

3. *Discovering Tut : The Saga Continues*

(A. R. Williams)

INTRODUCTION

Background

Tut (Tutankhamun) an Egyptian pharaoh (king) lived from 1343 B.C. to 1325 B.C. His tomb was discovered in the Valley of the Kings (*Refer to Map on Page 24 of Text*) neighbouring river Nile by British archaeologist Howard Carter in the year 1922. Discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb containing his mummified body, numerous artefacts in gold, articles of daily use like precious oils, perfumes, clothes created a sensational furore in the whole world.

The credit for the discovery of Tut's tomb and its glittering treasure justifiably goes to Howard Carter who had been digging in the Valley of the Kings for the last 15 years and the Earl of Carnarvon who had funded the cost of his excavations for the same period as both were obsessed to discover the tomb of Tut, who had reigned more than 3,300 years ago.

The Valley of the Kings, the royal burial ground had been part of ancient Thebes, the capital from which the Egyptian empire was ruled at the zenith of its power. The Valley lay a few miles away from the west bank of Nile, whose waters nurtured Egyptian civilization, opposite Karnak and Luxor and more than four hundred miles south of present day Cairo (*Refer to Map on Page 24 of Text*).

Till then, 33 royal tombs had been found in the bedrock of the valley, but all had been pillaged long before by professional thieves. Three discoveries made in early twentieth century reinforced the belief that Tut's tomb was hidden somewhere in the valley. The first was a faience cup (glazed coloured earthenware) found hidden under a rock, bearing Tutankhamun's name. The next was a small mud filled

pit tomb containing pieces of gold foil with pictures of inscriptions of Tut and his wife. Third was a cache of pottery jars – sealed with Tut's seal that contained linen wrappings, mourning wreaths and other articles connected with ancient Egyptian funerary rites.

Finally when the tomb was discovered, it took years to sort out and catalogue over 3500 objects, which are now displayed at the Cairo Museum. Egyptians' belief in life after death ensured that dead were buried with numerous articles of necessity and luxury.

Tut – in life and in death

During Tutankhamun's grandfather Amenhotep III (1386 – 1349 B.C.) rule, Egypt was a prosperous state. After Amenhotep III's death, his son Amenhotep IV acceded to the throne around 1350 B.C. and proceeded to institute a religious reform of sweeping nature. He selected one god, the Sun god as the reigning deity and according to his religious belief changed his name to Akhenaten. He also ordered the shutting down of old temples and destroyed the images and idols of the god Amun. After 17 years of Akhenaten's rule, Tutankhamun ascended the throne at the age of nine in about 1334 BC and ruled till 1325 BC. Tut was named Tutankhaten at birth as a sign of his family's devotion to the Aten – the sun disk.

His reign lasted for about nine years and was a period of economic prosperity but religious confusion as the young Tut reverted to the practice of old religion and changed his name to Tutankhamun to show his reverence to the old god, 'Amun'. Tutankhamun died when he was 18 or 19 and the cause of his death is still a mystery – thus a C.T. Scan after so many years.

As per custom Tutankhamun's corpse was mummified after the internal organs such as



One of the coffins containing internal organs of Tut (PICTURE 1)

Source :
Treasures of Tutankhamun

brain, liver, lungs, intestines and viscera (except the heart) had been removed. The body was packed in a dry mineral called natron for dehydration and then resins, gums and oils were used to embalm the body, which was wrapped in linen bandages and adorned with amulets and other jewellery. The organs which had been treated separately were placed in four miniature coffins (Refer to Picture 1) which were kept in a Canopic chest. The chest was further placed in a shrine guarded by four statuettes of goddesses Isis, Nephthys, Selket and Neith. (Refer to Pictures 2a, 2b).

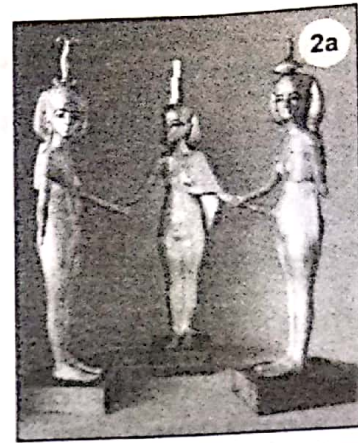
Golden Splendour

Tutankhamun's tomb is intricate and grand. The most impressive object in the tomb was the solid gold coffin which contained the mummified body of King Tut and weighed 110.4 kg. The mummy had a death mask made of solid gold with the King's features, weighing 10 kg. The belief was that the King would be born with the same features.

