



COMPACT  
MATERIAL

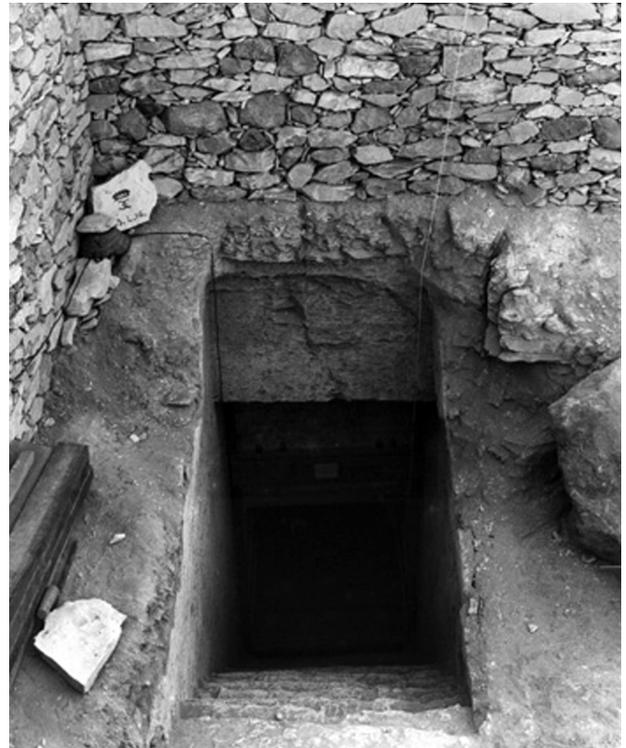
# I. THE DISCOVERY OF TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB

## The Valley of the Kings

The Valley of the Kings lies in the city of the dead (necropolis) on the west bank of the Nile opposite Thebes (modern Luxor). It became the burial place for almost all the kings of the New Kingdom (18th–20th Dynasties, 1550–1070 B.C.). The tomb of Tutankhamun and the objects in it give us many insights into life in Ancient Egypt, and the discovery of an almost untouched pharaoh's tomb was a sensation.

## The discovery of the tomb by Howard Carter 1922

Howard Carter first went to Egypt in September 1891 when he was 17. The British Lord Carnarvon later spent some time in Egypt too. This awoke his interest in Egyptology, and he had enough money to pay for excavations. In 1907, Theodore M. Davis' excavation team found a pit in the Valley of the Kings with embalming materials and the remains of a funeral celebration for Tutankhamun. Then, in 1909, Davis found a plundered tomb which he thought was Tutankhamun's, and he declared that the Valley of the Kings was now completely explored. Howard Carter thought differently and convinced Lord Carnarvon to invest in excavations in the Valley of the Kings. In 1914, Carnarvon took over the excavation permit from Davis and gave Howard Carter the job of heading the excavations in the Valley of the Kings to find Tutankhamun's tomb. Carter thought about where the clues to Tutankhamun had been found and divided the area between the finds into squares on a map. This meant he could record every excavation that had taken place and its finds. After five years, almost the whole of the area had been



Steps to Tutankhamun's tomb

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investigated, and only the unexplored land by the ancient builders' huts at the entrance to the tomb of Ramesses VI was left. That's where the excavation team searched during the last planned digging season. On November 4, 1922, Howard Carter discovered some steps under the builders' huts. On November 26, 1922, Carter opened the wall to the antechamber in the presence of Carnarvon, his daughter Lady Evelyn Herbert and Carter's colleague Arthur Callender. Carnarvon asked Carter whether he could see anything. Carter answered with the famous words: "Yes, wonderful things." Soon the team was certain it had discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun. The first article about the discovery of the tomb appeared on November 30 in the English newspaper, *The Times*. The discovery was celebrated as

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a sensation in the media around the whole world. Howard Carter immediately put a team of experts together. The chambers were thoroughly and scientifically catalogued and cleared out. That took 10 years, and over 5,900 objects were found. The exhibition, *The Discovery of King Tut*, shows the tomb chambers just as Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon found them on their discovery.



