

# [-roman i received from timothy stoker also](https://assignbuster.com/roman-i-received-from-timothy-stoker-also/)

-Roman CulturesMythologyBurial Practices of the Ancient Egyptian and Greco-Roman CulturesAncient Egyptian and Greco-Roman practices of preparing the dead for thenext cradle of humanity are very intriguing.

These two cultures differ in amultitude of ways yet similarities can be noted in the domain of funeraryservices. In the realm of Egyptian afterlife, The Book of the Dead canprovide one with vital information concerning ritual entombment practicesand myths of the afterlife. The additional handouts I received fromTimothy Stoker also proved to be useful in trying uncover vital informationregarding the transition into another life. Regarding the burial practicesof Greece and Rome, parts of Homer’s Odyssey are useful in the analysis ofproper interment methods. One particular method used by the Egyptians was an intricateprocess known as mummification. It was undoubtedly a very involved processspanning seventy days in some cases. First, all the internal organs wereremoved with one exception, the heart.

If the body was not already West ofthe Nile it was transported across it, but not before the drying processwas initiated. Natron (a special salt) was extracted from the banks of theNile and was placed under the corpse, on the sides, on top, and bags of thesubstance were placed inside the body cavity to facilitate the process ofdehydration. After thirty-five days the ancient embalmers would anoint thebody with oil and wrap it in fine linen.

If the deceased was wealthyenough a priest donning a mask of Anubis would preside over the ceremoniesto ensure proper passage into the next realm. One of the practices overseen by the priest was the placing of aspecial funerary amulet over the heart. This was done in behest to secure asuccessful union with Osiris and their kas.

The amulet made sure the heartdid not speak out against the individual at the scale of the goddess ofjustice and divine order, Maat. The priest also made use of a “ peculiarritual instrument, a sort of chisel, with which he literally opened themouth of the deceased.” This was done to ensure that the deceased was ableto speak during their journeys in Duat. Another practice used by the Egyptians to aid the departed soulinvolved mass human sacrifice.

Many times if a prominent person passedaway the family and servants would willfully ingest poison to continuetheir servitude in the next world. The family members and religiousfigureheads of the community did just about everything in their power toaid the deceased in the transition to a new life. The community made sure the chamber was furnished with “ everythingnecessary for the comfort and well-being of the occupants.” It wasbelieved that the individual would be able of accessing these items in thenext world. Some of the most important things that the deceased would needto have at his side were certain spells and incantations. A conglomerationof reading material ensured a successful passage; The Pyramid Texts, TheBook of the Dead, and the Coffin Texts all aided the lost soul in theirjourney through Duat into the Fields of the Blessed.

“ Besides all thesespells, charms, and magical tomb texts, the ancient practice of depositingin the tomb small wooden figures of servants was employed.” These “ Ushabistatuettes” as they are called, were essentially slaves of the deceased. If the deceased was called to work in the Elysian fields he would call uponone of the statues to take his place and perform the task for him. It wasnot unheard of for an individual to have a figure for every day of the yearto ensure an afterlife devoid of physical exertion.

Just about every thingthe embalmers and burial practitioners did during the process was done forparticular reasons. Many of the funerary practices of the ancient Greco-Romans werealso done with a specific purpose in mind. Unlike the Egyptian’s theGreco-Roman cultures did not employ elaborate tombs but focused on the useof a simple pit in the ground. Right after death, not too dissimilar fromthe practices of the Egyptians, it was necessary for the persons tocarefully wash and prepare the corpse for his journey. It was vital forall persons to receive a proper burial and if they did not they were dammedto hover in a quasi-world, somewhat of a “ limbo” between life and death. One Greco-Roman myth that illustrates this point is The Odyssey byHomer.

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