



## V. Glossary

amulet	small token, for example a hieroglyphic symbol or figurine of a god, that is believed to provide magical protection or another kind of benefit to its wearer
Amun	god of Thebes, "the hidden one," shown in human form with a tall crown of feathers. Sacred animals are the ram and the goose
Amun-Re	from the Middle Kingdom onward this fusion of Amun and Re is the preeminent deity, combining in a single entity all the characteristics of the creator and sustainer of the world
ankh	hieroglyphic sign meaning "life" and "to live"
Anubis	god of embalming, protector of the deceased, guardian of the cemetery
Atef crown	resembles the crown of Upper Egypt with an ostrich plume on each side and horizontal ram's horns underneath; worn by Osiris, to symbolize his triumph over death, and by the king in certain rituals
Aten	solar disk: under Akhenaten worshiped as the medium through which the divine power of light comes into the world
Atum	"the undifferentiated one": according to myth, the primeval being and creator of the world; also god of the setting sun
<i>ba</i>	the spiritual part of a deceased person that has the ability to act and move about. The <i>ba</i> of a god can be translated as that god's efficacy. In art the <i>ba</i> of a deceased person appears as a human-headed bird.
bas relief	low relief in which the images are raised from the background, which has been cut away
Bastet	goddess of the city of Bubastis in the delta, depicted as a cat or as a human with a cat's head; often understood as the benign counterpart of Sakhmet

Bes	protective dwarf deity with a monstrous face and a lion's ruff; a household god who averts evil, especially at times of childbirth, and is in charge of sexual life
blue crown	the <i>khepresh</i> , a helmet-shaped crown frequently worn by kings from the New Kingdom on, usually colored blue
canopic jars	funerary jars containing organs removed from the mummy; these were made in sets of four to contain the lungs, stomach, liver, and intestines
cartonnage	a material made of layers of gummed linen or papyrus and plaster; a medium for mummy masks and coffins
cartouche	oval frame (meant to indicate a tied rope) in which the birth and throne names of the king are written
crook and flail	from the early Old Kingdom onward, part of the king's paraphernalia also held by Osiris. Originally the crook probably derived from a shepherd's stick; as a hieroglyph it signified the word "ruler." The flail resembles a fly whisk.
cult symbol	symbol of a deity, often itself an object of veneration
cursive	a style of writing in which successive characters are joined and angles are rounded
demotic	a cursive form of hieroglyphic writing developed in the seventh century B.C., written from right to left
double crown	the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt worn together
dynasty	a series of rulers descending within a family; following the Ptolemaic historian Manetho, ancient Egyptian history is divided into thirty dynasties
faience	a powdered quartz paste, which is modeled or molded and fired; it is either self-glazed or made with applied glaze
false door	a panel in the form of a niched doorway through which the deceased could receive offerings
gesso	a mixture of whiting and glue often used to prepare a surface for painting
Harakhty	"Horus of the horizon," the god of the rising sun, depicted as a falcon or a falcon-headed human crowned by a sun disk

Hathor	a goddess sometimes depicted as a cow or with cow's horns and ears; associated with joy, music, and love
Heh	god of millions of years, of eternity
hieratic	handwritten counterpart to the hieroglyphic script, developed in the Old Kingdom mainly for writing on papyrus; written from right to left
hieroglyph	a Greek word meaning "sacred symbol." In Egypt, one of some seven hundred signs used in writing (considerably more if one counts signs used exclusively in the Old Kingdom and the periods after the New Kingdom). "Hieroglyphs" refers to the signs themselves; "hieroglyphic script" is Egyptian writing. (Calling the signs "hieroglyphics" is incorrect.)
Horus	ancient sky god in the form of a falcon, embodiment of the divine powers of the living king; son of Osiris and Isis
ideogram	(sense sign) a hieroglyph signifying the actual object depicted or a closely connected notion
Isis	wife of Osiris, mother of Horus, the divine magician because of her extraordinary powers, divine mourner of the dead; her name is written with the hieroglyphic sign for "throne," which she wears on her headdress
<i>ka</i>	life force; the hieroglyphic sign is a pair of extended arms
<i>Maat</i>	right order and justice established by the gods, personified by the goddess Maat, who wears an ostrich feather on her head or is represented by the ostrich feather itself
magic rod	a squared or rectangular object carved with symbols, such as felines, crocodiles, protective <i>wedjat</i> eyes, and baboons tending lamps, that Egyptians may have believed helped the sun reappear each day from the chaos of night. These rods were placed in tombs to guarantee a similar rebirth to the deceased.
mastaba	a type of Egyptian tomb having a rectangular superstructure with exterior walls slightly slanting inward as they rise; contains chapels, chambers, and a shaft leading to an underground burial
mortuary temple	a temple erected and endowed by a king where he could receive offerings in perpetuity after his death

