

Introduction

For all who knew him, Bill Murnane's unexpected death in 2000 came as both a great shock and a double tragedy. Not only had we suddenly lost one of the foremost Egyptological scholars of his generation, but a dear friend well known to colleagues around the world for his kindness and generosity. Bill was unfailingly a gentleman who freely gave of his time and expertise to all who asked it, be they scholars, students, tourists or members of the general public.

Even when engrossed in his fieldwork for the Epigraphic Survey and later for his own Karnak Hypostyle Hall Project, Bill was never too busy to answer questions posed by tourists, responding in Arabic, English, French, German or Spanish depending on the questioner's native tongue. Having grown up in Venezuela, he spoke Spanish fluently, and happily lent his expertise to Spanish speakers, whether to give the wife of a high-ranking Spanish dignitary a private tour of the Tomb of Queen Nefertari or to advise a new Argentinean expedition on their epigraphic work in the tomb of Neferhotep in Gurnah in his final years.

Bill's knowledge of Egyptology was encyclopedic. Simply put, he was a walking reference work who could cite on demand relevant bibliography, ancient textual references and monumental art and inscriptions from his prodigious memory. He loved to "talk shop" about all aspects of Ancient Egyptian history, especially the Amarna Period. Leisurely discussions over lunch and dinner, during breaks in fieldwork or in his office after class soon brought out his extensive lore on Egyptology, always illustrated with funny anecdotes about his own experiences and the many colorful personalities he encountered throughout his career. One of his favorite stories was a hysterical account of how he once climbed the *gebel* in Gurnah to sing the great love aria of Radames from the opera *Aida* at sunset, only to incite every dog on the west bank to barking. He was then pinned down by gunfire from locals, who presumed him to be a jackal, and he remained stranded on the mountain overnight! Another of his favorite "war stories" was how he and Charles C. Van Siclen perfected the culinary art of "one pot spaghetti," by boiling the noodles in the tomato sauce, during their expedition to record the boundary stela of Akhenaten at Amarna. All who met him soon learned, too, of Bill's great passion for Grand Opera. He once proudly confessed: "I own fifteen complete recordings of Wagner's entire *Ring* cycle on vinyl records and CDs, not including separate recordings of the individual operas and discs with arias by various divas!"

Among Bill Murnane's most appealing scholarly qualities were his rigorous approach to the evidence and his open mindedness. These twin virtues were especially important in his favorite subject, the Amarna period. He would tell his students: "remember, we're having an ongoing conversation about these issues; we're not in the business of revealing truth." He was always willing to reconsider the evidence and even change his mind about cherished, long-held views. Bill was a consummate field epigraphist who delighted in such conundrums as usurped cartouches and palimpsest inscriptions. He was also one of the deans of history and historiography in Egyptology, both as a thoughtful and meticulous scholar and a passionate and devoted mentor to students at the University of Memphis.¹ Bill was a master of applying epigraphic data and analysis to the interpretation of Egyptian history. He could also make the most arcane subjects accessible to wider audiences of students, tourists and the public. In explaining the complex succession of usurpations and recut inscriptions at Karnak during the Ramesside Period, for example, he would often quip: "the history of Egypt is the story of who did what to whose monuments!"

¹ One of his final contributions to scholarship was as a panellist for the millenium debate on history writing in Egyptology at the Eighth International Congress of Egyptology held in Cairo in the spring of 2000. W. J. Murnane, "Millennium Debate: Response to D. B. Redford," in *Egyptology at the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists Cairo 2000*, Vol. 2, *History and Religion*, eds. Z. Hawass and L. P. Brock (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2003), pp. 15-19.

