On the Origins of the Cartouche and Encircling Symbolism in Old Kingdom Pyramids

DAVID IAN LIGHTBODY (AUTHOR)

This study suggests the development of the cartouche was closely related to the monumental encircling symbolism incorporated into the architectural designs of the Old Kingdom pyramids. By employing a new architectural style and a new iconographic symbol, the pharaoh sought to elevate his status above that of the members of his powerful court.

On the Origins of the Cartouche and Encircling Symbolism in Old Kingdom Pyramids is a treatise on the subject of encircling symbolism in pharaonic monumental tomb architecture. The study focuses on the Early Dynastic Period and the Old Kingdom of ancient Egypt from the first dynasty through the sixth. During that time, encircling symbolism was developed most significantly and became most influential. The cartouche also became the principal symbol of the pharaoh for the first time. This work demonstrates how the development of the cartouche was closely related to the monumental encircling symbolism incorporated into the architectural designs of the Old Kingdom pyramids. By employing a new architectural style, the pyramid, and a new iconographic symbol, the cartouche, the pharaoh sought to elevate his status above that of the members of his powerful court. These iconic new emblems emphasized and protected the pharaoh in life, and were retained in the afterlife. By studying the available evidence, the new and meaningful link between the two artistic media; iconographic and architectural, is catalogued, understood, and traced out through time.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS VOLUME

David Ian Lightbody, PhD., BEng (Hons), is an archaeologist with a special interest in the origins of architectural and scientific principles, most notably in the ancient Egyptian and Greek cultures. In 2016 he founded the Journal of Ancient Egyptian Architecture (JAEA) with co-editor Franck Monnier. He has published several journal articles, a monograph, and most recently, the Great Pyramid Haynes Operations Manual (2,590 B.C. onwards).

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