Mut	"mother": worshiped as the consort of Amun; shown as a vulture or as a woman wearing the double crown
myrrh	a fragrant aromatic plant gum used in making perfume, unguents, and incense
natron	a natural salt used in mummification
necropolis	from the Greek meaning "city of the dead," especially the large cemetery of an ancient city
Neith	"the terrifying one": protector of the king and one of four goddesses who guard the coffin and the canopic box
<i>nemes</i>	a royal headdress, probably of striped linen or perhaps leather, with lappets falling forward over each shoulder and with the fabric gathered and tied in back
Nepthys	sister of Isis, protector of coffins and canopic jars
Nut	the winged sky goddess; as a woman arching over the earth she is the personification of the vault of the heavens
Osiris	according to myth, Egypt's first king; created by the gods, Osiris suffered a violent death, was made whole again magically by Isis, and became the ruler of the dead
ostrakon	a limestone or pottery flake used to sketch, practice writing, or make notes
papyrus	the writing surface of Egyptian scribes, made from the pith of papyrus stalks separated into strips that were flattened and placed side by side, slightly overlapping. On top of this layer, another layer of strips was placed at right angles to the first. The surface was then repeatedly pounded to make it smooth. The plant juices released in the pounding caused the strips to adhere to each other permanently without the aid of glue. In art, images of papyrus plants symbolized the world, which arose from the primeval waters at the time of creation. The plant was also the heraldic symbol of Lower Egypt.
Ptah Sokar	creator god and patron of craftsmen: shown as a human without any indication of limbs

Re	meaning simply "sun," the most important name of the sun god, who was later combined with many other gods; the creator and sustainer of the world, who travels in a bark through the sky by day and through the underworld by night
Re-Harakhty	falcon-headed god, fusion of Re and Harakhty
red crown	red headdress, cylindrical in shape with a high back extension, symbolizing the sovereignty of the king over Lower Egypt
Sakhmet	ambivalent goddess of war, disease, and chaos, who could also cause such calamities to cease and, in her role as the sun's destructive eye, could repel hostile powers threatening Egypt; usually shown with a lioness's head and a lion's mane
sarcophagus	a coffin made of stone
Selket	goddess—shown in human form with a scorpion on her head—who, with Isis, protected Horus during his childhood and was one of the four goddesses who guard the coffin and canopic box
<i>serdab</i>	an Arabic word for the statue chamber of a tomb
Seth	violent deity, murderer of his brother Osiris (who had been divinely installed to maintain order); shown in human form with the head of a strange doglike creature; associated with the desert, where the ordered world ends; nonetheless, Seth uses his powers to help protect the sun god during his nightly journey through the underworld
sistrum	a sacred rattle consisting either of a metal hoop with crossbars to which metal disks are attached or of a rectangular centerpiece in the shape of a small temple gate with two metal bands at each side
sledge	a platform on flat runners used to transport loads
sons of Horus	protectors of the internal organs removed during mummification. Human-headed Imsety protects the liver; baboon-headed Hapy, the lungs; jackal-headed Duamutef, the stomach; and hawk-headed Qebehseuef, the intestines.
stela (pl. stelae)	an upright slab of stone carved and inscribed with religious or historical texts and representations
sunk relief	relief in which the forms are set back from the flat stone surface

Taweret	hippopotamus goddess of childbirth
Tefnut	goddess of moisture, who, with Shu, god of light and air, were the first divine couple created by Atum
temple precinct	the enclosed area around a temple
Thoth	god of writing, scribes, and the moon; depicted as an ibis-headed human or as a baboon
throne name	the designation "king of Upper and Lower Egypt"; one of the two most important names of the king, the other being his birth name, which identified him as the "son of Re"
underworld	the dangerous world through which a boat carrying the sun god and his companions, including the deceased, must travel every night
uraeus	the mythical fire-spitting cobra, a protector of kings and gods, worn on the front of the headdress, depicted rearing up with dilated hood
wadi	valley or stream bed that is dry except perhaps in the rainy season
<i>wedjat</i> eye	an eye with stylized falcon markings, meaning "that which is made whole," the symbol of the left eye of Horus, torn out by Seth in their battle over who should rule Egypt. The eye, which was restored by the god Thoth, is a symbol of revitalization after death. Each part of the Horus eye represented a mathematical fraction in writing. Altogether the fractions add up to one, or the whole.
white crown	tall tapering crown with a bulbous terminus, the crown of Upper Egypt