Bill Murnane made huge contributions to the recording and analysis of Egyptian monumental inscriptions through his tenure with the Epigraphic Survey of the University of Chicago² and through the Karnak Great Hypostyle Hall Project which he founded at the University of Memphis.³ Bill also took the initiative to edit, correct and publish the complete set of Harold H. Nelson's drawings of the reliefs and hieroglyphic texts from the interior wall scenes in the Karnak Hypostyle Hall which had sat largely forgotten in the archives of Chicago House after Nelson's death.⁴

The bibliography of Bill's works highlights other contributions he made to the publication and interpretation of ancient sources, especially epigraphic data. These include publication of fragments of an important inscription of Hatshepsut from her famous *Chapelle Rouge* at Karnak and a funerary cone from a New Kingdom private tombs at Thebes.⁵ Most important is the volume he co-authored with Charles C. Van Siclen containing the definitive documentation, translation and analysis of the texts of the several boundary stelae of Akhenaten at Amarna with all their editions and colophons.⁶ His work also called attention to historically interesting temple reliefs which often seem to hide in plain sight on the walls of as yet unpublished Theban monuments, such as reliefs from the Triple Shrine at Luxor and the Eighth Pylon at Karnak. His meticulous and exacting approach to the documentation and analysis of such inscriptions is reflected in his study of erased figures of Tutankhamun on the Third Pylon at Karnak.⁷

Bill Murnane made invaluable advances to our understanding of the history and chronology of pharaonic Egypt. Most fundamental was *Ancient Egyptian Coregencies* (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1977), his wide ranging study of this important and controversial historical phenomenon from the Old Kingdom down to the Roman emperors who ruled Egypt in the guise of pharaohs. He revisited the

² Among the Epigraphic Survey's volumes to which he contributed through fieldwork and editorially are: Epigraphic Survey, *The Temple of Khonsu I, Scenes of King Herihor in the Court*, OIP 100 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979); idem, *The Temple of Khonsu II, Scenes and Inscriptions in the Court and the First Hypostyle Hall*, OIP 103 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); idem, *The Tomb of Kheruef: Theban Tomb 192*, OIP 102 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); idem, *The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I, RIK 4* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); idem, *The Festival Procession of Opet in the Colonnade Hall, RILT 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); idem, *The Facade, Portals, Upper Register Scenes, Columns, Marginalia, and Statuary in the Colonnade Hall, RILT 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). He is also listed as a participant in the preparation of the Epigraphic Survey's latest volume: *Medinet Habu IX, The Eighteenth Dynasty Temple, Part I: The Inner Sanctuaries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, forthcoming).

³ In addition to articles published during his lifetime and after his death, some forthcoming volumes of the Karnak Hypostyle Hall Project will be published in his name: W. J. Murnane, "Egyptian Monuments and Historical Memory," *KMT* 5.3 (Summer 1994), pp. 15-24, 88; idem, "Ramesses I and The Building of the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak Revisited," *Iubilate Conlegae: Egyptological Studies in Memory of A. A. Sadek, VA* 10 (1995), pp. 163-168; idem, "Reconstructing Scenes from the Great Hypostyle Hall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak," in *Essays in Honour of Prof. Dr. Jadwiga Lipińska*, ed. A. Niwinsky and A. Majewska, Warsaw Egyptological Studies vol. 1 (Warsaw: Polish Academy of Sciences, 1997), pp. 107-117; idem[†], "A Forest of Columns: The Karnak Great Hypostyle Hall Project," *KMT* 12.3 (Fall 2001), pp. 50-59; idem[†], P. J. Brand, J. Karkowski, and R. Jaeschke, "The Karnak Hypostyle Hall Project (1992-2002)," *ASAE* 78 (2004), pp. 79-127.

Currently in preparation are two further volumes: W. J. Murnane[†], P. J. Brand, *The Great Hypostyle Hall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak*, Vol. 1, Part 2. *The Wall Reliefs: Translations and Commentary*; and idem, Murnane[†] and Brand, *The Great Hypostyle Hall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak*, Vol. 2. *The Gateways*. Finally, his contribution to an eventual publication of the war scenes of Ramesses II on the south exterior wall of the Karnak Hypostyle Hall will also be honored.

⁴ H. H. Nelson, *The Great Hypostyle Hall in the Temple of Amun at Karnak*, Volume I, Part 1. *The Wall Reliefs*, ed. W. J. Murnane, OIP 106 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

⁵ W. J. Murnane, "Unpublished Fragments of Hatshepsut's Historical Inscription from Her Sanctuary at Karnak," *Serapis* 6 (1980), pp. 91-102; idem, "A Hitherto Unpublished Funerary Cone," *GM* 19 (1976), pp. 39-40.

