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THE LATEST SECRETS OF HIEROGLYPHS

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Directed by Patrick CABOUAT

THE LATEST SECRETS OF HIEROGLYPHS

THE SUMMARIZED SYNOPSIS

(September 2021 - subject to change)

CHAPTER 1. THE LATEST DISCOVERIES AT SAQQARA: WAHTYE'S TOMB, ADORNED WITH INTACT HIEROGLYPHS

SPEAKER: Mostafa Waziri, Secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities of Egypt

South of Cairo, in the ancient necropolis of Saqqara, Egyptian archaeologists have discovered a magnificent tomb that remained inviolate for 4,400 years, decorated with hieroglyphs! Reading the texts, we learn that it is the tomb of a man named Wahtye, a high-ranking priest of the entourage of King Neferirkare Kakai of the Fifth Dynasty of Egypt (between 2500 and 2300 BC). Through these recent illuminations, we understand that the soil of Egypt abounds in tombs and new characters not listed by Egyptologists. And it is thanks to the deciphering of hieroglyphs that we can piece together their history.

CHAPTER 2. TT33 - THE EXTRAORDINARY PALACE OF HIEROGLYPHS, THE 3D SCAN OF THE TOMB

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT 33 mission; Gaël Pollin and Mohamed Gaber, in charge of the photogrammetry of the TT 33

700 km from Saqqara, near Luxor, the necropolis of El-Assasif hides a treasure: the most monumental tomb in Egypt, closed to the public, the "TT 33". We enter this immense underground labyrinth with a team of scientists from the IFAO (French Institute for Oriental Archaeology in Cairo). The air is unbreathable, and the members of the mission have to go there with respiratory protection masks. The walls are entirely covered with engraved texts: it is a true palace of hieroglyphs! In all, 22 rooms, on 4 levels, with corridors, secret passages, wells up to 21 meters deep, which lead to the burial chamber. By means of more than 50,000 photos, we will be able to constitute a complete 3D photogrammetric model of the tomb and its hieroglyphs and visit it at 360° as it has never been seen before!

Why was such a huge tomb built, bigger than those of the greatest pharaohs? To which period does it belong? Who ordered it? The answers to these questions are hidden in the hieroglyphs, but for a long time, this writing remained indecipherable.

CHAPTERS 3 & 4. NAPOLEON, THE ROSETTA STONE AND THE BEGINNING OF THE SCIENTIFIC RACE TO DECIPHERING

SPEAKERS: Salimalkram, Egyptologist; Christophe Barbotin, curator at the Department of Egyptian Antiquities of the Louvre (to be confirmed); Laurent Coulon, Director of the IFAO

From 1798 to 1801, a military expedition led by Napoleon Bonaparte landed in Egypt. A soldier found, in the city of Rosetta, a stele with a text engraved in three different writings: in hieroglyphs, in Egyptian cursive writing and in Ancient Greek. The Greek, we know it, we can read it! Could it be that the text in hieroglyphs is the translation of the text in Greek? This is what scientists think. They would then finally have a way to compare! This is the beginning of the adventure of deciphering hieroglyphics. In the race, there was the Frenchman Jean-François Champollion. Ambitious, obstinate, he possessed a real asset: an exceptional gift for languages.

CHAPTER 5. THE HIEROGLYPHS SPEAK! THE REVELATION OF THE NAME OF THE DECEASED "PEDIAMENOPET"

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 mission

The Egyptologists of TT 33 explore the tomb. The architectural style is specific to the Late Period. This allows them to suggest a date for the tomb: the 7th century BC. We discover a text in hieroglyphs that reads "P.E.D.I.A.M.E.N.O.P.E.T." and representations of the face of the priest and his wife. This name is everywhere in the tomb. So this is the name of the man who had this huge tomb built as his final resting place. Who was this Pediamenopet?

CHAPTER 6. THOMAS YOUNG VS. JEAN-FRANÇOIS CHAMPOLLION, THE CARTOUCHE OF PTOLEMY, THE HIEROGLYPHS CAN CORRESPOND TO SOUNDS

SPEAKERS: Salimalkram, Egyptologist; Christophe Barbotin, curator at the Department of Egyptian Antiquities of the Louvre (to be confirmed)

At the beginning of the 19th century, scientists, including the English physicist Thomas Young and the young Champollion, were trying to unravel the mystery of the Rosetta Stone. They knew that the ancient Egyptians surrounded the names of their kings with an oval called a cartouche. While looking for correspondences between

the Greek text and the hieroglyphs, Thomas Young was the first to find the cartouche containing the hieroglyphs which indicate the name of the king "Ptolemy". He realized that the hieroglyphs could correspond to sounds, as in our alphabet. It was a major discovery, because until then, it was thought that hieroglyphs were ideograms. Champollion would go further: what if hieroglyphs had two different functions? If they were sounds AND ideograms? He was on the right track, but the definitive discovery, the one that would finally allow him to find the secret of hieroglyphs, was still to come.

