimiliano Nuzzolo perceives that the historic Khufu's identity as Ra himself is uncontested and he also is the believed conduit through which the gods interacted with the humans; symbolic observations were recontextualized in the “Giza plateau” which is an elaborate engineering achievement transpiring from the Fourth Dynasty's sun-importance.²⁶⁵ Dayton's fictionalized Khufu is the “half-breed” son of Hetepheres and the alien Kinley Captain, and for him the Great Pyramid appears as the site of apotheosis; it remains unknown to him that it is just a technological device. Though the Pyramid constitutes the Captain's engineering prospects his rational faculties get submerged in his delusion for

²⁶⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–54, 67–95, 128–135.

²⁶¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 180–191, 277–283, 366–376, 323–328.

²⁶² Bauval, “The Place Where the Gods Are Born,” 216.

²⁶³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–54, 67, 95, 128–135, 277–283, 323–328, 366–376.

²⁶⁴ Bauval, “The Place Where the Gods Are Born,” 216–217.

²⁶⁵ Massimiliano Nuzzolo, “The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty: A Reassessment,” *Studien Zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 36 (2007): 238, accessed October 24, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25157803>.

maintaining the image of Osiris.²⁶⁶ Nuzzolo informs that in the Fifth Dynasty we see the attempts for a fusion between sun-related cult and the “funerary” one.²⁶⁷ Thus it becomes “Egyptomaniacally” fitting that Dayton shows the Great Pyramid as one of the steps taken by the Captain in impersonating Osiris.²⁶⁸

It is noticeable that “alternative Egyptology” is gradually expanding the premises of Egyptian religion involving the mysteries of symbols, architecture, and identities of the deities. Stephen S. Mehler, following Abd’El Hakim notes that the blue-complexioned Ptah is thought to have an extraterrestrial source, having the blue celestial register as the point of his advent.²⁶⁹ Mehler notes that in “Khemetian” thought, the developments in (i) intellectual registers, (ii) in the legal, societal sectors, and peoples’ lifestyles, and (iii) monument building were all attributed to Wizzer (“Osiris”), thought to be an alien by Zecharia Sitchin.²⁷⁰ Thus the scope of speculation results from the “gap areas” generated in Egyptology. This also includes the need for reinterpreting the usage and contexts of hieroglyphic symbols. It has been speculated that Ptah’s face seems to have shaped future races and his physiognomy is composite: Mehler perceives that Ptah’s lips resemble those of a dark colored human, his eyes resemble those of an Asian, while his nose appear to be that of a Caucasian individual.²⁷¹ Similar cross-breeding certainly remains important in *Resurrection*, since Khufu is a “half-breed,” “Egyptomaniacally” to whom the Great Pyramid is attributed.²⁷²

It can be argued that *Resurrection* also attempts to fictionally narrate the development of Osiris-cult by mentioning Kinley technology of hibernation / “sleep” offered

²⁶⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 277–283, 366–376, 323–328.

²⁶⁷ Nuzzolo, “The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty,” 238.

²⁶⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 323–328.

²⁶⁹ Stephen S. Mehler, *The Land of Osiris: An Introduction to Khemitology* (Kempton, Illinois: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2001), 179–180.

²⁷⁰ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 62.

²⁷¹ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 180.

²⁷² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 327, 323–328.

to the alien astronauts.²⁷³ In argument, references can be drawn to the Egyptological studies of the importance of ritual fluids in connection with Osiris and the hibernating / “sleeping” bodies of the Kinleys. Interestingly, as Thom F. Cavalli notes, ancient Egyptian religious texts prefer to describe Osiris in a “deeply unconscious” state being in an aquatic slumber without attesting his demise.²⁷⁴ Thus the Nile carrying Osiris’s coffin indicates a shift from “unconscious” to “conscious” conditions.²⁷⁵ Another noteworthy point, as noted by Goelet Jr., is that the green countenance of Osiris is connected with vegetation.²⁷⁶ The demise and subsequent revival lead to Osiris getting the names like “the Inert One”²⁷⁷ and “the Weary One.”²⁷⁸ Martin Pehal and Markéta Preininger Svobodová perceive that in Egyptian funerary thought and alchemy, the mythical “*rdw* fluids” are non-human in origin, occurring in the deceased, in divine bodies, also in Osiris’s body.²⁷⁹ Citing Andreas Winkler, and Rune Nyord, Pehal and Preininger Svobodová note that efflux, collected exteriorly from the dead body can be applied while reclaimed, and it results in a beneficial mechanism in a reverse manner, since they can acquire the chemical properties of Osiris’s “*rdw* fluids.”²⁸⁰ Mythical accounts regarding these fluids may be considered in comparison with Kinley-biofluid in the “cribs,”²⁸¹ and the “grease” in the “stasis tanks” sustaining Osiris-like hibernating /

²⁷³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–10, 256.

²⁷⁴ Thom F. Cavalli, *Embodying Osiris: The Secrets of Alchemical Transformation* (Wheaton, IL: Quest Books; Theosophical Publishing House, 2010), 101. See also Anirban Ray, “‘Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment’: An Egyptological Study,” *Teresian Journal of English Studies*, 13, no. 3 (July-September 2021), 29.

²⁷⁵ Cavalli, *Embodying Osiris*, 101.

²⁷⁶ Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” 148.

²⁷⁷ Quoted in Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” 149.

²⁷⁸ Quoted in Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” 149. For elaboration, see Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” 149.

²⁷⁹ Martin Pehal and Markéta Preininger Svobodová, “Death and the Right Fluids: Perspectives from Egyptology and Anthropology,” *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 17 (2018): 118, accessed May 6, 2020, <http://jaei.library.arizona.edu>.

²⁸⁰ Pehal and Preininger Svobodová, “Death and the Right Fluids,” 118. See Andreas Winkler, “The Efflux that Issued from Osiris: A Study on the *Rdw* in the Pyramid Texts,” *Göttinger Miszellen* 211 (2006): 125–139; Rune Nyord, *Breathing Flesh: Conceptions of the Body in the Ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2009).

²⁸¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–10.

“sleeping” bodies.²⁸² Ironically Khufu’s body does not survive the preparation because the sarcophagus is not provided with supplying tubes and associated “stasis tanks.”²⁸³ Nuzzolo notes that the Fifth Dynasty shows a “religious transformation”: Osiris starts receiving importance in the context of the post-death journey of the pharaoh in the afterlife.²⁸⁴ In argument, this Egyptologically studied religious transition can be linked with the inference drawn in *Resurrection*’s fictionalized ancient Egypt in which “science [turns] into religion” following Khufu’s priesthood’s wrong understanding of Kinley technology behind hibernation / “sleep.”²⁸⁵

In Alexandre Piankoff’s description, in the “Fourth register” of the “Second Division” of the *Book of Caverns* in the tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings, twelve embalmed Osiris-figures can be seen, each protected within an oval kept within the western subterranean cavern, which are approached by a deity with a hawk’s head.²⁸⁶ It has to be kept in mind that, in *Resurrection*, the “stasis tanks” and the “cribs” provide the hibernating / “sleeping” spaces for the Kinley astronauts; their places of resting is also within the subterranean Cave, reminiscent of a tomb.²⁸⁷ Thus an analogy is possible between coffins/containers in ancient Egyptian mythology/art and the body-nourishing technological devices described in *Resurrection*.²⁸⁸

It is noteworthy that vegetative growth is essentially linked with the cycle of Osiris in Egyptian worldview. The Kinley Archaeologist cautions her husband (the Captain) that he needs to influence the Egyptians by impersonating a deity, and suggests that he emulates Osiris – since Osiris’s position at the time of Kinley arrival is still not very functionally

²⁸² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 265–266.

²⁸³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 402–407.

²⁸⁴ Nuzzolo, “The Sun Temples of the Vth Dynasty,” 240.

²⁸⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 402–407.

²⁸⁶ Alexandre Piankoff, trans., *The Tomb of Ramesses VI: Texts*, ed. N. Rambova, introd. Alexandre Piankoff (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), 1: 62–63, Fig. 11. The “Texts” volume is volume one.

²⁸⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11, 208–218, 238–248, 265–268.

²⁸⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11, 265–268, 323–328.

oriented, but the god's "blond hair" coincidentally matches with that of the Captain.²⁸⁹ According to Richard A. Parker's translation of a text from Dendera and cited by Henri Frankfort, Osiris materializes himself through lunar imagery, and is held analogous with moon-bound "benu bird" rising from "sleep (of death)"²⁹⁰ as Frankfort communicates.²⁹¹ The pharaoh was believed to enable the Nile to emerge from Osiris's subterranean cavern.²⁹² Thus "Egyptomaniacally" it becomes relevant how the ancestors of the fluid-nourished Kinleys (in their ships) improved ancient Egypt's irrigation system and the Captain becomes the authority figure over entire ancient Egypt.²⁹³

The Captain's stages in the deification involve technological enterprises. Hetepheres marvels at Captain's "translator" and considers technology as part of "magic."²⁹⁴ It can be noted here that David P. Silverman notes that the pharaoh in the Old Kingdom theology was supposed to have mastered magic through connection with the god Heka and the "knowledge" of the "divine" origin was bestowed to him by the god Sia, while the physical faculty of pronunciation of the "divine" words was made possible by the god Hu.²⁹⁵ At her question regarding Captain's intentions, the Captain dispels her fears, stating his intention is to bless Egypt not only with longevity but also with stability, fulfilling his role as Osiris.²⁹⁶ Silverman mentions that ancient Egyptians were able to see no gulf between the mortal and the immortal identities in the pharaoh.²⁹⁷ Silverman perceives that the king is the pivot; the keeping of the equilibrium is subjected to his character and function; he bodily ages but also

²⁸⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 130–131, 128–135.

²⁹⁰ Richard A. Parker quoted in Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 195.

²⁹¹ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 195.

²⁹² Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 195.

²⁹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–111, 323–328, 361–363.

²⁹⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 134.

²⁹⁵ David P. Silverman, "Divinity and Deities in Ancient Egypt," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 65.

²⁹⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 135.

²⁹⁷ Silverman, "Divinity and Deities," 64.

is seen immortal in ancient Egyptian perception.²⁹⁸ In this context it can be argued that in Dayton's *Resurrection* Sneferu offers the Captain the opportunity to bring purity to the "bloodline" by giving *divinely* seeded children leading to the official recognition of the Captain's godhead.²⁹⁹ The Captain makes the Archaeologist contemplate that she should receive her own "consolations" in her role as Isis – a mythic "partner" to him; she agrees, considering that the deities' roles include infusing humans with inspiration and motivation.³⁰⁰ Thus the Captain and the Archaeologist fit conveniently in the roles of Osiris and Isis, while the Captain becomes the essential administrative power along with Hetepheres.³⁰¹ Simultaneously, the technology is fused along with the individual to subscribe to the notion of the divine.³⁰² The Kinley "rescue ship" is interpreted by the Egyptians through Khufu as the "divine barque" meant for receiving and transporting all those who are considered appropriate,³⁰³ indicating that deification as a process involves both the individuals and their machines.

It can be argued in this context that the Kinley technology is essentially intertwined with the bodies of the users. As it has been seen, the "biofluids" are essential for the Kinleys, collected through "reedarms"³⁰⁴; these arms extend from their bodies, as seen in the remarkable moment of Pruitt healing Jean-Claude using her bio-suit.³⁰⁵ In this role, she resembles the goddess Hathor who is supposed to provide her "protective fluid" by means of her "Menat collar"³⁰⁶ held close to the face of her human beneficiary.³⁰⁷ The "*Kinley Earth*

²⁹⁸ Silverman, "Divinity and Deities," 67.

²⁹⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 186–191.

³⁰⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 186–191.

³⁰¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 188–191, 322–328.

³⁰² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 186–191.

³⁰³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 327.

³⁰⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–11.

³⁰⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 301–303.

³⁰⁶ Quoted in Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 23.

³⁰⁷ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 23; Mansell Collection, *Hathor and the Pharaoh Seti I*, in *Larousse Mythologie Générale*, ed. Félix Guirand, *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (1996; reprint, London: Chancellor Press; Reed Consumer/International Books Ltd, 1997), 23.

Survey[’s]” Second Year records prosperity as Dayton draws reference to the plantation “season” following Inundation.³⁰⁸ It is also seen how the Kinley “Lion,” is the Captain’s (the deified Osiris) son creates an ideal source for modern “farm” for the Egyptians to emulate,³⁰⁹ so the alien-human Lion is acknowledged for improving the agriculture practice in ancient Egypt. He is acknowledged for introducing the usage of canals “for irrigation” which earlier were meant only for “transport[ation]”; it is found that the canal irrigation saves the harvest even during the low “inundation.”³¹⁰ Frankfort notes that in the ancient Egyptian mindset, the fields getting exposed following the receding of the water level of the inundation indicates Osiris’s symbolic rediscovery by the Egyptians through recovered fields.³¹¹ Thus it can be argued that Dayton recontextualizes the Osiris-myth and the Osiris-agency aptly in the accounts of the Kinley agricultural revolution in Egypt which happens simultaneously with the rise in power of the Captain impersonating Osiris.³¹²

4.10 The “Rostau” in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*

In *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the extraterrestrial energy beings following the completion of the Pyramid leave the awaiting Sphinx behind and journey towards the “Rostau.”³¹³ This leaves the readers pondering about the mystic stellar associations made by the ancient Egyptians with this astral zone, the “Rostau.” The “Rostau” in Egyptology has been studied extensively in connection with the Sphinx, the leonine motif, and the gods Ra, Osiris, and Sokar. “Rostau” is a mysterious celestial space in the Egyptian mythology intrinsically also connected with the underworld “Duat” as Egyptologists note.

³⁰⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 128.

³⁰⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 362.

³¹⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 362–363.

³¹¹ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 191–192.

³¹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 87–130, 188–191, 361–363.

³¹³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17.

Egyptology has attempted the interpretation of “Rostau” from geographical and celestial perspectives. Citing H. Carter and A. H. Gardiner, as well as R. O. Faulkner, Peter Robinson communicates that “Rostau” connotes two interpretations: (a) the elevated architectonic machinery for the transportation of the sarcophagus, a “ramp”³¹⁴ and (b) a general term for the “necropolis”³¹⁵ referred to in Egyptology.³¹⁶ Egyptologically, as L. H. Lesko mentions, it has also been argued that the architectonic structure of the sliding path towards the tomb is held analogous with transit in the astral plane, constituted with the term “Rosetau.”³¹⁷ It may be noted here that in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the living Sphinx also appeared at the surface by climbing upward along the sliding “corridor” to the surface where the stone-structure of the Great Sphinx sits.³¹⁸ The Sphinx-entity is linked with the “Rostau” and similarly the Sphinx-temple prepares the exit in a sliding manner. Hancock and Bauval note that Sokar, as one of the manifested versions taken by Osiris, resides in “Rostau” which is referred to as the “Giza necropolis” thus establishing a connection with the terrestrial city Memphis.³¹⁹ According to James H. Breasted’s translation provided by Hancock and Bauval, Thutmose IV’s “Dream Stela” refers to Giza’s “Pyramid field” interpreted as “Rostau” and considers Giza to be in primal existence even during the “First Time”³²⁰ thereby referring to that prehistoric time.³²¹ It can be argued that Thornton notes

³¹⁴ Quoted in Peter Robinson, “‘As For Them Who Know Them, They Shall Find Their Paths’: Speculations on Ritual Landscapes in The ‘Book of The Two Ways,’” in *Mysterious Lands (Encounters with Ancient Egypt)*, eds. David O’Connor and Stephen Quirke (London: UCL Press, 2003), 148; Robinson, “‘As For Them Who Know Them,’” 148. See also H. Carter and A. H. Gardiner, “The Tomb of Ramesses IV and the Turin Plan of a Royal Tomb,” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 4 (1917), 137; R. O. Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1991), 146.

³¹⁵ Quoted in Robinson, “‘As For Them Who Know Them,’” 148; Robinson, “‘As For Them Who Know Them,’” 148. See also Carter and Gardiner, “The Tomb of Ramesses IV,” 137; Faulkner, *A Concise Dictionary*, 146.

³¹⁶ Robinson, “‘As For Them Who Know Them,’” 148.

³¹⁷ L. H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” 119. Lesko has given the spelling of “Rostau” as “Rosetau.”

³¹⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 240–247, 274–287, 294–299.

³¹⁹ Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 145.

³²⁰ James H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (London: Histories & Mysteries of Man Ltd., 1988), 2: 323, 2: 320–324, quoted in Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 145.

³²¹ Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 145.

this insight regarding that initiating phase in his novel: Cliff transits through the “Dream Stela” at the Sphinx’s bidding and has a glimpse of the pre-historic “savannah” full of wild life.³²²

A depiction of “Rostau” can be seen in the tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings, Egypt, showing “Am Tuat[’s]” (or “Amduat,” the Egyptian Underworld) “Fifth Division” in which the sun god touches the two wings and rests on a snake with three hoods on one end and a human head on the other.³²³ As John Bunke and Katen Pressler note, the Western Lion and the Eastern Lion present on the two sides of the oval in Egyptian images like this might stand for the constellations Leo and the Centaurus.³²⁴ This arrangement of the stars were supposed to have been seen in pre-dawn sky dated 21st September “10,390 BC.”³²⁵ Bunker and Pressler estimate that the “Sphinx Temple” was at a lesser distance from the Nile in “10,390 BC”³²⁶ and this time frame may correspond to the period of the wild landscape seen by Cliff in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.³²⁷ Piankoff notes that in Amduat’s (*Book of What Is in the Netherworld*) “Fifth Division” the “oval” houses the “pupa” enabling the larva-like emergence of the god Sokar, initiating the reanimating process following demise.³²⁸ This may also be observed in connection with the emergence of the Sphinx, since the monument Sphinx is the silent inanimate form adopted by the once live powerful aliens who visits Earth from outer space.³²⁹

Abbas notes that the “Duat” is dually placed: (i) one in connection with the funerary regions (“the tomb and the necropolis”) intrinsically connected with the retinue of the

³²² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 317, 316–321.

³²³ For corresponding image and discussion from the *The Book of Aker* see Bunker and Pressler, *The Book of Aker*, 6, 214.

³²⁴ Bunker and Pressler, *The Book of Aker*, 6, 214.

³²⁵ Bunker and Pressler, *The Book of Aker*, 6.

³²⁶ Bunker and Pressler, *The Book of Aker*, 287.

³²⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 317.

³²⁸ Piankoff, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI*, 1: 40, 1: 261–268.

³²⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17.

deceased, headed by Osiris, while (ii) the other placed in the diurnal firmament, witnessing the transit of Ra.³³⁰ Likewise, Cliff, going through the “Dream Stela” glimpses through his mind and body the terrestrial and celestial past and future, shown by the Sphinx.³³¹

Citing Edouard Naville, Hancock and Bauval note that “Rwty” as a “hieroglyphic sign” is represented by two lions: it can be placed “one above the other”; sometimes the ancient Egyptians place them “side by side.”³³² Selim Hassan cited by Hancock and Bauval has observed the importance of the paired existence of the Sphinxes in the shrines in connection with “Rwty” depicted as “the double-lion.”³³³ It can be argued that the lions have stellar and astral significances and in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* one of the alien entities gets embodied as the Great Sphinx.³³⁴ The Great Sphinx travels the galaxy later to delay the Galaxy Lord’s schemes.³³⁵ Even the alien “Lion” literally travels through space to settle on Earth in Egypt in *Resurrection*.³³⁶

The *Book of the Dead* of Yuya and Tuya in Egyptian Museum Cairo, shows the animals associated with “Duat,” the Underworld. “Duat” is celestial as well as subterranean according to Egyptian funerary beliefs. In this Papyrus, Falcon, Hippotamus and crocodile are shown; the recumbent Sphinx-like “double lion” “Rwty” are depicted horizontally,³³⁷ and it can be noted that three of these four species are embodied by the alien entities in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* who laid the foundation of the Pyramids and the Sphinx in Giza.³³⁸

³³⁰ Abbas, “The Tomb of Osiris,” 41.

³³¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 316–321.

³³² Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 155. See also Edouard Naville, “Le Sphinx III,” *Sphinx* XXI (1924), 12–13.

³³³ For information regarding the horizontal placement of the lions, see Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 156. See also Selim Hassan, *The Sphinx: Its History in the Light of Recent Excavations* (Cairo: Government Press, 1949), 129.

³³⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17.

³³⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 326–327, 338–340.

³³⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 43–54, 188–191, 361–363.

³³⁷ For “Rwty,” see Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 155.

³³⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17.

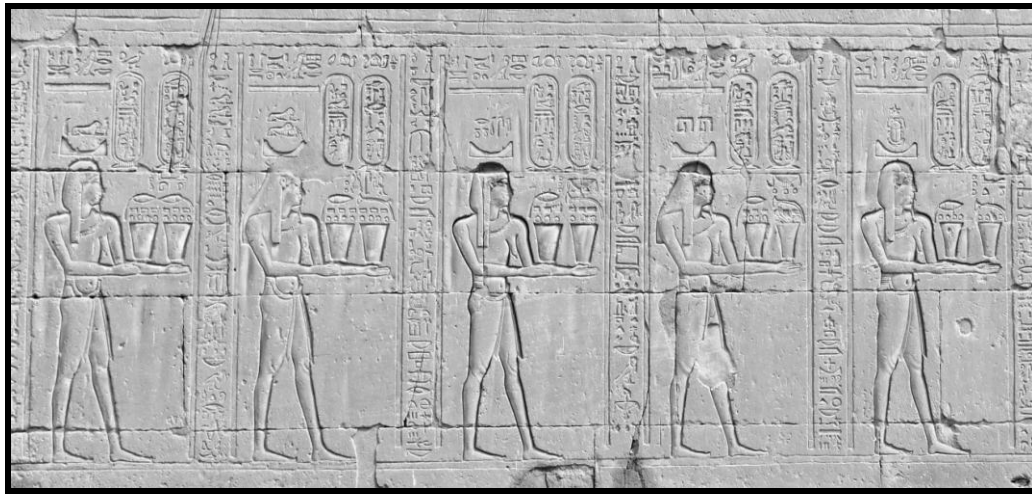


Figure 4.4 Representation of the “Double Lion” Motif

In the image above, we see procession of offering carriers from the Edfu Temple dedicated to Horus. Each figure has the “horizon” glyph above his head, above which glyphs and species appear.³³⁹ From the left, the first figure has a single recumbent lion above his head, while the second figure from the left bears two, indicating another possible example of “Rwty” in a vertical manner, one above the other; this observation follows the account of “Rwty” by Hancock and Bauval.³⁴⁰ The figure in the right corner bears the scarab connecting with the “rising sun,” Khepri³⁴¹ over which there is a star connecting Osiris and “Duat.”³⁴² In Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the scarab is the key with which the authenticity of the statue of Mut is validated by Mustapha.³⁴³ The scarab also occurs as a motif, as a sign of beckoning/manifestation in a temple-space materialized following the invocation of the deities.³⁴⁴ Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

³³⁹ For the “horizon” glyph, see Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 256–257.

³⁴⁰ The observation follows the account of “Rwty” by Hancock and Bauval; see Hancock and Bauval, *The Message of the Sphinx*, 155.

³⁴¹ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 13.

³⁴² For the stellar connection with “Duat”-glyph, see Mark Lehner, *The Complete Pyramids* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1997), 29, cited by Bauval, “The Place Where the Gods Are Born,” 213; Bauval, “The Place Where the Gods Are Born,” 213.

³⁴³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 73–74.

³⁴⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 188–194.

4.11 The Sphinx and the God Amun-Ra

In *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the Sphinx and the Great Pyramid constitute mysteries even to the alien “Consilium.”³⁴⁵ It is also an unexplained existence within Egypt herself. However, the leonine symbolisms and representations reminiscent of the Sphinx and leonine divinities are present copiously in Egyptian art and mythology. Goelet Jr. notes that the lions “Shu and Tefnut” appear representing the scribe Ani’s temporal and spatial transition between yesterday (the god Osiris; the direction West) and tomorrow (the god Ra; the direction East) in Ani’s *Book of the Dead*.³⁴⁶

Leonine style was used in ancient Egyptian furniture. In *Resurrection*, the Captain impersonating the god Osiris notes many colored furniture in Queen’s chamber, including the Queen’s couch with leonine paws.³⁴⁷ In argument, it can be noted drawing Naydler’s information that the leonine significance is connected with the furniture for Osiris, as we observe in the Egyptian art from (i) Philae temple of Isis, (ii) the Abydos temple of Seti I for Osiris, and (iii) the Dendera Temple for Hathor; it can be seen that the regenerative stages following rejuvenation, and preceded by decomposition and death “of Osiris” occur upon the “lion bed” depicted in the reliefs in these temples.³⁴⁸ Lion is also a connection between the opposites. Piankoff notes that in the *Book of the Caverns* depicted in the tomb of Ramesses VI, a deified lion with the head of a hawk is seen represented by a male human head originating in the hind section; Seth’s and Horus’s heads are attached to a single body which stands upon this composite animal.³⁴⁹ This becomes relevant in Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, as bringing together of contrasts, when Wanre impersonifying Horus

³⁴⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 141–152, 8–348.

³⁴⁶ Goelet Jr., “A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature,” 159.

³⁴⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 133.

³⁴⁸ Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom*, 76.

³⁴⁹ Piankoff, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI*, 1: 197, Fig. 5.8. The falcon-lion connection has been earlier noted in the iconography of the god Nefertum.

battles Benben embodying Seth in front of the Great Sphinx.³⁵⁰ Thus even the aliens have to represent themselves in Egypt as deities for the possession of the Sphinx just as the alien-human Kinleys, the Captain and the Archaeologist, have to impersonate Osiris and Isis respectively.³⁵¹

The English translation of “*shesep-ank*,” meaning “living image”³⁵² as noted by Malkowski,³⁵³ was used by the ancient Egyptians in reference to the Sphinx; it is applicable in case of the dormant stony identity/appearance of the Sphinx awaiting revival in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.³⁵⁴ Citing these information it can be argued that in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the Sphinx is seen creating the deities and providing them tangible iconographies for public comprehension; he turns Amun-Ra into the mightiest of the deities, and Amun-Ra in turn guides Mustapha, the great Egyptian “Mage.”³⁵⁵



Figure 4.5 Sphinx-figure

³⁵⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 275–289.

³⁵¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 128–407.

³⁵² Quoted in Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 41.

³⁵³ Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, 41.

³⁵⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–294.

³⁵⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

In the image above, the relief from the Temple of Seti I, Abydos, showing Seti I in a Sphinx-form, before the goddess Sekhmet, thus both the king and the goddess are linked through the leonine aspect. Sekhmet's throne is placed upon the "Neb" sign-linked basket,³⁵⁶ positioned over the glyph for horizon.³⁵⁷ As per the translation of the "Dream Stela" by J. H. Breasted, the place "Khas," which is associated with the "First time" (elaborated by R. Bauval as the "zep tepi") was also linked with Sekhmet and Mut.³⁵⁸ The connection with Mut is important because Mut's statue in "Karnak in Exile" responds foreshadowing the awakening of the Sphinx; she also guides Mustapha, Cliff, and Maria with insight regarding genetic information.³⁵⁹ "Rostau," according to the Egyptians is also the possible place associated with the alien civilization since the alien-identities move to that "direction" leaving the Sphinx on Earth.³⁶⁰ Thus *Sphinx: The Second Coming* weaves a unique recontextualization regarding the astral importance associated with the Egyptian deities and the importance of the Lion in connection with the cosmos.³⁶¹ The leonine connection with the Sphinx is also established from the point noted by Pinch that the "Duat[']s" portals are under the vigilance of the god Aker, represented as the "double sphinx" to whom the "two horizons" are also entrusted.³⁶² Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

³⁵⁶ For "Neb"-sign, see Moustafa Gadalla, *Pyramid Handbook*, 2nd rev. ed. (Greensboro, N.C.: Tehuti Research Foundation, 2000), 64; William Osburn, *The Monumental History of Egypt, as Recorded on The Ruins of Her Temples, Palaces, and Tombs* (London: Trubner and Co., 1854), 1:81. See also Anirban Ray, "Ancient Egyptian 'Ished' Tree and Satyajit Ray's 'Swarnaparni' Plant: Assessments," in *Rejuvenating Environmental Studies: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, eds. Chitra V. S. and Balamurali R. S. (Delhi: Upanayan Publications, 2021), 162–163.

³⁵⁷ For horizon-glyph, see Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 256–257.

³⁵⁸ James Henry Breasted, trans., "Appendix 5: Text of the Dream Stela," in *Origins of the Sphinx: Celestial Guardian of Pre-Pharaonic Civilization*, by Robert M. Schoch and Robert Bauval (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2017), 335.

³⁵⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 71–74, 208–210, 218–226, 240–247, 274–277, 294–296.

³⁶⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 16–17, 338–341.

³⁶¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

³⁶² Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 206.



Figure 4.6 Atum, Amun, and Seti I

In the relief in the image above we see Seti I between Atum (behind him), and Amun (before him) from the Temple of Seti I, Abydos. As per Heliopolitan accounts noted by Pinch, “completeness” is signified by Atum from whom every living being originates³⁶³ while Amun, as per Hermopolitan records, is the concealed source of “millions of forms” of living beings.³⁶⁴ It can be argued, keeping Pinch’s Egyptological information in mind that Thornton in *Sphinx: The Second Coming* has “Egyptomaniacally” accounted the merging of the gods Amun and Atum³⁶⁵; Amun-Ra forms the head of the group of divinities in the underground temple complex comprising the “Karnak in exile” in which the ancient Egyptian priesthood secretly remain functional, thereby incorporating the entire cosmic span embodied in the combined form of Amun-Ra.³⁶⁶ It can also be argued that the image above is correct in terms of chronological developments in the cults of Amun and Atum; thus Seti I’s hand is held by Atum, while the King faces the manifested Amun, a god who gathered

³⁶³ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 111.

³⁶⁴ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 100–101.

³⁶⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 177–191.

³⁶⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 67–74.

importance later in Egyptian religious history, especially in the New Kingdom.³⁶⁷ However, both the gods are treated equally as the signs of life and stability are attached to the “was” (meaning “divinity”³⁶⁸) scepters held by both, flanking on both sides of the King. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

Figures 4.7.1 and 4.7.2 Seti I and Ramesses II before Amun-Ra and Mut

The act of providing birds to Amun-Ra and Mut by Seti I and his son Ramesses II is shown in a sequential order on the walls of the Temple of Seti I, Abydos, Egypt. Photos taken on April 7, 2019.



Above, the first two stages are seen showing the collection of birds in the image in above left and the conveyance of the same in the image in above right. The birds can be seen flocking in the papyrus-filled marsh, symbolic of the “primeval marsh” that is full of life-potential but is also chaotic.³⁶⁹ However, the Egyptian artists have tried to contain the chaos (“*Isfet*”) within the geometry of order (“*Maat*”): the hexagonal-shaped net catches within it the fowl from the oval-shaped water-body, reminiscent of the protective cartouche, beneath it. The net, tied to a rope, is then drawn by the deities and the pharaoh, indicating partnership between the celestial and the terrestrial.

³⁶⁷ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 29–32.

³⁶⁸ Aude Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology* (1999; reprint, New York: Todtri Book Publishers, 2002), 78–79, 118–119.

³⁶⁹ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 165.



The third and the final stage constitute the presentation of the wild fowl to the enthroned Amun-Ra, and Mut, standing behind him. The Divine Couple are present within a shrine, shown in the above right. Pinch perceives that ancient Egyptian mythology connects Amun-Mut with aquatic symbolism: goose is the “primeval” bird within which Amun embodied himself as the “Great Shrieker” uttering the “first sound” as accounted by Hermopolis’s priesthood.³⁷⁰ The Nile’s flood is attributed to the perspiration of Mut.³⁷¹ Applying these beliefs we may argue that the relevance of the bird-hunt involves the channelizing of wild Nature in a tamed way, as offerings to the Divine Couple. Thus on the above left we see Seti I holding the blue war-crown while making the offering. The crown’s relevance can be argued in reference to *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, in which Mustapha is drenched and sees the “Blue War Crown” upon his head.³⁷² Thus Mustapha, like Seti I mediates between Amun-Ra and Earth for the understanding of cosmic crises and their prevention. Also, Cliff is given the vision by the Sphinx of whom Amun-Ra is a cerebral manifestation and extension³⁷³ of the wild pre-civilization in the Nile valley, indicating the shift from the rough to the milder nature convenient for the growth of civilization.³⁷⁴

³⁷⁰ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 101.

³⁷¹ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 168.

³⁷² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 114–115. Note the aquatic connection.

³⁷³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 266–268.

³⁷⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 31–34, 290–291, 294–296, 301–338.

Cliff inside the Sphinx saw the pyramids and the “savanna” before the initiation of the Pharaonic Egyptian history.³⁷⁵ This enigmatic moment may be studied in connection with the geophysical approaches in the study of the Great Sphinx which form material for “alternative,” “radical” Egyptology. Bauval notes that around 10th Millennium BC, while the humans in the Sahara were blessed with fauna and monsoon precipitation and had a comfortable existence, the Nile valley resembled inhospitable “swampland” accumulated with raging flood of the Nile River.³⁷⁶ Bauval explains that the situation altered as the Sahara gradually lost precipitation; the Nile flooding came under control rendering the valley convenient space for irrigation, prompting people to leave Sahara and to travel to Egypt.³⁷⁷ In argument, Thornton’s use of similar geophysical insight in his novel can be referred to.³⁷⁸ The four animal-embodying alien entities arrive before the Pharaonic civilization, experiencing an untamed Nile river; they foresee the migration of the western people living in the Sahara to the Nile valley to eventually unite under the reign of the Scorpion King who himself received the guiding vision for unification from the Sphinx.³⁷⁹ Thornton’s novel is thus a unique blend of “Egyptomaniac” speculation and the “alternative Egyptological” studies regarding climate change and the birth of the ancient Egyptian civilization.

The Sphinx and his connection with Amun-Ra involve the initiation into the mystic. The “Hidden One” is the name given for the Demiurge Amun, who is “mysterious” as per the *Pyramid Texts*.³⁸⁰ Thus it becomes fitting that Amun-Ra foreshadows the awakening of the Great Sphinx; he is also an agent of the enigmatic alien.³⁸¹ Countless living forms were

³⁷⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 317.

³⁷⁶ Bauval, “Horus Who Dwells in the Horizon,” 200.

³⁷⁷ Bauval, “Horus Who Dwells in the Horizon,” 200.

³⁷⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17, 58–61, 295, 291, 317.

³⁷⁹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–34.

³⁸⁰ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 100.

³⁸¹ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

supposed to be issued from Amun.³⁸² Schwaller de Lubicz perceives that water is associated with Amun; water's "metabolism" is "regulat[ed]" in the "posterior lobe" of pituitary gland linked with muscle work and "cardiovascular hypertensive action."³⁸³ Thus water places a crucial role in regulating bodily mechanism that developed over evolution. It can be argued that the preparation produced by Mustapha, Maria, and Cliff following Amun's instruction and Mut's advice is also poured in the semi-aquatic, energetic mass in the giant basin initiating the formation of the Sphinx.³⁸⁴ The mass seems to show the montage of evolution of species, the memories of which remain embedded in the species' genes.³⁸⁵ Schwaller de Lubicz notes that "Amunian" nature is associated with the amniotic fluid; the "cerebrospinal fluid" nourishes the encephalon with which the developing foetus is linked.³⁸⁶ Thus in conjunction with Thornton's account, Amun-Ra embodies within himself the agency of the Sphinx; he conveys the Sphinx's message to the humans on Earth by advising for preparations matching human DNA, to be added with the non-Earthly DNA to materialize the Sphinx in the living form.³⁸⁷ The ritual "basin" also resembles the mystic fluid containing the potential for forming life.³⁸⁸

4.12 Conclusion

Science fiction draws much from objects which retain a mystic aura. For example, C. K. Robertson notes that mysticism is a key element in Stephen Lee's fictional universe in which Spiderman, whose powers could be interpreted in biochemical levels, coexists with Dr. Strange to whom magical interface is provided since the otherworldly opponents like

³⁸² Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 101.

³⁸³ Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man*, 2: 664.

³⁸⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 208–247, 266–268.

³⁸⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 208–247, 266–268.

³⁸⁶ Schwaller de Lubicz, *The Temple of Man*, 1: 457.

³⁸⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 230–275.

³⁸⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 246–247, 266–275.

Dormammu must be dealt with.³⁸⁹ Jordan Raphael and Tom Spurgeon cited by Robertson note that this coexistence imply that pagan religion is revisited in Lee's fiction³⁹⁰ and even a highly advanced civilization does not forget its spiritual roots. In Dayton's *Resurrection*, the Kinleys venerate the "Mother" figure,³⁹¹ and the Luciens practice spiritual exercise involving psychic powers and also have reverence for Omani, the god imparting Knowledge.³⁹² It can be argued that the empowered yet misguided characters learn to value life and survival; thus the human who is also Lucien learns to share the knowledge of the "Eschless Funnel" and decides to assist Pruitt and the Team.³⁹³

The two novels, *Resurrection* and *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, compared may thus lead to the following observations. First, analyses drawn between ancient Egyptian mythology and science may help us gauge the development of scientific paradigms. Second, literary imaginations may provide the readers with empirical archaeological studies of the development of civilization and the birth of religions in an intertwined context. Thirdly, even if alien contact cannot be certified, the speculations regarding possibilities in fiction (i) prepare ourselves for future galactic travel and (ii) nurture belief in the existence of other places of refuge. Dayton's *Resurrection* thus accounts ancient Egypt as the accepted home for the stranded alien Kinleys, which change the progress of the Egyptian culture massively in the fictional premise.³⁹⁴ Thornton in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, providing his admiration for the Egyptian priesthood as the pursuers of chemical as well as botanical knowledge, observes that the Old Kingdom was a heightened period, and the following three

³⁸⁹ C. K. Robertson, "Sorcerers and Supermen: Old Mythologies in New Guises," in *Religion and Science Fiction*, ed. James F. McGrath (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2011), 51.