⁶ W. J. Murnane and C. C. Van Siclen, *The Boundary Stelae of Akhenaten* (London: Kegan Paul International, 1993).

⁷ W. J. Murnane, "The Bark of Amun on the Third Pylon at Karnak," *JARCE* 16 (1979), pp. 11-27; idem, "False Doors and Cult Practices Inside Luxor Temple," in *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar* Vol. II, ed. P. Posener-Kriéger (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, 1985), pp. 135-148; idem, "Tutankhamun on the Eighth Pylon at Karnak," *VA* 1 (1985), pp. 59-68.

coregency debates concerning the Middle and New Kingdom in several articles, always keeping an open mind for new data and interpretations and modifying some of his own earlier conclusions.⁸ Sadly, a thoroughly revised and updated edition of his first book was only in the planning stages when he died.

Another important contribution was *The Road to Kadesh*, SAOC 42 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), Bill Murnane's study of Egypt's relations with Western Asia from the Amarna Period down to the early Nineteenth Dynasty written to accompany the Epigraphic Survey's definitive edition of the Seti I battle reliefs at Karnak. His masterful elucidation and analysis of the complex range of evidence for the origins of the Egyptian-Hittite conflict found in the Amarna letters and in numerous other Egyptian and Akkadian sources had, in Donald Redford's words, left us all in Bill's debt. The book was so successful that it quickly sold out and a second revised edition was published in 1990.

Bill Murnane was one of the foremost experts on the Amarna Period, as reflected in books and articles published throughout his career. In addition to his studies on the hotly debated coregency of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten and his monograph on the Amarna Boundary Stelae, his *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt* (Atlanta: Scholars' Press, 1995), provides a comprehensive set of excellent translations of important texts from the reign of Amenhotep III down to that of Horemheb together with a survey of the historical problems of the Amarna age. A large corpus of his articles and book reviews considered various aspects of the age ranging from the accession date of Akhenaten to the epigraphic complexities of Soleb Temple and the enigmatic events at the end of the Amarna Period.⁹

Among Bill's other important contributions to scholarship and the public's knowledge of Ancient Egypt are his excellent gazetteer *The Penguin Guide to Ancient Egypt* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983, revised 1996) which still enjoys a wide following. Another is *United With Eternity: A Concise Guide to the Monuments of Medinet Habu* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1980). The wealth of other scholarly articles and book reviews is too numerous to survey here. A final representative example of his meticulous analysis and thought-provoking interpretations of Egyptian history is his study of the introduction to Thutmose III's *Annals* from Karnak. The title of this gem also betrays a playful sense of humor that could appear in even his most erudite work.¹⁰ A hallmark of all his writings was lucid and elegant prose married to incisive, prescient analysis of the evidence.

The essays in this volume reflect Bill Murnane's wide variety of interests, especially historical and epigraphic issues. Lorelei H. Corcoran offers a fond remembrance of Bill and his legacy as a scholar and teacher based on the eulogy she gave at his funeral in November 2000.

Subjects from the Amarna period loom large, as they did in Bill's own research and thinking, especially the events at the close of Akhenaten's reign and its aftermath. He would be delighted by the studies devoted to his favorite period of Egyptian history. James P. Allen investigates the complex problem of the royal succession in a study Akhenaten's three immediate successors, Smenkhkare, the female pharaoh Neferneferuaten, and Tutankhamun, as he reaches new conclusions about the

⁸ E.g., W. J. Murnane, "The Hypothetical Coregency Between Amenhotep III and Akhenaten: Two Observations," *Serapis* 2 (1970), pp. 17-21; idem, "The Earlier Reign of Ramesses II and His Coregency with Sety I," *JNES* 34 (1975), pp. 153-190; idem, "The Earlier Reign of Ramesses II: Two Addenda," *GM* 19 (1976), pp. 41-43; idem, "In Defense of Middle Kingdom Double Dates," *BES* 3 (1981), pp. 73-82; idem, J. P. Allen, J. van Dijk, "Further Evidence for the Coregency of Amenhotep III and IV: Three Views on a Graffito Found at Dahshur," *Amarna Letters* 3 (1994), pp. 26-31, 152; idem[†], "Coregency," *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1, ed. Donald B. Redford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 307-311.

