

Hornbill

Textbook in English for Class XI
(Core Course)



CHAPTER-

3

DISCOVERING TUT: THE SAGA CONTINUES

BY
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AUTHOR, TEXT, AND TITLE

- Author:

- A.R. Williams- science fiction writer
- senior writer in the National Geographic magazine

- Title:

- Tutankhamun- an Egyptian Pharaoh (1343-1325BC)
- Saga- long story of events

- Text:

- desire to know and analyse the roots of civilisation
- archaeological research
- forensic reconstruction
- comprehensive awareness of ancient Egyptian culture

SERIES OF EVENTS

An Overview

- Rediscovering Tut after 3300 years
- Howard Carter's work on Tut's mummy
- Archaeology and its progressive changes
- Two questions still unanswered about Tut
- Tut's lineage and rule
- Egyptian Mummy Project

3. Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues

TUTANKHAMUN: an Egyptian Pharaoh (1343-1325BC)

Saga: long story of events

A. R. Williams

- a teenager when he died
- successor of the powerful Pharaoh Dynasty
- tomb - discovered in 1922
- body was to undergo a CT scan which would give new information and clues about his life and death



He was just a teenager when he died. The last heir of a powerful family that had ruled Egypt and its empire for centuries, he was laid to rest laden with gold and eventually forgotten. Since the discovery of his tomb in 1922, the modern world has speculated about what happened to him, with murder being the most extreme possibility. Now, leaving his tomb for the first time in almost 80 years, Tut has undergone a CT scan that offers new clues about his life and death — and provides precise data for an accurate **forensic reconstruction** of the boyish pharaoh.

- Beginning- strange, unnatural, ominous: angry wind, ghostly dust devils, dark bellied clouds, veiling the stars
- On 5 January 2005: King Tut's mummy was placed in the CT scanner to investigate the mystery behind his death which had occurred more than 3300 years ago
- Tomb: rock cut tomb, 26 feet underground, murals on the wall
- Tourists: arrived to pay their respects, wondered about the pharaoh's curse
- comprehensive awareness of ancient Egyptian culture
- Howard Carter's experiments resented
- The ancient Egyptians believed that there was life after death. That is why the Pharaohs were buried with the tremendous amount of wealth including things of daily use so that they could use them in their life after death
- It was also believed that gold would guarantee their resurrection

AN angry wind stirred up ghostly dust devils as King Tut was taken from his resting place in the ancient Egyptian cemetery known as the Valley of the Kings*. Dark-bellied clouds had **scudded across** the desert sky all day and now were veiling the stars in **casket grey**. It was 6 p.m. on 5 January 2005. The world's most famous mummy glided head first into a CT scanner brought here to probe the lingering medical mysteries of this little understood young ruler who died more than 3,300 years ago.

All afternoon the usual line of tourists from around the world had descended into the cramped, rock-cut tomb some 26 feet underground to pay their respects. They gazed at the murals on the walls of the burial chamber and peered at Tut's gilded face, the most striking feature of his mummy-shaped outer coffin lid. Some visitors read from guidebooks in a whisper. Others stood silently, perhaps pondering Tut's untimely death in his late teens, or wondering with a shiver if the pharaoh's curse — death or misfortune falling upon those who disturbed him — was really true.

"The mummy is in very bad condition because of what Carter did in the 1920s," said Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, as he leaned over the body for a long first look. Carter—Howard Carter, that is—was the British archaeologist who in 1922 discovered Tut's tomb after years of futile searching. Its contents, though hastily ransacked in antiquity, were surprisingly complete. They remain the richest royal collection ever found and have become part of the pharaoh's legend. Stunning artefacts in gold, their eternal brilliance meant to guarantee **resurrection**, caused a sensation at the time of the discovery — and still get the most attention. But Tut was also buried with everyday things he'd want in the afterlife: board games, a bronze razor, linen undergarments, cases of food and wine.

he set the mummy outside in blazing sunshine that heated it to 149 degrees Fahrenheit. Nothing budged. He reported with scientific detachment that "the consolidated material had to be chiselled away from beneath the limbs and trunk before it was possible to raise the king's remains."

