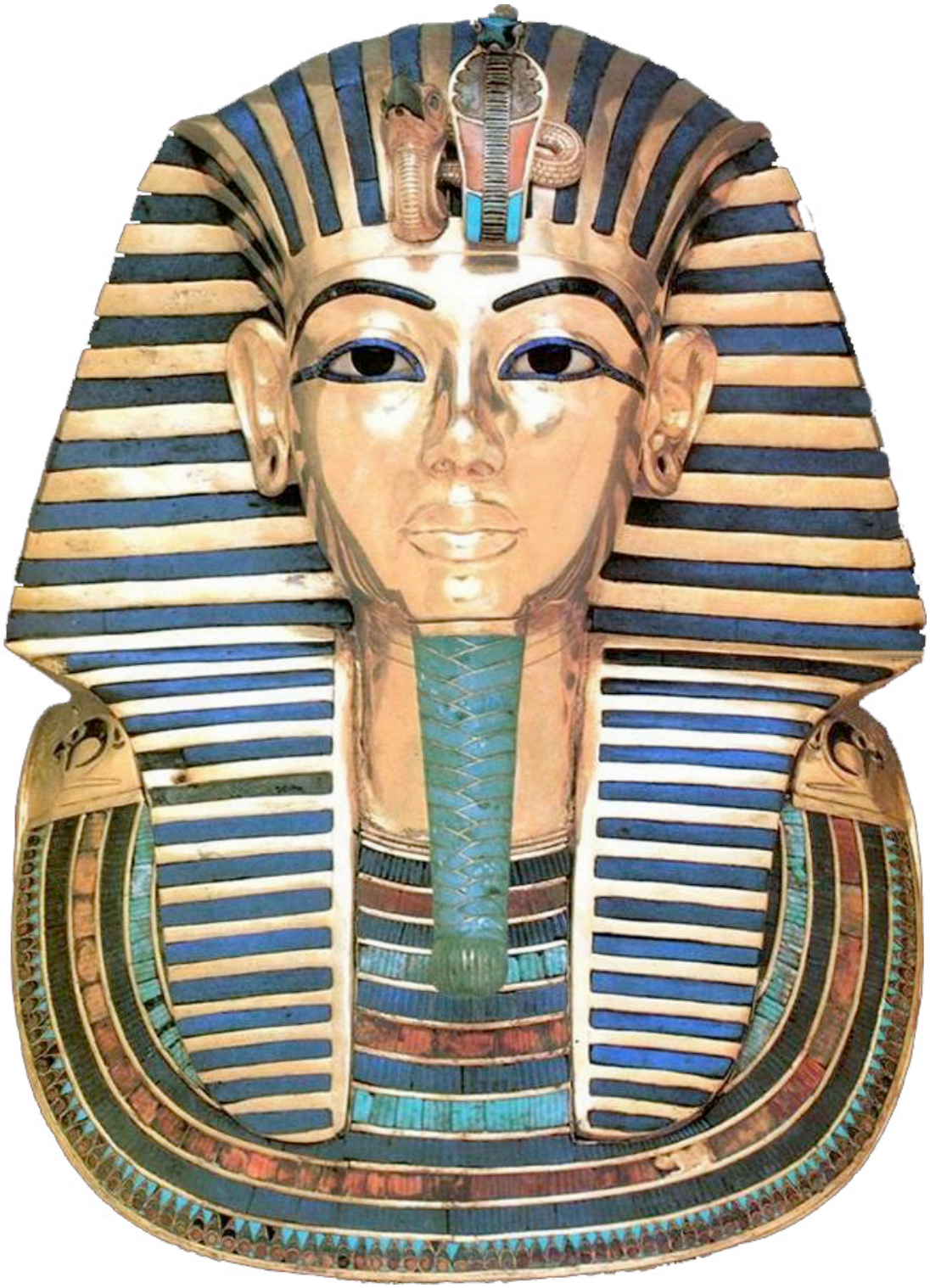


Encore Learning – Egypt: The First 5000 Years

Fall 2021

Tom Wukitsch, Instructor

Table of contents

See also
http://www.mmdtkw.org/EGtkw0900AlexandrinesPtolemiesRomans.html
(more links can be found in this page)

Direct links to the unit outlines are on the Internet at
http://www.mmdtkw.org/ALRItkwPages.html#Ancient_Egypt

Course Syllabus
Ancient Egypt, ALRI Fall 2011

The Funerary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut.

Unique in design and execution, Hatshepsut's temple stands in the curve of Dayr al-Bahri with its central axis aligned with the Karnak temple complex on the opposite side of the Nile at Luxor. While most of the other funerary temples of the Egyptian New Kingdom are built of sandstone, Hatshepsut's temple is built of limestone. Rising behind her temple is a huge cliff marking the beginnings of the Theban Hills where the New Kingdom buried its dead: directly behind the cliff is the Valley of the Kings where are the tombs of the New Kingdom pharaohs, including Hatshepsut.

It is thought that Senimut, the genius architect who built this Temple, was inspired in his design by the plan of the neighboring mortuary Temple of the 12th Dynasty King, Neb-Hept-Re. The Temple was built for the great Queen Hatshepsut (18th Dynasty), to commemorate her achievements and to serve as a funerary Temple for her, as well as a sanctuary of the God, Amon Ra.

The Temple was seriously damaged and defaced, after Queen Hatshepsut's mysterious death, by the followers of Thutmoses III, her successor. Reconstruction work by 20th / 21st century archeology teams continues.

Course information:

Ten two-hour sessions covering Egypt from prehistoric times through the Roman period.

- **Mondays, noon to 2 PM**
- **First class is October 4, 2021. Last class is December 6, 2011.**
- **It now appears that this will be another on-line ZOOM course. If that changes, information will appear here.**
- **The link and password for the proposed ZOOM course will be listed here when known.**

Course description: Historic Egypt is now in its seventh millennium, but we will only cover the first 5000 or so years (plus a few thousand more years of prehistory.)

We are all familiar with the pyramids, the great sphinx, King Tut, and a few other "pharaohs". If we watch television, we've seen films about ancient Egypt. This course will try to get a little deeper into the thicket of reeds along the Nile. For example, the reason the word "pharaohs" is in quotation marks in the previous sentence is that it started as a slang word in ancient Egypt. The hieroglyphic signs that represent the sounds of "p" and "r" really mean "house", and a determinative hieroglyph is added to indicate "big". The word pharaoh was used the way we use "the White House" to describe the center of the Executive Branch of the US Government. From the 14th Dynasty onward, the ruler might be referred to as "paraoh" -- the "ph" (= f sound) at the beginning was a Greek corruption. The 14th Dynasty ruled for about 100 years (ca. 1700 BC) during the dissolution of the Middle Kingdom. It apparently wasn't until the 19th Dynasty that someone had the nerve to send a letter to Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) using the word as a form of direct address. (More on the etymology of "pharaoh" is at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharaoh#Etymology)

We WILL NOT study all the Pharaohs (there are just too many -- see http://www.phouka.com/pharaoh/pharaoh/pharaohs.html), but we will look at the major periods, a few important dynasties, some notable kings and queens, some aspects of the art, architecture, history, and culture, and, yes, those pyramids, and the great sphinx, and King Tut.

No textbook is necessary: this handout and the Internet links provided below will more than suffice. If you really feel the need to hold physical books on Ancient Egypt, there are many available on the Internet and at bookstores. My own favorite is the Oxford History of Ancient Egypt by Ian Shaw, which is available on the Internet for as little as $12.

Keep up with developments in Egyptian Archeology at http://egyptology.blogspot.com/

A note on spelling of ancient Egyptian names and words:

All Egyptian names and words are transliterations from ancient Egyptian phonetic scripts. So modern spellings are dependent on how Egyptologists think the ancient words sounded. This can lead to different spellings. There is no correct way to spell any Egyptian word or name. One tries for consistency, but some variation is inevitable. Please patiently accept the sometimes variant spelling of Egyptian names and words you may see during this course.

Prominent Egyptologists

Listed below are just some of the earlier pioneers who made the study and discoveries of Ancient Egypt famous:

THOMAS YOUNG 1773-1829

Both a scientist and linguist, who by the age of 14 was already able to read twelve languages, including Hebrew, Latin, Greek, Arabic, Persian, French and Italian. He qualified as a physician, making importing discoveries in the field of physics, but began to take an interest in the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs, publishing a study of the Rosetta Stone in 1815. Although the actual deciphering of the stone was finally achieved by Jean François Champollion, Young was the first scholar to have translated the demotic script.

JEAN FRANÇOIS CHAMPOLLION 1790-1832

French Egyptologist who was responsible for the most important achievement in the history of the study of ancient Egypt - the decipherment of hieroglyphs. Equipped with an excellent knowledge of Hebrew, Coptic, Arabic, Syriac and Chaldaean, he embarked on the task of deciphering hieroglyphs using the Rosetta Stone as his principle guide. It was only at the time of the publication of his grammar and dictionary just before his premature death, that he finally achieved a satisfactory understanding of the language. He died of a stroke in 1832.

GIOVANNI BELZONI 1778-1823

Belzoni was an Italian adventurer who made numerous discoveries, many of which were procured for European collectors and museums. He went to Egypt in 1814, and started working for Henry Salt in 1816, the then British Consul-General in Egypt, transporting part of a colossal statue of Ramesses II. This was to become one of the first major Egyptian antiquities in the British Museum collection. Belzoni's discoveries included the tomb of Seti I at Thebes and although his methods were somewhat unorthodox judged by modern standards, he was nevertheless an important pioneer in Egyptology. He died of dysentery in December 1823, whilst on an expedition to discover the source of the Niger.

AUGUSTE MARIETTE 1821-1881

French Egyptologist who founded the Egyptian Antiquities Service and the world famous Egyptian Museum. Known for his four-year excavations of the Serapeum at Saqqara. In June 1958 he was appointed the first director of the newly created Egyptian Antiquities Service, which enabled him to gather together sufficient antiquities to establish a national museum at Bulaq, Cairo. He died at Bulaq in 1881 and was buried in a sarcophagus, which was later moved to the forecourt of the modern Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

GASTON MASPERO 1846-1916

French Egyptologist who succeeded Auguste Mariette as Director of the Egyptian Museum, and edited the first fifty volumes of the immense catalogue of the collection there. In 1880, he made his first trip to Egypt at the head of a French archaeological mission that was eventually to become the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale. His distinguished career included the first publication of the Pyramid Texts and the discovery of the cache of royal mummies at Deir el-Bahri.

WILLIAM MATTHEW FLINDERS PETRIE 1853-1942

Widely recognised as the first scientific excavator in the history of Egyptian archaeology. He developed the method of "sequence dating" where the predynastic period was divided into a series of cultural stages that are still broadly recognised by modern archaeologists. Petrie's techniques of excavation were vastly superior to that employed by most of his contemporaries. Above all, he was determined to preserve and record as much of the evidence as possible, rather than concentrating on objects that would command a good price on the art market.

HOWARD CARTER 1874-1939

Carter joined the Archaeological Survey of Egypt in 1891 when he was only seventeen, and worked with both Gaston Maspero and Flinders Petrie at El Amarna in 1892. He resigned from the Egyptian Antiquities Service in 1903 after a row with some French tourists. He then worked for four years as a painter and dealer in antiquities until the offer of finance from Lord Carnarvon enabled him to return to excavation in the Valley of the Kings. Although he discovered six royal tombs at Thebes, his most famous achievement was undoubtedly the discovery of the virtually untouched tomb of Tutankhamun in November 1922. He spent the remaining seventeen years of his life recording and analysing the funerary equipment from the tomb, a task which is still incomplete today.

PIERRE MONTET 1885-1966

French archaeologist Pierre Montet had previously been excavating sites at Byblos (on the coast of modern Lebanon) before he began work at Tanis in the Nile Delta in the winter of 1929. On the eve of the Second World War, Montet, and his team discovered six royal tombs - the occupants of two of the tombs are unknown, but the remaining four belonged to Psusennes I, Amenemope, Osorkon II and Sheshonq III. Two further royal burials had been placed in these tombs, Psusennes I also contained the hawk headed silver coffin of Sheshonq II as well as the coffin and sarcophagus of Amenemope, and the tomb of Osorkon II also held the sarcophagus of Takelot II. All the treasures were transported to the Cairo museum in May 1940, and have been on display ever since.

Zahi Hawass

Short Biography

World-renowned archaeologist, Zahi Hawass until recently was Minister of Antiquities, Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and Director of Excavations at Giza, Saqqara and the Bahariya Oasis.

He was responsible for many exciting recent discoveries, including the Tombs of the Pyramid Builders at Giza and many other discoveries concerning the construction of the pyramid. He discovered the satellite pyramid of Khufu and revealed the secrets behind the so-called doors found inside the pyramid. He also excavated at Bahariya Oasis where he discovered the Valley of the Golden Mummies. This find is considered to be the King Tut of the Graeco-Roman period. He also found the tombs of the governor of Bahariya and his family under the houses in the town of El-Bawiti. This discovery is regarded as one of the most amazing adventures in archaeology. His excavations at Saqqara revealed many important archaeological discoveries around the pyramid of Teti, such as the tomb of the physician Qar, and the rediscovery of the "headless pyramid." He led an Egyptian team in the examination of the mystery of King Tut's mummy through the use of a CT-scan. Dr. Hawass has lectured on these discoveries all over the world in front of large audiences, including kings, queens, the general public, and media.

Four books were published by Dr. Hawass in 2006, including: *Royal Tombs: of Ancient Egypt*; (DeAgostini) *The Great Book of Egypt: the Realm of the Pharaohs* (Whitestar); and *Mountains of the Pharaohs: History of the Pyramid Builders* (Doubleday); and *The Golden Boy: The World of King Tutankhamun* (National Geographic paperback). Dr. Hawass has written many books for general audiences about ancient Egypt, including *Silent Images: Women in Pharaonic Egypt; Hidden Treasures of Ancient Egypt; Secrets from the Sand;* and *The Golden Age of Tutankhamun*. His book about his excavations at Bahariya, *The Valley of the Golden*

***Mummies,* became a bestseller and now has been published in five languages. He has also authored several books for children.**

Most recently, Dr. Hawass was instrumental in sending King Tutankhamun back to the United States. During the exhibit's openings in Los Angeles, Fort Lauderdale, and Chicago, Dr. Hawass again entered the homes of thousands of people, making a number of television appearances to promote the return of the golden king to America.

Dr. Hawass received a Fulbright Fellowship and studied in the United States. He received his Ph.D. in Egyptology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1987. He has written numerous scholarly articles, and is highly respected as an Egyptologist.

Over the course of his long career, Dr. Hawass received numerous awards and honors. In 2006, Time Magazine chose Dr. Hawass one of the Top 100 Most Influential People for the year 2005. In February 2005, Dr. Hawass received an Honorary Doctorate degree from the American University in Cairo. In August of 2005, he participated in Adventures of the Mind, sharing his experiences and expertise with 150 of the most accomplished high school students in the United States. Mansoura University has honored Dr. Hawass for his many achievements and contributions to Egyptian society and to the archeological community world wide; and the Egyptological Society in Spain chose him as one of five distinguished Egyptians for the year 2002. November 2002, his name was written on a CD for the Mars Exploration Rover 2003 mission. In 2001, he was awarded a Silver Medal and membership in the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences. In July 2001, National Geographic selected Dr. Hawass as one of its Explorers in Residence. In 2000, the Association of Egyptian American Scholars named him Distinguished Scholar of the Year; in October of that same year, he was one of thirty international figures to receive the Golden Plate Award from the American Academy of Achievement, honoring his accomplishments in archaeology. In 1998, he received the First Class Award for Arts and Sciences from President Mubarak; and the Pride of Egypt Award from the members of the foreign press in Egypt.

After the 2011 Egyptian popular revolution that deposed Mubarak, Hawass was named Minister of State for Antiquities by the provisional government.

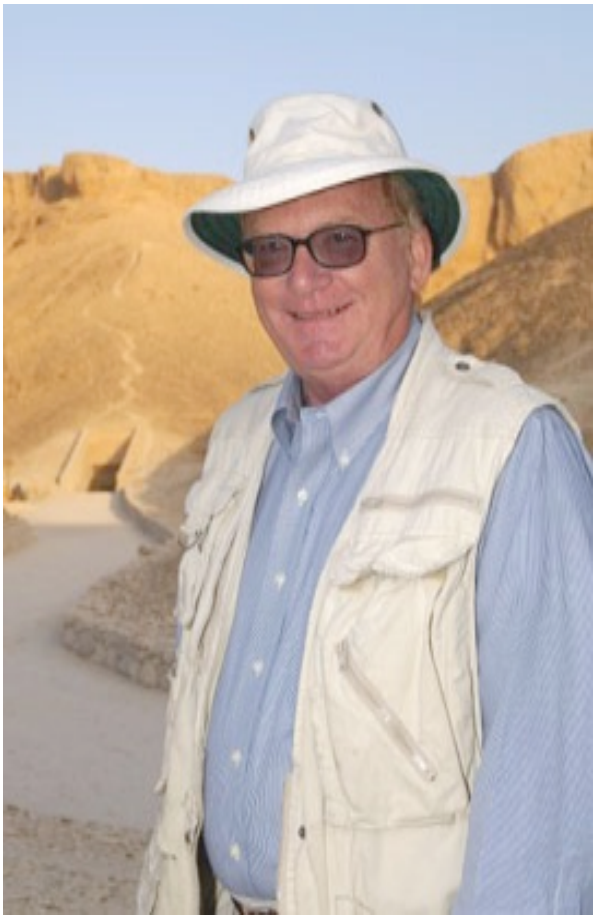
His web site is a popular source of information about Ancient Egypt and also hosts a fan club for children: http://www.guardians.net/hawass.

Mohamed Abdel Fatah

At the end of August 2011, the Egyptian Prime Minister appointed Mohamed Abdel Fatah the new Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) replacing Zahi Hawass.

Abdel Fatah was the head of the Ancient Egyptian Antiquities sector at the SCA. He previously served as head of the Museums sectors and director of Antiquities in Upper Egypt.

Kent R. Weeks



The study of Egyptology has produced many luminary scholars since its inception in the early nineteenth century. From the linguistic genius of Jeans-Francois Champollin to the colorful exploits of HowardCarter, Egyptologists have given modern Westerners a plethora of information on ancient Egyptian history and how the ancient Egyptian lived. In recent years in the United States, Kent Weeks has proven to be on the vanguard of Egyptology, finding important tombs and leading a mapping project of the west bank of Thebes.

Weeks is originally from Washington where he obtained his Masters Degree from the University of Washington in 1965. He then went on to work on archaeological digs in the Middle East before receiving his Ph.D. in Egyptology from Yale University in 1970. Weeks then went on to work at several universities before taking the post of Professor of Egyptology at the American University in Cairo in 1988, which he holds to this day.

In 1978, Weeks began his project of mapping the Theban West Bank, appropriately calling it the Theban Mapping Project. New (and old) methods have been used in the project such as photographs from hot air balloons and ground based advanced photography techniques.

The project is continuous and has produced a wealth of archaeological information and helped to generate interest in the general field of Egyptology among the public. One of the largest finds of the project has been the rediscovery of Valley of the Kings number five (KV5).

KV5 revealed the tombs of the sons of Ramses II. The discovery of KV5 has helped Weeks and his team uncover mummies, jewelry, and other artifacts that have helped advance Egyptology into the twenty first century. Weeks wrote a book entitled *The Lost Tomb*, published in 1998, that details many of the findings of KV5. Weeks continues to be active in the field of Egyptology, dividing his time on the Theban Mapping Project with speaking engagements at universities around the United States.

As the study of Egyptology evolves and moves into the twenty first century Dr. Kent Weeks will no doubt be one of the leaders in its study. Today students learn the names of Champollin, Carter, and Belzoni as being pioneers in Egyptology; tomorrow's students may well learn the name of Weeks as a great innovator in the field.

See also the Internet site of the Theban Mapping Project:
http://www.thebanmappingproject.com/

Mark Lehner

Today, as always, there remains considerable debate over such matters as the age of the Great Sphinx, the means by which the Great Pyramids were constructed, as well as many other topics related to ancient Egypt. Some theories border on the fantastic, while others clearly step over that threshold. Of course, there are always arguments within the scope of scholarly investigation, but sometimes it seems that "alternative theories" receive the bulk of the media attention.

While many traditionally trained Egyptologists might consider themselves to be the guardians of reasonable scientific Egyptology, none is better equipped than one of the modern living legends of that discipline, Mark Lehner. Today, his is considered to be one of the foremost experts on the Giza Pyramids, having devoted most of his life to their study.

Mark Lehner first enrolled in the American University in Cairo in 1973, a year after making his initial journey to Egypt. However, by 1977, on his way to a party with his good friend Zahi Hawass who is now the director of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), Mark Lehner reportedly told his fellow Egyptologist that "I no longer believe in [Edgar] Cayce's theories. Now that I've studied Egyptology I can see strong evidence proving the Sphinx was a creation of the fourth dynasty [about 2500 BC] and not 10,000 years old as Cayce said."

Today, Mark Lehner is perhaps not as visible as he should be considering his stature in the world of Egyptology. He has been described as a quite man, and regardless of his connection with the grandest of Egypt's ancient monuments, he remains somewhat elusive. Historic Egyptologists were often a flamboyant lot, but like some of the very best, such as William Petrie, Mark Lehner seems really more interested in his digs then the limelight. Unlike many of his high profile contemporaries, he has no web site about himself, and even within sites such as the Giza Mapping Project which he directs, he remains obscure.

After attending the American University in Cairo, where he received his BA in Anthropology in 1975, he spent the next thirteen years in Egypt doing archaeological fieldwork for American, French, British, German and Egyptian projects. In 1979 became Field Director of the Sphinx Project sponsored by the American Research Center in Egypt.

In 1990 he received his Ph.D in Egyptology from Yale University studying under Williams Kelly Simpson. He was Assistant Professor of Egyptian Archaeology at the University of Chicago from 1990 until 1996. Today, he remains a research associate of both the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, as well as of the Semitic Museum at Harvard University.

Since it founding in 1985, Mark Lehner has been the president of Ancient Egypt Research Associates (A.E.R.A.), which was established for the purpose of funding and facilitating the research of the Giza Plateau Mapping Project. From 1988 until the present he has been the Director of the Giza Plateau Mapping Project excavations south of the Great Sphinx. At first this work was under the auspices of Yale University and the American Research Center in Egypt. From 1990, the work continued under the banner of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, and since 1994, the Harvard Semitic Museum has been a cosponsor.

This work is uncovering the remains of a royal urban production center. An area of three hectares has been exposed. Dating from the time the Giza Pyramids were under construction 4,500 years ago, this orthogonally planned settlement includes one of the oldest known paved streets, Egypt's oldest known hypostyle hall, and oldest copper working facility.

However, Mark Lehner probably, at least in the public eye, remains most notable for his work with the great pyramids. He is often called upon by media outlets such as the Discovery Channel, PBS (NOVA), the National Geographic Society, and the BBC for his vast knowledge of pyramids and the Giza Plateau in general. One of his projects, in which he and others built a small pyramid using ancient techniques, has shown that the Great Pyramid may not have required either the time span, nor the vast number of laborers to traditionally thought for its completion.

Today, Mark Lehner is considered to be a pioneer in the use of state-of-the-art computer graphics and remote sensing technology to model the ancient configuration of the Giza Plateau. He remains a Research Associate and Visiting Assistant Professor of Egyptian Archaology at the Oriental Institute and the Harvard Semitic Museum.

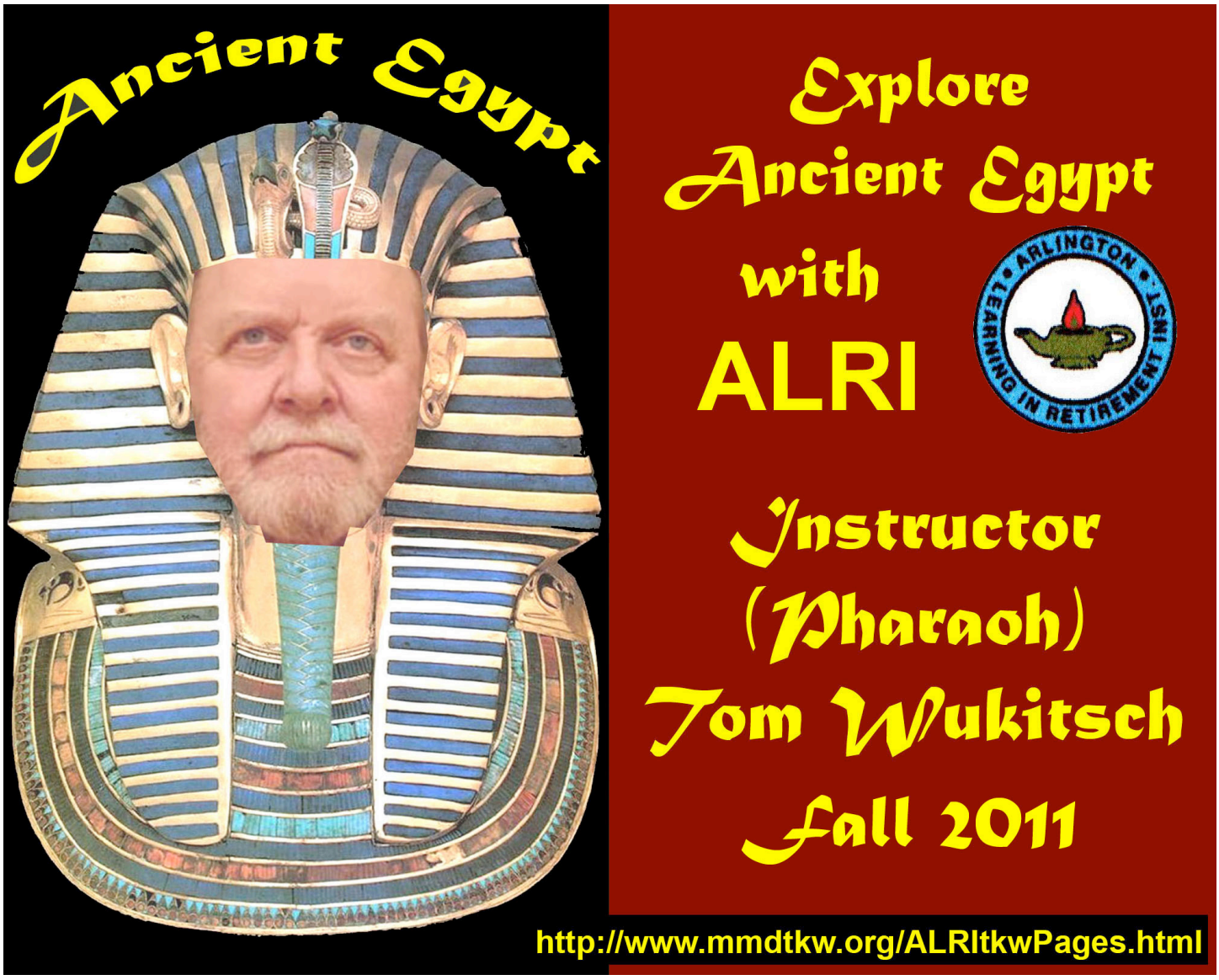
Books:

- **The Egyptian Heritage, A.R.E. Press, March 1974**
- **The Complete Pyramids: Solving the Ancient Mysteries, Thames & Hudson, November 1997**

Encore

Egypt – The First 5000 years

Instructor: Tom Wukitsch



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Mediterranean Sea
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Lower Egypt
GIZA
Cairo
Abusir
Maadi
SAKKARA
Memphis
Suez
Fayum
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Sinai
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el-Lahun
Serabit el-Khadim
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Monastery of St. Catherine
Nile River
Middle Egypt
Beni Hasan
Mallawi
el-Amarna
Maragah
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Badari
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Qau
Akhmim
Mahasnah
Naga el-Deir
Abydos
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Amra
Dendera
QUSEIR AL-QADIM
Hu
THEBES
BIR UMM FAWAKIR
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LUXOR
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el-Kab
Hierakonpolis
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Edfu
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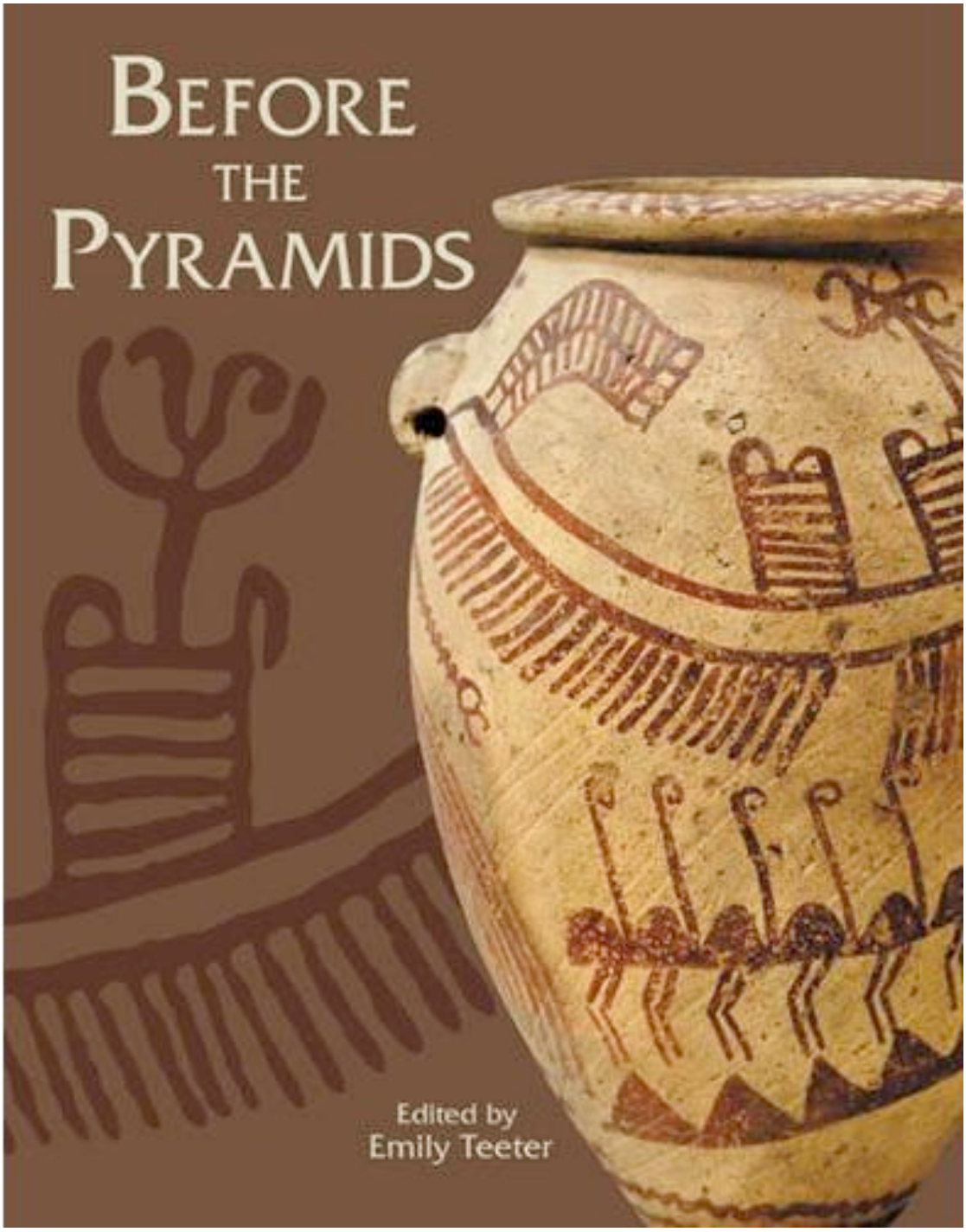
Aswan
First Cataract
Dabod
Philae
BEIT EL WALI
Lower Nubia
Kalabsha
Lake Nasser
'Aniba
Abu Simbel
BALLANA
QUSTUL
Buhen
ADINDAN
DORGINARTI
SERRA EAST
Second Cataract
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
Other Sites
Modern Cities

Unit 1 Introduction, Prehistory, and Pre-Dynastic Egypt

Rock face drawings and etchings recently rediscovered in southern Egypt are similar in age and style to the iconic Stone Age cave paintings in Lascaux, France, and Altamira, Spain.

There have been many recent publications of new research on the pre-dynastic, proto-dynastic and early dynastic periods of ancient Egypt. A consise synthesis of this new material and older research is available in the form of an exhibition catalog from the Orienta Institute of the University of Chicago entitled <u>Before the Pyramids</u> (ed. Emily Teeter). The heavily illustrated book is available from Internet booksellers for as little as $35.



Egyptian art and architecture: Predynastic period

Encyclopædia Britannica Article

The term predynastic denotes the period of emerging cultures that preceded the establishment of the 1st dynasty in Egypt. In the late 5th millennium BC there began to emerge patterns of civilization that displayed characteristics deserving to be called Egyptian. The accepted sequence of predynastic cultures is based on the excavations of Sir Flinders Petrie at Naqadah, at al-'Amirah (el-'Âmra), and at al-Jazirah (el-Gezira). Another somewhat earlier stage of predynastic culture has been identified at al-Badari in Upper Egypt.

From graves at al-Badari, Dayr Tasa, and al-Mustaqiddah evidence of a relatively rich and developed artistic and industrial culture has been retrieved. Pottery of a fine red polished ware with blackened tops already shows distinctive Egyptian shapes. Copper was worked into small ornaments, and beads of steatite (soapstone) show traces of primitive glazing. Subsequently in the Naqadah I and Naqadah II stages, predynastic civilization developed steadily. Pottery remains the distinctive product, showing refinement of technique and the development of adventurous decoration. Shapes already found in Badarian graves were produced in Naqadah I with superior skill and decorated with geometric designs of white-filled lines and even simple representations of animals. Later new clays were exploited, and fine buff-coloured wares were decorated in purple pigment with scenes of ships, figures, and a wide variety of symbols.

The working of hard stones also began in earnest in the later Predynastic Period. At first craftsmen were devoted to the fashioning of fine vessels and to the making of jewelry incorporating semiprecious stones.

Sculpture found its best beginnings not so much in representations of the human form (although figurines, mostly female, were made from Badarian times) as in the carving of small animal figures and the making of schist (slate) palettes (intended originally for the preparation of eye paint). The Hunters and Battlefield palettes (British Museum; part of the former in the Louvre; part of the latter in the Ashmolean, Oxford) show two-dimensional representation—a convention that was to last 3,000 years.

The basic techniques of two-dimensional art—drawing and painting—are exemplified in Upper Egyptian rock drawings and in the painted tomb at Hierakonpolis, now destroyed. Scenes of animals, boats, and hunting, the common subjects of rock drawings, were more finely executed in paint in the tomb, and additional themes, probably of conquest, presaged those found in dynastic art.

Tasian culture: possibly the oldest-known cultural phase in Upper Egypt (c. 4500 BC):

The Tasian culture is best known from evidence found on the east bank of the Nile River at al-Badari and at Deir Tasa. Tasian remains are somewhat intermingled with the materials of the subsequent Badarian stage, and, although the total absence of metal and the more primitive appearance of its pottery would seem to argue for an earlier date, it is also possible that the Tasian was contemporary with the Badarian. Archaeological remains indicate that the Tasians were settled farmers who cultivated emmer

wheat and barley and raised herds of sheep and goats. Pottery vessels were reasonably well made, with open bowls and bag-shaped forms predominating. The dead were usually buried in straw coffins, with the bodies in crouching or bent positions.