³⁹⁰ Jordan Raphael and Tom Spurgeon, *Stan Lee and the Rise and Fall of the American Comic Book* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2003), 104, cited in Robertson, "Sorcerers and Supermen," 51; Robertson, "Sorcerers and Supermen," 51.

³⁹¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 69, 95.

³⁹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 36–37, 169, 429–430.

³⁹³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 391–334, 409–417.

³⁹⁴ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–4.

millennia in Egyptian history could not revert to its glory.³⁹⁵ Jack, who pursues “radical” Egyptology,³⁹⁶ believes that a person’s life changes after visiting Giza³⁹⁷ indicating the psychic impact Egypt holds for any visitor. Similarly Eddie in *Resurrection* also mentions that the “Fourth Dynasty” appeals to him because of the mysteriously advanced development in the sciences and the arts having occurred in that period, giving his aspirations a direction and purpose; in fact it is in Egypt he meets the alien Pruitt who broadens his vision.³⁹⁸

Despite advancement in cellular biology and genetics in the Twenty-first Century the coding capacity of the genes still appear mystifying as it rivals the artificial micro-preserved that have thrived for. Simultaneously we also feel troubled by the ultimate future of our existence since our sun, as Clark R. Chapman and David Morrison note, will complete the stellar life-cycle, and in the end swell to consume the terrestrial planets including the Earth.³⁹⁹ The need for relocation thus has become one of the most explored themes in science fiction, and it brings with it degrees of apostasy and questioning the presence and role of a Benevolent Deity. The creation of religion gets entangled with “misinterpretation” often from ignorance and partial data of highly advanced scientific/technological gifts *offered* to us, creating elaborate mythologies for pursuit by the common mass while the esoteric ones in their midst nurture the scientific cores secret.⁴⁰⁰ However, the elaborate iconographies which survived in posterity provide directions for gradual unlocking of lost science, creating a field to which scholars like Schwaller De Lubicz, Judy Kay King, Robert M. Schoch, and Robert Bauval have contributed. Insights equivalent to the works of these

³⁹⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 55.

³⁹⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 316.

³⁹⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 57–59.

³⁹⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 240, 38–422.

³⁹⁹ Clark R. Chapman and David Morrison, “Death of the Sun,” in *Cosmic Catastrophes*, by Clark R. Chapman and David Morrison (New York: Plenum Press, 1989), 243–256.

⁴⁰⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

scholars have also been embraced by fictional authors like Dayton and Thornton, who added, to their informational nexus, the voices of humanity and recounted the conflicts faced by the humanoid aliens, yielding the flavour of science fiction.

It can be argued that ancient and modern Egypt, thus again rises to the forefront to provide answers to not only the Earthly humans, but also to the “humans” from outer space. In *Resurrection* the Kinleys feel reverence for the ancient technology of data-storage in crystals, the mechanism of which defies current comprehension⁴⁰¹ which also necessitate the “return” to the Egypt. Their “return” to Egypt to rediscover their own technology involves the survival of their race and civilization risking extinction in a planetary/species war with the Luciens.⁴⁰² Even the Earthly non-human species were worshipped as “*neters*” and the forms “taken” by the alien energy-beings indicate that our Earth *disturbs* the cosmos but also equally holds ground for receiving alien cooperation and assistance.⁴⁰³ The conduit for these extraterrestrial exchanges is of course Egypt. Thus in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the Sphinx, as the one of the figures associated with cosmic vigilance; his revealed role in the novel considerably reflects the “hidden” nature of the leonine god Aker in Egyptian texts and icons⁴⁰⁴ and he “resurrects” like the “resurrection” of Osiris.⁴⁰⁵ His living animated state from beneath the stony structure to guide Mustapha and Cliff who are ancient Egyptians transmigrated, having “returned” to Egypt in different bodies to engage in the prevention of “*Isfet*” represented in the “Black Hole in the Galactic Center.”⁴⁰⁶ It can be argued that the two novels, though by different authors, can be appreciated as thematically connected in terms of this “return.” In *Resurrection* the Kinley Pruitt prepares for the survival of her race by rediscovering Kinley technology. In *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the

⁴⁰¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 23–24.

⁴⁰² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 12–26.

⁴⁰³ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁴⁰⁴ Bunker and Pressler, *The Book of Aker*, 5–7, 25.

⁴⁰⁵ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

⁴⁰⁶ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

Sphinx awakens to initiate awareness regarding the survival of the entire Galaxy and Egypt and the manifestation of the Sphinx-being enables the “passing of knowledge” to the deserving, reincarnated ancient Egyptians, Unas and Qaa, even if they are embodied in the bodies pursuing different faiths (Mustapha [Islam] and Cliff [Christian]).⁴⁰⁷ A question of worth is however involved. Mustapha is the undercover “Great Mage” carrying ancient Egyptian legacy in the subterranean shrine, while at the surface he serves as a very important authority figure in the Department of Antiquities; his archaeological authority thus is an extension of his knowledge as the Egyptian “High Priest” serving Amun-Ra.⁴⁰⁸

It can also be argued that Dayton’s *Resurrection* and Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* are broader in scope than just fictional novels. These texts creatively fuse elements of funerary culture with the involvement of laboratory application in archaeological knowledge. The scientists and the Egyptologists must work together, just as the students of literature make use of psychoanalytic sciences for analyses of fictional characters’ mindsets. The novels help us extend our search for the purpose behind the existing Egyptian architecture thereby asking non-specialist readers to also sustain interest in the fields of architecture and engineering. The novels also encourage us to bear a balance between mysticism and rationality. Dayton’s *Resurrection* refers not only to the harmony of nature and human body but also addresses the pitfalls of misinterpreted applications of science.⁴⁰⁹ Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* warns us of our pride in individual faiths leading to communal conflicts, while we remain oblivious of galactic crisis threatening our overall planetary existence, including the lives of the aliens belonging to so many solar systems.⁴¹⁰ Above all, in the midst of danger, the joy of life remains as the most significant experience.

⁴⁰⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 18–30, 303–304, 8–348.

⁴⁰⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 53–56, 62–74.

⁴⁰⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

⁴¹⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

In Dayton's *Resurrection* the human Lucien Adaiz learns the importance of survival and need for the cessation of unnecessary war.⁴¹¹ In Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the aliens of the "Consilium" are reminded of the united struggle for life irrespective of planetary difference in the "Multiverse."⁴¹² Egypt with her ancient depictions of joyous living reflected in the Pharaonic tomb arts, and in her present liveliness amidst the throngs of visiting tourists and scholars, expect the characters' and their readers' repeated returns to her for the understanding of the gifts of life and living.

⁴¹¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 409–417.

⁴¹² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 39–42, 345–346, 8–348.

Chapter Five

Rick Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* (2010-2012):

Humans, "Maat," and the Ancient Egyptian Deities

5.1 Introduction

In the ancient Egyptian worldview, as the Egyptologists studying the texts and the spells have noted, the power of words, both spoken and written, has tremendous impact on the Creation of the physical and material universe. Jan Assmann notes that in ancient Egyptian thought the heart as well as the tongue is attributed the highest importance as instruments of "power" in connection with every divine and earthly species¹ thereby stressing the source of the abstract essences. The ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs join the abstract and the concrete. Assmann perceives that the material structure and the shaping ideas are perceived by the heart, which are visually represented with hieroglyphs, and the utterances by the tongue vocalize the "concepts."² Assmann writes that the hieroglyphic script is "invent[ed]" by the god Ptah simultaneously with the "Ideas of things" formed in his heart, constituting an "interior writing" which is expressed through utterance.³ This Egyptological insight can be found in Zia Rashid's explanation to Sadie Kane and Carter Kane, the Kane sibling-protagonists in Rick Riordan's *The Red Pyramid* in the trilogy *The Kane Chronicles*.⁴ In the "House of Life" they proceed by drinking water carrying the essence of the god Thoth's statue and learn to channelize power through hieroglyphs materializing in the air.⁵ There is indeed cooperation between the ancient Egyptian deities and humans in the communication of the creative agency through words.

¹ Jan Assman, "Creation Through Hieroglyphs: The Cosmic Grammatology of Ancient Egypt," in *The Poetics of Grammar and the Metaphysics of Sound and Sign (Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 6)*, eds. S. La Porta and D. Shulman (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007), 25.

² Assmann, "Creation through Hieroglyphs," 25–27.

³ Assmann, "Creation through Hieroglyphs," 25–28.

⁴ Rick Riordan, *The Red Pyramid* (2010; London: Puffin Books, 2011), 187–196.

⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 184–198.

Equally important to the usage of the words and magic is the notion of the Duality of the user and his/her space. The Egyptologists have explained that Duality is an important ancient Egyptian concept by virtue of which the ancient Egyptians were able to think of important concepts as consisting of two identities simultaneously. One of the most important projections of ancient Egyptian duality is the visualization of the nation as “Two Lands,” the “Upper Egypt” and the “Lower Egypt,” thought to be in union under the Pharaoh’s administration.⁶ The ancient Egyptians developed symbolic imagery, spells, and formula to manifest this perception of the two zones in their united nation. Duality would include divine performance and the human expressions as well: Ramona Louise Wheeler and Diana Janeen Pierce note that the ancient Egyptians can be cited for the conceptual usage of “the dual voice”⁷ in which heteronormative modes of the “male or [the] female” are used, and the fascinating aspect of such expression is that, despite possessing a “united” nature, the voice maintains the uniqueness of each of the individuals.⁸ Similarly we see that the entire Trilogy by Riordan is communicated in the form of voice recordings by Sadie and Carter, who speak individually in turns in the chapters.⁹ Their spoken version generates a new adaptation of the ancient Egyptian myths; it resembles a creative recontextualization of the ancient Egyptian concepts regarding the faculties of the sound and the speech as noted by Assmann, through which the world materialized, according to the ancient Egyptian mythology.¹⁰

Riordan aptly interprets the ancient Egyptian concept of “Maat” as the force that binds all the registers of material and organic existences. Vincent Ariele Tobin notes that in

⁶ Aude Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology* (1999; reprint, New York: Todtri Book Publishers, 2002), 66.

⁷ Quoted in Ramona Louise Wheeler and Diana Janeen Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian: A Modern Guide to The Religion and Philosophy of Ancient Egypt: Expanded Edition Including The Egyptian Horoscope*, 3rd. ed. (1996; USA: Wildside Press, 2005), 17.

⁸ Wheeler and Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian*, 17

⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Rick Riordan, *The Throne of Fire* (2011; London: Puffin Books, 2012), 1–446; Rick Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow* (2012; London: Puffin Books, 2013), 1–401. In the footnotes referring to more than one novel by Riordan, or all the three novels in the trilogy, I have arranged the sources chronologically. The bibliography lists the sources alphabetically.

¹⁰ Assmann, “Creation through Hieroglyphs,” 25–28.

ancient Egyptian thought, from “individual” sense of decorum to greater community and court-affairs, everything comes under “Maat[’s]” purview.¹¹ Tobin notes that the maintenance of “Maat” is the crucial responsibility of each pharaoh because he was the epitome of the optimistic hope for ancient Egyptian world/consciousness.¹² This responsibility, in the fictional context, falls upon Carter and Sadie assists him full-fledgedly; Riordan’s plot fictionally attests the authenticity of the Kane Family whose ancestry is traced to the Pharaonic dynasties of Menes and Ramesses.¹³ Myths are contingent with ancient Egyptian minds and the physical state of the world is attributed to the deities’ function.¹⁴ The “Maat” was maintained by the ancient Egyptians through an intricate understanding of their pantheon. The individual deities’ emotions and thought-processes needed to be understood and utilized, but in a controlled state; throughout Riordan’s Trilogy, for example, Sadie learns this and is able to maintain equilibrium between Isis, whom she “hosts,” and her own agenda.¹⁵ Jan Assmann writes that while the singular presence of the Creator god and the conceptual framework are important in Egyptian beliefs, the divine “protagonists” are several, each pursuing specific functional activities in mythology¹⁶ which appears like an elaborate drama. Thus the ancient Egyptian deities could be effectively reimagined as fictional characters in Riordan’s universe. For example, according to Wheeler and Pierce, Osiris-Isis are the quintessential couple; the universally appealing husband-wife “bond[ing]” could be perceived in Isis’s attempt to resurrect Osiris.¹⁷ Wheeler and Pierce perceive that Isis does so by inventing funerary rituals and rules which are later observed in

¹¹ Vincent Arieh Tobin, “Mytho-Theology in Ancient Egypt,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 25 (1988): 171, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40000877>.

¹² Tobin, “Mytho-Theology in Ancient Egypt,” 171–172.

¹³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid* 73, 97–98, 159, 195, 1–514; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–401.

¹⁴ Tobin, “Mytho-Theology in Ancient Egypt,” 172.

¹⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁶ Jan Assmann, “Magic and Theology in Ancient Egypt,” in *Envisioning Magic: A Princeton Seminar & Symposium (Studies in the History of Religions 75)*, eds. Peter Schäfer and Hans G. Kippenberg (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 5, 1–18.

¹⁷ Wheeler and Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian*, 15.

all the strata of the ancient Egyptian society in management of the dead and in the hopes regarding the blessed existence in the Afterlife.¹⁸ The Divine Couple, along with their son Horus thus retell their mythical accounts in fantasy fiction. Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* can thus be read as the retelling of the Osiris-Isis myth in a globalized setting, referring to the ancient Egyptian hopes for the Afterlife.



Figure 5.1 Seti I Gives “Maat”-figurine

J. Viaud informs that “Maat,” the central idea of universal harmony, truth, and justice in ancient Egyptian religion and symbolism is also the name for the goddess Maat who represents these virtues and qualities.¹⁹ She was fathered by Ra and her head carries an ostrich feather.²⁰ She could be shown as seated or standing or as a small figurine placed upon the “*neb*” (gold) sign²¹ which we see in the photo above, in the hand of Seti I, in the relief from the Temple of Seti I in Abydos. This gesturing of giving to the deities or holding

¹⁸ Wheeler and Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian*, 15.

¹⁹ J. Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” in *Larousse Mythologie Générale*, ed. Félix Guirand, *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (1996; reprint, London: Chancellor Press; Reed Consumer/International Books Ltd., 1997), 41–43.

²⁰ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 41–43.

²¹ Moustafa Gadalla, *Pyramid Handbook*, 2nd rev. ed. (Greensboro, N.C.: Tehuti Research Foundation, 2000), 64. See also Anirban Ray, “Ancient Egyptian ‘Ished’ Tree and Satyajit Ray’s ‘Swarnaparni’ Plant: Assessments,” in *Rejuvenating Environmental Studies: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, eds. Chitra V. S. and Balamurali R. S. (Delhi: Upanayan Publications, 2021), 162.

before the deities the figurine of Maat is a recurring scene in the veneration-themed images in ancient Egyptian art. By including the Maat-“figurine” amongst offerings the pharaohs communicated abundance by “Maat”; the concept of “Maat” is also perceived as sustenance for the deities.²² Hence when Sadie asks for the energy of “Maat” by hieroglyphs she channels cosmic abstract force to affect concrete/material registers/substances.²³ In this image Seti I can be seen offering Maat/“Maat” to Osiris, Isis and Horus.²⁴ We may argue here that the Kane siblings in Riordan’s Trilogy share Ramesses’s genes through their mother Ruby’s family²⁵ and indeed Sadie and Carter maintain “Maat” by “hosting” Isis and Horus respectively.²⁶ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

Speech thus remains supreme in the ancient Egyptian perception and Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* re-establishes the powers of narrated and spoken mythical events following ancient Egyptian beliefs. Jeremy Naydler informs us that “Heka,” the personification of magic, is given personhood as per ancient Egyptian practice and ancient Egyptian magician was believed to be capable of pursuing supernatural feat following his/her bond “with heka.”²⁷ Maulana Karenga notes that according to the ancient Egyptian *Book of Coming Forth by Day*, by pronouncing the name of a personage, the speaker is given access to an enormous potential; for example, it was customary for the person, before journeying to the afterlife, to use the names of different deities to imitate the deities’ abilities, such as (i) Ra’s/Ptah’s building powers, (ii) Horus’s avenging temperament and (iii) Thoth’s

²² Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 58.

²³ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 26–31.

²⁴ Rosalie David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1981), 28–31.

²⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 195. Note that Ramesses II was Seti I’s son.

²⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁷ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1996), 124.

intellectual caliber.²⁸ It can be argued thus that “voiceovers” by Sadie and Carter involve creative magic; their narrative is an establishment of “Maat” through speech, recollecting actions from memories.²⁹ Assmann perceives that the “[v]erbal” praxis and spoken procedure are attributed as the sources behind the existence of the “pantheon”; the priest pursues the divine faculties by proper invocation of the “Divine Names,” thus a “linguistic” order essentially holds the ancient Egyptian pantheon together.³⁰ The ancient Egyptian magician is a gifted linguist, and the White “Egyptomania” involves the recontextualization of the ancient Egyptian spells.

5.2 Brief Overview of Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*

The first novel, Riordan’s *The Red Pyramid*, introduces the young-adult readers to the mythic, cosmic image-potential of the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, the expectations and the challenges faced by the magic-initiate-protagonists in the “House of Life.”³¹ The siblings possess tremendous cerebral abilities due to the “Blood of Pharaohs” inherited from their father Julius who had knowledge regarding material artifacts, and their mother Ruby who was a gifted scientist with magical knowledge.³² The ancestry of the siblings, through the respective Kane (Julius) and Faust (Ruby) families, go back to the Pharaonic times.³³ The four Kane family members embody divine attributes, the essence and abilities of the ancient Egyptian deities, a process Riordan calls “hosting,” and face the destructive principle embodied by Set, his powers being enhanced by the red color and the geometric precision of his “Red pyramid” through which he seeks to pursue his world-dominion.³⁴

²⁸ Maulana Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal in Ancient Egypt: A Study in Classical African Ethics* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 191.

²⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

³⁰ Assman, “Creation through Hieroglyphs,” 24, 17–34.

³¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

³² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 195, 221, 472, 1–514.

³³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 158–191.

³⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

Sadie assisted by Isis forestalls Set's powers by pronouncing his "secret name," "Evil Day."³⁵ Sadie also remarkably figures out battle tactics by factoring in magical/religious powers associated with architectonic spaces.³⁶ In this context Riordan superbly associates American monuments with ancient Egyptian concept of "Maat": Sadie teleports Set's "Red pyramid" to Washington D.C. because she tries to bring the conflict with Set in the vicinity of the "Maat" generating "Washington Monument," the Obelisk.³⁷ Geraldine Pinch notes that mythologically the creation must summon up the pyramid-figure because "*benben*," which architectonically represents the apex of the obelisk, was formed upon Nun from which the cosmos began.³⁸ Sadie likewise charges the "Washington Monument" with glyphs and changes it to ancient Egyptian³⁹ thereby using the "Maat"-oriented Obelisk to bring Set under control.⁴⁰

The ancient Egyptian Pyramid is a source of funerary ambience and an interpretative agent of solar essence. Giulio Magli notes that for the Pharaoh Khufu, his absorption in the divine realm of his predecessors was instrumented through the pyramid-"icon."⁴¹ Following Jan Asmann, Magli elaborates that the "mound of creation" according to the ancient Egyptian mythology could have been the model for the pyramids.⁴² If contextualized in Riordan's *The Red Pyramid*, this insight means that Set wishes to repeat the "Act of Creation," but a chaotic inversion of it.⁴³ The rise of Set empowered by the "Red Pyramid" can be contextualized with the Egyptologically studied connection between the Pyramid-project and the Pharaoh Sneferu. Magli interprets that the "Red Pyramid" commissioned by

³⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 458–485.

³⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 458–485.

³⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 242, 238–239, 476–485.

³⁸ Geraldine Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 180–181.

³⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 478.

⁴⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 458–485.

⁴¹ Giulio Magli, *Architecture, Astronomy and Sacred Landscape in Ancient Egypt* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 70.

⁴² Magli, *Architecture, Astronomy and Sacred Landscape*, 69.

⁴³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

Snefru was given a name meaning “*Snefru is rising*,”⁴⁴ which thereby links the sun’s birth with the pharaoh’s persona.⁴⁵ The color red amplifies this rising. Hermann Kees cited by John Gwyn Griffiths draws an analogy between Seth and the Egyptian desert in terms of the color red; however the ancient Egyptian artists also used the color red for the depiction of the solar orb.⁴⁶ This gets reflected in Sadie pointing out that Set is important for the solar deity Ra being Ra’s “lieutenant.”⁴⁷

The second novel *The Throne of Fire* by Riordan and the final novel *The Serpent’s Shadow* by Riordan introduce the human malevolent magicians enabling Apophis, and also expand the crisis posed by the rival deities, of whom Nekhbet is especially powerful.⁴⁸ The benevolent god Anubis who assists as the soul-companion of the deceased in Egyptian mythology is drawn as Sadie’s assistant regarding funerary matters of the Underworld.⁴⁹ We also meet the god Bes, linked with the safeguarding of children in the ancient Egyptian mythology,⁵⁰ the goddess Bast, who becomes a bodyguard-figure to the Kane siblings, and we see the benevolent goddess Taweret as the nurse for the senile, *retired* deities.⁵¹ The paths of Sadie and Carter temporarily diverge: Zia, from whose “tomb” Ra’s scepter is retrieved, is located by Carter accompanied by Bes, while Sadie completes joining the parts of the “Book of Ra” essential for reviving the sun god.⁵² It can be argued that this heteronormative role-division effectively recontextualizes the importance of women in ancient Egyptian art and beliefs. The women/goddesses stand behind/after the men/gods as

⁴⁴ Quoted in Magli, *Architecture, Astronomy and Sacred Landscape*, 68.

⁴⁵ Magli, *Architecture, Astronomy and Sacred Landscape*, 68.

⁴⁶ Hermann Kees, “Farbensymbolik in Ägyptischen Religiösen Texten,” in *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1943), 413–479, cited in John Gwyn Griffiths, “The Symbolism of Red in Egyptian Religion,” in *Ex Orbe Religionum. Studies in the History of Religions* 21–22 (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 85; Griffiths, “The Symbolism of Red,” 85.

⁴⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 483.

⁴⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁵⁰ Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 28.

⁵¹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁵² Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 210–371.

the supportive partners⁵³; thus Sadie is the nurturing agent while Carter personifies the aggressive agent. Sadie's role as the reviver of Ra⁵⁴ also is Egyptologically relevant because Ra's daughters Bast, Hathor, and Sekhmet are all female warriors and powerful, functional goddesses in their individual posts/roles.⁵⁵ Sadie and Carter then follow the "River of Night," the nocturnal way of Ra, and the boat is revived through fiery nourishment in the "Lake of Fire"⁵⁶ and reach to protect "Brooklyn House" from malevolent magicians serving Apophis.⁵⁷ *The Throne of Fire* looks at the Egyptian mythical theme of chaos, features the interdependence between ancient Egyptian deities and humans primarily through the usage of hieroglyphic spells and patterns.⁵⁸

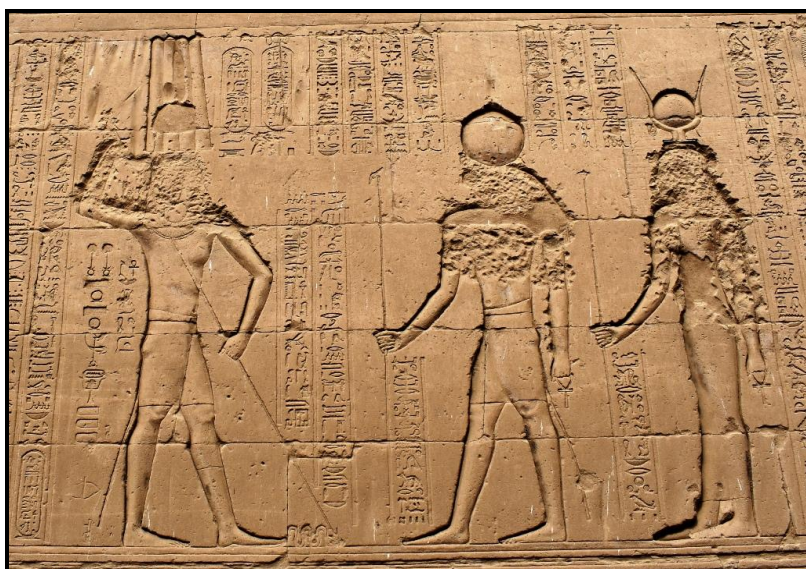


Figure 5.2 Relief Showing Pharaoh Piercing a Snake

In the image above, a relief from the Temple of Horus, Edfu, shows a Pharaoh piercing a snake before Horus and Hathor. Images were thought to be equivalent to the real

⁵³ See Stephen S. Mehler, *The Land of Osiris: An Introduction to Khemitology* (Kempton, Illinois: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2001), 42–45.

⁵⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 361–370.

⁵⁵ Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 26, 38–41, 86.

⁵⁶ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 344–349.

⁵⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 372–349.

⁵⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446.

object represented⁵⁹; thus by staging victory over the serpent, the Pharaoh follows and re-enacts the mythic role pursued by Horus harpooning his opponents. In Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*, Carter's self-control is important since Horus is shown as a figure impatient for armed combat.⁶⁰ The humans reflect the deities' action for maintaining "Maat" but humans also can assert their influence upon the energy-beings possessing their powers.⁶¹ Riordan envisions that "Maat" also implies balance between the deities and the humans, thus removal of Apophis the Serpent also requires the distancing of the deities from the humans since Order and Chaos are mutually connected.⁶² Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

Riordan's imagination of the human attempt to revive the ancient Egyptian sun god reminds us of the supreme solar importance in Pharaonic kingship geared towards the maintenance of "Maat." Two male deities are essentially linked with the identity of the Pharaoh. Naydler notes that Ra remains as the supreme "prototype" of the pharaoh, though the Pharaoh's personhood is thought to be Horus's "incarnat[ion]."⁶³ It can be argued that this is also Carter's mission and he is acknowledged by Ra himself for solar restoration and he is also important for the reinstallation of Horus.⁶⁴ It can be argued that Riordan's fictional setting and plot become appropriate in terms of the solar cult linked with kingship. Ra's course must be renewed; his absence must be filled in, setting the solar boat on trajectory again in the "River of Night."⁶⁵ That is why it can be argued that Carter and Sadie travel on the Solar Boat till dawn, initiating sunrise, which is connected with the re-establishment of

⁵⁹ See Bob Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic: Spells, Incantations, Potions, Stories, and Rituals* (1980; New York: Quill, 1981), 118.

⁶⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

⁶¹ See R. O. Faulkner, "The 'Cannibal Hymn' from the Pyramid Texts," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 10, no. 2 (July 1924): 97–103, accessed April 3, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3854235>.

⁶² Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 369–437.

⁶³ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 104.

⁶⁴ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 369–395.

⁶⁵ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

the Pharaonic authority.⁶⁶ Ra's crowning and the Pharaoh's crowning are linked and the siblings' travel on the Solar Boat is made possible⁶⁷ because, as the Kanes, they have the "Blood of the Pharaohs" as a gift.⁶⁸ Only with Ra's survival the defeat of Apophis is ensured, letting Horus achieve his throne and protecting the world with "Maat" in balance.⁶⁹

In *The Serpent's Shadow* the protagonists also envision the ambivalent beginnings of Egypt in "Duat"; they notice the enlightened Obelisk surrounded by the chaotic aquatic mass.⁷⁰ Riordan revisits the holding power of hieroglyphs by describing the body of the Obelisk, which is itself adorned with glyphs⁷¹ and Sadie is able to contain Apophis's shadow⁷² which would later be execrated to remove Apophis.⁷³ It can be argued that in the Twelfth Hour of ancient Egyptian Text *Amduat* the Underworld serpent's mouth becomes the exit point of the energized sun.⁷⁴ Arguably a recontextualization of this image is seen towards the climax of the deities' and the human-led "Brooklyn House[s]" confrontation with Apophis; the mouth of the Serpent is disintegrated to reveal the rejuvenated, victorious Ra.⁷⁵ The Trilogy concludes with Carter being recognized as the guiding figure of the "Brooklyn House" at the terrestrial level while Horus is re-crowned amidst the deities,⁷⁶ evoking the re-establishment of "zep tepi" ("First Time").⁷⁷ The celebration of the rights of the "Horus-king" thereby solidifies "Maat" in her firm basis.⁷⁸

⁶⁶ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 327–437.

⁶⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 327–437.

⁶⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 221, 472.

⁶⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

⁷⁰ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 295–310.

⁷¹ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 299.

⁷² Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 304–308.

⁷³ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 368–369.

⁷⁴ Bojana Mojsov, *Osiris: Death and Afterlife of a God* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 86.

⁷⁵ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 316–391.

⁷⁶ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 370–395.

⁷⁷ See James Henry Breasted, trans., "Appendix 5: Text of the Dream Stela," in *Origins of the Sphinx: Celestial Guardian of Pre-Pharaonic Civilization*, by Robert M. Schoch, and Robert Bauval (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2017), 335; Robert Bauval incorporates the words "zep tepi."

⁷⁸ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 370–395.

5.3 Literature Review

Unlike Riordan's more expanded series featuring Percy Jackson and ancient Greek Mythology, *The Kane Chronicles* consist of three novels; however each of these three novels is densely packed with Riordan's Egyptological studies as well as "Egyptomaniac" creativity.⁷⁹ My trajectory of discussion is immensely shaped by Heather K. Cyr's article "Pyramids in America: Rewriting the 'Egypt of the West' in Rick Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles Series*" in which the Trilogy, especially *The Red Pyramid*, is studied in terms of "Egyptomania" amidst the Americans, featured through the discussion of the influence of ancient Egyptian art on American buildings.⁸⁰ Cyr contributes a very important observation that the ancient Egyptian magic, obelisk and all the important legacies of ancient Egypt are "inherited" by America which is regarded as the mantle-bearer of the ancient Egyptian heritage.⁸¹ I find Cyr's findings helpful since the Kane children's roles as the carriers of genetic information from the pharaohs are recontextualizations of such "inheritance." Their lineage enables Egyptianization which facilitates their quest to be navigated through ancient Egyptian mythical system/world that functions elaborately through nodes, grid, symbols and hieroglyphically materialized magic. This chapter shall further add to the "Egyptomaniac" as well as Egyptological approach to Riordan's trilogy by (i) individually discussing the embodiments of the deities within humans, (ii) the importance of "Maat" established through architectonic agencies, and (iii) the recontextualization of the roles of the gods Ra and Osiris. The dominant cults surrounding Ra and Osiris are associated with the ancient

⁷⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

⁸⁰ Heather K. Cyr, "Pyramids in America: Rewriting the 'Egypt of the West' in Rick Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles Series*," *Mythlore* 38, no. 1 (135) (Fall/Winter 2019): 131–152, *Special Issue: Mythopoeic Children's Literature*, accessed April 10, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26809397>.

⁸¹ Cyr, "Pyramids in America," 131–152.

Egyptian Afterlife in the Trilogy. This has not been much covered by scholars writing on Riordan's novels in association with the ancient Egyptian corpus.

I have also benefitted from consulting the article “Adaptation of Egyptian Mythology and Rick Riordan's Kane Chronicles Trilogy” by Gurpyari Bhatnagar and Rupinder Kaur; Bhatnagar and Kaur have noted the importance of Apophis and Ra as the contrasting adversaries and the conflict between the two mythical beings covers a major section in the plots of the three novels.⁸² A very important observation by Bhatnagar and Kaur also includes the ambivalence in the ancient Egyptian mythology portrayed in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*⁸³; this has been recontextualized in the contemporary global scenario establishing the Trilogy's relevance. I believe that this relevance can be further established by drawing references from the ancient Egyptian concepts of magic, physical space and territories. These associations shall be added to the critical literature relevant for Riordan's Trilogy to argue that *The Kane Chronicles* have summed up nearly all the basic elements associated with the ancient Egyptian deities and magic. For the trilogy's encompassing nature, the discussion of Riordan's novels have been pursued in this Fifth chapter of textual analysis, since many of the concepts regarding ancient Egyptian mythical elements discussed in the previous main Chapters (Chapter Two to Five) can be synchronized in the discussion on Riordan's Trilogy.

5.4 Argument: Recontextualization of “Maat” in Fiction

Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* could be interpreted as an excellent fictionalization of “reception” of ancient Egypt in popular fiction and we can read the trilogy by applying

⁸² Gurpyari Bhatnagar and Rupinder Kaur, “Adaptation of Egyptian Mythology and Rick Riordan's Kane Chronicles Trilogy,” *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology* 17, no. 6 (2020): 7380–7381, accessed June 11, 2021, <https://archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/2116>. This article is relevant in the sense that Riordan's texts and Egyptology/“Egyptomania” are gradually garnering interest amidst the Indian academia.

⁸³ Bhatnagar and Kaur, “Adaptation of Egyptian Mythology,” 7377–7383.

insights from Egyptology and also studying the trends in “Egyptomania.” Stephanie Moser identifies three causes behind “reception studies” pursued on Pharaonic culture and history: (i) Egyptologists using empirical methods of studies tend to perceive “artistic” productions of the ancient “Egyptian revival traditions” as speculative, but scientifically viable; (ii) in terms of visual studies as well as art history, the unique charm of the ancient Egyptian artifacts have left an impact on aesthetic variations/experiments by Euro-American artists, and (iii) “popular culture” may provide the impetus to establish the newer “reception” of ancient Egyptian art and culture parallel to entitled institutional pursuit and formation of knowledge.⁸⁴ I agree with Moser that “Egyptomania” receives an impetus from North American as well as from the European artists and scholars and Western scholarship has perceived visual images, rich in “ideas” and symbolism.⁸⁵ Moser aptly notes that studies and researches in ancient Egypt involve careful museum cataloging as well as showcasing of objects.⁸⁶ These features can be indeed found in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*: museums and exhibitions remain as important features in the Trilogy. Importantly, objects are used as portals, like Set emerging from the “Rosetta Stone” preserved in the British Museum in *The Red Pyramid*.⁸⁷ In this context, it is noteworthy to remember that in the film *The Awakening*, based on Bram Stoker’s *The Jewel of Seven Stars* and directed by Mike Newell, Kara fully possesses Margaret’s (played by Stephanie Zimbalist) body and emerges at night from the British Museum, killing Dr. Matthew Corbeck (played by Charlton Heston) after he pursues the ritual for Kara’s resurrection, urged by Margaret.⁸⁸ In *The Mummy Returns* Imhotep is

⁸⁴ Stephanie Moser, “Reconstructing Ancient Worlds: Reception Studies, Archaeological Representation and the Interpretation of Ancient Egypt,” *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory* 22, no. 4 (December 2015): 1266–1267, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43654234>.

⁸⁵ Moser, “Reconstructing Ancient Worlds,” 1279.

⁸⁶ Moser, “Reconstructing Ancient Worlds,” 1280, 1263–1308.

⁸⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 17–28.

⁸⁸ Mike Newell, dir., *The Awakening*, written by Chris Bryant, Allan Scott, and Clive Exton, story by Chris Bryant and Allan Scott, based on *The Jewel of Seven Stars* by Bram Stoker (London, UK: EMI Films, 1980), Film.

also reanimated and released in the “Year of the Scorpion” from the ritual pursued in the British Museum.⁸⁹ These recurring tropes render the British Museum a portal for releasing ancient Egyptian characters that are ambivalent or negative, thus they take over the White world from the Museum, as mimicry of English/British conquests of economy/power from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth centuries.

It can also be argued that Riordan imagines a neo-“global” Egypt, and the entire world is made up of 360 “nomes”⁹⁰ much like the 42 “nomes” present in ancient Egypt.⁹¹ It is important to note that a kind of cosmopolitanism was considerably achieved in ancient Egypt in the Greco-Roman Period. Romans also actively participated in spreading the Isis-cult and studied the ancient Egyptian obelisk, as Bob Brier notes.⁹² The Euro-American interests in ancient Egypt also are reflected in the “hosting” of Isis within a White girl Sadie and her usage of the obelisk for the maintenance of “Maat” reminds us of the studies of ancient Egyptian architecture by predominantly White scholars.⁹³

It can be argued that Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* also re-contextualizes in fiction the ancient Egyptian optimism regarding everlasting life in Osiris’s realm. The Osiris-Isis myth remains as a recurring trope in mythological fiction based on the ancient Egyptian pantheon, because our disillusionments in technological warfare, religious and political violence inspire us to imagine impossible and fantastic afterlives. To the ancient Egyptians, despite the perils of the Underworld, Osiris was hope. James Henry Breasted cited by S. G. F. Brandon notes that, with Osiris gaining the post of the judge after Ra, mythology

⁸⁹ Stephen Sommers, dir., *The Mummy Returns*, screenplay by Stephen Sommers, written by Stephen Sommers (2001; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 2001), DVD; Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy Returns* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001), 97–109.

⁹⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 52–53.

⁹¹ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 263.

⁹² Bob Brier, *Egyptomania: Our Three Thousand Year Obsession with the Land of the Pharaohs* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 19–41.