⁹ E.g., W. J. Murnane, "On the Accession Date of Akhenaten," in *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes, January 12, 1977*, eds. J. H. Johnson and E. F. Wente, SAOC 39 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 163-167; idem, "The Return to Orthodoxy," in *Pharaohs of the Sun*, eds. R. Freed, Y. Markowitz, and S. D'Auria (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1999), pp. 177-185; idem, "Soleb Renaissance: Reconsidering the Nebmaatre Temple in Nubia," *Amarna Letters* 4 (Fall, 2000), pp. 6-19, 160; idem[†], "The End of the Amarna Period Once Again," *OLZ* 96 (2001), pp. 9-22.

¹⁰ W. J. Murnane, "Rhetorical History? The Beginning of Thutmose III's First Campaign in Western Asia," *JARCE* 26 (1989), pp. 183-189.

parentage of the latter. Peter Dorman revisits the hotly debated coregency between Amenhotep III and Akhenaten. Dorman uses the Theban tomb of Kheruef as a lens through which he establishes a chronological structure for Akhenaten's reign and tests the coregency against it. In an addendum, he integrates the evidence from Soleb Temple into this picture.

Jacobus van Dijk's study on the death of Princess Meketaten reconsiders the funerary scenes in room γ of the royal tomb at Amarna and gives a new reconstruction of the broken text glossing the figure of a nurse who carries an infant from the death chamber. He concludes with a new interpretation of who this infant represents. Earl Eartman offers an art historical and iconographic study on a representation of Nefertiti on a talatat block from one of Akhenaten's early temples at Karnak which shows a continuity of artistic style with the reliefs of Amenhotep III.

Marc Gabolde's offering combines Bill Murnane's interests in the Amarna Period and monumental epigraphy through a careful analysis of erasures, alterations and usurpations of inscriptions on three objects: a canopic jar and the golden coffin from KV 55 and one of the gold coffinettes from Tutankhamun's burial. He identifies the original owners of all three objects and names the individual buried in KV 55. W. Raymond Johnson traces the history and original location of a fragment of relief decoration of Tutankhamun now in the collections of the Liverpool Museum.

Bill dedicated most of his professional life to the scientific recording and interpretation of the standing monuments of Thebes, especially the temples of Karnak and Luxor, during his tenure with the Epigraphic Survey and later with his own Karnak Hypostyle Hall Project at the University of Memphis. It is appropriate, then, that several of the articles dedicated to his memory deal with these same monuments to which he devoted so many of his own energies.

Michel Azim and Vincent Rondot present archaeological and epigraphic notes on a "lost" architrave of the Karnak Great Hypostyle Hall. Peter J. Brand examines cartouches of Merenptah erased by Amenmesse and usurped by Seti II at Karnak and Luxor.

Bill's former graduate student Amy Calvert gives a précis of her doctoral study on the use of a computer database for analyzing the complex iconography of royal costume in New Kingdom temple reliefs from Medinet Habu and elsewhere. Richard Fazzini considers two semi-erased cartouches from Kushite monuments from the precinct of Mut at Karnak Temple.

Luc Gabolde investigates a group of blocks from the storage magazines of Luxor Temple inscribed for Amenemhet I and their relevance to the early history of Karnak temple. Helen Jacquet-Gordon reconstructs the origins and history of the "Festival on which Amun went out to the Treasury" which centered around the Treasury of Thutmose I in North Karnak. François Larché presents a major synthesis of a large corpus of archaeological and epigraphic data to reconstruct the monuments of Senwosret I and Amenhotep I at Karnak, including their eventual dismantling and reuse by various Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs.

Bill Murnane also excelled in the realm of historical and textual studies. In honor of his important contributions to these disciplines, Kenneth A. Kitchen offers methodological analysis on the historical and literary aspects of New Kingdom topographical lists. Finally, Donald B. Redford examines the literary and lexicographic background in Egyptian texts to the "Land of Ramesses" of the Hebrew Bible. The book closes with a compilation of Bill Murnane's own publications.