Badarian culture: **Egyptian predynastic cultural phase, first discovered at al-Badari, its type-site, on the east bank of the Nile River in Asyut Muhafazah (= Governorate), Upper Egypt. British excavations there during the 1920s revealed settlements and cemeteries dating to about 4000 BC.**

Although the Badarians apparently continued the agricultural and pastoral practices of the Tasians (see Tasian culture), whom some scholars consider to be their immediate predecessors, their artistic and technical skills were greatly improved. Their pottery, often distinguished by a black top, was extremely thin-walled, well-baked, and often decorated with a burnished ripple; many regard it as the best ever made in the Nile River valley. Other remains include combs and spoons of ivory, slate palettes, female figurines, and copper and stone beads. Badarian materials have also been found at Jazirat Armant, al-Hammamiyah, Hierakonpolis (modern Kawm al-Ahmar), al-Matmar, and Tall al-Kawm al-Kabir.

Amratian culture: **so called Naqadah I culture. Egyptian predynastic cultural phase, centred in Upper Egypt, its type-site being al-'Amirah near Abydos in Qina Muhafazah (Governorate). Numerous sites, dating to about 3600 BC, have been excavated and reveal an agricultural way of life similar to that of the preceding Badarian culture, but with advanced skills and techniques, including mud-brick structures in fair-sized towns. Pottery characteristic of this period includes black-topped red ware and a dark-red burnished ware, occasionally decorated in white slip with bold linear designs—human or animal figures; on an Amratian shard excavated at Naqadah the earliest known representation of the pharaonic red crown is drawn. Other important remains include disk-shaped maceheads, slate cosmetic palettes, well-made stone vases and ivory carvings, and numerous figurines of various materials.**

Egypt Prehistory

Our human ancestors have been living in the Nile Valley since early prehistoric times. The late Neolithic period in Egypt is referred to as the 'Predynastic Period'. Human settlers first began to farm the Nile Valley from Palestine and Syria, from the Libyan tribes living to the west and from Nubia to the south. All of this migration occurred at about 5000 B.C.. These people prospered and eventually formed two kingdoms. Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt.

Archaeologists have found stone axes at Abu Simbel, the site of later temples that date back about 700,000 years. Unfortunately with the annual Nile floods, much archaeological evidence of prehistoric human life was washed away or deeply buried. We do know that by 10,000 B.C. groups of people were wandering around the fertile region around the Nile river, hunting, fishing, gathering roots, seeds and berries.

A little before 3000 B.C., traders from southern Iraq also sailed to Egypt, and some of these people, attracted by the fertile land of the country, decided to stay on. Soon these early settlers to the Nile Valley began to grow barley and to domesticate cattle, sheep and other livestock. They began to build villages of mud huts in areas that seemed to be safe from the annual flooding of the Nile.

These earliest Egyptians also believed in life after death. Before mummification evolved, burials involved arranging the corpse in a sleeping position with the elbows and knees drawn together in a fetal-like posture. The body was placed in a shallow sand pit with a selection of items to see the person into the next life, including valued personal possessions. The sand thrown on top of it would serve to preserve the body. The illustration at the top of this page shows a man who was found and was dubbed "Ginger" by the people who found him because of his reddish hair. (See illustration above).

An absolute chronology of this period has been difficult because of the variance of the types of remains between those found in Upper Egypt and those found in Lower Egypt. Excavations in Upper Egypt consist mainly of cemeteries, whereas in Lower Egypt the primary remains are those of settlements. This situation makes comparisons difficult.

A framework for relative dates for the mid to late Predynastic period in Upper Egypt i.e. the Amaratian and Gerzean periods such as those found at Naqada, was first established by Flinders Petrie in the early 1900's. Later when Gertrude Caton-Thompson excavated the area at Hammamia in the El-Badari region in the 1920's, she found that the stratigraphic evidence matched and confirmed Petrie's dating system. Radiocarbon dating suggests that that the period extended back at least as far as 5500 B.C.

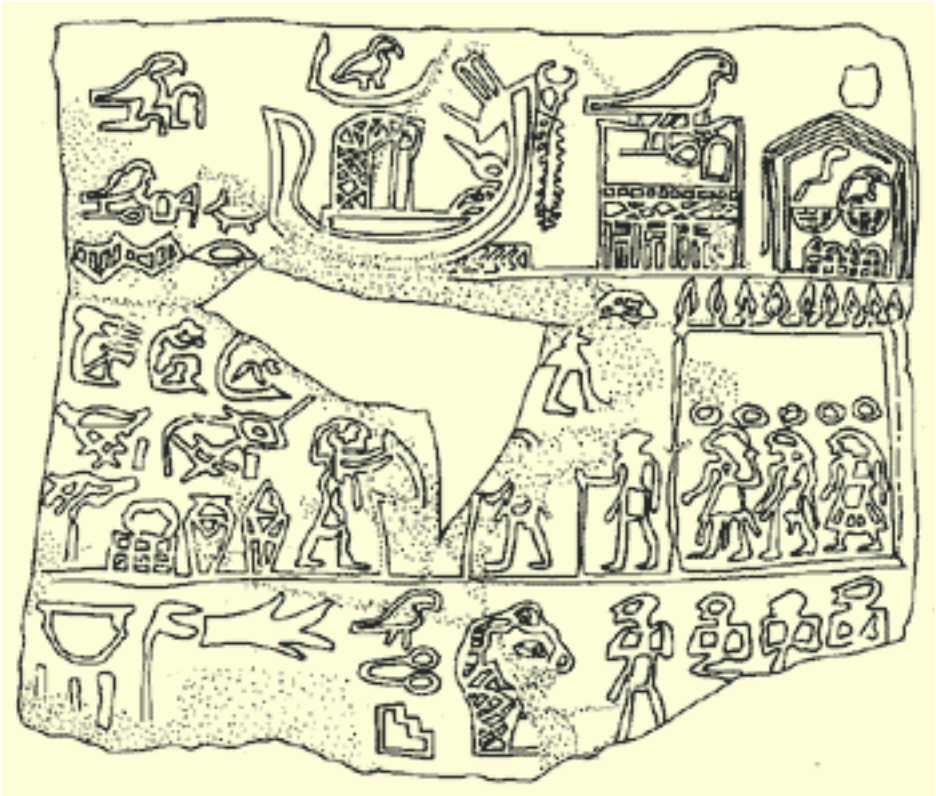
Aha! Or is it King Menes?

By Marie Parsons

Manetho and Herodotus are the "best" historical sources for the tradition that Menes was the unifier and first King of a unified Egypt. Manetho lived in Sebennytos in the Delta during the Ptolemaic period. He was a priest, perhaps chief priest, of Ra, and served as a consultant to the early Ptolemaic rulers on the cult of Serapis.

Using perhaps source materials such as the annals now called the Palermo Stone and the Turin Canon, Manetho recorded a list of the Kings of ancient Egypt from pre-dynastic times through to the Persian conquest.

The Palermo stone, inscribed on both sides of a black basalt slab, dates from the Fifth Dynasty and records names of the kings of the 1-5th Dynasties. The first three dynasties consist almost exclusively of events that give the years their names.



The King-list on this stone mentions several pre-dynastic kings as well as the name of Narmer, Menes, and Aha. The King-list at Abydos in the temple of Seti I also includes the name of Menes. But is Menes also Narmer, or is Menes, Aha, that is, a second, or *nisw bity* name, for either of these kings? Was Menes a name at all, or was Menes a title? Confusions about names and corresponding identities by the way may have to do with the fact that later king lists show the *nbty* names, while those on monuments usually list the Horus names.

We know of Narmer by his famous palette, macehead, and by jar seals. It should be noted herein that fragments of clay jar seals from Abydos, alternating Narmer and the word or name *mn,* suggests that *mn* was a leading person and possibly successor to Narmer.

We know the name of Hor-Aha, or Aha, the Fighter or Fighting Hawk, by his name sign appearing in a serekh on a potsherd, now in the British Museum, and by an ivory label from the tomb at Naqada of Nithotep (possibly his mother and the wife of King Narmer). This label also shows the *nbty* name *Mn* in front of the serekh. The reading of the hieroglyphic sign of *mn* on several ivory tablets belonging to King Aha, and on a plate fragment, has prompted speculation that Aha is Menes. Some scholars however do not accept that *mn* equates with Menes. Some speculate the *mn* to mean merely a "someone", i.e. designating any person on whose behalf ritual ceremonies were undertaken.

This second name *Mn* which could means "established," could be the origin of the name Menes by Manetho and still later by Herodotus, but this is by no means certain.

A label found at Abydos, where he had at least one tomb constructed, shows the Horus name of Aha, with sacred barks, a shrine of Nit, and possibly some indication of the name Memphis. A wooden label from Abydos indicates he had to subdue rebels in Nubia, and another label indicates he built a temple to Neith or Nit in the Delta at Sais. One of these labels may show a ceremony called "Receiving the South and the North" over an unidentified object, possibly first representation of the binding together of lotus and papyrus stalks which later came to represent both halves of Egypt. If Aha was the successor to Narmer, that is, the first king to begin his reign over a fully unified Egypt, it may make sense that he would establish a new capital and undertake such a ceremony as may have been represented. *[TKW Note: for information on Ancient Egyptian royal naming conventions, see http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/titles.htm]*

The first line on the Palermo stone is determined by hieroglyphs for "king", some shown wearing the red crown and some the double, that is both white and red, crowns.

So for the reign of Aha, who may be Menes, the Annals record this:

Year X + 1: The Year of …. In which took place the Festival of the Birth of Anubis.

Year X + 2: The Year of …. In which took place…..Bull.

Year X + 3: The Year of ….. in which took place the Festival of the Birth of….

Year X + 7 (?) + 1: The Year of the Following of Horus in which took place the Festival of the

Birth of Anubis.

Year X + 7 (?) + 2: The last civil year of the reign of the King, of which he reigned the first six months and seven days.

King Menes is traditionally believed to have begun Egyptian history. But according to the Turin Canon and Manetho, there were historical events which preceded Menes, such as a series of semi-divine rulers who filled the gap between the reign of gods and of the emergence of Menes. The Palermo stone mentions these "followers of Horus." It is also thought that perhaps the Followers of Horus referred to a royal progress through the cities of Upper and Lower Egypt so that the King could visit his domain.

Manetho wrote this about King Menes: "After the dead and the demigods comes the 1st Dynasty, with 8 kings of whom Menes was the first. He was an excellent leader. In what follows are recorded the rulers from all of the ruling houses in succession.

Menes of Thinis, whom Herodotus calls Men, and his 7 descendants. [Thinis, or This, was apparently a city or town near Abydos and the point of origin for the first dynasties.]

Menes, we are told ruled for about 62 years, led the army across the frontier and won great glory. He was killed by a hippopotamus."

Herodotus was a Greek historian who traveled in Egypt and recorded his own observations as well as the stories that he was told by priests and other Egyptians.

Herodotus wrote that Menes was the first king of Egypt and dammed up the Nile near what was to become Memphis, in order to reclaim land on which he then founded the city.

Certainly, about the time of Aha, Memphis did become the administrative center of government. Although it is believed that Aha built his grave at Abydos, his name has been found inscribed on material from cemeteries in the Memphite region, at Tura, Tarkhan and Helwan. Under his reign, tombs were built at Saqqara, which have been attributed to high-ranking government officials and nobles.

The tomb of Aha was a complex of three large brick-lined chambers number B10/15/19 roofed over with wood. To the east were a set of graves whose young male occupants were apparently sacrificed at the time of burial. The monumental part of this tomb lay to the northeast where a large rectangular enclosure of brick, with corner bastions and towers was erected.

King Aha's grave was built of several separate chambers, in three stages. It shows traces of large wooden shrines in three chambers, and 33 subsidiary burials containing the remains of young males aged 20-25 years old. Seven young lions also were buried nearby one of those graves.

As more work is done at both Abydos and Saqqara, new evidence may come to light which will help fill in some of the gaps surrounding the mystery of who Menes may in fact have been.

From: http://touregypt.net/featurestories/menes.htm

King Scorpion - By Marie Parsons

Egypt's culture is a product of its geography, its people, and at least to some degree by its links with its neighbors. Egyptian traveled to and traded with Palestine, where pottery and Egyptian-style buildings have been found, with Afghanistan and beyond to modern Pakistan, the source for lapis lazuli, documented to have been imported into Egypt from Predynastic time. They also traded with Elam and Sumer, from whence came elements shown on palettes and cylinder seals, and indicates contact between Egypt and other regions of the Near East. However, with all the similarities that can be noted, there are also significant differences between Near Eastern cultures and that which is undeniably Egyptian. The Egyptian cosmology, cosmogony, governmental hierarchy and administration, writing, dress, its concept of kingship—these were all things most definitely Egyptian, even if perhaps influenced by outside contacts.
The movie entitled "The Mummy Returns", and its later sequel, titled "The Scorpion King", purport to tell of a semi-mythical king of late pre-dynastic Egypt. The sequel is scripted to speculate about the Scorpion's rise to become King over Egypt. The fact that Scorpion has suddenly leapt into the most popular Hollywood media is perhaps a victory for the science of Egyptology. Tutankahmun, Cleopatra's Palace at Alexandria--we know of these things--we race to visit them, to see and touch and learn, because of what the Egyptologists have accomplished. Scorpion may soon join the ranks of his famous successors. And people will travel to Egypt to see where he may have walked, just as they do now to see where Hatshepsut walked.

Who is this King that may soon be as familiar as his later, more historically documented successors such as Hatshepsut, Tutankhamun, and Cleopatra VII? His name may very well have been Scorpion, though in Egyptian it may have been pronounced something like *Srqt*.

What is known thus far about this ruler?

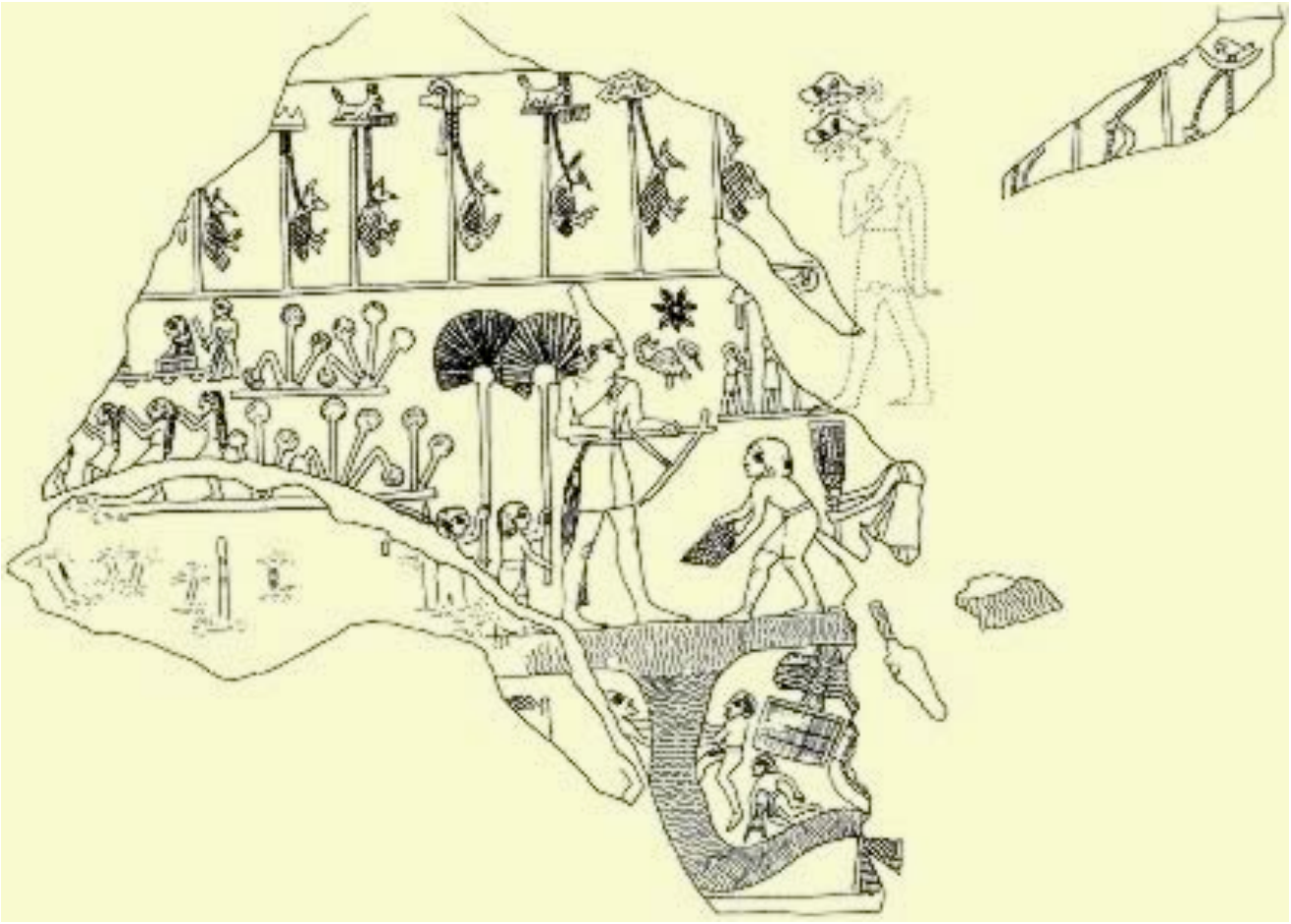
In the ancient Upper Egyptian town of Nekhen, The Falcon, also called Hierakonpolis, where archaeological finds have been made that are significant to the earliest days of the unification of Egypt, a fragmented and incomplete macehead attributed to King Scorpion was found by J.E. Quibell in 1897-98. Maceheads were early considered to be symbolic of Kingly power, and throughout Egypt's history, were shown in relief carvings as the weapon of the king as he smote his enemies who were the enemies of Egypt.

This macehead depicts a King or Chieftain wearing the White Crown of

Upper Egypt in full ritual dress, with the bull's tail representing power, hanging from the back of his belt. The multi-petalled rosette or star at this time was used to identify Egyptian kings and in fact, in neighboring Sumer, signified divinity itself. It is shown in front of his face, along with a clearly drawn scorpion sign, thereby giving his name as indicated earlier to be Srqt, or Scorpion. In another convention of Egyptian art, this kingly, perhaps quasi-divine, figure is drawn towering over his companions and attendants.

King Scorpion is accompanied by his high officers, who carry standards on which are displayed symbols identified with particular districts into which Egypt was divided. Many of these district symbols are familiar throughout Egypt's history. Two of these interestingly enough are Set animals, showing that at this very early time Followers of Set supported the royal clan; others represent falcons, a jackal, the god Min, and possibly the mountains. If these are accurately interpreted as regional standards, there are more here shown than on the Narmer palette.

On this macehead, Scorpion is apparently performing a ceremony using a hoe. Perhaps he is opening the irrigation dykes to begin the flooding of the fields, or perhaps he is cutting the first furrow for a temple or even a city to be built, thus beginning a foundation ritual which was a kingly prerogative in Egypt (similar to Roman emperors millennia later, shown on coins ploughing the outline of a city at its foundation).



The decorative frieze around the remaining top of the macehead has lapwing birds hanging by their necks from vertical standards. In hieroglyphics these rekhyts have been interpreted to

represent the common people of Egypt, and their fate seems to indicate that they were conquered by King Scorpion. However, some authorities have interpreted the rekhyt symbol as only later representing the Egyptian population, whereas early in predynastic history they referred to foreigners or non-Egyptians instead. Thus the Scorpion macehead and Narmer palette may represent the respective rulers as having successfully defeated foreigners from the west Delta (something which happened later in history as well.)

Although a four-chambered tomb in Abydos designated as B50 has been speculated as being Scorpion's burial place, no conclusive evidence of Scorpions existence has yet been found at Abydos, where the tombs of several First Dynasty kings and even some preceding Dynasty 0 kings have been found. Some scholars are not even sure Scorpion actually existed (perhaps Scorpion was a title; perhaps the Scorpion sign did not signify the personage's name at all).

He may have come from the royal house of Hierakonpolis, rather than from This, the origin city of the Thinite dynasty from whence came his later successor Narmer, the King Catfish. Perhaps This and Hierakonpolis each were the centers of rival chiefdoms, and when Scorpion's reign ended, This assumed an uncontested position as sovereign of Egypt. Perhaps Narmer was the first king who actually reigned unchallenged throughout the country. Based upon Scorpion's apparent connection with Hierakonpolis and from the stylistic similarities between his macehead and the palette and macehead attributed to Narmer, the two rulers may well have been close contemporaries.

The only other evidences to date of the existence of a King Scorpion come from small serekhs found on vases. Serekhs were the enclosing devices within which the early names of Kings were written. A serekh of Scorpion may occur on a wine jar from Minshat Abu Amar, though this inscription has also been read as being that of "Aha," the later First Dynasty King who may have been the same king known by Manetho as Menes. Two serekhs written on pottery vessels from Tarkhan have been read as Scorpion, but that is not yet considered a conclusive reading either. Indeed, it has been proposed that these inscriptions be attributed to a King called "Crocodile", perhaps a king reigning concurrently with the main Thinite royal family.

As more discoveries are made in Abydos, Hierakonpolis and other Predynastic and Early Dynastic sites, it is possible that the gaps of legend and history will shrink, and a clearer picture of these earliest days of Egyptian beginnings will stand clear.

Sources:

Narmer: First King of Upper and Lower Egypt, a Reconsideration of His Palette and Macehead, Abstract by Frank Yurco, published in JSSEA #XXV,
Prehistory of Egypt by Beatrix Midant-Reynes,
Early Egypt: Rise of Civilisation in the Nile Valley by A.J. Spencer,
Early Dynastic Egypt by Toby Wilkinson.

From: http://touregypt.net/featurestories/scorpionking.htm

King Catfish, Also Called Narmer

By Marie Parsons

From http://touregypt.net/featurestories/narmer.htm

The unification of Egypt at the end of the Predynastic period took place in two stages: spread of a uniform material culture, as evidenced by the diffusion of products characteristic of the Naqada culture, centered around the city of Naqada, also called Nubt, and the establishment of unified political control. Later Egyptian tradition contains references to the existence of separate northern and southern kingdoms, perhaps at Buto in the Delta and Hierakonpolis in Upper Egypt, respectively.

Hierakonpolis has been producing much evidence of its being an important center. It was a major urbanized center of the Naqada culture and a residence of powerful Upper Egyptian chiefs. The two-sided Narmer palette, for example, is interpreted as being a thanks-offering for the successful definitive victory of the southern over the northern kingdoms.

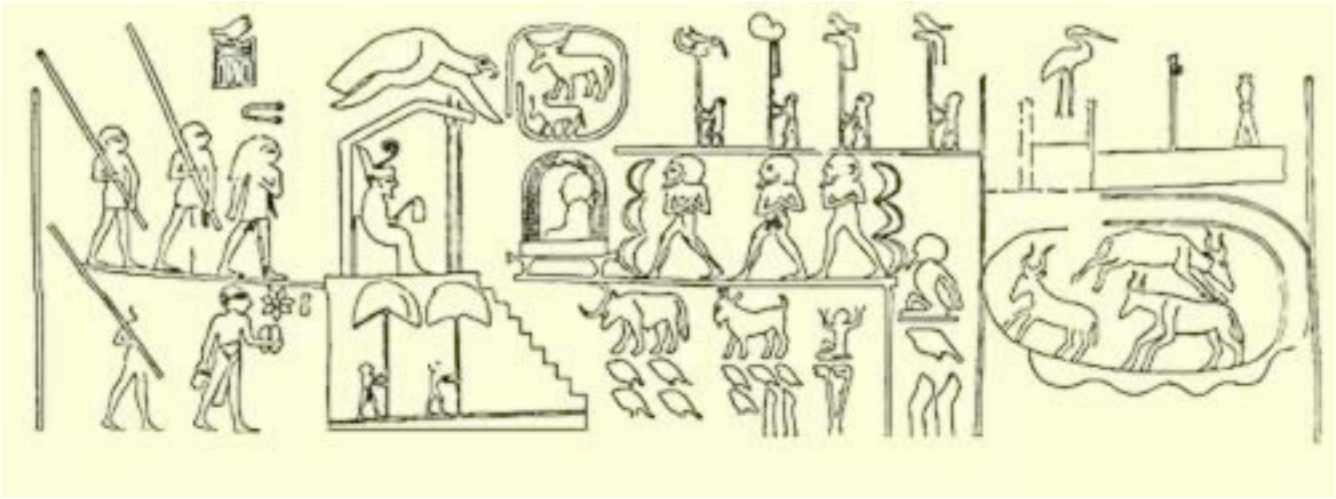
Narmer Palette

King Narmer is thought to have reigned c. 3150 BCE as first king of the 1st dynasty (and/or last king of the 0 dynasty) of a unified ancient Egypt. The rebus of his name as shown on his palette and on other inscriptions is composed of a chisel, thought to be read *mr*, below a catfish, thought to be read as *n'r*. King Narmer, or Catfish as he could also be called, appears thus on seal impressions from the 1st Dynasty tombs of King Den (tomb) and King Ka (Tomb) at Abydos (where we believe he may have himself built a tomb), and also at Tell Ibrahmin Awad. Narmer's name and that of his possible predecessor Scorpion have also been found on pottery vessels from the site of Minshat Abu Omar in the eastern Delta. The name of Narmer also occurs in Hierakonpolis on objects in addition to the Palette and Macehead such as potsherds etc. Narmer's importance as the probable unifier of Lower and Upper Egypt is indicated primarily by the Palette and the Macehead which are attributed to him. His name-rebus appears on both. But his power in the region must have extended further, since Egyptian sherds inscribed with Narmer's name have also been found in northern Nubia and in southern Palestine.

The Narmer Palette was discovered by J.E.Quibell at Hierakonpolis in 1897-98. The obverse is divided into three registers, uppermost of which gives his name in a serekh flanked by human-faced bovines. The second register shows Narmer wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt smiting an enemy. The third register shows dead, nude enemies. On the reverse the upper register showing his name-serekh is repeated. The second register shows Narmer now wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt, inspecting rows of nude, decapitated enemies. The third register shows a man mastering serpent-necked lions, and the fourth register shows a bull destroying a town and trampling a dead enemy.

Narmer may have considered Buto as the central capital of the Delta he had just conquered. On his palette is a hieroglyphic group that could be read as Ta Mehu, the later name for the Delta region. Since Narmer is shown with the Red Crown he was thus the first to ascribe this Crown to the entire Delta and thus Lower Egypt. He may have transferred the Red Crown from Nubt/Naqada to represent the entirety of Lower Egypt.

The Narmer macehead, also discovered at Hierakonpolis, has had three interpretations. Petrie's theory, also held by later scholars, was that the mace head depicted the political marriage of Nithotep, princess of the north, with Narmer. Other scholars feel the macehead depicts a celebration by Narmer of his conquest of the north, while still others regard the macehead as commemorating a HebSed-festival of the king. Nithotep's grave has been found at Naqada, with Narmer's name as well as with King Aha's name. Nithotep thus is linked with two kings as wife and mother.



Narmer Macehead

Most recently, new studies of the images on the macehead put forth the theory that the scenes are not primarily commemorative but are simply pictorial versions of year-names. The focus of the scene is the king's figure, seen sitting robed in a long cloak enthroned under a canopy on a high dais, wearing the Red Crown and holding a flail. The enclosure within which he sits can be interpreted as a shrine or temple. He is attended by minor figures of fan-bearers, bodyguards, with long quarterstaves and an official who may be either vizier or heir-apparent. In front of Narmer three men run a race towards him, while above them stands four men carrying standards. Facing the king is a cloaked and beardless figure, over whom is a simple enclosure in which stands a cow and calf (a nome sign). The running figures may represent Muu dancers, long associated with Buto, presenting a welcome to the new lord of the Delta. The seated figure facing Narmer may be the chief of Buto rather than a princess of the Delta.

Beneath these figures are symbols of numbers. The numbers have been recently interpreted to indicate 400,000 cattle, 1,422,000 small animals, and 120,000 men (not women and children, only males.) This would have provided for a total human population of the Delta of perhaps 600,000.

The macehead then commemorates the completion of the conquest of Lower Egypt, not with a royal dynastic marriage etc, but perhaps, with the first Appearance of the King of Lower Egypt, by an actual census of the Delta people, similar to and a precursor of the census taken by William the Conqueror after he won England.

Some scholars speculate that Menes and Narmer may be the same person. Menes is the Greek form of the name of the legendary first human king of Egypt as given by Manetho, the historian living in Hellenistic times who constructed one form of King Lists.

Jar-sealings found by Petrie at Abydos associate the "*mn*" glyph, the gaming board, from which Menes apparently receives his name, with Narmer. Narmer was shown in a serekh and Meni was shown in an unenclosed space, like a son and heir.

Hor-Aha, the first king of the 1st Dynasty and thus Narmer's probable successor and possibly his son by Queen Nithotep, perhaps took the second royal name of *Men*, which means "established", thus being the origin of the name *Menes*.

Evidence indicating all this is an ivory label from the tomb of Queen Nithotep at Naqada. It shows the name Hor-Aha, and the name Men, in front of it.

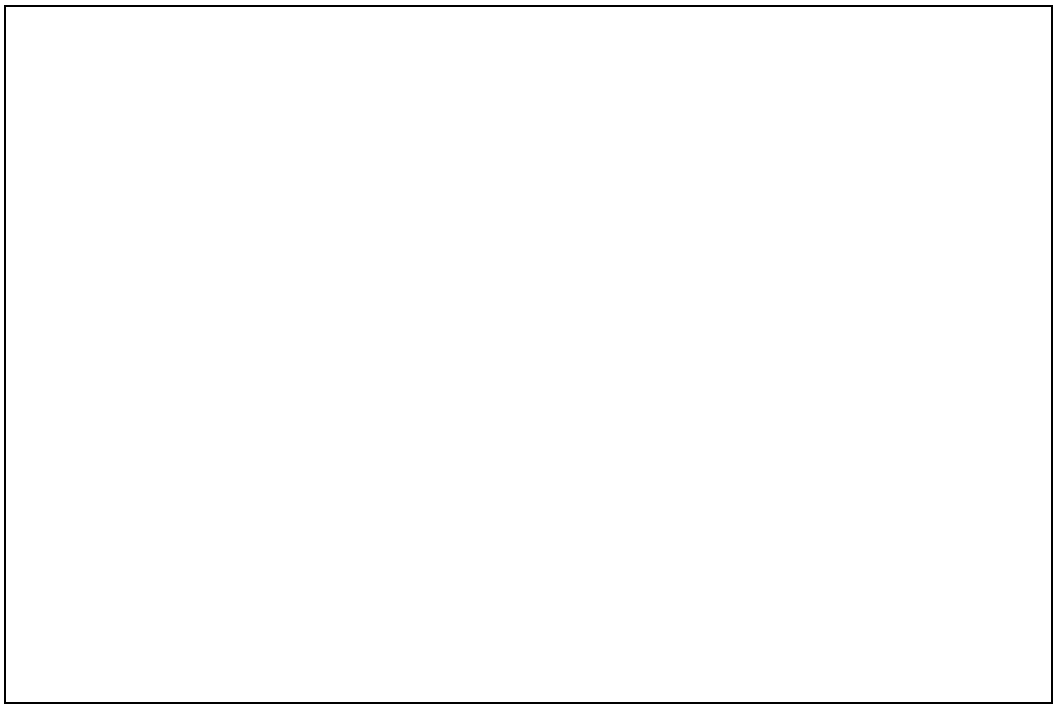
Sources: The *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, *Egypt Before the Pharaohs* by Michael Rice, *Journal of the ARCE, 1990*, *Narmer: First King of Upper and Lower Egypt, a Reconsideration of His Palette and Macehead, Abstract* by Frank Yurco, published in JSSEA #XXV, and *Early Egypt: Rise of Civilisation in the Nile Valley* by A.J. Spencer

Predynastic Egypt

From Encyclopedia Britannic

← **Britannica Map of Egyptian sites**

Delta sites



Sites around Thebes

The peoples of predynastic Egypt were the successors of the Paleolithic inhabitants of northeastern Africa, who had spread over much of its area; during wet phases they had left remains in regions as inhospitable as the Great Sand Sea. The final desiccation of the Sahara was not complete until the end of the 3rd millennium BC; over thousands of years people must have migrated from there to the Nile Valley, the environment of which improved as it dried out. In this process, the decisive change from the nomadic hunter-gatherer way of life of Paleolithic times to settled agriculture has not so far been identified. Some time after 5000 BC the raising of crops was introduced, probably on a horticultural scale, in small, local cultures that seem to have penetrated southward through Egypt into the oases and the Sudan. Several of the basic food plants that were grown are native to the Near East, so the new techniques probably spread from there. No large-scale migration need have been involved, and the cultures were at first largely self-contained. The preserved evidence for them is unrepresentative, because it comes from the low desert, where relatively few people lived; as later, most people probably settled in the Valley and Delta.

The earliest known Neolithic cultures in Egypt have been found at Marimda Bani Salama, on the southwest edge of the Delta, and farther to the southwest, in the Fayyum. The site at Marimda Bani Salama, which dates to the 6th–5th millennia BC, gives evidence of settlement and shows that cereals were grown. In the Fayyum, where evidence dates to the 5th millennium BC, the settlements were near the shore of Lake Qarun, and the settlers engaged in fishing. Marimda is a very large site that was occupied for many centuries. The inhabitants lived in lightly-built huts; they may have buried their dead within their houses, but areas where burials have been found may not have been occupied by dwellings at the same time. Pottery was used in both cultures. In addition to these Egyptian Neolithic cultures, others have been identified in the Western Desert, in the Second Cataract area, and north of Khartoum. Some of these are as early as the Egyptian ones, while others overlapped with the succeeding Egyptian predynastic cultures.

In Upper Egypt, between Asyut and Luxor, have been found the Tasian culture (named after Dayr Tasa) and the Badarian culture (named after al-Badari); these date from the late 5th millennium BC. Most of the evidence for them comes from cemeteries, where the burials included fine black-topped red pottery, ornaments, some copper objects, and glazed steatite beads. The most characteristic predynastic luxury objects, slate palettes for grinding cosmetics, occur for the first time in this period. The burials show little differentiation of wealth and status and seem to belong to a peasant culture without central political organization.

Probably contemporary with both predynastic and dynastic times are thousands of rock drawings of a wide range of motifs, including boats, found throughout the Eastern Desert, in Lower Nubia, and as far west as Mount 'Uwaynat, which stands near modern Egypt's borders with Libya and The Sudan in the southwest. The drawings show that nomads were common throughout the desert, probably down to the late 3rd millennium BC, but they cannot be dated precisely; they may all have been produced by nomads, or inhabitants of the Nile Valley may often have penetrated the desert and made drawings.

Naqadah I, named after the major site of Naqadah but also called Amratian after al-'Amirah, is a distinct phase that succeeded Badarian and has been found as far south as Kawm al-Ahmar (Hierakonpolis; ancient Egyptian Nekhen), near the sandstone barrier of Jabal al-Silsila, which was the cultural boundary of Egypt in predynastic times. Naqadah I differs from Badarian in its density of settlement and in the typology of its material culture, but hardly at all in the social organization implied by finds. Burials were in shallow pits in which the bodies faced to the west, like those of later Egyptians. Notable types of material found in graves are fine pottery decorated with representational designs in white on red, figurines of men and women, and hard stone mace-heads that are the precursors of important late predynastic objects.

Naqadah II, also known as Gerzean after al-Girza, is the most important predynastic culture. The heartland of its development was the same as that of Naqadah I, but it spread gradually throughout the country. South of Jabal al-Silsila, sites of the culturally similar Nubian A Group are found as far as the Second Cataract and beyond; these have a long span, continuing as late as the Egyptian Early Dynastic Period. During Naqadah II, large sites developed at Kawm al-Ahmar, Naqadah, and Abydos, showing by their size the concentration of settlement, as well as exhibiting increasing differentiation in wealth and status. Few sites have been identified between Asyut and the Fayyum, and this region may have been sparsely settled, perhaps supporting a pastoral rather than agricultural population. Near modern Cairo, at al-'Umari, Ma'adi, and Wadi Digla, and stretching as far south as the latitude of the Fayyum, are sites of a separate, contemporary culture. Ma'adi was an extensive settlement that traded with the Near East and probably acted as an intermediary for transmitting goods to the south. In this period, imports of lapis lazuli provide evidence that trade networks extended as far afield as Afghanistan.