⁹³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401

attributes the state of “morality” more “importance” in the context of Osiris while “social justice” remains the criteria of judgment in Ra’s reign.⁹⁴ Brandon perceives that since Osiris himself received favorable judgment in the Divine Court against Seth, the judgment thereby is geared towards the “justification” of the human deceased since Osiris and the dead ancient Egyptian person were held analogous.⁹⁵ Osiris not only renders judgment but he was also the “saviour” in terms of facilitating the bliss of the Afterlife.⁹⁶ Brandon citing Breasted’s translations notes that the *Coffin Texts* extend Osiris’s responsibilities as the “saviour” and as the judge to common ancient Egyptian citizens other than the kingship which the *Pyramid Texts* exclusively intended.⁹⁷ This “savior” motif is an agent in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*: Julius sacrifices himself to restore “Maat”⁹⁸ implying that his children should undergo and brace the dangers in the Underworld envisioned in the cults of Osiris and Ra.⁹⁹ They also need to revive Ra and keep the balance of “Maat” steady by encountering Set and Apophis, and such feats are made possible by embracing ancient Egyptian essence, identities, and faculties.¹⁰⁰

Riordan’s imagination of an entire world esoterically following ancient Egyptian religion controlled from the headquarters of different “nomes”¹⁰¹ reminds us of the archaeological conjectures in institutional Egyptology regarding the spread of pan-global Pharaonic culture. Grafton Elliot Smith cited by Robin Derricourt “proposed”

⁹⁴ James Henry Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1912), 309–310, James Henry Breasted, *The Dawn of Conscience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), 270, cited in S. G. F. Brandon, “A Problem of the Osirian Judgment of the Dead,” *Numen* 5, no. 2 (April 1958): 113, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3269404>; Brandon, “A Problem of the Osirian Judgment,” 113.

⁹⁵ Brandon, “A Problem of the Osirian Judgment,” 113.

⁹⁶ Brandon, “A Problem of the Osirian Judgment,” 114.

⁹⁷ Brandon, “A Problem of the Osirian Judgment,” 121.

⁹⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508.

⁹⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁰⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁰¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 52–53.

“Hyperdiffusionism”¹⁰² (as termed by Glyn Daniel cited by Derricourt) indicates the distribution in disparate cultures of the gifts of material, arts, and science that were initiated in a sophisticated source like ancient Egypt.¹⁰³ For example, Grafton Elliot Smith cited by Derricourt notes that the inventions attributed to the ancient Egyptians include (i) the art of jewel-making with “inl[aid]” decorations, and (ii) the eyes painted on the bows of the ships.¹⁰⁴ This influence can be perceived in *The Kane Chronicles* in which Riordan provides intriguing examples of cultural practices derived from ancient Egypt. Sadie points out that the boats carrying painted eyes are used by the Mediterranean sailors.¹⁰⁵ Setne reminds Carter that Spanish “Running of the Bulls” in Europe originated from the cult of Apis.¹⁰⁶ Amos affirms that the earliest example of the “nation state,” both as a concept and an organization, is attributed to the ancient Egyptians.¹⁰⁷ The inclusiveness found in Egyptian art can be noted here. The ancient Egyptians in their visual representations had also tried to incorporate the other races. Derricourt notes that the non-ancient-Egyptians were depicted in “stereotypical” modes while the Egyptians were depicted uniformly; Kushite and Lybian ancestries were found in Pharaonic dynasties as well.¹⁰⁸ Thus reading Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* feels like returning to the sources in Pharaonic Egypt the memories and influences of which exist in arts, styles, mimesis, and performances. Ancient Egypt, as Bast reflects to Sadie and Carter, is an unending memory dispersed and is present throughout the world.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² Glyn Daniel quoted in Robin Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined: The Remarkable Legacy of Egypt and the Ancient Near East* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 2015), 111.

¹⁰³ Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined*, 100–111.

¹⁰⁴ Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined*, 122. See also Grafton Elliot Smith, *The Diffusion of Culture* (London: Watts and Co., 1933).

¹⁰⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 224–233.

¹⁰⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 224–233.

¹⁰⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 72.

¹⁰⁸ Derricourt, *Antiquity Imagined*, 133.

¹⁰⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 239–243.

Besides Osiris, Isis gets a revived and recontextualized idealization with equal importance in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*. Brier notes that the Isis-figure became a universal mother-figure linked with domestic aspects and the royal authority in the Mediterranean world following the Greco-Roman period.¹¹⁰ The "Roman Egyptomania" enabled the popularity of Isis-veneration to travel beyond the borders of ancient Egypt.¹¹¹ Isis-Sadie interdependence reminds us of the feminine power recognized in ancient Egypt. Stephen D. Mehler informs us that in Kemet (ancient Egypt) the woman remained as the house's primary authority figure, and "Per-Aa" ("High House")¹¹² was the epithet for institutional power considered in equation with her.¹¹³ The role of the women was taken up in the mythology as well; Osiris's role as the benevolent ruler was cemented by Isis representing the Pharaonic authority.¹¹⁴ Stephen S. Mehler also makes an interesting observation that Osiris's triumph over death, made possible by Isis, inspired believers to identify him as the "hero"¹¹⁵ figure.¹¹⁶ The word "hero," as Mehler observes, is derived from "Heru," the ancient Egyptian name for Horus, who is none but Osiris's son.¹¹⁷ Thus Osiris-Isis-Horus trio influenced storylines and got embedded as archetypes of savior figures for humankind. Mehler notes that despite the masculine powers involved, the principal guiding powers are feminine; Horus as well as Osiris derives royal authority and the ceremonial throne from Hathor and Isis respectively.¹¹⁸ Though Carter's masculinity and heroism remain at the forefront, the readers can discern that Sadie "hosting" Isis is a superb

¹¹⁰ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 23–24, 28–31.

¹¹¹ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 23–31.

¹¹² Quoted in Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 42–43.

¹¹³ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 42–43; Stephen S. Mehler, *Figure 11. Temple of Hathor at Dendara*, in *The Land of Osiris: An Introduction to Khemitology*, by Stephen S. Mehler (Kempton, Illinois: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2001), 43; see the caption given by Mehler for fig. 11.

¹¹⁴ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 44.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 44.

¹¹⁶ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 44.

¹¹⁷ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 44.

¹¹⁸ Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 43–45.

magician; her constant support of her brother Carter reminds us of the universally known mythical achievement of Isis in resurrecting her brother Osiris and her independent protection of her child Horus.¹¹⁹

Finally it can be argued reiterating the previous discussion that Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* acquaint the readers regarding one of the most important ancient Egyptian philosophies, "Maat," which throughout the span of ancient Egyptian civilization remained as the steadfast universal force of unity. Karenga notes that mortal women, men, and even God are bound in the "ontological" level of "Maat."¹²⁰ Karenga perceives that the inauspicious, the malevolent, the chaos, the "non-being" must be replaced by the sacred, the beneficial, the order, the live "being[s]," by the "Maat"-principle.¹²¹ "Maat" is both a concept and a practice. Karenga notes that life's strength and the vital natures are all "Maat"-bound, featured through the preservation of the good, exercised through the materialization process¹²² and the world of nature along with humans are tied with the Creator in the "essence" of "Maat."¹²³ Thus, even the Divine World is not entirely orderly; it saw ripples and chaos. The failure to maintain peace amidst the heavens by the deities themselves is significantly depicted in James Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra*.¹²⁴ In L. Kákosy's observation cited by Karenga, the destabilizing caused by Seth initiated the divine legal proceedings to pursue their course thus "Isfet" is instrumental in the re-configuration of "Maat."¹²⁵ It is this philosophy that Sadie perceives. She reminds Seth of his glorious role in

¹¹⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

¹²⁰ Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 185.

¹²¹ Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 185.

¹²² Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 184.

¹²³ Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 198.

¹²⁴ James Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra* (Special edition) (2009; reprint, Oxford: Solaris, 2015), 15–329; discussed in Chapter Three.

¹²⁵ L. Kákosy, "Ideas about the Fallen State of the World in Egyptian Religion: Decline of the Golden Age," *StudAeg* 7 (Budapest 1981), 81–92, cited in Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 206; Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 206.

subduing Apophis from Ra's boat,¹²⁶ thus enlisting even a violent deity Seth to confront the absolute Chaos (Apophis), which is required for the sake of "Maat." Even Apophis's repeated defeats re-install the benevolence of the created Order represented in Ra, as perceived by H. Te Velde, and cited by Karenga,¹²⁷ thus "Maat" must be maintained under constant vigilance, through constant awareness and routinized confrontation with Chaos.

On Shedsunefertem's Stele kept in Cleveland Museum of Art, the celebration of dawn is represented by the solar orb, which elicits adoring responses from two baboons with raised arms¹²⁸; this baboon-trait is brilliantly recontextualised by Riordan in attributing Khufu's (an intelligent ape that accompanies Sadie and Carter) love for basketball, evoking the disk of the sun.¹²⁹ Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner notes that the path of the deceased is guided by Anubis, the canine deity.¹³⁰ The "ba-bird['s]" course reminds us of Sadie in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* coursing through the spiritual realm in her dreams by taking the form of her "ba."¹³¹ In ancient Egyptian beliefs, the resurrection of the deceased coincides with sunrise as Brier notes.¹³² Ra's arrival over New York is a climactic moment in *The Kane Chronicles*.¹³³ Thus Riordan recontextualizes in an American scenario the resurrection-motif central to the ancient Egyptians expressed through different species.

¹²⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 479–485.

¹²⁷ Herman Te Velde, *Seth, God of Confusion: A Study of His Role in Egyptian Mythology and Religion*, trans. Mrs. G. E. van Baaren-Pape (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 81–82, cited in Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 206; Karenga, *Maat, The Moral Ideal*, 206.

¹²⁸ [Artists Unknown], *Stele of the High Priest of Ptah, Shedsunefertem*, 945–924 BC, Limestone, Photograph of Stele, Cleveland Museum of Art, *Gift of the John Huntington Art and Polytechnic Trust 1914.669*, *The Cleveland Museum of Art*, accessed March 26, 2022, <https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1914.669>.

¹²⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 282.

¹³⁰ Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner, "Wepwawet in Context: A Reconsideration of the Jackal Deity and Its Role in the Spatial Organization of the North Abydos Landscape," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 43 (2007): 139–150, accessed June 14, 2018, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27801611>.

¹³¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 161–182.

¹³² Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 121, 132–133.

¹³³ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 415–429.



Figure 5.3 The Goddess Seshat and Frog-symbolism

The goddess Seshat holds the palm branch at the base of which a frog-figure is seen seated on a “shen” ring in this relief from the Temple of Seti I in Abydos. In the goddess Taweret’s “Sunny Acres,” the “old-age home” for the deities as described in Riordan’s *The Throne of Fire*, the frog-goddess Heket, who is also an inmate in Taweret’s care, requests Sadie, whom she sees as a priestess, to re-initiate her temple duties.¹³⁴ Elizabeth Thomas perceives that in ancient Egyptian thought, the frog conveys the concept of endless renewal of life linked with solar movement.¹³⁵ E. Thomas notes that the observation of the “mud” of the Nile as bringing forth frogs and fertility led to the constitution of the frog as a life-linked amphibian,¹³⁶ and the ancient Egyptians used the image of the tadpole for the representation of the number “100,000.”¹³⁷ Keeping in mind the frog as the developed form of the tadpole, it can be argued that Riordan’s Heket reminds us of eternity believed in ancient Egyptian faith; unfortunately this faith has experienced discontinuation, which results with the deities

¹³⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 349–374, 364–365.

¹³⁵ Elizabeth Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 45 (December 1959): 38–51, accessed May 16, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3855461>.

¹³⁶ E. Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat,” 45. See W. Spiegelberg and A. Jacoby, “Der Frosch als Symbol der Auferstehung bei den Ägyptern,” *Sphinx* 7 (1903): 215–228. See also Alfred Wiedemann, *Das alte Ägypten* (Heidelberg, 1920), 266, cited in E. Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat,” 45, see footnote no. 2; E. Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat,” 45.

¹³⁷ E. Thomas, “Terrestrial Marsh and Solar Mat,” 45, see in footnote no. 2.

residing as senile inmates.¹³⁸ Riordan captures the twilight of the faith poignantly by depicting the deities as being inmates in the “old age home.”¹³⁹ It can be argued that Heket notices Sadie¹⁴⁰ probably because Sadie carries writing tools much like Seshat, and Sadie is able to see the sequences of Osiris-Set rivalry of the Divine Age in the “House of Life”¹⁴¹; thus Sadie’s senses of history and evolution of the deities surpasses those of Carter. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

5.5 Deities and Humans United for “Maat”

This section notes the interaction between the principal deities and the human characters, and how through their interdependence “Maat” is kept in balance. I have consulted Egyptological insights to show and argue how “Egyptomania” helps in keeping the myths functional in repeated contextualization.

5.5.1 Horus-Carter

Horus is one of the most honored deities linked with ancient Egyptian royalty. Toby A. H. Wilkinson observes that the human king’s embodiment of the sky-god is instrumented through the ruler’s usage of the “Horus name.”¹⁴² In ancient Egyptian art the human but deified ruler symbolically negotiates with different life-forms; the kingship is also communicated through different species. For example, as T. A. H. Wilkinson notes, the King’s authoritative attribute is held analogous with catfish according to the iconic standards pursued by “late Predynastic period[’s]” artists; another unchallenged creature-symbol of Pharaonic conquest is the scorpion.¹⁴³ The scorpion is depicted as a powerful creature and that’s why it can be argued that Serqet in Riordan’s *The Red Pyramid* is one of the

¹³⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 349–374.

¹³⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 349–374.

¹⁴⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 365.

¹⁴¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 171–177.

¹⁴² Toby A. H. Wilkinson, “What a King Is This: Narmer and the Concept of the Ruler,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 86 (2000): 24, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3822303>.

¹⁴³ T. A. H. Wilkinson, “What a King Is This,” 25.

opponents who challenge Sadie and Carter.¹⁴⁴ It indicates the mythic association of the falcon, connected with Horus and Carter, communicating Pharaonic strength. For example, T. A. H. Wilkinson notes that the harpoon, a weapon, is depicted as carrying a falcon, a bird of prey, manifesting Narmer's victory; the depiction occurs in the "Narmer Palette."¹⁴⁵ Thus as early as in the Old Kingdom royal art, the artistic practice of depicting creatures and weapons attached with the royal image of the Pharaoh can be seen. This information can be cited to argue that Riordan's Carter engages in confrontation with his opponents by maneuvering the projection of the hawk-headed human body of Horus who is his patron deity.¹⁴⁶



Figure 5.4 Striking Scenes, Edfu Temple

The image above shows the symmetry in the depiction of the striking scenes on the two external pylons of the Temple of Horus, Edfu. The Pharaoh Ptolemy on both sides is shown in the gesture of inflicting blows upon opponents; the violent act is watched by Horus facing the Pharaoh on two pylons and also Isis on either sides of the entrance. This double representation reminds us of Sadie "hosting" Isis, who watches over and assists her brother Carter "hosting" Horus.¹⁴⁷ The siblings confront their common enemy Set who is mythically the opponent of Isis and Horus¹⁴⁸ and later Apophis.¹⁴⁹ Richard H. Wilkinson notes that symbolically such apparently violent scenes of overpowering of the opponents on the temple

¹⁴⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 127–145.

¹⁴⁵ T. A. H. Wilkinson, "What a King Is This," 28.

¹⁴⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 384–390.

¹⁴⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 176–183, 192–209; Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 439–492.

¹⁴⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

¹⁴⁹ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

pylons ensure the security and sacred sanctity of the inner spaces of the temples, since the temples are meant to be separated from the external world keeping their auspicious functions in mind.¹⁵⁰ Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

However, as Geraldine Pinch notes, before Horus grew up to be a strong adult male, he himself suffered from scorpion's poison.¹⁵¹ Pinch notes that the crocodiles are occasionally depicted as trampled over by Horus, which constitutes "Horus *cippi*," a category of stela containing depictions of the child-Horus, providing means to keep poisons as well as harm-causing creatures at bay.¹⁵² Interestingly, Riordan also makes Horus-strength battle Sobek in *The Red Pyramid*, thus aptly recontextualizing the reptilian attack posed against the opponents of Seth that are Osiris and Horus.¹⁵³ Pinch observes that Isis's body-fluid was capable of treating Horus's burns.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, Riordan's Sadie "hosting" Isis could effectively cure Carter's venom by using his "secret name,"¹⁵⁵ just as Isis heals Ra's poison by means of his "secret name"¹⁵⁶; thereby Isis's protectiveness for Horus is recontextualized in Sadie's protectiveness for her brother Carter.¹⁵⁷

5.5.2 Isis-Sadie

Riordan's fictionalization of Isis bears testimony to the goddess's tremendous powers with which she resurrects Osiris and remains resistant to Seth's schemes.¹⁵⁸ In addition to her benevolent nature, Isis could be militant as well. Edward F. Malkowski accounts that the "followers of Seth" met a fiery death at the hands of Hathor, a form taken

¹⁵⁰ Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 6–239.

¹⁵¹ Geraldine Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 27.

¹⁵² Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 100.

¹⁵³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 383–301.

¹⁵⁴ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 141.

¹⁵⁵ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 192–209.

¹⁵⁶ Geraldine Harris, *Gods and Pharaohs from Egyptian Mythology* (Italy: Eurobook, 1982), 24–25.

¹⁵⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 176–183, 192–209.

¹⁵⁸ For information regarding Isis's powers, see G. Harris, *Gods and Pharaohs*, 41–47.

by Isis herself, the myth thereby connects Hathor with Isis.¹⁵⁹ This information can be applied in Riordan's portrayal of warrior-like Isis "hosted" in Sadie in *The Kane Chronicles*. Isis is also a devoted mother, an expert healer to her son Horus.¹⁶⁰ Sadie's constant assistance to her brother Carter, who by "hosting" Horus fights Seth for the rightful Egyptian royal kingship pursued by Horus,¹⁶¹ reminds us of Isis's own position as the divine feminine embodiment of the throne; she is thus the female safe-keeper of the male pharaoh and his domain over Egypt.¹⁶² Sadie by "hosting" Isis plays the goddess's role by learning, mastering and channelizing hieroglyphs and in this art her abilities surpass that of her magician-warrior brother Carter.¹⁶³ Isis in art is occasionally placed on gold-gilded shrine, seated on the "glyph" for gold,¹⁶⁴ hence it could be argued that Sadie's magic produces and uses "golden" hieroglyphs.¹⁶⁵ Sadie feels drawn towards the hieroglyphs which incite her natural gift of translation which is both attractive and scary.¹⁶⁶ The energies of the deities seem to be channelized through human physical frame effectively. Riordan offers a unique literary philosophy here: anthropomorphism is a powerful feature because humans possess the capacity for contemplation which can be coupled with divine "power."¹⁶⁷ Sadie's mother Ruby combines science and magic; her abilities of remote sensing and speculation could even influence the lector Iskander's convictions regarding magical usage/empowerments amidst the initiates in the "House of Life" responsible for separating the divine and the

¹⁵⁹ Edward F. Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE: The History, Technology, and Philosophy of Civilization X* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 215.

¹⁶⁰ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 40.

¹⁶¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁶² Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 17–19.

¹⁶³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁶⁴ William Osburn, *The Monumental History of Egypt, as Recorded on The Ruins of Her Temples, Palaces, and Tombs. Vol. I.: From the First Colonization of the Valley to the Visit of the Patriarch Abram* (London: Trübner and Co., 1854), 1: 81. See also Ray, "Ancient Egyptian 'Ished' Tree," 162.

¹⁶⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 88.

¹⁶⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 137.

¹⁶⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 179.

human realms.¹⁶⁸ Ruby's vision is fulfilled by her children Sadie and Carter; the siblings assemble the deities and humans together again, crown Horus, rejuvenate Ra and preserve "Maat."¹⁶⁹



Figure 5.5 Hippopotamus Harpooning Scene, Edfu Temple

In the image above, a relief from the Temple of Horus, Edfu, shows the conflict between Set and Horus for the latter's rightful authority over the "Two Lands" of Egypt. We see the Pharaoh and Horus harpooning the hippopotamus,¹⁷⁰ an animal representing Set,¹⁷¹ while it is bound by the "kneeling" figure of Isis.¹⁷² This image reminds us of Riordan's plot in which Isis "hosted" within Sadie assists Carter "hosting" Horus in controlling Set.¹⁷³ It can thus be argued that Riordan's novels can be studied in connection with the mythological reliefs carved on Edfu Temple's walls in a new light; both the ancient, Greco-Roman, Egyptian artists and Riordan have portrayed the shared roles of the deities and the humans for the maintenance of "Maat." Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

¹⁶⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 181, 1–514.

¹⁶⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁷⁰ Arthur Weigall, *A Guide to the Antiquities of Upper Egypt: From Abydos to the Sudan Frontier* (1910; reprint, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 344–345.

¹⁷¹ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 19–20.

¹⁷² Weigall, *A Guide to the Antiquities of Upper Egypt*, 344–345.

¹⁷³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 439–492.

Sadie's magical training implies that she empathizes with Isis's pain of losing Osiris and also her frantic attempts to revive the vulnerable Horus.¹⁷⁴ Sadie and Carter inherit fragments of divine consciousnesses and they join in a mission to bring Set to subjugation and to preclude his attempts of establishing his dominion and kingship, which belongs to Horus by the principle of "Maat."¹⁷⁵ Riordan's Iskander aptly observes that the mythical history repeats itself and Isis "hosted" in Sadie and Horus "hosted" in Carter must join forces to encounter Set (who influences Amos, uncle of Sadie and Carter) very much like the ancient mythical course of Set being opposed by Isis and Horus.¹⁷⁶ Riordan interprets the ancient Egyptian mythology aptly, envisioning that the gods cannot acquire authority without invitation from humans.¹⁷⁷ This fictional premise is authentic, if Egyptological insights are considered. The interaction between the deities and the humans through the elaborately designed rituals and formulae have been abundantly found and discussed by the Egyptologists. Thus all the three novels in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* envision that psychic commonalities are shared between the deities and the humans and the deities opt for these humans whose thinking procedures correspond to their temperaments. This is Riordan's unique imagination/output in keeping ancient Egyptian mythology alive through his fictional recontextualizations of mythic "history."

Sadie correctly understands the "monotheistic polytheism" discussed in Egyptology because the other gods draw their powers from Ra.¹⁷⁸ As we learn from Andreas Schweizer, every night the god Ra's "Mesektet" Boat (the "Evening Boat") passes through the "Lake of Fire" according to the texts concerning *The Book of Gates*, another Underworld-related book

¹⁷⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 171–176, 1–514.

¹⁷⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

¹⁷⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 177–182, 218–220, 1–514.

¹⁷⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 220, 451–452, 1–514.

¹⁷⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 342–343.

like the *Amduat*¹⁷⁹ hence Riordan's solar boat is required to be drenched in the "Lake of fire" for nocturnal rejuvenation.¹⁸⁰ Sadie needs her brother's physical contact to withstand the fire and their closeness also intensifies the strength of magic they possess.¹⁸¹ This is Riordan's unique imagination of interpreting the success of ancient Egyptian magic determined by genetic ties. It is earlier perceived that the hieroglyphs resemble mini commands viscerally present around Sadie's body¹⁸²; the glyphs thereby pre-exist the deities and can even bend them since the glyphs seem to protect Sadie even in the midst of the terrifying "Lake of Fire" which nourishes Ra, the highest god in the ancient Egyptian pantheon.¹⁸³ Thus glyphs can be used for the upholding of "Maat" by utilizing magic which works irrespective of the deities and the humans. Riordan's *The Throne of Fire* like other two novels in *The Kane Chronicles* can thus be explored as a unique specimen of fantasy and mythological fiction since it incorporates a complex account of the ancient Egyptian solar myth in a Twenty-first century setting enabling living humans to travel on Ra's boat which was the highest achievement/bliss for an ancient Egyptian, possible only in the Afterlife.¹⁸⁴

5.5.3 Ra-Khepri-Nephthys-Zia

Zia Rashid is truly enigmatic since by (i) channelizing Khepri's powers,¹⁸⁵ (ii) in becoming the "hostess" for Nephthys¹⁸⁶ and (iii) also by embodying Ra, she connects the foremost member Atum-Ra with the last member Nephthys of the Divine "Ennead."¹⁸⁷ Her role in the maintenance of "Maat" is important in assisting in the controlling of Set by

¹⁷⁹ Andreas Schweizer, *The Sun God's Journey through the Netherworld: Reading the Ancient Egyptian Amduat*, ed. David Lorton (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2010), 113.

¹⁸⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 345–350.

¹⁸¹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 348–349.

¹⁸² Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 124–125.

¹⁸³ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 345–350.

¹⁸⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 323–428.

¹⁸⁵ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 234–239.

¹⁸⁶ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 238, 220–249.

¹⁸⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 238, 220–241; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 370, 382, 1–40.

indirectly enabling Sadie and Carter to gain Set's "secret name" from Nephthys.¹⁸⁸ Zia's place of dormancy also contains Ra's "crook and flail" required for defeating chaotic forces, re-assembling the deities for the "Maat"-installation.¹⁸⁹ Riordan makes Ra's essence closer to Zia, corroborated by the fact that Zia is able to protect herself with Khepera's shield-powers.¹⁹⁰ The ancient Egyptian watery consciousness is important for Zia¹⁹¹; water is also connected with solar cult/fire in ancient Egyptian perception. The Primordial "First land," as Naydler mentions, is the designated space for Ra's materialization; Ra is also said to have been generated¹⁹² every night in the "Lake of Fire" in the subterranean realm¹⁹³ as discussed earlier. Water is thus the precondition and the medium for solar rejuvenation; however water can be a chaotic material/medium too. The creative force, as Stephen Quirke notes, is attributed to have materialized in the "primeval marsh" but it lacks the systematic harmony of irrigated lands yielding routine-based crops.¹⁹⁴ Thus Quirke perceives that the three aspects like (i) the aridity of the Sahara, (ii) the harmony in irrigation, and (iii) the disharmony in the "backwaters"¹⁹⁵ of the Nile, indicative of the "primeval marsh," are considered different from each other in ancient Egyptian thought in terms of their states of appearance.¹⁹⁶ Thus Zia embodies both watery and fiery essence¹⁹⁷; thus she becomes the vessel for Ra's rejuvenation, whose essence can be both aquatic and fiery.¹⁹⁸

Ra as the foremost god is also the most potent wielder of magical powers, and Ra's embodiment in Zia renders her potent regarding fire-usage. In ancient Egyptian magic the

¹⁸⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 465–492.

¹⁸⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 238–239, 220–249.

¹⁹⁰ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 220–241.

¹⁹¹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 220–249.

¹⁹² Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 220–241.

¹⁹³ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 241–242.

¹⁹⁴ Stephen Quirke, *The Cult of Ra: Sun-Worship in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001), 165.

¹⁹⁵ Quoted in Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 165.

¹⁹⁶ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra*, 165.

¹⁹⁷ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 238, 220–249.

¹⁹⁸ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 370, 382, 1–401.

magician-figure him/herself is solar associated. Herman Te Velde writes that one of Re's "fourteen *kas*" (the god's "essence") and one of his "seven *bas*" (the sun god's exterior form) is embodied in the human "Magician"; by virtue of his visceral form as well as inner attributes, the Magician and Re are equated.¹⁹⁹ Riordan thus stages Zia's journey from a tormented disillusioned initiate to a capable magician understanding the need for invoking the deities,²⁰⁰ whom she initially opposes.²⁰¹ Zia realizes that she is the preserved along with Ra's scepter and Vladimir Menshikov initiated the antagonism; she comes to accept the required assemblage of the deities needed to restore the "House of Life."²⁰² Her waking from her tomb under the watery cover appears like a transformation²⁰³ and is similar to Khepri's birth in the heavenly eastern waters at every dawn, evoking one of the meanings of the name "Khepri" ("transformation") indicating the birth of the sun.²⁰⁴

Zia is unique since she exists in two different manifestations. First, as a "shabti"-form she is seen in *The Red Pyramid* while Zia is secured in sleep²⁰⁵ introducing the Kane siblings to magic practice.²⁰⁶ Second, the awakened Zia in *The Throne of Fire* and in *The Serpent's Shadow* travel with Carter and Sadie with her awakened realization opened for the need of Divine-Human alliance.²⁰⁷ Even the "shabti"-Zia could apply the elaborate knowledge of the arrangement of "Four Sons of Horus" used usually for the mummy in seeking protective assistance.²⁰⁸ It has to be noted that the "Sons of Horus" are aligned according to the cardinal points by Sadie following Zia's instructions to protect themselves

¹⁹⁹ Herman Te Velde, "The God Heka in Egyptian Theology," trans. Mrs. G. E. van Baaren-Pape, *JEOL* 21 (1969–1970): 182, accessed April 1, 2020, <http://www.jacobusvandijk.nl/docs/Heka.pdf>.

²⁰⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁰¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 137–144.

²⁰² Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 320.

²⁰³ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 220–249.

²⁰⁴ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 13.

²⁰⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 486–487; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 236–244.

²⁰⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

²⁰⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 146–199.

²⁰⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 139–145.

from Serqet.²⁰⁹ Thus she seeks to procure protection like the mummy in a coffin²¹⁰ protected by the “Sons of Horus,” which seems interesting in the sense that the Zia is kept asleep in the sarcophagus.²¹¹ As the “scribe in the House of Life” Zia holds power because the words “shesh” and “sekhem,” used in reference to the scribes, meant power in hieroglyphs and magical vocabulary.²¹² Zia’s growing feminine power, so convincingly narrated by Riordan, reminds us of Ra’s own daughters Sekhmet and Bast sharing his fiery essence.²¹³ The word “Sekhem” also reminds us of Sekhmet whose husband Ptah was associated with constructive magic and creation,²¹⁴ thus linking the Heliopolitan and the Memphite traditions.²¹⁵ Keeping that in mind it can be argued that Riordan makes Carter admit Zia’s strength in being the expressive form of Ra; Zia comes to respect (i) Horus’s right and kingship and (ii) Carter’s receipt of the emblems crucial for upholding “Maat.”²¹⁶

5.5.4 Anubis-Walt

Sadie’s romantic interest Walt Stone cooperates with Anubis since Anubis’s functions concern death and the matters in the Underworld; thus Anubis is empathetic in understanding the dying Walt and prolonging Walt’s vital essence.²¹⁷ It can be argued that both Anubis and Walt bond with Sadie overlapping the divine and the human personas, thereby embracing an aspect of the ancient Egyptian concept of “Duality.”²¹⁸ The canines are important life-forms in Egyptian mythic ecosystem; Mary-Ann Pouls Wegner notes that the Egyptian “environment” led to the imagination of mythical roles and identities of the

²⁰⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 139.

²¹⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 139.

²¹¹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 236–244.

²¹² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 140, 187; also see Richard J. Reidy, *Eternal Egypt: Ancient Rituals for the Modern World* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2010), 130.

²¹³ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 11, 25, 36.

²¹⁴ Assmann, “Creation through Heiroglyphs,” 27–28.

²¹⁵ Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 78, 86.

²¹⁶ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 284–287.

²¹⁷ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 100, 398–399, 1–401.

²¹⁸ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 100, 398–399, 1–401.

divinities relating to the canine species.²¹⁹ Isis cooperating with Anubis and forming the first human mummy out of Osiris's body constituted a watershed moment in Egyptian mythology.²²⁰ Osiris experiences mortality, a human condition, and only through the death of the terrestrial body, Osiris could gain the experience of handling judgment over the deceased in the Underworld.²²¹ Subjecting Osiris, a god, to death and agony in essence is the grim but emphatic acceptance of human fate which is the precondition for everlastingness in the Afterlife. That is why the Osiris-myth is so humanistic and it carries potential for repeated fictionalization since literature and fictional enterprises try to preserve moments and garner hopes knowing the irreversibility of death. The death-bound Walt, assisted by Anubis, thus helps Sadie and Isis, wife of Osiris, and Carter and Horus, son of Osiris, to preserve "Maat" by battling Apophis and also maintains the integrities of the Underworld.²²²

In ancient Egyptian art the depictions of the Judgment sometimes includes Thoth's baboon; thus Anubis appreciates Sadie and Carter having Khufu the baboon as a fellow traveler,²²³ the expressions of Khufu are also conveniently understood by Anubis.²²⁴ Riordan's novels thus can be argued as having interpretative, fictional recontextualizations/reflections of ancient Egyptian symbolic funerary art. Like the illustrations in the papyri, Riordan's Khufu positions himself upon the balance.²²⁵ Riordan's Anubis, for conversation with Sadie, chooses a deserted town, since (i) the ambience resounds with the demise-concerning rites, and (ii) the music played in the background in remembrance imitates the ancient Egyptian "ritual"; this manifests Anubis's acquaintances

²¹⁹ Wegner, "Wepwawet in Context," 140.

²²⁰ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 18–19, 25.

²²¹ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 16–19, 41.

²²² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

²²³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 353.

²²⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 353.

²²⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 355.

with cultural death customs of every earthly community.²²⁶ Riordan also applies emphatic bonding: the mythological Anubis is the illegitimate child of the drunken Osiris and the scheming Nephthys.²²⁷ Thus Anubis and Sadie bond in terms of mutual suffering and emptiness: Anubis as a child born out of wedlock is perceived with human prejudice and as a child Sadie is separated from her parents.²²⁸ Thus like the physical proximity between the gods and the humans in ancient Egyptian stela, funerary papyri and temple art, Riordan fictionalizes the affectionate closeness and understanding between Anubis and Sadie. Anubis also mentors Walt; Walt teaches Sadie execration-process which she applies successfully on Apophis for the maintenance of “Maat.”²²⁹

5.5.5 Osiris-Julius; Set-Amos

Riordan reenacts the connection between the divine brothers Osiris and Seth through the blood brothers Julius and Amos who are influenced by the two deities.²³⁰ Carter “hosting” Horus thus negotiates with his father and uncle to ensure the controlling of Set and the “Maat”-structuring by recognizing the administrative legacy of Osiris in the underworld held by his father. In this context Henri Frankfort can be cited who observes that through the joined institution of Horus and Osiris, the separate habitual spaces belonging to the human and the deities are shaped by the Pharaoh.²³¹ Frankfort notes that resurrection is offered to Osiris as he revives on a regular basis, through vegetation, through kingship; Osiris thereby constitutes the “paradox” as a “dead” deity but is simultaneously seen as functioning amidst the living, by partaking in the natural forces of inundation and vegetation, both of which

²²⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 356–357.

²²⁷ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 25.

²²⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 360–365.

²²⁹ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 262–275, 264–369, 1–401.

²³⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

²³¹ Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (1948; reprint, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 42–43, 181–185. See also Anirban Ray, “‘Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment’: An Egyptological Study,” *Teresian Journal of English Studies* 13, no. 3 (July–September 2021), 27–28.

experience ebb and flow.²³² Osiris thus constitutes a twilight identity existing in both the realms of the living and the dead and he is tied with different deities also through his functions between life and demise. It can be argued that Riordan's studies in Osiris-myth incorporate these observations. The entrapped Julius does remain posted as the Osiris-judge in the underworld, implying that the pattern of the myth cannot be overturned; the "host" needs to experience the "hosted" deity's fate.²³³ Just as Re and Osiris divinely and spiritually unite in the Sixth Hour in the *Book of Gates*,²³⁴ Riordan's meticulous studies recontextualize the Ra-Osiris union in the dinner offered by Julius (Osiris) to the senile Ra as he is brought along by the Kane siblings through the "River of Night."²³⁵ Riordan's "Egyptomania" in describing a dinner scene can be seen as a creative recontextualization of Re-Osiris union studied by the Egyptologists.²³⁶

A relief from one side of the throne of Senusret I in the Egyptian Museum Cairo shows Horus and Set binding the heraldic plants of Egypt: lotus representing Horus and Upper Egypt and papyrus representing Set and Lower Egypt, communicating the unity within the "duality" of ancient Egypt.²³⁷ The Egyptologists infer that even though Horus ultimately receives the authority over the "Two Lands," the ancient Egyptians nevertheless venerated Set as a powerful god. Keeping this in mind, it can be argued that Sadie

²³² Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 185.

²³³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508; Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

²³⁴ Erik Hornung and Theodor Abt, trans., *The Egyptian Book of Gates* (Zurich: Living Human Heritage Publications, 2014), 194–232.

²³⁵ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 378–395.

²³⁶ It is perceived as a mystic phenomenon occurring in the Underworld; see Hornung and Abt, *The Egyptian Book of Gates*, 194–232.