CHAPTER 7. TT 33 -PEDIAMENOPET'S TITLE

TT33 STORY ARC: LECTOR PRIEST

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

The Egyptologists of TT 33 note on the walls of the tomb that the name Pediamenopet is very often accompanied by the title "lector priest". In ancient Egypt, the lector priest was an intellectual, a great scribe who knew how to read and write, who knew the sacred texts and meditated on them. During the ceremonies and rituals, he ensured that these texts were respected. Pediamenopet was therefore one of these lector priests.

CHAPTERS 8 & 9. THE COPTIC, CHAMPOLLION'S KEY TO CRACK THE CODE OF HIEROGLYPHS

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

In 1822, Champollion studied hieroglyphs found in the decorated temple of Abu Simbel, in southern Egypt. He wondered: what mysterious names were contained in the royal cartouches that decorated it? Thanks to his knowledge of the Coptic language, the oldest Egyptian language still spoken, which according to Champollion is close to the one spoken by the pharaohs, he succeeded in identifying the name " Ramesses " and its meaning. Champollion succeeded in cracking the code! But how does this writing work?

CHAPTERS 10. TT 33 - AN IMMENSE TEXT CORPUS IN HIEROGLYPHS ABOUT DEATH AND FUNERAL RITES

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

The hieroglyphs have a sacred character. Pediamenopet dedicated an important part of his tomb to the "funerary books" of ancient Egypt, which are based on the same principle: the deceased has to pass through a parallel world made of challenges and obstacles, in order to be able to experience a rebirth at the end.

The Egyptologists of TT 33 share among themselves the different funerary books. They show us some of the formulas of these texts, very colorful, which reveal the very particular vision of death that the ancient Egyptians had. TT 33 is presented as a huge collection of funerary texts from different periods

CHAPTER 11. TT 33 - PEDIAMENOPET'S TOMB, HIEROGLYPHS THAT ADDRESS THE VISITORS COMING FROM THE FUTURE!

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

One place in TT33 contains an unusual text. Pediamenopet invites the visitors of the tomb, those from his time but also those from the future, to enter it to "contemplate what is in it". For Egyptologists, his tomb appears as a kind of great library or "museum" before its time. It also shows that Pediamenopet wanted to show us that he knew these texts well, that he had a great culture. It is a very modern vision. But if Pediamenopet conceived and composed his tomb, it was not he who drew and engraved with his own hands the innumerable hieroglyphs of his tomb. He was not in charge of the manual work. Who were these scribes who wrote these hieroglyphs? To find out, we will travel back in time, 8 centuries before Pediamenopet...

CHAPTER 12. DEIR EL-MEDINA - THE VILLAGE OF SCRIBES AND HIEROGLYPHIC CRAFTSMEN, THE TRACES OF THE LEARNING OF WRITING

SPEAKER: Cédric Larcher, Chief of the Deir el-Medina mission

About 1 km from TT 33, in Deir el-Medina, scientists from all over the world gather to study the remains of this New Kingdom village. Here lived the artists and scribes who decorated the tombs of the Valley of the Kings, such as Ramesses II and Tutankhamun. Among their recent discoveries, ostraca (pottery used as a medium for writing) with repeated tracings intrigue archaeologists. They identify writing supports, which proves that people were learning to write in Deir el-Medina.

The village has left us a lot of texts, mainly in the form of papyrus and ostraca that tell the daily lives of these scribes, painters and engravers?

Back in TT33. Egyptologists wonder how Pediamenopet conceived and organized the decoration of his tomb. Looking closely at the walls, they notice a red line that served as a basis for the scribes, engravers and hieroglyphic

painters. What was the chain of work of these craftsmen? The answer lies in the multiple written documents discovered in Deir el-Medina.