In his defence, Carter really had little choice. If he hadn't cut the mummy free, thieves most certainly would have **circumvented** the guards and ripped it apart to remove the gold. In Tut's time the royals were fabulously wealthy, and they thought — or hoped — they could take their riches with them. For his journey to the great beyond, King Tut was lavished with glittering goods: precious collars, inlaid necklaces and bracelets, rings, amulets, a ceremonial apron, sandals, sheaths for his fingers and toes, and the now iconic inner coffin and mask — all of pure gold. To separate Tut from his adornments, Carter's men removed the mummy's head and severed nearly every major joint. Once they had finished, they reassembled the remains on a layer of sand in a wooden box with padding that concealed the damage, the bed where Tut now rests.

- Carter's investigation was resented: he conducted his experiment with scientific detachment and gave more importance to the preservation of the exclusively crafted gold ornaments adorning king tut rather than preserving his mummy which could have led to the unraveling of the mystery associated with his life and death
- had to chisel away the solidified resins to raise the king's remains
- Tut's body was buried along with gilded treasures

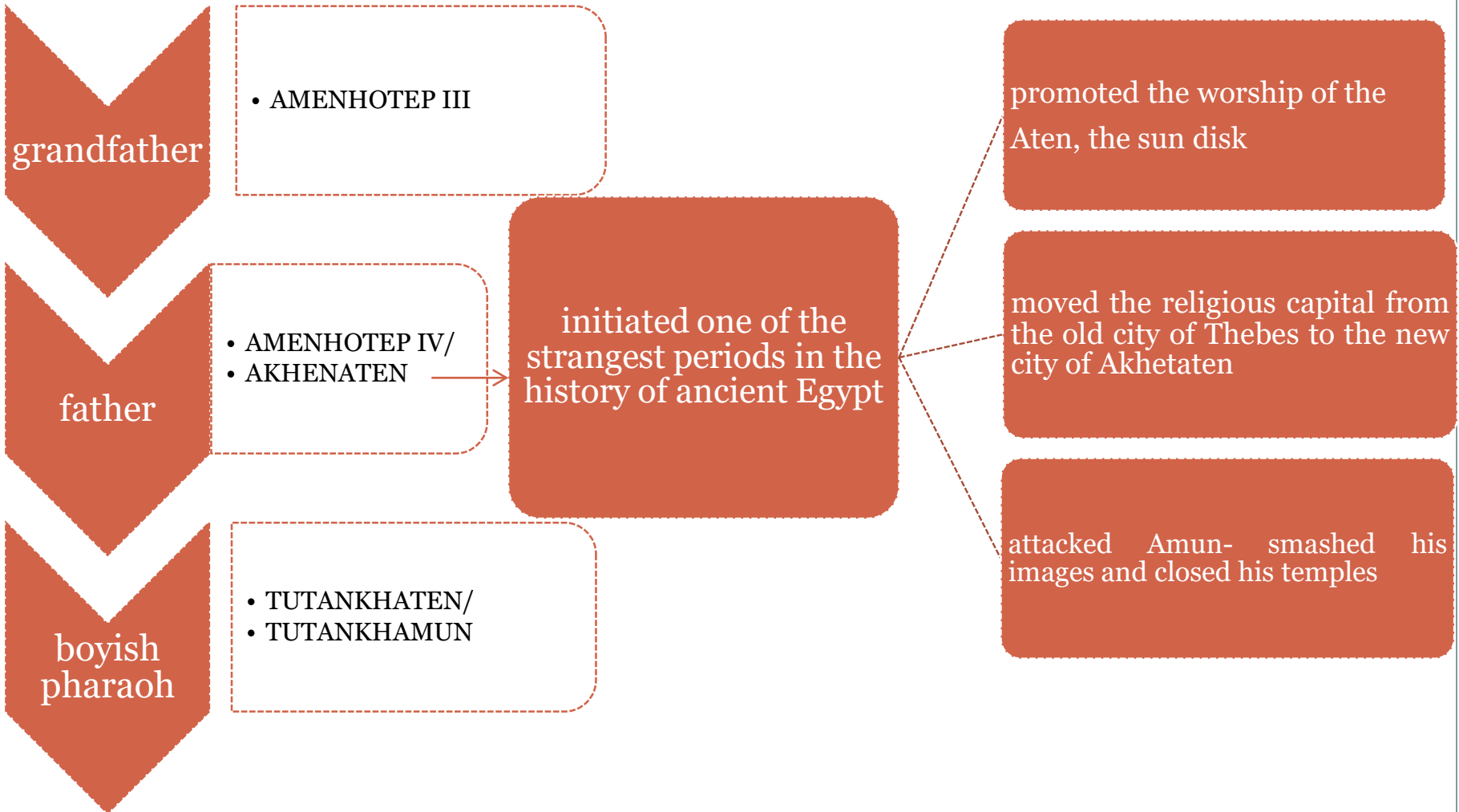
- Tut's body has been subjected to repeated scrutiny
- advances in technology that have improved forensic analysis
- Results of the X-ray- front limbs and breast bone were missing
- CT- provides a three dimensional view

