

Uluburun shipwreck - Context

Near Southern Turkey, c.14th century BCE.

Bronze Age shipwreck, provides insight into maritime and terrestrial trade in Mediterranean.

Site revealed copper ingots arranged in rows.

Computer modeling has allowed reconstructions of what the ship looked like and how its cargo was arranged - the wooden hull had deteriorated and the ship is placed on a slope off which some artifacts tumbled over the years.

(Pulak, 2012)

Uluburun shipwreck - Cargo

10 tons of copper ingots, 1 ton of tin ingots (note that copper and tin together make bronze, kinda important in the Bronze Age), pottery storage jars, 24 stone anchors.

Much of the perishable cargo would have disappeared because of the aquatic environment.

Elite/royal cargo?

- Faience beads, inlaid seashell rings, ostrich eggshell vases...
- Gold and silver jewelry.

The **copper ingots** - Pure Cypriot copper (origin deduced from lead-isotope analysis).
- Ingots very carefully loaded into rows to minimise slippage.

The **tin ingots** - Most lost due to corrosion, but chemical analysis reveals very pure tin.
- Tin = quite rare in Bronze Age Mediterranean.
- Lead-isotope analysis suggests origins in Taurus Mountains and a source near Afghanistan.

Uluburun shipwreck - Cargo (cont)

- The **Cypriot pottery** - Included oil lamps, milk bowls...
- Cypriot wares found in very high concentration at Uluburun.

(Pulak, 2012)

Uluburun shipwreck - Copper Ingots



Uluburun shipwreck - Trade

Illustrates Bronze Age trade routes which connect Egypt, Cyprus and the Aegean.

Royal gift exchange conducted directly by palatial institutions?

Long-distance trade = high risk endeavour which requires many preparations

Some private merchants engaging in domestic trade, but most of long-distance = controlled by some form of elite group.

(Pulak, 2012)

The Uluburun Mouse

Dispersal of the house mouse is agreed to be linked to stowaway transport in grain and foodstuff cargo.

Before Uluburun, evidence resided in zooarchaeological evidence, without direct archaeological evidence.

Uluburun produced small mouse mandible.

Mouse also provides information about the route of the ship before its sinking.

Phenotypic analysis of the mandible suggests it most likely originated from Syria.

(Cucchi, 2008)

New Kingdom Key Chronology

c. 1550-1525	<i>Ahmosé</i>	Defeats the Hyksos, reaches 2 nd cataract in Nubia.
--------------	---------------	--

c. 1525-1504	<i>Amenhotep I</i>	Campaigns up to 3 rd cataract in Nubia, establishes Deir el-Medina.
--------------	--------------------	--

c. 1504-1492	<i>Thutmose I</i>	Defeats Kush + destroys Kerma, campaigns in Syria.
--------------	-------------------	--

c. 1492-1479	<i>Thutmose II</i>	Quashes rebellions in Kush.
--------------	--------------------	-----------------------------

c. 1479-1458	<i>Hatshepsut/Thutmose III</i>	Expedition to Punt, a lot of temple building.
--------------	--------------------------------	---

c. 1473-1458	<i>Thutmose III</i>	Campaigns in Syria + Palestine, establishes full control of Nubia. Initiates destruction of many temples.
--------------	---------------------	---

New Kingdom Key Chronology (cont)

c. *Amenhotep* Diplomatic contacts
1427- *II* in the Near East
1400 after military
campaigns.

c. *Thutmose* is also around.
1400- *IV*
1390

(Van de Mieroop, 2021)

Amarna - Overview

New Kingdom (1550-1069 BCE).

Amarna = new capital city during the reign
of Amenhotep IV (also known as
Akhetaten).

Residence of royal family, but site
abandoned shortly after construction.

Attempt to replace tradition with new
religion.

Range of social status within city.

(Scarre, 2018)

Amarna - the Workmen's Village

Square village.

Grid-like streets patrolled by police.

Houses identical in floorplan and size ->
lack of differential status? Two larger
houses on edge of village - overseers.

Pens for keeping animals.

Police outposts and repres- Oppres-
entations -> authority figures. sion?
Agency?

Amarna - Domestic Religion

Amarna = contemporary with religious
reforms by Akhenaten.