CHAPTERS 13 & 14. DEIR EL-MEDINA. FROM HIERATIC TO HIEROGLYPHS, THE ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE CRAFTSMEN OF HIEROGLYPHS

SPEAKER: Cédric Larcher, Chief of the Deir el-Medina mission

3000 years after their use, archaeologists still find materials in Deir el-Medina with which the craftsmen painted hieroglyphs, such as brushes, bowls or breads of color. The use they made of these materials is described in detail in the very rich written documentation of the site. Through these testimonies, we know how the work chain of the scribes who decorated the tombs of the pharaohs in the Valley of the Kings was organized. The hieroglyphs in the tombs were first written in a simplified script by a scribe, then transcribed into hieroglyphs. A second scribe, the "contour scribe", drew the hieroglyph in the tomb. Then came an engraver and, once the hieroglyphs were engraved, other "scribe-painters" added ornaments and painted the intricate patterns with a brush. Drawing or engraving hieroglyphs took a lot of time, as these were so sophisticated. Very early in their history, the Egyptians needed a simpler writing. They then transformed hieroglyphs into a writing that was quick to write, the hieratic writing. Hieratic was used in everyday affairs, but also in literature.

CHAPTER 15. CHAMPOLLION DECIPHERS THE PAPYRI OF MUSEO EGIZIO IN TURIN

SPEAKERS: Federico Poole and Cédric Gobeil, Conservateurs at Museo Egizio in Turin

Champollion understood very early that hieratic was a derivative of hieroglyphics. Fascinated by both scripts, he deciphered, throughout his life, alternately texts in hieroglyphs and texts in hieratic. In 1824, Champollion studied the rich collection of Egyptian objects gathered at the Turin's Academy of Sciences. Museo Egizio still exists, it is one of the largest museums of Egyptology in the world. It was there that Champollion accomplished one of the great feats of his life as an Egyptologist. He found a large papyrus in a thousand pieces, and, like a puzzle, he pieced together the "Turin Canon". The hieratic text, which he translated, turned out to be a long chronology of the pharaohs. It is thus a whole part of the history of ancient Egypt that resurfaces thanks to Champollion!

CHAPTERS 16, 17 & 18. - 200 YEARS AFTER CHAMPOLLION, THE SAME RECONSTRUCTION WORK OF THE MISSING HIEROGLYPHS WALLS, THE PUZZLES OF THE TT33

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, co-directors of the TT33 Mission

The reconstruction of fragmentary texts is a work familiar to all Egyptologists, not only those who work on papyri. In TT33, the funerary book called the "Book of the Dead" is spread out on the walls. But these walls have suffered a real degradation and parts of the hieroglyphs are missing. To complete the missing parts of these texts, the epigraphists called in archaeologists who excavated the floor of the room. In some places, they found fragments of engraved walls that gradually completed the texts.

CHAPTER 19. TT33 - THE FEAT OF BUILDING TT33, PEDIAMENOPET'S WEALTH

SPEAKER: Isabelle Régen or Silvia Einaudi, co-directors of the TT33 Mission

The Egyptologists of TT33 are trying to understand the work of the workers who built Pediamenopet's tomb. The discoveries of Deir el-Medina reveal that the first step consisted in digging the chambers and the corridors by splitting the limestone with bronze chisels, as iron tools did not yet exist in Egypt. This was the work of the quarrymen. Then the walls had to be polished and prepared for the work of the painters and hieroglyph engravers. The builders of Pediamenopet's tomb achieved a real feat. Looking at the 3D volumetric representation of the tomb, one can see that they managed to calculate the slope of the galleries and to position the rooms harmoniously on different levels. The depth of the tomb at 21 meters sheds light on the Egyptologists: great wealth was needed, Pediamenopet was a powerful priest.

CHAPTERS 20 & 21. DEIR EL-MEDINA. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE TOMB DECORATORS, THE TEAM ON THE RIGHT AND ON THE LEFT

SPEAKERS: Cédric Larcher, Chief of the Deir el-Medina mission

In Deir el-Medina, we learn that all the work of decoration of the tombs in its different stages was carried out by two teams, each with a great chief scribe. Everything was duplicated. There was the "right" team and the "left" team, and they advanced at the same time, each on their own. We even know the names of these chief scribes. The tomb of one of them, Neferhotep, who was in charge of the decoration of the tomb of Pharaoh Ramesses II in the Valley of the Kings, is being restored in Deir el-Medina.

CHAPTER 22. TT 33 - AN INDICATION OF THE WORK OF THE TWO TEAMS OF CRAFTSMEN IN PEDIAMENOPET'S TOMB, THE RIGHT AND LEFT TEAMS

SPEAKER: Isabelle Régen or Silvia Einaudi, co-directors of the TT33 Mission

The traces of the work of the two teams can be seen in TT33. The floor of one corridor of the tomb shows some unevenness. During the excavation, the team working on the right encountered a flaw in the limestone, which caused the ground to become uneven. We can still see today how the team on the left had to deal with this unforeseen event to adapt.