²³⁷ See Zahi Hawass and Sandro Vannini, *Inside the Egyptian Museum with Zahi Hawass: Collector's Edition* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 108, quoted in Joan Ann Lansberry, *Images of Set: Changing Impressions of a Multi-Faceted God* (Oxford: Mandrake of Oxford, 2013), 32–33, Fig. 2-1. I have paraphrased the information in the section quoted from Hawass and Vannini by Lansberry. For illustration, and elaboration of the representation, see Joan Ann Lansberry, *Fig 2-1 Senusret I's Throne Side, Showing Set and Horus Uniting the Lands*, in *Images of Set: Changing Impressions of a Multi-Faceted God*, by Joan Ann Lansberry (Oxford: Mandrake of Oxford, 2013), 32; Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 32–33. For the concept of "duality" see also Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 119.

acknowledges Set's power, reminding him of his "lieutenant[ship]" on Ra's boat.²³⁸ Interestingly, through their mother's side, the Kane siblings are descended from the Ramesside dynasty,²³⁹ whose prime ruler Seti I established a personal association with Set.²⁴⁰

Seth always remained as an ambivalent deity for the ancient Egyptians. Erik Hornung cited by Herman Te Velde notes that fearing Seth's malpractices, Seth's fated duties have been mentioned and depicted in the *Book of Amduat* and before him is present the "Eldest Magician" Re.²⁴¹ Hart observes that Isis's logic and persuasion are opposed with Seth's brute force; Seth can easily wield his scepter weighing ("4500 lbs") with which he declares to kill deities if the Divine Court did not decide to deregister Isis's claims against him.²⁴² Set's staff is mentioned in *The Red Pyramid*; Riordan depicts Set's staff as powerful enough to overpower Carter and Zia.²⁴³ Hart notes that balance is maintained after Horus is given his due throne and Seth having been placed in one of the most exalted place in ancient Egyptian mythology: upon the solar barque beside Ra.²⁴⁴ Remembering the myths, Riordan similarly makes Sadie negotiate with Set to engage against Apophis so that Set's position as Ra's defender is kept undisturbed for the sake of "Maat."²⁴⁵ Set, like Bast, has special antagonism against snakes. Joan Ann Lansberry notes that the serpentine opponent is given to Seth since he regularly negates Apophis²⁴⁶; Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger cited in

²³⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 482–485.

²³⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 195.

²⁴⁰ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 20.

²⁴¹ Erik Hornung, *Das Amduat: Die Schrift des Verborgenen Raumes*, vol. 2 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), 131, cited in Te Velde, "The God Heka," 177; Te Velde, "The God Heka," 177.

²⁴² George Hart, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 144.

²⁴³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 451–474.

²⁴⁴ Hart, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, 144–145.

²⁴⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 482–485.

²⁴⁶ Joan Ann Lansberry, *Images of Set: Changing Impressions of a Multi-Faceted God* (Oxford: Mandrake of Oxford, 2013), 118–119.

Lansberry note that this feat shows that the serpent is a powerful bringer of darkness.²⁴⁷ In that level, Seth cannot be entirely evil but can be seen as a protector.²⁴⁸ This nocturnal overpowering of Apophis by Ra (with Set's assistance) is repeated every night, to ensure that his journey continues unhindered and "Maat" is maintained.²⁴⁹

Sadie's encounter with Set in *The Red Pyramid* brings Europe and North America together not only in terms of identification of the locations of the artefacts and magic but also in the interpretation of the "energy grid" spread across the Earth generated by ancient Egyptian-styled structures.²⁵⁰ Set values images despite being an evil god thus even "modern" cities and armies are shown visually under his assault in the internal visual decorations in his "Red Pyramid."²⁵¹ It indicates a different afterlife in a contemporary world and it can be perceived to have followed "sympathetic magic" in application.²⁵² Since the Egyptians believed in the animating powers of art, such images of destruction are carriers of Set's functions.²⁵³ The hieroglyphs in red are contributing chaotic strength; the throne with the coffin in the middle indicates that Set has replaced Osiris.²⁵⁴ Riordan's description of Set's pyramid speaks about the interaction of magic and art: the subject-matters of visuals enhance the impact of the scope/function assigned to the building. Thus Set's Pyramid, with its decorations exhibiting destruction, increases the consolidation of his violent powers.²⁵⁵ Amos influenced by Set is a powerful magician himself through his own learning. The blood carries a genetic ability to remember the memory of cataclysm; thus

²⁴⁷ Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp (Continuum International Publishing Group, 1998), 76–78, cited in Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 118. See Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 118.

²⁴⁸ Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God*, 76–78, cited in Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 118–119. See Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 118–119.

²⁴⁹ Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 123.

²⁵⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

²⁵¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 447.

²⁵² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 447–448.

²⁵³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 447–448.

²⁵⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 448.

²⁵⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 514.

Amos influenced by Set attempts to keep Set at bay through using magical powers.²⁵⁶ Since Amos and Carter (uncle and nephew) are blood related, Set could sense the burning anger of Horus (through/within Carter) which brings Riordan's Carter at harmony with the Egyptian Horus.²⁵⁷ However it is Isis who through Sadie wins against Set by usage of magic and not through brute force.²⁵⁸

5.6 The Benevolent Anomalies: Bes, Taweret and Neith

In the heterogeneous ancient Egyptian pantheon, the incorporation of “differently abled” deities speaks much about the ancient Egyptians’ open-mindedness regarding bodily structures. The Egyptian god Bes plays a very crucial significant role in Riordan’s trilogy, and Riordan has creatively developed the mythic Bes who occupies a register between the majestic deities and the peripheral deities of the ancient Egyptian pantheon.²⁵⁹ It can be argued that Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* provides a brilliant fictional space to the “Others” amidst the ancient Egyptian pantheon contextualized within the Osiris-Ra interactive cosmos to enlist their assistance for the protection of Horus.²⁶⁰ Thus the obscure mythical figures are remodeled as full-fledged characters with a keen balance between humor and devotional fervor felt by practitioners of the ancient Egyptian faith. In ancient Egyptian art and beliefs the dwarf Bes is important for the child Horus, who grows up to be a masculine savior. Despite Horus’s masculinity, the vulnerability of the young male god is a conspicuous element in the ancient Egyptian thought. “Metternich Stela” as Carolyn Graves-Brown notes, has a copious collection “of spells” the subject matter of which addresses Horus’s vulnerabilities following his poisoning.²⁶¹ The sun-association is

²⁵⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 451–457.

²⁵⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 453, 451–464.

²⁵⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 464–485.

²⁵⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 126–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁶⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 126–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁶¹ Carolyn Graves-Brown, *Daemons & Spirits in Ancient Egypt* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018), 49.

perceived in association with Horus as well as Bes; thereby linking one of the highest deities of the pantheon, Horus, associated with royalty, with Bes, the deity of short stature.²⁶² The other powerful goddess is Taweret, depicted in a fearsome, composite manner; thus her role can be instrumental in the study of the “grotesque” in mythology. Carolyn Graves-Brown notes that the hippopotami are supposed to inhabit the celestial expanse in the “northern sky,” and the responsibility of containing Seth’s leg, represented as “a bull’s leg” in Ramesses VI’s “astronomical” tomb-ceiling, is given to “hippopotamus goddess.”²⁶³ Thus despite her hippopotamus-body and aggressive nature, Taweret shares an association with Isis in the controlling of Seth and also in maintaining the stellar distribution in the Northern Sky. Graves-Brown notes that Taweret along with Bes inhabits the “marshes” and through her association with the sow, she either as Taweret or as Ipet, another hippopotamus deity is in charge of safeguarding Horus, according to “Metternich Stela.”²⁶⁴ Riordan thus notes that if the masculine Horus’s strength is required for the preservation of “Maat,” then the dwarf-deity Bes, as well as the hippopotamus deity Taweret are equally required as assistance-givers for the maintenance of “Maat” too, even if they were considered “misfits.”²⁶⁵ Riordan’s imagination makes us connect with the ancient Egyptian illustrations of Bes. Graves-Brown informs that Taweret and Bes are represented together in the mythical illustrations in the New Kingdom²⁶⁶; thus it can be a fruitful exercise to pursue cross-disciplinary studies of mythology, mythical images and their influence on fantasy and mythological fiction.

²⁶² Graves-Brown, *Daemons & Spirits*, 48.

²⁶³ Graves-Brown, *Daemons & Spirits*, 43. See Anirban Ray, “Bram Stoker’s *The Jewel of Seven Stars*: Sexual, Creative and Aesthetic Aspects from Ancient Egyptian Mythology,” in *Theorizing Sexuality in English Literature*, eds. Sunil K. Mishra and Rituparna Mukherjee (Delhi: Upanayan Publications, 2021), 56. See also Bram Stoker, *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1902, 1903; London: W. R. Caldwell, 1904), *Internet Archive*, uploaded by pmcalduff, October 24, 2012, accessed January 22, 2020, archive.org/details/BramStoker-TheJewelOfSevenStars/page/n189/mode/2up.

²⁶⁴ Graves-Brown, *Daemons & Spirits*, 43–49.

²⁶⁵ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 363.

²⁶⁶ Graves-Brown, *Daemons & Spirits*, 42.

Pinch notes that Bes's representations in Egyptian art sometimes include erotically aroused depictions on "obscene gargoyles."²⁶⁷ This eroticized essence can be kept in mind while considering Bes's choice of wearing a speedo with the label "DWARF PRIDE" on it, in *The Kane Chronicles*.²⁶⁸ While speedo can involve both homonormative and heteronormative fetishes and be a sources of desire, the word "pride" when pronounced (without even hinting the capitalization of the initial "P") immediately evokes associations regarding the rights of the "sexual minorities" in the minds of many. However, despite his scary looks, Bes is benevolent in his protective role. Hart notes that in the "Late Period" Stelae, Horus and Bes share a kind of godson-godfather relationship; on some stelae Horus stamping on crocodiles is depicted beneath Bes's head to indicate that Bes watches over his young charge Horus.²⁶⁹ The crocodiles, indicative of the river, remind us of Riordan's description of the London Bridge where Bes takes Sadie to confront Nekhbet and Babi; he also provides her knowledge that watery presence could lower divine potential, enabling Sadie to have an advantage in her confrontation with Nekhbet.²⁷⁰ Bes is also seen travelling with Carter to locate the sleeping Zia in a chamber built under the river bed.²⁷¹ Ayman Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed observes that external threats to the children are thwarted by Bes²⁷² while Taweret undertakes suckling; thus the rearing of the infants and their security are the responsibilities of Taweret and Bes.²⁷³ Keeping in mind the ancient roles of these

²⁶⁷ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 44.

²⁶⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 134–136.

²⁶⁹ Hart, *The Routledge Dictionary of Egyptian Gods and Goddesses*, 50.

²⁷⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 127–140.

²⁷¹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 236–249.

²⁷² Ayman Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed, "Izt The Milk Goddess in Ancient Egyptian Theology," *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists* 2, no. 2 (2017): 29, accessed October 7 2020, https://jguua2.journals.ekb.eg/article_4793_1737073a09c5b8b4740c14fa3d56056d.pdf.

²⁷³ Mohamed, "Izt The Milk Goddess," 29–30.

deities, Riordan brings Bes and Taweret together and depict their concerned safekeeping and protection of the Kane teenager-siblings Carter and Sadie.²⁷⁴

The dwarf aspect of Bes does bear unique responsibilities in the ancient Egyptian beliefs. Véronique Dasen notes that the “great dwarf (*nmw*)” is supposed to guard Horus, according to “The Metternich Stela.”²⁷⁵ Thus it becomes fictionally fitting for Riordan to assign Bes to escort Carter to Zia’s water-covered chamber where Bes also recognizes Re’s “crook and flail”²⁷⁶ indicating Bes’s familiarity with Ra’s authority and emblems. Dasen accounts that the “*udjat*-eye of Horus (or Re)” is worn by a “dwarf god” in “a magical stela in Cairo [Museum]” who gains the ability to counter malevolent forces; “dwarf gods” thus are givers of medical/magical treatment to Horus-identified human children.²⁷⁷ Dasen also interprets Bes as a “liminal” deity, belonging to areas between the supernatural and the terrestrial domains.²⁷⁸ Applying Dasen’s information, it can be argued that in “Duat,” the peripheral, zoomorphic deities from the “Sunny Acres,” the “nursing” place run by Taweret,²⁷⁹ come to the aid of Carter, Sadie, and Zia at Taweret’s bidding to encounter monsters.²⁸⁰ Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* thus provides a mythical account of how the ancient Egyptians included the “Other(s)” and it can be also be seen as an appropriate recontextualization of Riordan’s detailed studies of “liminal” figures in Egyptian mythology.²⁸¹

Pinch mentions that Taweret is provided a “composite” appearance, with body-parts taken from scary animals, but the fearsome appearance is balanced by the hieroglyphic

²⁷⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 351–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

²⁷⁵ Véronique Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt and Greece* (1993; reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 48.

²⁷⁶ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 235–248.

²⁷⁷ Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt*, 53.

²⁷⁸ Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt*, 63.

²⁷⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 351–371.

²⁸⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 308–315.

²⁸¹ Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt*, 63.

safeguarding sign “sa” held by her, indicating the glyph-based identities of the deities conceived in ancient Egyptian consciousness.²⁸² Riordan’s fictional depiction of the Divine romance between the deities Bes and Taweret can be studied with reference to the mythical accounts of their interactions and the artistic depictions of the two in Egyptian art. Taweret along with Bes are also architectonically shown in the shrines’ exterior zones, implying that similarly like the mortal humans, the deities also need shields for the safekeeping of their images/sculptures.²⁸³ This is aptly envisioned in *The Kane Chronicles*: Riordan assigns nursing qualities to Taweret who is in charge of nursing the old and senile deities.²⁸⁴ Taweret’s “old age home” becomes the retiring repository but a different version of the Pharaonic residing places for deities as originally perceived by the Egyptians²⁸⁵ which Riordan recontextualizes.²⁸⁶ Three millennia were the approximate standard span of the Pharaonic civilization according to institutional Egyptology hence the “old age” care is given “AT 3000.”²⁸⁷ Thus Riordan numerically echoes the time-span of the ancient Egyptian civilization with the living age of the deities, as ancient Egyptian deities are no longer worshipped.²⁸⁸ Taweret is given the summing up of the world’s situation²⁸⁹; in this context it can be argued citing Jeremy Naydler’s information that Taweret deserves to be informed because as per her role given in Egyptian mythology she also supports the cosmos in another hippopotamus form.²⁹⁰ Despite being a goddess, even Taweret is unsure about the fates of the deities; she insists that the remembrance of names helps in preserving the life force of

²⁸² Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 39–40.

²⁸³ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 162.

²⁸⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 351–371.

²⁸⁵ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 6–239.

²⁸⁶ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 351–371.

²⁸⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 352.

²⁸⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 351–365.

²⁸⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 353–356.

²⁹⁰ Jeremy Naydler, *Shamanic Wisdom in the Pyramid Texts: The Mystical Tradition of Ancient Egypt* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2005), 262–263.

the deities.²⁹¹ Her lack of insight regarding the fates of the deities is an expression of the discontinuation of ancient Egyptian ethos, because that exists as a mythical corpus, since the specificities are lost.

Riordan's Neith also deserves discussion amidst the *Divine anomalies* siding for "Maat." Barbara S. Lesko notes that the ancient Egyptians credited Neith as one of the earliest deities engaged in the Egyptian accounts of the Creation of the Universe.²⁹² Re is mothered by her and all things (both organic and material) are her heart-born.²⁹³ She is thus a parthenogenetic originator of beings; a supreme deity containing within her the capacity of sustaining the Cosmos. B. S. Lesko notes that Neith's single role in generating the deities earns the double parental roles of "[the] Father and [the] Mother" in the Egyptian mindset which needs to be considered along with her "androgynous" form.²⁹⁴ Riordan fictionalizes this brilliantly through Sadie's perception: Neith emits a mixed aura of a fighter/warrior and a female model.²⁹⁵ B. S. Lesko observes that Neith is also venerated in her role as the shooter of arrows at the opponents of Re to ensure his safe passage.²⁹⁶ This implies that the perception of that all-creative and defensive force still remains recognized within the female physical form in the Egyptian material art. B. S. Lesko mentions that even the mythological Text "Contendings of Horus and Seth" stresses the goddess Neith's "advice" sought by the deities, venerating her appearance as preceding over the other divinities; her position is unquestioned, and she is fully capable of providing her opinions regarding the Egyptian throne's rightful association with Horus.²⁹⁷ As G. Harris informs, the security of the world at stake needed Neith's participation according to ancient Egyptian mythical thought, and she

²⁹¹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 358–359.

²⁹² Barbara S. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses of Egypt* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1999), 62.

²⁹³ B. S. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses*, 62.

²⁹⁴ B. S. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses*, 62.

²⁹⁵ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 250.

²⁹⁶ B. S. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses*, 62.

²⁹⁷ B. S. Lesko, *The Great Goddesses*, 57.

was shown arguing in favor of Horus regarding his rightful kingship, since she herself is an astute supporter of “Maat.”²⁹⁸ It can be argued thus that the enlisting of Neith in the Kaness’ war against Apophis and the dark magicians is justified as the Creator goddess Neith would never let “Isfet” (Chaos) gain strength over “Maat” (Order).²⁹⁹ Dasen mentions that Neith too is dreaded in terms of her fighter-“attributes”; thus the dwarfs and Neith are connected in terms of warlike attitude.³⁰⁰ Citing Ramadan El-Sayed, Dasen notes that Neith is supposed to have rapport with “dwarf gods” in the Egyptian pantheon.³⁰¹ Thus the ancient Egyptians were able to link one of the highest Creator deities with the peripheral ones. Keeping such magnanimity of the ancient Egyptian thought in mind, it can be argued that Riordan makes Taweret express gratitude for Neith and remembers her happy days with Bes in Neith’s estate.³⁰²

5.7 Bast

Felines are actively connected with the maintenance of “Maat” in Egyptian mythology, and Riordan stays true to the account of Bast battling Apophis as per mythical accounts.³⁰³ M. Oldfield Howey notes that Ra has strong ties with Bast³⁰⁴ and a sense of force is manifested in the name “Bast,” meaning the one who shreds something to pieces.³⁰⁵ Howey informs that in hieroglyphs and visual representations the cat is designated as Bast’s “emblem,” but the lion-“sign” is linked with Bast’s hieroglyphic name; she thereby unites the two feline species.³⁰⁶ It can be argued that this conflation is noticed in *The Kane Chronicles*: Riordan’s Bast explains to Sadie and Carter ruefully that believers often do not

²⁹⁸ G. Harris, *Gods and Pharaohs*, 44.

²⁹⁹ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 250–265, 250–401.

³⁰⁰ Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt*, 51.

³⁰¹ Dasen, *Dwarfs in Ancient Egypt*, 30, 51. See also Ramadan El-Sayed, *La Déesse Neith de Saïs, Importance et Rayonnement du Son Culte*, vol. I (Cairo: IFAO, 1982), 10–11.

³⁰² Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 167–170.

³⁰³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 324–328.

³⁰⁴ M. Oldfield Howey, *The Cat in Magic and Myth* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 2003), 15.

³⁰⁵ Howey, *The Cat in Magic*, 17.

³⁰⁶ Howey, *The Cat in Magic*, 17.

realize that it is she the cat (and not the Sekhmet-lioness) that battles Apophis.³⁰⁷ The cat and the sun are integrally linked; Ra's nocturnal journey is reflected in the feline vision, after sunset.³⁰⁸ The docile cat however can be powerful; Howey mentions that Bast's title "the Tearer" originates from the violent battle she engages in with Apophis while she utilizes the solar "light" embodied within her nocturnally active lunar feline persona.³⁰⁹ Bast thus accompanies Carter and Sadie as their protectress in the nocturnal river journey, which is also the route of the sun god.³¹⁰

The feline deities have encompassed both the genders in function and temperament. James Allen Baldwin notes that while Amun or Re and the "male cats" are mutually connected, Bast and the "[f]emale cats" are held connected in terms of "fertility."³¹¹ Citing H. Bonnet, Geraldine Pinch mentions Hathor, who is one of the candidates for the identification of "The Great Cat"³¹² by whose attack "the chaos serpent" is killed.³¹³ Thus an empirical observation on predation is contextualized as a Divine Act necessitated for the preservation of "Maat." Pinch notes that through the "leonine" imagery, Hathor is similar to "Sekhmet, Bastet and Tefnut" and the feline as well as the leonine are animal manifestations to connote the aggressive and the softer aspects respectively.³¹⁴

Riordan's Bast mentions to Sadie and Carter that Sekhmet was later replaced since her aggressive form also threatens Order even though Sekhmet is actually a guardian of

³⁰⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 325.

³⁰⁸ Howey, *The Cat in Magic*, 20.

³⁰⁹ Howey, *The Cat in Magic*, 20. See also Ray, "Ancient Egyptian 'Ished' Tree," 164.

³¹⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 320–351.

³¹¹ James Allen Baldwin, "Notes and Speculations on the Domestication of the Cat in Egypt," *Anthropos* 70, no. 3/4 (1975): 438, accessed January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40458771>.

³¹² Quoted in Geraldine Pinch, "Offerings to Hathor," *Folklore* 93, no. 2 (1982): 143, accessed November 13, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/1259934.

³¹³ Pinch, "Offerings," 143. See also Hans Bonnet, *Reallexicon der Ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1952), 277–282.

³¹⁴ Pinch, "Offerings," 143.

“Maat.”³¹⁵ Peter le Page Renouf cited by Baldwin observes that there is an onomatopoeic similarity in the hieroglyphic vocabulary noticed between the words “cat and light” which results in Bast carrying the sun-significance.³¹⁶ Riordan’s Bast thus could be justified in staying devoted to Ra, and Riordan’s Bast possesses sufficient knowledge regarding the photonic qualities of her sun-lord.³¹⁷ Bast also is well acquainted with architectural symbolism; the Kane siblings learn from her that the Washington Monument is a great resource power linked with ancient Egypt beyond Egypt.³¹⁸ The portal-access involves huge energy consumption³¹⁹; this knowledge is crucial as it is seen that Sadie controlling Set by staging her confrontation with him in the vicinity of the “Washington Monument.”³²⁰

5.8 “Maat” and Obelisk

Each ancient Egyptian religious monument, in terms of its entrance, its pylons, its courtyard, its assemblage of columns and inner sanctuary, in terms of its dense network of reliefs and hieroglyphic texts implies the need for the balance of “Maat” by visually conveying the pharaohs’ meticulous execution of obligations as expected by the deities. Such intricately planned structures emit holiness and divine aura. Bast observes that ancient Egypt has her own architectonic essence which makes power harvesting possible irrespective of the building’s location even in places beyond Egypt or in the times even after the cessation of Pharaonic culture; thus symbols stand for absolute essence.³²¹ Out of the different specimens and types of Egyptian architecture, the obelisk is an icon of power; as Bast explains, the obelisk is able to consolidate energy transmission, being a solidified

³¹⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 325. See also Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 187–188.

³¹⁶ Peter Le Page Renouf, *The Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated by the Religion of Ancient Egypt* [Hibbert Lectures, New York, 1879] (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1880), 247, cited in Baldwin, “Notes and Speculations,” 438; Baldwin, “Notes and Speculations,” 438.

³¹⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 242–243.

³¹⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 239.

³¹⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 239.

³²⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 473–485.

³²¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 239–242.

manifestation of Ra's photonic energy.³²² The obelisk enables the containment of the gods; it is also regarded as a communication and energy exposition device.³²³

Riordan's penchant for Osiris reminds us that besides the Pyramids and the obelisk tend to be recurring icons of Egypt in Western films featuring "Egyptomania." In the epic-movie *The Ten Commandments*, the director Cecil B. DeMille depicts the verbal confrontation between Moses (played by Charlton Heston) and Seti (played by Sir Cedric Hardwicke) while Moses is busy supervising the installation of the obelisk.³²⁴ Once it is safely erected, Moses explains to Seti that the Hebrew slaves need to be taken care of humanely, since Egypt's architectural wonders are being built with their labor.³²⁵ In the historic biopic *Cleopatra* (1999), directed by Franc Roddam and adapted from Margaret George's *The Memoirs of Cleopatra*, Cleopatra VII (played by Leonor Varela) is seen being led to the sun-shrine's auspicious obelisk which houses the cobra³²⁶ which will eventually aid her in her suicide.³²⁷ In the mythical retelling of Horus-Set conflict in the film *The Gods of Egypt* (directed by Alex Proyas) Set (played by Gerard Butler) is shown as a commissioner of obelisk, much like Riordan's Set raising his "Red Pyramid" in *The Red Pyramid*, who is raising an obelisk as a sign of his authority which ultimately is destroyed in the scuffle between Set and Horus (played by Nikolaj Coster-Waldau).³²⁸ Thus the Egyptian obelisk tends to be prominent in Western imagination as (i) a sign of Egyptian engineering skill and labor, as (ii) a sign of balance, or (iii) as "destiny" or (iv) most importantly - power.

³²² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 239–242.

³²³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 239, 242–243.

³²⁴ Cecil Blount DeMille, dir., *The Ten Commandments* (1956; Hollywood, California: Paramount Pictures, 1999), Film DVD.

³²⁵ DeMille, *The Ten Commandments*.

³²⁶ Franc Roddam, dir., *Cleopatra*, based on *The Memoirs of Cleopatra* by Margaret George, 2 Episodes (Los Angeles, California: Hallmark Entertainment, 1999), Film. The mentioned scene occurs in the 2nd Episode.

³²⁷ Roddam, *Cleopatra*, Episode 2.

³²⁸ Alex Proyas, dir., *Gods of Egypt*, written by Matt Sazama and Burk Sharpless (Santa Monica, California: Thunder Road Pictures, Mystery Clock Cinema, and Summit Entertainment, 2016), Film.

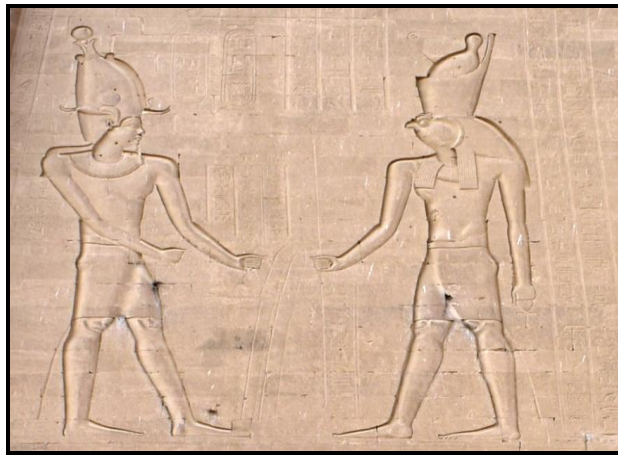


Figure 5.6 Pharaoh Installing Obelisks before Horus

In the image above, a relief from the West Pylon of the Temple of Horus, Edfu, shows two obelisks being installed by Pharaoh and witnessed by Horus. Placing the obelisk indicates the association established between the Horus-principle and the Atum-principle. The “pyramidion” at the top of the obelisk evokes (i) “*benben*,” the first “Mound” and Atum were connected, representing Order rising over Nun, the chaotic primordial ocean,³²⁹ and (ii) Horus’s establishing of “Maat” by uniting Egypt and subduing Set. The cosmic moment of Creation conceived by the Pharaonic Egyptians was so influential that the Ptolemaic builders of the Edfu Temple decided to honor and repeat its timelessness by incorporating this significant scene in their Horus Temple in Edfu. It can be argued that Riordan establishes this timelessness of the Egyptian obelisk in *The Kane Chronicles* as (i) a solar icon, and (ii) as a “Maat”-principle. Thus Sadie can (i) discipline Set before the Obelisk of the “Washington Monument” in Washington D.C., USA,³³⁰ as well as (ii) take Apophis’s shadow in custody, which is bound by the illuminated obelisk in “Duat” upon the Primordial Mound “benben” surrounded by the chaotic aquatic mass.³³¹ Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

³²⁹ Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology*, 180–181.

³³⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 475–485.

³³¹ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 296–310.

The ancient Egyptians believed that the Divine essence dwells in the shape, structure and declaration of the architecture. Fekri A. Hassan notes that the solar identities of sunrise and sunset, represented by Ra and Atum respectively, are the beneficiaries of the obelisks, thus the sun is essential in the symbolism of the obelisk.³³² F. A. Hassan notes that the Heliopolitan “*benben*” stone is integral, since “the mount of creation” as well as the solar rays are thought to be connoted by the sacred stone.³³³ The obelisks tend to be carriers of “Egyptomania” as they are portable artifacts. It was believed, as F. A. Hassan informs us, that when a non-Egyptian culture placed an Egyptian obelisk in their space, the hieroglyphs carved on the displaced obelisk resulted in the transmission of the Egyptian “wisdom” to its new place.³³⁴ For example, F. A. Hassan explains that the esoteric “knowledge” was supposed to be carried through the inscribed symbols on the revered obelisks.³³⁵ It can be argued, keeping the above belief in mind, that the “Cleopatra’s Needle” in London finds a prominent role in *The Red Pyramid* since (i) Ruby’s last memories are connected with it and (ii) Bast is temporarily emancipated from her fight with Apophis, a unique imagining by Riordan in terms of justice meted out to a selfless goddess by a human.³³⁶ This decision by the Kanes can also be argued as an act of “Maat” since Bast was rather unrecognized for her continued self-sacrifice.³³⁷ The “Cleopatra’s Needle” is a significant object of “Egyptomania” and is thus a memory-signifier of Pharaonic Egypt. Robert Lomas notes that in 1878, graced by Bro. Dr. Erasmus Wilson’s “Masonic ceremony,” the “Cleopatra’s Needle” saw its installation in London, its transportation financed by Bro. Dr. Erasmus

³³² Fekri A. Hassan, “Imperialist Appropriations of Egyptian Obelisks,” in *View of Ancient Egypt since Napoleon Bonaparte: Imperialism, Colonialism and Modern Appropriations*, ed. David Jeffreys (London: UCL Press, 2003), 27.

³³³ F. A. Hassan, “Imperialist Appropriations of Egyptian Obelisks,” 27.

³³⁴ F. A. Hassan, “Imperialist Appropriations of Egyptian Obelisks,” 58.

³³⁵ F. A. Hassan, “Imperialist Appropriations of Egyptian Obelisks,” 58.

³³⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 242–245, 321–328.

³³⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 321–328.

Wilson.³³⁸ Brier informs that keeping the Egyptian practice of placing buildings, usually temples, at the back of obelisks, the “Houses of Parliament” as the backdrop was chosen for the placement of “Cleopatra’s Needle.”³³⁹ Similarly, as Lomas notes, in 1880 New York’s Central Park saw the installation of the obelisk under the supervision of Jesse B. Anthony.³⁴⁰ Lomas accounts that the “Masonic” philosophy employed the two obelisks to usher a bonding between the American and the British people; the reconciliation between the two nations by means of obelisks seemed to echo the symbolism behind the ancient obelisks in glorifying the closely tied identities of the Upper and the Lower Egypt; these obelisks were installed in Alexandria, and moved there from the ancient Heliopolis.³⁴¹ Thus it can be argued that since the obelisks are linked with Egypt’s ancient glory, Riordan places the illuminated obelisk as the object of “Maat” in “Duat,” and Sadie must utilize the powers of the magical essence of the obelisk to restore “Maat” by uttering the spell for the excretion of Apophis.³⁴² Thus it can be perceived that the relevance of ancient Egyptian architecture is validated in the Euro-American architecture behind buildings of public interest. Thus “Masonic” knowledge has assisted in the preservation of Egyptian symbolism traced back to the cult of Isis and the sun, and it becomes useful as a strategy for Sadie, who with the essence of Isis “hosted” within her, disciplines Set within the power grid of the “Washington Monument,” with the obelisk as the witness and carrier of “Maat.”³⁴³

The connection between Isis whose powers are used by Sadie and the obelisk requires elaboration. David Ovason mentions that the observation of the horoscope as well as the “stellar magic” was considered important by the ancient Egyptians in connection with

³³⁸ Robert Lomas, *The Secret Power of Masonic Symbols: The Influence of Ancient Symbols on the Pivotal Moments in History and an Encyclopedia of All the Key Masonic Symbols* (Beverly, MA: Fair Winds Press, 2011), 109.

³³⁹ Brier, *Egyptomania*, 95–96, 81–100.

³⁴⁰ Lomas, *The Secret Power of Masonic Symbols*, 109.

³⁴¹ Lomas, *The Secret Power of Masonic Symbols*, 108–109.

³⁴² Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 296–310, 368–372, 1–401.

³⁴³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 241, 238–239, 473–485.

architectural projects; these were also considered important during the erection of the “Washington Monument.”³⁴⁴ Ovason notes that the shadow of the ancient Egyptian architectural essence is felt in Washington D.C. through the obelisk despite its “American”-ness,³⁴⁵ meaning that Egyptian symbolism remains a constant presence. Thus it can be argued that the American realization of freedom and justice were aligned with ancient Egyptian perception of stars and destiny. Egyptian beliefs, as Ovason notes, are retained by the observed “stellar event” coinciding with its installation.³⁴⁶ Ovason informs us that Isis in terms of “wisdom” and Anubis as canine were considered in connection with Sirius, the “*Canis Major*” constellation as the Romans termed it.³⁴⁷ On the basis of the Divine connection, it can be argued that since Egyptian memory is strongly centered on the “Washington Monument,” Sadie could harness the “Maat”-power consolidated by its Obelisk-shape and temporal significance despite being spatially distanced from Egypt.³⁴⁸ It is remarkable thus, how the obelisk could be used for setting Bast free.³⁴⁹ Since Sirius is linked with Isis,³⁵⁰ Sadie is able to interpret the magical potential of the obelisk by confronting Seth and breaking his “Red Pyramid” in the sacred magical vicinity of the “Washington Monument,” using the power emanating from the Obelisk.³⁵¹

5.9 Relevance of Mythology and Magic Retold

Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* can be studied by the young adult readers not only for an introduction to the Heliopolitan and Osirian mythologies but also for an understanding of the “reception” of ancient Egypt in terms of archaeology and adventure in

³⁴⁴ David Ovason, *Lost Symbols?: The Secrets of Washington, D.C* (1999; reprint, London: Arrow Books, 2009), 158–173.

³⁴⁵ Ovason, *Lost Symbols?*, 164.

³⁴⁶ Ovason, *Lost Symbols?*, 166.

³⁴⁷ Ovason, *Lost Symbols?*, 171–173.

³⁴⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 241, 238–239, 473–485.

³⁴⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 321–328.

³⁵⁰ Ovason, *Lost Symbols?*, 171–173.

³⁵¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 238–239, 441–485.

the Western mindset/fictional imagination. This can also be seen as a parallel experience to the recreated world in electronic games and enjoyment of filmic adaptations of superheroes, in which magic/deities, technology/mutation exist. Riordan has explored the Osiris-Ra connection keeping the solar and funerary concepts alive in fiction, since these concepts are also influential in the background of the plots of mummy-films and the mummy-obsession. Throughout ancient Egyptian history, Osiris's and Ra's importance never diminished. J. Gwyn Griffiths notes that the ancient Egyptian authority is represented through Horus's (son of Osiris) eye.³⁵² Frankfort observes that Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephthys help link humankind with Nature; the throne is personified through Isis, while each living pharaoh is the terrestrial counterpart of Horus who follows the deceased father having become an Osiris.³⁵³ This is a unique contextualization of the Divine Family in the human world and kinship. Riordan has thus retold the Divine Family myths through reuniting the members in a family narrative which young adult readers can relate to.

Humans remain central in Riordan's fiction which we can link to the Egyptian initiation, to the Divine through human contemplation. Magic practiced by humans too remains crucial in ancient Egyptian religion and in Riordan's fiction. Eleanor L. Harris observes that, to ensure the security of Ra and to keep his voyage unhindered, human assistance in terms of magic from priesthood was given.³⁵⁴ Magic, as E. L. Harris intriguingly notes, involves neurons and they transmit extensive perception and use of "symbols" and "images"; the left and right hemispheres of ancient Egyptian practitioners' brains worked simultaneously in usage of hieroglyphs.³⁵⁵ Riordan shows cerebral faculties working in response to magic; "hieroglyphic" words are given stable realistic appearances

³⁵² John Gwyn Griffiths, *The Origins of Osiris and His Cult* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 179.

³⁵³ Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 42–43, 172, 182–183.

³⁵⁴ Eleanor L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Magic* (Newburyport, MA: Weiser Books, 2015), 167–168.

³⁵⁵ E. L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 159.

hence magicians are able to interpret the word “*shesh*” as conveying the associations through writing exercise.³⁵⁶ It is mostly applicable with hieroglyphs because “Maat” builds herself on it.³⁵⁷ In Egyptian beliefs, writer/artist of hieroglyphs and art delivers life-force considerably to a pictured being³⁵⁸; this animating faculty is Egyptologically relevant keeping in mind Brier’s discussion of ancient Egyptian magic in representations of animals in texts in which “mutilated” bodies are shown because of the possibility of them getting awakened by virtue of magic.³⁵⁹ Magic is thus picture-based; the ultimate objective in magic is to transmute the spoken to a manifested form, which Iskander is able to do – that is, image turning spoken “language” into real objects.³⁶⁰ The usage of magic is also gene-facilitated: the genetic combination is essential for divine “host[ing],” and the Kane siblings by birth have magical powers.³⁶¹ Riordan remembering the training of ancient Egyptian priests portrays the Egyptian initiation of scribes and magicians in *The Kane Chronicles*, thereby acquainting his readers with ancient Egyptian beliefs in the cosmic power latent in words and magic.

The act of creation as per ancient Egyptian mythology, as Herman Te Velde notes, is carried forth through “the word,” which possesses a “mysterious” energy; this “energy,” distinguished from the “word of creation” is termed “Heka.”³⁶² There is also destructive “creative energy” which needs to be bound properly, thus “Maat” must be coordinated with Heka’s function.³⁶³ In this regard it can be noted that Sadie’s learning of hieroglyphs reminds her of the neural exhaustion that magic caused by hieroglyphs might bring about,³⁶⁴

³⁵⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 187.

³⁵⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 187.

³⁵⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 188.

³⁵⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 187–188. See also Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 118.

³⁶⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 189.

³⁶¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 194–195.

³⁶² Te Velde, “The God Heka,” 184.

³⁶³ Te Velde, “The God Heka,” 184–185.

