

The Ancient Egyptian Cartouche, Ba, and Ka

by Mr. Zindman

Cartouche- In ancient Egypt, kings, and sometimes others, encircled their name hieroglyphs with a design that we now call a cartouche. the cartouche's presence identifies the name the king of Egypt. A cartouche is a name plate. It is oval an oval with your name written on it in hieroglyphs. A cartouche is attached to a king's coffin when he dies.



The ancient Egyptians wanted to make sure that their two souls - the **Ba** and the **Ka** could find their way back to their tomb at night, after they died. No one wanted their Ba or Ka to get lost.

A cartouche made it very easy for a Ba and Ka to find their way home.

Ba- The Ba was your personality, whatever made each person unique that was not physical - your humor, your warmth, your charm, yourself. The Ba is pictured in hieroglyphics as a bird with a human head. The Egyptians thought birds were able to fly between worlds, that of the living and the afterlife.



Ba

Ka: They believed every ancient Egyptians was born with a Ka that was uniquely theirs. Each Ka was a **life force**. The Ka is sometimes

represented in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics by a drawing of a very little person standing next to a picture of the same person drawn much larger. Sometimes the Ka was represented by two arms, outstretched. This was to ward off evil. When a person died, their Ka continued to live. The ancient Egyptians believed that your soul split into two parts after you died. One part, the **Ba**, flew off every morning to keep watch over your living family. The other part, the **Ka**, flew happily off to enjoy life in the Land of Two Fields. At night, both the Ba and the Ka returned home to your tomb to rest up for the next heavenly day.



Ka

Ask the author a question