CHAPTER 23. MUSEO EGIZIO, THE PAPYRUSES OF DEIR EL-MEDINA, THE BEHIND-THE-SCENES WORK OF THE CRAFTSMEN WITH THE FIRST STRIKE OF MANKIND TOLD IN A PAPYRUS

SPEAKER: Federico Poole or Cédric Gobeil, Curators at Museo Egizio in Turin

A papyrus in hieratic from Deir el-Medina, kept in Museo Egizio, recounts an exceptional event: the first known strike in history! It was under the reign of Ramesses III, around the year 1160 BC. The author of the papyrus tells us about the arm wrestling between the craftsmen and the representatives of the pharaoh, following a delay in the wages and the supplies. The strikers went so far as to occupy the temples! They would obtain satisfaction.

Another papyrus in hieratic preserved in Turin reveals an unexpected aspect of the community of Deir el-Medina: men and women represented in sexual positions. It is an erotic papyrus. The specialists think that it is a transgression approach of the codes and the morals of the pharaonic society, a kind of satire. Champollion had qualified this scene as "monstrous obscenity". The stay in Turin was a very important stage for Champollion. But the journey of his life was yet to come...

CHAPTER 24. CHAMPOLLION'S EXPEDITION TO EGYPT: A TITANIC TASK OF SURVEYING THE GREAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES WITH GREAT SCIENTIFIC PRECISION

SPEAKER: Laurent Coulon, Director of the IFAO

In 1828, Champollion realized his dream: to go up the Nile from Alexandria to Aswan, then down again to Cairo. An adventure which was to last 18 months. He brought with him a Franco-Italian team made up of fourteen scientists and illustrators. This trip is of considerable importance in the history of Egyptology. It is the first time that a team of scientists crossed Egypt by understanding the meaning of hieroglyphs! Surveys were made of all the great sites as methodically and meticulously as possible. Since this trip, Champollion and the Egyptologists who would succeed him are the transmitters of the memory of ancient Egypt.

CHAPTER 25. TT33 - TODAY'S EGYPTOLOGISTS ARE STILL MAKING FREEHAND SURVEYS OF HIEROGLYPHS

SPEAKER: Silvia Einaudi, co-director of the TT33 Mission

200 years after Champollion, the TT33 epigraphists also made handwritten records. For them, it is essential to understand the meaning of the hieroglyphs that they copy. The slightest error can result in translation errors and change the meaning of what Pediamenopet, through the scribes who decorated his tomb, wanted to say.

CHAPTER 26. DEIR EL-MEDINA. THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCRIBES

SPEAKER: Elizabeth Bettles, Scribe specialist

We enter a tomb dug in the hill of Deir el-Medina where a great chief scribe of the 19th dynasty was buried. Its interior is magnificent: whole sections of walls covered with figures and hieroglyphs are in perfect condition. A British researcher, Elizabeth Bettles, photographs them very closely with a camera/microscope. The same motif is photographed several times with different light angles, which makes it possible to highlight the volume created by the successive layers of paint. The goal is to understand how the scribe painted these hieroglyphs. Where did they start their brush stroke? In what order did they draw the lines? What are the styles of the different scribes?

CHAPTER 27. TT 33 - CONTINUATION OF THE MISSION TT 33: THE CENOTAPH REVEALS THAT PEDIAMENOPET WAS "CONDUCTOR OF THE OPET FESTIVAL" WHERE HE REPRESENTED THE PHARAOH

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission; Salimalkram, Egyptologist

The mission of the TT 33 progresses. Little by little, Pediamenopet's figure takes shape. One of the original features of the tomb is that it has a cenotaph, a false tomb where one pays tribute to someone who is not buried there. The cenotaph of TT 33 is dedicated to the great god Osiris. It is a massive square block surrounded by four straight

corridors that were devoted to circumambulation rituals. Pilgrims circled the block much like the Muslims do around the Kaaba in Mecca. The hieroglyphs tell us that Pediamenopet had the title of "conductor of the Opet festival". He represented the pharaoh during the great festivals and ceremonies. For this he had to have the absolute confidence of the pharaoh. Because of his great culture, his extensive knowledge of religious texts and rituals, Egyptologists picture Pediamenopet as a kind of spiritual guide of the first order to the pharaoh, but who was this pharaoh who showed so much confidence in Pediamenopet?