Amarna - Domestic Religion (cont)

Altars W/in houses, sometimes in
form of mini chapels. Examples
decorated with scenes of
Akhenaten and Nefertiti worshi-
pping the Aten, but usually
simple platforms. Made of mud
brick.

Vertical niches Religious significance or archit-
ectural practicality?

Domestic reliefs and inscriptions Amuletic images, some relating
to the cult of the Aten.

Statues + figurines + ostraca Anthropomorphic figurines f
fertility deities and figurines of
animals.

(Stevens, 2003)

Amarna - Cemeteries

Non-elite cemeteries Rock-cut tombs, mixture of
adults and children. Grave
goods included pottery and
botanical remains. 2 small
pyramid structures found -
used as landscape modifiers?

Separate burial grounds in
north Amarna show variab-
ility, not turning up any
wooden coffins and less
artifacts.

At least 10,000-13,000 people buried on the
east bank cemeteries of Amarna.

Amarna - Cemeteries (cont)

Commitment to Akhenaten's vision?
Influence of death and burial practices on
urban development? Death as a driving
force for the formation of a city?

Domestic elements reflected in elite tombs,
considered as houses for the dead.

(Stevens, 2018)

Deir el-Medina - Context

New Kingdom, Ramesside worker village.

18th-20th Dynasties (Amenhotep I,
Ramesses XI)

West bank of Luxor.

Deir el-Medina = "Monastery of the Town".

Excellent preservation because of dry
desert context.

Large administrative record on papyri and
ostraca and ostraca, including

Two necropolises, one with many child
burials from the 20th Dynasty.

Notable deities worshipped: Amun-Re, Hathor, Thoth,
Ptah, Osiris, Horus...

(Souto Castro, 2018; Van de Mieroop,
2021)

Deir el-Medina - Religion

Good example of personal religion.

Similar in some ways to Tell el-Amarna. *e.g., chapels, altars, amulets...*

Role of theology in daily lives -> "Theology
of will".

"Private religion" refers to worship in
domestic contexts.

Distinction between everyday relevance
and interaction with a *private deity* as
common practice in ancient Egypt v.
popularised deities involved in official cults.

(Souto Castro, 2018)

Deir el-Medina - Domestic Religion

Houses structured as a front room and a sitting room.

Domestic platforms - *lit clos* Rectangular platform in the front room. Could have been surrounded by walls (elevated beds?), but more recent research has suggested that the front rooms may not have been roofed - platforms would have therefore been located in open court areas. Most likely used for ritual since in open front and public space.

Altars with ancestral busts in niches?

Other evidence (e.g. *false doors/vertical niches*) as evidence of ancestor worship.

Ancestor busts Small amulet size to 50 cm busts. Found as early the Old Kingdom. Depict loved ones in their lives.

Letters to the dead Found in association with ancestor busts. Communication between the living and dead, written on pottery and jar stands.

(Souto Castro, 2018)

References for your humble perusal

Cocchi, T. (2008) 'Uluburun shipwreck stowaway house mouse: molar shape analysis and indirect clues about the vessel's last journey', *Journal of Archaeological Science*, 35(11), pp. 2953–2959. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jas.2008.06.016>.

Scarre, C. (2018) 'The Human Past: World Prehistory and the Development of Human Societies', 4th edn. London: Thames and Hudson.

Souto Castro, I. (2018) 'The religious context at the village of Deir el-Medina'. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/36594107/4_The_religious_context_at_the_village_of_Deir_el_Medina_Iria_SOUTO_CASTRO.

Stevens, A. (2003) 'The Material Evidence for Domestic Religion at Amarna and Preliminary Remarks on Its Interpretation', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 89, pp. 143–168.

Stevens, A. (2018) 'Death and the City: The Cemeteries of Amarna in Their Urban Context', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 28(1), pp. 103–126. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0959774317000592>.

Pulak, C. (2012) 'Uluburun Shipwreck', in E.M. Cline (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean*. Oxford University Press, p. 862–876. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199873609.0-13.0064>.

Van de Mieroop, M. (2021) *A History of Ancient Egypt*. 2nd edn. Hoboken and West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.