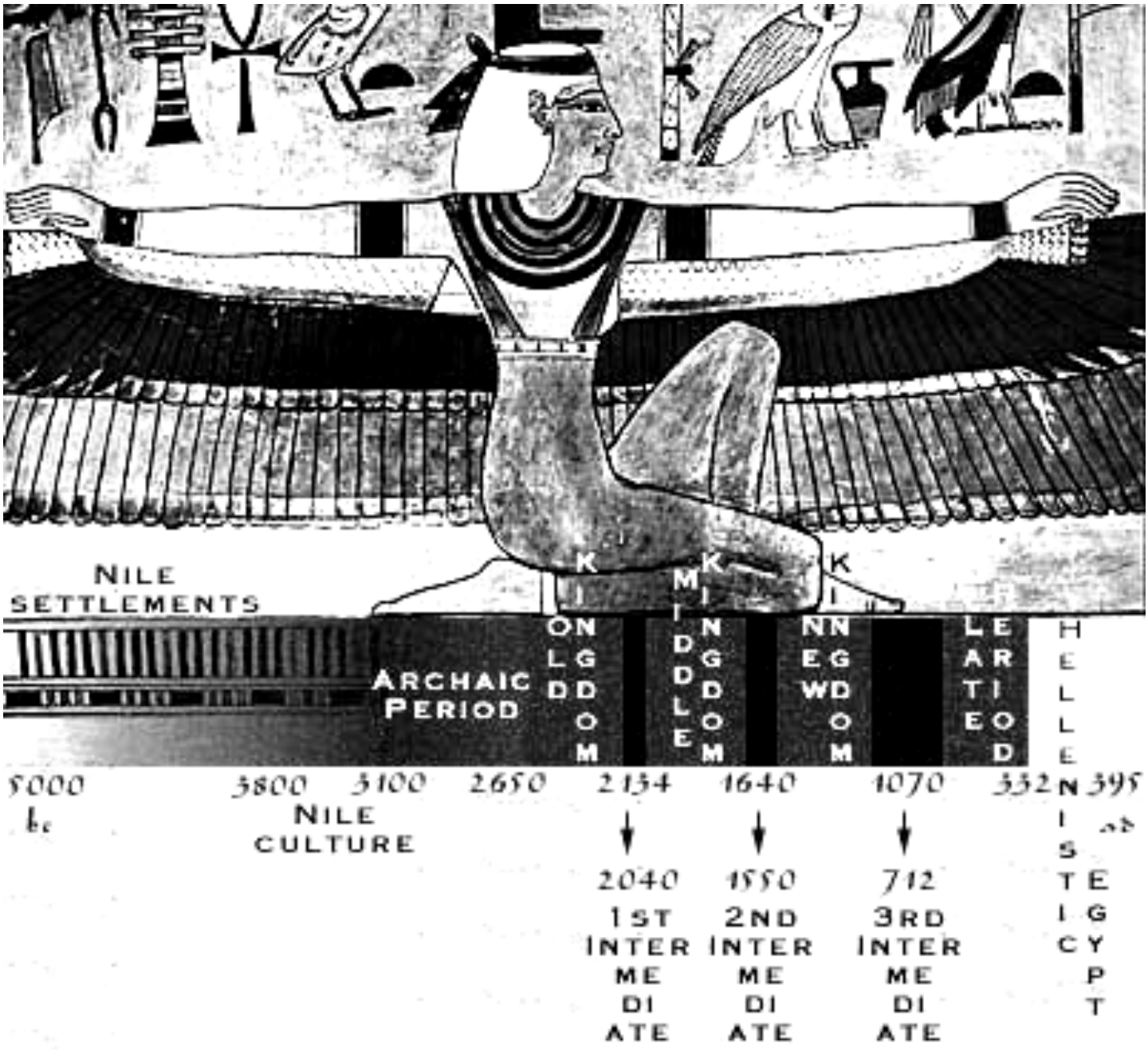
The material culture of Naqadah II included increasing numbers of prestige objects. The characteristic mortuary pottery is made of buff desert clay, principally from around Qena, and is decorated in red with pictures of uncertain meaning showing boats, animals, and scenes with human figures. Stone vases, many made of hard stones that come from remote areas of the Eastern Desert, are common and of remarkable quality, and cosmetic palettes display elaborate designs, with outlines in the form of animals, birds, or fish. Flint was worked with extraordinary skill to produce large ceremonial knives of a type that continued in use during dynastic times.

Sites of late Naqadah II (sometimes termed Naqadah III) are found throughout Egypt, including the Memphite area and the Delta, and appear to have replaced the local Lower Egyptian cultures. Links with the Near East intensified and some distinctively Mesopotamian motifs and objects were briefly in fashion in Egypt. The cultural unification of the country probably accompanied a political unification, but this must have proceeded in stages and cannot be reconstructed in detail. In an intermediate stage, local states may have formed at Kawm al-Ahmar, Naqadah, and Abydos, and in the Delta at such sites as Buto (modern Tall al-Fara'in) and Sais. Ultimately, Abydos became preeminent; its late predynastic cemetery of Umm al-Qa'ab was extended to form the burial place of the kings of the 1st dynasty. In the latest predynastic period, objects bearing written symbols of royalty were deposited throughout the country, and primitive writing also appeared in marks on pottery. Because the basic symbol for the king, a falcon on a decorated palace facade, hardly varies, these objects are thought to have belonged to a single line of kings or a single state, and not to a set of small states. This symbol became the royal Horus name, the first element in a king's titulary, which presented the reigning king as the manifestation of an aspect of the god Horus, the leading god of the country. Over the next few centuries several further definitions of the king's presence were added to this one.

Thus at this time Egypt seems to have been a state unified under kings who introduced writing and the first bureaucratic administration. These kings, who could have ruled for more than a century, may correspond with a set of names preserved on the Palermo Stone, but no direct identification can be made between them. The latest was probably Narmer, whose name has been found near Memphis, at Abydos, on a ceremonial palette and mace-head from Kawm al-Ahmar, and at the Palestinian sites of Tall Gat and 'Arad. The relief scenes on the palette show him wearing the two chief crowns of Egypt and defeating northern enemies, but these probably are stereotyped symbols of the king's power and role and not records of specific events of his reign. They demonstrate that the position of the king in society and its presentation in mixed pictorial and written form had been elaborated by this date.

During this time Egyptian artistic style and conventions were formulated, together with writing. The process led to a complete and remarkably rapid transformation of material culture, so that many dynastic Egyptian prestige objects hardly resemble their forerunners.

Unit 2 – Timeline of Egyptian History



Egypt from the Pre-Dynastic to the Roman-Byzantine Periods

Pre-dynastic history

Archaeological evidence suggests that hunters inhabited Egypt over 250,000 years ago when the region was green grassland. The Paleolithic period around 25,000BC brought climatic changes, which turned Egypt into a desert. The inhabitants survived by hunting and fishing and through a primitive form of cultivation.

Desertification of Egypt was halted by rains, which allowed communities of cultivators to settle in Middle Egypt and the Nile Delta. These farmers grew wheat, flax and wove linen fabrics in addition to tending flocks.

The first indigenous civilizations in Egypt have been identified in the south of the country through archaeological excavations. The Badarian culture is the earliest known developed Egyptian civilization based on farming, hunting and mining. Badarians produced fine pottery and carved objects as well as acquiring turquoise and wood through trading.

The Naqada lived in larger settlements about 4,000BC and produced decorated pottery and figurines made from clay and ivory, which indicate they were a war-like people. Naqada artifacts from 3,300BC show further development both in terms of culture and technology. Evidence of irrigation systems and more advanced burial sites, as well as the use of alien materials like lapis lazuli, indicate a cultural diversity and the development of external trading.

Throughout most of its pre-dynastic history Egypt encompassed a multiplicity of settlements, which gradually became small tribal kingdoms. These kingdoms evolved into two loosely confederated states; one encompassed the Nile valley up to the Delta (with the Naqada dominating) with Hierakonpolis as capital, represented by the deities Seth and White Crown; the other encompassed the Delta, with Buto as its capital and represented by the deities Horus and Red Crown.

The two kingdoms vied for power over all the land of Egypt. This struggle led to the victory of the south and the unification of the Two Lands in 3100BC under the command of Menes who is also known as Narmer. This was the beginning of the dynastic period of the Pharaohs.

The Early Dynastic or Archaic Period (3100-2686BC)

This period is shrouded in mythology. Little is known of Menes and his descendants outside

of their divine ancestry and that they developed a complex social system, patronized the arts and constructed temples and many public buildings.

The foundation of Memphis, the world's first imperial city, is attributed to Menes. From Memphis the third and fifth kings of the First Dynasty, which extended from 3100 to 2890BC set out to conquer the Sinai. During the First Dynasty culture became increasingly refined. The royal burial grounds at Saqqara and Abydos became sites of highly developed mastabas.

The Second Dynasty lasting from 2980 to 2686BC was characterized by regional disputes and a decentralization of Pharaonic authority, a process that was only temporarily halted by the Pharaoh Raneb, also called Hotepsekhemwy.

These regional contentions were very likely the outcome of the unresolved conflict between the two deities Horus in the south and Seth in the Delta. Theistic rivalry seems to have been resolved by Khasekhem, the last Pharaoh of the Second Dynasty.

The Old Kingdom (2686-2181BC)

Pharaonic burial practices continued to develop during the Third Dynasty, lasting from 2686-2613BC, which marked the beginnings of the Old Kingdom. The first of Egypt's pyramids were constructed during the 27th century BC. The Step Pyramid of Saqqara built for King Zoser by his chief architect Imhotep, who later generations deified, is considered by many to be the first pyramid ever constructed in Egypt.

Prior to this, most royal tombs were constructed of sun-dried bricks. Zoser's gargantuan step pyramid attested to the pharaoh's power and established the pyramid as the pre-eminent Pharaonic burial structure. During Zoser's rule the Sun God Ra attained a supra-eminent place over all other Egyptian deities.

The Fourth Dynasty (2613-2494BC) was characterized by expansionism and pyramid construction. King Sneferu constructed the Red Pyramid at Dahshur near Saqqara and the Pyramid of Meidum in Al-Fayoum.

He also sent military expeditions as far as Libya and Nubia. During his reign trading along the Nile flourished. Sneferu's descendants, Cheops (Khufu), Chephren (Khafre) and Mycerinus (Menkaure) were the last three kings of the Fourth Dynasty. These three pharaohs built the pyramids of Giza.

Egypt under Cheops became the first state in the history of the world to be governed according to an organized system. The Fourth Dynasty also extended trade relations with the Near East and mined and smelted copper in Nubia.

The Fifth Dynasty (2490-2330BC) was marked by a relative decline in Pharaonic power and wealth, evidenced by the smaller pyramids of Abu Sir built during this period. The pharaohs ceased to be absolute monarchs and began to share power with the aristocracy and high officials. As the independence of the nobility increased, their tombs became larger and were built at increasing distances from the pharaohs.

Worship of the sun god Ra also spread during the Fifth Dynasty. It was during the reign of Unas that religious texts were placed in the pyramids bearing descriptions of the afterworld, which were later gathered into the Book of the Dead.

Decentralization of Pharaonic authority increased during the Sixth Dynasty (2330-2170BC) as small provincial principalities emerged to challenge Pharaonic power. The Sixth Dynasty kings were forced to send expeditions as far as Nubia, Libya and Palestine to put down the separatists, but these campaigns served to further erode the central authority. By the reign of the last Sixth Dynasty Pharaoh Pepi II, the Old Kingdom had become a spent force.

The First Intermediate Period (2181-2050BC)

The demise of the Old Kingdom brought a period of chaos and anarchy, which characterized the Seventh Dynasty (2181-2173BC). During this brief period over 70 rulers were said to have laid claim to the throne. The Eighth Dynasty (2173-2160BC) followed the same pattern. Civil disorders multiplied and a drought struck Egypt.

Out of the turmoil and Pharaonic inertia, principalities within the realm raised up to challenge the authority of the kings. Achthoes, ruler of Heracleopolis, seized control of Middle Egypt, seized the throne and founded the Ninth Dynasty (2160-2130BC).

The kings of Heracleopolis maintained control over northern Egypt through the Tenth Dynasty (2130-2040BC).

However, the rulers of Edfu and Thebes fought over control of Upper Egypt. Thebes won the battle over Upper Egypt and its ruler Inyotef Sehertowy founded the Eleventh Dynasty (2133-1991BC) with the aim of extending his power over all the land.

The north-south battle for control of Egypt ended with the victory of Nebhepetre Mentuhope II who reunited the country under one king and launched the Middle Kingdom.

The Middle Kingdom (2050-1786BC)

Mentuhope II reigned over Egypt for fifty years and re-established political and social order, which in turn revived the economic and artistic development that characterized the glory of the Pharaohs. Trading was resumed and mines were reopened. Expansionist campaigns were re-launched against Libya, Nubia and the Bedouins of the Sinai.

His successors Mentuhope III and Mentuhope IV continued to rule from Thebes, maintaining the strength of the Eleventh Dynasty, building and expanding their kingdom until Amenemhat, a minister during the Eleventh Dynasty, assumed the throne and founded the Twelfth Dynasty (1991-1786BC).

Amenemhat moved his capital from Thebes back to Memphis. From here he annexed Nubia and extended his kingdom to the land of Sham, as far as Syria and Palestine. Al Fayoum became the capital of the Middle Kingdom during the reign of Amenemhat's son Senusert I. His successors Amenemhat II and Senusert III built the last pyramids in Lahun, Lisht and Hawara.

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During this long period provincial governors or monarchs began to vie for power and threaten the Pharaonic authority and it is said that the power of the monarchs was gradually eliminated. Over time the central authority weakened, leading to civil disorder and instability and a prolonged period of upheaval.

The Second Intermediate Period (1786-1567BC)

The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties were powerless to put Down the Hyskos, tribal warlords with foreign support who seized control of the Delta, establishing the capital of Avaris and moving south. Despite their alien origins (Hyskos means "Princes of Foreign Lands") and foreign ties, the Hyskos assumed an Egyptian identity and ruled as pharaohs.

The Hyskos dominion eventually was shaken by Thebes, which established the Seventeenth Dynasty and, under Wadikheperre Kamose, laid siege to Avaris. When his successor Ahmosis expelled the Hyskos from Egypt in 1567 BC, the New Kingdom was born. The Hyksos were defeated because they had become decadent and because the Egyptians had adopted and improved Hyksos weaponry.

The New Kingdom (1567-1085BC)

Ahmosis founded the Eighteenth Dynasty (1567-1320BC), which reigned over the first part of a prosperous and stable imperial period during which Pharaonic culture flowered and Egypt became a world power.

During the Eighteenth Dynasty Nubia was subdued and its wealth of gold, ivory, gemstones and ebony flowed into Egypt. Pharaonic armies conquered the Near East, Syria and Palestine and workers from these new-established colonies, and a cultural cross-fertilization took place as artisans and intellectuals transplanted their knowledge, skills and culture onto Egyptian soil.

The temple of Karnak at Thebes grew with the expansion of empire. Tuthmosis I constructed the first tomb in the Valley of the Kings. His daughter, Hatshepsut, reigned as pharaoh and built the temple of Deir Al-Bahri. Tuthmosis III expanded the empire beyond Nubia and across the Euphrates to the boundaries of the Hittites.

Imperial expansion continued under Amenophis II and Tuthmosis IV. The reign of Amenophis III was the pinnacle of Egyptian Pharaonic power. Under Amenophis III the kingdom was secure enough for the Pharaoh to build many of the greatest Pharaonic structures including the Temple of Luxor.

His son Amenophis IV fought with the priesthood of the god Amun and changed his name to

Akhenaten in honor of the god Aten. With his wife Nefertiti, Akhenaten established a new capital at Tel El-Amarna dedicated to the worship of Aten, which many believe was the first organized monotheistic religion. Both his predecessors and successors denounced his beliefs as heresy.

During their short reign (1379-1362BC) Pharaonic obsession with the afterlife was banished, as was the old idolatry. Art began to reflect human concerns. This was called the Amarna revolution, which barely survived Akhenaten's reign. His successor Smenkhkare upheld Akhenaten's ideals but died within a year, leaving the child pharaoh Tutankhamen under the influence of the priesthood who easily convinced him to renounce the monotheism of his father-in-law and return to rule from Thebes.

This period has been called the Theban counter-revolution during which time the priesthood destroyed any traces of Akhenaten's reign, including the Temple of the Sun at Karnak.

Tutankhamen ruled for nine years until just before reaching manhood, when he died. He is most remembered in modern times for the fabulous and pristine treasures uncovered when his tomb was discovered in 1922.

Ay and Horemheb, the last Eighteenth Dynasty kings, both of whom worked to eradicate Akhenaten’s revolutionary beliefs and restore the status quo, succeeded Tutankhamen.

The Nineteenth Dynasty (1320-1200BC)

Was established by the Horemheb's wazir, or minister, Ramses I who reigned for two years. Ramses and his descendants were warrior kings who recaptured territories lost under Akhenaten. His successor Seti I regained controls over Egypt's eastern colonies in Palestine, Nubia and the Near East. Seti I also began construction on a majestic temple at Abydos, which was completed by his son Ramses II who reconquered Asia Minor.

Ramses also constructed monumental structures like the Ramesseum in Thebes and the sun temples of Abu Simbel. His son Merneptah spent much of his reign driving back invaders from Libya and the Mediterranean but he is believed to be the biblical Pharaoh described in Exodus. Seti II was the last king of the Nineteenth Dynasty.

The Twentieth Dynasty (1200-1085BC) was to be the last of the New Kingdom and was first established by Sethnakhte. By the reign of his successor Ramses III, the kingdom was occupied with defending itself against Libyan and "Sea People" invasions. Ramses III constructed the enormous palace temple of Medinet Hebu but the empire had begun to disintegrate with strikes, assassination attempts and provincial unrest.

His successors, who were all named Ramses, presided over the decline of their empire until Ramses XI withdrew from active control over his kingdom, delegating authority over Upper Egypt to his high priest of Amun, Herihor, and of Lower Egypt to his minister Smendes. These two rulers were the last of the New Kingdom.

The Late Period (1085-322BC)

The Twenty-First Dynasty was established by successors of Herihor and Smendes who continued to rule Upper and Lower Egypt separately from Thebes and Tanis. But by this period external threats from Libyan invaders and others were eroding Egypt's power to defend itself. Eventually both Upper and Lower Egypt succumbed to foreign invasions. Libyan warriors who established their own Twenty-Second Dynasty drove the Tanites from power.

Upper Egypt held out longer against Nubian invaders until being overrun by the armies of their ruler Piankhi all the way to Memphis. Piankhi's brother Shabaka marched north to conquer the Delta and reunite Upper and Lower Egypt under the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty of Nubian Kings (747-656BC). During this period there was an artistic and cultural revival. The Twenty-Fifth Dynasty ended when Assyrian armies captured Memphis and attacked Thebes, driving the Nubian pharaoh Tanutamun back to Nubia.

The Assyrians found a willing Egyptian collaborator in the form of a prince from the Delta. Psammetichus I governed on behalf of the Assyrians until they were forced to withdraw their forces to wage war against the Persian Empire. On the departure of the Assyrians, Psammetichus I declared himself pharaoh and established the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, ruling over a re-united Egypt from his capital at Saïs in the Delta. This was to be the last great Pharaonic age, which witnessed the revival of majestic art and architecture and the introduction of new technologies.

Gradually, though, the power of the kingdom was eroded through invasion, ending ignominiously when Amasis, "the Drunkard", was forced to depend on Greek forces to defend his Kingdom against the onslaught of Persian imperial armies.

The Persians first invaded Egypt in 525BC, initiating a period of foreign domination of the country, which lasted until 1952, when an Egyptian republic replaced the monarchy of King Farouk. (Farouk was the last king of the Mohammed Ali Dynasty whos founder, Muhammad Ali, was an Albanian commander of the Ottoman army.) The conquering Persians established the Twenty-Seventh Dynasty (525-404BC), which ruled Egypt with an iron hand.

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The Persians, under the emperors Cambyses and Darius, completed a canal connecting the Nile with the Red Sea, which had been started by the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty king Necho II. They also constructed temples and a new city on the site of what is now called Old Cairo. This was called Babylon in Egypt.

The harshness of Persian rule resulted in revolts against the Persian satraps Xerxes and Artaxerxes, which led to the Twenty-Eighth dynasty of the Egyptian ruler Amyrtaeus and his successors. The Egyptian kings of succeeding dynasties were under continual attack by Persians until Artaxerxes III overthrew the Thirtieth and final Pharaonic dynasty. The Persians controlled Egypt until the arrival of Alexander the Great in 332BC.

Greek Rule (332-30BC)

After centuries of upheaval and foreign incursions, Egypt was in disarray when Alexander established his own Pharaonic rule, reorganizing the country's government, founding a new capital city of Alexandria and validating the religion of the pharaohs. Alexander was received as a liberator.

Upon his death in 323BC, the empire of Alexandria was divided among his Macedonian generals. Ptolemy I thus established the Ptolemaic Dynasty, which ruled Egypt for three centuries. Under the Ptolemys Greek became the official language of Egypt and Hellenistic culture and ideas were introduced and synthesized with indigenous Egyptian theology, art, architecture and technology. The Ptolemy's synthesis of religious ideas resulted in the construction of the temples of Edfu and Kom Ombo, among other sacred structures. Alexandria became a great capital, housing one of history's greatest libraries.

Gradually Ptolemaic rule was subverted by internal power struggles and foreign intervention. The Romans made inroads into Ptolemaic Egypt, supporting various rulers and factions until attaining total control over the country when Julius Caesar's armies attacked Alexandria.

Queen Cleopatra VII was the last of the Ptolemaic rulers who reigned under the protection of the Caesar with whom she had a son. With the assassination of Caesar, Mark Antony arrived in Egypt and fell in love with Cleopatra, living with her for 10 years and helping Egypt retain its independence. The fleets of Octavian Caesar destroyed the Egyptian navy in the battle of Actium, driving Antony and Cleopatra to suicide and Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire.

Roman and Byzantine Rule (30BC-AD638)

Octavian Caesar became the first Roman ruler of Egypt, reigning as the Emperor Augustus but also assuming the pharaonic title. Egypt became the granary of the Roman Empire and remained stable for about 300 years. The Romans, like their Greek predecessors, synthesized many Egyptian beliefs with their own, building temples at Dendara and Esna and Trajan's kiosk at Philae. Hellenism remained a dominant cultural force and Alexandria continued to be a centre of Greek learning.

The Christian era began in Egypt with the supposed biblical flight of the Holy Family from Palestine. To this day shrines and churches mark the stages of the journey of Mary, Joseph and their infant Jesus. According to Coptic tradition, it was not until the arrival of Saint Mark that Christianity was established in Egypt during the reign of Nero. Saint Mark began preaching the gospel in about AD40 and established the Patriarchate of Alexandria in AD61.

The Egyptian Coptic Church expanded over three centuries in spite of Roman persecution of Christian converts throughout the Empire. In AD202 the Roman authorities, continuing for nearly a century, initiated persecutions against Copts. In AD284, during the reign of the Emperor Diocletian, a bloody massacre of Coptic Christians took place from which the church has dated its calendar. Christianity was legalized and adopted as the official religion of the Roman Empire by the Emperor Constantine.

By the 3rd century AD the Roman Empire was in decline as a result of internal strife, famine and war, finally splitting into eastern and western empires. The Eastern Empire based in Constantinople became known as the Byzantine Empire. The Western Empire remained centered in Rome. The legalization of Christianity did not stop Roman persecution of the Coptic Christians because the Byzantine church was based upon fundamentally different beliefs than those of the Coptic Christian church which had adopted a Monophysite belief in the total divinity of Christ, as opposed to the Byzantine belief that Christ was both human and divine. The schism between the Byzantine and Coptic churches was never closed.

The Copts were formally excommunicated from the Orthodox Church at the Council of Chalcedon in AD451 and established their own Patriarchate at Alexandria. The fifth century was also a time when monasticism emerged and the Coptic monasteries of Saint Catherine, Saint Paul and Saint Anthony were established as well as those at Wadi Natrun and Sohaag.

Apart from this doctrinal upheaval, the Byzantine rule over Egypt remained relatively stable until the coming of Islam.

Timeline for Ancient Eygpt

Late Predynastic Period 3100-2950 BC

Earliest known hieroglyphic writing
Foundation of the Egyptian state

Early Dynastic Period (First-Third Dynasties) 2950-2575 BC

Creation of the capital city of Memphis
Intensive contact with Palestine
The earliest form of pyramid is built – the Step Pyramid at Saqqara – by Djoser

Old Kingdom (4th-8th Dynasties) 2575-2150 BC

The Old Kingdom or the 'Pyramid Age' heralds the golden age of Pyramid building
The first king of the Fourth Dynasty, Sneferu, comes to power
Sneferu builds the two Pyramids at Dahshur – the Bent Pyramid and the North or Red Pyramid
Khufu – Sneferu's son and the second king of the Fourth Dynasty - inherits the throne
The Great Pyramid of Cheops (also known as Khufu) is built at Giza
Pyramids and elite tombs include the first extensive inscriptions

First Intermediate Period (Ninth-11th Dynasties) 2125-1975 BC

Egypt splits into two smaller states, ruled from Memphis in the north and Thebes in the south

Middle Kingdom (11th-14th Dynasties) 1975-1640 BC

Mentuhotep reunites Egypt
Amenemhat I founds a new royal residence near Memphis
Egypt conquers Lower Nubia under Senwosret I and III
Classical period of art and literature

Second Intermediate Period (15th-17th Dynasties) 1630-1520 BC

Hyksos kings seize power in the north
Theban 17th dynasty in the south

New Kingdom (18th -20th Dynasties) 1539-1075 BC

Egyptian empire in Near East and Nubia
Elaborate tombs of the Valley of the Kings
Rule of woman pharaoh Hatshepsut
King Akhenaten attempts to introduce a monothesistic religion
Brief reign of Tutankhamun
Ramesses II rules for 67 years

Third Intermediate Period (21st-25th Dynasties) 1075-715 BC

Disunity and Libyan settlement in Egypt
Nubians conquer Egypt (late eighth century)

Late Period (20th-30th Dynasties, 2nd Persian Period) 715-332 BC
Egypt conquered briefly by Assyrians
Cultural revival under kings from Sais
Persian conquest of Egypt (525 BC)
Egypt independent again (404-343 BC)

Greco-Roman Period (Macedonians, Ptolemies, and Romans) 332 BC-395 AD

Alexander the Great occupies Egypt
Alexander's general, Ptolemy, becomes king and founds a dynasty
The Rosetta Stone is carved (196 BC)
Cleopatra VII reigns (51-30 BC)

Egypt becomes a province of the Roman Empire (30 BC)

Ancient Egypt Timeline

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Pre-Dynastic Egypt

As elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa, Egypt went through Paleolithic, Mesolithic,

and Neolithic periods before "civilization" set in. In fact, Egypt was still in its Neolithic phase well into the dynastic period. Copper tools came into use in the Old Kingdom (and were used to cut the stone of the Old Kingdom pyramids), but bronze tools and technology only became available when they were introduced by the more advanced Hyksos at the end of the Middle Kingdom and during the Second Intermediate Period.

The Old Kingdom

From the 1st dynasty 3I00 2890 BC to the 8th dynasty 2181- 2125 BC

Egyptian dating is expressed by ruling families - dynasties. The historian Manetho (270 BC) wrote a history of Egypt giving the number of dynasties, the number of kings, their names and the length of each reign.

Protodynastic Egypt Dynasty 0

Scorpion, Narmer (Catfish), Aha, and "Menes" are all semi-mythical and are sometimes listed as being in the 0 (Zero) Dynasty. Other scholars start with Narmer as the first Pharaoh of the 1st dynasty.

The Narmer Palette makes a claim for Narmer as the unifier of Upper and Lower Egypt, but all Pharaohs exaggerated their deeds and conquests. It may have been a propaganda piece prepared for Narmer or even prepared and deposited in the Herakeopolis (Hieakonpolis) cache by someone later.

1st dynasty 3I00 2890 BC

- **Narmer**
- **Aha**
- **Djer**
- **Djet**
- **Den**
- **Anedjib**
- **Semerkhet**
- **Qaa**

Before the first dynasty Egypt was in fact two lands. The unifier of these lands, in folk tales, was a fellow called Menes and known as the first mortal king of Egypt. The Greek historian Herodotus, records that this king founded the capital, Memphis, by damming the Nile to reclaim land for the city.

During this time papyrus paper was invented and as a consequence writing was used as an administrative tool of government. This created the conditions for prosperity, which can be seen in the magnificent artefacts that have been found from this period.

2nd dynasty 2890-2686 BC

- **Hetepsekhemwy**
- **Raneb**
- **Nynetjer**
- **Peribsen**
- **Khasekhem (Khasekhemwy**

At the end of the 1st dynasty there appears to have been rival claimants for the throne. The successful claimant's Horus name, Hetepsekhemwy, translates as "peaceful in respect of the two powers" this may be a reference to the opposing gods Horus and Seth, or an understanding reached between two rival factions. But the political rivalry was never fully resolved and in time the situation worsened into conflict. The fourth pharaoh, Peribsen, took the title of Seth instead of Horus and the last ruler of the dynasty, Khasekhemwy, took both titles. A Horus/Seth name meaning "arising in respect of the two powers," and "the two lords are at peace in him." Towards the end of this dynasty, however, there seems to have been more disorder and possibly civil war.

3rd dynasty 2686-2613 BC

- **Sanakht**
- **Djoser**
- **Sekhemkhet**
- **Huni**

This period is one of the landmarks of Human history. A prosperous age and the appearance of the world's first great monumental building - the Pyramid. The artistic masterpieces in the tombs of the nobles show the martial wealth of this time

Djoser - one of the outstanding kings of Egypt. His Step Pyramid at Saqqara is the first large stone building and the forerunner of later pyramids.

4th dynasty 2613-2494 BC

- **Sneferu**
- **Cheops**
- **Radjedef**
- **Chephren**
- **Menkaura**
- **Shepseskaf**

Egypt was able to accomplish the ambitious feat of the Giza pyramids because there had been a long period of peace and no threats of invasion. So their energies were spent in cultivating art to it's highest forms.

The fourth dynasty came from Memphis and the fifth from the south in Elephantine. The transition from one ruling family to another appears to have been peaceful.

5th dynasty 2494 2345 BC

- **Userkaf**
- **Sahura**

- **Neferirkara Kakai**
- **Shepseskara Isi**
- **Raneferef**
- **Nyuserra**
- **Menkauhor Akauhor**
- **Djedkara Isesi**
- **Unas**

The first two kings of the fifth dynasty, were sons of a lady, Khentkaues, who was a member of the fourth dynasty royal family. There was an institutionalisation of officialdom (bureaucracy), and high officials for the first time came from outside the royal family.

The pyramids are smaller and less solidly constructed than those of the fourth dynasty, but the carvings from the mortuary temples are well preserved and of the highest quality.

There are surviving papyri from this period, which demonstrate well developed methods of accounting and record keeping. They document the redistribution of goods between the royal residence, the temples, and officials.

6th dynasty 2345 2181 BC

- **Teti**
- **Userkara**
- **Pepy I**
- **Merenra**
- **Pepy II**

There are many inscriptions from the sixth dynasty. These include records of trading expeditions to the south from the reigns of Pepi I. One of the most interesting is a letter written by Pepy II.

The pyramid of Pepi II at southern Saqqara is the last major monument of the Old Kingdom. None of the names of kings of the short-lived seventh dynasty are known and the eighth dynasty shows signs of and political decay.

First Intermediate Period

7th and 8th dynasties 2181- 2125 BC

About this time the Old Kingdom state collapsed. Egypt simultaneously suffered political failure and environmental disaster. There was famine, civil disorder and a rise in the death rate. With the climate of Northeast Africa becoming dryer, combined with low inundations of the Nile and the cemeteries rapidly filling, this was not a good time for the Egyptians.

The years following the death of Pepy II are most obscure. The only person from this era to have left an impression on posterity is a woman called Nitokris who appears to have acted as king. There are no contemporary records but Herodotus wrote of her:

> **"She killed hundreds of Egyptians to avenge the king, her brother, whom his subjects had killed, and had forced her to succeed. She did this by constructing a huge underground chamber. Then invited to a banquet all those she knew to be responsible for her brother's death. When the banquet was underway, she let the river in on them, through a concealed pipe. After this fearful revenge, she flung herself into a room filled with embers, to escape her punishment."**

For a time petty warlords ruled the provinces. Then from the city of Herakleopolis there emerged a ruling family led by one Khety who for a time held sway over the whole country. However, this was short lived and the country split into North, ruled from Herakleopolis and South, ruled from Thebes.

Whereas the Theban dynasty was stable, kings succeeded one another rapidly at Herakleopolis. There was continual conflict between the two lands which was resolved in the 11th dynasty.

The Middle Kingdom

From the 11th dynasty 2125-1991 BC to the 17th dynasty 1650-1550 BC

11th dynasty 2125-1991 BC

- **Intef I**
- **Intef II**
- **Intef III**
- **Mentuhotep I**
- **Mentuhotep II**
- **Mentuhotep III**

The Middle Kingdom really begins with the reunification of the country under Mentuhotep I who ousted the kings of Herakleopolis. The three Intefs, therefore, belong to the preceding Intermediate Period. Mentuhotep I assumed the Horus name Divine of the White Crown, implicitly claiming all of Upper Egypt. This was later changed to Uniter of the Two Lands. His remarkable mortuary complex at Dayr al-Bahri was the architectural inspiration for Hatshepsut's temple, which was built alongside some 500 years later

12th dynasty 1991-1782 BC

- **Amenemhet I**
- **Sesostris I**
- **Amenemhet II**
- **Sesostris II**
- **Sesostris III**
- **Amenemhet III**
- **Amenemhet IV**
- **Queen Sobeknefru**

Amenemhet I moved the capital back to the Memphis. There was a revival of Old Kingdom artistic styles.

He later took his son, Sesostris as his co-regent. During the 10 years of joint rule Sesostris undertook campaigns in Lower Nubia which led to its conquest. Amenemhet was murdered during Sesostris' absence on a campaign in Libya, but Sesostris was able to maintain his hold on the throne and consolidated his father's achievements,

Sesostris III reorganised Egypt into four regions the northern and southern halves of the Nile Valley and the eastern and western Delta. He and his successor Amenemhet III left a striking artistic legacy in the form of statuary depicting them as ageing, careworn rulers.

It was during this period that the written language was regularised in its classical form of Middle Egyptian. The first body of literary texts was composed in this form, although several are ascribed to Old Kingdom authors. The most important of these is the "Instruction for Merikare," a discourse on kingship and moral responsibility.

Queen Sobeknefru, the first female monarch marked the end of the dynastic line.

13th dynasty 1782-1650 BC

- **Wegaf**
- **Intef IV**
- **Hor**
- **Sobekhotep II**
- **Khendjer**
- **Sobekhotep III**
- **Neferhotep I**
- **Sobekhotep IV**
- **Ay**
- **Neferhotep II**

14th dynasty

- **Lasted for around 57 years**

The true chronology of the 13th dynasty is rather vague since there are few surviving monuments from this period. There were many kings who reigned for a short time, who were not of a single family and some were born commoners. The last fifty years represents a gradual decline. It seems that after the death of Ay, the eastern Delta broke away under its own petty kings (14th dynasty). There is even less known about this dynasty.

Asiatic immigration became widespread, the northeastern Delta being settled by successive waves of Palestinians.

The Second Intermediate Period

The Middle Kingdom fell because of the weakness of its later kings, which lead to Egypt being invaded by an Asiatic, desert people called the Hyksos. These invaders made themselves kings and held the country for more than two centuries. The word Hyksos goes back to an Egyptian phrase meaning "ruler of foreign lands". The Jewish historian Josephus (1st century AD) mentions them. He depicts the new rulers as sacrilegious invaders who despoiled the land but with the exception of the title Hyksos they presented themselves as Egyptian kings and appear to have been accepted as such. They tolerated other lines of kings within the country, both those of the 17th dynasty and the various minor Hyksos who made up the 16th dynasty.

