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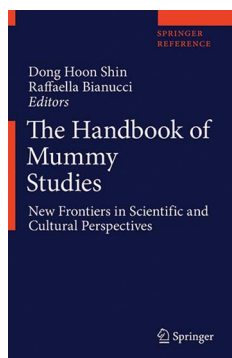
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DONG HOON SHIN & RAFFAELLA BIANUCCI (ed.). 2021. *The handbook of mummy studies: new frontiers in scientific and cultural perspectives*. Singapore: Springer; 978-981-15-3354-9 hardback £299.99.



With 50 chapters and 1186 pages, this book offers a thorough and up-to-date review of mummy studies from a range of disciplinary perspectives. The book is divided into nine sections, each focused on either a particular theme or a geographical region.

The first section, ‘General aspect of mummy studies’, opens with the excellent chapter by Buikstra and Nystrom on the history of mummy studies, which sets the scene for the rest of the handbook. Its title echoes the introductory chapter of the same name from Arthur Aufderheide’s (2003) famous work, *The scientific study of mummies*. This opening section addresses general and ethical questions related to research on mummies. Piombino-Mascali and Carr’s

comprehensive synthesis of mummification processes and their significance finds a perfect home in this part of the volume. The inclusion of two chapters discussing the ethics of mummy studies (Gill-Frerking; Placher & Bae) is also to be welcomed. The following section, ‘Research techniques of mummy studies’ considers precise investigative techniques such as endoscopy (Spigelman & Shin), various medical imaging technologies (Beckett & Conlogue; Loynes & Bianucci) and stable isotope analysis (Takigami & Yoneda); it also includes a case study in craniofacial reconstruction (Lee & Shin). The chapter on radiology applications in mummy science by Beckett and Conlogue is particularly exhaustive and relevant.

‘Ancient DNA analysis and mummy research’ presents state-of-the-art methods and analytical techniques within the field of aDNA research, addressing different types of molecular analysis and recommendations for best practice. This section covers exciting techniques and research that were not possible 20 years ago. The chapters alternate between up-to-date reviews of

techniques and more methodological chapters that read like practical guides. The fourth section, 'Archaeoparasitology', deals with the range of ancient parasites and arthropods that can be preserved on mummies, such as different types of worms and mites. Questions related to past diets are also addressed through coprolite analysis. This is followed by the rather brief section—'Egyptian mummies'—which offers a review of mummies from that particular region. This includes a thorough overview chapter by Antoine and Vandenbeusch, a review of animal mummies (Ikram) and a synthesis of balms used in mummification (Evershed & Clark).

Some well-known mummies are presented in 'Mummies in Europe', including the Neolithic man, Ötzi, preserved by an Alpine glacier, and two bog bodies from the Netherlands, known as the Weerdinge Couple. Some less renowned mummies are also introduced, such as those found in European crypts and catacombs, reviewed by Nerlich and colleagues. The principles and practice of French embalming between the sixth and nineteenth centuries AD are also described here by Charlier. South America and the Pacific region are the focus for section seven, which contains a concise and effective review of mummies from South America by Lombardi and Arriaza. Mummies from Siberia, China, Korea and Japan are detailed in section eight. The last part of the volume, 'Cultural aspects of mummy studies', presents the final two chapters—one that aims to debunk claims of alien mummies and mummies that are fake (Lombardi & Rodríguez Martín), and one tracing the history of clothing in East Asia through apparel found on mummies (Shin *et al.*).

In terms of public perception, the best-known mummies are, of course, those from Egypt and South America. These have been extensively studied and are the subject of only a few chapters of this book. Instead, the focus is on other regions of the world with lesser-known cases. Several Asian mummies are reviewed and published in English for the first time. Kang and colleagues, for example, offer a synthesis of the Bronze Age mummies from the Tarim Basin in China that were, until now, mainly published in Chinese.

For as long as mummification has been practiced it has been a subject of interest, beginning with Greek historians' curiosity about Egyptian mummies. Modern technical advances, however, allow increasingly detailed examinations, ranging from advanced medical imagery to palaeogenomics. This wide array of techniques is well illustrated in this book, which does an excellent job of covering most of the current and most important topics related to mummy studies. All categories of mummies are discussed: artificial, natural, ancient, as well as modern mummies from recent cases (such as the soldier from the 1950s, or the body of Vladimir Lenin, which is preserved and on public display in Moscow). These chapters, however, are disparate in length and depth of detail. Some lean too heavily towards summary to convey anything new to those familiar with the topic, while also being too short for non-specialists to clearly understand the context. Likewise, some detailed methodological chapters (mostly on aDNA) use jargon that is complicated for non-specialists—even those well versed in related disciplines, such as bioarchaeology. Overall, because the book covers so many topics, it sometimes loses coherence.

Inevitably in a volume of this size, there are a few typos and errors, and while some chapters are well illustrated, others would have benefitted from more images and, in particular, maps.

The hefty price tag reflects the size of the volume, which, while not a cover-to-cover read for the interested non-specialist, is a very useful point of reference, with many chapters providing a good entry point into their subject matter. It will certainly be a valuable resource for archaeologists seeking to apply best practice when working with mummified remains, and a go-to book for students looking for a reference point for particular types of mummies or techniques.

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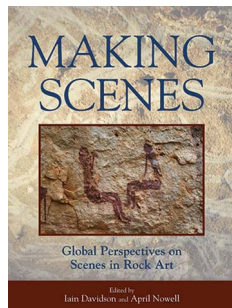
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AIN DAVIDSON & APRIL NOWELL (ed.). 2021. *Making scenes: global perspectives on scenes in rock art*. New York: Berghahn; 978-1-78920-920-4 hardback £148.



Rock art has always been a difficult archaeological subject: hard to date and often challenging to interpret and understand. One early approach was to define descriptive ‘scenes’: intentional groupings of motifs thought to illustrate an event of some kind. This typically led to the identification of putative quotidian vignettes. But these reflected more about the primitivist biases of the archaeologist than about the art, in the process stripping Indigenous peoples of potential complex symbolism and metaphysical or religious concerns. Despite these initial dead-ends, great headway has been made recently in defining and interpreting complex scenic imagery.

Particularly notable are Lewis-Williams’s (2002) explication of the Salon of the Bulls and the Axial Gallery at Lascaux (including a ledge serving as a ground-line) as a type of cosmogram; Keyser’s (e.g. 2004) long-term study of the Great Plains ‘biographical style’ panels and the war events and honours they portray; and Boyd’s (2016) detailed micro-superimpositional analysis of a complex Pecos River panel, demonstrating that it is a single composition encoding a widespread aetiological myth. Rock art research clearly has much to gain from identifying, and plausibly interpreting, scenes among the myriad individual motifs that are present at many sites.

*Making scenes: global perspectives on scenes in rock art* is thus a timely contribution addressing a key analytical concern. With an introduction, epilogue and 20 chapters, the volume provides good