

Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian Collection in the Ashmolean Museum

The collection of objects from Predynastic Egypt in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is widely regarded as the most representative of its kind anywhere in the world. This is the first catalogue of the collection, the fruit of Joan Crowfoot Payne's unique knowledge gained from over thirty years' work with this material. In addition to the basic documentation and illustration of over two thousand objects, she has provided a commentary and up-to-date review of their chronological and cultural importance. The book thus offers both a major study, and an invaluable reference work for anyone interested in the development of civilization in ancient Egypt.

The Ashmolean collection is distinguished by the large amount of material from controlled excavations directed by Flinders Petrie and his associates - notably from the great cemetery site of Naqada, which has given its name to the cultural phase which initiates the Predynastic period as defined in this catalogue. It was from the evidence provided by these objects that Petrie was able to begin tracing the evolution of Egyptian society and the emergence of the Pharaonic state. As his primary conclusions have stood the test of time, the collection remains central to any study of prehistoric Egypt, so this catalogue will be an indispensable aid to current research.

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64,00 €

59,81 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Nicht mehr lieferbar

Artikelnummer: 9780900416736

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-900416-73-6

Verlag: GRIFFITH INST

Erscheinungstermin: 31.12.2000

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2000

Serie: Griffith Institute Publication

Produktform: Gebunden

Gewicht: 1746 g

Seiten: 410

Format (B x H): 218 x 279 mm