15th dynasty 1650-1550 BC

- **Sheshi**
- **Yakubher**
- **Khyan**
- **Apepi I**
- **Apepi II**

16th dynasty 1650-1550 BC

- **Anather**
- **Yakobaam**

The Hyksos, sometimes referred to as the Shepherd Kings or Desert Princes, sacked the old capital of Memphis and built their capital at Avaris, in the Delta. The dynasty consisted of five possibly six kings, the best-known being Apepi I, who reigned for up to 40 years.

Their rule brought many technical innovations to Egypt, from bronze working, pottery and looms to new musical instruments and musical styles. New breeds of animals and crops were introduced. But the most important change was in the area of warfare; composite bows, new types of daggers and scimitars, and above all the horse and chariot. In many ways the Hyksos modernized Egypt and ultimately Egypt was to benefit from their rule.

17th dynasty 1650-1550 BC

- **Sobekemsaf**
- **Intef VII**
- **Tao I**
- **Tao II**
- **Kamose**

While the Hyksos ruled northern Egypt a new line of native rulers was developing in Thebes. They controlled the area from Elephantine Island in the south, to Abydos in the middle of the country. The early rulers made no attempt to challenge the Hyksos, but an uneasy truce existed between them. However, the later rulers rose against the Hyksos, and a number of

battles were fought. King Tao II, also know as Seqenenre, was probably killed in one of these battles since his mummy shows evidence of terrible head wounds. It was to be one of his sons Ahmose, the founder of the Eighteenth dynasty, who was to expel the Hyksos from Egypt.

The New Kingdom

From the 18th dynasty 1550-1295 BC

18th dynasty 1550-1295 BC

- **Ahmose**
- **Amenhotep I**
- **Thutmose I**
- **Thutmose II**
- **Hatshepsut**
- **Thutmose III**
- **Amenhotep II**
- **Thutmose IV**
- **Amenhotep III**
- **Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten)**
- **Neferneferuaten**
- **Tutankhamen**
- **Ay**
- **Horemheb**

This family began a period of unprecedented success in international affairs for Egypt. There was a succession of extraordinary and able kings and queens who laid the foundations of a strong Egypt and bequeathed a prosperous economy to the kings of the 19th dynasty.

There was Ahmose who expelled the Hyksos, followed by Thutmose I's conquest in the Near East and Africa. Queen Hatshepsut and Thutmose III who made Egypt into an ancient super power. The magnificent Amenhotep III, who began an artistic revolution. Akhenaton and Nefertiti who began a religious revolution - the concept of one god. Finally there was Tutankhamen who is so famous in our modern age.

19th dynasty 1295 -1186 BC

- **Rameses I**
- **Seti I**
- **Rameses II**
- **Merenptah**
- **Amenmessu**
- **Sety II**
- **Saptah**
- **Tausret**

The reign of Seti I looked for its model to the mid-18th dynasty and was a time of considerable prosperity. He restored countless monuments. His temple at Abydos exhibits some of the finest carved wall reliefs.

His son Rameses II is the major figure of the dynasty.

Around this time the Hittites had become a dominant Asiatic power. An uneasy balance of power developed between the two kingdoms, which was punctuated by wars and treaties

By now Egypt was an ethnically pluralistic society, and this is reflected in a diversity of artistic expression. Unfortunately the tide of history was turning and Rameses' son, Merenptah had to struggle to maintain Egypt's prestige.

20th dynasty 1186 - 1069 BC

- **Setnakht**
- **Rameses III**
- **Rameses IV**
- **Rameses V**
- **Rameses VI**
- **Rameses VII**
- **Rameses VIII**
- **Rameses IX**
- **Rameses X**
- **Rameses XI**

Rameses III was the last great king. He gave Egypt a final moment of glory by defeating Sea Peoples who had utterly destroyed Hittite Empire and swept all before them on their march south. He was followed by a succession of kings all called Rameses. Perhaps this was a vain attempt to recapture past glories. Rameses III had ruled for 31 years and was the last of the great Pharaohs. Egypt now began to suffer economic problems and was unable to exploit the revolution of the Iron Age (which had begun around 1200 BC) because she had no sources of iron ore. But the most important factor in Egypt's decline was a break down in the fabric of society. There were disputes between officials and governors and infighting between the north and south. The priesthood became much more powerful and eventually took control of the government. From this time onwards others would determine the destiny of the Mediterranean world. The Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, and eventually the Romans were to become the lead players on the stage of international politics.

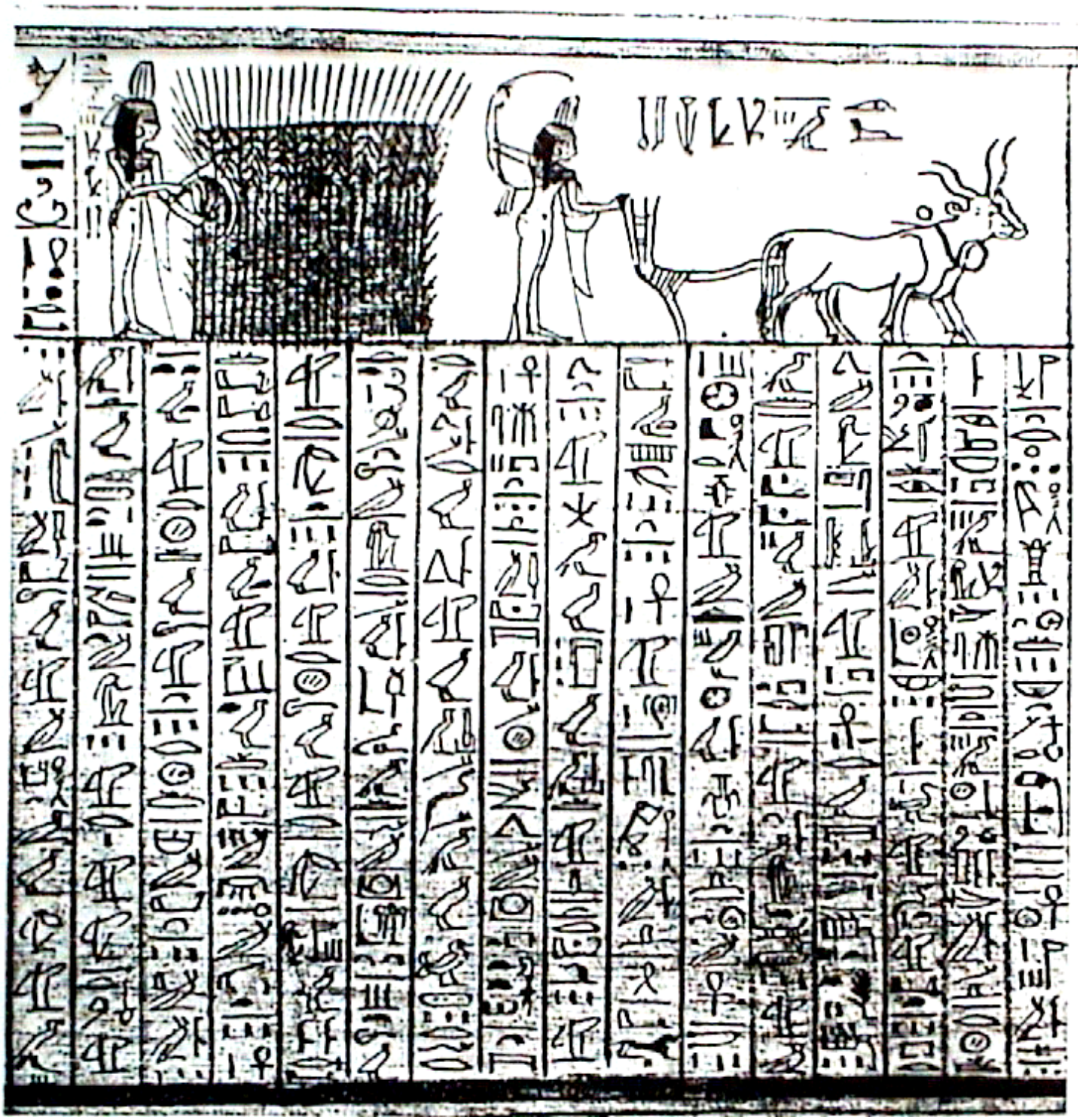
The Death of Rameses III

Rameses III had two principle wives plus a number of minor wives, and it was one of the principle wives, Tiye, who was the cause of his destruction. She hatched a plot to kill him with the aim of placing her son, prince Pentaweret, on the throne. She and her confederates stirred up a rebellion and, according to some accounts, used magic wax images and poison as their weapons. The

conspiracy failed and the traitors were arrested, but not before Rameses was mortally wounded. Fourteen officials sat in judgment and all the accused, with the exception of one, was found guilty and condemned to commit suicide. Rameses died before the trial was completed.

For more on Rameses III, including the assassination plot, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramesses_III.

Unit 3 Egyptian Language and Writing



Ancient Egyptian scripts

Origins of Egyptian Hieroglyphs

The ancient Egyptians believed that writing was invented by the god Thoth and called their hieroglyphic script "*mdwt ntr*" (god's words). The word hieroglyph comes from the Greek *hieros* (sacred) plus *glypho* (inscriptions) and was first used by Clement of Alexandria (Titus Flavius Clemens (c.150 - c. 215)).

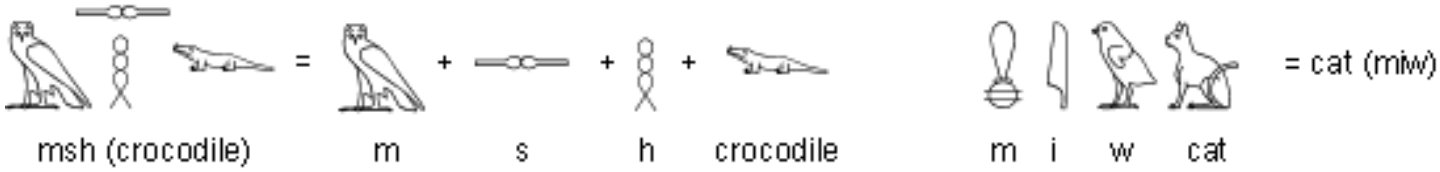
The earliest known examples of writing in Egypt have been dated to 3,400 BC. The latest dated inscription in hieroglyphs was made on the gate post of a temple at Philae in 396 AD.

The hieroglyphic script was used mainly for formal inscriptions on the walls of temples and tombs. In some inscriptions the glyphs are very detailed and in full colour, in others they are simple outlines. For everyday writing the hieratic script was used.

After the Emperor Theodsius I ordered the closure of all pagan temples throughout the Roman empire in the late 4th century AD, knowledge of the hieroglyphic script was lost until the early 19th century, when a French man named Jean-Francois Champollion (1790-1832) managed to decipher the script. (Egyptian and Coptic sources say that the script survived longer.)

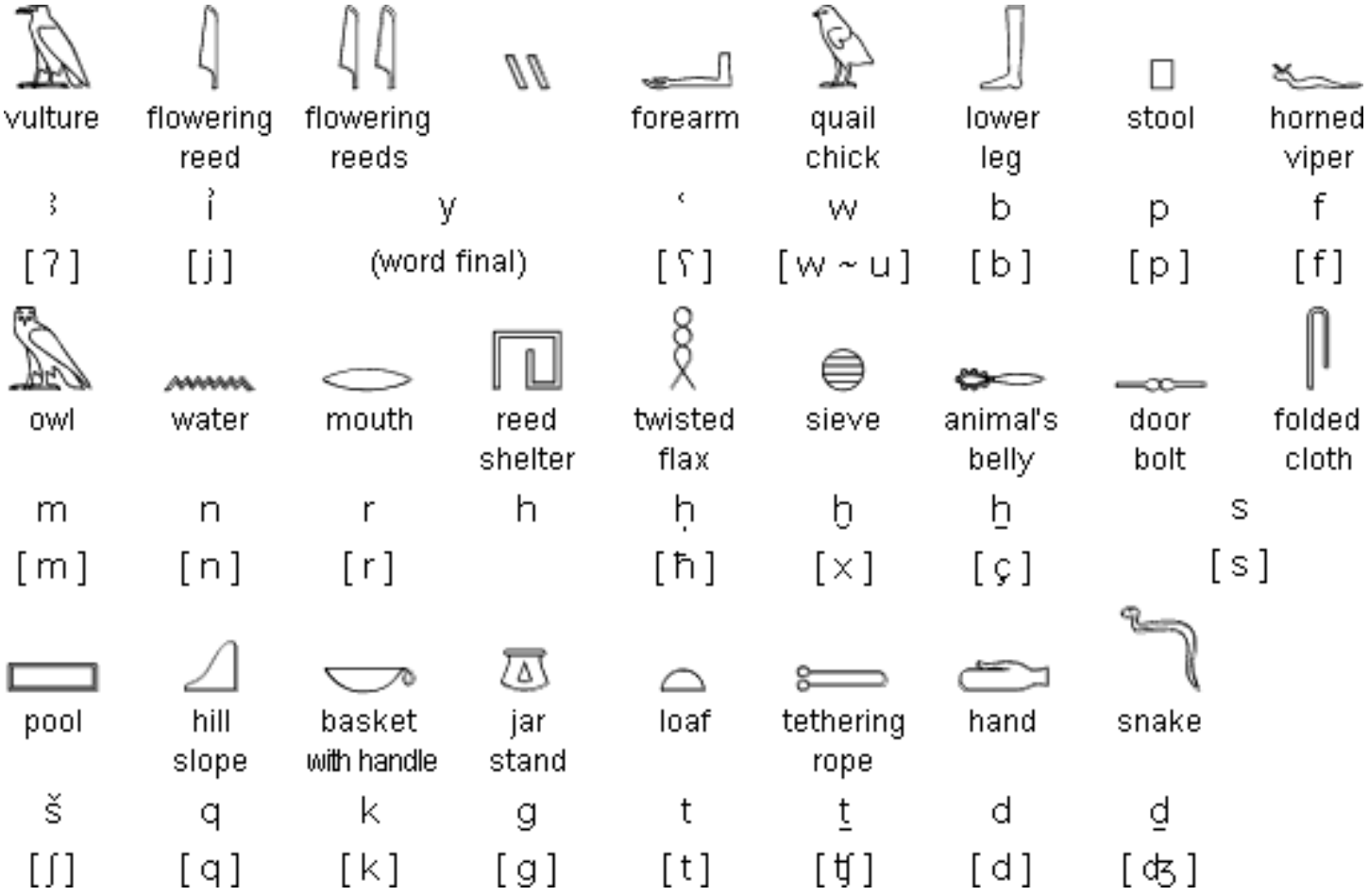
Notable features

- **Possibly pre-dates Sumerian Cuneiform writing - if this is true, the Ancient Egyptian script is the oldest known writing system. Another possibility is that the two scripts developed at more or less the same time.**
- **The direction of writing in the hieroglyphic script varied - it could be written in horizontal lines running either from left to right or from right to left, or in vertical columns running from top to bottom. You can tell the direction of any piece of writing by looking at the way the animals and people are facing - they look (predominantly) towards the beginning of the line.**
- **The arrangement of glyphs was based partly on artistic considerations.**
- **A fairly consistent core of 700 glyphs was used to write Classical or Middle Egyptian (ca. 2000-1650 BC), though during the Greco-Roman eras (332 BC - ca. 400 AD) over 5,000 glyphs were in use.**
- **The glyphs have both semantic and phonetic values. For example, the glyph for crocodile is a picture of a crocodile and also represents the sound "msh". When writing the word for crocodile, the Ancient Egyptians combined a picture of a crocodile with the glyphs which spell out "msh". Similarly the hieroglyphs for cat, *miw*, combine the glyphs for m, i and w with a picture of a cat.**



Used to write:
"Egyptian" was an Afro-Asiatic language spoken in Egypt until about the 10th century AD. After that it continued to be used as a liturgical language of Egyptian Christians, the Copts, in the form of Coptic.

Hieroglyphs representing single consonants
These glyphs alone could be used to write Ancient Egyptian and represent the first alphabet ever devised. In practice, they were rarely used in the fashion.



Numerals
By combining the following glyphs, any number could be constructed. The higher value signs were always written in front of the lower value ones.

Sample text

Transliteration: **iw wnm msh nsw*, this means "The crocodile eats the king".***

Hieratic script

The Hieratic script was invented and developed more or less at the same time as the hieroglyphic script and was used in parallel with it for everyday purposes such as keeping records and accounts and writing letters. It was used until the 26th Dynasty, though by that time, it was only used for religious texts, while the Demotic script was used for most other purposes.

Notable features

- **A simplified and abbreviated form of the hieroglyphic script in which the people, animals and object depicted are no longer easily recognisable**
- **Structurally the same as the hieroglyphic script**
- **Written almost exclusively from right to left in horizontal lines and mainly in ink on papyrus**
- **Written in a number of different styles such as "business hand" and the more elaborate "book hand"**
- **There were a number of regional variations, one of which, a northern version, developed into the Demotic script by the 25th Dynasty**

Hieratic glyphs and the hieroglyphs they evolved from

Hieratic determinatives and the hieroglyphs they evolved from

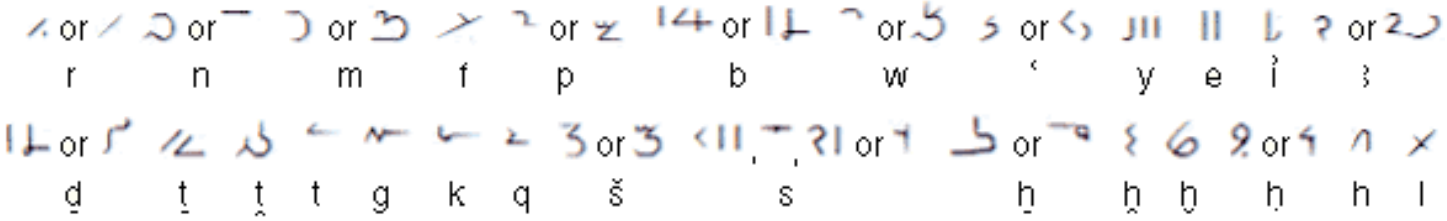
Demotic script

The Demotic or popular script, a name given to it by Herodotus, developed from a northern variant of the Hieratic script in around 660 BC. The Egyptians themselves called it 'sekh shat' (writing for documents). During the 26th Dynasty it became the preferred script at court, however during the 4th century it was gradually replaced by the Greek-derived Coptic alphabet. The most recent example of writing in the Demotic script dates from 425 AD.

The Demotic script was used for writing business, legal, scientific, literary and religious documents. It was written almost exclusively from right to left in horizontal lines and mainly in ink on papyrus. Demotic inscriptions on wood and stone are also known. During the Ptolemaic Period it was regularly carved in stone - the most famous example of this is the Rosetta Stone, which is inscribed with texts in the Hieroglyphic script, Greek and Demotic and was one of the keys to the decipherment of Ancient Egyptian scripts.

It was deciphered mainly by Thomas Young, who also attempted to deciphere the hieroglyphic script, though without much success.

Demotic glyphs representing single consonants



Coptic alphabet

Origin

The Coptic alphabet is a variant of the Greek alphabet containing a number of extra letters for sounds not found in Greek. The extra letters come from the Demotic form of the Egyptian script. The Coptic alphabet came into being during the 3rd century BC after the Greek conquest of Egypt and the subsequent spread of Christianity.

The name 'Coptic' derives from the Greek word for Egyptian: *Aigyptioi,* which became *Qibt* in Arabic and then was Latinised to become *Copt*

Used to write Coptic, a member of the Egyptian branch of the Afro-Asiatic language family and a descendant of the Ancient Egyptian language. Coptic was an official language in Egypt until around the 13th Century AD, when it was replaced by Arabic. Nowadays Coptic Christians all speak Arabic as their every day language, but use Coptic in their religious ceremonies.

Coptic alphabet

alpha	veeta	ghamma	delta	ei	soo	zeta	eeta	theeta	iota	kappa
a	b, v	g, gh, ng	th, d	e	6	z	ee	th, t	i, y	k
[a]	[b, v]	[g, ŋ]	[ð, d]	[ɛ, e]		[z]	[i:]	[θ]	[ɪ, j]	[k]

lamda	mei	nei	eksee	o	pee	ro	seema	tav	epsilon	fei
l	m	n	x	o (short)	p	r	s	t, d	v, u, y	f
[l]	[m]	[n]	[ks]	[ɔ]	[p]	[r]	[s]	[t, d]	[v, u, ɪ]	[f]

kai	epsee	o	shai	fai	khai	horee	cheema	tee	janja	jinkim
k, sh, kh	ps	o (long)	sh	f	kh	h	ch	tee	g, j	
[k, ʃ, x]	[p͡s]	[o:]	[ʃ]	[f]	[x]	[h]	[ʧ]	[ti]	[g, ʤ]	

Notes

- **veeta = [b] at the beginning of a word, [v] elsewhere.**
- **ghamma = [ŋ] after a double seema, [g] elsewhere.**
- **delta = [d] in names, [ð] elsewhere.**
- **tav = [d] after nei, [t] elsewhere.**
- **epsilon = [v] after alpha or ei, [u] after short o, [ɪ] elsewhere.**
- **jinkim splits words into separate syllables when attached to the letter ei and followed by a consonant**

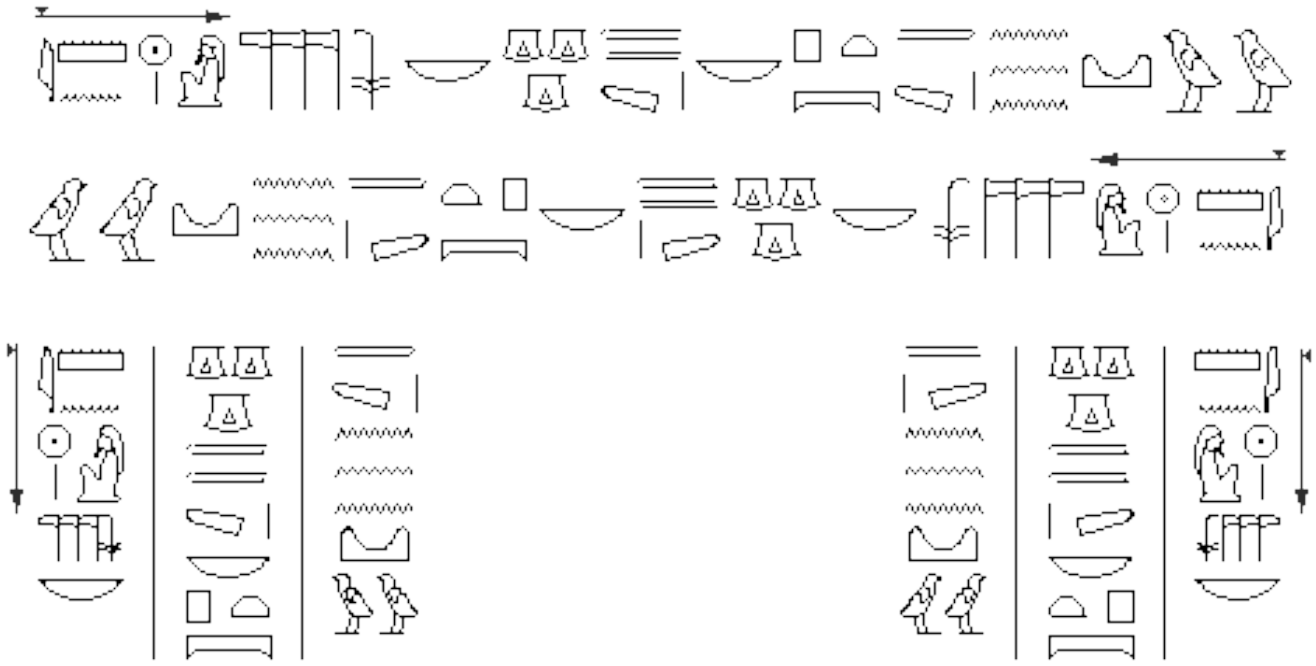
Numerals

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Egyptian Writing

From http://library.thinkquest.org/C0121761/1.htm

Contrary to hieratic and demotic, which were only written from right to left, hieroglyphs could be written from right to left and from left to right. Both hieroglyphic and early hieratic could be written in lines or in columns, but as it evolved, hieratic would be restricted to lines whereas hieroglyphic continued to be written in lines and columns.



The same hieroglyphic text, written in lines and in columns, from left to right and from right to left. The arrows in this example indicate the orientation of each text.

The text reads: "*Amun-Re, king of the gods, lord of the thrones of the two lands, lord of the heaven, the earth, the water and the mountains*".

When hieroglyphic text was used as a legend, a comment or as "words spoken by" with an object, a god or a person, the signs would be oriented in the same way as the accompanying image. Thus in a scene where a king makes an offering to a god, the text with the king and his offering is oriented in the same way as the king opposite the text of the god: within one text one can often find hieroglyphs written from right to left as well as from left to right! The need to write hieroglyphs in lines or in columns was more an aesthetic and practical need: the ancient artists had to make optimal use of the space they had for their text and image.

It is very easy to find the beginning of a hieroglyphic text: the signs that represent people or animals all look towards the beginning of the text. When a scene has texts that are written in both directions, either text will start somewhere near the middle. Which part of the text is to be read first (if there is such a notion as one part taking precedence over another) must be found examining the texts. Hieroglyphs are (almost) always written from top to bottom, even when they are arranged in lines will one read a sign that is directly above another before reading the

one below.

***T*he disposition of the signs was also influenced by other motivations:**

- **religious motivations made that signs or words representing holy notions such as the word "god" or the name of a god or goddess, were to be written before other signs. This could influence sign-order, word order and the order of entire parts of sentences. If one wished to write, for instance, "beloved by Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the Two Lands" one would normally write "Amun-Re, lord of the thrones of the Two Lands, beloved by", and if one wished to write "king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt Menkheperre, beloved by Amun-Re, of the gods king" one would normally write "Amun-Re, king of the gods, king of Upper- and Lower-Egypt Menkheperre, beloved by", ...**

- **the same applied to words related to the kingship. The word "king" would often be written before other words related to it. Thus palace was written "of the king, house" and prince "of the king, son" where grammatical rules imply that despite the reversed writing, one still read "house of the king" and "son of the king". This reversal of signs and even entire words or phrases is called *honorific transposition*.**

- **the order of sign was changed for aesthetic reasons as well: tall narrow signs were often placed before signs representing a bird, even when they ought to have been placed behind them. The guiding principle here was that the available space had to be used optimally: the surface of unused space was reduced to a minimal.**

- the same principle was also used, not in changing the order of certain signs, but also in their disposition. Low, narrow signs were often placed under the chest or behind the head of signs representing a bird.

The different kinds of signs

Although it uses images to express notions and ideas, hieroglyphic writing can not be considered as purely pictographic. A purely pictographic writing would mean that each sign represents a notion or a word: the image of a cow would represent the word "cow", the image of a face would represent the word "face", ... The number of words or notions that could be represented by a sign or combination of signs, however, would be limited to the practical and material. How would one write such notions as "love", "father", "brother", "good" or "bad"?

Basically, hieroglyphic distinguishes between two types of signs:

- **pictograms or ideograms: signs that are indeed pictographic, and that represent a notion**

- **phonograms: signs that represent a sound of one (uniliteral signs), two (biliteral signs) or three (triliteral signs) consonants.**

Words were often written as a combination of phonograms and ideograms, where the phonograms represent the consonantal skeleton of the word and the ideogram(s) determine its meaning. Ideograms used to determine the meaning of a word are called determinatives.

Since the Ancient Egyptians did not write any vowels, many words would have been written in the same way if they were only written using phonograms.

Some words, that were too abstract to be written using ideograms, were written with phonograms only. Such words are pronouns, prepositions, etc. Other words were so commonplace, that they were often written with ideograms only.

The phonetic part of words could be written using a combination of phonograms that represent one, two or three consonants, where the uniliteral signs would sometimes repeat one or more of the consonants of the biliteral or triliteral signs.

These principles made the hieroglyphic writing highly flexible and versatile. Many words could be written in different ways, depending on whether or not phonetic complements were used, which phonetic complements were used, whether or not ideograms were added to the phonetic part of the word, which ideograms were used.

A note on so-called "Ptolemaic" writing

During the Middle Kingdom and the beginning of the New Kingdom, there were about 750 to 800 signs in use. Some signs had a phonetic value, others had one or more ideographic meanings and an occasional sign would have a phonetic and an ideographic meaning, depending on its context. By the beginning of the Greek-Roman era, the number of signs was drastically increased to several thousands, and the meaning of individual signs was increased as well.

Due to changes in pronunciation, the phonetic values of most signs also evolved.

This sort of writing is often called "Ptolemaic" writing, because it is mainly found on monuments that are dated to the Greek-Roman era. This name, however, does not mean that "Ptolemaic" writing was invented by the Ptolemaic rulers or by the Greeks who came to live in Egypt. It is mainly, but not solely used for inscriptions on the walls of temples, such as the temple of Horus in Edfu. These texts were composed by Egyptian priests, not by Greeks, not even influenced by Greeks. The tendency to use the hieroglyphic writing in this manner predates the Greek conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great. The increase in the number of signs and their meaning shows us not a decaying and dying culture, but an inventive and creative mind bent on honouring Egyptian gods in a typical Egyptian manner.

Writing and magic

As already hinted in the previous, hieroglyphic writing was (sometimes) considered as of a magical nature. The individual hieroglyphs could possess a magical force that could be either benevolent or evil. A hieroglyph representing a scorpion, for instance, would often be drawn without its poisonous tail to prevent it from doing any harm. The determinative in the name of the demon Apophis is a snake that is being stabbed or cut, thus magically repelling the evil that emanates from the writing of Apophis' name. The writing of the phrase "like Re" with a hieroglyph representing a cat crowned with a solar disk was also the result of such magical considerations (see above). The same connection between writing and magic could also result in the cutting out or deleting of names of unpopular people, demons and even gods. During the Amarna-period, the many names of the god Amun would be struck from the walls, and less than a generation later, the very same thing would happen to the names of Aton,

Akhenaten and his relatives. In destroying the names of hated beings, harm was done magically to the beings themselves. The persecution of names was thus much more than an effort to remove a hated person from memory.

Jean-Francois Champollion -- 1790-1832

Champollion was a French Egyptologist, who is acknowledged as the father of modern Egyptology. He achieved many things during his short career, but he is best known for his work on the Rosetta Stone. It was his deciphering of the hieroglyphics contained on the Stone that laid the foundations for Egyptian archaeology.

He was born in 1790. His oldest brother educated him until he turned 10, at which time he was enrolled in the Lyceum in Grenoble. His brother was also an archaeologist, and it is probably from his influence that he developed a passion for languages in general and for Egypt in particular. While he was at the Lyceum, he presented a paper in which he argued that the language of the Copts in contemporary Egypt was in essence the same as that used by the Egyptians of antiquity.

His education continued at the College de France, where he specialized in languages of the Orient. He knew bits and pieces of many languages, and was fluent in several others. A partial listing of the languages he was familiar with is astounding: Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, Chaldean, Chinese, Coptic, Ethiopic, Sanskrit, Pahlevi, and Persian.

When he finished his education, he was invited to teach Royal College of Grenoble, where he taught history and politics. By the age of 19, he had earned his Doctor of Letters and his career began really taking off. He continued to teach at Grenoble until 1816. In 1818, he was appointed to a chair in history and geography at the Royal College of Grenoble, and taught there until 1821.

While he was teaching, he continued his research on ancient Egypt. He began to be noticed by others, and that resulted in his appointment as the conservator of the Louvre Museum's Egyptian Collection in 1826.

In 1828, he began a year-long trip to Egypt. He traveled with one of his students, Ippolito Rosellini. Rosellini was an Italian, who became a fairly well-known archaeologist in his own right. While they toured Egypt, Champollion took detailed notes of what he saw. Rosellini did the same, although his medium was engravings/drawings, and not words. The notes and engravings they left behind are still regarded as some of the best ever done. Together, they preserved a lot of information that otherwise would have been lost.

In 1831, the First Chair of Egyptian antiquities was created for him at the College de France, and he became a member of the French Academy. Sadly, he didn't get to enjoy this coveted post very long. He died of a stroke in 1832.

From http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2004/10/041007085716.htm

Hieroglyphics Cracked 1,000 Years Earlier Than Thought

ScienceDaily (Oct. 7, 2004) **— Western scholars were not the first to decipher the ancient language of the pharaohs, according to a new book that will be published later this year by a UCL researcher.**

Dr Okasha El Daly of UCL's Institute of Archaeology will reveal that Arabic scholars not only took a keen interest in ancient Egypt but also correctly interpreted hieroglyphics in the ninth century AD – almost 1,000 years earlier than previously thought.

It has long been thought that Jean-Francois Champollion was the first person to crack hieroglyphics in 1822 using newly discovered Egyptian antiquities such as the Rosetta stone. But fresh analysis of manuscripts tucked away in long forgotten collections scattered across the globe prove that Arabic scholars got there first.

Dr Okasha El Daly, of UCL's Institute of Archaeology, explains:

"For two and a half centuries the study of Egyptology has been dominated by a Euro-centric view, which has virtually ignored over a thousand years of Arabic scholarship and enquiry encouraged by Islam.

"Prior to Napoleonic times little was known in the West about the ancient civilisation of Egypt except what had been recorded in the Bible. It was assumed that the world of the pharaohs had long since been forgotten by Egyptians, who were thought to have been incorporated into the expanding Islamic world by the seventh century.

"But this overhasty conclusion ignores the vast contribution of medieval Arabic scholars and others between the seventh and 16th centuries. In reality a huge corpus of medieval writing by both scholars and ordinary people exists that dates from long before the earliest European Renaissance. Analysis reveals that not only did Moslems have a deep interest in the study of Ancient Egypt, they could also correctly decipher hieroglyphic script."

Following the Roman invasion of Egypt in 30 BC the use of hieroglyphics began to die out with the last known writing in the fifth century AD.

While Western medieval commentators believed that hieroglyphics were symbols each representing a single concept Dr El Daly has shown that Arab scholars grasped the fundamental principle that hieroglyphics could represent sounds as well as ideas.

Using his unique expertise in both Egyptology and medieval Arabic writers, Dr El Daly began a seven year investigation of Arabic writing on ancient Egypt.

“The manuscripts were scattered worldwide in private as well as public collections and were mostly not catalogued. Even when they were, they were often wrongly classified so I had to go through each one individually - it is not like researching in modern books with an index which you can check for relevant information,” says Dr El Daly.

“A specialist in only Arabic or Islamic studies reading these manuscripts would fail to grasp their significance to Egyptology. Conversely Egyptologists think that Arabs and Moslems had nothing useful to say about ancient Egypt, so there wasn’t any need to look at manuscripts that were mainly the domain of scholars within the disciplines of Arabic/Oriental studies.”

The breakthrough in Dr El Daly’s research came from analysis of the work of Abu Bakr Ahmad Ibn Wahshiyah, a ninth century alchemist. Ibn Wahshiyah’s work on ancient writing systems showed that he was able to correctly decipher many hieroglyphic signs. Being an alchemist not a linguist, his primary interest was to identify the phonetic value and meaning of hieroglyphic signs with the aim of accessing the ancient Egyptian scientific knowledge inscribed in hieroglyphs.

“By comparing Ibn Wahshiyah’s conclusions with those in current books on Egyptian Language, I was able to assess his accuracy in understanding hieroglyphic signs,” says Dr El Daly.

“In particular I looked at the Egyptian Grammar of Sir Alan Gardiner which has a sign list at the end, it revealed that Ibn Wahshiyah understood perfectly well the nature of Egyptian hieroglyphs.”