Archaeology has changed substantially in the intervening decades, focusing less on treasure and more on the fascinating details of life and intriguing mysteries of death. It also uses more sophisticated tools, including medical technology. In 1968, more than 40 years after Carter's discovery, an anatomy professor X-rayed the mummy and revealed a startling fact: beneath the resin that cakes his chest, his breast-bone and front ribs are missing.

Today diagnostic imaging can be done with **computed tomography**, or CT, by which hundreds of X-rays in cross section are put together like slices of bread to create a three-dimensional virtual body. What more would a CT scan reveal of Tut than the X-ray? And could it answer two of the biggest questions still lingering about him — how did he die, and how old was he at the time of his death?

King Tut's demise was a big event, even by royal standards. He was the last of his family's line, and his funeral was the death rattle of a dynasty. But the particulars of his passing away and its aftermath are unclear.

Tut's lineage and rule



A CT machine scanned the mummy head to toe, creating 1,700 digital X-ray images in cross section. Tut's head, scanned in 0.62 millimetre slices to register its intricate structures, takes on **eerie detail** in the resulting image. With Tut's entire body similarly recorded, a team of specialists in radiology, forensics, and anatomy began to probe the secrets that the winged goddesses of a gilded burial shrine protected for so long.

The night of the scan, workmen carried Tut from the tomb in his box. Like pallbearers they climbed a ramp and a flight of stairs into the swirling sand outside, then rose on a hydraulic lift into the trailer that held the scanner. Twenty minutes later two men emerged, sprinted for an office nearby, and returned with a pair of white plastic fans. The million-dollar scanner had quit because of sand in a cooler fan. "Curse of the pharaoh," joked a guard nervously.

- CT machine- donated by National Geographic Society and Siemens
- Results of the CT scan

- First mummies to be scanned- in death as in life...
- Curse-death or misfortune falling upon those who disturbed him

Eventually the substitute fans worked well enough to finish the procedure. After checking that no data had been lost, the technicians turned Tut over to the workmen, who carried him back to his tomb. Less than three hours after he was removed from his coffin, the pharaoh again rested in peace where the funerary priests had laid him so long ago.

Back in the trailer a technician pulled up astonishing images of Tut on a computer screen. A grey head took shape from a scattering of pixels, and the technician spun and tilted it in every direction. Neck vertebrae appeared as clearly as in an anatomy class. Other images revealed a hand, several views of the rib cage, and a transection of the skull. But for now the pressure was off. Sitting back in his chair, Zahi Hawass smiled, visibly relieved that nothing had gone seriously wrong. "I didn't sleep last night, not for a second," he said. "I was so worried. But now I think I will go and sleep."

QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE

1. What was the pharaoh's curse?
2. What unforeseen problem did Carter encounter when he reached King Tut's mummy?
3. How did Carter separate Tut's mummy from the coffin?
4. What startling fact was revealed in 1968?
5. Why was Tut's body buried along with gilded treasures?
6. Why did the boy king change his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun?
7. What did Amenhotep IV do when he became the pharaoh?
8. What are the two biggest questions still lingering about Tutankhamun?
9. What were the findings of the CT scan?
10. Which evidence proves the burial of Tut in March/April?