(Refer to Picture 3)

Curse of the Mummy

To protect the mummified bodies of their kings and to prevent robbers or political enemies from desecrating the burials, a curse was invoked against violators. The belief in the mummy's curse was rekindled when Lord Carnarvon died five months after the discovery of Tut's tomb. But the same curse theory was refuted when Howard



Source (Picture 2a & 2b) :
Treasures of Tutankhamun



Source :
Treasures of Tutankhamun
(Picture 3)

Carter, the one who should have been most affected died peacefully at the age of 66 in the year 1939.

ABOUT THE LESSON

"Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues" provides a deep insight into man's keen desire to know and analyse the roots of our civilization. The passage transports us to Egypt, the land of the pyramids and ancient civilization. The mummies which lie buried in those wonders of the world had startling facts to reveal about human life thousands of years ago. The discovery of Tut's tomb in 1922 inspired many archaeological researchers to speculate about what happened to him as he died an early and untimely death. The last heir of a powerful family that had ruled Egypt and its empire for years, died when he was just a teenager. His body was laid to rest with gold and eventually forgotten. The lesson analyses the advanced studies made on the cause(s) of his death through C.T. Scan which offers new clues about his life and death by providing precise data for an accurate forensic reconstruction.

NOTES

- **Rediscovering Tut after 3300 years**

5th January 2005

- King Tut (the mummy) leaves his cemetery to be C.T. scanned
- ominous atmosphere with dark sky and ghostly clouds : a reflection of the mysterious happening 3300 years ago.
- throughout the day, tourists visit the 26 feet underground tomb, travelling at the wall murals in the burial chamber and Tut's face golden in glittering gold. Some reflect on the pharaoh's curse visiting those who disturbed his eternal sleep.

- **Howard Carter's Work on Tut's Mummy**

- exam

- Views of Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of Egypt's Council of Antiquities : Tut's mummy in very bad condition because of Howard Carter, a British archaeologist, who discovered Tut's tomb in 1922
- Tomb though ransacked earlier had its contents still intact
- Tomb contained jewellery, pieces in glittering gold along with articles of everyday use like wine, clothings, board games etc.
- A shroud covered with garlands of spring season plants and flowers like willow, olive leaves, wild celery, lotus petals and cornflowers indicated a burial in the month of March or April
- Carter faced trouble as Tut's mummified body cemented to the bottom of the gold coffin due to hardening of ritual funerary resins
- Carter kept Tut's mummy cemented to its gold coffin out in the blazing desert sun, heating it to 149 degrees F without avail
- Finally Carter chiselled beneath the mummy to separate it from the gold base. He also separated mummy's head and every major joint to remove the adornments and reassembled the remains in a wooden box to conceal the damage
- Howard Carter defends his action by saying that had he not cut the mummy free, thieves would have outwitted the guards and removed the golden adornments
- **Archaeology and its progressive changes**
 - Earlier : a scientific study of human antiquities
 - Now : an investigative scientific study of human antiquities
 - changed substantially with time
 - less focus on treasures and more focus on mysteries of life and death
 - also uses more sophisticated tools and medical technology

- example of modern archaeology : Tut's body X-rayed in 1968 by an anatomy professor
- startling revelation : beneath the ritual resin that covered his chest, Tut's breast bone and front ribs missing.
- another tool of modern archaeology : C.T. scanning or computed tomography in which hundreds of X-rays in cross section arranged like bread slices to create a three-dimensional virtual body. The technique is also called diagnostic imaging.
- **Two questions still unanswered about Tut**
 - How did Tut die?
 - How old was he at the time of his death?
- **Tut's lineage and rule**
 - Tut's demise : A death knell for his dynasty
 - Tut's grandfather Amenhotep III ruled eighteenth dynasty for forty years
 - his son Amenhotep IV succeeded him and brought far-reaching drastic changes
 - discouraged the worship of 'Amun' a major god and destroyed his images, idols and temples
 - appointed 'sun' as the reigning diety and prompted the worship of 'Aten', the sun disk. Also changed his name to Akhenaten
 - moved the religious capital from Thebes to Akhenaten, now known as Amarna.
 - reflecting on the above events Ray Johnson, director of the University of Chicago's research centre in Luxor referred to that period as "horrific time" with "Akhenaten going a little wacky"
 - after Akhenaten's death a mysterious ruler Smenkhkare ruled for a brief period
 - finally a young Tutankhaten ascended the throne. He changed

his name to Tutankhamun and oversaw a restoration of the old religious ways and reigning diety 'Amun'. Tut ruled for nine years and died unexpectedly