Dr El Daly added: “Western culture misinterprets Islam because we think teaching before the Quran is shunned, which isn’t the case. They valued history and assumed that Egypt was a land of science and wisdom and as such they wanted to learn their language to have access to such vast knowledge.

“Critically they did not, unlike the West, write history to fit with the religious ideas of the time, which makes their accounts more reliable. They were also keen on the universality of human history based on the unity of the origin of human beings and the diversity of their appearance and languages. Furthermore, there are likely to be many hidden manuscripts dotted round the world that could make a significant contribution to our understanding of the ancient world.

Dr Okasha El Daly is based in UCL’s Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, one of the world’s largest collections of artefacts covering thousands of years of ancient Egyptian prehistory and history.

Unit 4 – Pharaohs and Pharaohesses

Pharaohs Who Made a Difference

Dynasty 0/1
Narmer, c. 3100BC
Scorpion
Menes
Aha
Dynasty 3
Djoser, c. 2667 - 2648
Imhotep
Dynasty 4
Seneferu, c. 2613 - 2589
Khufu, c. 2589 - 2566
Djedefre, c. 2566 - 2558
Khafre, c. 2558 - 2532
Menkaure, c. 2532 - 2503
Dynasty 18
Ahmose, 1550 – 1525
Hatshepsut, 1473 - 1458
Thutmose II & III, 1492 - 1425
Amenhotep III, 1390 - 1352
Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV), 1352 - 1336
Tutankhamun (Tutankhaten
Dynasty 19
Ramesses II, 1279 - 1213
Dynasty 30
Nakhtenebef (Nactenebo), 380 - 362
Dynasty 32
Alexander, 332 - 329
Dynasty 33
CleopatraVII, 51 - 30
Ptolemy XIII
Ptolemy XIV
(Dynasty 34)
Augustus, 30 BC – 14 AD

Djoser

Netjerikhet Djoser was the 2nd King of Egypt's 3rd Dynasty, and was probably the most famous king during this period. He is also sometimes referred to as Zoser, and by the Greeks, Tesorthos. Through contemporary sources, he is only known by his Horus and Nebt-names, Netjerikhet, "the divine of body". Djoser may have been the king's birth name and appears only in later records. The earliest evidence that the two names belong to the same king is found on a long inscription on a large rock on the island of Sehel at Aswan.

According to the Turin King list, Netjerikhet Djoser ruled for about 19 years, following the 20 year long reign of the otherwise unattested Nebka (Sanakhte). However, some archaeological sources have shown that Djoser may be considered as the first king after Khasekhemwii, the last king of the 2nd Dynasty. The order by which some predecessors of Kheops are mentioned on the Papyrus Westcar may confirm that Nebka must be placed between Djoser and Huni and not before Djoser. The fact that the Turin King list has noted Djoser's name in red may also be significant, indicating a reverence for this king late into Egypt's history.

In view of Djoser's building projects, particularly his monumental complex at Saqqara, the number of years credited to him by the Turin King list has been in doubt. It is not impossible that the Turin King list may have mistook some bi-annual cattle-counts for whole years. If this is indeed the case, then Djoser may have ruled up to 37 or 38 years.

Nimaathapu (Nimaethap), the wife of Khasekhemwi, is known to have held the title "Mother of the King". This makes it likely that Netjerikhet Djoser was her son, with Khasekhemwi his father. Three royal women are known from during his reign, including Inetkawes, Hetephernebti and a third one whose name is destroyed. One of them might have been his wife while the others were perhaps daughters or sisters. The relationship between Netjerikhet and his traditional successor, Sekhemkhet is not known.

It is possible that during Djoser's reign the king managed to extend Egypt's southern border as far as Elephantine at the Nile's First Cataract. The inscription near modern Aswan on the Island of Sehel, which is a Ptolemaic forgery cut by the priests of the god Khnum of Elephantine, lays claim to some 137 km (85 miles) of territory south of their temple, known as the Dodekaschoinoi. This claim is made under the authority of Djoser, who, the inscription reads, was advised by Imhotep, his famous vizier, to make the grant of land to the temple of Khnum in order to end a famine in Egypt. In part, the text, written during the time of Ptolemy V. Epiphanes over 2000 years after the death of Djoser, partly states:

"My heart was in sore distress, for the Nile had not risen for seven years. The grain was not abundant, the seeds were dried up, everything that one had to eat was in pathetic quantities, each person was denied his harvest. Nobody could walk any more; the old people's hearts were sad and their legs were bent when they sat on the ground, and their hands were hidden away. Even the courtiers were going without, the temples were closed and the sanctuaries were covered in dust. In short, everything in existence was afflicted."

The text goes on to record Djoser's attempt to find the origins of the Nile flood and to understand the role played by Khnum in the inundation. He then makes an offering to Khnum, and the god appears to him in a dream, promising,

> **"I will cause the Nile to rise up for you. There will be no more years when the inundation fails to cover any area of land. The flowers will sprout up, their stems bending with the weight of the pollen."**

Ptolemy V Epiphanes was no doubt actually referring to himself in the guise of Djoser, having to struggle with the effects of a famine. Regardless of whether there was a famine in Djoser's time, this stele is evidence of Djoser's continuing fame throughout Egypt's dynastic period. Also important is the fact that Ptolemy V Epiphanes was making an attempt to identify himself with Djoser, who Egyptians saw as an idea king and the founder of the Memphite dynasty. Later kings would imitate much about Djoser, and generally regard him as a king they wished to be associated with.

Netjerikhet Djoser's foreign policy was one of careful establishment of Egyptian presence in economically important places. He sent several military expeditions to the Sinai, during which the local Bedouins were defeated, and an inscription at Wadi Maghara would indicate that he also had turquoise mined in the region. The Sinai owed its importance to the Egyptian economy for its valuable minerals turquoise and copper. It was also strategically important as a buffer between the Asian Bedouin and the Nile valley.

Netjerikhet Djoser is mostly known as the king who commissioned the building of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara and the temple complex surrounding it. This is often recognized as the first monumental building made of stone.

His name is linked with that of the architect who planned and constructed the first stone buildings in the world, the high-priest and vizier Imhotep, who may also have built the Step Pyramid of Djoser's successor, Sekhemkhet. Besides the technological advances and the Ancient Egyptian craftsmanship, the building of Djoser's funerary complex at Saqqara also demonstrates the organizational skills of the central government. It would probably be the Step Pyramid which caused most of Djoser's fame during ancient times, and it is certainly why his name is known to so many today.

Djoser is also attested by fragments from a shrine in Heliopolis, a seal impressions in the tomb of Khasekhemwy in Abydos, a seal impressions from tomb 2305 in Saqqara, a seal impression from the tomb of Hesy in Saqqara, seal impression from Hierakonpolis and seal impression from Elephantine.

Imhotep, Doctor, Architect, High Priest, Scribe and Vizier to King Djoser *by Jimmy Dunn*

From http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/imhotep.htm

Of the non-royal population of Egypt, probably one man is known better then all others. So successful was Imhotep (Imhetep, Greek Imouthes) that he is one of the world's most famous ancients, and his name, if not his true identity, has been made even more famous by various mummy movies. Today, the world is probably much more familiar with his name then that of his principal king, Djoser. Imhotep, who's name means "the one that comes in peace". existed as a mythological figure in the minds of most scholars until the end of the nineteenth century when he was established as a real historical person.

He was the world's first named architect who built Egypt's first pyramid, is often recognized as the world's first doctor, a priest,. scribe, sage, poet, astrologer, and a vizier and chief minister, though this role is unclear, to Djoser (reigned 2630–2611 BC), the second king of Egypt's third dynasty. He may have lived under as many as four kings. An inscription on one of that kings statues gives us Imhotep's titles as the "chancellor of the king of lower Egypt", the "first one under the king", the "administrator of the great mansion", the "hereditary Noble", the "high priest of Heliopolis", the "chief sculptor", and finally the "chief carpenter".

Of the details of his life, very little has survived though numerous statues and statuettes of him have been found. Some show him as an ordinary man who is dressed in plain attire. Others show him as a sage who is seated on a chair with a roll of papyrus on his knees or under his arm. Later, his statuettes show him with a god like beard, standing, and carrying the ankh and a scepter.

Inscription with the names of Netjerikhet (Djoser) and Imhotep

Imhotep may have been born in Ankhtowë, a suburb of Memphis early in Egyptian history. However, other classical writers suggested that he was from the village of Gebelein, south of ancient Thebes. His father might have been an architect named Kanofer. His mother could have been Khreduonkh, who probably belonged to the province of Mendes, and he may have had a wife named Ronfrenofert but none of this is by any means certain. As a commoner at birth, he rose through the ranks quickly due to his genius, natural talents and dedication.

As the High Priest of Heliopolis, he would have been one of the chief priest of Lower (northern) Egypt. Even though Egypt's capital may have been located at Memphis, it is likely during this period that Heliopolis was recognized as the religious capital of Egypt.

As a builder, Imhotep is the first master architects who we know by name. He is not only credited as the first pyramid architect, who built Djoser's Step Pyramid complex at Saqqara, but he may have had a hand in the building of Sekhemkhet's unfinished pyramid, and also possibly with the establishment of the Edfu Temple, but that is not certain. The Step Pyramid remains today one of the most brilliant architecture wonders of the ancient world and is recognized as the first monumental stone structure.

Imhotep's best known writings were medical text. As a physician, Imhotep is believed to have been the author of the Edwin Smith Papyrus in which more than 90 anatomical terms and 48 injuries are described. He may have also founded a school of medicine in Memphis, a part of his cult center possibly known as "Asklepion, which remained famous for two thousand years. All of this occurred some 2,200 years before the Western Father of Medicine Hippocrates was born.

Sir William Osler tells us that Imhotep was the:

> **"..first figure of a physician to stand out clearly from the mists of antiquity." Imhotep diagnosed and treated over 200 diseases, 15 diseases of the abdomen, 11 of the bladder, 10 of the rectum, 29 of the eyes, and 18 of the skin, hair, nails and tongue. Imhotep treated tuberculosis, gallstones, appendicitis, gout and arthritis. He also performed surgery and practiced some dentistry. Imhotep extracted medicine from plants. He also knew the position and function of the vital organs and circulation of the**

blood system. The Encyclopedia Britannica says, "The evidence afforded by Egyptian and Greek texts support the view that Imhotep's reputation was very respected in early times. His prestige increased with the lapse of centuries and his temples in Greek times were the centers of medical teachings."

Along with medicine, he was also a patron of architects, knowledge and scribes. James Henry Breasted says of Imhotep:

"In priestly wisdom, in magic, in the formulation of wise proverbs; in medicine and architecture; this remarkable figure of Zoser's reign left so notable a reputation that his name was never forgotten. He was the patron spirit of the later scribes, to whom they regularly poured out a libation from the water-jug of their writing outfit before beginning their work.

Imhotep is one example of the "personality cult" of Kemet, whereby a learned sage or otherwise especially venerated person could be deified after death and become a special intercessor for the living, much as the saints of Roman Catholicism. About 100 years after his death, he was elevated as a medical demigod. In about 525, around 2,000 years after his death, he was elevated to a full god, and replaced Nefertum in the great triad at Memphis. In the Turin Canon, he was known as the "son of Ptah". Imhotep was, together with Amenhotep, the only mortal Egyptians that ever reached the position of full gods. He was also associated with Thoth, the god of wisdom, writing and learning, and with the Ibises, which was also associated with Thoth.

We are told that his main centers of worship were in the Ptolemaic temple to Hathor atf Dier el-Medina and at Karnak in Thebes, where he was worshipped in conjunction with Amenhotep-Son-of-Hapu, a sanctuary on the upper terrace of the temple at Deir el-Bahari, at

Philae where a chapel of Imhotep stands immediately in front of the eastern pylon of the temple of Isis and of course, at Memphis in Lower (northern) Egypt, where a temple was erected to him near the Serapeum. At saqqara, we are told that people bought offerings to his cult center, including mummified Ibises and sometimes, clay models of diseased limbs and organs in the hope

of being healed.

He was later even worshipped by the early Christians as one with Christ. The early Christians, it will be recalled, adapted to their use those pagan forms and persons whose influence through the ages had woven itself so powerfully into tradition that they could not omit them.

He was worshiped even in Greece where he was identified with their god of medicine, Aslepius. . He was honored by the Romans and the emperors Claudius and Tiberius had inscriptions praising Imhotep placed on the walls of their Egyptian temples. He even managed to find a place in Arab traditions, especially at Saqqara where his tomb is thought to be located.

Imhotep lived to a great age, apparently dying in the reign of King Huni, the last of the dynasty. His burial place has not been found but it has been speculated that it may indeed be at Saqqara, possibly in an unattested mastaba 3518.

The Viziers of Ancient Egypt *by Mark Andrews*

The Egyptian title of tjaty is equivalent to a vizier and can be attested to since ancient Egypt's 2nd Dynasty (2890-2686 BC) from inscribed stone vessels found beneath the Step Pyramid at Saqqara. However, Egyptologist believe that the title may have been present from the beginning of the Pharaonic period and in fact there is some evidence that a vizier was depicted on the Narmer palette. It was a very important position, administratively just under the king himself (chief minister). After the Kings of Egypt, we are probably most familiar with various viziers in ancient Egypt than any other group of people. Probably the most famous vizier known to most people is Imhotep, who was the vizier of Djoser during the 3rd Dynasty. He was latter deified by the people of ancient Egypt. In Egyptian art, viziers are usually depicted wearing a long robe which came up to the armpits. The garment, usually of pure white material, symbolized his impartiality.

Not until the 4th Dynasty (2613-2494 BC) would they gain their full range of powers. During the 4th Dynasty, viziers were exclusively the sons of kings, but from the 5th Dynasty (2494-2345 BC) this was no longer true (for the most part). Their importance in the 5th Dynasty may be attested by the tomb of Ptahshepses, a vizier who's mastaba tomb is the finest of any at Abusir.

Around the 12th Dynasty, the power of both the King and his vizier were strengthened at the expense of the governors of Egypt's various nomes (provinces). However, at times, particularly during some of the intermediate periods where the kings rule was weak, it was the viziers who often held the fabric of Egypt's administration system together. Viziers often held their office during the reign of more then one king, particularly within a single dynasty. In fact, viziers could even be elevated to king. Amenemhat I Sephetepibra (1985-1955 BC) was the first ruler of the 12th Dynasty, but we believe he was earlier attested to as the vizier of Mentuhotep IV. Another example is Ay, who succeeded Tutankhamun, but was a vizier during the reign of Akhenaten. After the Second Intermediate Period (1650-1550 BC), viziers such as Ramose and Rekhmira continued to play a significant role in the government of Egypt, because of the strength the title gained during the that intermediate period. After the Second Intermediate Period, the title also seems to have become hereditary, passing from father to son.

From the 18th dynasty onward, the office was split between a northern and southern vizier. This had happened twice before, during the reigns of Pepy II (2278-2184 BC) and Senusret I (1965-1920 BC). However, perhaps resulting from the polarization of the two dynasties ruling Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period from Thebes and the Delta, the dual offices of northern and southern viziers became a permanent fixture. While the two viziers seem to have held equal power, we usually know more about the southern viziers then their northern counterparts. This is basically because we have more archaeological records from the south then the north.

By Egypt's late period, the position of vizier seems to have lost some of its importance, though perhaps not its prestige. We hear very little about viziers during this period, yet some of the finest monuments of the Late Period belonged to holders of the office.

A vizier by the name of Rekhmire who worked under Tuthmosis III recorded invaluable information about the vizier's position on his tomb walls. These inscriptions record the details of a vizier's installation and duties, as well as providing clues to the vizier's importance as a key office in Egypt's administration system. The vizier often held other titles, such as the "Chief of all the King's Works" or "Royal Chancellor of Lower Egypt". Mereruka (about 2350 BC), for example, held the titles Vizier, Chief Justice and Inspector of the Prophets and Tenants of the Pyramid of Teti.

Theoretically, the power structure in ancient Egypt below the king might be separated into three groups, consisting of military leaders, the priesthood, and administrators. The vizier was the head of the administrators, but at various times, and particularly at Thebes, the vizier might also be the chief priest. Viziers heard all domestic territorial disputes, maintained a cattle and herd census, controlled the reservoirs and the food supply, supervised industries and conservation programs, and were required to repair all dikes. The bi-annual census of the population came under their purview, as did the records of rainfall and the varying levels of the Nile during its inundation. All government documents used in ancient Egypt had to have the seal of the vizier in order to be considered authentic and binding. Tax records, storehouse receipts, crop assessments and other necessary agricultural statistics were kept in the offices of the viziers. In addition, young members of the royal family often served under the vizier. In this capacity, they received training in government affairs.

It is probable that throughout Egyptian history, the viziers were some of the king's most trusted allies. The vizier was usually in constant contact with the king, consulting him on many important matters. Family members, particularly those who might hold a claim to

kingship, could often not be trusted. But viziers, even though at times did elevate themselves to kingship, were probably most often selected not only for their skills, but because the king could trust them to carry out his will without the fear they might overthrow his rule.

Akhenaten

Amenhotep IV (throne name Nefer-kheperue-re) becomes Akhenaten, the famous "heretic" pharaoh.

Akhenaten (1352-1336 BC) was son of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy. During his reign both the art and religion in Egypt were marked by rapid change. When he initially succeeded the throne he was known as Amenhotep IV, but changed his name to Akhenaten in his fifth regnal year, and began to build a new capital called Akhetaten ("horizon of the sun"), in Middle Egypt. This phase, encompassing Akhenaten's and Smenkhkara's reign and the beginning of Tutankhamun's, is now referred to as the Armarna Period, and the site of the city of Akhetaten is now known as el-Amarna.

Late-Amarna style sculpture of Akhenaten, probably from the workshop of Thutmose

Akenaten and his family, shown adoring the Aten sun-disc.

Bust of Akhenaten, Cairo Museum

Akhenaten was a philosopher and a thinker, much more so than his forebears. His father Amenhotep III had recognised the growing power of the priesthood of Amun and had sought to curb it - Akhenaten however took matters a lot further by introducing the new "monothesitic" cult of worship to the sun-disc Aten. This was not a new idea, as a minor aspect of the sun god Ra-Horakty, the Aten had been somewhat venerated in the Old Kingdom. A large scarab belonging to Tuthmosis IV (Akhenaten's grandfather) has a text that mentions the Aten.

The major religious innovation of this reign was the worship of the sun disc Aten to the exclusion of the rest of the Egyptian gods, even Amun. Art took on a new distinctive style - the reliefs and stelae in the tombs and temples of Akenaten's reign show Akhenaten, his wife Nefertiti and the royal princesses worshipping and making offerings to the Aten, which was displayed as a sun-disc with radiating arms and hands stretched downwards (see pictures above). The names of other deities were removed from temple walls in an attempt to reinforce the idea of the Aten as a single supreme deity.

The Aten is portrayed as a sun disc whose protective rays stretch down into hands holding the ankh, the symbol for life. Everywhere the royal family appeared they were shown to be under the protective rays of the Aten. The king, usually accompanied by Nefertiti and a number of their daughters, dominate the reliefs on walls of the tombs of the nobles at el-Amarna. This Aten symbol is prevalent in all of the distinctive art of the Amarna period, and is also depicted upon some of the treasures of the later pharaoh, Tutankhamun.

Physical representations

Significantly, and for the only time in the history of Egyptian royal art, Akhenaten's family was depicted in a decidedly naturalistic manner, and they are clearly shown displaying affection for each other. Nefertiti also appears beside the king in actions usually reserved for a Pharaoh, suggesting that she attained unusual power for a queen. Artistic representations of Akhenaten give him a strikingly bizarre appearance, with slender limbs, a protruding belly and wide hips, giving rise to controversial theories such as that he may have actually been a woman masquerading as a man, or that he was a hermaphrodite or had some other intersex condition. The fact that Akhenaten had several children argues against these suggestions. It has also been suggested that he suffered from Marfan's syndrome.

Until Akhenaten's mummy is located and identified, proposals of actual physical abnormalities are likely to remain speculative. However, it must be kept in mind that there is no good evidence that we are necessarily dealing with a literal representation of Akhenaten's physical form, or that of his wife or children. As pharaoh, Akhenaten had complete control over how he, his family, and his government in general was represented in art. We can only assume that what we see as an odd physical abnormality was in fact the way that Akhenaten wanted to be artistically portrayed.

Family values

Akhenaten was married to Nefertiti at the very beginning of his reign, and the couple had six known daughters:

Meritaten
Meketaten
Ankhesenpaaten, later Queen of Tutankhamun
Neferneferuaten Tasherit
Neferneferure
Setepenre

Akhenaten's most famous wife was of course Nefertiti who was known as the "great royal wife" early in his reign. He also had additional consorts, including Kiya, a "lesser royal wife", Meritaten, who was recorded as his "great royal wife" late in his reign, and Ankhesenpaaten, his third daughter, who is thought to have borne a daughter to her own father. After Akhenaten's death, Ankhesenpaaten married Tutankhamun.

What happened after Akhenaten?

Following Akenaten's death, a peaceful but comprehensive political, religious and artistic reformation returned Egyptian life to the norms it had followed previously during his father's

reign. Much of the art and building infrastructure that was created during Akhenaten's reign was defaced or destroyed in the period immediately following his death. Stone building blocks from his construction projects were later used as foundation stones for subsequent rulers temples and tombs.

The mysterious Smenkhkare

After a reign of around 18 years, Akhenaten was succeeded for a short time by Smenkhkara. Soon after, a rather youthful Tutankhaten succeeded the throne. He may have been a son of Akhenaten's, or a younger brother of Smenkhare, or even a younger son of Amenhotep III. Within a few years, Tutankhaten had abandoned the city at Tell el-Amarna in favour of the traditional administrative centre at Memphis, and in the second year of his reign he changed his name to Tutankhamun, effectively signalling the end of the supremacy of the Aten. Many reliefs from this period were later heavily damaged as a reaction against the so-called heresy of Akhenaten.

In year 14 of Akhenaten's reign, Nefertiti herself vanishes from the historical record, and there is no word of her after that date. Her disappearance coincides with the rise of co-ruler Smenkhkare to the throne. Smenkhkare is thought to have been married to her daughter Meritaten, and may have become Akhenaten's co-regent for a few years before Akhenaten's death. He certainly ruled Egypt for a brief period since he is attested in his Year 1 on a wine label from "the House of Smenkhkare".

However, Smenkhkare is also depicted in many of the same ways as Nefertiti was, and his regnal name, Nefernefruaten, is quite similar to that of Nefertiti. He is sometimes depicted as looking very feminine, and even his name was sometimes written with a feminine ending. This has led some scholars to believe that Smenkhkare was in fact another name for Nefertiti, and instead of falling from grace or dying, Nefertiti actually rose in power, taking the throne for herself after the death of her husband.

What happened to their bodies?

One other mystery remains surrounding the Amarna period - the disappearance of the bodies of Akhenaten and his immediate family. The royal tomb to the east of el-Amarna appears to never have been completed and there is little evidence to suggest that anyone other than one of his daughters was ever buried there. In 1907 a young male member of the royal family was discovered by Theodore Davis in tomb 55 in the Valley of the Kings. This mummy had been reburied with a set of funerary equipment mainly belonging to Queen Tiy, and was initially identified as that of Akhenaten (a view still accepted by some Egyptologists) but is now considered to be that of Smenkhkara.

Akhenaten, Smenkhkare, Tutankhamun, and Ay (Tutankhamun's successor) were excised from the official lists of Pharaohs, which instead reported that Amenhotep III was immediately succeeded by Horemheb. This is thought to be part of an attempt by Horemheb to delete all trace of Atenism and the pharaohs associated with it from the historical record. Akhenaten's name never appeared on any of the king lists compiled by later Pharaohs and it was not until the late 19th century that his identity was re-discovered and the surviving traces of his reign were unearthed by archaeologists.

King Tutankhamen

Tutankhamun, named Tutankhaten early in his life, was the 12th Pharaoh of the Eighteenth dynasty of Egypt. He ruled from 1334-1323 BC and lived ca. 1341 BC - 1323 BC, during the period known as the New Kingdom.

His original name, Tutankhaten, meant "Living Image of Aten", while Tutankhamun meant "Living Image of Amun". He is possibly also the Nibhurrereya of the Amarna letters.

In historical terms, Tutankhamun is of only moderate significance, primarily as a figure managing the beginning of the transition from the heretical Atenism of his predecessor Akhenaten back to the familiar Egyptian religion.

As Tutankhamun began his reign at age 9, a considerable responsibility for his reign must also be assigned to his vizier and eventual successor, Ay. Nonetheless, Tutankhamun is in modern times the most famous of the Pharaohs, and the only one to have a nickname in

popular culture ("King Tut").

The 1922 discovery by Howard Carter of his (nearly) intact tomb received worldwide press coverage and sparked a renewed public interest in Ancient Egypt, of which Tutankhamun remains the popular face.

Family

Tutankamun's parentage is uncertain. An inscription calls him a king's son, but it is debated which king was meant. Most scholars think that he was probably a son either of Amenhotep III (though probably not by his Great Royal Wife Tiye), or of Amenhotep III's son Amenhotep IV (better known as Akhenaten), perhaps with his enigmatic second queen, Kiya. It should be noted that when Tutankhaten succeeded Akhenaten to the throne, Amenhotep III had been dead for some time; the duration is thought by some Egyptologists to have been seventeen years, although on this, as on so many questions about the Amarna period, there is no scholarly consensus.

Tutankhamun ruled Egypt for eight to ten years; examinations of his mummy show that he was a young adult when he died. Recent CT scans place Tut at age 19. This conclusion was reached after images of Tut's teeth were examined, and were found to be consistent with the teeth of a 19 year old. That would place his birth around 1342 BC-1340 BC, and would make it less likely that Amenhotep III was his father.

Tutankhamun and Ankhesenpaaten, Tutankhamun's wife -- Images from the back of his gold throne.

Tutankhamun was married to Ankhesenpaaten, a daughter of Akhenaten. Ankhesenpaaten also changed her name from the 'aten' endings to the 'amun' ending, becoming Ankhesenamun. They had two known children, both stillborn - their mummies were discovered in his tomb.

Reign

During Tutankhamun's reign, Akhenaten's Amarna revolution (Atenism) began to be reversed. Akhenaten had attempted to supplant the existing priesthood and gods with a god who was until then considered minor, Aten.

In year 3 of Tutankhamun's reign (1331 BC), when he was still a boy of about 11 and probably under the influence of two older advisors (notably Akhenaten's vizier Ay), the ban on the old pantheon of gods and their temples was lifted, the traditional privileges restored to their priesthoods, and the capital moved back to Thebes.

The young pharaoh also adopted the name Tutankhamun, changing it from his birth name Tutankhaten. Because of his age at the time these decisions were made, it is generally thought that most if not all the responsibility for them falls on his vizier Ay and perhaps other advisors.

Tutankhamun died at the age of 19 by a head injury. Many suspect that he was murdered. He was buried in the Valley of the Kings. Two mummified fetuses were found in coffins that had been sealed by his name. These are believed to have been his children that were born prematurely.

Events after his death

A now-famous letter to the Hittite king Suppiluliumas I from a widowed queen of Egypt, explaining her problems and asking for one of his sons as a husband, has been attributed to Ankhesenamun (among others). Suspicious of this good fortune, Suppiluliumas I first sent a messenger to make inquiries on the truth of the young queen's story. After reporting her plight back to Suppilulumas I, he sent his son, Zannanza, accepting her offer.

However, he got no further than the border before he died, perhaps murdered. If Ankhesenamun were the queen in question, and his death a murder, it was probably at the orders of Horemheb or Ay, who both had the opportunity and the motive.

In any event, after Tutankhamun's death Ankhesenamun married Ay (a signet ring, with both Ay and Ankehesenamun's name was found), possibly under coercion, and shortly afterwards disappeared from recorded history.

Tutankhamun was briefly succeeded by the elder of his two advisors, Ay, and then by the other, Horemheb, who obliterated most of the evidence of the reigns of Akhenaten, Tutankhamun, and Ay.

Although all the other tombs in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes were later plundered, the tomb in which Tutankhamen was ultimately buried was hidden by rock chips dumped from cutting the tomb of a later king. Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter It was filled with extraordinary treasure, including a solid gold coffin, a gold mask, jewelry, and many artifacts.

KV 62, Tutankhamun's Tomb, Valley of the Kings

Cause of death

For a long time the cause of Tutankhamun's death was unknown, and was the root of much speculation. How old was the king when he died? Did he suffer from any physical abnormalities? Had he been murdered? Many of these questions were finally answered in early 2005 when the results of a set of CT scans on the mummy were released.The body was originally inspected by Howard Carter's team in the early 1920s, though they were primarily interested in recovering the jewelry and amulets from the body.

To remove the objects from the body, which in many cases were stuck fast by the hardened embalming resins used, Carter's team cut up the mummy into various pieces: the arms and legs were detached, the torso cut in half and the head was severed. Hot knives were used to remove it from the golden mask to which it was cemented by resin. Since the body was placed back in its sarcophagus in 1926, the mummy has subsequently been X-rayed three times: first in 1968 by a group from the University of Liverpool, then in 1978 by a group from the University of Michigan and finally in 2005 a team of Egyptian scientists led by Dr. Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, conducted a CT scan on the mummy.

Early (pre-2005) X-rays of his mummy had revealed a dense spot at the lower back of the skull. This had been interpreted as a chronic subdural hematoma, which would have been caused by a blow. Such an injury could have been the result of an accident, but it had also been suggested that the young pharaoh was murdered. If this is the case, there are a number of theories as to who was responsible: one popular candidate was his immediate successor Ay.

Interestingly, there are seemingly signs of calcification within the supposed injury, which if true meant Tutankhamun lived for a fairly extensive period of time (on the order of several months) after the injury was inflicted.

Much confusion had been caused by a small loose sliver of bone within the upper cranial cavity, which was discovered from the same X-ray analysis. Some people have mistaken this visible bone fragment for the supposed head injury. In fact, since Tutankhamun's brain was removed post mortem in the mummification process, and considerable quantities of now-hardened resin introduced into the skull on at least two separate occasions after that, had the fragment resulted from a pre-mortem injury, it almost certainly would not still be loose in the cranial cavity. It therefore almost certainly represented post-mummification damage.

2005 research

On March 8, 2005, Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass revealed the results of a CT scan performed on the pharaoh's mummy. The scan uncovered no evidence for a blow to the back of the head as well as no evidence suggesting foul play. There was a hole in the head, but it appeared to have been drilled, presumably by embalmers. A fracture to Tutankhamun's left thighbone was interpreted as evidence that suggests the pharaoh badly broke his leg before he died, and his leg became infected; however, members of the Egyptian-led research team recognized as a less likely possibility that the fracture was caused by the embalmers. 1,700 images were produced of Tutankhamun's mummy during the 15-minute CT scan.

Much was learned about the young king's life. His age at death was estimated at 19 years, based on physical developments that set upper and lower limits to his age. The king had been in general good health, and there were no signs of any major infectious disease or malnutrition during childhood. He was slight of build, and was roughly 170 cm (5 ft) tall. He had large front incisor teeth and the overbite characteristic of the rest of the Thutmosid line of kings to which he belonged.
He also had a pronounced dolichocephalic (elongated) skull, though it was within normal bounds and highly unlikely to have been pathologic in cause. Given the fact that many of the royal depictions of Akhenaten (possibly his father, certainly a relation), often featured an elongated head, it is likely an exaggeration of a family trait, rather than a distinct abnormality more typical of a condition like Marfan's syndrome, as had been suggested.

A slight bend to his spine was also found, but the scientists agreed that that there was no associated evidence to suggest that it was pathological in nature, and that it was much more likely to have been caused during the embalming process. This ended speculation based on the previous X-rays that Tutanhkamun had suffered from scoliosis.

The 2005 conclusion by a team of Egyptian scientists, based on the CT scan findings, confirmed that Tutankhamun died of a swift attack of gangrene after breaking his leg. After consultations with Italian and Swiss experts, the Egyptian scientists found that the fracture in Tutankhamun's left leg most likely occurred only days before his death, which had then become gangrenous and led directly to his death.

The fracture was not sustained during the mummification process or as a result of some damage to the mummy as claimed by Howard Carter. The Egyptian scientists have also found no evidence that he had been struck in the head and no other indication he was killed, as had been previously speculated.Despite the relatively poor condition of the mummy, the Egyptian team found evidence that great care had been given to the body of Tutankhamun during the

embalming process. They found five distinct embalming materials, which were applied to the body at various stages of the mummification process. This counters previous assertions that the king _s body had been prepared carelessly and in a hurry.

Tutankhamun in popular culture

Tutankhamun is the world's best known pharaoh, partly because his tomb is among the best preserved, and his image and associated artifacts the most-exhibited. He has also entered popular culture - he has, for example, been commemorated in the whimsical song "King Tut" by comedian Steve Martin, and in a series of historical novels by Lynda Robinson. As Jon Manchip White writes, in his forward to the 1977 edition of Carter's *The Discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamun,* "The pharaoh who in life was one of the least esteemed of Egypt's kings has become in death the most renowned."

From http://www.crystalinks.com/tut.html

Hatshepsut -- Queen for a day

http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/849/eg3.htm
Nevine El-Aref attempts to unravel the identity of Hatshepsut

Though not the only female ruler of Egypt, Queen Hatshepsut (1473-1458 BC), which means "united with Amun in front of the nobles", is one of the best known.

In ancient Egypt women often held high status, and could own and inherit property. Yet female rulers remained rare: only Khent- Kaues, Sobeknefru and, possibly, Nitocris, preceded Hatshepsut. Pharaoh was an exclusively male title and in early Egyptian history there was no word for a Queen regent, unlike Queen consort.

Hatshepsut slowly assumed the regalia and symbols of Pharaonic office, including the Khat head cloth topped with an uraeus, the traditional false beard, and the shendyt kilt.

She created a myth about her own divine birth in which Amun goes to Ahmose in the form of Thutmose I and awakens her with pleasant odours. When Amun places the *ankh*, a symbol of life, beneath Ahmose's nose, Hatshepsut is conceived. Khnum, the god who forms the bodies of human children, is then instructed to create a body and *ka*, or corporal presence/life force, for Hatshepsut. Khnum and Heket, goddess of life and fertility, leads Ahmose to a lion bed where she gives birth to Hatshepsut.

To further strengthen her position, the Oracle of Amun proclaimed that it was the will of Amun that Hatshepsut be Pharaoh. She also claimed that she was her father's intended heir and that he had made her crown prince of Egypt.

Hatshepsut enjoyed a peaceful and prosperous reign. She built magnificent temples, protected Egypt's borders and masterminded a highly profitable trading mission to the Land of Punt. Yet as a result of the relocation of royal mummies by 21st Dynasty temple priests during the third Intermediate Period the whereabouts of Hatshepsut's mummy has long been a mystery. It was not among the royal mummies discovered in 1881 and 1898 in the Valley of the Kings, nor in the unfinished tomb KV20, built for her as the official wife of king Thutmose II. When Howard Carter explored the tomb in 1920, he found two empty sarcophagi; one for Hatshepsut and the second for her father, Thutmose, along with some of Hatshepsut's funerary objects which were transferred to the Egyptian museum in Cairo.

In 1903, Carter found the tomb of Siter In, Hatshepsut's wet nurse. Two sarcophagi were found in KV60, one for Siter In and the second containing an unknown female's mummy. Carter paid little attention to the tomb.

Three years later KV60 was re-entered by Edward Ayrton, who removed the mummy of Siter In to the Egyptian museum, where it joined other royal mummies as part of the royal funerary collection.

It was not disturbed again until 1989, when anthropologist Donald Ryan found it in more or less the same condition as Carter and Ayrton, with the second, unidentified mummy lying down near the core of the burial chamber. The well preserved fat woman with dyed long hair was wrapped in linen, her right arm crossed over her chest -- a sign of royalty -- while her left arm was laid beside her.