³⁶⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 87–88; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 26–28.

and as Iskander points out, the images of deities, with hypnotizing impact can be dangerous to the human viewers.³⁶⁵ Te Velde notes that the ancient Egyptian sages stressed that “Maat”-practice is superior than Heka’s usage³⁶⁶ and access to magical faculties or perceptions through dreams are special privileges reserved for selected individuals.³⁶⁷ Thus magic only for the sake of “Maat” and not pursued for personal gain remains as the constant moral force for the Kane siblings and because of their innate ability, both Carter and Sadie can travel in dreams in their “*ba*” manifestations.³⁶⁸

By developing a fiction in connection with the “House of Life” Riordan has revived the interest in the most venerated of the Pharaonic institutions.³⁶⁹ Maarten J. Raven informs that learning and veneration of the divine were combined in the “House of Life.”³⁷⁰ The animation of sculpted images proves that art in ancient Egypt involved magic and craft; the priesthood and the artists were both required for the idealization of the divine.³⁷¹ Magic and Heka are contextualized in art with the prominent deities of the Egyptian pantheon. Geraldine Pinch cited by E. L. Harris notes that the “House of Life” disseminated texts as well as provided training for magic.³⁷² Magic is both energy and material; a “script” is required for the completion of the mechanism of the spell.³⁷³ In argument, the glyphs written with ink on foreheads protecting Sadie and Carter in the subterranean “Lake of Fire” can be considered.³⁷⁴

³⁶⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 169–182.

³⁶⁶ Te Velde, “The God Heka,” 185.

³⁶⁷ Te Velde, “The God Heka,” 185–186.

³⁶⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 169–182, 273–278.

³⁶⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

³⁷⁰ Maarten J. Raven, *Egyptian Magic: The Quest for Thoth’s Book of Secrets* (Cairo and New York: The American University in Cairo Press, 2012), 33.

³⁷¹ Raven, *Egyptian Magic*, 33.

³⁷² Geraldine Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995), 52, cited in E. L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 96; E. L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 96.

³⁷³ E. L. Harris, *Ancient Egyptian Magic*, 96.

³⁷⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 344–349.

Riordan's trilogy also has revived the mythical corpus of the Horus-Seth conflict which had been anthropologically linked with the unifying political history of dynastic Egypt where communities and cities were symbolically represented with creatures and weapons. Griffiths observes that Edfu might be equivalent to the ancient "Harpoon-city"³⁷⁵ as observed by Kurt Sethe.³⁷⁶ Hermann Kees cited by Griffiths has also noted that the "harpoon myth" connects the falcon, the hippopotamus, as well as the crocodile; it involves the rise of the falcon against the "Sethian" spots of veneration.³⁷⁷ Thus strong animal-motifs are connected with the Horus-Seth conflict. Animal-human co-functioning remains strong in the balance of "Maat."



Figure 5.7 Ramesses II before Osiris, Isis, and Horus

In the image above, a relief from the "First Hypostyle Hall" of Temple of Seti I, Abydos shows Osiris, Isis and Horus as beneficiaries of offerings from Ramesses II.³⁷⁸ The king makes an elaborate offering: upon a plate there is a kneeling image of him holding a

³⁷⁵ Quoted in John Gwyn Griffiths, "The Interpretation of the Horus-Myth of Edfu," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 44 (December 1958): 76, accessed 16 January 16, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3855067>.

³⁷⁶ Griffiths, "The Interpretation of the Horus-myth," 76.

³⁷⁷ Hermann Kees, "Kultlegende und Urgeschichte. Grundsätzliche Bemerkungen zum Horusmythos von Edfu," in *Nachrichten von der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* (Philol. - hist. Kl., Berlin, 1930), 355, cited in Griffiths, "The Interpretation of the Horus-myth," 76. Griffiths elaborates the information, see Griffiths, "The Interpretation of the Horus-myth," 76.

³⁷⁸ David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos*, 21, 26.

pillar that supports Ra's/Horus's falcon-head bearing the solar disk.³⁷⁹ It is an interesting example of "meta-art," meaning that the relief of the pharaoh on the wall holds an etched miniature self which is also in the act of offering.³⁸⁰ The Ra/Horus-principle is offered to Osiris; it can be noted here that the Ra as well as Osiris unite in the Sixth Hour of Amduat in the Underworld-transit of Ra towards sunrise representing life and repetition of "Maat."³⁸¹ In front of Ramesses II a recumbent jackal upon a shrine can be seen. Isis stands apparently behind Osiris raising her right hand in the gesture of protection; following Mehler it can be observed that in ancient Egyptian art occasionally the goddesses, the wives, and the queens stand behind their male partners but this should not be misinterpreted as passive or secondary position; this actually means that the female principle watches over and supports the male.³⁸² Horus on the left and Ramesses II on the right indicate the celestial and terrestrial successors of Osiris respectively. This may be linked with Riordan's Carter, who along with Horus represents authority in the terrestrial level through "Brooklyn House" and the "House of Life."³⁸³ Horus departs with his celestial authority; Carter's parents Julius and Ruby fulfill the roles of Osiris and Isis respectively in "Duat."³⁸⁴ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

The Osiris-connection is the next important feature revisited/recontextualized by Riordan. Osiris is one of the most individualized deities linked with the states of human transition through life, death, and resurrection. Thus every man can reach the state of Osiris; every woman as Isis and every son as Horus can strive for the everlasting association with the husband and father Osiris. The realization of "Maat" involves each family forming the

³⁷⁹ David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos*, 21, 26.

³⁸⁰ David, *A Guide to Religious Ritual at Abydos*, 21, 26.

³⁸¹ Hornung and Abt, *The Egyptian Book of Gates*, 194–232.

³⁸² Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 42–45.

³⁸³ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 429–437; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 385–396.

³⁸⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

nation and life of Egypt. It is interesting to note here in this regard, that Riordan imagines the space of the dining (where Sadie and Carter dine in the Underworld with their parents Julius and Ruby with Ra in the company) as the siblings' childhood house in the territorial United States of America.³⁸⁵ Thus ancient Egypt is a memory, a familial memory which can be connected with every family and every individual and magic makes this reunion possible. Pinch mentions that “*heka*” is thought to be present in (i) the demised (like Julius and Ruby); in (ii) the “differently [built] abled” people like the dwarfs, and (iii) would spontaneously belong to the Pharaohs,³⁸⁶ as Sadie and Carter possess Pharaonic blood.³⁸⁷ “Maat” as Pinch notes after observing Isis's agency, is not the liability of the deities only; human cooperation too is required for its maintenance, implying that divine-human interactions are kinds of “contracts” through the means of which the cosmos survives.³⁸⁸ This is exactly Riordan's beautiful philosophy expressed through *The Kane Chronicles*: the revival of ancient Egypt is possible through the “House of Life[’s]” reunion between deities and humans.³⁸⁹ Thomas Georg Allen's translation from the *Book of the Dead* cited by Leonard H. Lesko informs us that Osiris represents the things past, while the future state rests with Re, whose realm is to be entrusted to Horus following the annihilation of his opponents.³⁹⁰ It can be argued that this Osiris-Horus-Re connection is also felt in *The Kane Chronicles*. Julius undertakes Osiris's role, so that ancient judgment of the dead in the Egyptian manner continues.³⁹¹ Carter as the earthly/human Horus establishes the authority

³⁸⁵ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 378–383.

³⁸⁶ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 11–12.

³⁸⁷ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 73.

³⁸⁸ Pinch, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 146.

³⁸⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

³⁹⁰ Leonard H. Lesko, “Ancient Egyptian Cosmogonies and Cosmology,” in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 113. See also Thomas George Allen, *The Book of the Dead, or Going Forth by Day, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 37 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 26–32.

³⁹¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508.

by re-starting the solar cycle, that is, the reviving of Ra by Sadie, so that the blessed future existence could experience the solar essence of Ra.³⁹²

By recreating the “House of Life” in fiction, Riordan re-establishes the importance of the Egyptian deities as bestowers of knowledge to the humans. Alan H. Gardiner notes that the medical profession is closely linked with the “House of Life” because the physicians held expertise over the pronunciation and writing of glyphs, since formulae against illness were used as incantations.³⁹³ Gardiner citing *Papyrus Leiden* informs us that the texts of magic are supposed to be co-authored by Thoth and “Horus in *Šnwt*,”³⁹⁴; the latter’s epithet is also “the prince of books”³⁹⁵ as Gardiner informs.³⁹⁶ Thus Horus, besides his warrior-aspect, is also connected with texts; in this regard it can be remembered that in *The Mummy* (discussed in Chapter Two), the *Book of Amun Ra* required for subduing Imhotep is placed under the Horus-statue.³⁹⁷ Gardiner notes that in ‘Ankhefenamūn’s coffin, Isis is attributed the feminine guardianship over “House of Life”³⁹⁸ and she is also seen as a resident of the mummification-space, called the “Beautiful House.”³⁹⁹ In argument it can be mentioned that Sadie (Isis) and Carter (Horus) also incorporate a library of magic spells in the “Brooklyn House.”⁴⁰⁰ Gardiner recounts that the spiritual essence of the sun god Rē‘ was supposed to be seen as manifested in the material text produced by a scribe⁴⁰¹; this becomes significant when Sadie is perceived as a medium/scribe. She is able to reinstall vitality in Ra uttering

³⁹² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

³⁹³ Alan H. Gardiner, “The House of Life,” *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 24, no. 2 (December 1938): 158, 157–179, accessed July 18, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3854786>.

³⁹⁴ Quoted in Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 164.

³⁹⁵ Quoted in Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 164.

³⁹⁶ Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 164.

³⁹⁷ Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001), 98, 191–195.

³⁹⁸ Quoted in Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 165.

³⁹⁹ Quoted in Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 165; Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 165.

⁴⁰⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 83–103.

⁴⁰¹ Gardiner, “The House of Life,” 168. Gardiner has given the spelling of “Ra” as “Rē.”

words from the “Book of Ra.”⁴⁰² Thus Riordan effectively captures the ancient Egyptian association between writing and power, which can restore even the deities themselves.

Riordan’s “Duat,” the Underworld, also is fictional re-creation of the ambience of the Pharaonic ideas regarding the afterlife. In *The Kane Chronicles*, it seems that everyone can pass away like an ancient Egyptian, and each person’s fate is oriented with ancient Egypt. This perception is also prevalent in Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra* (discussed in chapter Three), in which each person of the world is destined for the ancient Egyptian Afterlife, hoping to reach the “Fields of Iaru.”⁴⁰³ Ra’s celestial circuit through Egyptian boat-movement is also maintained in *The Kane Chronicles*.⁴⁰⁴ The maintenance of “Maat” is made possible through the Egyptian Underworld. In “Duat” the laws of ancient Egypt manifest; Carter and Sadie require to go to combat in the garbs of ancient Egyptians.⁴⁰⁵ Egypt becomes the universal consciousness; the “psycho-cartography” becomes ancient Egyptian.⁴⁰⁶ Thus after Apophis is removed, Ra is revived, and Horus is crowned, the world is also safe, and initiates from all around the globe are asked to learn ancient Egyptian magic in “Brooklyn House” to maintain “Maat.”⁴⁰⁷

5.10 Ancient Egypt and the World

It can be argued that amidst the ancient Egyptians, the perception of their nation was visceral in many registers. Michael Rice notes that the Pharaoh constitutes ancient Egypt’s self; his identity and actions held the lives of all ancient Egyptians together, and their individualities were contained within him and his office.⁴⁰⁸ The kingship was codified, but

⁴⁰² Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 365–371.

⁴⁰³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 181–187.

⁴⁰⁴ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴⁰⁵ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 331–332.

⁴⁰⁶ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 337–338.

⁴⁰⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴⁰⁸ Michael Rice, *Egypt’s Making: The Origins of Ancient Egypt 5000–2000 BC*, 2nd ed. (1990; reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 264.

the applications of beliefs were fluid. Rice perceives that this all-encompassing Pharaonic entitlement later got diffused with the hope of the afterlife extended over all social strata, and Osiris-state being attributed to each person following demise.⁴⁰⁹ Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* perceives similar democratization; thus the American Julius Kane could take over the role of Osiris as the "Judge of the Dead"⁴¹⁰ and Carter could function as the counterpart to Horus's Pharaonic authority for the sake of "Maat."⁴¹¹ In the three novels, the Kane siblings' journeys to the Judgment Hall and through "Duat" also form a psychic journey for perceiving ancient Egypt and her psychosomatic essence.⁴¹² Ancient Egyptian territories are reflected and integrated in their arts and beliefs. The "physical" Egyptian terrain, as Naydler observes, was mirrored in the "Hall of Maat" where the "forty-two deities" stand for a humanized geography of Kemet (ancient Egypt) divided into "forty-two regions."⁴¹³ Naydler perceives that ancient Egypt, hailed as the region of the Divine, projects the "psychospiritual[ity]" in the "Judgment Hall" whose examination of morality seems to reflect "moral geography" of native Kemet.⁴¹⁴ Thus it is the heart-bound journey towards self-knowledge that is the sum total of the perilous Underworld transit.⁴¹⁵ Thus the ancient Egyptians' love for their nation was integrated and consolidated, and their entire world was seen as encapsulated through only ancient Egypt, including the fates in the Afterlife in the ancient Egyptian mode. Thus despite building a fictional world through "Egyptomania," Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* also can be perceived by young scholars/readers aspiring to pursue Egyptology since the Trilogy projects an encompassing view of the ancient Egyptian concepts of life, death, the underworld and the role of the deities in maintaining "Maat" and

⁴⁰⁹ Rice, *Egypt's Making*, 265.

⁴¹⁰ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 390, 498–508; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 390.

⁴¹¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 429–437.

⁴¹² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴¹³ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 263, fig. 12.1.

⁴¹⁴ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 265, 263–265.

⁴¹⁵ Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos*, 250.

also the integrity between living, demise, and the eternal wish of resurrection in Osiris's domain.⁴¹⁶ The legacy of such a worldview still inspires (i) scholarship as well as (ii) zealous groups even when the Pharaonic culture had ceased more than two millennia ago, and hence it is still relevant.



Figure 5.8 Ramesses II between Seth and Horus

In the image above, a relief from Temple of Nefertari in Abu Simbel shows Ramesses II crowned by Seth and Horus. Not only are the two deities equally responsible for nominating Ramesses II for the authority over the “Two Lands” represented by the composite double crown (“pschent”) of Upper and Lower Egypt⁴¹⁷ over Ramesses II's head, it is also noteworthy that this relief appears in Nefertari's Temple built by Ramesses II.⁴¹⁸ This indicates that Ramesses II honored the two contrasting male principles through her feminine space and he treated her as his equal. This male-female solidarity can be argued in reference to Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*: Ruby explains to Sadie that though by tradition Carter inherits the ruling authority, Sadie has greater responsibilities following her “hosting”

⁴¹⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴¹⁷ See Gros de Beler, *Egyptian Mythology*, 119.

⁴¹⁸ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 223–227.

of Isis and her evolution as a powerful magician in the “House of Life,” in supporting her brother.⁴¹⁹ Riordan thus brilliantly captures in fiction the importance given to the divine feminine roles in Egyptian pantheon and in Egyptian royalty. Photo taken on April 11, 2019.

Riordan’s depictions of Set-Horus conflict also reminds us of the ancient Egyptian artistic representations of the strange iconographic bonding between the two gods recognized for perceiving the unity of the “Two Lands” of ancient Egypt. The interaction between Set and Horus influenced stylistic expressions required for signifying power and station. Andrzej Ćwiek cited by Lansberry notes that Queen Hatshepsut is credited with wearing the male “king’s jacket”⁴²⁰ in art, with the representation of falcon head of Horus and that of Seth, with “their wings”⁴²¹ protectively intersecting each other on the torso.⁴²² Such adornment by the female ruler involves the nurturing of the essences of the male deities depicted as uniting ancient Egypt symbolically (“*sema tawy*”); thus Set-Horus’s rivalry as well as union hold the Two Egypts strongly united. H. Te Velde cited by Lansberry accounts that the eventual reunion of Seth and Horus following antagonisms is aimed at the combined comradeship to thwart Apophis; to constitute “Maat,” the deities must force a coalition where Set’s lance as well as Horus’s spear Horus need to be combined.⁴²³ Riordan’s Sadie incorporates this philosophy when she reminds Set of his designated role assigned to help Ra “against Apophis,” which is a mark of one of the highest honor given to a god.⁴²⁴

⁴¹⁹ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 430–437; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 385–390.

⁴²⁰ Andrzej Ćwiek, “Fate of Seth in the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri,” *Centre d’Archéologie Méditerranéenne de l’Académie Polonaise des Sciences, Etudes et Travaux XXII* (2008), 38, cited in Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 53; Ćwiek, “Fate of Seth,” 38, quoted in Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 53; Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 53.

⁴²¹ Ćwiek, “Fate of Seth,” 38, quoted in Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 53; Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 53.

⁴²² Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 53.

⁴²³ Herman Te Velde, *Seth, God of Confusion: A Study of His Role in Egyptian Mythology and Religion*, trans. Mrs. G. E. van Baaren-Pape (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), 70–71, cited in Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 148. Lansberry also elaborates the information; see Lansberry, *Images of Set*, 148.

⁴²⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 483, 482–485.

Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* also retells the Egyptian philosophy that the human and the divine bodies share mutual essences. Wheeler and Pierce note that while the ancient Egyptians sought the preservation of the individual "identity" in the "eternity."⁴²⁵ This explains why the pharaohs would carry Horus-based names⁴²⁶ implying they were walking "Horus[es]" on Earth; the Divine thus existed on the Earth in the terrestrial sphere itself, through the Pharaohs. Ogden Goelet Jr. explains that keeping the close bodily connection between the deities and the humans in mind it can be perceived that the concept of the embodiment of the deity is possible by associating physical body parts of the deceased with the deities accounted in the *Book of the Dead*, with hopes of being protected by the deities⁴²⁷; thus the concept of carrying the deities' essence within the individual human bodies becomes relevant in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*.

5.11 Conclusion

Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* trilogy provides us with a fascinating insight into ancient Egyptian magic, deities, and worldview which are inclusive of different anomalies. Through the three novels, Sadie and Carter progress through magic-learning and performance, and through their partnership, the British and the American agencies are fictionally shown actively reviving the ancient Egyptian ethos and culture. This revival, though featured in a young-adult fictional realm, still excites interest in the ancient Egyptian antiquities. The probing into Egyptian culture is done in the trilogy in the non-empirical standards, through studies in spells, hieroglyphic incantations, the individual accounts of the deified members. The Renaissance inspired the Italian artists to sculpt mythical figures and

⁴²⁵ Wheeler and Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian*, 25.

⁴²⁶ Wheeler and Pierce, *Walk Like an Egyptian*, 25.

⁴²⁷ Ogden Goelet Jr., "A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature and Tradition which Constitutes *The Book of Going Forth by Day*," in *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Book of Going Forth by Day*, by Scribes and Artists Unknown, "With Additional Translations and a Commentary by" Dr. Ogden Goelet Jr., introd. Carol A. R. Andrews, ed. Eva Von Dassow, 137–170, "In an Edition Conceived and Produced by" James Wasserman (1994; reprint, San Francisco, California: Chronicle Books, 1998), 167–168.

the European canon has re-fictionalized Greek mythical traditions in literature. This is bit challenging in terms of ancient Egyptian mythology since with the exception of the ritual-themed explanatory texts on the temple/tomb walls, stelae, and papyri, we do not have substantial ancient Egyptian “literature” surviving from the Pharaonic times. The corpus of ancient texts studied in Egyptology constitutes majorly funerary matters and spells for the usage of the deceased. Because of their specific contexts for studies in symbols and icons, Egyptian texts have remained crucial for studies exclusively within the Egyptological discipline but they are not usually included in the university curriculum in non-Egyptological Humanities, not in the same way we have engaged with Greek plays in English translation and Classical theories and philosophy. It can thus be argued that Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* Trilogy thereby brings the concepts of Egyptian mythology to the young-adult readers, through (i) the re-weaving of the Osiris-Isis-Horus-Seth motif; through (ii) the Ra versus Apophis motif in the context of the Twenty-first century setting factoring in the aspects of globalization and attuned with “Egyptomania,” and also through (iii) the “reception” of Egyptian mythology and culture beyond the discipline of Egyptology.

Riordan has also incorporated the most important attributes of Egyptian religious beliefs, giving fictional institutionalizations of the “House of Life” which had been expanded to include initiates from across the world, thereby imagining a world-wide dissemination of ancient Egyptian wisdom. The esoteric nature of Egyptian magic and temple rituals has been extended for the protection of the entire world. The need for semi-divine and/or magical protection besides technological advancement is noticed in cinematic adaptations and storylines in “DC Comics.” This reminds us of Diana’s (the Wonder Woman, played by Gal Gadot) desire to break free from Themyscira and use her strength to help humankind in the *Wonder Woman* (2017) movie directed by Patricia Lea [Patty] Jenkins; Diana’s journey also involves her shift from a myth-oriented world to the male-

dominated world of chemical weapons.⁴²⁸ In the composite world of superheroes, ancient Greek magical/mythical realm can coexist and remain functional, unlike the discontinued Egyptian religion with technologically advanced organizations of North America and Europe.⁴²⁹ Just as Greek mythology has been integrated in superhero films, Egyptian themes are gradually garnering interest and representation. Riordan offers magical protection to the world through Egypt, thus *The Kane Chronicles* project Egypt as a solution-giver in the fictional world of semi-deities and demons/monsters.

In argument, we can also establish Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* as a collection of neo-magical texts since the Egyptians perceived magic as part of initiation and engagement with their mythological beings, and the Kane members also perceive the limitations of the human body in holding the energy and essence of the divine and the bio-neural challenges posed in temporarily embodying a deity and channelizing his/her powers.⁴³⁰ The private usage of magic extended for the world's protection is also a moral need in Doctor Strange's training in Marvel's Universe as shown in *Doctor Strange* (2016) movie directed by Scott Derrickson; Doctor Strange's (played by Benedict Cumberbatch) mind broadens, the loss of his manual skill in surgery leads to his gradual perfection of magical art of materializing weapons.⁴³¹ He also learns to use magic not only for his own desire of self-healing but also for protecting the world from Dormammu.⁴³² It can be argued that magic practiced in accordance with objects/artifacts recontextualizes Egyptian artifacts in terms of Western and Eastern powers and knowledge. For understanding the blending of mythology and magic,

⁴²⁸ Patricia Lea [Patty] Jenkins, dir., *Wonder Woman*, screenplay by Allan Heinberg, story by Zack Snyder, Allan Heinberg, and Jason Fuchs (Burbank, California: Warner Bros. Pictures, 2017), Film.

⁴²⁹ Jenkins, *Wonder Woman*.

⁴³⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 498–508; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

⁴³¹ Scott Derrickson, dir., *Doctor Strange*, written by Jon Spaihts, Scott Derrickson, and C. Robert Cargill, based on *Doctor Strange* by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko (Burbank, California: Marvel Studios and Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2016), Film, 00:12:23–00:48:00.

⁴³² Derrickson, *Doctor Strange*, 00:34:30–01:45:00.

Riordan has extensively studied the architectonic hubs, the local cults in touch with the Egyptian deities. Thus Heliopolitan solar cult is brought close to the Osirian funerary realm as envisioned in the ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead*.⁴³³ The two cults are connected together in the opposition between Set, without whom the cult of Osiris would not have risen, and Apophis, without whom Ra's daily victory over Chaos cannot be repeated. Finally the trilogy recontextualizes the perilous subterranean aquatic journey resembling the one accounted in the *Book of Amduat* without which the repetition of the diurnal and nocturnal solar cycles cannot occur for the sake of "Maat."

Unlike the Greek mythology immortalized in poetry, art, and academic studies the ancient Egyptian *Underworld* books are still beyond common access and interest. Likewise, these highly symbolic pictorial literatures were mostly used by the royalty and the rich people in the Pharaonic times. Thus it can be argued that Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* features "archaeological fantasy" and mythological genre which revives the Pharaonic engagement with the mystique and the rituals. Egyptological insights preserved through museum corpus and institutional jurisdiction and supervision of Egyptological heritage are also offered in the three novels. Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* can be perceived as a catalyst to initiate young-adult scholars to perceive ancient Egypt as an independently evolved nexus of consciousness involving architecture, material culture, and psychic development. This might influence readers to institutionally pursue Egyptology in future. The Trilogy also inspires the readers to look at bodies as energy-hubs, thereby viewing human bodies as weapons, which are significant themes in science fiction in which deities and technologically augmented super-characters reside simultaneously as protectors.

⁴³³ See Goelet Jr., "A Commentary on the Corpus of Literature," 137–170.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

The films and novels have shown how the history and evolution of human civilization could be studied through history of science and magic, and how ancient Egypt remains a potential forum, with her unique pantheon, rich art forms and mythical beings and species. In this Conclusion I have brought together the key points and have tried to establish, by drawing references to the primary texts studied in the chapters Two to Five, how the genres of science fiction, science fantasy can be influenced by mythmaking, mythical retelling, mythical recontextualization, and how the ancient Egyptian mythology remains popular amidst Western fiction writers and filmmakers. Let us first re-visit the archaeological aspects concerning art, culture, and myths which form the core spaces in Egyptology and sum up their importance in the fiction concerning Ancient Egypt.

6.1 Recurrence of Ancient Egyptian Themes

It has been argued in the previous chapters that studies in ancient Egyptian civilization are concerned with significant aspects of human existence and development. Thomas Schneider notes that many basic features of early history of humanity in general can be understood from Egyptological studies because of discoveries of Egypt's materials, and the temporal length of her civilization.¹ Thus studying ancient Egypt provides multiple perspectives of her civilization and facets. Egyptology is also not just confined to archaeology. Schneider perceives that not only Middle Eastern but also Mediterranean cultures get interconnected within Egyptology and the discipline includes hieroglyphic

¹ Thomas Schneider, "Introducing the New Editor of Near Eastern Archaeology: Egyptology Past, Present, and Future—A Reflection," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 75, no. 1 (March 2012): 58, accessed January 21, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5615/neareastarch.75.1.0056>.

translations, environment, and anthropology.² Schneider mentions that Egyptology as a subject covers the studies of human culture and settlements; besides Egyptology, Biblical Studies, as well as studies in Classical Greece and Rome constituted Eurocentric self-definition of progress.³ The White creative writers tend to fictionalize ancient Egypt since ancient Egypt has left influences in Western and European arts, culture, and identities. Ancient Egypt continues to remain as a fountain of imaginative ideas; recontextualizations of ancient Egyptian myths get linked with our technological ideas and/or contexts as well. Schneider notes that the archaeological studies covering ancient Egypt interest the writers of science fiction and popular culture also project Western “imagination[s]” of ancient Egyptian myths and “mysteries.”⁴ Schneider observes that the contemporary Egyptians are working to incorporate the Pharaonic past in their “identity” besides the showcasing of their past to attract (mostly) Western and international tourists.⁵ In argument, the spectacle of the transportation of the mummies in Cairo in 2021 can be cited; the “National Museum of Egyptian Civilisation” becomes their space, and the journey amidst performances by contemporary Egyptians dressed in ancient styled costumes had been observed and recorded, as we learn from Wael Hussein.⁶ The event is shown as carrying a great sense of national pride and awareness of the country’s past. This growing awareness is crucial for cultures which experienced White colonization. Depictions of ancient Egypt in native writings might show more accurate information and perspectives. This thesis has concentrated on Western representations of ancient Egypt which apparently carry a hegemonic approach towards ancient Egypt and her representations. In the plots studied in this thesis, the White characters still remain as the primary processors of ancient Egyptian knowledge. The texts and movies

² Schneider, “Introducing the New Editor of Near Eastern Archaeology,” 58.

³ Schneider, “Introducing the New Editor of Near Eastern Archaeology,” 59.

⁴ Schneider, “Introducing the New Editor of Near Eastern Archaeology,” 59.

⁵ Schneider, “Introducing the New Editor of Near Eastern Archaeology,” 59.

⁶ Wael Hussein, “Egypt Mummies Pass Through Cairo in Ancient Rulers’ Parade,” *BBC News, Cairo, BBC*, April 3, 2021, accessed February 20, 2022, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-56508475>.

are still important for study because they show ancient Egyptian impact on ideas and representation and how this impact has been utilized. This has encouraged interdisciplinary studies and reworking of methodology to bring text, art, and architecture together. They can urge rewriting of history and information from native perspective.



Figure 6.1The “sema-tawi” and Hapi(s)

Ancient Egypt developed unique diagrammatic expressions regarding the mythic cartography. For example, vegetal motifs are crucial in “sema-tawi” - the symbolic diagram of the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt represented in the image above by Hapi carrying papyrus flowers on his head and Hapi carrying lotus flowers on his head. Harsomatus, the divine son of Hathor and Horus, sits on a throne supported by the symbol for trachea⁷ around which the stalks of the lotus and papyrus are being bound.⁸ Harsomatus carries the “pschent” crown representing Upper and Lower Egypt and the trachea represents the vital air for survival, equated with the vitality of Egypt. This vitality is again linked with

⁷ For the information regarding trachea’s link with “sema-tawi,” see Peter James, *Saving the Pyramids: Twenty-first-century Engineering and Egypt’s Ancient Monuments* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018), 44.

⁸ For Harsomatus’s identification, see Geraldine Pinch, *Handbook of Egyptian Mythology* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2002), 146–148.

the two Hapi figures represented as tying the knot, the “*sema-tawi*.” Thus the relevance of this image can be argued to communicate that as the symbolic divine sustainer of ancient Egypt through Inundation, Hapi comes to assist Carter, who is also uniting the humans, the magicians, and the Egyptian pantheon, in Rick Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles*.⁹ The unification of ancient and contemporary Egyptian consciousnesses is also a theme in “Egyptomania,” which connects Egypt with the world through the different literary, filmic, audio-visual expressions. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

Ancient Egypt appeals to a section of writers because her material treasures exist (i) as products, (ii) as ideas/information, and (iii) as legacies. Valuing the past was integral in ancient Egypt as well. Joyce Tyldesley notes that in terms of antiquities studies, the ancient Egyptians seem to defy age themselves; the preservation of history was deemed crucial in the ancient Egyptian mind, as the act of maintenance was integral for “*maat*.”¹⁰ According to Tyldesley, Djoser in as early as in “2680 BC” was supposed to have filled, in his “Step Pyramid,” the remains of utensils a part of which was acquired from the first two Dynasties and the number of “stone vessels” was “approximately 40,000.”¹¹ Tyldesley observes that such collection evoked a sense of a museum for Djoser, and he was showcasing his understanding of the importance of antiquities in his collection.¹² Thus while the Pharaonic Egyptians are “ancient” to us, it has to be kept in mind that they themselves also valued their own “ancient” history; thus the amplified stress on ancientness of Egypt opens up a semi-mythic realm.

⁹ Rick Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow* (2012; London: Puffin Books, 2013), 213–223.

¹⁰ Joyce Tyldesley, *Egypt: How a Lost Civilization Was Rediscovered* (2005; reprint, London: BBC Books, 2008), 23–24.

¹¹ Tyldesley, *Egypt: How a Lost Civilization Was Rediscovered*, 23. I have kept the date and the numerical amount within quotation marks because the estimation varies in Egyptology; here I have cited Tyldesley’s information specifically.

¹² Tyldesley, *Egypt: How a Lost Civilization Was Rediscovered*, 23.

It has also been seen in the chapters Two to Five that Egyptology and “Egyptomania” involve crucial studies in the symbolisms of objects and material culture found in Egypt. Clive Gamble refers to Lewis Roberts Binford’s classification, and explain that the “three behavioral realms” as identified in “[p]rocessual archaeology” include (i) the “environment,” influencing “material artefacts[’]” survival, (ii) “social organisation,” making use of “artefacts,” and (iii) religious faiths and “ideas” exercised through “artefact.”¹³ For illustration of an “artefact,” Gamble observes that a crown can be seen as catering to all the three registers mentioned above.¹⁴ First, Gamble notes that it is a protective headgear, thus it is influenced by “environment.”¹⁵; this is applicable in the case of the Pharaoh for protecting his head in the sun. Second, Gamble points out that it is a status-symbol, thus it is influenced by the king’s “social” position¹⁶; thus the “pschent” crown worn by the Pharaoh represents his administrative power over the Northern and Southern parts of Egypt. Finally, Gamble states that it represents the ruler surrounding whom “rites” function, thus it influences “ideas” surrounding the crown and kingship,¹⁷ thus in ancient Egyptian mythology and art elaborate symbolism and function existed involving individual crowns/headdresses worn by the deities who influenced the Pharaoh’s actions. Thus objects like cartouche, sarcophagus, ankh, amulets are essential tropes in science fiction and fantasy featuring ancient Egypt and her mythology. Ian Hodder cited by Gamble also puts stress in the “post-processual” interpretation since each object’s meanings vary according to region and context thus multilayered interpretation instead of “universal”

¹³ Clive Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics* (London: Routledge, 2001), 102–103. See also Lewis Roberts Binford, “Archaeology as Anthropology,” *American Antiquity* 28, no. 2 (1962): 217–225; Gamble explains the three aspects citing Binford.

¹⁴ Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics*, 102–103.

¹⁵ Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics*, 102–103.

¹⁶ Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics*, 102–103.

¹⁷ Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics*, 102–103.

approach is required.¹⁸ This information is relevant because though in Egyptology there are specific branches of material and visual studies, and artifacts also show particular variations from different periods of ancient Egyptian history, “Egyptomania” globalizes ancient Egypt, thus concepts are used in a broader sense catering to Western imagination and needs. Fiction concerning ancient Egypt thereby includes this phase of showing archaeologist-protagonist trying to assess the meanings of objects found in Egypt according to different contexts. A similar phase takes up considerable plot-space in *StarGate* by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black in connection with the interpretation and activation of the Stargate by guidance from Daniel¹⁹ and in James Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in connection with the interpretation of the chamber in the Great Pyramid.²⁰ Since ancient Egypt is so unique, the plots concerning ancient Egypt appear pan-global since Western as well as Egyptian scholars cooperate to increase the scope of Egyptological studies.

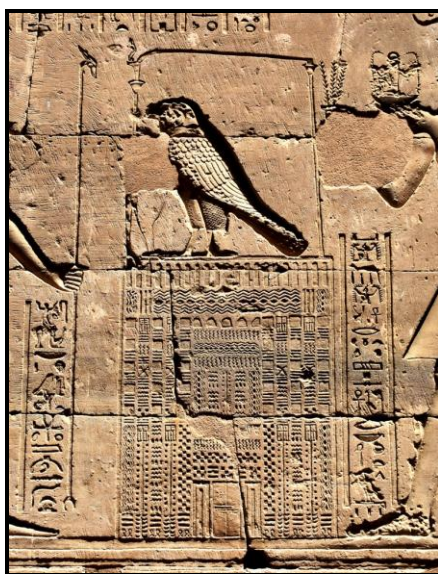


Figure 6.2 Horus-falcon on “serekh”

¹⁸ Ian Hodder, *Symbols in Action: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Material Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), cited in Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics*, 103. Gamble explains Hodder’s concept; see Gamble, *Archaeology: The Basics*, 103.

¹⁹ Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, *StarGate* (1994; reprint, London: Puffin Books, 1995), 15–67. In the novel by Dean Devlin, Roland Emmerich, and Sheila Black, “Stargate” is spelled as “StarGate.” The title of the novel is given as *StarGate* in the chapters, footnotes, bibliography.

²⁰ James Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming* (London: Barbican Press, 2014), 35–238.

In the relief in this image, the Horus-falcon sits on an elaborate “*serekh*,” with a door at the bottom, from the wall of Temple of Horus, Edfu. The architecture and the bird together convey the power of the Divine embodied in the pharaoh’s office. As Stephen S. Mehler notes, the word “pharaoh” refers to a sumptuous building while falcon is the avatar of Horus, who, as Henri Frankfort perceives, is functionally manifested in every pharaoh.²¹ Falcon over “*serekh*” thus forms a combined idea of kingship involving the bird-species and the architectural structure as Beatrix Midant-Reynes notes.²² The door or entrance and the temple are certainly important in both *Stargate* which leads to the planet Abydos²³ and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* we are led to a different dimensional Temple under the Great Giza Sphinx.²⁴ The “*serekh*” is distinctly ancient Egyptian, but it intrigues our wonder, since it looks like an elaborate device. The bird thereby is a powerful “*net*er” form, associating power with the deities. Material studies are thus important in archaeology and inspire us to observe uniquely shaped objects in popular/speculative imagination. This image is relevant particularly in case of Rick Riordan’s trilogy because institutions of magic like “Brooklyn House” and the “House of Life” and architecture like the Pyramid and the Obelisk are important and Horus is a very important figure through whom the divine and the human worlds are connected.²⁵ Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

²¹ For the architectonic connection see Stephen S. Mehler, *The Land of Osiris: An Introduction to Khemitology* (Kempton, Illinois: Adventures Unlimited Press, 2001), 42–46. For the Horus-connection see Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (1948; reprint, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978), 42–43, 181–185. See also Anirban Ray, “‘Kubla Khan: or, A Vision in a Dream. A Fragment’: An Egyptological Study,” *Teresian Journal of English Studies*, 13, no. 3 (July-September 2021): 27–28.

²² Beatrix Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt: From the First Egyptians to the First Pharaohs*, trans. Ian Shaw (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 232.

²³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 62–76.

²⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 204–291.

²⁵ Rick Riordan, *The Red Pyramid* (2010; London: Puffin Books, 2011), 1–514; Rick Riordan, *The Throne of Fire* (2011; London: Puffin Books, 2012), 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401. In the footnotes referring to more than one novel by Riordan, or all the three novels in the trilogy, I have arranged the sources chronologically. The bibliography lists the sources alphabetically.