- **Egyptian Mummy Project**

- began an inventory in 2003 and recorded 600 mummies so far
- scanning the mummies with a portable C.T. Scan Machine donated by National Geographic Society and Siemens
- Tut : the first mummy scanned
- King Tut ahead of his countrymen in death as in life
- Tut's mummy scanned on 5th January 2005 in less than 3 hours
- a minor snag during scan as desert sand entered the cooler fan
- Tut scanned head to toe resulting in 1,700 digital X-ray images in cross section. Head scanned in 0.62 mm slices
- results of scan studied and debated upon by specialists in radiology, forensics and anatomy
- Zahi Hawass expressed satisfaction and relief after the successful completion of the scanning procedure
- Tut rests in peace in his tomb guarded by Osiris, the god of the after life.

GLOSSARY

- precise - exact, accurate
- forensic - pertaining to sciences or scientists connected with legal investigations
- stirred up - arouse (a strong feeling) in someone
- casket grey - grey or grim as a coffin
- scudded across- moved fast across the sky because of the wind
- glided - moved smoothly and easily
- cramped - without enough room, confined

- gilded - covered or coated with gold
- pondering - considering
- archaeologist - one who conducts scientific study of human antiquities
- futile - ineffectual, useless
- ransacked - searched thoroughly for stealing or destroying something
- antiquity - ancient times
- artefacts - objects made by human workmanship
- resurrection - rising from the dead
- funerary - artefacts in gold, alabaster, ivory and objects of treasures daily use buried with mummies in Egypt
- shroud - a winding sheet used to wrap dead bodies
- resins - sticky substances which result in condensation
- detachment - aloof, unconnected
- chiselled - cut with a tool called chisel usually in a metal case
- circumvented - outwitted
- amulets - a charm carried about the person
- sheaths - case or protective structures
- iconic - images, carved or painted
- severed - separated, cleaved, divided
- anatomy - science of the body by dissection
- diagnostic imaging - image that identifies the nature of illness
- death rattle - end of dynasty
- initiated - began, started, introduced
- inventory - list of schedules or articles, catalogue

- wacky – irrational, eccentric
- eerie – affected with fear, exciting fear
- radiology – study of radioactivity or radiation or their application to medicines *e.g.* as x-rays
- hydraulic lift – a lift operated by a liquid moving in confined space under pressure
- pall-bearer – a person helping to carry or escorting a coffin at a funeral
- scattering – reflecting, dispersing or spreading irregularly
- pixels – minute units which make up the picture on a cathode ray tube
- vertebrae – joint of the backbone

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

(to be answered in about 40 words each)

Q1. Give reasons for the following:

(i) King Tut's body has been subjected to repeated scrutiny.

(Textual)

Tut's body has been subjected to repeated scrutiny in order to unravel the mysteries associated with his death. He was the last heir of a powerful family that ruled Egypt and its empire for centuries. He died as a teenager under mysterious circumstances. Once his mummy was discovered in 1922, his body was scrutinised to unravel the mysteries of his death.

(ii) Howard Carter's investigation was resented. *(Textual)*

Howard Carter's investigations were resented because he immensely disfigured the body in order to remove it from its gold coffin. Tutakhamun's head was removed and every major joint was severed.

- (iii) Carter had to chisel away the solidified resins to raise the king's remains. (Textual)

Carter had to chisel away the solidified resins to raise the king's remains because the body was cemented to the bottom of his solid gold coffin. He feared that if he did not chisel out the body free, thieves would certainly rip it apart for the gold.

- (iv) Tut's body was buried along with gilded treasures. (Textual)

Tut's body was buried along with gilded treasures because of the belief that their eternal brilliance would guarantee resurrection for the great king. Moreover, the pharaohs of the time were fabulously rich and they believed that they could probably carry their wealth to the other world.

- (v) The boy king changed his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun. (Textual)

The boy king changed his name from Tutankhaten to Tutankhamun because he believed himself to be the 'living image of Amun' the old God of Egyptians and wanted to restore the glory of the old ways.