A few years later, in her book about the Valley of the Kings, Elizabeth Thomas would suggest the mummy left inside KV60 was that of Hatshepsut. She had several reasons for doing so: the mummy dated from the 18th Dynasty and was in royal pose; a part of Hatshepsut's wooden mummy mask had been found inside KV60; Hatshepsut was known to have requested that people close to her be buried alongside her. There was also the small hole found in the mummy's chin, suggesting that a fake beard had been attached at some point. While the circumstantial evidence seems compelling, it remained circumstantial. The tomb was closed once again.

Two years ago the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) launched its five-year mummy project, involving CT scans of a vast number of mummies, the one in KV60 among them.

"At the Valley of the Kings I went to see KV60 with Egyptologist Salima Ikram to examine the mummy for a television documentary," wrote Zahi Hawass, secretary- general of the SCA, in an article, "The quest for the mummy of Hatshepsut", published last year on his official website. They made their way to the burial chamber down a set of rough stairs and an undecorated tunnel with niches on both sides, and entered the unfinished burial chamber with difficulty. "It might have been a perfect place to hide mummies in the Pharaonic period," wrote Hawass.

Three caches of royal mummies have been found in the Valley of the Kings: KV35 in 1898; KV55 in 1907; and the tomb of Horemheb in 1908; neither these, nor the royal mummy cache discovered at Deir Al-Bahari, have ever been associated with Hatshepsut.

"Despite Thomas's suggestion that the mummy left behind in KV60 is Hatshepsut and Ryan's support for such a hypothesis, I do not believe that this mummy is Hatshepsut," writes Hawass, explaining that the mummy is very fat with huge pendulous breasts, and the position of her arm is not convincing evidence of royalty.

Hawass instructed curators at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo to look for the second mummy found by Carter and moved by Ayrton in 1908. They found it on the third floor of the museum. Examinations revealed that the badly damaged coffin is typical 18th Dynasty and among the inscriptions engraved on it is " *wr Sdt nfrw nswt In*, [great royal nurse In]." The mummy inside is 1.5m tall while the coffin is 2.13m, suggesting that the coffin was not originally intended for the mummy it contains. "The obese mummy still in the tomb is significantly taller, and would fit much better in the coffin," says Hawass. The examination also revealed that the mummy in the Egyptian Museum has her right hand by her side and the left hand across her abdomen, with the hand closed as if it was originally holding something. She was mummified in fine linen, with the fingers wrapped individually. The toes were evidently wrapped together; this wrapping has been torn away, as if the robbers were looking for gold. The woman was eviscerated through a U-shaped incision in the abdomen. She has long curly hair remaining on her head. There is also a mass of linen at the bottom of the coffin but this is not of the same quality.

"I think the face is quite royal, and believe that anyone who sees it will have the same reaction," concluded Hawass in his article.

He suggests that in the Third Intermediate Period, during the 21st Dynasty, the priests moved the mummy of Hatshepsut to KV60, which was possibly cut in the 18th Dynasty but never used. The priests moved Hatshepsut's mummy for security reasons, as they did with many mummies in the valley.

According to Hawass the big breasted mummy in KV60 may well be the wet nurse, the original occupant of the coffin at the Egyptian Museum, while the mummy on the third floor of the Egyptian Museum could be Hatshepsut.

In an attempt to end such speculation, the mummy was moved to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo where it was subjected to CT scans and other examinations.

Talking at the Metropolitan Museum during the inauguration of the Hatshepsut exhibition, Hawass said that while they had considered DNA testing the problem is that "there are mistakes about 40 per cent of the time. We might, though, experiment with an Egyptian team, with the mummy of Thutmosis II and with the mummies thought to be of Hatshepsut. If they are related, maybe this will settle the issue."

Examinations are now in their final stages and Hawass will declare which is the mummy of Hatshepsut at the end of this month [June, '07 – tkw] during an international press conference at the Egyptian Museum.

Research will determine which of the two is Hatshepsut

THUTMOSE III

The Eighteenth Dynasty marks the beginning of the New Kingdom period in ancient Egyptian history with the reassertion of Egyptian power and the building of an empire. Thutmose III was the sixth ruler in a line of young and famous rulers during this dynasty that included Hatshepsut, one of the few women pharaohs and Tutankhamun, the boy king known as King Tut.

Thutmose III (ruled c.1504-1452 BCE) was very young when his father, Thutmose II, died. After the pharaoh's death, Hatshepsut, his wife and half-sister, assumed power, first as regent for the young Thutmose III, and then as pharaoh. However, by about 1482 BCE, Thutmose III became the sole ruler.

As pharaoh of Egypt, Thutmose III devoted himself to the expansion of the empire through numerous, successful military offensives, leading campaigns into Canaan, Phoenicia and Syria in the Middle East. To the south, he expanded Egypt's hold over the wealth of Nubia and Kush.

Thutmose set up an efficient administration, both civil and military, and assessed large yearly tributes from the defeated kings and chiefs of conquered lands. This allowed Thutmose to construct temples, obelisks and monuments at numerous sites throughout his empire including a Festival Temple at Karnak. After nearly 50 years as ruler of Egypt, Thutmose III died.

The impact of Thutmose III on Egyptian culture was profound. He was a national hero who was worshiped long after his death. His reverence for his ancestors and his care for his people was acknowledged by the Egyptians as demonstrated in the cult that grew up around him and the many monuments that were built in his memory. Several of the objects seen in *The Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt*, were produced during the reign of Thutmose III. An exact replica of the interior walls of his burial chamber is also a part of the exhibition. On the walls you will see the *Amduat* text, the story of the pharaoh's journey through the underworld.

Ramesses the Great By John Ray

BBC http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/egyptians/ramesses_print.html

Ramesses II fought the Hittites and signed the world's first official peace treaty. He undertook an unparalleled building programme, had over one hundred children and reigned for 67 years. Did he deserve the epithet, 'the Great', or was he full of hot air? John Ray investigates.

A stone carving of Ramesses II found at Abu Simbel

Jupiter of pharaohs

Ramesses II is the most famous of the Pharaohs, and there is no doubt that he intended this to be so. In astronomical terms, he is the Jupiter of the Pharaonic system, and for once the superlative is appropriate, since the giant planet shines brilliantly at a distance, but on close inspection turns out to be a ball of gas. Ramesses II, or at least the version of him which he chose to feature in his inscriptions, is the hieroglyphic equivalent of hot air.

Nowadays this ruler's name is known to every knickknack-seller in the Nile Valley, a posterity which would not have embarrassed him in the least. Ramesses has gained a multimedia afterlife: his mummy is flown from Cairo to Paris to be exhibited and re-autopsied, and a series of airport-lounge best-sellers by a French writer, Christian Jacq, gives a soap-opera version of his life.

Yul Brynner captured the essence of his personality in the 1956 film *The Ten Commandments*, and in popular imagination Ramesses II has become the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The history behind this is much debated, but it is safe to say that the character of Ramesses fits the picture of the overweening ruler who refuses divine demands. The king's battle against the Hittites at Qadesh in Syria was a near defeat, caused by an elementary failure of military intelligence, and saved only by the last-minute arrival of reinforcements from the Lebanese coast. In Ramesses' account, which occupies whole walls on many of his monuments, this goalless draw turns into the mother of all victories, won single-handedly by himself.

One of the best guides to Egypt ever compiled was the work of James Baikie (1866-1931), who wrote his detailed account of the country without ever seeing the place. Baikie's down-to-earth reaction to the interminable accounts of this battle reads as follows:

A growth industry

The traditional capitals, Memphis and Thebes, were not enough for the victor of Qadesh, and he added his own in the Delta, modestly named Pi-Ramesse, one rendering of which would be Ramessopolis. Not even the heretic Akhenaten had dared to name his city after himself. Ramesses, however, thinks large, and this extends to his family, since he boasts that he is the father of more than 100 sons and 60 daughters.

Previous Pharaohs had followed the rule that, in temple design, incised relief was used on the exterior walls, where it could cast strong shadows. Inside the temples, however, bas-relief was employed, since it does not produce such contrasts and creates a serene effect in the semi-dark. Unfortunately, bas-relief takes time, since the background to every detail needs to be cut away. Ramesses decided to double the rate of temple-building, by seeing to it that the work was done in fast, and cheap, incised relief. Akhenaten had sometimes resorted to the same shortcut, but he was in a genuine hurry, since he had abandoned traditional religion and needed a new home for his god. Ramesses II does not have this excuse.

Ozymandias

← ***The Great Temple of Abu Simbel with four colossal seated statues of Ramesses II.***

A form of the king's throne-name passed into Classical tradition as Ozymandias, and was immortalised as a symbol of ostentatious tyranny by the poet Shelley. Ozymandias and vulgarity were made for each other. Such is the case for the prosecution. Nevertheless, a defence lawyer, although faced with a daunting task, can still find points to make in Ozymandias' favour.

The empty victory of Qadesh was followed by a greater achievement, an international peace treaty with the Hittites, a copy of which is now on the wall of the General Assembly building of the United Nations. The treaty covers extradition, arbitration of disputes, and mutual economic aid, a clause which was later honoured by the Egyptians when their old enemies were afflicted with food shortage.

The temple-building programme instigated by Ramesses may have been rushed, but it turned out to be the most extensive ever achieved by a single Pharaoh in all Ancient Egypt's 30 dynasties, and some of the king's monuments, such as the delicate temple built at Abydos next to the larger complex of his father, show refinement and even understatement. The twin temples of Abu Simbel in Nubia, though by no means understated, are masterpieces of land- and river-scaping, as well as being political propaganda skilfully translated into stone.

A more abstract point in the king's defense is that modesty was never considered to be a Pharaonic virtue. If kings of Egypt were great by definition, there could be nothing wrong in going out of one's way to be the greatest: this was simply the logic of Pharaonic kingship. Another mitigating factor is the humble origin of Ramesses' family. The man who became Ozymandias was the grandson of Ramesses I, a solid figure, but essentially a provincial bureaucrat who had had greatness thrust upon him. This was not inspirational. When Ramesses II turned his attention to recent history, he would have seen the upheavals of the Amarna period, an episode which needed to be purged from the record. Before this, however, lay the family of the Tuthmosids, a dynasty which was associated with prosperity, elegance, and the growth of empire.

Another figure that loomed over the king was his father, Seti I, whose reign saw military success as well as achieving one of the high points of Egyptian art, marked by sensitivity, balance and restraint. These were the hard acts which it was Ramesses' destiny to follow, and one way of doing this would be to upstage the past by ostentation, thereby eclipsing it. Ramesses II was well suited to this kind of role, and the gods gave him a reign of 67 years in which to perfect his act.

Principal queens

Hathor & Isis blessing Nefertari inside the smaller Abu Simbel temple →

Ramesses may have taken polygamy to excess, but two principal queens shared his affections. One of these, Nefertari, is best known for her exquisitely decorated tomb in the Valley of the Queens at Luxor. This has been restored, thanks to the generosity of the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, and it is one of the finest sights in Egypt. Good art can be found in Ramesses' reign, especially in the earlier years, and it continued to flourish when not subjected to the dead weight of the king's ego. Nefertari owed her place in the king's affections partly to her charms, but also to the fact that she was the mother of several princes and princesses, including the eldest son and heir, who was given the snappy name Amenhiwenimmef, 'Amun is on his right hand'. Nefertari seems to have died before the thirtieth year of her husband's reign.

The second principal wife is Isinofre, who is less well known. The influence of this queen is more detectable in the north of the country. She was a contemporary of her rival, and she could boast that she had borne the king his second son, diplomatically named Ramesses, and

a favourite daughter, who was given the Canaanite name Bintanath, 'Daughter of the goddess Anath'. Isinofre was also the mother of the fourth in line to the throne, a prince named Khaemwise, who pursued a career in the priesthood of Memphis, and devoted himself to the study of hieroglyphs and antiquities. He also designed the Serapeum, the catacomb for the sacred Apis bulls in the desert at Saqqara. As a result of his interests and activities, Khaemwise has been described as the first Egyptologist in history.

A mixed legacy

The architectural history of Ramesses' reign must now be rewritten, in the light of recent discoveries made in Tomb 5 of the Valley of the Kings. This tomb was long believed to have been a mere false start for the king's own burial place, but it is now known to contain more than 100 chambers, arranged on varying levels and destined to receive the bodies of most of the king's sons. The monument is uniquely intriguing.

Ramesses outlived many of his sons, and was succeeded by the thirteenth, a prince named Merneptah who was already advanced in years. One of this king's first acts was to call for an inventory of the wealth of the temples, and one gains the impression that the excesses of the previous reign had left the throne close to bankruptcy. This conclusion is supported by the history of the rest of the dynasty, which is disfigured by a series of feuds between rival branches of the over-extended family.

Ramesses may well deserve the epithet, 'the Great', but, like some others who are honoured with the same distinction, he left a mixed legacy.

Unit 5 – Belzoni

Giovanni Battista Belzoni

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

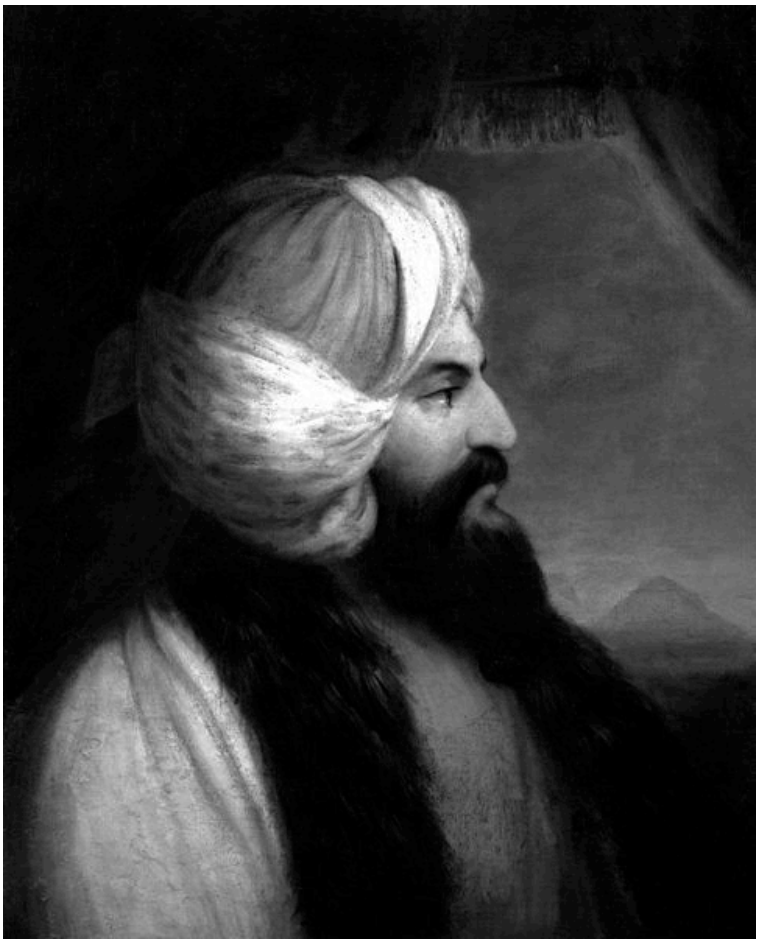
Giovanni Battista Belzoni	
Born	November 5, 1778 Padua
Died	December 3, 1823 (aged 45) Gwato
Nationality	Republic of Venice
Known for	Egyptian antiquities

Giovanni Battista Belzoni (15 November 1778 – 3 December 1823), sometimes known as **The Great Belzoni**, was a prolific Venetian explorer of Egyptian antiquities.

Biography

Belzoni was born in Padua. His father was a barber who sired fourteen children. His family was from Rome and when Belzoni was 16 he went to work there, claiming that he 'studied hydraulics'. He intended taking monastic vows, but in 1798 the occupation of the city by French troops drove him from Rome and changed his proposed career. In 1800 he moved to the Netherlands.

In 1803 he fled to England to avoid being sent to jail.[2] There he married an Englishwoman, Sarah Bane or Banne. Belzoni was a tall man at 6 ft 7 in (2m1) tall (one source says that his wife was of equally generous build, but all other accounts of her describe her as being of normal build) and they both joined a travelling circus.[3] They were for some time compelled to find subsistence by performing exhibitions of feats of strength and agility as a strongman at fairs and on the streets of London. In 1804 he appears engaged at the circus at Astley's amphitheatre at a variety of performances.[4]



Giovanni Battista Belzoni →

In 1812 he left England and after a tour of performances in Spain, Portugal and Sicily, he went to Malta in 1815 where he met Ismael Gibraltar, an emissary of Muhammad Ali, who at the time was undertaking a programme of agrarian land reclamation and important irrigation works.[5] Belzoni wanted to show Muhammad Ali a hydraulic machine of his own invention for raising the waters of the Nile. Though the experiment with this engine was successful, the project was not approved by the pasha. Belzoni, now without a job, was resolved to continue his travels. On the recommendation of the orientalist, J. L. Burckhardt, he was sent by Henry Salt, the British consul to Egypt, to the Ramesseum at Thebes, from where he removed with great skill the colossal bust of Ramesses II, commonly called "the Young Memnon". Shipped by Belzoni to England, this piece is still on prominent display at the British Museum. This weighed over 7 tons. It took him 17 days and 130 men to tow it to the river. He used levers to lift it onto rollers. Then he had his men distributed equally with 4 ropes drag it on the rollers. On the first day (27 July) he only covered a few yards, the second he covered 50 yards deliberately breaking the bases of 2 columns to clear the way for his burden. After 150 yards, it sank into the sand, and a detour of 300 yards on firmer ground was necessary. From there, it got a little easier, and, on 12 August, he finally made it to the river where he was able to load it on a boat for shipment to the British Museum in London.[6]

The 'Young Memnon', Rameses II, at the British Museum.

He also expanded his investigations to the great temple of Edfu, visited Elephantine and Philae, cleared the great temple at Abu Simbel of sand (1817), made excavations at Karnak, and opened up the sepulchre of Seti I (still sometimes known as "Belzoni's Tomb"). He was the first to penetrate into the second pyramid of Giza, and the first European in modern times to visit the oasis of Bahariya. He also identified the ruins of Berenice on the Red Sea.

In 1819 he returned to England and published an account of his travels and discoveries entitled *Narrative of the Operations and Recent Discoveries within the Pyramids, Temples, Tombs and Excavations in Egypt and Nubia, &c*[7] the following year. During 1820 and 1821 he also exhibited facsimiles of the tomb of Seti I. The exhibition was held at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, London.[8] In 1822 Belzoni showed his model in Paris.

In 1823 he set out for West Africa, intending to travel to Timbuktu. Having been refused permission to pass through Morocco, he chose the Guinea Coast route. He reached the Kingdom of Benin, but was seized with dysentery at a village called Gwato, and died there. According to the celebrated traveller Richard Francis Burton he was murdered and robbed. In 1829 his widow published his drawings of the royal tombs at Thebes.

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External links

The Great Belzoni (1778–1823) from Belzoni online

GIOVANNI BELZONI CIRCUS GIANT AND COLLECTOR OF EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES

BY MARIE PARSONS

From http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/belzoni.htm

Giovanni Battista Belzoni was born in Italy, but when his native land was invaded by Napoleon of France in 1798, Giovanni fled. For years he learned hydraulic engineering and worked as a merchant trader.

In 1802, the now 6'7" tall Belzoni traveled to London and was employed as a circus strongman, called the "Patagonian Samson." The highlight of his act was to lift a special constructed iron frame with 12 people sitting on it, and then, still holding it, walk across the stage.

At the age of 40 in 1812, Belzoni left England with his wife Sara. They journeyed to Malta, where Belzoni learned from a Captain Ishmail that the Pasha of Egypt, a former Macedonian mercenary named Muhammed Ali, needed a hydraulic engineer. Ali was very Western-minded, desiring modern knowledge to develop his poverty-stricken country. Belzoni wrote of Cairo, "It was barbarous, really barbarous, and it remains so to this day." Of course, he came to the city when it was torn apart by plague.

When Belzoni finally got an audience with the Pasha, Ali was less than enthusiastic about his plans for a new ox-driven water pump. But he did award Belzoni a tiny government allowance which permitted him to live a while longer in Egypt. During this time, Belzoni met Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, who had adopted Arabic dress and managed to travel to places in Egypt no other European had yet seen. He described to Belzoni both the Abu Simbel temple in Nubia to Belzoni, and a part of a colossal statue known as the "Young Memnon" in Luxor.

Belzoni was intrigued by these discoveries. He applied to Henry Salt, then British consul, to move the colossus to England. Salt granted permission and also promise to provide the required funds. Days later, equipped with only four poles and some rope made locally, Belzoni sailed down the Nile to Luxor and identified the statue. After three weeks of moving several columns in his way, Belzoni had the bust safely on a boat bound for England. This statue, a bust really, measured 9 feet high.Burckhardt described the feat this way: "He

handles masses of this kind with as much facility as others handle pebbles, and the Egyptians who see him a giant in figure, for he is over six feet and a half tall, believe him to be a sorcerer."

Perhaps Belzoni rescued the statue just in time. The French Consul had also eyed the statue, and had considered drilling into it and inserting dynamite in order to make it smaller. The drill-hole can still be seen in the statue's right shoulder.

Belzoni then traveled further to Abu Simbel, and was dismayed to find 30 feet of sand covering the temple entrance. He remained there several weeks, but was unable to find workers willing to stay long enough for his offered wages, and so he left without having ever reached the entrance itself. On his return trip, Belzoni made a tour of collection, stopping first at Philae island and the temple of Isis to collect several fine pieces of sculpture and send them north. Next he stopped again at Luxor, and south of the main temple of Karnak in the precinct of Mut, he found a series of statues of the lion-headed goddess Sekhmet, made of black granite. Some of those joined the Philae sculptures going north.

Henry Salt was so pleased he sponsored a second trip to return to Nubia and collect more and finer pieces. But Belzoni had antagonized the French Consul, also an Italian, named Bernardino Drovetti. Drovetti himself collected artifacts and threw obstacles in Belzoni's way, sending his men to each place Belzoni stopped to rouse public opinion against him, although often it was justified. Since Belzoni could not access the Karnak temple complex, he roamed the Valley of the Kings instead, and there managed by his actions to truly blacken his reputation with archaeologists and scholars.

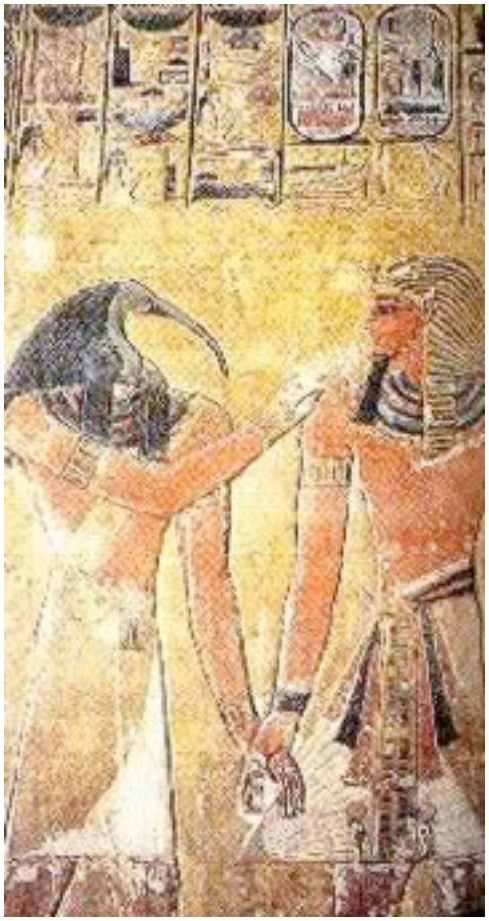
Belzoni did make some discoveries while in the Valley of the Kings, though in many instances, because hieroglyphs had not yet been deciphered, he had no idea who or what he had found. He almost literally stumbled into the tomb belonging to King Ay, but only noted a wall painting of 12 baboons, leading him to christen the chamber "tomb of the 12 monkeys."

Henry Salt had directed Belzoni to arrange for the removal of the bottom part of a decorated sarcophagus, now in the Louvre in Paris, which is attributed to Ramesses III. Belzoni also found the lid buried under heaps of rubble and claimed that for himself, bringing it back to England.

On another occasion, the Italian giant came across an ancient wall, and ordered his workmen to create a battering ram to get through. It is unknown just what might have been learned from studying the wall in an intact condition.

Once inside the tomb, Belzoni recorded finding eight mummies in coffins "all painted, and one with a large covering thrown upon it." He didn't bother with more than that, and the identities of those mummies are left unknown, though they may have been priests from Karnak.

Entering another tomb, he noted wall paintings that were the finest he had ever seen. He had found the tomb of Prince Mentuhirkhopeshef of the 20th Dynasty. Moving through into another area, Belzoni found two mummies, which he described as "females, and their hair pretty, long, and well preserved, though it casually separated from the body by pulling it a little." Another blot on Belzoni's record, this haphazard treatment of his finds.



Belzoni also was fortunate to find the tombs of Ramesses I, the first king of the 19th Dynasty, and of Seti I, the finest tomb found in the Valley of the Kings. The paintings on the walls looked as if they had just been completed. The sarcophagus was carved of finest alabaster, 9 feet 5 inches long and 3 feet 7 inches wide. Sadly, Seti's tomb no longer looks as it must have when he found it. Not only did Belzoni and his workers take wax impressions of the reliefs, but a sudden flash flood in the valley shortly after he left allowed rainwater to enter the tomb and caused immense damage to the paintwork.

Belzoni returned to Abu Simbel and after some days of making an entrance was the first modern man to set eyes on the chamber of Ramesses II's temple. He collected everything moveable and returned north. Stopping at Giza, Belzoni dug for three weeks at the pyramid of Khafre, found the entrance and, squeezing himself through, was the first modern man to see the sarcophagus.

When he returned to London, Belzoni's artifacts were put into an exhibition. He re-created the burial chamber of Seti I, but could not include the sarcophagus. That was claimed by the British Museum, but later sold to Sir John Soane.

Giovanni Belzoni never returned to Egypt, and died of dysentery in a small village in Benin, near Timbuktu in southern Africa.

Not to defend the methods (or lack thereof) of Giovanni Belzoni and others of his time in the early days of archaeology, it should be noted that monuments had been altered and even reduced for countless centuries, as their stones were taken and used in other monuments, or the sands and waters broke in on them and allowed nature to whittle away. There are entire tombs and temples that once existed in Egypt, that certainly exist today in textual references, but as physical structures, can only be marginally pieced together.

Sources:

The World of the Pharaohs by Christine Hobson
Ancient Egypt: The Great Discoveries by Nicholas Reeves

Unit 6 Religion and Death Rites

In Egyptian mythology, the Ogdoad are the eight deities worshipped in Hermopolis. The gods of the Ogdoad were mostly seen as humans with their animals' heads, or just depicted as snakes and frogs. They were arranged in four male-female pairs, with the males associated with frogs, and the females with snakes.

The Egyptians believed that before the world was formed, there was a watery mass of dark, directionless chaos. In this chaos lived the Ogdoad of Khmunu (Hermopolis), four frog gods and four snake goddesses of chaos. [Balance in infinity]

These deities were Nun and Naunet (water), Amun and Amaunet (invisibility), Heh and Hauhet (infinity) and Kek and Kauket (darkness).

Egyptian Religion

[Ancient Egypt lasted for several millennia and covered the Nile valley from about the Fourth Cataract to the Mediterranean Sea. Religion started as groups of widely diverse local beliefs and went through periods of unification, reform and disunification. There was no real long-term "official" Egyptian religion. Rather, the religion and belief structure of the Pharaonic and priestly power structure at any given moment was either enforceable or un-enforceable as circumstances allowed. The following is a short theoretical approximation (one of many – some cover several volumes) of longer-term religious trends, as we understand them, based on only partial records and current archeological deductions. –tkw]

From http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/prehistory/egypt/religion/religion.html

Mythology

Mythology is defined as a collection of interrelated stories of a given culture. Myths tend to describe the creation of the world and give a culture an understanding of the events of nature and the world around them. Myths are also generated to tell the story of the first people to inhabit the earth. These people are elevated to gods and goddesses, which usually associate them as having supernatural and special powers. Myths also express the values or beliefs of a culture, and every culture studied has their own myths distinctive to their group.

Ancient Egyptians tried to understand their place in the universe and their mythology centers itself on nature, the earth, sky, moon, sun, stars, and the Nile River. Heliopolis, the City of the Sun, is located in the ruins of Yunu in northeast Cairo. This is where the cosmic creation of Egyptian myth began. Ancient Egyptian mythology states that in the beginning of time everything began with Nu. Nu is the description of what the planet was before land appeared. Nu was a vast area of swirling watery chaos and as the floods receded the land appeared. The first god to appear out of this watery mess was Atum. This myth was probably created because of the large source of water from the Nile River. In one interpretation, Atum is credited with the fertile land that springs up when the water's of the Nile River recedes, because he was the first to arise out of the watery mess.

Atum emerged from Nu as the sun god at the beginning of time and is the creator of the world. Since Atum was all alone he chose to mate with his shadow. The god Atum was known as the `Great He-She', and a bisexual. The ancient Egyptians found this act acceptable, as they found all types of sexual orientations acceptable. Atum gave birth to two children by spitting out his son (Shu) and vomiting up is daughter (Tefnut). Shu represented the air and the principles of life and Tefnut represented rain and principles of order. The three remained in the watery chaos of Nu and after some time Atum was separated from his children. When they were finally reunited, Atum wept with tears of joy. When his tears hit the ground men grew and he then began to create the world. Shu and Tefnut later gave birth to Geb, the god of the earth in which the throne of the Pharaoh would be decided. Nut was also born from Tefnut and Shu as

the Goddess of the sky, the separator between earth and Nu. Geb and Nut then gave birth to Osiris, Isis, Seth, and Nephthys. In ancient Egyptian mythology there is an established kinship of the gods and goddesses. Atum is known also as Khepri, the great scarab beetle, Ra-Harakhte, the winged-solar disk, Ra, the midday sun, Aten, the solar-disk, or Horus on the Horizon. By whatever name you call him Atum, is the one and only creator in the universe. The sun god Atum travels along Nut during the day and then is swallowed by Nut at night. At dawn it is seen as Nut giving birth to Atum as the sky opens up to the light.

One of the most famous Egyptian myths is the myth of Osiris. Osiris has been credited with many different titles, god of fertility, king of the dead, god of agriculture, and god of the underworld, controller of the Nile floods, and the rising and setting of the sun. All of these titles have one thing in common: life, death, and rebirth because the myth of Osiris is attributed to his life, murder, and eternal life after death. The myth of Osiris begins when he sets out to spread law and order across the land and to teach people how to farm. Because Osiris was a powerful king and popular with the people, his jealous brother lured him into a coffin and sealed his fate with molten lead. Seth then sent him down the Nile River in the coffin. Later the coffin washed ashore in Lebanon and a tree encased it. A king of Lebanon was impressed by the size of the tree and cut it down and put it in his palace.

Isis was the wife and sister to Osiris who gave birth to Horus and was the protector of the dead. When she received the news of Osiris's death, she knew the dead could not rest without a proper burial. Isis searched and found Osiris' body and brought it back to Egypt. Seth found this unacceptable and cut Osiris into many pieces and scattered them throughout Egypt. Isis set out again and had all the pieces she found made into wax duplicates. All the wax duplicates were placed in the temple to be worshipped. Isis preserved his body with linen bandages, used her magic and breathed life back into Osiris. Osiris then rose as a God-King and he chose to rule the underworld. This is where the roots of mummification and rebirth into the afterworld began.

Ancient Egyptian major gods:

Amen (Amon): Amen has his origin in Thebes. He is known as Lord of Creation and Protector of the Poor and Weak. His name means "The Hidden One." He is considered the father of all gods; thus he does not have a mother or father but is husband to Mut, the Great Mother. During the Middle Kingdom, Uast became the state capitol of Egypt and since Amen was the central god of Uast, he became the state god and was later combined with Ra (another creator god) to become Amen-Ra, and worshipped as the King of Gods. Egyptians represent him in art and statue as man or the sun. His sacred animals were the ram and the goose, which were bred and kept at all of his temples throughout Egypt.

Bastet: The Egyptian cat-headed goddess, Bastet was strictly a solar deity until the arrival of Greek influence on Egyptian society, when she became a lunar goddess due to the Greeks associating her with their Artemis. Dating from the 2nd Dynasty (roughly 2890-2686 BC), Bastet was originally portrayed as either a wild desert cat or as a lioness, and only became associated with the domesticated feline around 1000 BC. She was commonly paired with Sakhmet, the lion-headed goddess of Memphis, Wadjet, and Hathor. Bastet was the "Daughter of Ra", a designation that placed her in the same ranks as such goddesses as Maat and Tefnut. Additionally, Bastet was one of the "Eyes of Ra", the title of an "avenger" god who is sent out specifically to lay waste to the enemies of Egypt and her gods. Geb: Geb was the

“Father Earth” or the earth-god. He is said to live forever below his wife Nut, the goddess of the sky. He is the brother and husband of Nut and together they had five children. Geb's sign is the goose, which is thought, according to the mythological creation story, to be the form that the creator took on the day of creation. Geb is thought to be the first ruler of Kemet and some of the ancient king-lists have Geb and his immediate descendants as actual physical kings.

Horus (Heru, Haroeris, Harpocrates): Horus is the son of Isis and Osiris. When Osiris was killed by Set, Horus set out to avenge him. He is the god of the living and lord of the heavens. His name means “He who is above.” Horus is represented as a falcon or hawk-headed deity because of his status as god of the sky and horizon. There are several myths about the eye or eyes of Horus. One source says that Horus gave up his right eye in battle and that it represents strength, vigor and self-sacrifice. Another source simply says that one of his eyes represents the sun and the other represents the moon. During the time he was worshipped in Ancient Egypt, his cult-centers were Behdet in Lower Egypt, and Hierakonpolis and Edfu in Upper Egypt.

Ma'at (Maat): Ma'at was the goddess of truth, justice and harmony. Ra, the sun god, was her father. Offerings were often made of Ma'at to the gods by the pharaohs to show that they wanted to keep harmony and justice on the earth. Ma'at is represented as a woman with an ostrich feather on her head. A vizier, who was a high official in the government and advisor to the pharaohs, were often known as “priests of Ma'at”.

Nut (Nuit): Nut was the goddess of the sky. She created the casing over the earth with her body. She was the sister and wife of Geb, the god of the earth. Shu, the god of air, separated nut and Geb when he lifted Nut up to become the canopy over the earth. Ancient Egyptians believed that in the evenings, Nut would swallow Ra, the sun god, and in the mornings give birth to him. Nut appears as a goddess wearing a blue dress covered in stars.

Ptah: Ptah is the creator god of Memphis, the capital of the dual Kemetic for most of its history. Ptah is symbolized as a mummified man wearing a skullcap and holding the symbols of life, power, and stability in his arms. Ptah is sometimes seen as an abstract form of the self-created one, who effected creation through the actions of his heart and gave all things the breath of life with his tongue. Ptah represents the sun at the time when it begins to rise above the horizon and or right after it has risen. As early as the Second Dynasty, he is regarded as a creator god. He is the patron of painters, builders. architects, artists and sculptors. It was Ptah who built the boats for the souls of the dead to use in the afterlife. In the Book of the Dead we learn that he was a master architect, and responsible for building the framework of the universe. It was said that Ptah created the great metal plate that was the floor of heaven and the roof of the sky. He also constructed the supports that held it up. Some creation legends say that by speaking the names of all things, Ptah caused them to be.

Ra (Re): Another deity represented in human form with the head of a falcon, like Horus. Ra, like Amen, is also thought to be a god of creation. His cult-center is Heliopolis, where he is known as the sun god and supreme judge. Ra is also known as the father of kings and the most important gods. Followers of Ra believe that life on earth was created from the tears of Ra as he wept at the beauty of mankind and his creation. He is considered a living god during the day and a dead one at night. He is born at dawn as a small child, an adult in prime at midday and an old man at sunset. He dies at dark and is reborn again at next dawn.