Howard Carter during work on the burial chamber

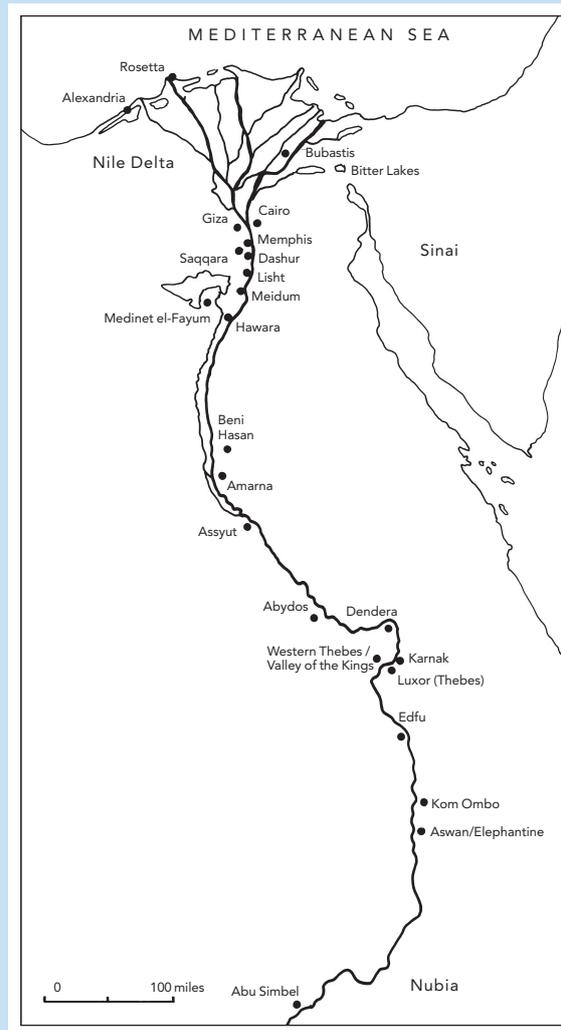
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## I. THE DISCOVERY OF TUTANKHAMUN'S TOMB



### Suggested Activity

Have a look where the Valley of the Kings is on the map of Egypt.



© project map Egypt, by Dieter Potente, Cornelsen Verlag Berlin 2002



### Suggested Activity

Write a newspaper article about the discovery of the tomb by Howard Carter.

Use the selected readings on page two to make notes on the discovery of the tomb. You'll find more information about Howard Carter in the exhibition.

## 2. Pharaohs and the world of the gods

### THE PHARAOH

The word 'pharaoh' comes from Egyptian and means 'great house'. The term was used along with the five royal names of the king. The pharaohs were regarded as gods and were absolute rulers over the country and its people.

They were also responsible for maintaining the order of life on earth. At the same time, they had to make sure that the people of Egypt honored the gods and that the gods were happy with the people. So the pharaohs were responsible for the temples, where they had to provide the furnishings and offerings. It was also the pharaoh's duty to provide for his people's welfare in both this life and the next. Although the pharaoh's power was absolute, he employed a state administration which included officials, priests, and governors. The rights and duties of a ruler began with his coronation, when a pharaoh took his five royal

names. Pharaohs were often succeeded by their sons when they died but this wasn't always the case. The pharaoh's crowns were worn on different occasions, and the 'white' and 'red' crowns symbolised Upper and Lower Egypt. The crowns were designed so that the pharaoh could wear them together. A sceptre and flail were also part of the insignia representing the power of the pharaohs. Around 3000 B.C., Menes became the first pharaoh of Egypt, unifying Upper and Lower Egypt. This was the beginning of the reign of the pharaohs, who succeeded each other over a series of 30 dynasties. Historians divide the history of Egypt into the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms and the Late Periods. Sovereignty over Egypt was closely connected with belief in various gods. Djoser (about 2700 B.C.) was the first pharaoh of all to have a pyramid built as his tomb.



It's relatively certain that Tutankhamun was the son of Akhenaten who reigned from 1353 to 1337 B.C. Akhenaten introduced a monotheistic faith which was supposed to replace the Ancient Egyptian religion with its many gods. Aten, the god of the sun disk, became the only god. There's been a lot of speculation about Tutankhamun's mother. The latest DNA investigations show that Tutankhamun's parents could have been brother and sister. But there's no evidence so far from the Egyptian sources that Akhenaten married a sister of his. Akhenaten's chief wife was the famous Nefertiti.

Tutankhamun was originally given the name Tutankhaten, in reference to the worship of Aten. He was crowned pharaoh when he was only a child. Two years into his reign he changed his name to Tutankhamun, the 'Living Image of Amun'. Tutankhamun married Ankhesenamun, the third daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, in other words his older sister or half-sister. They probably

## 2. PHARAOS AND THE WORLD OF THE GODS

had no children. Tutankhamun reigned for nine years. Under him, Memphis became the capital of the kingdom. He went back to the old gods, thus abolishing his father's belief in one god. A huge stele was set up in the temple of Karnak on which Tutankhamun announced his return to the old religion, and Thebes became the religious center of Egypt. Tutankhamun was the head of a well-organized state. Countless officials took care of the administration. The priest Ay, who was probably Nefertiti's father, was one of Tutankhamun's most important advisers. General Horemheb was the commander of the armed forces. The country returned to its old traditions under Tutankhamun's rule, and this restoration was an important step towards stabilizing the kingdom again. When Tutankhamun died in the spring of 1323 B.C. at 18 years of age, Ay succeeded him on the throne.