- Q2. List the deeds that led Ray Johnson to describe Akhenaten as "wacky". Or (Textual)

Which period in ancient Egyptian history is referred to as a 'horrific period'? Why?

Wacky means irrational or eccentric. Amenhotep IV who has been dubbed as a wacky pharaoh initiated one the strangest periods in the Egyptian history. He promoted the worship of Aten, the sun disk, and moved the religious capital from Thebes to the new city of Akhenaten (now Amarna). Moreover he attacked Amun, smashed his images and idols and closed his

temples. His reign was a horrific time. No wonder Ray Johnson describes him as a little wacky.

Q3. What were the results of the CT scan? *(Textual)*

The CT scan of Tut's body revealed astonishing images : A grey head took shape from a scattering of pixels. Neck vertebrae appeared as clearly as in an anatomy class. Other images revealed a hand, several views of the rib cage, and transection of the skull.

Q4. List the advances in technology that have improved forensic analysis. *(Textual)*

Advances in technology have brought about a paradigm shift in the approach to archaeology study giving impetus to unravelling the fascinating details of life and intriguing mysteries of death. The use of X-ray machines and computed tomography or CT, specialisation in radiology have all contributed in improved forensic analysis.

Q5. Explain the statement, "King Tut is one of the first mummies to be scanned - in death, as in life moving regally ahead of his countrymen." *(Textual)*

The statement comments upon the place of pride King Tut enjoyed in his life and later in his death. King Tut, though took up the reigns when he was still very young, contributed tremendously in restoring the past glory and old ways of his dynasty. He died a young death in mysterious circumstances and was given a befitting royal burial. More than 4,000 years later, when technology was used to unravel the mystery of his death, his mummy was the first to enjoy the privilege of such an advanced study. It was taken out with reverence and style that befitted an emperor. It moved ahead of a train of scientists and technicians.

Q6. Who was King Tut and what is his significance in Egyptian history?

King Tut was the last heir of a powerful family that had ruled Egypt and its empire for centuries. He was the descendent of Amenhotep III who ruled for almost four decades at the height of the eighteenth dynasty's golden age. King Tut took over the reigns after the fall of an non descript King Smenkhkare's rule and was recognised for restoring the old ways of his dynasty which had been crushed and shattered by his ancestor Amenhotep IV. King Tut was a teenager and his sudden death is shrouded in mystery.

Q7. What was the pharaoh's curse? How did it prove ominous?

Or

What made the guard remark nervously "Curse of the pharaoh"?

According to ancient myths the pharaoh had placed a curse of death or misfortune befalling upon all those who tried to disturb his eternal sleep. The curse seemed to have claimed the life of Carter's financier. Again, on the fated day of January 5, 2005, when king Tut's mummy was removed from its tomb for CT scan, the sky suddenly turned ominous. An angry wind stirred up ghostly dust clouds. These dark dust clouds enveloped the stars in their grey shroud creating an ominous atmosphere in the sky. Later the fan of the CT scan machine was jammed by the desert sand. Thus the curse seemed to be at work even now, too. Thus, the guard's remark is significant.

Q8. Who discovered King Tut's tomb and what discoveries did he make?

Or

Where and when was Tut's tomb discovered? By whom?

King Tut's tomb was first discovered by a British archaeologist Howard Carter in the year 1922. On discovering the tomb Carter

found that its contents, though hastily ransacked were complete. King Tut had been buried with stunning artefacts in gold with the belief that their eternal brilliance would guarantee resurrection. He was also buried with everyday things like board games, a bronze razor, linen undergarments, cases of food and wine. The funerary treasures of King Tut till date remain the richest royal collection ever found and caused a sensation at the time of discovery. These discoveries have become a part of the pharaoh's legend.

Q9. What revelations were made by Carter on investigating King Tut's coffins?

Carter made startling revelations on investigating King Tut's three nested coffins. He found a shroud adorned with garlands of willow and olive leaves, wild celery, lotus petals and cornflowers when he opened the first coffin. This gave faded evidence of King Tut's burial in March or April. On reaching the mummy he found that it was difficult to remove it from the coffin as the ritual resins had hardened thereby cementing it to the bottom of its solid gold coffin. Carter's men literally had to remove the mummy's head and sever nearly every major joint in order to detach it.

Q10. Who donated the CT machine and what were its results?