Seth: Seth was the god of wind and storms and ruler of the deserts. He is seen as the one who brings chaos to Egypt and is the enemy of Osiris and Horus. Nephthys is the wife to Seth and sister to Osiris, Isis, and Seth. She is usually depicted as a protector of the dead. From Osiris and Isis comes Horus, the King of Egypt.

Tawaret (Thoeris, Taurt): Tawaret, or "The Great One", is the goddess who protects women during their pregnancy and childbirth. Often temples were built to honor gods and goddesses but Tawaret was a goddess who was worshiped by ancient Egyptians in their own homes. Often an amulet of Tawaret was worn or at least kept in a person's home to keep them safe from evil spells or actions. Tawaret has the head of a hippopotamus and arms and legs of a lion. She has the back and tail of a crocodile and the breasts and stomach of a pregnant woman.

These are the gods with whom ancient Egyptians had a relationship for thousands of years. By careful study of the gods and the myths that surround them, we can develop a picture in our own minds of what the ancient Egyptians were like as emotional beings. We know what they did on an everyday basis. We know what kind of jobs they worked, how they ate, their medical technology, their government, and how they created their magnificent monuments. But within the hieroglyphs containing the myths of the gods we can learn what motivated the Egyptians spiritual lives. We can learn why they did the things that they did, what the purpose of the pyramids were, their relationship with the pharaoh, their burial practices and their belief in the afterlife. Maybe the ancient Egyptians knew something about the afterlife or the realm of the spirits that we don't know, or will never know, unless we take the time to understand their mythology as they understood it.

Divine Ennead - Heliopolitan Origin Myth

According to the Heliopolitan Tradition, the world began as a watery chaos called Nun, from which the sun-god Atum (later to identified with Re) emerged on a mound. By his own power he engendered the twin deities Shu (air) and Tefnut (moisture), who in turn bore Geb (earth) and Nut (sky). Geb and Nut finally produced Osiris, Isis, Seth and Nephthys. The nine gods so created formed the divine ennead (i.e. company of nine) which in later texts was often regarded as a single divine entity. From this system derived the commonly accepted conception of the universe represented as a figure of the air-god Shu standing and supporting with his hands the out-stretched body of the sky-goddess Nut, with Geb the earth-god lying at his feet.

Hermopolitan Ogdoad

The second cosmological tradition of Egypt was developed at Hermopolis, the Capital of the Fifteenth Nome of Upper Egypt, apparently during a time of reaction against the religious hegemony of Heliopolis. According to this tradition, chaos existed at the beginning of time before the world was created. This chaos possessed four characteristics identified with eight deities who were grouped in pairs: Nun and Naunet, (god and goddess of the primordial water), Heh and Hehet, (god and goddess of infinite space), Kek and Keket, (god and goddess of darkness), and Amun and Amunet, (god and goddess of invisibility).

These deities were not so much the gods of the earth at the time of creation as the personifications of the characteristic elements of chaos out of which earth emerged. They

formed what is called the Hermopolitan Ogdoad (company of eight). Out of chaos so conceived arose the primeval mound at Hermopolis and on the mound was deposited an egg from which emerged the great sun-god. The sun-god then proceeded to organize the world. The Hermopolitan idea of chaos was of something more active than the chaos of the Heliopolitan system; but after the ultimate triumph of the latter system, a subtle modification (no doubt introduced largely for political reasons) made Nun the father and creator of Atum.

Memphite Theology

The third cosmological system was developed at Memphis, when it became the capital city of the kings of Egypt. Ptah, the principal god of Memphis, had to be shown to be the great creator-god, and a new legend about creation was coined. Nevertheless, an attempt was made to organize the new cosmogony so that a direct breach with the priests of Heliopolis might be avoided. Ptah was the great creator-god, but eight other gods were held to be contained within him. Of these eight, some were members of the Heliopolitan Ennead, and others of the Hermopolitan Ogdoad. Atum, for example, held a special position; Nun and Naunet were included; also Tatjenen, a Memphite god personifying the earth emerging from chaos, and four other deities whose names are not certain. They were probably Horus, Thoth, Nefertum, and a serpent-god. Atum was held to represent the active faculties of Ptah by which creation was achieved, these faculties being intelligence, which as identified with the heart and personified as Horus, and will, which was identified with the tongue and personified as Thoth.

Ptah conceived the world intellectually before creating it 'by his own word'. The whole Memphite theology is preserved on a slab of basalt now exhibited in the Egyptian Sculpture Gallery. It was composed at an early date, and committed to stone during the Twenty-fifth Dynasty by the order of King Shabaka. Unfortunately, this stone, the so-called 'Shabaka Stone' was subsequently used as a nether mill-stone and much of the text has been lost. The document known as the Bremner-Rhind Papyrus includes, among other religious texts, two monologues of the sun-god describing how he created all things.

Priest Caste

osorak9.jpg (2296 bytes) The priesthood of ancient Egypt has a far reaching and deep history, rooted within the traditions of Ancient Egypt. Unlike the orthodox priesthoods usually found within Western society, the role of the Egyptian priest or priestess was vastly different within the society as a whole. Rather than seek the divine and develop a rapport with the gods, the role of the priest was akin to an everyday job. For, as the pharaoh was seen as a god himself, the priests and priestesses were seen as stand-in's for the pharaoh; as it was the greater job of the priests and priestesses to keep Egyptian society in good order, as is the case with most theoretically based societies. The mystical attributes of the priests and priestesses take on a secondary role, when one considers the heightened role religion played within Egyptian society. Not only was religion a way to attain the ethereal and basic needs of the Egyptians, but it also served as a mechanism to order society, to create a hierarchy, and to preserve the culture for future generations. As such, the role of the priests and priestesses was both functional and mystical on both levels.

A priest or priestess in ancient Egypt was generally chosen by either the king, or attained their post by hereditary means. In either case, the priests who received their positions hereditarily and through the king were not set apart from mundane life. In fact, such priests were made to

embrace the mundane life to keep Egyptian society functioning properly (and as stated above it was a job of fairly high status). Though the priesthood had started out simply, with relatively few temples, in the later dynasties the temples expanded into the hundreds. With such growth, a large bureaucracy was needed to keep the temples in good standing; and thenceforth, the small priesthood's of the Egyptians grew from an estimated hundred priests into the thousands, and with it came a priestly hierarchy.

The daily life of a priest or priestess depended on their sex and also their hierarchical standing within the priesthood. Priests were often rotated from position to position within the priestly hierarchy and were integrated in and out of mundane society. This rotation system generally went, that a priest would enter into temple life one month, at three times a year. This rotation system had a direct connection to the often stringent purity rites of the priests. Regardless of what status the priest was, there were numerous taboos and tradition's a priest had to or could not partake of. Of these taboos and traditions, a priest or priestess could not eat fish (a food thought to be ascribed to peasant life), could not wear wool (as nearly all animal products were unclean), were generally circumcised (only common among the male priests), and it was not uncommon for priests to bathe three or four times a day in "sacred" purificatory pools. It was also not uncommon for the "oracle" tending priests (one of the most sacred positions), to shave off all of their body hair, partially to get rid of lice, but partially for purificatory functions. These "oracle" priests symbolically gave food to the statues of the gods, clothed the statues of the gods, sealed the temple chamber in the evening, and were known as stolists. As can be seen from the example of the stolists, the need for purity extended not only upon the mundane level, but also held true within the afterlife as well. Further, from such purificatory rites the priests were often times known as the "pure ones" regardless of status within the temples.

The hierarchy of priests consisted of a milieu of offices and duties. At the top of the hierarchy of priests was the high-priest, also known as the sem-priest, and as "the First Prophet of the God". The high-priest was often very wise in years, and old. Not only did he serve as political advisor to the pharaoh, but he was also a political leader for the temples he belonged to as well. The high-priest was in charge of over-seeing magical rites and ceremonies as well as advising the pharaoh. Maintaining a fairly ceremonial position, the high-priest was often times chosen by the pharaoh as an advisor, however, it was not uncommon for a high-priest to have climbed through the ranks to his official status.

Below the high-priest were a number of priests with many specialized duties. The specialization of these second tier priests ran from "horology" (keeping an accurate count of the hours through the days, extremely important during the time of the sunboat worshippers, but also for agricultural reasons as well), "astrology" (extremely important as well to the mythology of Egypt as well as to the architectural and calendrical systems of Egypt), to healing. As is obvious by the specialization of the priests, the cycles of the cosmos were extremely important, as they decided when crops would be planted, when the Nile would wax or wane, and further when the temple rites were to begin in the morning. The result of these Egyptian priests studies can be seen in both the mythological studies of Egypt, as well as within the agricultural practices, which rival even the modern Caesarian Calendar still used within the western world today.

In addition to the political administration, the priests and priestesses took on both magical and economic functions, however set apart from the hierarchy of priests are the lay magicians who supplied a commoners understanding of Egyptian religion. Through the use of magic and

their connection to the gods, lay magicians provided a service to their community, usually consisting of counseling, magical arts, healing, and ceremony. Lay magicians who served within this last and final caste of the Egyptian priesthood belonged to a large temple known simply as "The House of Life". Laymen would come to "The House of Life" to meet with a magician, priest or priestess to have their dreams interpreted, to supply magical spells and charms, to be healed and to counteract malevolent magic, and to supply incantations of various types. Though the House of Life provided it's Laymen with many prescriptive cures for common ills, it was largely shrouded in mystery in ancient times. In fact, the library of The House of Life was shrouded in great secrecy, as it contained many sacred rites, books, and secrets of the temple itself which were thought could harm the pharaoh, the priests, and all of Egypt itself. Though the magicians of The House of Life, were seen as another step from the ceremonial duties of the priests, they were by no means less important, and as is evidenced by the presence of many magical wands, papyri text, and other archeological evidence, The House of Life took on a role direly important to the way of life of Ancient Egyptians.

One final position within the priesthood highly worthy of mention is that of the Scribes. The scribes were highly prized by both the pharaoh and the priesthood, so much so that in some of the pharaoh's tombs, the pharaoh himself is depicted as a scribe in pictographs. The scribes were in charge of writing magical texts, issuing royal decrees, keeping and recording the funerary rites (specifically within The Book of The Dead) and keeping records vital to the bureaucracy of Ancient Egypt. The scribes often spent years working on the craft of making hieroglyphics, and deserve mentioning within the priestly caste as it was considered the highest of honors to be a scribe in any Egyptian court or temple.

Finally, worthy of mention, though there is considerable historical evidence telling of the role of priests within the priestly hierarchy, the status of the priestesses was at times equal if not mirror to that of the male priesthood. The female priestesses held the main function within the temple's of music and dancing. At Thebes, however, the chief-priestess of Amun bore the title of ‘god’s wife’; she was the leader of the female music-makers who were regarded as the god’s harem and were identified with the goddess Hathor, who was associated with love and music. In the Twenty-third Dynasty and afterwards such priestesses were practically rulers of the theocracy, their duties centering around the reverence of Isis, and many other female and male goddesses and gods.

Ancient Egyptian Idea of the Soul

The Ancient Egyptians believed that the "soul" is made up of three parts; the Ba, Ka, and Akh. One part of the soul couldn't live without the other, i.e. if one died they all died. The purpose of mummification was to keep all of the soul's three parts alive.

Ba: The Ba was depicted as a human headed bird. It represented the personality, character, or individuality of the deceased. The Ba lived inside the tomb, but was allowed to leave the tomb and come back at will. It could visit the land of the living where it could take on any form.

Ka: The Ka was a double of the person. It was sometimes represented as a human figure with raised arms, or just a pair of raised arms (David, 140). The creator god "Khnum" fashioned the Ka at the time a person was conceived. It was an exact physical and emotional replica of an individual, that was imprisoned within the living heart, and was only expelled by death. It had

to stay close to the body at all times and could never leave the tomb. It was believed that the Ka could not live unless the body was preserved. If the body was not preserved properly the ka could live inside a picture of the body that was depicted on the wall of the tomb. The Ka was dependent on the objects and offerings that were left in the tomb. It could not survive without nourishment. It required food, drink, and clothing. It was up to the friends and family of the deceased to leave regular offerings at the tomb. Dried fish and fowl were some of the foods left by relatives to nourish the Ka.

Akh: The Akh represented the immortality of the deceased. And, like the Ba, it was sometimes depicted as a bird. The Akh made the journey to the underworld so that it could eventually take its place in the afterlife.

Mummification

Preparing a body for the afterlife in ancient egypt was a very long and complicated process. The Egyptians believed that preserving the body in death was important to keep their soul alive. The Embalmers were priests who were trained in the mummification process. Mummification was a ritual, so the priests who participated were trained to perform the process with both surgical and ritual precision. The embalmers were required to work and labor outside of the town in a workshop called a "Wabet" or a clean place.

The head priest that supervised the ritual wore a terra-cotta mask in the form of Anubis. Anubis was the chosen god for surgeons, and for priests performing the mummification process. By wearing the mask of Anubis it symbolized Anubis watching over the mummification process to guide the priests in the ritual. It was important that the priest did not make any unnecessary cuts in the body, because if the spirit could not recognize the body it would be doomed to wonder across the Earth and possibly haunt the priest responsible.

The first step in the process was to make a cut in the abdomen, below the ribs, on the left side of the body. This first incision was done with a special flint knife, and all other cutting was done with an ordinary metal blade. They had to cut into the body so that they could take out special organs. Once the organs were removed they were placed in canopic jars, which were carved out of alabaster and

inscribed with spells that would one day enable the organs to rejoin the body when it was resurrected. The organs that were placed in the jars include: stomach, lungs, intestines, and liver.

← ***Canopic Jars***
1070-712 B.C.; Egyptian, Dynasty 21-22; Limestone; height 48.3 cm (17 1/2-19 in.)

Once inside the canopic jars each organ was protected by the one of sons of Horus whose head graced the lid. [In later times, the organs would be dried and wrapped and place back inside the abdominal cavity. Mock canopic jars were still placed near the body in the tomb. – tkw]

Next the brain would be extracted through the nose and then thrown away. Resin was then poured through the nose and into the skull with the use of a funnel, to keep the head from collapsing. The heart was left in place because later in the underworld Anubis would weigh the heart and guide the soul through the underworld. During the embalming process every part of the body was saved and either placed in the tomb with the body or given to the relatives of the deceased. Then, the body and organs were preserved with spices and dried out with natron salt. The spices that were used in the preservation process made the body look brown and leathery.

The entire preservation process took about 70 days. After the process was complete, the body was wrapped in linen. Death masks were placed on the head of the mummy around the bandages to be used as a replacement head incase something happened to the real skull. Special amulets were placed within the wrapping of the mummy to protect it. Finally, a "mummy tag," similar to our toe tags, was placed around the mummy's neck to help identify it for burial.

Cats in Ancient Egypt

Animal worship in ancient Egypt is part of the culture of daily life of Egyptians. Animals of every kind were respected and revered, as they were in close contact with deities and gods that the average Egyptian could not reach.

The cat in ancient Egypt, or miw (to see), was a sacred and respected beast. These small companions fascinated the Egyptians, and were venerated by all. It was in Egypt that the cat was first domesticated 4,000 years ago and where they were held in the most admiration and respect. There is evidence of wild felines around the banks of Egypt, but it was not until around 2000 BCE that the fully domesticated cat was brought into the houses of Egyptians.

The first domesticated Egyptian cats in Egypt were more than likely used for warding off the common asp and other snakes, and the typical chasers of rodents. Slowly though, the cat became more to the Egyptians than just a normal animal, the cat became a god.

During the New Kingdom (1540 to 1069 BC), there were many tomb scenes that started showing cats as part of everyday life. The ancient Egyptians took their cats on hunting excursions instead of dogs, The most popular excursions being the marshes where cats may have been trained to retrieve fowl and fish. Another very common scene in tomb paintings was the picturing of a cat seated underneath a woman's chair. Children had become known in

their family as Mit or Miut, showing great affection not only for the child but for the cat as well. Statues of cats were placed outside the house to protect the inhabitants and to ward off evil spirits. This showed scientists that the cat had become an integral part of the ancient Egyptian family life.

Mafdet was the first Egyptian feline deity, sometimes depicted as a lynx, but the most famous cat goddesses in the world, first revered by the ancient Egyptians were Bastet (also known as Bast, Pasch, Ubasti) and the lion-headed Sekhmet.

Bastet had the roles of fertility, protector of children and the protector of all cats. Bastet became so popular infact that she became a household goddess. This goddess was called Bastet when in full cat form, and Bast when only having the head of one and the body of a beautiful woman. Bastet's counterpart was the goddess Sekhmet who represented the cat goddess' destructive force. Sekhmet is known as the goddess of war and pestilence. Together, Bastet and Sekhmet represented the balance of the forces of nature in Egypt.

In Bubastis, or Tell Basta, the cats lived a lavish life as the `embodiment' of Bastet in her temples. Here they were served upon and taken care of until they passed away, and it was here that their bodies were mummified and given as offerings to Bastet. Bubastis contains the remains of over 300,000 cat mummies. Upon being inspected, some feline mummies had severe trauma to the head or neck, signifying that they were killed on purpose, perhaps to lower the growing population or for offerings for Bastet. Giza, Abydos, and Dendereh were also feline tomb cities other than Bubastis.

When a cat died their former owners and occupants of the house would go into deep mourning and shave their eyebrows as a sign of grief. People are not the only mummies in Egypt, as the cat was also mummified significantly. The process of feline mummification had six steps:

1. **Removal of organs**
2. **Body is stuffed with sand or packing material**
3. **Feline is placed in a sitting position**
4. **Body is wrapped tightly**
5. **Faces and designs are painted on wrappings with black ink**
6. **No chemicals, only natural dehydration**

In the tombs of the cats were set bowls of milk along with mice and rats.

Cats were not only protected by almost every occupant of Egypt, but also by the law. So extreme infact was the devoutness of the Egyptian culture to the cat, that if a human killed a feline, either intentionally or unintentionally, that human was sentenced to death. Laws were set that also forbid the exportation of cats, though more often than not, many were smuggled to the neighboring Mediterranean countries. Documents state that armies sometimes were set out to recapture these cats from the foreign lands.

Herodotus stated a story once about a fire in a house in Egypt. The men from the house stood outside in a line to protect the cats from harm and danger. Another statement from Herodotus explains even greater the significance of the cat to Egypt. Herodotus begins with the Egyptians in war with Persia. The Persian general had decided to collect as many cats that his men could find or steal, knowing the great importance of the cat to Egypt. The soldiers then

returned to the town of Pelusium and set the cats free on the battlefield. Horrified, the Egyptians surrendered the city to the Persians rather than harm the cats.

The cat held a powerful spot in the history of Egypt. While she protected his land and his people, she also protected the mystique that is and was the cat in ancient Egypt.

The Goddesses and Gods of Ancient Egypt

Amon (Amen, Amun): the great god of Thebes of uncertain origin; represented as a man, the sun, and sometimes as ithyphallic; identified with Re as Amen-Re; his sacred animals were the ram and goose. anubis.gif (8608 bytes)

Anat: goddess of Syrian origin, with warlike character; represented as a woman holding a shield and an axe.

Anubis (Anpu): the jackal-god, patron of embalmers, healers, and surgeons; in both healing and mummification ceremonies, Anubis was the patron deity which prepared the dead and healed the living. Anubis is considered to be the great necropolis-god.

Anukis (Anqet): goddess of the cataract-region at Aswan; wife of Khnum; represented as a woman with a high feather head-dress.

Arsaphes (Herishef): ram-headed god from, Heracleopolis.

Astarte (As-start-a): goddess of Syrian origin; introduced into Egypt during the 18th Dynasty. She is also known as The Queen of Heaven and her cult often times overlapped with Isian worshipers.

Aten: god of the sun-disk, worshipped as the great creator-god by Akhenaten.

Atum (Tum): the original sun-god of Heliopolis, later identified with Re; represented as a man.

Bastet (Bast): A cat-goddess whose cult-center was at Bubastis in the Delta; in the Late Period regarded as a beneficent deity. She was seen as the patron of cats, of women, and protection.

Bes: A dwarf-deity with leonine features. Seen as a domestic god, protector against snakes and various terrors; helper of women in child-birth.

Edjo (Wadjet, Buto): the cobra-goddess of Buto in the Delta; tutelary deity of Lower Egypt, appearing on the royal diadem, protecting the king.

Geb: the earth-god; husband of Nut; member of the ennead of Heliopolis; represented as a man.

Hapy: god of the Nile in inundation; represented as a man with full, heavy breasts, a clump of papyrus on his head, and bearing heavily laden offering-tables.

Haroeris: a form of Horus, the 'Elder Horus'; identified with the falcon-god and particularly the patron of the king.

Harpocrates (Hor-Pa-Khred): A late form of Horus in his aspect of being son of Isis and Osiris; represented as a naked child wearing the lock of youth and holding one finger to his mouth.

Harsiesis: A form of Horus, specifically designated 'son of Isis'.

Hathor: Goddess of many functions and attributes; represented often as a cow or a cow-headed woman, or as a woman with horned head-dress; the suckler of the king; the 'Golden One'; cult-centers at Memphis, Cusae, Gebelein, Dendera; the patron deity of the mining-region of Sinai; identified by the Greeks with Aphrodite. She was sent by Re to cleanse the land of disbelievers. After slaying all who opposed Re, she asked to rest, and became the equivalent to the Greek form of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, fertility, women, and also their protector. There are many myths surrounding the goddess Hathor.

Hat-mehit: Fish-goddess of Mendes in the Delta; sometimes represented as a woman with a fish on her head.

Heqet: Frog-goddess of Antinoopolis where she was associated with Khnum; a helper of women in child-birth.

eyeofhorus.jpg (4314 bytes)Horus (Haroeris, Harpocrates, Harsiesis, Re-Harakhty): The falcon-deity, originally the sky-god, identified with the king during his lifetime. Known more importantly as the son of Osiris and Isis. Horus was also the avenger of his father Osirius, who was killed by Set. The eye of Horus came from a myth of his battles where Horus gave up his right eye in battle. Since then the Eye of Horus, has come to represent strength, vigor, and self-sacrifice. His cult-centers were in many places, Behdet in the Delta, Hierakonpolis and Edfu in Upper Egypt.

Imhotep (Imouthes): The deified chief minister of Djoser, and architect of the Step Pyramid; in the Late Period venerated as the god of learning and medicine; represented as a seated man holding an open papyrus; equated by the Greeks with Asklepios.

Isis: Isis is known as the divine mother, and as wife of Osiris and mother of Horus; Isis is one of the four great protector goddesses (Bast, Nephythes, and Hathor), guarding coffins and Canopic jars. Isis is sister animatedankh.gif (2641 bytes)of Nephthys with whom she acted as a divine mourner for the dead, and is divinely represented by the Ankh. In the Late Period Philae was her principal cult-center. She is also known as The Queen of Heaven (similar to Astarte), and rules over all matters concerning life, mothering, and sorcery. In the origin myth of Re and the world, it was written that she found out Re's name by enchanting a poisonous snake to bite him. The snake bit Re, and Isis could only heal him by knowing Re's true name. By knowing Re's name, she then had power equal to him and was then given all of her magical power and was thenceforth known as the divine sorceress. Another of the Isian myths concerns, both Isis, Osiris, and Horus. In this myth, Set kills Osiris and scatters his body in fourteen pieces around the world. Isis goes to find these pieces. After she find all of the peices, she reassembles Osiris and he comes back to life for one night during which Isis conceives their son, Horus. Osiris then becomes Lord of the Dead. Horus was given birth to and was committed to avenging his fathers death by killing Set. Isis from then on lived as the divine mourner on earth and in heaven.

Khepri: The scarab-beetle god, identified with Re as a creator-god; often represented as a beetle within the sun-disk.

Khnum: Ram-headed god of Elephantine, god of the Cataract-region; thought to have molded man on a potter's wheel.

Khons: The moon-god, represented as a man; with Amun and Mut as father and mother, forming the Theban triad.

Maat: Goddess of truth, right, and orderly conduct; represented as a woman with an ostrich-feather on her head. It is said that in the judgement of the dead she holds the scales which weigh the human heart.

Min: The primeval god of Coptos; later revered as a god of fertility, and closely associated with Amun; represented as an ithyphallic human statue, holding a flagellum.

Month (Munt): Originally the local deity of Hermonthis, just south of Thebes; later the war-god of the Egyptian king; represented as falcon-headed.

Mut (Mutt): The divine wife of Amun; cult-center at Asheru, south of the main temple of Amen-Re at Karnak; originally a vulture-goddess, later represented usually as a woman.

Nefertum: The god of the lotus, and hence of unguents; worshipped at Memphis as the son of Ptah and Sakhmet; represented as a man with a lotus-flower head-dress.

Neheb-kau: A serpent deity of the underworld, sometimes represented with a man's body and holding the eye of Horus.

Neith (Net): Goddess of Sais; represented as a woman wearing the red crown; her emblem, a shield with crossed arrows; one of the four 'protector'-goddesses who guarded coffins and Canopic jars; identified by the Greeks with Athena.

Nekhbet: Vulture-goddess of Nekheb (modern El-Kab); tutelary deity of Upper Egypt, sometimes appearing on the royal diadem beside the cobra (Edjo).

Nephthys (Nebet-het): Sister of Isis; one of the four 'protector'-goddesses, who guarded coffins and Canopic jars; with Isis acted as mourner for Osiris and hence for other dead people; represented as a woman.

Nun (Nu): god of the primeval chaos, the Nu was also seen as the primeval water from which the gods, earth, and humans were created from, i.e. the chaos from which order was created.

Nut (Nuit): the sky-goddess, wife of Geb, the earth-god; represented as a woman, her naked body is curved to form the arch of heaven.

Onuris (Anhur): God of This in Upper Egypt; the divine huntsman; represented as a man.

Osiris (Asar): The god of the underworld, identified as the king of the dead; also a god of the inundation and vegetation; represented as a mummified king; principal cult-center, Abydos.Osiris is seen as the great judge of the dead.

Ptah: Creator-god of Memphis, represented as a man, mummiform, possibly originally as a statue; the patron god of craftsmen; equated by the Greeks with Hephaestus.

Ptah-seker-osiris: Composite deity, incorporating the principal gods of creation, death, and after-life; represented like Osiris as a mummified king.

Qadesh: Goddess of Syrian origin, often represented as a woman standing on a lion's back.

Re (Ra): The sun-god of Heliopolis; head of the great ennead, supreme judge; often linked with other gods aspiring to universality, e.g. Amen-Re, Sobk-Re; represented as falcon-headed. Seem as the father of the gods, it was from him that all the gods and goddesses were created. He is also known by three aspects, which correspond to the positions of the sun, Amen at dawn, Re in the evening, and Set at dusk.

Re-harakhty: A god in the form of a falcon, embodying the characteristics of Re and Horus (here called 'Horus of the Horizon').

Renenutet (Ernutet, Thermuthis): Goddess of harvest and fertility; represented as a snake or a snake-headed woman.

Reshef (Reshpu): God of war and thunder, of Syrian origin.

Sekhmet: (Sakhmet) A lion-headed goddess worshipped in the area of Memphis; wife of Ptah; regarded as the bringer of destruction to the enemies of Re.

Sarapis: a god introduced into Egypt in the Ptolemaic Perod having the characteristics of Egyptian (Osiris) and Greek (Zeus) gods; represented as a bearded man wearing the modius head-dress; the Egyptian writing of the (i.e. Osiris-Apis) may not signify the true origin of this god.

Satis (Satet): A goddess of the Island of Siheil in the Cataract-region; represented as a woman wearing the white crown with antelope horns; the daughter of Khnum and Anukis.

Selkis (Selkit, Selkhet, Serqet): A scorpion-goddess, identified with the scorching heat of the sun; one of the four 'protector'-goddesses, guarding coffins and Canopic jars; shown sometimes as a woman with a scorpion on her head.

Seshat: The goddess of writing; the divine keeper of royal annals; represented as a woman.

Seth (Set, Sutekh): The god of storms and violence; identified with many animals, including the pig, ass, okapi, and hippopotamus; represented as an animal of unidentified type; brother of Osiris and his murderer; the rival of Horus; equated by the Greeks with Typhon.

Shu: The god of air; with Tefnut, forming the first pair of gods in the Heliopolitan ennead; shown often as a man separating Nut (sky) from Geb (earth).

Sobk (Sebek, Suchos): The crocodile-god, worshipped throughout Egypt, but especially in the Faiyum, and at Gebelein and Kom Ombo in Upper Egypt.

Sokaris (Sokar, Seker): A falcon-headed god of the necropolis; cult-center in Memphis.

Sopdu: The ancient falcon-god of Saft el-Henna in the Delta; a warrior-god, protector of the eastern frontier; represented often as an Asiatic warrior.

Sothis (Sepdet): The dog-star Sirius (see the constellation Canis), defined as a goddess; shown as a woman with a star on her head.

Tatjenen: The primeval earth-god of Memphis; later identified with Ptah.

Tefnut: The goddess of moisture; with Shu forming the first pair of the Heliopolitan ennead.

Thoeris (Taurt, Taweret): The hippopotamus-goddess; a beneficent deity, the patron of woman in child-birth.

Thoth: the ibis-headed god of Hermopolis; the scribe of the gods, the inventor of writing, and the great god of all knowledge; the ape as well as the ibis are sacred to him. In the judgment of the dead he was the scribe who recorded the confessions and affirmations of the dead on his scrolls, and also kept a record of who went into paradise and who was eaten by the dogs of judgment.

Unnefer (Wenen-nefer, Onnophris): A name meaning 'he who is continually happy', given to Osiris after his resurrection.

Wepwawet (Upuaut): The jackal-god of Asyut in Middle Egypt; a god of the necropolis and an avenger of Osiris.

Egyptian Astrology

An Entry from the Cairo Calendar Papyrus:

Very Adverse

It is the day the offering to Sobek was taken away.

Do not eat any mehyet-fish today.

Reference: Brier, Bob Ancient Egyptian Magic. Quill: New York, 1980

Most of our understanding of Egyptian astrology is contained within the Cairo Calendar, which consists of a listing of all the days of an Egyptian year. The listings within the calendar all take the same form and can be broken up into three parts: I, the type of day (favorable, unfavorable etc), II, a mythological event which may make a particular day more favorable or unfavorable, III, and a prescribed behavior associated with that day. Unlike modern astrology as found within newspapers, where one can choose whether to follow the advice there in or not, the Egyptians strictly adhered to what an astrologer would advise. As is evidenced by the papyrus of the Cairo Calendar, on days where there were adverse or favorable conditions, if

the astrologers told a person not to go outside, not to bathe, or to eat fish on a particular day, such advice was taken very literally and seriously.

Some of the most interesting and misunderstood information about the Ancient Egyptians concerns their calendarical and astrological system. Of the greatest fallacy about Ancient Egypt and it's belief in astrology concerns the supposed worship of animals. The Egyptians did not worship animals, rather the Egyptians according to an animals astrological significance, behaved in certain ritualistic ways toward certain animals on certain days. For example, as is evidenced by the papyrus Cairo Calendar, during the season of Emergence, it was the advisement of the Seers (within the priestly caste), and the omens of certain animals they saw, which devised whether a specific date would be favorable or unfavorable.

The basis for deciding whether a date was favorable or unfavorable was based upon a belief in possession of good or evil spirits, and upon a mythological ascription to the gods. Simply, an animal was not ritually revered because it was an animal, but rather because it had the ability to become possessed, and therefore could cause harm or help to any individual near them. It was also conceived of that certain gods could on specific days take the form of specific animals. Hence on certain days, it was more likely for a specific type of animal to become possessed by a spirit or god than on other days. The rituals that the Egyptians partook of to keep away evil spirits from possessing an animal consisted of sacrifice to magic, however, it was the seers and the astrologers who guided many of the Egyptians and their daily routines. Hence, the origin of Egyptians worshipping animals, has more to do with the rituals to displace evil spirits, and their astrological system, more so than it does to actually worshipping animals.

An Overview of the Ancient Egyptian Religion

by John Watson ***From http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/religion.htm***

Without the ancient Egyptian Religion, there would probably be little reason for one to visit Egypt today. The great Pyramids would not exist, nor of course, would there be the fabulous temples, the tombs on the West Bank of Thebes (modern Luxor) and their mummies, or the colorful decorations that adorn these structures that have lured travelers to Egypt over the past three thousand or so years. Behind every aspect of Egyptian life, including the art, the political structure and the cultural achievements one must see the religious forces that shaped the fabric of ancient Egypt.

The spiritual world that was created by the ancient Egyptians was a richly fascinating one which remains unique in the history of human religion, but at the same time, somehow familiar in many ways. The character of that spiritual world was both mysterious and manifest, at once accessible and hidden, for although Egyptian religion was often shrouded in layers of myth and ritual, it nevertheless permeated the ancient civilization of the Nile and ultimately shaped, sustained and directed Egyptian culture in almost every way.

One thing that does seem familiar about their ancient religion was that people were very concerned about the afterlife. Furthermore, in order to avoid being counted among the damned of the afterlife, one had to not only venerate the Egyptian gods, but also live by a code of standards that would be judged after death.

Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians "are religious to a higher degree than any other people"

Some six centuries later, in the Perfect Discourse, Hermes Trismegistos summed up the spirit of Egyptian religious beliefs for his disciple, Asclepius, in a striking metaphor:

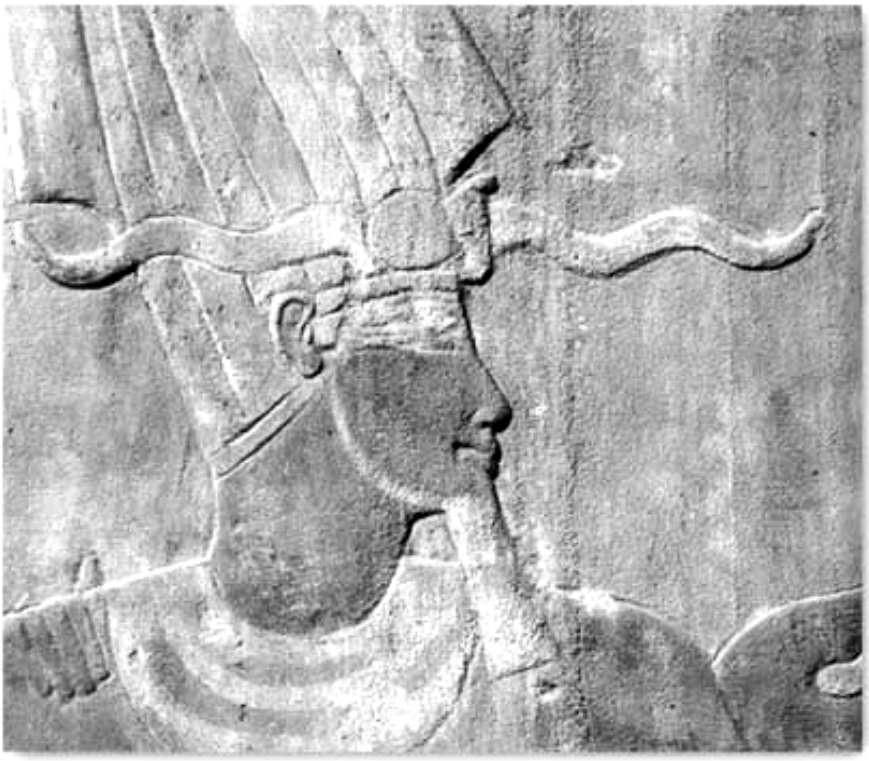
> **"[Egypt] has become the image of heaven, and what is more, the resting place of heaven and all the forces that are in it. If we should tell the truth; our land has become the temple of the world"**

Like the members of any other human culture, the ancient Egyptians were driven to find meaning in existence, but there were also other influences on their religion, such as the need to justify kingship, among others.

We cannot say with any certainty exactly when the foundations of Egyptian religion were actually laid, though it was certainly prior to recorded history. In fact, some of the important mythology, such as the Contentings of Horus and Seth, could have possibly been rooted in real events prior to Egypt's unification.