Backrest of the Golden Throne of Tutankhamun



### Suggested Activity

1. Look at the pictures, objects and texts about Tutankhamun in the exhibition. One of the most famous objects from the tomb of Tutankhamun is the golden throne. You can see the throne in the exhibition, with its picture of Tutankhamun and his wife. Ankhesenamun is anointing her husband with perfumed oil. After you've visited the exhibition, write down what most impressed you about the objects in the tomb.
2. Write a profile of Tutankhamun.

## 2. PHARAOHS AND THE WORLD OF THE GODS

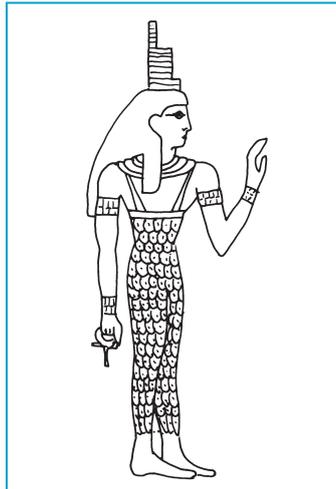
### WORLD OF THE GODS

Some Egyptian gods in more detail:



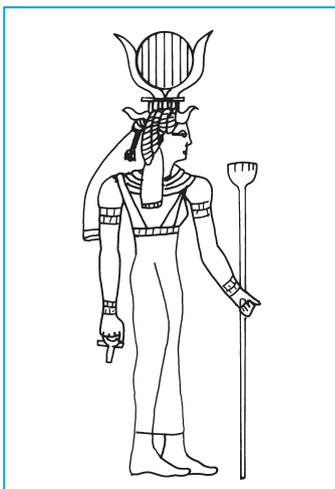
#### Osiris

God of the afterlife, he presides over the judgement of the dead. He is usually portrayed like a pharaoh with a crown, sceptre and flail.



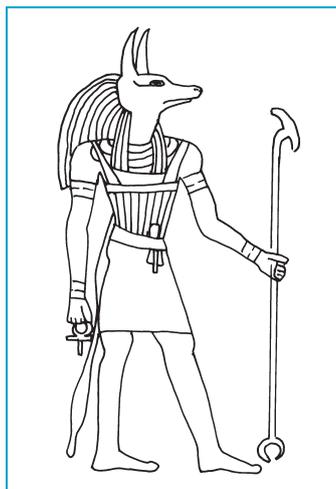
#### Amun-Ra

For the Egyptians, the sun god Amun-Ra was the creator of the world. He is often portrayed with a hawk's head and a sun disk.



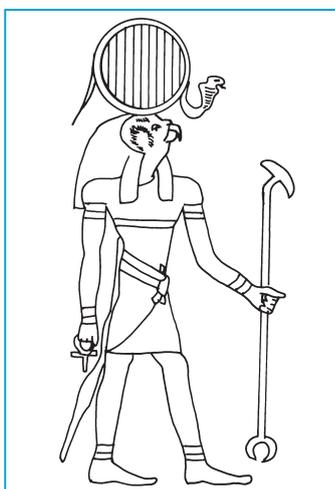
#### Hathor

Goddess of love. She is often portrayed as a cow with a sun disk between her horns.



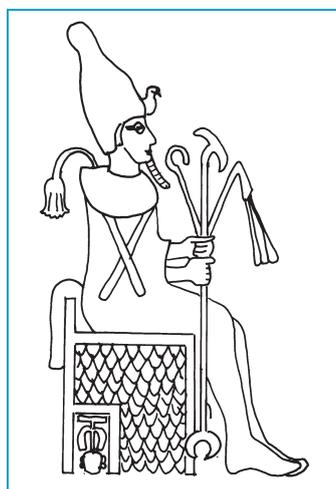
#### Isis

She is Osiris's wife and was seen as the role model for all mothers and the guardian of children. Isis can be recognized by the throne hieroglyph on her head.



#### Anubis

He is seen as the god of embalming and supervises the weighing of the heart during the judgement of the dead. He has the head of a jackal.



#### Horus

According to legend, he is the son of Isis and Osiris. He is portrayed as a hawk and wears the royal double crown. Horus is the protective god of the pharaoh.

## 2. PHARAOHS AND THE WORLD OF THE GODS



### Suggested Activity

1. Cut out the pictures and texts and stick them together in the right order on a sheet of paper.
2. There are many figures and pictures of gods to be seen on objects in the exhibition. Can you find the gods from the worksheet in the exhibition? What other gods have you discovered in the exhibition? Write a list so that you'll have your own lexicon of Egyptian gods.