The CT machine used in the scanning of the mummy was donated by the National Geographic Society and Siemens, its manufacturers. With the help of the CT machine it was possible to scan the mummy from head to toe. 1,700 digital X-ray images in cross section could be created and Tut's head was scanned in 0.62 mm slices to record its intricate structures.

Q11. When was Tut's body mummified? When was it discovered? After how many years of its burial did it leave its tomb? Why?

Tut's body was laid to rest roughly 3300 years ago. It was

discovered in the summer of 1922. Tut's mummy left its tomb after 3300 years of its burial to be released from its gold coffin. Tut's mummy again left its tomb after 83 years of its discovery (since 1922) for a C.T. scan.

Q12. What is the significance of the metal gold in the artefacts found in Tut's tomb?

Tutankhamun was an extremely wealthy pharaoh. When he died, he was buried with numerous artefacts like pieces of jewellery and furniture made of pure gold. It was believed that eternal glitter and brilliance of the precious metal gold will ensure resurrection of King Tut.

Q13. What are referred to as funerary treasures? What does their presence in Tut's tomb tell us about the beliefs of ancient Egyptians?

Funerary treasures refer to the cache of numerous artefacts in pure gold and articles of everyday use like oils, food, wine, garments, board games etc. found buried along with King Tut's mummy in his tomb. The presence of the above in Tut's tomb indicate that people of ancient Egypt believed in life after death and ensured an easy transition for their departed by burying with them the things they loved during their lifetime.

Q14. What unforeseen problem did Carter encounter when he reached King Tut's mummy?

While trying to raise King Tut's mummy from its centuries old resting place at the base of its gold coffin, Carter realized that the mummy had become cemented to the coffin due to years of hardening of ritual resins applied to Tut's mummy.

Q15. What did Carter report with scientific detachment? What does this tell us about his temperament?

Or

What natural way was used by Carter to release the mummy from its coffin?

Or

What argument does Carter present in favour of his action of 'chiselling the body apart from its golden coffin'?

Carter exposed Tut's mummy to the blazing desert sun for hours and heated it to 149 degrees Fahrenheit to separate it from its coffin. When he did not succeed, he chiselled the consolidated material (hardened resins) from beneath the limbs and trunk in order to raise the mummy. He reported the above with scientific detachment and this tells us that in pursuit of his research he displayed a totally detached attitude and did not seek outside opinion before taking this extreme step.

Q16. What had led to the cementing of Tut's body to the base of its golden coffin?

As was customary, after Tut's demise his body was embalmed with gums, oils, resins etc before mummification and placing in gold coffin. With the passage of time (more than 3000 years) all these substances hardened and condensed which resulted in the mummy becoming cemented to the base of the gold coffin.

Q17. What startling fact was revealed about Tut's mummy 40 years after its discovery? Who revealed this fact?

Or

What startling fact was revealed in 1968?

In the year 1968, 40 years after the discovery of Tut's mummy, an anatomy professor X-rayed the mummy and revealed that beneath the resin that covered the mummy's chest, his breast-bone and front ribs were missing. This happened perhaps during King Tut's mummification when his internal organs were taken out and preserved separately.

Q18. How did King Tut restore the ancient religion in Egypt during his reign?

Or

What was King Tut's original name? What did he change his name to? Why?

King Tut was named Tutankhaten at the time of his birth. On acceding to the Egyptian throne after Akhenaten, Tut systematically brought about a restoration of the old religion which had been banned by Akhenaten. First he changed his name to Tutankhamun in reverence to the old god Amun and oversaw the restoration and reopening of old temples, shrines and idols.

Q19. What was the cause of Zahi Hawass' worry and eventual relief?

Or

Who was Zahi Hawass? What made him remark, "I was so worried. But now I think I will go and sleep"?

Being the Secretary General of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, Zahi Hawass shouldered the sole responsibility of supervising the smooth and safe scanning of King Tut's mummy. Conscious of the great onus and afraid of the ancient 'curse of the pharaoh', he was understandably tense and worried before the CT scan and obviously felt relieved when everything was over without any major hitch and delay.

Q20. "Dark-bellied clouds had scudded across the desert sky all day and now were veiling the stars in casket grey." What is the significance of these weather conditions in the context of Tut's CT scan?

The statement is significant of the ominous atmosphere that prevailed on January 5, 2005 when King Tut's body was removed from its resting place for C.T. scanning. The author has used beautiful imagery here as massive dark clouds made their huge formations in the desert sky and covered the stars in their grey shield. Here 'grey' symbolises the colour of death or

grimness. The ominous weather conditions signify the ominous attempt of the investigators to disturb Tut's sleep once again.