The science in science fiction and the patterns in fantasy always consider the natural world. Laurence Coupe notes that ceremonies involve mythological “narrative[s]”; James George Frazer cited by Coupe particularly considers myths concerning agriculture, plant and crop-growth.²⁶ For example, Coupe states that the Osiris-myth belongs to this pattern and the demise of Osiris becomes the requisite for the maintenance of vegetation and life of the community.²⁷ Arwen Elys Dayton’s *Resurrection* shows how the existing agriculture in ancient Egypt is further influenced by the alien Kinley’s botanical knowledge and technology²⁸; the Kinley Captain takes up the role of Osiris²⁹ worshipped as a vegetation deity in ancient Egypt.³⁰ Frazer, cited by Coupe notes that the important members of the monarchy as well as the priesthood were the earliest users of magic, which led to the elaborate creation of the deities as well as the mythical accounts.³¹ Dayton’s *Resurrection* features this transition aptly, but shows how the Kinley science is lost upon the Egyptians; it erroneously influences the myths/rituals aiming resurrection.³² Elaborating Frazer, Coupe notes that fertility is symbolically analogous with a deity’s resurrection; this constitutes “sympathetic”³³ form of magic used by believers in connection with that deity and natural fertility.³⁴ In James Matthew Henry Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra*, we see a glimpse of this, as David heals, having a vision of the plant germinating from Osiris’s “Djed pillar.”³⁵ The mythical hero as noted by Coupe comprises of “superhuman” abilities embodied in the human body and the “eternity” is perceived temporally through the “superhuman[’s]”

²⁶ Laurence Coupe, *Myth*, 2nd ed. (1997; reprint, New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), 18.

²⁷ Coupe, *Myth*, 18–20.

²⁸ Arwen Elys Dayton, *Resurrection* (Las Vegas, NV: 47North, 2001), 362–363.

²⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 87–130, 188–191, 361–363.

³⁰ J. Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” in *Larousse Mythologie Générale*, ed. Félix Guirand, *The Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, trans. Richard Aldington and Delano Ames (1996; reprint, London: Chancellor Press; Reed Consumer/International Books Ltd., 1997), 16–17.

³¹ James George Frazer cited in Coupe, *Myth*, 20. Coupe elaborates Frazer’s ideas; see Coupe, *Myth*, 20.

³² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 402–407.

³³ Quoted in Coupe, *Myth*, 20.

³⁴ Coupe, *Myth*, 20.

³⁵ James Matthew Henry Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra* (Special edition) (2009; reprint, Oxford: Solaris, 2015), 263–265.

exploits.³⁶ “[T]ime becomes “eternity” in case of “the shaman” who establishes divine connections and moves between two dimensions.³⁷ In *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, Mustapha who features the ability of the shaman, initiates Cliff into the vision of the deities and receives Horus’s blessing to engage with the Sethian forces by using his magic staff.³⁸

In ancient Egyptians myths the supernatural and the terrestrial registers are intrinsically connected. As E. A. Wallis Budge has noted, in the course of time, some space in Lower Egypt, with its different aquatic canals as well as agricultural reserves became the standardized model for the mythical “Sekhet-Āaru,” the “Field of Reeds”³⁹ as illustrated in *Book of the Dead*.⁴⁰ The proximity of the river, provision of domestic needs, and developed means of irrigation made it a convenient model for the ancient Egyptian afterlife, as Budge notes.⁴¹ Thus the mythic geography of Egypt has provided a lot of tropes for fictional speculation. In Dayton’s *Resurrection* (discussed in chapter Four) it is perceived that the alien Lion too imagined the same kind of idyllic household in ancient Egypt, in the midst of the farmlands.⁴² Budge observes that despite the veneration of different aspects of Isis, the goddess’s position throughout ancient Egyptian history was unsurpassed in her station; her funerary functions were well conceived as early around the third millennium B.C.⁴³ This importance given to Isis preceded even the religious thoughts projected in the *Pyramid Texts*⁴⁴ which establishes her position as a very early goddess. Budge notes that Isis combines within her enormous degrees of protective abilities, fecundity, and compassion for

³⁶ Coupe, *Myth*, 48.

³⁷ Coupe, *Myth*, 48.

³⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 275–284.

³⁹ Quoted in E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians or Studies in Egyptian Mythology*, vol. 2 (London: Methuen, 1904), 2: 121, *ETANA: Electronic Tools and Ancient Near East Archives*, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://etana.org/sites/default/files/coretexts/20625.pdf>.

⁴⁰ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 121.

⁴¹ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 121.

⁴² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 361–362.

⁴³ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 203.

⁴⁴ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 203.

all living beings, making her the quintessential and the universal Divine Feminine-figure.⁴⁵ Landscapes, if they are important to Osiris, are crucial for the cult of Isis too. In Dayton's *Resurrection*, the Archaeologist realizes the importance of the role of Isis as a figure of antiquity; she thus embraces the "mythic role" attributed to Isis to maintain public faith.⁴⁶ Budge accounts that Isis's unsurpassable magic as well as "knowledge" in vocabulary are attributed to the act of the concealed name coaxed out of Ra following the poisoning of his body by a serpent procured by Isis with Ra's spittle-moistened earth.⁴⁷ This role earned her power as well as notoriety; this dual aspect of her powers has been recontextualized in both Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* as well as in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*.

Apart from Isis-Osiris, the Set-Horus duality is also a major aspect in ancient Egyptian myths. Budge notes that the nocturnal celestial register and the diurnal celestial register were under the domains of the gods Set and Heru-ur respectively.⁴⁸ Budge also informs that the hieroglyphic texts and mythical accounts describe these two deities as adversaries, though Set's Underworld-associated role is deemed beneficial.⁴⁹ Budge perceives that Set as well as Heru-ur could also be merged in a single physical frame showing their complementary and oppositional nature like malevolent/benevolent and "Darkness"/"Light."⁵⁰ The other recurring motif is Horus-Set rivalry needed for the realization of balance; the rivalry's cosmic nature makes it potential for recontextualization in any genre of fictional text. Thus Set is shown as creating division in Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra*. Riordan enlists Set's aid to oppose Apophis in *The Kane Chronicles*. It can be summed up that the deities are possible characters, and the myths are potential plots in science fiction and "mythopoeic" texts.

⁴⁵ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 203.

⁴⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 189–191, 361–370.

⁴⁷ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 214.

⁴⁸ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 242.

⁴⁹ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 242.

⁵⁰ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 242–243.



Figure 6.3 Osiris and Solar Disk

The funerary spaces/contexts of ancient Egypt are important resources in the studies of fictional representation of ancient Egyptian deities. This image shows a symmetric representation of double Osiris receiving incense from Ramesses IV in his tomb in the Valley of the Kings. The artist(s) have also added the red solar disks above the crowns of the two Osiris(s). This links the two dominant traditions believed in the ancient Egyptian religion: (i) the solar resurrection taking place in Ra's boat and (ii) turning of the deceased into an Osiris in "Duat."⁵¹ Osiris also receives Ra in the sixth Hour of Amduat - an episode recontextualized as a supper scene in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles* where Julius Kane and Ruby Kane host the senile Ra, and their children Sadie and Carter.⁵² Photo taken on April 8, 2019.

Thomas C. Sutton and Marilyn Sutton note that the fantasy writers shorten the differences between "scientific" and "mythopoeic" pattern.⁵³ Generic mixing is possible in the recontextualizations of the Egyptian pantheon in fiction because of possible comparative

⁵¹ Robert Temple and Olivia Temple, *The Sphinx Mystery: The Forgotten Origins of the Sanctuary of Anubis* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2009), 330–442.

⁵² Rick Riordan, *The Throne of Fire* (2011; London: Puffin Books, 2012), 380–383.

⁵³ Thomas C. Sutton and Marilyn Sutton, "Science Fiction as Mythology," *Western Folklore* 28, no. 4 (October 1969): 233, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1499217>.

indices like myths and scientific precepts. Space-exploration and studies of astronomical phenomena and objects seem to have occupied the corpus of “modern myth[s].”⁵⁴ Thus we see alien contacts rather credibly imagined in the Egyptian space. Sutton and Sutton perceive that “[t]emporal” alterations are noticed in both science fiction and myth; while parallel timelines are considered in science fiction, in mythology, remoteness in time is indicated in which actions are contextualized.⁵⁵ “Alternative Egyptology” has applied this, by referring to several millennia of history before Pharaonic rule where speculated deified beings and extraterrestrial authorities might have been present.⁵⁶ Sutton and Sutton discuss that while “myth of technology” tends to regard “knowledge” as the guiding force of human power in science fiction, the attribution of “*mana*” to human-surpassing personages with godlike abilities is perceived in mythology.⁵⁷ Applying this, it can be seen and argued that Carter and Sadie connect into the divine power in Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* by “hosting” deities,⁵⁸ while in Dayton’s *Resurrection*, the Captain becomes “Osiris” by his translation-instrument and healing capacities of his team.⁵⁹ Thus it can be summed up that recontextualization of myths in the texts show deification of power and technology together. The summaries of the observations have been organized from this point onwards in this Conclusion section.

6.2 Hieroglyphs in “Mythopoeia”

Hieroglyphs, as we have discovered, appeal to our psychic forces, going deeper than immediate aesthetic appreciation. Ancient Egyptian glyphs are carriers of symbols defying

⁵⁴ Sutton and Sutton, “Science Fiction as Mythology,” 235.

⁵⁵ Sutton and Sutton, “Science Fiction as Mythology,” 236.

⁵⁶ Christopher Dunn, *Lost Technologies of Ancient Egypt: Advanced Engineering in the Temples of the Pharaohs* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 1–345; Christopher Dunn, *The Giza Power Plant: Technologies of Ancient Egypt* (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear & Company, 1998), 1–272; Edward F. Malkowski, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE: The History, Technology, and Philosophy of Civilization X* (Rochester, Vermont: Bear & Company, 2010), 244–249.

⁵⁷ Sutton and Sutton, “Science Fiction as Mythology,” 236.

⁵⁸ Rick Riordan, *The Red Pyramid* (2010; London: Puffin Books, 2011), 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

⁵⁹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 69–85, 128–141, 180–191.

time, and the glyphs connoting deities and power appeared as early as in the 2nd millennium B. C. in Egyptian history. Beatrix Midant-Reynes notes that the “Horus-falcon” began to appear on “*serekh*” - a unique mode for nomenclature giving the king his identity and this innovation occurs in the “Naqada IIIb” period classified by Werner Kaiser.⁶⁰ Thus the house and the bird turn crucial in the ancient Egyptian construct of human kingship. The “Hunters’ Palette” in the British Museum, as Roland Tefnin cited by Midant-Reynes reflects, is a “concept[ual]” representation of human triumph over the wild fauna; Midant-Reynes notes that the lions are shown creating a Pharaonic “symbol” communicating undefeated glory.⁶¹ In Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, it is revealed how humans in predynastic Egypt gradually domesticated wild animals⁶² and *StarGate* starts with Ra watching an art-ritual of controlling animals.⁶³ Midant-Reynes notes that the “Narmer Palette” is important because it is an early evidence of the ancient Egyptian “artistic” mode in the “classic”⁶⁴ manner.⁶⁵ Midant-Reynes notes that the phonetic signs incorporated in it indicate that the language is communicated along with art, channelized for the realization of the pharaoh’s power involving “violence” as well as Order.⁶⁶ For example, statues are powerful objects, as Riordan shows in *The Kane Chronicles* and thus stelae are material points of convergence in science fiction and fantasy. Thus it can be summed up that animal figures are crucial in pre-history of ancient Egypt and are important in composition, decoration, and magic thereby enriching science fiction texts in terms of nature and diversity of life forms.

⁶⁰ Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 232.

⁶¹ Roland Tefnin, “Image et Histoire. Réflexions sur l’Usage Documentaire d’Image Égyptienne,” *Chronique d’Égypte* 54 (1979): 218–244, cited in Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 240; Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 240.

⁶² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 31–34.

⁶³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–5.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 246.

⁶⁵ Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 246.

⁶⁶ Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 246.

Midant-Reynes informs that the Scorpion's insect-association, as discussed by German Egyptologists, is not "a name" but believed to be "a title."⁶⁷ This becomes relevant in Max Allan Collins's *The Mummy Returns* in which the Scorpion becomes a living consciousness, a threat to the world, to be contained within Egypt, and thus an obvious sign of inversion of a legend in popular imagination.⁶⁸ Similarly a decisive historical event is coded timelessly in art and hieroglyphs and therefore the "Narmer Palette" is used in Riordan's *The Red Pyramid*; the "serpopards" depicted in the Egyptologically studied "Narmer Palette"⁶⁹ challenge the Kanes, because the Kane siblings should take leadership as Narmer did in the memory of the ancient Egyptians.⁷⁰



Figure 6.4 Hieroglyph over Bread, Mastaba of Kagemni

Hieroglyphs yield magical value; that is why science fiction and fantasy continue to recontextualize them. The image above shows a relief from the Mastaba of Kagemni seated before a table containing eighteen elongated loaves of bread. The final resting place, the tomb, was supposed to provide the deceased with the necessities for eternity. Here by adding

⁶⁷ Midant-Reynes, *The Prehistory of Egypt*, 249.

⁶⁸ Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy Returns* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001), 1–288.

⁶⁹ Cyril Aldred, *Egyptian Art in the Days of the Pharaohs: 3100–320 BC* (1980, 1985; reprint, London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 34–35.

⁷⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 104–113.

the plant sign (indicating 1000, as Gardiner notes⁷¹) over each of the eighteen loaves the artist had ensured that the deceased would have eternal supply of the bread. The tomb is thus a symbolic and magical repository. If we recontextualize magic in science fiction, then in Dayton's *Resurrection* it has been seen that Dayton creates the technology-equipped spaces containing resources to regenerate a subject and also hibernate the ancient Kinleys so that their aging is halted.⁷² Thus hieroglyphs-filled objects/spaces intrigue the readers of science fiction. Photo taken on April 5, 2019.

6.3 Technical Marvels

A device/gadget is not just an object in science fiction; for example, as Adam Roberts observes, in science fiction ships, which recur abundantly in plots, could be of a composite nature, fusing machines with the humans, having sentience.⁷³ The spaceship, as Robert notes, is projected as a world in itself by the science fiction authors.⁷⁴ Dayton's *Resurrection* shows how the "Champion" that travelled faster than light and was a mystical object for the alien Kinleys themselves even though their predecessors built it.⁷⁵ Emmerich's *Stargate* also features the sarcophagus that could sustain and renew life repeatedly. Darco Suvin quoted and cited by Roberts perceives that science fiction brings "*cognition*"⁷⁶ with "*estrangement*"⁷⁷; it is freed from excessive adherence to facts and also provides means to

⁷¹ Alan H. Gardiner, "The Nature and Development of the Egyptian Hieroglyphic Writing," *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 2, no. 2 (April 1915): 72, accessed January 16, 2021, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3853896>. See also Anirban Ray, "Ancient Egyptian Art and Architecture in *Asterix and Cleopatra* and *Asterix and Obelix: Mission Cleopatra*," in *Proceedings of National Conference on "Innovation in Visual Arts" (NCIVA'17): Theme: "Imagination, Experience and Expression in Visual Arts": 23rd March, 2017 Amity University, Uttar Pradesh*, eds. Pradeep Joshi, Geetika Kaw Kher, Soujit Das, Kaushik Lohani, and Varun Sahai (New Delhi: Excellent Publishing House, 2017), 8.

⁷² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 238–259, 265–276, 408–414.

⁷³ Adam Roberts, *Science Fiction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 112.

⁷⁴ Roberts, *Science Fiction*, 112–116.

⁷⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 23–26, 250–251.

⁷⁶ Darko Suvin, *Positions and Presuppositions in Science Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1988), 37, quoted in Roberts, *Science Fiction*, 7–8.

⁷⁷ Suvin quoted in Roberts, *Science Fiction*, 7–8.

perceive things and worlds “different” to us.⁷⁸ Technology often constitutes the unfamiliar and is the distinction between the known and the unknown. For example, in *Predator* directed by John McTiernan, Major Alan “Dutch” Schaefer (played by Arnold Alois Schwarzenegger) learns how to kill the predator but simultaneously learns the alien technology which combines with the body of the creature.⁷⁹ The Kinleys, the human-alien hybrids in Dayton’s *Resurrection* are kept both acquainted as well as unknown to us, as experienced by Eddie’s attempts to understand the sentient “bio-suit” of Pruitt.⁸⁰ Ra in *StarGate* novel is both human and alien; Daniel realizes the distinction Ra makes between himself and his subjects (residents on Abydos), between hidden technology and apparent divine gift of renewed life.⁸¹ Similarly, Hetepheres’s awe is generated by the translating device used by Osiris impersonated by the Captain, but her intelligence harbors sufficient doubt regarding the “divinity” required for “status quo.”⁸² Thus it can be summed up that ancient Egypt projects many ritual objects which could be recontextualized as technological marvels sufficient enough to sustain awed “beliefs.”

6.4 “Neters”

Even if the ancient Egyptians conceived the deities as powerful, neither vulnerable human nature nor the bodily factors subject to suffering was considered beyond divine nature. For example, E. A. Wallis Budge notes that the eyes are important organs defining Horus’s powers and godhead; thus “Horus dwelling without Eyes”⁸³ (one manifestation of

⁷⁸ Roberts, *Science Fiction*, 8.

⁷⁹ John McTiernan, dir., *Predator*, written by Jim Thomas and John Thomas (Los Angeles, California: 20th Century Fox, 1987), Film.

⁸⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 241–243.

⁸¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–146, 156–181.

⁸² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 85.

⁸³ Quoted in E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians or Studies in Egyptian Mythology*, vol. 1 (London: Methuen, 1904), 1: 467, *ETANA: Electronic Tools and Ancient Near East Archives*, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://etana.org/sites/default/files/coretexts/20625.pdf>.

Horus) is still a notion of a god even if his vision is challenged or if it is absent.⁸⁴ Thus the ancient Egyptians recognize the deities' bodily problems as Seong-Hyuk Hong has noted.⁸⁵ Ra and Horus share important connections in terms of strength and warfare and there are different manifestations of Horus with individual names. Budge perceives that the photonic luster of the afternoon sun indicated the sun's most potent state, and this was embodied by the warrior-god "Ḥeru-beḥuṭet" while Set's forces were encountered by him.⁸⁶ Budge perceives that the "[W]inged-disk" is also the manifestation taken by the god "Ḥeru-beḥuṭet" while he rained assault upon "Rā-Ḥeru-khuti['s]" human opponents.⁸⁷ Budge accounts that the opponents' auditory as well as the visual capacities got damaged by the attacks of the "winged disk" which possessed an all-encompassing vision for the inspection of the terrain below, thus making the avenging god "Ḥeru-beḥuṭet" Ra's warrior.⁸⁸ This myth reminds us of Ra's "udajeet" (winged gliders) deployed to punish the Abydonians/Nagadians in the Emmerich's *Stargate* film and the *StarGate* novel.⁸⁹ The deities are thus complex life forms, and as Budge notes, "Neter" is a "common word" which enabled the ancient Egyptians to classify spirits as well as deities performing different functions.⁹⁰

6.5 Symbols

In chapter Five of textual discussion we saw the interaction between the deities and the magicians/magic initiates for the maintenance of "Maat." Riordan's trilogy urges us to study the roles of the deities Horus, Ra, and Osiris in terms of cerebral and physical faculties.

⁸⁴ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 467.

⁸⁵ Seong-Hyuk Hong, *The Metaphor of Illness and Healing in Hosea and Its Significance in the Socio-Economic Context of Eighth-Century Israel and Judah (Studies in Biblical Literature; v. 95)* (New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006), 36.

⁸⁶ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 473.

⁸⁷ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 477.

⁸⁸ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 477.

⁸⁹ Roland Emmerich, dir., *Stargate*, written by Dean Devlin and Roland Emmerich (1994; Los Angeles, California: Centropolis Entertainment [Centropolis Film Productions] / Carolco Pictures; Paris: StudioCanal [Le Studio Canal+] 1997), Film DVD; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 122–124, 167.

⁹⁰ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 63.

Budge mentions that the Egyptians attributed power to the object/tool axe since it was capable of deforestation, thereby depriving the vegetal and animal spirits of the terrestrial spaces and gradually merging the tool and the weapon, becoming the glyph for “deity.”⁹¹ Budge notes that the transition from war or hunting to civic cult/premise could also be considered in context of Neith’s “symbols” or “emblems” which constitute the “two arrows and a shield” which indicated her “predynastic” vegetal and/or “hunting”-personification.⁹² The ancient Egyptian afterlife was seen concretely and the divine spheres were seen as having symbolic and material properties. An elaborate hierarchy and division of labor exist in the divine premise as well. The solar trait is shared with Horus as well, thus Horus is Ra’s henchman in *StarGate*⁹³ and Set’s energy is required by Ra in the Lovegrove’s *The Age of Ra* even if he creates division.⁹⁴ Budge notes that the “material” space was indeed a space of family reunion, with the comforts of terrestrial life increased; the Afterlife-experience through resurrected physical bodies appealed more to the common people since comfort and pleasure could be registered more in the corporeal body.⁹⁵ This leads to the two distinguished pieties and priesthoods the beneficiaries of which are Osiris and Ra, though in later stages Osiris would absorb Ra’s characteristics.⁹⁶ In Riordan’s *The Kane Chronicles* it has been seen that Riordan uses this insight creatively for family reunion. Sadie meets her father in the Underworld, presiding as Osiris over judgment of Setne,⁹⁷ and also in the dinner given to Ra.⁹⁸ The “dinner” is creatively based on the episode from the *Book of Amduat* showing Osiris-Re union in the “Sixth Hour” of the Night as discussed by Temple

⁹¹ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians* 1: 65–66.

⁹² Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians* 1: 451–453.

⁹³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 113–185.

⁹⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 215–224.

⁹⁵ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 334.

⁹⁶ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 1: 334.

⁹⁷ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 188–199.

⁹⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 380–383.

and Temple⁹⁹ which happens every night, according to ancient Egyptian belief. Such visceral depictions are made possible because of Egyptian love for life despite funerary thinking in predominance, and the pantheon was seen not as hostile but benevolent towards the dead.



Figure 6.5 Detail of Hieroglyphs from Edfu Temple

In the image above, section from a line of hieroglyphic text from Edfu temple showing intricately cut glyphs. Entire figures in miniature form can be seen, like the stick-holding human figure on the left and the body of the sky-goddess Nut on the right. A single winged scarab and a double winged scarab above it are interesting as they show “metamorphosis” as scarab is associated with transformation.¹⁰⁰ Bob Brier informs that Nut is the archetypal mother; she is represented in the sarcophagus protecting the mummy.¹⁰¹ Temple and Temple explain that the mummy emerges in the afterlife resurrected and represented by the winged beetle arising from dung ball.¹⁰² The finger sucking figure and the staff holding figure on the left represent the young and the old age representatively. The photographed section thereby captures the two stages of life, and resurrection in connection

⁹⁹ Temple with Temple, *The Sphinx Mystery*, 392–442.

¹⁰⁰ Temple with Temple, *The Sphinx Mystery*, 392–400.

¹⁰¹ Bob Brier, *Ancient Egyptian Magic: Spells, Incantations, Potions, Stories, and Rituals* (1980; New York: Quill, 1981), 120–122.

¹⁰² Temple with Temple, *The Sphinx Mystery*, 392–400.

with Nut and beetle. In Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*, Zia carries the essence of Khepri, the scarab god and also becomes the caretaker of the revived sun god whose senility as well as childlike behavior is observed.¹⁰³ In Sommers's *The Mummy* the keyhole of Imhotep's sarcophagus also has a scarab sign on it, and Imhotep himself is made undead by predation by scarabs.¹⁰⁴ Thus Egyptian art has evidences regarding hope for regaining the bodily faculties in the afterlife and scarab has featured significantly in "mythopoeic" fiction on ancient Egypt. Photo by Anirban Ray.

6.6 Body, Jewels and Armor

The writers of science fiction and fantasy based on ancient Egypt seem to be much intrigued by the orientation of costumes and ornaments worn by ancient Egyptians and the physical forms of their deities. The physical universe was imagined in both humanoid and zoomorphic manners in ancient Egypt. The divine body is cosmic; Rivka B. Kern Ulmer notes that preceded by Ra, Horus was thought to have personified the sky; Ra's/Horus's eyes were thought to have constituted the sun.¹⁰⁵ The cosmos was Egypt-centric and Egypt-contextualized. Ulmer informs that the Divine Pupil itself was supposed to be reflected in the physical span of "*Kemet*" (name for ancient Egypt); Osiris's pupil was an example.¹⁰⁶ The Egyptians survived in a desert and dry climate and had knowledge about bodily frailty. Ulmer notes that the divinities are not invulnerable and they need material protection; the moon's genesis was attributed to Horus's eye.¹⁰⁷ The body and the funerary device are also connected intrinsically. Ulmer notes that the coffins resemble extensions of the body's faculties; coffins would have been supplied with eyes to enable vision to the mummified and

¹⁰³ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 369–399.

¹⁰⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy*; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 23–25. also Ray, "The 'Identities' of 'Egyptologist-Archaeologists,'" 160–169.

¹⁰⁵ Rivka B. Kern Ulmer, "The Divine Eye in Ancient Egypt and in the Midrashic Interpretation of Formative Judaism," *Journal of Religion & Society* 5 (2003): 2–3, accessed April 10, 2021, <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.1059.6087&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

¹⁰⁶ Ulmer, "The Divine Eye in Ancient Egypt," 5.

¹⁰⁷ Ulmer, "The Divine Eye in Ancient Egypt," 4.

the healing of the dead person's eyes was attributed to Thoth, since the coordination of organs are required by the resurrected persons in their afterlife-stage.¹⁰⁸ It is interesting how Ra in Emmerich's *Stargate* uses the Eye-resembling device to melt his opponents' brains,¹⁰⁹ and how the metallic heads used by him and his henchmen create the distinctions between "gods" and "humans."¹¹⁰ Ra's valued mineral is quartz,¹¹¹ and the sarcophagus is also of immense "Egyptomaniac" importance in *Stargate*. Joyce Tyldesley observes that the "quartzite sarcophagus" of Tutankhamun, an exceptional specimen of craft, could be found in his tomb reminding us of its rootedness and bond with the pharaoh's intended place of rest.¹¹² Thus in terms of body, decoration, and protection, the sarcophagus in archaeology has become a very potent trope in archaeological science fiction like *Stargate*.

6.7 Body and Organs

As indicated earlier, the potential power of the Eye transcends the abstract and the concrete. Martin A. Stadler notes that the Eye is a powerful recurrent trope in Egyptian mythology: "Eye of Horus" receives treatment from Thoth who is also responsible for reconciling the sun god with his Eye, his daughter, which/who had found a place in Nubia.¹¹³ Irrespective of gender, the Eye is the agent of divine power and establishes connection between matter and energy, between body and entity. The entire transition from the mortality to the resurrection, involving vision and bodily functions, involves an intricately laid out structured system.

¹⁰⁸ Ulmer, "The Divine Eye in Ancient Egypt," 5.

¹⁰⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 147–148.

¹¹⁰ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 109–139.

¹¹¹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 104–161.

¹¹² Joyce Tyldesley, *Egypt: How a Lost Civilization Was Rediscovered* (2005; reprint, London: BBC Books, 2008), 167.

¹¹³ Martin A. Stadler, "Thoth," in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2012): 9, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz002c4k99>.

In the netherworld, the entity of the physical body gathers luminosity and properties of energy. Rita Lucarelli notes that for the successful resurrection of the deceased in “Duat” a sense of detailed coordination is required between the “divine, demonic, and spiritual entities.”¹¹⁴ The bodily mingling also involves the deities in Egyptian mythology. For example, Lucarelli notes that the deities Re and Osiris merge as “Osiris-Re” in the underworld, even the demised person was believed to have taken the identity of a deity while being referred to as “the Osiris N”¹¹⁵ as Lucarelli explains.¹¹⁶ The interaction between the solar and the subterranean entities is an interesting factor, and this also reminds us of the aspect of death linked with the transition to eternity. Ra in *StarGate* revives himself regularly, thus he remains a *deity* by transcending mortality every time.¹¹⁷ Lucarelli mentions that just as Osiris in his embalmed form required safeguarding, the embalmed ancient Egyptian deceased is entitled to the same benefits; hence coffins are provided with references to “guardian demons” to offer protection.¹¹⁸ An empathic correlation occurs between the status of a deity and the mortal body. Osiris appears on Ra’s coffin in *Stargate*¹¹⁹ and Riordan brilliantly conceives of the demon “Bloodstained Blade” to guide the Kanes’ ship through the “River of Night.”¹²⁰ Thus the fiction on ancient Egypt seems to revisit this theme of mortality and revival since it speaks about physical preservation and memories; the complex hierarchy of supernatural beings in the “Duat” inspires the re-creation of fictional monstrous beings.

¹¹⁴ Rita Lucarelli, “Gods, Spirits, Demons of the Book of the Dead,” in *Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Foy Scalf (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2017), 127.

¹¹⁵ Quoted in Lucarelli, “Gods, Spirits, Demons,” 127.

¹¹⁶ Lucarelli, “Gods, Spirits, Demons,” 127.

¹¹⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 104–181.

¹¹⁸ Lucarelli, “Gods, Spirits, Demons,” 134.

¹¹⁹ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 174–175.

¹²⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 324.

6.8 “Heka”

Magic is of utmost importance in Egyptian worldview; the abilities of deities can be channelized for the human purposes through magic. Robert K. Ritner notes that a very interesting practice of seeking protection by “identification” of organs by names of deities could be seen in the *Pyramid Texts* (especially “PT 539”) as well as in the “BD [Spell] 42” in the *Book of the Dead*.¹²¹ Applying this concept in science fiction, it can be connected with the artifacts inducing high tech powers. This notion can be applied in *Stargate* in which actual humans undertake disguised divine roles and their metallic suits tend to almost disappear upon the skin, creating godlike ambience before the believers.¹²² Citing and quoting Erik Hornung, Ritner notes that the human uses of magic could cause risks even to the deities by using the impersonal “heka” (the magical “force”) a possibility that frightens the supreme sun god Re as well.¹²³ Thus it can be observed that in *The Kane Chronicles*, Sadie uses magic to bind Set¹²⁴; Zia uses magic to subdue Serqet.¹²⁵ “Heka” exists independent of divine agency as indicated in the *Pyramid Texts*; the organs of the pharaoh armed with “Heka” might even confront the deities upon their resistance to the King’s skyward pursuit as stated in “PT spell 539” and “PT spell 569” and Texts contain the element of thirsting for power by means of Heka.¹²⁶ Since science fiction refers to the codes that can alter laws thereby almost creating godlike ambience, the neutral power of the Egyptian “Heka” might inspire a lot of fiction writers.

¹²¹ Robert K. Ritner, “Divinization and Empowerment of the Dead,” in *Book of the Dead: Becoming God in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Foy Scalf (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2017), 111.

¹²² Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 113–120.

¹²³ Ritner, “Divinization and Empowerment,” 114. For the quoted section, see Erik Hornung, *Der Ägyptische Mythos von der Himmelskuh: Eine Ätiologie des Unvollkommenen. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 46* (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1982), 20, 44. I have paraphrased Ritner’s quoted section from Hornung.

¹²⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 475–485.

¹²⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 141–144.

¹²⁶ Ritner, “Divinization and Empowerment,” 114.

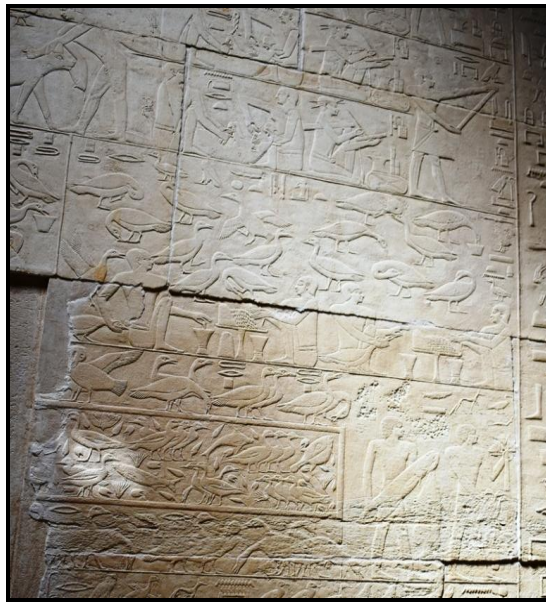


Figure 6.6 Birds from Mastaba of Kagemni

Relief from Kagemni's mastaba in the image above shows men attending poultry/birds. Hieroglyphs and figures are juxtaposed in Egyptian art: glyphs seem to float in the spaces of composition. Thus the animate, the organic, and the glyphs together constitute the subject of the art, or magic, or "Heka." Our visual interest is sparked by the dilation of the boundaries between the image and the language; this inspires the writer and the directors featuring Egyptian art and recontextualizing such blending. In Stephen Sommers's *The Mummy* Imhotep animates the two priests from the reliefs.¹²⁷ In Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming* the glyphs appear before Mustapha. The glyphs are visually materialized before the Kane children each time they cast spells, in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*.¹²⁸ The hieroglyphs have elements of both material and energy; they thus form excellent tropes, "alternative" technology and different versions of magic. Photo taken on April 5, 2019.

¹²⁷ Stephen Sommers, dir., *The Mummy*, screenplay by Stephen Sommers, story by Stephen Sommers, Lloyd Fonvielle, and Kevin Jarre (1999; Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 1999), Film DVD.

¹²⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 1–401.

6.9 Museums in “Mythopoeia”

“Egyptomania” surrounds the museum spaces since they emit the aura of artifacts. Kevin Greene notes that Museums and tourism are important factors for expressing archaeology; “package tours” include visits to the “sites,” and museums are eager to welcome non-“specialists” by the arrangement of exhibits in those.¹²⁹ Similarly popular culture through series and TV shows has helped to bring archaeology to the common public.¹³⁰ Thus many franchises would contain an episode on ancient Egypt concerning a museum exhibit possessing an agent/power that might break free thereby intruding upon the world. Greene mentions that from the Middle Ages onwards the “Oriental” “Near East” as well as the Mediterranean had mystified the White scholars since they had invested much on Classical Greek and Roman civilization and the constitution of Biblical information.¹³¹ Egypt thereby revives and reviews many of the held precepts in the western archaeology. At the same time Egypt has raised a lot of contradictory theories: Greene notes that Egypt as well as Mesopotamia was thought to be initiators of culture, and studies in evolution were merged with the concept of “[d]iffusionism” to explain the transportation of cultural information.¹³² Greene notes that while Grafton Elliot Smith’s interpretation of the Mayan pyramids as reflecting an impact of the Giza Pyramids might be considered far fetched, Oscar Montelius approached with a “rational” basis regarding the spread of civilization from Egypt across the Middle East as well as the Mediterranean.¹³³ These scholarly debates refer to a shady area, where lack of direct/authentic data evokes speculation, thus fiction writers find Egypt to be a potential sector of ideas. In the film *Night at the Museum* directed by

¹²⁹ Kevin Greene, *Archaeology: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (1983; reprint, London: Routledge, 2003), 159.

¹³⁰ Greene, *Archaeology: An Introduction*, 159.

¹³¹ Greene, *Archaeology: An Introduction*, 162.

¹³² Greene, *Archaeology: An Introduction*, 162. Green urges the readers to consult Colin Renfrew, *Before Civilization: The Radiocarbon Revolution and Prehistoric Europe* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1973) for this concept.

¹³³ Greene, *Archaeology: An Introduction*, 162.

Shawn Levy we thereby see the life-bringing tablet reanimating the exhibits.¹³⁴ In the film adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (*The Awakening* directed by Mike Newell) the seven lamps are placed in front of Kara's statue and her mummy in the British Museum, London; the magical space is created to return Kara's spirit to Margaret's body.¹³⁵ In Riordan's *The Red Pyramid*, the British Museum is shown where the "Rosetta Stone" is used to bring forth Osiris, but instead Set arrives.¹³⁶ In *The Mummy* the Cairo Museum and its Library provide information about Imhotep; the Curator is a member of the secret resistance against Imhotep¹³⁷ while in *The Mummy Returns* the Curator of the British Museum is a follower of Imhotep and the Museum-space is used to reanimate Imhotep for the second time.¹³⁸

6.10 Religion and Liberalism

The ancient Egyptians were open minded and fluid. Rudolf Anthes believes that Egyptians were accommodative of "theological" alterations because "dogmas" did not constrict their thinking.¹³⁹ For example, as Anthes notes, the celestial, the solar iconographies and numerous variations exist parrallely and solar, lunar celestial and stellar associations were all attributed to the same deity Horus.¹⁴⁰ This has enabled us to recontextualize the mythical characters and functions of Egyptian beliefs thus the representations were not bound in categories. This fluidity comprises an important aspect in "Egyptomania." Anthes notes that the male falcon's wings were sometimes considered as

¹³⁴ Shawn Levy, dir., *Night at the Museum*, written by Thomas Lenon and Robert Ben Garant, based on *The Night at the Museum* by Milan Trenc (Los Angeles, California: 20th Century Fox, 2006), Film.

