



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 Università 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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 Lucian Freud
ARTS & HUMANITIES


 Roma
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Memorial

 Royalty
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 Hieroglyphs
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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. Contents. Predynastic Period (c. 5000-3100 B.C.). Archaic (Early Dynastic) Period (c. 3100-2686 B.C.). Old Kingdom: Age of the Pyramid Builders (c. 2686-2181 B.C.). First Intermediate Period (c. 2181-2055 B.C.). Middle Kingdom: 12th Dynasty (c. 2055-1786 B.C.). Second Intermediate Period (c. 1786-1567 B.C.). New Kingdom (c. 1567-1085 B.C.). Third Intermediate Period (c. 1085-664 B.C.). From the Late Period to Alexander's Conquest (c.664-332 B.C.). PHOTO GALLERIES. For almost 30 centuries—from its unification around 3100 B.C. to its conquest by Alexan 'Egypt in England and America: The Cultural Memorials of Religion, Royalty and Revolution', in: *Sites of Exchange: European Crossroads and Faultlines*, eds. M. Ascari and A. Corrado (Rodopi, Amsterdam and New York,2006), 39–74. Chaney, Edward. "Roma Britannica and the Cultural Memory of Egypt: Lord Arundel and the Obelisk of Domitian", in *Roma Britannica: Art Patronage and Cultural Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Rome*, eds. D. Marshall, K. Wolfe and S. Russell, British School at Rome, 2011, pp. 147–70. Hill, Marsha (2007).