Q21. "The mummy is in very bad condition because of what Carter did". Why does Zahi Hawass make this remark?

Howard Carter, a British archaeologist released Tut's body from the confines of its gold coffin in 1922. He found that its contents, though hastily ransacked, were complete. When he tried to remove the body from its three nested coffin, his men literally had to remove the mummy's head and severed every major joint. Ever since, the mummy has been in a very bad condition. Hence, Hawass's remark.

Q22. Archaeology has changed substantially in the intervening decades. Explain.

With the passage of time, the study of archaeology has shifted its onus from the study of treasures to focusing more on the fascinating details of life and intriguing mysteries of death. Carter's discovery focused on unravelling the secrets of the civilization of that era, but 40 years later in 1968 an anatomy professor X-rayed the mummy to reveal startling facts about its body. Now, the CT scan was going to reveal startling details about the King's life and death.

Q23. "King Tut's demise was a big event, even by royal standards". What does the author mean by this statement?

King Tut was the last of his family line and his death brought an end to a royal dynasty. Tut's body was buried with stunning artefacts in gold, the eternal brilliance of which was supposed to guarantee resurrection to the royal king. He was buried in a three nested coffin made of solid gold and also with everyday things he would want in the after life. Thus the statement refers to drastic political changes Tut's death must have caused and the grand burial that was given to him.

LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

(to be answered in about 120 – 150 words each)

Q1. Man's quest to unravel the mysteries of the past is an ongoing process. No single person can claim all the credit. Discuss.

"Discovering Tut : the Saga Continues" by A.R. Williams analyses the various efforts started about a century back by archaeologists, radiologists, anatomists and forensic experts to study King Tut's mummy to unravel the mysteries associated with his life and death and to throw light on ancient Egyptian culture.

A British archaeologist, Howard Carter who discovered the tomb in 1922 concentrated his findings on the art and artefacts of the time. His study did not end with him. Over the years, the study of archaeology made a paradigm shift and with advancement in medical technology Tut's body was X-rayed in 1968 revealing startling facts that his breast-bone and front ribs were missing. Tut's mummy was the first to be CT scanned on January 5, 2005 creating 1700 digital X-ray images in cross section and his head scanned in 0.32 mm slices to register its intricate structures.

With the forensic analysis of King Tut's body a new saga has been initiated. Efforts are on to scan more such bodies which lie preserved in the ancient Egyptian cemetery known as the Valley of the Kings. The scanning of King Tut's body is just the beginning, the saga continues – his mystery continues to interest mankind even now.

Tut's example is a testimony to the fact that research in any field is an ongoing and a long-drawn process. It needs a concerted effort and co-operation of different people. Hence, a single person cannot claim all the credit.

- Q2. Taking ideas from "Discovering Tut: The Saga Continues", write an article for your school magazine on the topic: 'Perseverance, Patience and Hard Work – the key to Success'.

PERSISTENCE, PATIENCE AND HARD WORK –

THE KEY TO SUCCESS

(by)

Man's curiosity and inquisitiveness prompt him to take upon himself the responsibility of delving into different subjects and exploring them thoroughly. However, Man is not served with results on a platter – his exploration and research demands a lot of hard work, patience and concentration.

When Howard Carter discovered Tut's tomb in the year 1922, it created a sensational furore all over the world. It had taken Carter 15 years and a lot of money to discover the tomb. Success had evaded him several times, but he didn't give up. His perseverance, strong will-power and determination eventually bore fruit.

However, all problems were not over as yet. Carter took months together to record the pharaoh's funerary treasures. After opening the different coffins, when he finally reached the mummy, he ran into trouble. The ritual resins with the passage of time had hardened cementing the Pharaoh to the bottom of his gold coffin. No amount of force could pull out Tut's mummy from the coffin. The coffin was heated up in the hope of getting results, but the experiment failed. Then started the process of chiselling the solidified material.

Thus, Carter succeeded in his mission after putting in a lot of hard work and patience. His story reveals that in order to succeed in life, you need a lot of perseverance, patience and diligence.

Q3. "Archaeology has changed substantially in the intervening decades". Comment.

Ever since man became conscious of his surroundings, he has taken keen interest in analysing his ancient past. Archaeologists and researchers have devoted much of their time to the study of the glory of the ancient Egyptians who were much ahead of their times and knew the art of preserving bodies.

