Egypt in England and America: the cultural memorials of religion, royalty and revolution

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Abstract
My interest in the cultural memory of ancient Egypt evolved from my work on the Grand Tour. Most British travellers first encountered ancient Egypt in Rome, where in particular the obelisks and their hieroglyphs inspired curiosity concerning the civilization that had produced them. Egypt was already familiar from ancient literature and the Bible. Henry VIII passed an 'Egyptian Act', banning gypsies from England and conversely Shakespeare's Cleopatra was the 'Gypsy' whore. In parallel with its Roman image as decadent ran the Old Testament legacy of Egypt's 'ancient wisdom' associated with the name of Hermes Trismegistus. The latter was discredited in the seventeenth century but following decipherment of hieroglyphs, Victorian travellers were stunned by their encounter with pre-classical visual culture of such superb quality and longevity. Freud argued that Moses was an Egyptian who derived his idea of monotheism from the sun-worshipping Pharaoh Akhenaten. His grandson, the painter, Lucian Freud, was influenced by the cultural memory of Moses and Monotheism. I developed this material in a review of a book on Freud and Antiquity (in Psychoanalysis and History); a paper introducing the British School at Rome's Mellon-funded Roma Britannica conference and further for my lecture on 'Lord Arundel and the Obelisk of Domitian' at Arundel Castle and finalized it for the November 2006 conference on 'Mediterranean Paths, Images, Places and Civilizations' at the Universita della Svizzera Italiana. (forthcoming in the proceedings to be published by the British School at Rome). I am delivering a version of this at the London School of Economics in their conference on 'Facts and Artefacts: What Travels in Material Objects?' (funded by the Leverhulme Trust and ESRC:17 December 2007).

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Fingerprint
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Lucian Freud
Arts & Humanities

Roma
Arts & Humanities

Memorial

Royalty
Arts & Humanities

Hieroglyphs
Arts & Humanities

Ervot
The official religion of English society is Christianity with the main denomination being the Anglican Church. However, religious laws in the country are complex, diverse and multicultural. Christianity is the most practiced religion in England. It has a minority made up of an active small Catholic Christian group. There is also a Jewish population along with other major religions in the world. The Asian immigrants practice Islam and have a reserved view on equalities and freedom available to women. Early Years. People who practiced Paganism in ancient times would believe in multiple gods than Ancient Egypt. Author: History.com Editors.

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