¹³⁵ Mike Newell, dir., *The Awakening*, written by Chris Bryant, Allan Scott, and Clive Exton, story by Chris Bryant and Allan Scott, based on *The Jewel of Seven Stars* by Bram Stoker (London, UK: EMI Films, 1980), Film.

¹³⁶ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 17–28.

¹³⁷ Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 1999), 44–50, 174–195.

¹³⁸ Max Allan Collins, *The Mummy Returns* (New York: Berkley Boulevard Books, 2001), 97–109.

¹³⁹ Rudolf Anthes, "Egyptian Theology in the Third Millennium B. C.," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18, no. 3 (July 1959): 170, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/543421>.

¹⁴⁰ Anthes, "Egyptian Theology," 171.

the celestial expanse but simultaneously the sky itself could also be thought to be constituted of the “female” body of Nut.¹⁴¹ Also the nature of the deities were shared and modulated to establish Pharaonic authority. Anthes notes that the transition of powers in degree also happens from Horus to Osiris through kingship: in his ruling tenure, the living pharaoh embodied Heru/Horus, the deity of the “highest” stature and the pharaoh becomes Osiris following demise, and Osiris occupied the “greatest”¹⁴² position.¹⁴³ Anthes mentions that by the Third millennium B.C., Horus-worship conceived the genealogical structure in which humans and deities were joined asserting control over the celestial and terrestrial expanses.¹⁴⁴ Keeping this divine-human interaction in mind it can be concluded that Riordan has been able to recontextualize the sibling-connection. Sadie “hosts” Isis who was “hosted” by her mother as well, while Carter “hosts” Horus the son of Isis; such roles recontextualize the divine roles in fiction by Riordan.¹⁴⁵

6.11 Mythic Ecosystem

Science fiction and fantasy explore newer life forms; Egyptian myths are full of such human and non-human interaction. Citing Erik Hornung, and Siegfried Morenz, Richard H. Wilkinson notes that “animal names” were used by rulers before the First Dynasty.¹⁴⁶ The designation of a human being referred to as a creature might hurt our sense of the human identity but not for the Egyptians with a unique mindset. R. H. Wilkinson explains that gradually Egyptian consciousness felt the need for stressing human agencies throughout the

¹⁴¹ Anthes, “Egyptian Theology,” 171.

¹⁴² Anthes, “Egyptian Theology,” 173.

¹⁴³ Anthes, “Egyptian Theology,” 171–173.

¹⁴⁴ Anthes, “Egyptian Theology,” 178.

¹⁴⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁴⁶ Richard H. Wilkinson, “Anthropomorphic Deities,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2008), 1, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz000rz52f>. See also Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many*, trans. John Baines (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 105–107; Siegfried Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, trans. Ann E. Keep (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 19–20.

universe and thus human bodied divinities began to appear in Egyptian beliefs.¹⁴⁷ Thus it may be perceived in this context that the alien-essences embody themselves in the animal bodies during their arrival in the Nile valley in Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.¹⁴⁸ It is also noteworthy that Egyptians would prefer “anthropomorphic form[s]” for deities (i) personifying towns, terrestrial features of hills, forests, plains, and (ii) the celestial atmospheric registers which are “abstract” in nature.¹⁴⁹ The fluidity in terms of animal forms and anthropomorphic forms is an important inspiring force because in the expanding genre of science fiction and fantasy, the readers are unlearning the perspective that all mystic life forms need to be represented in the humanoid form. Thus the curious representations of Egyptian deities can inspire our fictional ideas repeatedly.

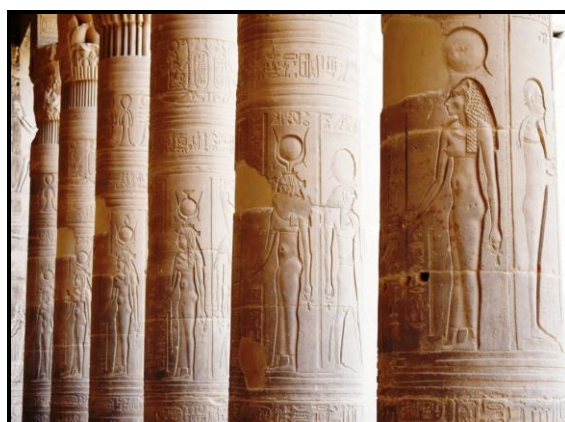


Figure 6.7 Goddesses on the Columns, Philae Temple

In the image above we see columns from the Philae temple of Isis carrying the reliefs of the goddesses. Each of them carries the solar disk balanced within the cow-horn, set upon the vulture crown, indicating a four component based aspect of the divine iconography: (i) the sun-disk, (ii) the bovine, (iii) the avian, and (iv) the human aspects. The goddesses face the inner wall, while the gods face the exterior, indicating the goddesses' authorities over the

¹⁴⁷ R. H. Wilkinson, “Anthropomorphic Deities,” 1–9.

¹⁴⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–15.

¹⁴⁹ R. H. Wilkinson, “Anthropomorphic Deities,” 4.

inner chambers¹⁵⁰ yet linked with the non-human external agents as well as the solar energy. Also the planning of the temple is noteworthy: the columns resonate to each other and also the corresponding section of each column contains a goddess-figure. The Egyptian temples are like compendiums of knowledge; thus they can be recontextualized in fiction and film. Photo taken on April 10, 2019.

6.12 The Aliens and “The Different”

It has been seen how the alien features in speculative fiction as the contributor of civilization as well as the reshaping force of the faith of the people. Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince note that unlike any monotheistic Deity, veneration was not forcibly solicited by the “Heliopolitan Ennead” in the Egyptian pantheon.¹⁵¹ The presence of the deities thereby was integral in the Pharaonic culture. Andrew Collins cited by Picknett and Price perceives that achievements classified as ancient Egyptian might have been inspired and undertaken by the “Elder Culture”¹⁵² constituted of deity-like beings; the communication with that sophisticated race is possible in the “shamanic” procedure.¹⁵³ Hence Picknett and Prince note that zoomorphism thrives, through the roles of the deities like Anubis as well as Sekhmet who’s canine and feline forms are modes of communication with them.¹⁵⁴ The zoomorphic bodies are of profound interest for speculation since genetic mutation and medical breakthrough through experimentation with non-human species might take science to abysmal heights. Michael Carmichael cited by Picknett and Prince urges us to remain inquisitive and accommodative about the “shamanic” insight of the ancient Egyptians in

¹⁵⁰ See Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 42–45.

¹⁵¹ Lynn Picknett and Clive Prince, *The Stargate Conspiracy: Revealing the Truth behind Extraterrestrial Contact, Military Intelligence and the Mysteries of Ancient Egypt* (1999; reprint, London: Time Warner Books, 2006), 334–335.

¹⁵² Andrew Collins quoted in Picknett and Price, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 346; Andrew Collins, *From the Ashes of Angels* (London: Michael Joseph, 1996), Chapter 5, cited in Picknett and Price, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 346; Picknett and Price, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 346.

¹⁵³ Picknett and Prince, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 346. Picknett and Price elaborate Andrew Collins’s information; see Picknett and Price, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 346.

¹⁵⁴ Picknett and Prince, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 348.

botanical observation as well as engineering science behind the pyramids.¹⁵⁵ Such calls for infinite possibilities enable creative fictional imagination to thrive and return to Egypt repeatedly. For example Bastet (voiced by Vanessa Hope) and Anubis (voiced by Shush Tenin) are present in the floating Pyramid in Enki Bilal directed *Immortel* (2004) who ask Horus (voiced by Thomas M. Pollard) to accept his mortality.¹⁵⁶ Horus needs a woman's uterus to preserve his seed, which he does through manipulating the human Nikopol's (played by Thomas Kretschmann) body.¹⁵⁷ The film is an interesting take on genetic mutations and the divine gene tends to remain evasive of interpretation by human intelligence. The Egyptian deities, as the film suggests, remain aloof, timeless; they mingle and then depart while humans remain curious and scrutinizing regarding anomalies and categorization.

Besides the zoomorphic deities the Egyptians incorporated the peripheral figures like Bes and made him popular and quite empowered. Budge notes that in "Metternich Stele" Bes gains features from other deities: (i) Amen's horns and (ii) Shu's "plumes" adorn his head and (iii) in his hands we see authoritative insignia and (iv) the hieroglyphs representing "[a] million of years" are represented over him.¹⁵⁸ Budge notes that Bes thus has a dual personality of both "terror" and laughter; the former being targeted at the malevolent spirits but in the Netherworld the deceased could discover a trusted "companion" in Bes's character.¹⁵⁹ It can be perceived that Riordan incorporates this and indeed in "Duat" Bes and Taweret come to rescue Sadie, Carter, and Zia.¹⁶⁰ Budge mentions that Bes's native land seems to have somewhere been in "Equilateral Africa" as supported by his plumed "head-

¹⁵⁵ Picknett and Prince, *The Stargate Conspiracy*, 357.

¹⁵⁶ Enki Bilal, dir., *Immortal* [*Immortel, ad vitam*], written by Enki Bilal, based on *La Foire aux Immortels* by Enki Bilal (Paris: Duran Entertainment; Quantic Dream, 2004), Film.

¹⁵⁷ Bilal, *Immortal* [*Immortel, ad vitam*].

¹⁵⁸ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 273, 2: 286.

¹⁵⁹ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 287.

¹⁶⁰ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 310–315.

dress” and the dwarfish body.¹⁶¹ Budge also mentions that the penchant for pygmies in Pharaonic royal household has been recorded as well; the pygmies were revered for their origin from the “Land of the Spirits”¹⁶² as Budge informs.¹⁶³ Thus studying ancient Egyptian mythology provides us with ideas regarding the incorporations from other African myths into the Pharaonic collection of myths. In support it can be argued that “pygmy zombies” do feature in Sommers’s *The Mummy Returns* in which they haunt the “Oasis of Ahm Shere.”¹⁶⁴

6.13 The “Grotesque”

Thus ancient Egyptian open-mindedness is expressed in giving representation to the deviants. Rosalie David citing Miriam Lichtheim’s edition of the translation of the “Instruction of Amenemope” mentions that in Egyptian thought the disabled and the deformed are worthy of reverence being shaped by the deities.¹⁶⁵ David aptly observes that the notion of the well-developed divine bodies were emulated by the ancient Greeks, reflected in their legacy of the glorification of the physical looks, thus divine negation was seen as instrumental behind lack of physical “beauty” and “deformity.”¹⁶⁶ In contrast, as David perceives, the ancient Egyptians were truly advanced in their terms of acceptance and their pantheon included both suffering bodies and the elegantly developed human bodies.¹⁶⁷ However the mummy films tend to feature the pantheon as featuring scary zoomorphism. The undead is thus mostly made grotesque, which again moves away from how the ancient Egyptians would have incorporated the so-called un-aesthetic. In Egyptian myths, as David

¹⁶¹ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 287.

¹⁶² Quoted in Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2: 287.

¹⁶³ Budge, *The Gods of the Egyptians*, 2:287.

¹⁶⁴ Sommers, *The Mummy Returns*; Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 198–223.

¹⁶⁵ Rosalie David, “Egyptian Medicine and Disabilities: From Pharaonic to Greco-Roman Egypt,” in *Disability in Antiquity*, ed. Christian Laes (London: Routledge, 2017), 84. For the translated text see Miriam Lichtheim, ed., *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings. Volume II: The New Kingdom* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1976), 146–163.

¹⁶⁶ David, “Egyptian Medicine and Disabilities,” 85.

¹⁶⁷ David, “Egyptian Medicine and Disabilities,” 85.

notes, the opposition between beautiful and the grotesque was balanced: the belief in the restoration of youth and health in Osiris's domain in the afterlife led Egyptians to curb prejudice towards "deformity and disability" since Osiris himself underwent mutilation, death and then only acquired the glorified position of the resurrected judge.¹⁶⁸ In *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* we thus see how the considerations shift unsteadily between Imhotep's handsomeness and his putrid body.¹⁶⁹ Thus the texts studied in the Thesis seek to highlight the inclusive nature of the ancient Egyptian beliefs enabling fiction and "mythopoeia" to be re-woven.

6.14 The Deities and Humans

Despite the plethora of zoomorphism, humanity was central in the ancient Egyptian worldview. Osiris-cult is timeless because human existence and mortality prefiguring eternal life constitutes a recurring pattern. Eugene Cruz-Urbe notes that Osiris was able to undertake the role of the judge since he himself passed through demise; thus Seth's violence in killing Osiris was considered instrumental in the long run for the shaping of the Osirian authority in the Afterlife.¹⁷⁰ Cruz-Urbe notes that Horus, the son of Osiris, is the militant figure counterpart to his regenerated father; Horus was attributed the designation of the savior figure while chaos was thought to be Seth-linked, as known especially from the corpus of texts in Edfu's Horus Temple as well as Dendera's Hathor Temple.¹⁷¹ Cruz-Urbe mentions that following initial encounter the cosmos's maintenance is attributed to the interaction between the deities Horus as well as Seth.¹⁷² Egyptian myths thereby balance the opposites. This balance has thus been utilized in mythical retellings, since writers find it

¹⁶⁸ David, "Egyptian Medicine and Disabilities," 86.

¹⁶⁹ Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–204; Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 43–174.

¹⁷⁰ Eugene Cruz-Urbe, "Sth '3 phty 'Seth, God of Power and Might,'" *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 45 (2009): 202, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25735454>.

¹⁷¹ Cruz-Urbe, "Sth '3 phty 'Seth, God of Power and Might,'" 207.

¹⁷² Cruz-Urbe, "Sth '3 phty 'Seth, God of Power and Might,'" 209.

more potent to work with wronged and/or unbalanced crisis than pure evil. Even Apophis's justification as the chaotic counterpart has been addressed in Riordan's *The Kane Chronicles*.¹⁷³ Thus the mythical worldview of ancient Egypt can inspire science fiction and "mythopoeic" fiction because these two genres look at the ambivalence in the world structure which is mostly seen in polarized terms (good and evil) in institutional religions.

The polarization of the Two Egypts remained in the dual consciousness of the ancient Egyptians throughout Egyptian history, and Viaud notes that while Horus's mother Isis and father Osiris represent the waters and the vegetation respectively, Set's dominion was the desert.¹⁷⁴ The cartouche containing the name contained the essence of the pharaoh and his entire authority¹⁷⁵; thus uniting the Two Egypts under the cartouche is a sufficient visual expression for the unification of Egypt under the character and the persona of the Pharaoh. The trachea used for the passing of life-giving air, maintain the cartouche and the Pharaoh's vitalities, he thus lives on eternally in art.¹⁷⁶ Interestingly the cartouche-shaped sarcophagus machine of Ra restores life in the film *Stargate*.¹⁷⁷ Thus Egyptian symbolic art recurs in the mechanical and technological contexts in science fiction.

The mythical world of the ancient Egyptians attribute enormous potential to humans: H. Te Velde notes that the divine and the human realms are connected through the pharaoh to whom performative action of rituals was all attributed.¹⁷⁸ Te Velde notes that both the embalmed mummy and the sculpted "images" of deities were "symbolically" animated by the "Opening of the Mouth" ritual meaning that the immortal as well the mortal beings are

¹⁷³ Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 298–310.

¹⁷⁴ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 19–20.

¹⁷⁵ Cathie Spieser, "Cartouche," in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Elizabeth Froid and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2010), 1–10, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf61t>.

¹⁷⁶ Jeremy Naydler, *Temple of the Cosmos: The Ancient Egyptian Experience of the Sacred* (Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions International, 1996), 269, Fig. 12.5.

¹⁷⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*.

¹⁷⁸ Herman Te Velde, "Theology, Priests and Worship in Ancient Egypt," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, ed. J. M. Sasson, vol. 3 (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 1731.

regulated by magic, and even the manifestations of deities needed to be re-established “ritual[ly]” with life.¹⁷⁹ The realization of power involves bodily knowledge; thus the Eye remains a potential organ and the sense of sight remains important in the mythical ethos. Te Velde perceives that vision was equated with flame as well as light hence Horus’s Eye in the initiatory phase in ritual was thought to attribute health and entirety and possessed Ra’s brilliance.¹⁸⁰ Thus the ancient Egyptian magicians were thought to be capable of toppling the cosmic forces. Evelyn in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*, Mustapha in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the magicians of the “House of Life” in *The Kane Chronicles* hold tremendous abilities to control cosmic forces. These texts echo the ancient Egyptian realization of power involving bodily knowledge.

6.15 “Maat” and the Balance

“Maat” in ancient Egyptian thought involved a close father-daughter relationship. Egerton Sykes and Alan Kendall cited by Tali M. Schroeder note that the sun’s daily trajectory is “Ma’at”-bound¹⁸¹; hence “Ma’at” and Re as daughter and father are intrinsically bound.¹⁸² Schroeder notes that “Ma’at” is conceived by Re; Re is himself regulated by “Ma’at,” proving sun’s dependence on the abstract principle of “Ma’at.”¹⁸³ The separation as well as unity of agency within “Maat” gives it a strong involved connection. We see this utilized and realized in the texts studied, whose protagonists learn to regulate themselves individually for the protection of the global communities. Ancient Egyptian art is also “Ma’at”-bound. Schroeder traces “Ma’at” perceived in visual composition of creatures as well as plants and the human controlled agencies mediating and functioning in the aquatic,

¹⁷⁹ Te Velde, “Theology, Priests and Worship,” 1732.

¹⁸⁰ Te Velde, “Theology, Priests and Worship,” 1732.

¹⁸¹ Tali M. Schroeder has given the spelling of “Maat” as “Ma’at.”

¹⁸² Egerton Sykes and Alan Kendall, “Maat,” *Who’s Who in Non-Classical Mythology*, revised by Alan Kendall (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 119, cited in Tali M. Schroeder, “Ma’at as a Theme in Ancient Egyptian Tomb Art,” *Oglethorpe Journal of Undergraduate Research* 5, no. 1 (2015): 1, accessed February 15, 2021, digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/ojur/vol5/iss1/1. See Schroeder, “Ma’at as a Theme,” 1.

¹⁸³ Schroeder, “Ma’at as a Theme,” 1.

natural sphere.¹⁸⁴ This perception, as Schroeder perceives, is seen in the relief *Ti Watching a Hippopotamus Hunt*, where the enormous power of the hippopotamus is checked by the humans, with the papyrus and the Nile in the backdrop.¹⁸⁵ Schroeder notes that violence and balance are positioned in “duality”; thus “Ma’at” is exercised in the visual illustration.¹⁸⁶ It is interesting that hippopotamus itself is a dual-mannered being in Egyptian mythology and we have protective goddess-figure in Egyptian mythology having physical features of the hippopotamus.¹⁸⁷ Thus Taweret becomes the caregiver in Riordan’s fiction because she balances “Ma’at” despite her ferocious appearance; it is in her nursing space, the “Sunny Acres,” that Ra is discovered and reanimated by Sadie’s incantation.¹⁸⁸

“Maat” and Set have a unique yet ambivalent connection. H. Te Velde observes that “maat” itself was alienated during Seth’s birth, attributed to Nut’s sputum, which was not normal as he was not attributed to her uterine delivery.¹⁸⁹ Te Velde mentions that for the maintenance of “Maat” peace was established between Set and Horus thus it was believed that the Pharaoh’s identity incorporated the balance between Set and Horus, the former’s lack of balance subsumed within the latter’s strength of Order.¹⁹⁰ Riordan has shown this in Carter’s self-control, resisting the urge to go into fight, instigated by Horus whom he “hosts.”¹⁹¹ Te Velde notes that ancient Egyptian mythology did however attribute the sublime relocation of Set, in the affectionate, exalted company of the solar deity Re on his boat from which he fights the serpent Apophis at bay.¹⁹² Thus Set was not only Re’s

¹⁸⁴ Schroeder, “Ma’at as a Theme,” 2.

¹⁸⁵ Schroeder, “Ma’at as a Theme,” 2.

¹⁸⁶ Schroeder, “Ma’at as a Theme,” 2–3.

¹⁸⁷ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 38.

¹⁸⁸ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 351–371.

¹⁸⁹ Herman Te Velde, “The Egyptian God Seth as a Trickster,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 7 (1968): 38, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40000633>.

¹⁹⁰ Te Velde, “The Egyptian God Seth,” 39.

¹⁹¹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

¹⁹² Te Velde, “The Egyptian God Seth,” 39.

appointed companion but also the god's strategic re-use of a destructive role (of Set) for a useful purpose, needed for "Maat."¹⁹³ In Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* it is Set who is able to see the borders of the universe, and Set's wife Nephthys is shown Ra's inner essence.¹⁹⁴ In the film *Gods of Egypt*, directed by Alex Proyas, Set (played by Gerald Butler) despite his crimes, is offered a place in the exalted sun boat.¹⁹⁵ The writers of science fiction often deal with the question and nature of power, the deviant, dissenting self, the ostracized inventions; thus they may find it interesting to borrow patterns from ancient Egyptian myths to show that the ambivalence of a powerful stratum ensures balance.



Figure 6.8 Thoth and the "Eye of Horus"

Thoth is seen standing before the "Eye of Horus" inserted in the lunar disk upon a crescent in this ceiling relief from the Temple of Hathor, Dendera. Alan F. Alford notes that the lunar light was linked with Horus's eye and it received Thoth's assistance.¹⁹⁶ The Eye was therefore important in Egyptian beliefs: it was the sign of power as well as of godhead. Thus enhanced sight and suffering become vital experiences for the divine realization. The

¹⁹³ Te Velde, "The Egyptian God Seth," 39.

¹⁹⁴ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 216, 219–224.

¹⁹⁵ Alex Proyas, dir, *Gods of Egypt*, written by Matt Sazama and Burk Sharpless (Santa Monica, California: Thunder Road Pictures, Mystery Clock Cinema, and Summit Entertainment, 2016), Film.

¹⁹⁶ Alan F. Alford, *The Midnight Sun: The Death and Rebirth of God in Ancient Egypt* (Walsall: Eridu Books, 2004), 28.

regeneration of the body along with enhanced power is an important trope in science fiction. Mustapha, David, Daniel, Imhotep, and Evelyn go through their temporary near-demise-phases and return, which reconstitute an important aspect in the funerary beliefs of the Egyptians. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

6.16 Ancient and Modern Egypt between Other Worlds and Earth

Egypt is a space that is “watched” by Earth and other worlds alike; thereby the writers attribute a mystic, mythical ambience to the Egyptian myths and their millennia-old impact. R. Vaiman cited by Tatiana Chernyshova notes that the Myths are so universal that anthropologists, psychologists, and classicists have approached them individually and discipline-wise.¹⁹⁷ It can be summed up that ancient Egypt has been universalized and globalized in the texts we studied. “[W]orld-models,” according to Chernyshova, have thus been created and modulated in the sectors of both myth and science.¹⁹⁸ Egypt is the meeting place through which different worlds interact, as in *Stargate*, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, and *Resurrection*. Chernyshova observes that the humans are gifted with processing skills and paucity of data does not hinder humans from generating imaginary structures.¹⁹⁹ Riordan philosophizes on this very notion that humans are more “*creativ[e]*” compared with the deities;²⁰⁰ hence they can re-work mythical patterns and recontextualize them. These gaps are fulfilled by bringing dissimilar areas into consideration; Chernyshova notes that human capacities from their interior faculties are able to establish connections between two separate areas to generate “information”; thus human nature and structures of human living

¹⁹⁷ R. Vaiman cited in Tatiana Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation in Our Age,” *Science Fiction Studies* 31, no. 3 (November 2004): 345, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4241282>. See Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 345.

¹⁹⁸ Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 346.

¹⁹⁹ Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 348.

²⁰⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 474.

get reflected in the scope of mythology.²⁰¹ Chernyshova notes that the “modern myth” is cosmos-bound and welcomes newer worlds to which humans would travel and along with them would travel the machine-human differences and oppositions.²⁰² Chernyshova perceives that our day-to-day life thus turns spaceward, and “cosmicization”²⁰³ occurs as generation of new myths in science fiction.²⁰⁴ Indeed, we see the Egyptian ambience in *Resurrection*, *Stargate*, and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* to move beyond Earth and bring the other species in the midst of Egyptian ethos. To reach out to them, one has to go through Egypt, like unearthing and activating the Stargate-machine in *Stargate* and the reawakening of the Sphinx in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.²⁰⁵

6.17 Ancient and Modern Egypt between Deities and Humans



Figure 6.9 Divine Pairs from Kom Ombo Temple

No other culture balanced the female and the male in such unique manner like the ancient Egyptians. In the image above, we see four columns from the dual temple of Kom Ombo. On each which we see that a goddess stands with another god; applying rules of perspective it can be perceived that each goddess stands side by side and not essentially

²⁰¹ Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 346.

²⁰² Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 353.

²⁰³ Quoted in Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 353.

²⁰⁴ Chernyshova, “Science Fiction and Myth Creation,” 353.

²⁰⁵ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193; Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

behind the god and raises a gesture of protection upon the god's shoulder.²⁰⁶ These divine pairs are beneficiaries of offerings from kings (not visible in this image) and interestingly the pairs face the Nile river implying a practical observation that offerings of all kinds are made possible by the physical, earthly river. The deities thus face the river, visualizing their creation while the pharaohs as the links between the divine and the earthly provide for the deities, being backed by the river and its products. Thus Egyptian temple is like the cosmos in stone and layout, and such ambience can be seen in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*. Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

Whitney M. Davies notes that according to the ancient Egyptian *Pyramid Texts*, for achieving placement amidst the divinities, physical purity was required for the pharaoh; Davis however informs us that apart from purification, utilization of “powers” for skyward rising and heavenly placement are pursued by the pharaoh.²⁰⁷ Thus the human aided by magic disrupting the boundaries is similar to the scientist aiming to change the ecosystem, and conquer worlds. Such world-changing/world destroying feats are available to the humans, which we can both identify and feel wary of. The Pharaoh's powers are unrestricted as Davis notes: terrestrial chaos might ensue from Geb being “curse[d]” if pharaoh's upward locomotion was forestalled by the deities.²⁰⁸ Davis observes that it is surprising that “Negative Confession”²⁰⁹ in the ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead* warns against blasphemy and yet the pharaoh's warning against the deities is mentioned in the *Pyramid Texts*.²¹⁰ Thus there existed the capacity to challenge the divine world in the Egyptian worldview. This appeals to us since the protagonists would be placed in the unstable power-zone, and understanding power is certainly an important dilemma and motive force in

²⁰⁶ See Mehler, *The Land of Osiris*, 42–43.

²⁰⁷ Whitney M. Davis, “The Ascension-Myth in the Pyramid Texts,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 36, no. 3 (July 1977): 163–164, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/545152>.

²⁰⁸ Davis, “The Ascension-Myth,” 164.

²⁰⁹ Quoted in Davis, “The Ascension-Myth,” 165.

²¹⁰ Davis, “The Ascension-Myth,” 165.

science fiction and fantasy. The context involves the celestial and terrestrial realms and power divisions. Davis perceives that the pharaoh's claimed abilities in the celestial register is the continuation of the exalted state of his reign "on Earth"; thus the state-authority is mythically recontextualized in the pharaoh's newfound position in heaven.²¹¹ This reminds us of Carter's "coronation speech" in Riordan's *The Serpent's Shadow* and reminds us how Horus and Carter address their "subjects."²¹² Also the battle between human forces on Earth in Lovegrove's *The Age of Ra* causes physical impacts on the divine bodies in heaven.²¹³ Thus Egyptian myths recontextualized in science fiction show human ambition to conquer the worlds which can be seen as counterpart to the mythical heavens.



Figure 6.10 Rectangular Scene-arrangement, Edfu Temple

In the image above, one wall from the Temple of Horus, Edfu, shows rectangular spaces containing rituals/veneration scenes and the rectangles are divided by lines of hieroglyphs. This meticulous coordination between text and image is laid out in every ancient Egyptian temple. Simultaneously the intense labour of the Egyptian builders baffles us, as the sheer size did not hinder the energy of the artists. Each section of the walls mattered to the artists in terms of content design and execution. Thus the ancient Egyptian

²¹¹ Davis, "The Ascension-Myth," 165.

²¹² Riordan, *The Serpent's Shadow*, 394–395.

²¹³ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 305–309.

temples are like compendiums of ritual and iconographic knowledge and in complexities resemble an electronic assembled device, or machinery. The Egyptian temples are thus tropes in science fiction and fantasy: in Thornton's *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, Amun-Ra manifested a colossal temple in an altered dimension under the Sphinx to bring forth the living Sphinx.²¹⁴ Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

6.18 Osiris-Cult and Its Popularity

The body in Egyptian thought is a complex conglomeration. Jan Assmann cited by Mark Smith perceives that the Egyptians did note that the overall bodily activities depend on the coordination of the parts' functions.²¹⁵ A person has different mythic codes, expressed through icons; the person resembles a mythic compound, and the compound might be constituted of opposites. Osiris becomes pan-gendered in the compounding process. M. Smith notes that Osiris's masculine identity however promised gendered assimilation to women as well as men, meaning that the "Osiris"-status could be achieved by women as well.²¹⁶ In argument it can be noted that in *Stargate*, Ra's sarcophagus-machine containing Osiris-image can revive all humans irrespective of gender.²¹⁷ M. Smith notes that not only do the human relationships get disrupted but also the organic disruption happens at death.²¹⁸ Applying this concept in *The Mummy*, it can be said that the undead-state involves the disconnection of Imhotep from society by organ disintegration; hence like a true ancient Egyptian he should reconstitute himself and re-acquire his position through Ankh-su-

²¹⁴ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 204–348.

²¹⁵ Jan Assmann, *Death and Salvation in Ancient Egypt*, trans. David Lorton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), 35–39, 118–120, cited in Mark Smith, "Osiris and the Deceased," in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles: University of California, 2008), 2, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nf6bg>. M. Smith elaborates the concept in his discussion, see M. Smith, "Osiris and the Deceased," 2.

²¹⁶ M. Smith, "Osiris and the Deceased," 3.

²¹⁷ Emmerich, *Stargate*; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 105–193.

²¹⁸ M. Smith, "Osiris and the Deceased," 2. See also Jan Assmann, "Death and Initiation in the Funerary Religion of Ancient Egypt," in *Religion and Philosophy in Ancient Egypt*, eds. J. P. Allen, J. Assmann, A. B. Lloyd, R. K. Ritner, and D. P. Silverman, *Yale Egyptological Studies 3* (New Haven: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 1989), 135–159.

namun.²¹⁹ The very entitlement for the Osirian emancipation fuels many plotlines in Western fiction: the desires of Imhotep and Ankh-su-namun in *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns*, and the motivation of Ra in *Stargate*.²²⁰ M. Smith informs us that the Egyptians conceived of two phases covered by the dead: in the first phase, the “Osirian form” is acquired by the deceased, and in the second phase Osiris’s domain is acquired by him/her.²²¹ Riordan shows this creatively when Julius hosts Osiris and becomes a presiding judge trying Setne.²²² For Sadie the binary between god and father breaks down as she embraces her father in the sacred space of the trial court.²²³ Riordan takes up the ancient Egyptians’ love for Osiris, expands it to a family affection that anyone from any nationality can relate to. It can be concluded that this makes the Osiris-myth relevant in all periods of human history; thus this myth will always hold plot ingredients for fiction.

6.19 The Funerary Space

Both the supernatural fiction and film (*The Mummy*) and science fiction (*Resurrection* and *Stargate*) feature mortality through resurrection and prolongation of life; these factors have featured in funerary texts throughout ancient Egyptian history. The heart and the scarab in Egyptian embalmment are linked in symbolic machination. Kathlyn M. Cooney notes that in the “Late Period” the analogy between the rising sun and the demised person was construed by the “winged scarab.”²²⁴ The “heart scarab” prevented any possibility of betrayal by the heart in condemning the deceased master during Osirian

²¹⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 186–195, 208–247.

²²⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 1–256; M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 1–288; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

²²¹ M. Smith, “Osiris and the Deceased,” 4.

²²² Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 188–199.

²²³ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 181–182.

²²⁴ Kathlyn M. Cooney, “Scarab,” in *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, eds. Jacco Dieleman and Willeke Wendrich (Los Angeles, University of California, 2008), 2, accessed April 9, 2021, <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz001nfbcx>.

judgment.²²⁵ Cooney perceives that the scarabs are linguistically, “semiotic[ally],” and “conceptual[ly]” important since the scribes and the artists would fuse complicated nuanced projection of spells which provided different classifications of “scarab amulets.”²²⁶ In *The Mummy* we find the scarabs as predators, they act as perpetrating forces on the undead, which is a very interesting way of re-contextualizing the ambivalent role of the scarabs to gain eternal Afterlife. In *The Mummy* the eternal “existence” is a curse since it consumes the living bodies. The ancient Egyptian attempt to bypass the deities had an inverse effect on Imhotep. The funerary space is thus always a rich but uncharted space, which dissolves the binary between the living and the dead. It can be concluded that the tombs are huge resources for the deceased undertaking an afterlife transition. Thus the tombs constitute important spaces in fictional retelling and contexts because they carry answers which provide a lot of potential for unlocking secrets or unleashing forces.

6.20 Retellings of Ancient Egyptian Myths

In the texts studied in this thesis, myths are always present and relevant as plot-constituents; the narrative trajectories are based on mythical recontextualizations. Myths have been necessary for world-structuring; Joseph Baumgartner, G. Lanczowski, J. B., and H. Fries note that the closing of the distance between humans and deities is an objective of myth and the primitive cultures would consider the myths as “real” factors behind the world’s creation and the deities were models for the believers.²²⁷ Myths are repositories of data which include both esoteric and elements of daily realizations. Baumgartner, Lanczowski, J. B., and H. Fries write that myths are important in providing knowledge regarding history as well as creation; the initial, “primordial” act of an event is remembered

²²⁵ Cooney, “Scarab,” 2.

²²⁶ Cooney, “Scarab,” 6.

²²⁷ Joseph Baumgartner, G. Lanczowski, J. B., and H. Fries, “Myth and Mythology,” trans. Joseph Baumgartner, SVD, *Philippine Quarterly of Culture and Society* 2, no. 4 (December 1974): 195, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29791159>.

by humans by practicing “ritual” based on myths.²²⁸ Thus myths are essential as guidelines for existence according to the established patterns. Baumgartner, Lanczowski, J. B. and H. Fries observe that the continuation of lives upon the planet is ensured by the authorization of the “ritual[s]” in connection with mythical “*hieros logos*.”²²⁹ The insights above are reflected in the primary texts we studied: in *Stargate* Ra’s godhead involves technology and its usage²³⁰; in *Resurrection* the Kinleys are worshipped for standardizing ancient Egyptian life,²³¹ and in *The Kane Chronicles* the Kane family re-enacts the myths so that the cosmic phenomena are all maintained according to “Maat” that had been followed since Creation and must be kept undisturbed till the end of Time.²³² Thus myths provide settings, contents, in which the worlds could be re-oriented in a futuristic setting.

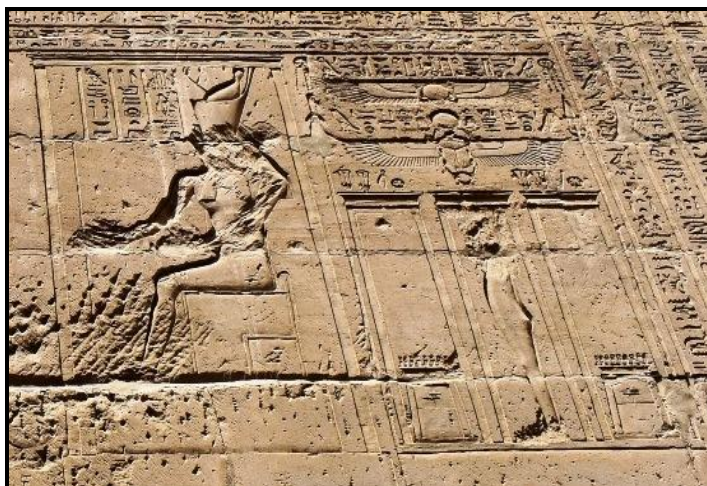


Figure 6.11 Horus and Osiris, Edfu Temple

In the image above, we see Horus (left, seated) and Osiris (right, standing) from a wall in Temple of Horus, Edfu. The artists have given the son larger dimensions than the father, since in the Osiris-Isis-Horus myth, Isis and Horus remain more active than Osiris. In

²²⁸ Baumgartner, Lanczowski, J. B., and H. Fries, “Myth and Mythology,” 195.

²²⁹ Baumgartner, Lanczowski, J. B., and H. Fries, “Myth and Mythology,” 195.

²³⁰ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

²³¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

²³² Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514; Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 1–446; Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 1–401.

The Kane Chronicles Riordan follows a similar pattern; thus Julius Kane is imprisoned in the very first novel in the trilogy and his daughter Sadie and son Carter need to cooperate with Isis and Horus to resist Set.²³³ Also the image of the scarab beetle above Osiris indicates resurrection and transformation,²³⁴ while the winged disk with uraei at the top indicates protective gesture above the Osiris and the shrine.²³⁵ Photo taken on April 9, 2019.

6.21 Myth and Material

With technological rise, myths have percolated into the narratives through speculation and future-introspection. Brian Attebery notes that much scope of science fiction involves human existence as myth also addresses, and how it negatively and positively responds to an external force/realm; thus we travel from the charted to the uncharted territories in which technical assistance along with our comprehensions work in knowing.²³⁶ Myths also provide worlds to which access is barred and risky; however science fiction opens up many of such realms. Many myths exist in appropriated patterns in fantasy. Attebery mentions that Fantasy also works with establishing interaction between constituent elements as seen in science fiction and myths and these are construed magically; but for science fiction these elements are artificial.²³⁷ Thus a machine-interface might be present which in mythical standards might pursue use of “mana,” and/or spells. For example in *StarGate* the sarcophagus filled with spells meant for resurrection in ancient Egyptian usage does become the regenerator for the alien Ra though it has glyphs covering them.²³⁸ Natural elements are explored in their different aspects, like a mystical thing or a formative element

²³³ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 1–514.

