

# Perspectives on materiality in ancient Egypt – agency, cultural reproduction and change

edited by

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and Rennan Lemos

**Access Archaeology**





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## Foreword

It is a great honour for me as president of the Association for Students of Egyptology to write the foreword to the volume *Perspectives on materiality in ancient Egypt – agency, cultural reproduction and change*. I cannot express how proud I am of the team who organised such a wonderful publication. The initial idea to discuss the subject took place in the form of a colloquium organised at the University of São Paulo in 2016—the very first event of the Association for Students of Egyptology. Unfortunately, time and money do not always allow everyone to be present at every event they would like, but thankfully the Internet serves as a bridge between different students all over the world. However, it is the combined time and effort of several students that make sure this bridge is used and maintained as well as possible, by publishing the results of their academic endeavours, which ASE is proud to support. This publication in particular has benefited from the network provided by ASE. The publication congregates students who firstly attempted to discuss ‘materiality’ in São Paulo, as well as other people engaged in the same discussions, who contributed with their ideas and papers to the present volume. Together with such a wonderful group of students and early career scholars, the ASE has the possibility to bridge the gap even further, so that time and travel play no more role in the communication, interaction, sharing of information and collaboration with each other. No matter how far you live, and whether your university has played a traditional role in Egyptology or not, everyone at the ASE is welcome to join and to collaborate; it is our passion for Egyptology and our academic mind-set that brings us all together.

Once more, I would like to congratulate Rennan, Érika and Carolina for organising such a successful publication. Mabrouk!

Lonneke Delpeut, president of the Association for Students of Egyptology

## Editors' Foreword

Oswald de Andrade's 1925 poem ("Erro de Português", or Portuguese Mistake) depicts the first encounter between the Portuguese and Native Brazilians in the New World. The poet ironically narrates an encounter rich in nuances. He regrets that the Portuguese colonisers reached the land on a rainy day, which made them assume it was appropriate if they dressed the Natives. "What a pity!"—Andrade regrets. Had the Portuguese arrived on a sunny morning, the Natives would have undressed them!

Andrade's poem served as a source of inspiration for us when we organised the colloquium Perspectives on materiality in ancient Egypt – agency, cultural reproduction and change in 2016 in São Paulo—the first step towards the publication of these papers. This is a book conceived and mainly composed by Brazilian young scholars. It reflects the interests of people involved in research projects in departments of archaeology and history, but with a wider anthropological and theoretical interest within the humanities. We have explored our not-so-traditional place when it comes to Egyptological studies to propose discussions that—we hope—will be of interest to a broader audience among social scientists. Here we explore the metaphor of the Natives' potential of showing other perspectives to those who come from a different place, rich in longstanding traditions.

The papers presented here reflect the topics the editors considered fruitful to be discussed in the São Paulo colloquium. Nevertheless, we were fortunate enough to have the collaboration of colleagues from the 'Old World' who sent their contributions to our local discussions, mainly exploring topics we failed to develop further. The contact between us in a not-so-traditional residence and colleagues from well-established institutions proved to be extremely valuable in terms of exploring new directions from where knowledge is built and transferred across the world. New publications are increasingly showing that Egyptological knowledge can be produced from alternative, local—but interconnected—epistemological frameworks. Such frameworks may produce innovative perspectives that hold the potential of contributing to overcoming disciplinary challenges, already addressed in the literature. At the same time the present publication benefits from the traditional course of knowledge production from Europe towards the rest of the world, it also aims to progressively place the knowledge produced in the global south in the Egyptological mainstream. It requires from us the effort of continuously building bridges that carry the potential of assisting people from all around the world and producing other ways of looking at ancient Egyptian data in a way that may contribute to broader discussions.

The articles presented here may be understood as the result of our effort to build Egyptological bridges worldwide in order to create networks of collaboration from which new, interesting perspectives may come out. We have profited enormously from the network provided by the Association for Students of Egyptology, and we hope this publication boosts other efforts that bring together young scholars from different places to create original collaborations that can contribute to the renovation of theory and practice in Egyptology—a movement from which all will benefit, independently of their background.