The ancient Egyptian cemetery known as the 'Valley of the Kings' is home to many royal personages in their eternal sleep. The Egyptian Mummy Project, which began an inventory in 2003 has so far recorded 600 mummies and the counting is still on. Initially archaeologists and researchers restricted their studies and investigations to knowing more about the ways of living, their myths and culture, their art and artefacts. However, with advancement in medical technology, the stress now is more on knowing the more fascinating details of life and intriguing mysteries of death than on studying and cataloguing treasures.

It was with this objective that King Tut's mummy was CT scanned on January 5, 2005 and startling revelations were made by the 1,700 digital X-ray images taken in cross section. The mummy's neck vertebrae appeared as clearly as in an anatomy class and it also revealed a hand, several views of the rib cage and a transection of the skull. These images have given much food for thought to the anatomists and biologists to work on and improvise on their study of human life and the mysteries associated with death.

Q4. Imagine you are one of the guards on duty, the day King Tut's mummy was to be scanned. Write a diary entry expressing your fears and apprehensions.

January 5, 2005

9.00 p.m.

Today was a fateful day. King Tut's mummy glided head first into a CT scanner. The machine had been brought here to probe the lingering medical mysteries of the young ruler who died more than 3,300 years ago.

I was deputed as one of the guards while the procedure was being undertaken. Throughout the afternoon King Tut's tomb had been flooded with tourists from all over the world gazing at the murals on the walls of the burial chamber or peering at his gilded face on the outer coffin lid. There was a strange, abominable lull, as if they nurtured the fear of the pharaoh's curse. By the evening the weather turned ominous with the rise of a thunder-storm. The angry wind stirred up ghostly dust devils. Large dark clouds enveloped the sky and veiled the stars in their grey casket.

Fear started mounting in my mind, as I remembered the pharaoh's curse – death or misfortune falling upon those who disturbed him – and my heart beat with impending disaster. A little before 6.00 p.m. Tut's mummy was carried from the tomb in his box into the trailer that held the scanner. Only twenty minutes later two men emerged, rushed towards an office nearby and returned with a pair of white plastic fans. Everyone was surprised that the million dollar scanner had quit because of sand in a cooler fan. My heart throbbed again, "Curse of the pharaoh!", I wondered. However, the substitute fan fortunately worked well enough to finish the procedure and King Tut was carried back to his tomb less than three hours after he was removed.

The wind had stopped by then. Everything around was cold and still and right above the entrance to Tut's tomb stood the

Orion. I still wonder whether it was right to disturb the King. What if the pharaoh's curse befalls on us? O God, be with us!

(Name)

Q5. Do you think Carter was justified in removing the hardened ritual resin deposits on Tut's mummy? Why/Why not?

Carter was a professional and scientific archaeologist. Those who allege that he was not justified in trying to remove Tut's mummy from its gold coffin by exposing it to the scorching heat do so out of their respect for the royal dead of ancient Egypt. They seem to believe that the dead should not have been disturbed in their eternal peace in their tombs.

I think Carter was fully justified in his attempt to remove the mummy by trying to soften the resin in the sunlight. His purpose was not to disrespect it or to plunder it for personal gain but to study it so that mankind's knowledge about the ancient Egyptians, their lives, rituals, beliefs and achievements in science could be furthered. Moreover, Carter was not the first one to study mummies and he was certainly not a thief. I do admit that the exposure to heat must have damaged the mummy a little, but such things keep happening in the world of investigative and experimental science. So, I strongly believe that Carter was fully justified in trying to remove the mummy from its coffin by heating the hardened resin in the sunlight.

Q6. There is no difference between mummy thieves and mummy investigators. Comment with reference to the lesson "Discovering Tut: the Saga Continues".

There are several differences between a mummy thief and a mummy investigator. First, a mummy thief ransacks and plunders mummies in order to make quick money but a mummy investigator studies a mummy to know more about the

ancient Egyptian civilization. Second, the thief's methods are crude and callous but the investigator is cautious, careful and systematic in his approach to the study of mummies. Third, a thief decamps with the mummy treasures, an investigator carefully catalogues and classifies them and hands them over to an appropriate authority for posterity or further study. So, it is ridiculous to even imagine there is no difference between mummy thieves and mummy investigators. Perhaps, the only similarity is that both disturb the dead in the eternal peace but then the similarity ends there itself.

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