

Still image deconstruction: 'the mummy'

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



The text is a graphic advertisement for the film *The Mummy*, probably found on billboards and in magazines of different genres. The image denotes possibly the characters in the film. We see a variety of positions and postures, and the colour gold is vast. There is no age certificate in the text, and it is a narrative-based production.

The setting of the scene in the text can be intertextualised to that of an ancient Egyptian genre film, showing the pyramids and 'ancient' hieroglyphics.

At the top of the poster, the strap-line for the film is shown: "The sands will rise. The Heavens will part. The power will be unleashed"- Three simple sentences, possibly telling us what is going to happen in the film, or is it some kind of code?

There is a man in the foreground holding a gun. This connotes that he is perhaps the main character in the film, and represents bravery, courage and leadership. He is the only person in the text that is holding a weapon, connoting that he is perhaps the hero in the film. His shirt is dirty, and he has the typical 'heroic' look about him - messy hair, dark eyes, shirt open.

A woman in formal dress is standing behind the man, but we can see the front of her body and her facial expression. She is the only female in the whole image, and so attention is brought to her. She doesn't fit in with the other characters in the image; she looks out of place, like a 'fair maiden'. The woman looks well-dressed and is wearing jewellery, connoting that she is perhaps of a higher class, and the expression on her fair face makes her look innocent and meek. Although she looks very different to the man in the

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foreground, there is still a noticeable link between the two characters because they are 'overlapping' - the woman is slightly blocked by the man's torso.

Another link to the woman is the man standing behind her, who is also blocked by her body slightly. His clothes denote that he is probably not prepared for what is going to happen in the film - he is wearing a jacket, shirt and tie. The man is thin, and looks weak compared to the man in the foreground, who he is standing behind also. He isn't holding a gun, and has a distinct fearful look on his face, connoting cowardess. Typically, we assume that this man has come from an academic background.

Behind these three front characters there is a back wall. It is decorated with Egyptian hieroglyphics - possible connoting a code. This enhances mystery in the text, and interests the audience. It is also linked to the Egyptian theme of the whole text. The treatment and usage of brown and gold colours encourages warmth, and again, fits in with the Egyptian theme. However, these particular colours mean different things. Gold, for instance, represents wealth and abundance and brown (the colour of the clothing and technology used in the text) depicts a sign of maturity and ageing.

Moving away from the three characters on the left side of the image, there is a man in the background who appears to be framed by the sunrise. He is a large figure and is shadowed, connoting that he is perhaps the villain in the film. The fact that he is blocking the sun shows that he has some kind of power. He is standing with his arms spread out, noticeably a crucifix-like

position, relating to Jesus. This shows this character to be God-like and perhaps unbeatable.

Set back from the focus point in the text, there is an aeroplane in the sky and several men on horseback - they appear to be travelling towards us. They look threatening because there are many of them, and they are positioned in an army-like fashion. This group of characters also look like bad guys, and visually, they are linked to the large man who is framed by the sun because they appear to be travelling 'from' him. There is a mix between technology and non-technology in this group of characters.

Altogether, I think that the pack-shot is very effective. We see several different types of characters and a diverse amount of technology (Gun, horses, aeroplane). There appears to be a light coming from towards the three characters at the front, and the characters are looking towards it. The expressions on their faces show fear, leaving the audience to wonder what they are fearful of. The text appears to be split too - good guys are separated from bad guys and there is a typical montage effect where western and non-western methods are juxtaposed. The main character is white, possibly American, so we follow the assumption that he is the hero, because he is of higher intelligence when it comes to technology. This is aided by the fact that he is the only character in the text that is holding a gun.

The name of the film is in the foreground and is of a unique typeface. The word 'The' signifies a definite object - we know that 'a' Mummy is important in the film (obviously). The strap-line mentioned earlier (The sands will rise...) is also very important. It grips the audience's attention in three short, sharp

sentences, emphasising importance. It reads like a prophecy - a positive statement.

At the bottom of the text, we see the company production logos - Universal, United pictures, Alphaville, and production information such as the director's name and the starring roles - Brendan Fraser, Rachel Weisz. The main characters are usually the only names shown on film advertisements. They are more likely to attract the viewer's attention, and a person is more likely to go and see the film if they recognise who is in it.

The advert works through the audience's awareness of typical Egyptian culture and through its use of stereotypical images such as pyramids and desert scenery. It shows exactly what the film is about, and before we even see the film itself, we are familiar with the different characters that will be in it.