CHAPTER 28. TT 33 - THE DATING OF THE TOMB AND THE BLACK PHARAOH TAHARQA THAT PROBABLY SERVED PEDIAMENOPET

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

No matter how hard they look, TT33 Egyptologists cannot find a cartouche in the tomb that mentions a king. Usually, the tombs of high-ranking figures like Pediamenopet have references to the pharaoh they served, which helps to date their tombs. But nothing like that here. It is as if Pediamenopet wanted to blur the temporal tracks and place himself outside of time. According to Egyptologists, Pediamenopet served the Black Pharaoh Taharqa, the last king of the Twenty Fifth Dynast. Although foreigners, the Black Pharaohs were attached to the Egyptian culture and even sought to own it. The hypothesis that an intellectual like Pediamenopet, guardian of this ancestral tradition, could serve these kings from afar is quite credible. The Black Pharaohs probably saw a man in him who would guarantee them access to this culture which they sought to own.

CHAPTER 29. TT 33 - THE ENIGMA OF HIS REBIRTH, A DISCOVERED ANOMALY THAT SHEDS LIGHT ON HIS PARTICULAR STATUS AS A PEDIAMENOPET REBORN TOWARDS THE "IMPERISHABLE STARS" AND NOT TOWARDS THE SUN

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

A corridor in TT33 poses a true enigma. The funeral books that decorate it are "solar" books. In these texts, the deceased, after having overcome a series of obstacles, can be reborn into the light like the sun each morning. This is why false doors that open towards the East are usually represented in the tombs, because the Sun rises in the East. But in this corridor, strangely, Pediamenopet directed the exit to the North. Why did he do that? It is after having scrutinized every corner of this corridor that the Egyptologists find the reason for this apparent anomaly. Placed high up, an engraved lintel has a short passage, the Pyramid Texts. This is the oldest funerary book in Egypt. In this book, the deceased is not reborn with the Sun but joins the imperishable stars of the North, those that never disappear from the sky whatever the season. It is among these stars that Pediamenopet has chosen to spend eternity. By choosing a very ancient tradition, Pediamenopet showed his willingness to display his great knowledge of the ancient texts.

CHAPTER 30. TT 33 - THE ULTIMATE QUEST: DIVING INTO THE BURIAL CHAMBER OF PEDIAMENOPET, CLUES ABOUT THE DECEASED

SPEAKER: Silvia Einaudi, co-director of the TT33 Mission

As in most Egyptian tombs, there is an intimate space in TT33 reserved exclusively for the use of the deceased. This is where his burial chamber is located, the secret vault where his body lies. Would Pediamenopet still be there? Along with the scientists, we go down a 6 meters deep well that leads to the private spaces of the tomb. One of the rooms represents on a wall the scene of the awakening of the god Osiris, a scene to which the Black Pharaohs gave much importance. Another clue that Pediamenopet was close to these Black Pharaohs. The exploration continues. We finally enter Pediamenopet's burial chamber. Its vault is arched and culminates at 5 m height! Engraved stars cover the whole ceiling of the room. We scrutinize the room. It is empty. No body. The burial chamber has certainly been plundered since ancient history. The room is certainly empty, but it is not mute. Surprisingly, in his burial chamber, Pediamenopet had a false door engraved in the direction of the North, thus reiterating his desire to reach the imperishable stars.

CHAPTER 31. TT33 - PEDIAMENOPET FOUND, THE GUARDIAN OF A WHOLE WRITTEN CULTURE, AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN KARNAK

SPEAKERS: Isabelle Régen, Silvia Einaudi, Claude Traunecker (founder), co-directors of the TT33 Mission

Although Pediamenopet's body is no longer in his tomb, his figure as a lector priest is present in every room. For Egyptologists, Pediamenopet appears as a unique character in the history of Egypt. His tomb reveals that he was a leading figure in the city of Thebes in the 7th century BC. A priest who was to play an important role in the great sanctuary of Karnak. A man of confidence of the pharaoh, most probably the last of the Black Pharaohs, Pediamenopet appears as the guardian of a whole culture written in hieroglyphics, by his will to make his tomb the place of memory of a civilization.

CHAPTER 32. CONCLUSION

We know from his diary that Champollion visited the necropolis of El-Assasif and saw Pediamenopet's tomb, which he described as an "immense and prodigious excavation". The path of Champollion thus crossed that of the great lector-priest. In retrospect, despite the 2,500 years that separate them, the two men appear today to have many things in common. They both have the concern of perfection and this ambition to embrace a whole knowledge, a whole culture.

Today, Egyptologists continue, in the line of Champollion, to reveal the secrets of hieroglyphs. In the archaeological sites, in the excavation sites and in the laboratories, they reveal to us the stories of these men of the shade - high-ranking priests, scribes and craftsmen of the hieroglyphs who gave life to ancient Egypt several millennia ago. They share with us their daily lives, their rites and their lifestyles. Discoveries that every day enrich our knowledge and bring us closer to the ancient Egyptians.