²³⁴ Viaud, “Egyptian Mythology,” 16–19.

²³⁵ For the speculation regarding the protection as well as encounter attributed to the disk, see Erich von Däniken, *The Eyes of the Sphinx: The Newest Evidence of Extraterrestrial Contact in Ancient Egypt* (New York: Berkley Books, 1996), 67, 165.

²³⁶ Brian Attebery, “Science Fantasy and Myth,” in *Intersections: Fantasy and Science Fiction*, eds. George E. Slusser and Eric S. Rabkin (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 181.

²³⁷ Attebery, “Science Fantasy and Myth,” 182.

²³⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 174–175, 180–181, 184–185.

in science fantasy.²³⁹ Pyramid as an archetype is perceived by Michael Rice²⁴⁰ and it can be seen as a marvel of mathematics and engineering in *Resurrection* and in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.²⁴¹ Roger Zelazny cited by Attebery enables the upliftment into the godhead by technical prowess, as perceived in Zelazny's novel *Creatures of Light and Darkness*.²⁴² Ra's Stargate falls in this pattern since his technology allows him to travel great distance, and "technology" becomes the religious institution for which he needs raw materials as his tributes.²⁴³ Thus it can be concluded that the sarcophagus creates an image in which the pyramid, the mythical realm and the realm of science fiction coincide.

6.22 Myth and Archaeology

Archaeology in popular culture has gothic elements like science fiction that unearths hidden stuff and ignites the repressed. The Mummy films incorporate these explorations of desires: Carol Siri Johnson notes that "Oriental" eroticism as well as psychic manipulation along with horror are contextualized in *The Mummy* (1932) directed by Karl Freund having Egypt as its locus.²⁴⁴ Johnson aptly observes that the Mummy brings out the patriarchal entitlement of the White West in appropriating their Egyptological discoveries believing in their sense of "superior[ity]".²⁴⁵ However, as Johnson informs us, since the British control itself is haunted and terrorized by the Mummy, the film could be read as "anti-colonialist" as well.²⁴⁶ It can thus be stated that the mummy, if kept dormant, triggers intrigue; if animated,

²³⁹ Attebery, "Science Fantasy and Myth," 185.

²⁴⁰ Michael Rice, *Egypt's Making: The Origins of Ancient Egypt 5000–2000 BC*, 2nd ed. (1990; reprint, London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 262–263.

²⁴¹ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 208–218; Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17, 35–197.

²⁴² Attebery, "Science Fantasy and Myth," 187. See also Roger Zelazny, *Creatures of Light and Darkness* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1969).

²⁴³ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

²⁴⁴ Carol Siri Johnson, "The Limbs of Osiris: Reed's Mumbo Jumbo and Hollywood's The Mummy," *MELUS* 17, no. 4 (Winter 1991-1992): 106, 105–115, accessed February 15, 2021, www.jstor.org/stable/467271. See also Karl Freund, dir., *The Mummy*, screenplay by John L. Balderston, story by Nina Wilcox Putnam and Richard Schayer, (Universal City, California: Universal Pictures, 1932), Film.

²⁴⁵ Johnson, "The Limbs of Osiris," 108.

²⁴⁶ Johnson, "The Limbs of Osiris," 108.

poses threat, which could again be controlled by ancient means, with assistance from the ancient Egyptian pantheon. This element can be seen in film *The Mummy* (1932) as Johnson mentions: the goddess Isis aids Helen (played by Zita Johann) held captive by the Mummy and the Mummy's body disintegrates at the gesture of Isis's "Ankh."²⁴⁷ Thus Isis in the film *The Mummy* (1932) as Johnson observes, remains as the ancient Egyptian power, uncharted and inaccessible by the White male since Isis is the quintessential Egyptian woman and the "Ankh" is coincidentally a "a circle with a cross" which is the female sign chosen in White semiotics.²⁴⁸ *The Mummy* and *The Mummy Returns* however remain mostly male in terms of this power since we see that the male opponents Imhotep and Scorpion King are thwarted by the agencies of the male deities Anubis, Osiris, Horus, and Amun-Ra; the incantations calling up Anubis is uttered by Evelyn²⁴⁹ and O'Connell learns the purpose of the "Spear of Osiris."²⁵⁰

6.23 Myth and Aliens

In the primary texts discussed it has been perceived how the aliens are deified; in some cases they are also the divine characters themselves. The references to the deities involve the beginning of life. Michael Ruse quoted and cited by Ulrich Charpa notes that mythical contents, faith, as well as scientific thought and studies thematically address life's beginning.²⁵¹ Charpa perceives that the human sense of validation of things by mythology is not too pertinent but our religious comprehension involves argumentative analysis and sense of history.²⁵² That could be one reason why literature and popular culture are distinct: (i)

²⁴⁷ Johnson, "The Limbs of Osiris," 110–112.

²⁴⁸ Johnson, "The Limbs of Osiris," 110–112.

²⁴⁹ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 244–247.

²⁵⁰ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy Returns*, 267–277.

²⁵¹ Michael Ruse, *The Evolution-Creation Struggle* (Cambridge/Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005), 4–5, quoted in Ulrich Charpa, "'Origin,' 'Creation,' and 'Origin of Life': Some Conceptual Considerations," *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 34, no. 3 (2012): 439–440, accessed February 15, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43831422>.

²⁵² Charpa, "'Origin,' 'Creation,' and 'Origin of Life,'" 446.

literature addresses the debate regarding beliefs in the world order and faith, while (ii) popular culture can conveniently address the myths. However Charpa writes that we still tend to value certain creation-stories as the epitome of general awareness that shapes the base of even our inquisitive and rational mind.²⁵³ Thus people always need a collection of stories in the background despite our technical premise, which provide materials for science fiction and fantasy. Charpa notes that the separation between “origin and creation” involves ontology: action forms the repertoire of creation while organic, inorganic, biological, and material come under the purview of “origin.”²⁵⁴ The texts selected in this thesis address the creation rather than the origins, like the advents of the alien Ra, the Kinleys, the alien spirits; the concept of “origins” is more geared towards the birth of complex cultures. Charpa perceives that the scope of scientific disciplines are ever-broadening; thus newer opinions are sought, the increasing complicated nature and living species are being determined yet the fruit of the research is “provisional.”²⁵⁵ Thus an all encompassing definition for life is difficult to reach.²⁵⁶ Science fiction tries to envision life forms through different perspectives but the sublime remain distant, unknowable. This is shown in Thornton’s *Sphinx: The Second Coming* in which “a far more developed Civilization is mentioned as divine, dwarfing the highly advanced aliens associated with the “Consilium.”²⁵⁷ What intrigues us that that beings from that civilization decide to appear in the primitive habitat of Earth in the bodies of animals revered in the ancient Egyptian pantheon.²⁵⁸ Thereby, the uniqueness of the Egyptian pantheon is again established.

²⁵³ Charpa, “‘Origin,’ ‘Creation,’ and ‘Origin of Life,’” 440–446.

²⁵⁴ Charpa, “‘Origin,’ ‘Creation,’ and ‘Origin of Life,’” 440, 439–459.

²⁵⁵ Charpa, “‘Origin,’ ‘Creation,’ and ‘Origin of Life,’” 454–455.

²⁵⁶ Charpa, “‘Origin,’ ‘Creation,’ and ‘Origin of Life,’” 454.

²⁵⁷ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 150–153, 346.

²⁵⁸ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–17.



Figure 6.12 Reliefs Showing the Body of Osiris, Dendera Temple

An interesting relief from Hathor Temple, Dendera, can be seen in the image above, showing Osiris's body within a rectangular space while vegetal motifs spring from it above. The image reminds us that the "resurrection" of Osiris is thereby linked with the harvest.²⁵⁹ In Dayton's *Resurrection* Kinley technology is seen as botany-based: reed is used for surviving in "biofluid,"²⁶⁰ indicating an interesting connection made between vegetation, waters and renewed life, as conceived in the Osiris-myth.²⁶¹ Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

6.24 Myth and Science Fiction

Fantasy often reworks many aspects of myths. Jane Mobley quoted by Helmut W. Pesch perceives that since readers of fantasy could comprehend "*mana* or magic"²⁶² thereby "myth" and "fantasy" mutually share some characteristics.²⁶³ Pesch interprets the definition in terms of a "subjective experience" arising out of the registering of an omnipotent

²⁵⁹ Cherine Abou Zeid Ragueh, "The Blessing of Grain Represented in God 'Nepri' and His Affiliate Gods of Grain: 'Osiris' and 'Renenutet,'" *Journal of the Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality* 13, no. 2 (2016): 1–22, accessed May 7, 2020, https://jaauth.journals.ekb.eg/article_48016_58197fd2c61691eca2b91ff34d71ec79.pdf.

²⁶⁰ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–10.

²⁶¹ Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," 16–17.

²⁶² Jane Mobley, "Toward a Definition of Fantasy Fiction," *Extrapolation* 15 (1974): 126, quoted in Helmut W. Pesch, "A Myth Retold: Towards a Rhetoric of Fantasy," in *Just the Other day: Essays on the Suture of the Future*, ed. Luc de Vos (Antwerpen: EXA, 1985), 20.

²⁶³ Pesch, "A Myth Retold," 20.

“numinous power.”²⁶⁴ The magic and the power are invested, explored, encountered in travel-patterns. In reference to the Brothers Grimm’s version of *The Waters of Life*, W. H. Auden cited by Pesch notes that a sort of examination is laid out for the “hero”-traveller and he is made to engage with the “assist[ants]” as well as the ones who watch over the “object” (which might be a magical or a high-tech device) he is asked to retrieve.²⁶⁵ This reminds us of Pruitt’s search for “Eschless Funnel”²⁶⁶ and Daniel also comes to understand the “Seventh symbol” for activating the Stargate to return to Earth.²⁶⁷ This has been established in both *Resurrection* and *Stargate*: Pruitt and Daniel must revolutionize technology and return, but it is hinted that they also find respective loves, Pruitt in Eddie and Daniel in Sha’uri.²⁶⁸

We have entered the age of doubt and skepticism long ago. B. K. Ridley observes that matters like “eugenics,” “euthanasia,” “environment[al]” concerns tend to be handled not through religious sectors but through ethical considerations; religious texts cannot create the sublime feeling associated with Nature’s mysteries.²⁶⁹ Magic intrigues us but it is also an ambivalent factor. Ridley notes that sometimes magic used in the scope of religion turns ambivalent because entities are pitted against each other in terms of benevolent and malevolent.²⁷⁰ Hence the sources of inspiration in science fiction question the much institutionalized notion of god. Ridley notes that in religion individuals respond to an identified agent, like God or an iconographically designated source of power; in science the laws of cosmos which are not tied to humans elude human perception.²⁷¹ Thus rather than imagining a humanoid Creator, science fiction makes us ponder about the existence of an

²⁶⁴ Pesch, “A Myth Retold,” 20. Mustapha, Cliff, and Maria experience something similar; see Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 35–348.

²⁶⁵ W. H. Auden, “The Quest Hero,” *Texas Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (1961): 83, cited in Pesch, “A Myth Retold,” 20; Pesch, “A Myth Retold,” 20.

²⁶⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422.

²⁶⁷ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 52–193.

²⁶⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 1–422; Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 52–193.

²⁶⁹ B. K. Ridley, *On Science* (London: Routledge, 2001), 17.

²⁷⁰ Ridley, *On Science*, 87.

²⁷¹ Ridley, *On Science*, 87.

intelligence: it becomes sublime, like the presence of godlike “Civilization” in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, whose entities can change the big cosmic phenomena themselves, resembling deities by our standards.²⁷²

Creative speculation has limitations. Ridley notes that besides adherence to facts, humans have come a long way to attribute “spiritual” deprivation to technology and have realized that science cannot explain everything.²⁷³ Especially in terms of material inventions, the degree of omniscience might falter. Ridley perceives that in case of “craft” a blueprint exists and the degree of foreknowledge exists regarding the completed product; in case of an art the completed product involves a “discovery” since it might evolve differently.²⁷⁴ However the material medium cannot cover all the potential, be it genetic or cosmic. Science fiction enables room for the seemingly irrational forces. Ridley notes that besides science, the occult and the transcendent experiences affect our lives; we are able to harness their impact from both organic and “inanimate matter.”²⁷⁵ This explains why science fiction still requires the “numinous,” the magic, the effect of the supernatural gifts. In the *Star Wars* films the high-tech crafts with well-laid mechanism exist beside the “Force” that the initiates trace and use.²⁷⁶ Similarly in Dayton’s *Resurrection* the mystic “Opening,” “Surfacing” of mind-exercise are practiced by the very Luciens who had also been able to create the fusion suns.²⁷⁷

The notion of higher power remains strong in the imagination of the unknown. Theodore Sturgeon notes that “science” has taken the place of our sense of veneration and humans have never stopped venerating something higher or something that inspires and

²⁷² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 1–348.

²⁷³ Ridley, *On Science*, 18.

²⁷⁴ Ridley, *On Science*, 197.

²⁷⁵ Ridley, *On Science*, 86.

²⁷⁶ James A. Herrick, *Scientific Mythologies: How Science and Science Fiction Forge New Religious Beliefs* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2008), 182–185.

²⁷⁷ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 30–32.

instills awe.²⁷⁸ Humans have a tendency to seek dependence in some sort of over-arching power. Sturgeon perceives that despite technical marvels deification is present in science fiction: science takes expressive manifestations in terrestrial as well as celestial worlds; it would be perceived as animate and inanimate, and a sense of awe surrounds “[s]cience-the-god” for the general population,²⁷⁹ thus becoming an impersonal agent.

The agents have become more Nature-based, or something that moves beyond humans: Alan E. Nourse notes that science fiction appeals to us because it shows adaptability in taking information from science itself.²⁸⁰ Science fiction therefore is giving growing importance to genetic mutation, inter-breeding newer species. Twentieth century has witnessed a “revolution” in technical as well as in scientific fields, which get contextualized in science fiction featuring predictions of future, the risks involved and the treatment we must pursue.²⁸¹ That is why the Egyptian deities intrigue us because of this zoomorphic nature in which deities and human bodies unite, rendering Egyptian myths suitable for recontextualization in science fiction and “mythopoeia.” Thus the aliens could traverse cosmic distance and take the forms worshipped as divine in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.²⁸²

6.25 Relevance of Myths

Studying mythology of a particular culture is one of the most important parameters of its culture, art and worldviews. Robert W. Guyker Jr. notes that individual communities

²⁷⁸ Theodore Sturgeon, “Science Fiction, Morals, and Religion,” in *Science Fiction, Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Reginald Bretnor (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), 99.

²⁷⁹ Sturgeon, “Science Fiction, Morals, and Religion,” 99–100.

²⁸⁰ Alan E. Nourse, “Science Fiction and Man’s Adaptation to Change,” in *Science Fiction, Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Reginald Bretnor (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974), 120.

²⁸¹ Nourse, “Science Fiction and Man’s Adaptation to Change,” 120.

²⁸² Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 8–348.

use codes for data-processing and myths enable their circulation.²⁸³ Myths can be fluid, culture-specific and in all their categories humans remain at the forefront. Guyker notes that in “demythologized societies” humans would gain a position to cater to the needs of that “system.”²⁸⁴ The importance of the humans/human bodies can be seen in all the texts studied in this thesis: “hosting” of deities/aliens in human bodies is found in *Stargate* and in *The Kane Chronicles*. The human bodies as media of the embodiment for the divine are found in *The Age of Ra*, and inter-galactic human mingling is seen in *Resurrection*.

Stephen R. L. Clark notes that Science fiction explores powers and boundaries; the genre has questioned the hitherto considered absolute entities/systems.²⁸⁵ The genre has also enabled the queries to grow in the same manner as the ancient Egyptians enabled their pantheon to incorporate versions of their beliefs. Clark perceives that it can be broadly observed that the two fields that have grown in importance through centuries are (i) the studies of the human mind and (ii) the studies of natural species. The Enlightenment has urged us to contemplate the inspection of the psychological worlds as well as moving out for exploration of alien life forms.²⁸⁶ Clark, citing William Whewell, also notes that the Enlightenment has questioned any ultimate interpretations; thus “neutral[ity]” is an important factor in science fiction since the Divine aim could not be encompassed by our understanding.²⁸⁷ We may note here how the Egyptians adopted so many different forms and registers to grasp the divine. The Egyptian themes can be recontextualized in the pattern of science fiction involving life forms. The features which bring religion in connection with science fiction are given by Clark. First, Clark perceives that the accounts are developed to

²⁸³ Robert W. Guyker Jr., “Verbal Markets and Games in the eValuation of Myth, With an Appeal to Hermes, Aesop, and Virtual Worlds,” *Western Folklore* 78, no. 2/3 (Spring/Summer 2019): 196, accessed January 21, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26864151>.

²⁸⁴ Guyker Jr., “Verbal Markets and Games,” 196.

²⁸⁵ Stephen R. L. Clark, “Science Fiction and Religion,” in *A Companion to Science Fiction*, ed. David Seed (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 96, 95–110.

²⁸⁶ Clark, “Science Fiction and Religion,” 96–98.

²⁸⁷ Clark, “Science Fiction and Religion,” 97. For Whewell’s insight, see William Whewell, *Of the Plurality of Worlds* (London: John W. Parker and Son, 1854).

showcase the “organized religion”²⁸⁸; for example like the pan-global Egyptian influence of the deities in *The Age of Ra* and in *The Kane Chronicles*. Second, Clark mentions that the analysis as well as repetition of mythical accounts are seen in a religion,²⁸⁹ as the “pattern” of myths/deities explained and recontextualized in characters’ persona in *The Kane Chronicles*. For example both the “Lightbringer” in *The Age of Ra* and Daniel in *Stargate* challenge the divine realm and establish dissent. Third, the writers’ use of “themes” forms a new pattern in representation, for example the Osiris-cycles in *Resurrection* and in *The Kane Chronicles*. Finally, as Clark notes, science fiction influences new belief-systems.²⁹⁰ This also becomes relevant in my choice and studies of texts, in which the deities as beings of energy are discussed in *The Kane Chronicles* and as members of a highly evolved species in *Sphinx: The Second Coming*.

6.26 Ancient Egyptian Artistic Legacy

Studying Egyptian pantheon in science fiction and fantasy involves and inspires intense studies in ancient art. *Resurrection*, *Stargate*, and *Sphinx: The Second Coming* refer to the Old Kingdom in terms of setting and religious beliefs. Cyril Aldred notes that the art and architecture of the Old kingdom was a “recognized” period of excellence in all fields.²⁹¹ Even in the minds of the later Pharaonic dynasties a sense of balance was seen in the art of the Old Kingdom.²⁹² Such equilibrium between engineering and art coupled with deified kingship make the Old Kingdom fruitful for culture, activities and expressions. Aldred notes how the Nile Valley also provided the artists with the rocks of different natures and the “wobbly drill”²⁹³ evolved as the hieroglyphic “ideogram” to denote craft following repeated

²⁸⁸ Quoted in Clark, “Science Fiction and Religion,” 98.

²⁸⁹ Clark, “Science Fiction and Religion,” 98.

²⁹⁰ Clark, “Science Fiction and Religion,” 98.

²⁹¹ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 104–105.

²⁹² Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 104–105.

²⁹³ Quoted in Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 22.

working with stone.²⁹⁴ This evaluation of artistic expertise has been fictionally contextualized, thus we see the alien Kinley Engineer experimenting with stone-formation in Dayton's *Resurrection*²⁹⁵ and we are given accounts of Kinley science behind the creation of the Great Pyramid.²⁹⁶ Aldred notes that the ideograms resemble repositories of ideas and thus are occasionally enlarged; in Egyptian art the flexibility existed in which an object could mimic a hieroglyph or modify it, but still convey the "meaning" carried by that hieroglyph.²⁹⁷ Thus it can be stated that glyphs can function as commands for technologically miraculous events in science fiction. Aldred explains that magic was supposed to bring to life the visual representations, thus glyphs and the art were intended to be received/perceived simultaneously.²⁹⁸ Indeed the charms of glyphs can be seen in magical performance fruitfully used by Riordan in *The Kane Chronicles*.

Aldred considered hieroglyphic "writing" as having "unsurpass[able]" charm, and he mentions that constant usage probably means that the ancient Egyptians were aware of their "aesthetic appeal" apart from their functional value and it is noteworthy that no other worldly culture has anything "counterpart" to the Egyptian hieroglyphs²⁹⁹ in terms of execution and expression. This particular aspect sets the Egyptian civilization so uniquely apart from other cultures. Thus glyphs, when used in science fiction and movies remind us that Egypt and her glyphs create visuals which are alienating as well as attractive. Aldred notes that the hieroglyphs cannot be freed from any visual representations, the former needs to annotate the latter; thus ancient Egyptian art sometimes resembles expanded "ideograms" and the artist represents the god Ptah whose "utterance" contributes to the world's

²⁹⁴ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 22.

²⁹⁵ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 90–95.

²⁹⁶ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 323–328.

²⁹⁷ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 15–18.

²⁹⁸ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 16.

²⁹⁹ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 15–18.

genesis.³⁰⁰ This is a powerful realization for any writer/artist. Since our current languages, in terms of function and formatting, do not carry much mystic energy we are drawn to ancient Egypt, her art and writing. Thus they form an intriguing feature in fantasy fiction in terms of magic bound with materiality.

6.27 Expansions in Egyptology

Egyptology in the Twentieth century had embraced a lot of discipline-based methodologies. For example, the observation of the mummified body has geared a lot of interest. Tyldesley notes that Egyptology includes medical and forensic sciences; for example the dental condition of the ancient Egyptian woman Asru was studied in the Manchester Museum by Professor Rosalie David which yielded much information regarding ancient Egyptian health.³⁰¹ We should note here that medical knowledge renders a past culture more identifiable. This is a known aspect in science fiction in which encounters with the unknown are expected to open up medical knowledge and insights regarding healing. Thus we have seen that in *Stargate* Daniel learns about Ra's healing secrets and interest in the human body/species³⁰² and in *Resurrection* the stranded human aliens become medical service providers to the ancient Egyptians³⁰³; thus the plots of these two texts conflate death, travel, and life's vitality together. Ra's spaceship is a mobile tomb, along with the technological legacy. The alien and the renewed body of a prehistoric, predynastic Egyptian human rule it in a fused identity.³⁰⁴ Thus the "alien" is generated by the extraterrestrial hosted in an Egyptian's body; this fact proves that Egypt with her uncharted marvels intrigues the Western spirit of knowing. The distinction between the mummy's preservation, constituting a medical breakthrough, and the ornaments mean different things for the

³⁰⁰ Aldred, *Egyptian Art*, 15–18.

³⁰¹ Tyldesley, *Egypt*, 242–243.

³⁰² Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 128, 134.

³⁰³ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 67–85.

³⁰⁴ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 1–193.

onlooker. In *The Mummy* we have an interesting scene in which Evelyn asks her brother to show reverence for the deceased since he has occupied the sarcophagus.³⁰⁵ Following her reproach, he presents her with the box containing the map to Hamanaptra.³⁰⁶ She also notices nail marks on the inner lid of the coffin and immediately declares that Imhotep was not embalmed with proper procedure, thereby generating a curse.³⁰⁷ Thus the body occupies an important scope of study in Egyptology and “Egyptomania” in terms of ancient Egyptian attempts for preservation and resurrection.

6.28 “Egyptomaniac” Extensions

“Egyptomania” has embraced many “alternative” ideas, which have contributed to Western plot ingredients. Ronald H. Fritze notes that in “Freemasonry,” the Hebrew community as well as Moses was believed to have been instructed in architectural knowledge and the possibility of the ancient Egyptians themselves being equipped with architectural acumen by “Joseph the Dreamer” also exists.³⁰⁸ Architecture tinged with mysticism and symbolism inspires speculation. Riordan explores this in *The Kane Chronicles* in which Bast explains how Egyptian architecture generated energy and ancient Egypt left her mark in much of modern architecture.³⁰⁹ Fritze perceives that ancient Egypt established herself as the original creator of unique processes as well as tools which were later conveyed to other sections of the world through “diffusionism.”³¹⁰ This reminds us of Ra’s declaration of having shaped human “civilization” in *Stargate*³¹¹ and the spreading of alien Kinley Civilization across the world in *Resurrection*.³¹² “Egyptomania” gains a lot of

³⁰⁵ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 44–46.

³⁰⁶ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 46–50.

³⁰⁷ M. A. Collins, *The Mummy*, 133–137.

³⁰⁸ Ronald H. Fritze, *Egyptomania: A History of Fascination, Obsession and Fantasy* (London: Reaktion Books, 2016), 252.

³⁰⁹ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 237–243.

³¹⁰ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 276.

³¹¹ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 129–131.

³¹² Dayton, *Resurrection*, 225–226.

impetus from Egypt being the globalized center and source³¹³ which Riordan contextualized in world-wide distribution of “nomes.”³¹⁴ The Egyptian civilization seemed to have affected non-Colored cultures as well. Gerald Massey cited by Fritze thought that ancient Egypt constituted a black African culture from which colonization in Britain occurred, leading to the changes in nomenclature and linguistic patterns.³¹⁵ We have seen this far reaching impact in the two novels discussed. In *The Age of Ra* and in *The Kane Chronicles* the Westwynter and the Kanes both connect themselves to the ancient Egyptian origins respectively. Europeans and the Mediterranean structures owe their conceptual sources to ancient Egypt as suggested by Grafton Elliot Smith cited by Fritze.³¹⁶ If we proceed further, the mixing of ancient Egyptian and alien genes becomes an important point of discussion in “Egyptomania.”³¹⁷ In *Resurrection* we see how Sneferu plans to legitimize dynastic purity by allowing Hetepheres to receive Kinley alien seed.³¹⁸ The extreme Antiquity is always intriguing. According to Manetho as cited by Fritze, preceding the pharaohs, Egypt witnessed about twenty-five millennia of administration by different spiritual entities and deities.³¹⁹ These beings are legendary, of more-than-human status. The “Age of the Deities” is a theme in *The Kane Chronicles*,³²⁰ and in Proyas’s film *The Gods of Egypt*. It is also reflected in the science fiction movie *The Fifth Element* directed by Luc Besson in which the priesthood had survived in generations since ancient Egypt, and had maintained contact with the aliens who contributed to the ancient Egyptian civilization.³²¹

³¹³ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 276.

³¹⁴ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 52–53.

³¹⁵ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 278.

³¹⁶ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 280.

³¹⁷ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 286.

³¹⁸ Dayton, *Resurrection*, 185–187.

³¹⁹ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 286.

³²⁰ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 171–176, 474, 1–514.

³²¹ Luc Besson, dir., *The Fifth Element*, screenplay by Luc Besson and Robert Mark Kamen, story by Luc Besson (Neuilly-sur-Seine: Gaumont, 1997), Film.

Fritze notes that Egyptological empirical data had been revisited by “Alternative Egyptology” which went hand-in-hand with popular culture in the last decade of the Twentieth Century.³²² This had been made possible by science fiction writers since they had projected many groundbreaking concepts in a format of light reading format for readers. Fritze perceives that despite much scholarship in the fields other than Egyptology, the “Alternative Egyptologists” tend to remain “speculative” yet they had advocated for the greatness of ancient Egypt surpassing even the civilizations of current times.³²³ Thus even if these are texts are not authentic in terms of Egyptological information, they project an interest for non-White antiquities and in the modalities of their studies. For example, the establishment of historical facts is not the motto of most of the commercially aimed Mummy films but Carter Lupton cited by Fritze acknowledge these films for enabling the growth of agreeable interest in the field of Egyptology in the minds of the viewers.³²⁴ This sense of delight needs to be expanded beyond the cinema halls to the institutions, and it can be analytically productive as this thesis has tried to show.

6.29 Architecture and Fiction

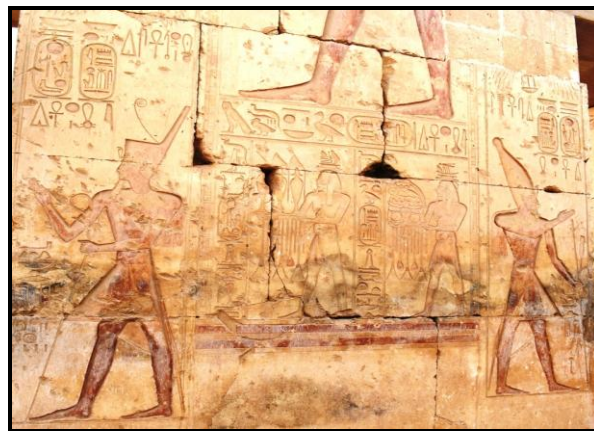


Figure 6.13 Reliefs Showing Ramesses II, Abydos

³²² Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 293.

³²³ Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 293.

³²⁴ Carter Lupton, “‘Mummymania’ for the Masses: Is Egyptology Cursed by the Mummy’s Curse?,” in *Consuming Ancient Egypt*, eds. Sally MacDonald and Michael Rice (London: UCL press, 2003), 45–46, cited in Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 363; Fritze, *Egyptomania*, 363.

In the image above, a relief from the Temple of Ramesses II, Abydos shows the king twice, one on the left with the “Red Crown” of the North, and one on the right wearing the “White Crown” of the South. In the middle two figures are seen personifying the Inundation and carrying offerings. Their androgynous figures are beautifully complemented with the broad-shouldered, thin-waisted male physique of the pharaoh. The scene is a beautiful juxtaposition of the body with the Nile-valley, the union between the Pharaoh and his Egypt. Another interesting aspect is that the Inundation-figures behind the King wearing the crown of Lower Egypt look at him. This is geographically valid since the river flows towards the Mediterranean Sea in the North. Egyptian temples in terms of layout, reliefs, composition of scenes, thus show a healthy balance between nature and body, between ideal and variety, and between the divine and the earthly. Photo taken on April 7, 2019.

In science fiction, the elaborate spaceship constitutes the pinnacle of human invention; it has the potential to traverse the cosmos. The Egyptian temple in the Pharaonic context is the mythical counterpart to such elaborate structure, in which astronomy, engineering, mathematics and art combine in harmony. Richard H. Wilkinson notes that the “[E]ast-[W]est” axis-wise construction of Egyptian temples and the careful differentiation between the Southern Egypt and the Northern Egypt through “heraldic symbols” render each temple a balance between decoration and calculation, with clear and concise understanding of directions.³²⁵ Thus each temple is a wonder in calculation, placed very carefully in time and space in connection with the cosmos. R. H. Wilkinson notes that the goddess Seshat was the helpful companion to the King in consulting the stellar positions for obtaining the “north-south orientation” for the temple and this precise ritual, “stretching the cord”³²⁶ preceded all rituals concerning temple construction.³²⁷ In *Stargate* we have seen similar

³²⁵ Richard H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples of Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 36–37.

³²⁶ Quoted in R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 38.

³²⁷ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 38.

woman-man interaction: Sha'uri assists Daniel with locating racial and planetary history.³²⁸ R. H. Wilkinson notes that the means to keep the “chao[tic]” energy at bay from the auspicious temple-space was served by the war-scenes covering the temple’s exterior sections.³²⁹ In *Sphinx: The Second Coming* we have seen how the temple space prepares Mustapha for the confrontation with Set and Nephthys.³³⁰ R. H. Wilkinson notes that the “Graeco-Roman” temples showed an increase in the decoration with hieroglyphs more “cryptic” in nature; the intended reader-circle was being limited to the selected priesthood.³³¹ R. H. Wilkinson informs that the “symbolic” nature of hieroglyphs was thus erroneously inferred by the early generations of European translators resulting in mistranslation.³³² But this is highly intriguing for fiction writers since they attach a lot of power-potential to the glyphs. Like the advanced devices the glyphs can influence physical laws and matter.

Amidst the architectonic structure, we have seen that the obelisk is a powerful magical structure. Even in Pharaonic times, auspicious incidents or political success were marked by Pharaohs dedicating obelisks to the deities³³³ which has been brilliantly showed by Riordan by the lit obelisk in “the Sea of Chaos,” where Apophis’s shadow is bound³³⁴ and also the “Washington Monument” used for controlling Set.³³⁵ Another important aspect linked with deification, as we saw, is the boat/barque. R. H. Wilkinson notes that the water-transportation inspired the ancient Egyptians to imagine their deities as water-travelers; thus barques were inserted within particular “spaces” in temples for containing and conveying the deities’ images.³³⁶ Thus Riordan could effectively show river journey along with Ra in

³²⁸ Devlin, Emmerich, and Black, *StarGate*, 100–104.

³²⁹ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 46.

³³⁰ Thornton, *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, 274–291.

³³¹ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 46–47.

³³² R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 46–47.

³³³ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 57.

³³⁴ Riordan, *The Serpent’s Shadow*, 294–308.

³³⁵ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 476–480.

³³⁶ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 69–70.

The Throne of Fire.³³⁷ The boat is instrumental in validating Ra's power; Ra is rejuvenated by incantation and the boat gets new vigor in the midst of the "Lake of Fire."³³⁸ R. H. Wilkinson notes that the celestial realm itself was thought to be present in the "sanctuary" containing the divine statue; it was considered supremely auspicious, which only the "highest" priests and the pharaoh could approach.³³⁹ In *Sphinx: The Second Coming*, the connection between meditation and sacred architecture in subterranean "Karnak in Exile" has been shown.³⁴⁰ Thus studying Egyptian architecture is crucial for the study of the deities and Egyptian architecture is fruitful for materials of exploration in science fiction and fantasy.

Ancient Egypt, her pantheon, her arts and culture would thus always provide repositories for ideas and speculation. It will be fruitful to conclude by drawing insight from F. A. Hassan's perception regarding ancient Egypt's legacy. Egypt has received remodulation and reinterpretations in recent years. Citing Jan Assmann's information Fekri A. Hassan communicates an observation of the duality perceived towards ancient Egypt.³⁴¹ F. A. Hassan mentions that the Deists, the Hermeneutics, the Neoplatonists, and the Alchemists perceived ancient Egypt favorably, possibly for the enormous iconic and symbolic corpus and potential.³⁴² Assmann cited by F. A. Hassan notes that to the monotheistic Christianity and Judaism, Egypt is construed as a rather conflicted and ambivalent possibly because of ancient "paganism."³⁴³ Egypt had received favorable reviews from empirical thinkers. David Boyd Haycock cited by F. A. Hassan notes that even Isaac Newton held a belief in the ancient Egyptian "heliocentric system" and believed that

³³⁷ Riordan, *The Throne of Fire*, 327–350.

³³⁸ Riordan, *The Red Pyramid*, 346.

³³⁹ R. H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Temples*, 70.

³⁴⁰ Lovegrove, *The Age of Ra*, 63–74.

³⁴¹ Fekri A. Hassan, "Egypt in the Memory of the World," in *Egyptian Archaeology*, ed. Willeke Wendrich (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 262.

³⁴² F. A. Hassan, "Egypt in the Memory," 262.

³⁴³ Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 217, cited in F. A. Hassan, "Egypt in the Memory," 262; F. A. Hassan, "Egypt in the Memory," 262.

hieroglyphic texts contain esoteric, confidential scientific data meant for discussion amidst the priesthood.³⁴⁴ This information inspires writers to often link fictional tombs, papyri, artifacts with hidden abundance of knowledge. Simultaneously ancient Egyptian architecture had been used for self-definition by White Eurocentric culture. F. A. Hassan observes that the acquisition of “Egyptian obelisks” have led to the globalization of New York, London as well as Paris; this “hegemonic” practice was also initiated by the Romans who installed obelisk “in Rome,” while a romantic fascination and attachment of mystery continued in association with ancient Egypt for centuries.³⁴⁵ The parallel schools of Egyptology and “Egyptomania” have perceived Egypt in different perspectives. F. A. Hassan notes that since “Egyptomania” might not always provide accurate information on Egypt, the non-scholarly community comprising the general audience needs to be acquainted with the ancient Egyptian culture, their funerary beliefs and complex iconographies.³⁴⁶ F. A. Hassan thereby envisions that the studies of ancient Egypt can be expanded to include broader disciplines and professionals. F. A. Hassan hopes that it is possible for the “humanities[’]” researchers to work in shared interest with the Egyptologists.³⁴⁷ The fiction writers whose works I have taken up tried to do the same, even if the empirical details had been experimented with and sometimes liberally used. I thus feel that more science fiction and fantasy need to be included in serious academic discussion. More fertile minds could be brought to light, with a balance between the dominant circles of thought in academia. Incorporation of ancient Egyptian studies in humanities along with Classical and Euro-American studies would enable the students to ponder about their own ethnic consciousness and contribution as well.

³⁴⁴ D. B. Haycock, “Ancient Egypt in 17th and 18th Century England,” in *The Wisdom of Egypt: Changing Views through the Ages*, eds. P. Ucko and T. Champion (London: UCL Press, 2003), 138–139, 142, cited in F. A. Hassan, “Egypt in the Memory,” 264; F. A. Hassan, “Egypt in the Memory,” 264.

³⁴⁵ F. A. Hassan, “Egypt in the Memory,” 265.

³⁴⁶ F. A. Hassan, “Egypt in the Memory,” 270.

³⁴⁷ F. A. Hassan, “Egypt in the Memory,” 271.

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