

Discovering Tut : the Saga continues by A.R. Williams

A critical summary :

This chapter is meant to show readers the beauty and mystery of ancient Egyptian culture and the science and wonder of archaeology. This chapter is actually a part of the book which goes with the same title as mentioned above and it has many chapters, rather than a short story; in fact, the book is an in-depth look at the circumstances of King Tut's death, as well as the general culture and lifestyle practiced during his lifetime. Fascinating and well-written this book has captured many people's interest, and it remains a popular choice for anyone interested in archaeology and ancient Egyptian culture. This is a living example of technology advancement. We accepted things and events attributing their cause to nature and her wrath. However, advancement and technology could give us a different picture. This way, it has become a habit with us to accept everything that history states and dictates.

On the process the modern world has found ways to offer a different view on it. In other words, the modern world has turn impossibilities to possibilities. William's report gives an insight into this. A mummy scanned after a thousand years has opened new avenues regarding a cause of its death. The mummy referred to here is that of King Tut or Tutankhamen, meaning the living image of Amun. The earlier ruler, Amenhotep-IV has shocked the country by attacking Amun, a major God, smashing his images and closing all his temples. His family had ruled for centuries before the boy king, Tut took over. However, Tut ruled for nine years and then died both mysteriously and unexpectedly.

The scanning of Tut's mummy also gave an insight as to how mummies were buried. Howard Carter, who scanned the body found it difficult to extract the mummy. The ritual resins had hardened thereby cementing Tut to the bottom of his solid gold coffin. Carter finally had to

chisel the mummy away having no other option. Every major point was severed. Tut was buried with gold which was meant to guarantee the resurrection and was also buried with every day things he would need in his after-life. Tut also had things to take on his journey to the great beyond-glittering goods, precious collars, necklaces and sandals, all of pure gold. The computed Tomography scan couldn't solve the mysterious death of Tut but gave us clues for sure. The X-rays and C.T.scan reveal a startling fact-the breast bone and the Pont ribs of Tut were missing. Such a revelation would not have been possible without technological precision. This fact gives us a clue that Tut, in all likelihood did not die a natural death.

Technology hasn't been able to give us a definite answer to Tut's death. However, it has given us a direction to think and proceed. Maybe in future, technology would solve it for us. The whole excavation and the scan required scores of people. It was a gruelling job and the workers had a tough time.

After the pharaoh was rested in peace again, Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities said, "I didn't sleep last night, not for a second. I was worried.

But now I think I will go and sleep." It just proves how tough the whole process was. In other words, King Tut is one of the first mummies to be scanned-in death as in life. He was famous when he was alive and his untimely death has raised the necessity to probe the lingering mysteries of this young ruler who died more than 3,300 years ago.

Short Answer Questions

Q.1. Who was Tut? Why was his mummy got scanned?

Ans. Tut was the last heir of a powerful family that ruled Egypt and its empire for centuries. When he died, he was just a teenager. After his death his dynasty came to an end so that his mummy was scanned. A CT scan was done on his mummy to get new clues about his life and death.

Q.2. Why was Carter's investigation resented?

Ans. Though Howard Carter was an archeologist, he did not use the scientific methods while excavating Tut's mummy. It resulted in great damage to the mummy. Its breast bone and front ribs are still missing. Scientific intervention was not followed to unearth buried mysteries.

Q.3. what were things buried with Tut's mummy? And Why?

Ans. It was buried with stunning artefacts in gold, also with the everyday things: board games, a bronze razor, linen undergarments cases of food and wine. It would guarantee resurrection. Egyptian ruler might believe in life after death.

Q.4 The boy king changed his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun. Do you think that it might be the reason of his death? Analyse the statement.

Ans. Yes, I think that his attempts to oversee a restoration that might have caused the sensation among the follower of Akhenaten who brought about the complete demolition of “Amun, a major god. As a result they might have murdered Tut.

Q.5. Why did Ray Johnson describe Akhenaten as ‘wacky’?

Ans. Ray Johnson described him as ‘wacky’ because of his eccentric nature and decisions. He moved the religious capital from the old city of Thebes to the new city of Akhetaten, and he attacked Amun, a major god, smashing his images and closing his temples. It was his eccentric behaviour that caused turmoil in the kingdom.

Q.6. What were the results of the CT scan?

Ans. - Tut’s neck vertebrae appeared very clearly.

- Other images showed a hand, several views of the rib cage and skull.

7. What is the Pharaoh’s curse?

Answer: The Pharaoh’s curse is inscribed on the walls of the burial chambers of the Pharaoh inside the pyramids. It affirms of death or misfortune falling upon those who disturbs him.

8. Who is Zahi Hawass?

Answer: Zahi Hawass is an archaeologist. He is the Secretary General of Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities.

9. Who is Howard Carter? What did he do that put King Tut’s mummy in a bad condition?

Answer: Howard Carter is the British archaeologist who had discovered Tutankhamen’s tomb and his mummy in the year 1922. Howard Carter had found out that the ritual resins which were used in the coffin had hardened cementing Tut to the bottom of his solid gold coffin and none was able to move the mummy with the use of simple force. Therefore, he put the coffin in the scorching sun of summertime Egypt with the idea that it would loosen the resin. But this idea was also unsuccessful. After that with no way out he had to use a chisel to separate the mummy from the coffin and this damaged the mummy to a large extent.

10. Why were the Pharaohs buried with tremendous amount of wealth?

Answer: The ancient Egyptians believed that there is life after death. That is why the Pharaohs were buried with tremendous amount of wealth including things of daily use so that they could use them in the life after death.

10. What was the nature of the wealth with which King Tut's mummy was buried? What were the things of daily use which were buried with him?

Answer: The wealth with which King Tut was buried remains the richest royal collection ever found and this has become part of the pharaoh's legend. The wealth basically contains different stunning artifacts of gold. Tut was also buried with everyday things which it was thought he would want in the afterlife and these things are:

- a. board games,
- b. a bronze razor,
- c. linen undergarments
- d. and cases of food and wine.

11. How has archaeology changed over the years?

Answer: From the time of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb back in the year 1922 to the present time the nature of archaeology has changed and thus it now focuses less on treasure and more on the fascinating details of life and the intriguing mysteries of death.

12. What do you mean by a CT scan?

Answer: CT scan means Computed Tomography. It is a process by which hundreds of X-rays in cross section are put together like slices of bread to create a three dimensional virtual body.

13. What are the two biggest questions still lingering about Tutankhamen?

Answer: The two biggest questions still lingering about Tutankhamen are how he had died and what his age was at the time of his death.

Questions for Practice

Long Questions

1. What picture of Egyptian life and beliefs does the lesson portray?
2. Describe the Egyptian rulers that you find mention in the lesson.
3. Do you feel the lesson is able to mirror the element of mystery that is associated with the Egyptians pyramids and the mummies inside them?

Short Questions:

1. What is the superstition associated with the mummies?
2. Describe in short Tutankhamen as the lesson mirrors him.
3. What is the justification of so much modern methods being applied to Tut's Mummy?
4. What are the two basic aspects of Ancient Egyptian life as portrayed in the lesson?
5. Why is Tutankhamen so famous of all the Egyptian Pharaohs?