We must be careful when examining the ancient Egyptian religion. Though there was a considerable amount of consistency between various areas of Egypt and over the religion's long existence, there were significant variations and over time, changes in the theology. For example, while some 1,500 gods and goddesses are known by name from ancient Egypt, many of them were not worshipped at any one time or in any one place.

Over time, many changes took place, and some were very dramatic. The tell-tail signs of these changes were sometimes very obvious. For example, the burial practices of the Egyptians, which were certainly affected by their religious ideologies, went from simple mastabas in the very early periods and during the Predynastic Period, to monumental pyramids during the Old and Middle Kingdoms.



Then, after the first ruler of Egypt's New Kingdom who built a Pyramid at Abydos, the Egyptian Kings rather suddenly did away with superstructures altogether, preferring instead to have hidden tombs with no superstructures at all. Perhaps part of the reason for this was the security of the tomb and its content of valuables, though it did not do much to stop the tomb robbers. However, it also had much to do with the Egyptian religion's movement towards Osiris. The god Osiris also seems responsible for another major change in Egyptian religion through its long history, that is, it's popularization. Osiris was a democratic god who doubtless became more and more popular because the theology surrounding him allowed even common Egyptians the opportunity of immortality after their death.

Of course, some things did stay the same, to an extent. There seems to have always been a sun god from the earliest of times, but his worship too changed over time, and sometimes dramatically. The sun god Re was worshipped at Egypt's earliest shrines, and his veneration probably reached a high point during the late Old Kingdom, when kings not only built their pyramids, but also specialized temples to worship the sun god.

Perhaps one of the most consistent aspects of ancient Egyptian religion was the role of the King, though even this did change over time. However, the king seems to always have been central to the ancient Egyptian religion. What changed was the perception of his role, though even this remained somewhat consistent particularly after the Early Dynastic Period.

While Egyptologists may sometimes address the reasons for changes within the ancient Egyptian religion, this may be one of the most unknown aspects of the religion. Did priests have heated debates over theology which culminated in change? If they did, it must have been mostly narrative in nature, for we have little if any record of this. If such discussions did take place, the King must have been involved, because it is through his actions that most new religious foundations were created, and it was his funerary monuments that seem to have changed the most over time.

That theological discussions and probably discourse took place is almost certain, because the mythology of the religion evolved, becoming more complete, sophisticated and more complex over time. This is particularly obvious from funerary texts, beginning with the Pyramid Texts and moving on to numerous texts particularly during the New Kingdom.

On the other hand, it is very likely that changes took place also because of shifts in regional power. This certainly seems the case when, during the New Kingdom, the center of religious activity shifted to Thebes, where the state god, Amun rose to acclaim. Furthermore, the need of the common populous to be included also effected changes, particularly towards Osiris.

Religion has been defined as a belief in and reverence for a supernatural power or powers regarded as creator and governor of the universe. This is somewhat of an over simplification because religions usually include a system of values as well as various practices. Egyptian religion can be said to encompass their ancient gods, the mythology or accounts of those gods and other aspects of the religion such as creation, death and the afterlife, and the cults who worshipped the gods. However, there are certainly more complexities to the religion, such as how the king played into this structure of religion, and moral dogma concerning what the god's expected of

humans (a system of values).

The Gods

Consistently, from the beginning of Egyptian religion to its final stand at the Temple of Philae, with possibly the exception of one brief period, most scholars agree that the religion was polytheistic. A number of attempts have been made to explain Egyptian religion in terms of monotheism, and certainly scholars of the nineteenth century, steeped in Christian tradition, tended to find traces of monotheism in Egyptian beliefs. The main evidence they sited was the anonymous "god" who the Egyptians referred to in literary and wisdom texts. Now, however, the anonymous god found in Egyptian texts is understood to represent a way of invoking any divine power emanating from any gods, or sometimes, a specific, assumed god worshipped by an individual or one in a specific region.

Even during the 18th Dynasty reign of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), who apparently tried to introduce and promote a single god, the Aten, Egyptian religion cannot be said to have been monotheistic, for while the king himself may have worshipped a single god, and even that is uncertain, his religion never caught on and for the most part, Egyptians in general continued to worship their traditional gods.

However, several researchers have applied the concept of henotheism to Egyptian religion. This practice focuses on one god addressed in a particular time of worship. Essentially, henotheism is the belief in one god without denying the existence of others. The believer unites all known divine powers in his favorite god.

The situation with gods is further complicated by syncretism and other forms of combining them. The term "syncretism" has a special meaning in Egyptology, referring to the combination or merging of aspects of one god in another. This feature first appeared in the 4th Dynasty with Atum-Re of Heliopolis and by Middle Kingdom, there were many such combinations. It has been shown that this was probably a temporary fusion of gods, each keeping their own characteristics.

Furthermore there is the matter of manifestation, a concept that is frequently misunderstood by the general public. Egyptians almost certainly did not worship statues, paintings of gods or, for that matter, animals. These objects were simply believed to be the manifestation, or temporary habitats of the gods who they worshipped.

It should also be noted that the Egyptians created personified conceptions, such as Ma'at (truth, balance), or (Hapi (the inundation), though these were always joined with a god or used as decorations.

Cults

Cults were the official structure used to worship the Egyptian gods. In regards to ancient Egypt, this structure included the priests who carried out rituals associated with the gods, who were frequently manifest in the form of statues, within the cult temples. The center of the Egyptian cult was the temple, a sacred area enclosed by a wall, that excluded the profane. Temples could be called a "house" or "chapel", or a "chapel of the god", which includes a section of the temple devoted to worldly needs. Inside the sanctuary of the temple was the cult statue, which served as the dwelling for the god worshipped in the cult center, though there could be and were more than one in many temples.

Cult rituals were actually a dialogue between the gods, and therefore the king (or a priestly substitute for the king) acted in the divine performance as a god.

Until the Middle Kingdom, the spheres of administration and cult were not separated, but in the 18th Dynasty, a special priesthood was established.

Rituals centered around offerings, but there were certainly numerous other rituals, including many daily functions such as washing and clothing the gods (or at least the statue of the gods). Other rituals took the form of celebrations when, for example, one god might be taken to visit the cult center of another, and it was during these festivals that common Egyptians probably came closest to their gods, for at other times they were prohibited from the sanctuaries that housed the cult statues.

At first the cult, and for that matter, the benefits of religion and the god's which it served was limited to the king for the most part, though many functions and rituals were performed by his substitutes (priests). Common Egyptians could mostly only hope that the King took his religious duties seriously, or otherwise they might expect to suffer famine or other disasters or for that matter, any chance of an afterlife. As time passed, religion became much more popularized, so that in latter Egyptian history, common Egyptians demanded their own means of worshipping and being accepted by their gods. More and more, common Egyptians built within their homes shrines for their personal worship, or at other times, small public shrines where they could worship and pray together. However, throughout Egyptian history, common Egyptians were limited as to the scope that they could participate in the state cult centers.

Mythology

A myth may be defined as a traditional, typically ancient story dealing with supernatural beings, ancestors, or heroes that serves as a fundamental type in the worldview of a people, as by explaining aspects of the natural world or delineating the psychology, customs, or ideals of society:

Unlike many modern religions, there was no single (or only a few) textual source that bound up the religious ideology of the ancient Egyptians. There was no bible as such, nor could there have been, because the beliefs sometimes varied from region to region, and the mythology evolved over time.

Texts are known since the third dynasty that make reference to the activities of the gods, usually within accounts of relations between nobles and the king. In fact, most of the known

Egyptian myths concern the origins and nature of kingship as the central topic of interest. Narrative literature did not appear before the Middle Kingdom (to our knowledge), but myths certainly existed in oral tradition long before. Allusions to the deeds of gods are inserted in early ritual texts, such as the Pyramid Texts.

Because Egypt had many gods, they also had many myths. Some of them, such as those surrounding Re, the Sun God, particularly during the earlier periods, and later, such as the contention of Horus and Seth, became central to the Egyptian religion, perhaps mainly due to their relevance to Kingship. However, other myths involving, for example, Hathor as a healer, were very important to more common Egyptians, as were myths concerning Bes, a goddess of childbirth and the home. There were certainly other myths, sometimes at odds with others, that explained creation, dealt with the afterlife, and even the end of times.

System of Values

A value system (also see our articles on evils and ethics) was important to the ancient Egyptians in much the same way that it is today. In fact, many of the values of our modern society were present in the Egyptian system. What is perhaps different is the exact relevance that the ancient Egyptians gave to their value system. Certainly, the value system had both a secular and religious side. On the religious side, then, as in many religions today, one was judged upon death for his or her actions during life, and either condemned to be a member of the damned or the blessed.

However, a system of values was also important for social order, just as it is today, and then as well as now, a criminal system was also available to punish offenders during their lifetime for certain offenses.

Somewhat different was the matter of Ma'at, a personified concept of truth, balance and order. An individual could violate Ma'at by his actions, but so too could the nation as a whole. In this regard, the king was always responsible for maintaining Ma'at on behalf of the country, usually by maintaining and supporting the cult centers, fending off foreign powers and in general by maintaining the system of values, for example, removing corrupt officials. The ancient Egyptians believed that failure to maintain Ma'at, as a country, could result in divine intervention, when the Egyptian gods provided only low Nile floods, and thus famine, enemy incursions or even complete chaos within the country.

This notion of a national Ma'at is not lost to us today. Many people of religion continue to believe that a nation's fortunes are dictated by their adherence to both good deeds and a general belief in God. Biblically, there are more than a few examples of states finding the wrath of God due to a lack of values.

We know of the ancient Egyptian system of values from wisdom text, wall engravings, particularly autobiographies, and from various religious sources.

Kingship

The King represented Egypt before the gods, and it is he who is depicted most often worshipping them while standing, kneeling or even crawling. In making offerings to the gods, the King attempts to secure order, or Ma'at, which is compulsory for gods as well as kings.

The king was the single link between the divine and the profane, as well as the representative of the gods on Earth. Since the Second Intermediate period, the doctrine of the king as god attempts to explain how a living being can acquire divine status, a concept that was first formulated in the Coffin Texts, and possibly used earlier in the Pyramid Texts. It may have originated in the union of the dead king with Osiris, or that of the living king with Horus.

The first title of an Egyptian king was his Horus name, and there is a close connection of this deity and the king since at least the late Predynastic Period. This basic concept was maintained during all periods, although in various royal representations, the proportions of the king to the god were eventually changed in favor of the god, and therefore making the king of less importance.

The king's divine status has been explained by reference to his two natures. The king became an offspring of the Sun God, Re, in the 4th Dynasty, which is viewed as a loss in divine power. The dead king was seen as Osiris, while the living king was the son of Re. Note that during the 5th Dynasty, the king's built solar temples (to Re), but had Osirian subterranean structures beneath their pyramids, which show the close association of both Re and Osiris with kingship.

So important was the king to ancient Egyptian religion that he was theoretically required to be the head of all ceremonies and rites throughout the country at the same time. The practical answer to this was for the king to elevate members of the royal family, during the Old Kingdom, and nobles of his court later, so that they could represent him. This became the Egyptian priesthood, which eventually developed its own independence and titles during the New Kingdom.

It is not unreasonable that our concept of how the Egyptians worshiped their many gods might change extensively as we find more and more new information. Indeed, there have, over the years, been shifts in how Egyptology views the religion. One might consider the amount of material available on our modern religions, and how little we have on the Egyptian religion, to have an understanding of just how little we actually know about this complex and ancient belief system.

For much more on Egyptian religion see the Internet links at the bottom of this Internet page: http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/religion.htm.

Overview of Mummification in Ancient Egypt

by Jefferson Monet

From http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/mummification.htm

Mummies is a term that today is used to describe natural or artificially preserved bodies, though traditionally the word was used specifically to describe the bodies of ancient Egyptians where dehydration of the tissues was used to prevent putrefaction. The word is derived from the Persian or Arabic word mumia (or mumiya), which means "pitch" or "bitumen". It originally referred to a black, asphalt-like substance, thought to have medicinal properties and eagerly sought as a cure for many ailments, that oozed from the "Mummy Mountain" in Persia. There was such a demand for this substance that an alternative source was eventually sought and, because the ancient Egyptian mummies often have a blackened appearance, they were believed to possess similar properties to munia. Hence, during the medieval and later times, they were used as medicinal ingredient. The term mumia, or "mummy" was therefore extended to these bodies and has continued in use up until our present day.

Mummification of bodies was originally a natural process in Egypt and elsewhere, where the dryness of the sand in which the body was buried, the heat or coldness of the climate, or the absence of air in the burial helped to produce unintentional or "natural" mummies. These processes have produced mummies not only in Egypt, but in South America, Mexico, the Alps, Central Asia, the Canary Islands, the Aleutian Islands and Alaska. Another type of natural mummification also occurred in northwestern Europe where bodies have been preserved when buried in peat bogs or fens containing lime.

In some of these areas, the natural process was early on intentionally developed by enhancing the environmental conditions. Sun, fire or other sources of heat were sometimes used to dehydrate the bodies, while at other times, the bodies were cured using smoke. Also, natural material such as grass could be used to surround the body, fill its cavities or seal the burial place so that, by the exclusion of air, decomposition and further deterioration was prevented.

Our Sources and Research on Mummification

What we know about Egyptian mummification comes from a number of sources, including the archaeological evidence provided by the mummies themselves, paleopathological studies of the bodies, painted and carved representations in tomb scenes and elsewhere that depict some stages of the mummification process, and textual references in Egyptian and other classical era accounts. However, there exists no known Egyptian description of the technical processes involved in mummification. No paintings or carvings provide an extant, complete record of mummification, though some wall scenes in the tombs of Thoy and Amenemope

(tombs 23 and 41 on the West Bank at Thebes, respectively) and vignettes painted on some coffins and canopic jars show some stages in the mummification process. However, the earliest known accounts of mummification that are elatively complete occur in the writings of two specific Greek historians (Herodotus from the fifth century BC and Diodorus Siculus from the first century BC).

Nevertheless, within Egyptian literature, there is scattered references to mummification and the associated religious rituals. In one text, called the "Ritual of Embalming", is provided a set of instructions to the officials who perform the rites that accompany the mummification process, as well as a collection of prayers and incantations to be invoked after each rite. This ritual is specifically set out in two papyri, probably copied from the same source and both dated to the Roman period. They are the Papyrus Boulaq 3, now in the Cairo Museum, and Papyrus 5158 in the Louvre. There are also references to the embalming ceremonies in the Rhind Papyri and in other literary sources, including inscriptions on stelae. However, it is Herodotus's account that remains the most complete regarding the mummification process.

In addition to classical texts and references, a surprising amount of modern scientific research has been conducted in regards to mummies. Sometimes,. these have even included multidisciplinary studies of mummified remains which have supplied new information about the process of mummification itself, as well as disease, diet, living and working conditions and even family relationships. For example, the use of scanning electron microscopes has been used to identify insects that attack mummies, histology and electron microscopy have supplied evidence about the success or failure of individual mummification techniques, and thin layer and gas liquid chromatography have isolated and characterized the substances that were applied to the mummy bandages.

here have also been several techniques that have informed us of the diseases in mummies. As early as the 1970s, radiography, which is a nondestructive method, became a major investigative procedure and later the additional use of computerized tomography (CT) became standard in most radiological investigations of mummies. There are also dental studies of mummies that have provided evidence about age, diet, oral health and disease. Paleohistology, which involves the rehydration, fixing and selective staining of sections of mummified tissue, together with paleopathology, which is the study of disease in ancient people, have developed considerably since the techniques were originally pioneered in Cairo earlier in the twentieth century by M. A. Ruffer.

Today, endoscopy has almost completely replaced the need to autopsy a mummy, since this technique allows the researcher to gain firsthand evidence about embalming methods and to obtain tissue samples for further study without destroying the mummy. Histology, transmission electron microscopy (TEM), immunohistochemistry and immunocytochemistry can then be used to search for evidence of disease in the tissue samples.

Today, we also use DNA, rather than the older studies of blood groups, to help identify individual family relationships and future studies of this type may even help identify the origins and migrations of ancient populations. DNA analysis may also help identify bacterial, fungal, viral and parasitic disease.

In the future, current studies on the process of deterioration may also help curators and conservators in preserving their mummy collections.

Egyptian Mummification

In Egypt, a combination of climate and environment, as well as the people's religious beliefs and practices, led first to unintentional natural mummification and then to true mummification. In Egypt, and particularly ancient Egypt, there was a lack of cultivatable land and so the early Egyptians chose to bury their dead in shallow pit-graves on the edges of the desert, where the heat of the sun and the dryness of the sand created the natural mummification process. Even this natural process produced remarkably well preserved bodies. Often, these early natural mummified bodies retained skin tissue and hair, along with a likeness of the person's appearance when alive.

Prior to about 3400 BC, all Egyptians were buried in pit graves, whether rich or poor, royal or common. Later however, as prosperity and the advance in building techniques improved, more elaborate tombs for those of high social status were constructed. Yet at the same time, these brick lined underground burial chambers no longer provided the conditions which led to natural mummification in the older pit graves. Now however, mummification had been established in the religious belief system so that the deceased's ka, or spirit, could return to and recognize the body, reenter it, and thus gain spiritual sustenance from the food offerings. Hence, a method was sought to artificially preserve the bodies of the highest classes. However, preservation of the body was probably also required due to the longer period that it took to actually inter the body, as grave goods and even the tomb itself received final preparations.

What we sometimes called true mummification involves a sophisticated process that was developed from experimentation. The best example of this process is Egyptian mummification, which involved the use of chemical and other agents. The experimentation that led to true mummification probably lasted several hundred years. Such efforts may have begun as early as the 2nd Dynasty. J. E. Quibell, an Egyptologist who worked in some primitive Egyptian necropolises, found a large mass of corroded linen between the bandages and bones of a body interred in a cemetery at Saqqara that perhaps evidences an attempt to use natron or another agent as a preservative by applying it to the surface of the skin.

Another early technique involved the covering of the body in fine linen and then coating this with plaster to carefully preserve the deceased's body shape and features, in particular the head. In 1891, W. M. Flinders Petrie discovered a body at Meidum dating to the 5th Dynasty in which there had been some attempt to preserve the body tissue as well as to recreate the body form. Bandages were carefully molded to reproduce the shape of the torso. Arms and legs were separately wrapped and the breasts and genitals were modeled in resin-soaked linen. Nevertheless, decomposition had taken the body beneath the bandages, and only the skeleton remained.

Only as early as the 4th Dynasty do we actually find convincing evidence of successful, true mummification. The mother of Khufu, the king who built the Great Pyramid at Giza, also had a tomb at Giza. Though her body has not been found, in her tomb was discovered preserved viscera which could probably be attributed to this queen. An analysis of these viscera packets proved that they had been treated with natron, the agent that was successfully used in later times to dehydrate the body tissue. Hence, this find demonstrates that the two most important components of mummification, evisceration of the body and dehydration of the tissues, was already in use by royalty. Afterwards, mummification continued to be practiced in Egypt for some three thousand years, lasting until the end of the Christian era.

As Egyptian history progressed, mummification became available to people of the upper and even the middle classes. During the Middle Kingdom, the political and economic growth of the middle classes and the increased importance of religious beliefs and practices among all Egyptian social classes resulted in the spread of mummification to new sections of the population. More mummies have survived from that period than from the Old Kingdom, but it is also evident that less care was taken in their preparations. Mummification was actually most widespread during the Greco-Roman period. It was then that foreign immigrants who settled in Egypt began to adopt Egyptian funerary beliefs and customs. Mummification at that time became an increasingly prosperous commercial venture, and it tended to indicate the decease's social status rather than any religious conviction. This resulted in a further decline in the quality of the mummification process. At that time, bodies were elaborately bandaged and encased in covers made of cartonnage (a mixture of plaster and papyrus or linen). However, modern radiographic analysis confirms that these bodies were frequently poorly preserved inside their wrappings. Mummification was never generally available to the common classes of people. Yet, since they could not afford the sophisticated funerary structures, they continued to be interred in simple desert graves where their bodies were naturally preserved.

Today, the method of mummification used to preserve a body, as well as the quality of the work, aids Egyptologists in determining the social status of the deceased. Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells us that there were three primary types of mummification available which ancient clients chose according to their ability to pay for these services.

The most expensive processes included elaborate funerary rites as well as a lengthy and complicated procedure to preserve the body. This process involved a number of stages, though the two most important steps continued to be the arresting of the decomposition of the body through evisceration and dehydration.

The internal organs, called viscera, were normally removed from the thoracic and abdominal cavities through an abdominal incision in the left flank. In some instances, the viscera were not extracted at all, while in others they were removed through the anus. This tissue was then dehydrated with natron, and either placed in canopic jars or made into four packages and reinserted into the body cavities. Some were wrapped in one large packet that was placed on the legs of the mummy. Interestingly, the heart was considered to be the organ associated with the individual's intelligence and life force and was therefore retained in place, while the brain was removed and discarded.

After removal of the internal organs, the body cavities were washed out with spiced palm wine and then filled with a mixture of dry natron (a type of salt) gum resin and vegetable matter. Afterwards, the corpse was left to dehydrate, apparently in a bath of natron, for a period of up to seventy days. However, experimentation has proven that forty days is sufficient for the dehydration process, and he seventy days that Herodotus spoke of may have actually represented the period of time between the individual's death and his burial. natron, believed to be the main ingredient used to pack the body, was found in a dry desert valley called the Wadi Natrun, now famous for its monasteries. It is composed of sodium carbonate and sodium bicarbonate and includes some natural impurities. Originally, there was some discussion in Egyptology circles concerning the use of natron, actual salt (sodium chloride), or lime (calcium carbonate) as the main dehydration agent in Egyptian mummification. There was also a question of whether the natron was used in a solution such as water, or in a solid state. However, Assessment of the Greek texts that describes the process, together with

modern experiments on mummification has led us to believe that dry natron provides the most satisfactory results and was probably used exclusively.

After the body was completely dehydrated, the temporary stuffing that was used to fill the body was removed from its cavities and replaced with the permanent stuffing and sometimes also with the viscera packages. Next the abdominal incision was closed, the nostrils were plugged with resin or wax, and the body was anointed with a variety of oils and gum resins, which may have also played some part in preventing or delaying insect attack and in masking the odors of decomposition that would have accompanied the mummification process. However, all of these later stages were essentially cosmetic and had little effect in preserving the tissues.

After the basic mummification process was completed, the embalmers then wrapped the mummy in layers of linen bandages, between which they inserted protected amulets to guard the deceased from evil and danger. A decomposing body will soon begin to swell and loose its recognizable human form. This swelling will effect all of the body, but is particularly apparent in the abdomen, where gasses being produced by bacteria inflate the intestines. Removal of the internal organs of course aids in preventing this process. However, bandaging of the body also prevents or at least restricts such swelling, as well as excluding air from direct contact with the corpse, thus slowing deterioration. Bandaging would also prevent the formation of blisters on the skin, caused by fluid within the body, which appear in the first stages of decomposition.

Next, a liquid or semi-liquid resinous substance was then poured over the mummy and coffin. The mummy and coffin were then returned to the family of the deceased for the funeral and burial.

The two less expensive forms of mummification that Herodotus mentions did not involve the complete evisceration of the body. In a second method, which was also used for animal mummification, oil of cedar was injected into the anus, which was then plugged to prevent the liquid from escaping. The body was afterwards treated with natron. Next, the oil was drained off and the intestines and the stomach, which became liquefied by the natron, came away with the oil. All that remained was actually the skin and the skeleton. The body was returned to the family in this state for burial. However, this was even superior to the cheapest method, where the body was purged so that the intestines came away. Afterwards, the body was treated with natron.

Over the long history of ancient Egyptian mummification, there were only two major additions to the basic procedure. From as early as the Middle Kingdom, the brain was removed in some mummies and by the New Kingdom, this procedure of excerebration had become widespread. This process involved the insertion of a metal hook by the embalmer into the cranial cavity through the nostril and ethmoid bone, and the brain was pulverized to fragments so that it could be removed with a spatula type instrument. However, at times, access was gained to the cranial cavity either through the base of the skull or an eye socket. Obviously, it would have been impossible to remove every small fragment of the brain through any of these methods. Before the mummification was complete, the emptied cranial cavity was packed with strips of linen that had been impregnated with resin, though at other times molten resin was poured into the skull.

The second innovation in mummification was probably not introduced until as late as the 21st

Dynasty. Then the embalmers sought to develop a technique that originally had been used during the 18th Dynasty mummification of King Amenhotep III. His embalmers had attempted to recreate the plumpness of the king's appearance by introducing packing under the skin of his mummy though incisions made in his legs, neck and arms. The priests of the 21st Dynasty began to use this subcutaneous packing for anyone who could afford such an expensive technique. Now, the body cavities were packed through a flank incision with sawdust, butter, linen and mud, and the four individually wrapped packages of viscera were also inserted into these cavities, rather than being placed in canopic jars.

Subcutaneous material was also inserted through mall incisions into the skin, the neck and the face was packed through the mouth. Hence, the embalmers attempted to retain the original body contours at least to some extent in order to give the mummy a more lifelike appearance. In fact, artificial eyes were often placed in the eye sockets and the skin was sometimes painted with red ocher (for men) or yellow ocher (for women). False plaits and curls were even woven into the natural hair. However, these very expensive and time consuming processes were not retained beyond the 23rd Dynasty.

The Rituals and Accessories of Mummification

Mummification was attended to in the embalmer's workshop, known as wbt (place of purification). There may have been some such workshops erected near specific tombs, but because mummification had an "impure" nature and was considered to be associated with certain dangers, most workshops would have been situated outside the actual tomb enclosure. Most workshops, and particularly those that dealt with many bodies, were located somewhat close to the necropolises or temples.

There were actually a number of different rites associated with the mummification process. Some of these were performed in the embalmer's workshop, though the most important of these, known as the Opening of the Mouth ceremony, was normally carried out at the tomb itself. Yet, there were many other less important rituals that were probably performed throughout the seventy days that Herodotus and others tell us were required for the mummification process. One question Egyptologists have not specifically answered is whether the rituals, which themselves were long and extensive, caused the need for the lengthy embalming process, or instead whether the rituals were extended because of the time required for mummification.

The embalmers and priests used a variety of tools and accessories in the mummification process and its associated rites. In the actual preparation of the body, the embalmers and their assistants employed a blade of obsidian, sometimes called a "stone of Ethiopia", to make the incision in the side of the mummy. They also used a hooked tool for brain extraction, as noted above, together with various containment vessels which held the plant remains and resin used to anoint the mummy.

Of course, there were amulets placed between the layers of bandages and a cartoonage mask was placed on the face. There were also chest and foot covers placed over the mummy to supply support, and even toe and finger stalls were sometimes utilized to prevent damage to those appendages.

The Embalmers and Others Associated with the Mummification

Process

In the mature practice of mummification, there were three distinct groups of practitioners. They included the cutter who made the incision in the flank of the mummy, the scribe who supervised this work and the embalmer himself, who belonged to a special guild or organization and was responsible for leading the mummification ceremonies and for wrapping the mummy in bandages. The latter actually supervised all of the stages of the mummification process and wore a jackal-headed mask to impersonate Anubis, the god of embalming, as he performed the rituals.

The embalmers were actually a special class of priest and were considered to be highly skilled professionals, probably with close ties with the medical doctors. Their office was hereditary. Under their charge might be others, including those who made coffins and wooden funerary figures, as well as other items for the tomb.

On the other hand, the cutters had one of the lowest statuses in society, because of the ritual "impurity" associated with the incision in the corpse and the removing of the viscera. They also obviously faced certain health risks. This class of individual in the mummification process may have even included criminals.

Others included in the mummification procedure and the funeral included priests of Osiris, who performed the rituals, lector priests, who recited the chants and the ritual instructions and the men who washed and cleansed the mummy and the viscera, prepared the natron and resin, and actually wrapped the body with layers of linen bandages. The whole process associated with death became a major industry that employed many workers including mourners and even dancers.

THE JOURNEY TO THE AFTERLIFE

From http://www.egyptatthefrist.org/explore-learn/journey-to-the-afterlife.php

During the time of the New Kingdom (c.1550-1069 BCE) there was a resurgence of religious activity that resulted in the development of numerous funerary texts designed to assist the deceased in attaining immortality. The Amduat, a text that was reserved for royalty, describes the deceased king's union with Re, the sun god who descends on a solar boat into the dangerous realm of the underworld where he brings eternal life to the dead. Guided by magical knowledge and assisted by numerous gods, the king travels through the underworld on a twelve-hour journey at the end of which he is reborn as the sun god and meets the day. In some cases the Amduat was written on papyrus scrolls, but in the case of Thutmose III, the entire book is painted on the walls of his tomb.

In each hour, the text and illustrations form a unit starting with an introduction in vertical columns. Then each hour is divided into three horizontal bars, called registers. Generally, the middle register shows the solar boat, a key component in the Amduat. The text that tells the story of the Amduat is read from top to bottom. In addition to the illustrated long version of the text, there is also a short version included that represents a summary of the book.

The following is a synopsis of the twelve-hour journey described in the images and text on the tomb walls of Thutmose III (See below). This tomb with its Amduat text is recreated in its entirety as part of the exhibition. When you walk through the tomb and study the walls you will notice that the hours are not illustrated in consecutive order. That's because the story begins in the west where the sun sets and ends in the east with the sunrise. Ideally, hours 1-4 are on the west wall, 5 and 6 on the south, 7 and 8 on the north, and 9-12 on the east wall. However, because of the orientation of Thutmose's tomb, some of the registers had to be arranged so that the prescribed order was not followed exactly.

Hour 1

The life of Thutmose III has ended. The day ends and he is greeted by the sun god Re who appears in his nocturnal form with the head of a ram. Re invites the pharaoh to join him on his boat along with other gods and goddesses. There is another boat containing a scarab beetle representing the sun god's form in the morning and pointing to the ultimate purpose of this journey, the renewed life of the king after death.

Hour 2

The boat is guided along a zigzag pattern that probably represents an underworld Nile River. The guide is the sun god's daughter, Hathor. Thutmose III and Re see the abundant and well-watered wheat fields of Osiris along the riverbanks.

Hour 3

Thutmose, Re and Hathor meet Osiris, the god who rules the underworld. Surrounding Osiris are several bird-headed gods with knives in their hands, ready to protect Thutmose and Re from all enemies.

Hour 4

Suddenly the journey becomes dangerous. The travelers have reached the land of Sokar, a falcon-headed god of the underworld and an aspect of Osiris. The land is populated by monster snakes, some with several heads or with legs and wings. Complete darkness surrounds them, a zigzag path blocks their way, and the river dries up. Four figures tow the boat across the desert, but magically the boat turns itself into a double-headed serpent whose fiery breath pierces the darkness and they are transported safely across the sands.

Hour 5

The travelers continue through the land of Sokar with several figures joining in the effort of pulling the solar boat safely through a dangerous narrow pass. Eventually they reach the secret cave of Sokar which is guarded by a two-headed sphinx. Sokar grasps the wings of a multi-headed serpent representing the sun god Re and the two are united in the underworld.

Hour 6

As midnight approaches, the journey continues into the darkest parts of the underworld. The travelers find themselves in a place dominated by the presence of Sobek, the crocodile god and Nun, the god who represents the world before creation, out of which the sun god emerged at the beginning of time and is now renewed again. Also, in this place a five-headed snake protects the corpse of Re's earth body.

Hour 7

At this point, the sun god Re meets his archenemy, a magical snake called Apophis. It was Apophis who swallowed the river that had carried the sun boat. But the goddess Isis comes to rescue them. She stands in front of the boat, raises her arms and hurls strong spells, destroying the snake's power while other gods decapitate more of Re's enemies.

The worst is now over, but the solar boat continues to be towed, this time by eight gods (according to the number of the hour). Almost all the figures represented in this hour are enthroned on the hieroglyph for "cloth". New clothes are part of the general renewal of well being, another feature of rebirth.

Hour 8

Three idols appear who are in charge of providing bread and beer and other essential foods for the pharaoh so that he is fully prepared for his life in the netherworld.

Hour 9

A large body of regenerating water appears in front of the solar boat. In it are those who died by drowning. In ancient Egypt, the drowned were of special concern because they couldn't have a proper burial and therefore, no chance for immortality. But Thutmose sees Horus, the falcon-headed god, gesturing toward the drowned, assuring them eternal life.

Hour 10

Hour 11

The new day will begin soon. Re's boat now has a solar disk at the front. Thutmose can see the snake of time about to eat ten stars in the dark sky, one star for each hour that the pharaoh has been on his journey through the underworld.

Hour 12

The last hour of the night has arrived. Thutmose has been transformed and will be reborn as the sun god Re. There is a long snake, followed by the triumphant Re in his boat. The boat is being pulled by a towline that passes through the snake's head indicating that the sun god will be pulled through the snake's body, emerging from its mouth, reborn and triumphant at sunrise. Re will first appear in his daytime form as a scarab beetle and will rise to begin the new day. As he rises into the sky the gods rejoice that the sun, a brilliant disk of gold will travel across the sky to sink below the horizon at dusk and continue its journey through the underworld once again. The mummiform figure of Osiris also appears in the twelfth hour. He will remain in the underworld as its king.

Unit 7 Pyramids

About Egyptian Pyramids

From
http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/pyramids.htm

There are no more famous ancient sites within Egypt, or for that matter elsewhere in the world, than the Great Pyramids at Giza. They are, without question, the icon most associated with the Egypt. They have been both the main destination for tourists, and a source of imaginative thought to the world for over three thousand years.

However, there are actually over 100 pyramids in Egypt, many of which are relatively unknown to anyone who is not an ancient Egypt enthusiast. All but a very few are grouped around and near the City of Cairo, just south of the Nile Delta. Otherwise, only one royal pyramid is known in southern Egypt (at Abydos), that being the one built by Ahmose, founder of the 18th Dynasty and Egypt's New Kingdom. It may have also been the last royal pyramid built in Egypt.

Hence, major pyramids were not built throughout Egypt's ancient history. The Pyramid Age began with a burst of building, starting with the 3rd Dynasty reign of Djoser. Some of the early kings, most specifically Snefru, built more than one pyramid. Almost all of the kings added to their number through the end of the Middle Kingdom, with the possible exception of the First Intermediate Period between the Old and Middle Kingdoms. After the first Pharaoh of Egypt's New Kingdom, Ahmose, royal pyramid building by Egyptians ceased entirely. Somewhat abruptly the kings of the New Kingdom chose, rather than making their tombs completely obvious, to hide them in the hills of the West Bank of Thebes (modern Luxor).

However, smaller pyramids were constructed, for example in the Deir el-Medina necropolis, by private individuals. The Late Period Nubians who ruled Egypt also built relatively small pyramids with much steeper sides, though these were in fact constructed in Nubia itself. This tradition was carried on in Nubia after these southern rulers lost control of Egypt, and eventually, more pyramids were actually built in Nubia than Egypt, though on a much smaller

scale.

Other pyramids in the world certainly exist, but their purpose, for the most part, was different than those of ancient Egypt. The most famous outside Egypt are probably those located in Mexico and to the south of Mexico, but these appear to have been built more as temples. In Egypt, all but a select few of the pyramids were built as tombs, sometimes to hold the physical body of a pharaoh (as well as other individuals), or to hold the soul of the deceased (as in the case of the small cult pyramids built next to the larger ones). Otherwise, the purpose of only a few small, regional stepped pyramids remains elusive.

While pyramids were, for the most part, tombs for the Pharaohs of Egypt, one must nevertheless question the reason that Egyptian rulers chose this particular shape, and for that matter, why they built them so large. Today, we believe that they chose the shape in order to mimic the Benben, a pyramid shaped stone found in the earliest of temples, which itself is thought to symbolize the primeval mound from which the Egyptians believed life emerged. This also connected the pyramid to Re, the Sun God, as it was he, according to some of the ancient Egypt mythology, who rose from the primeval mound to create life.

As far the great size of many of the pyramids in Egypt, we can really only surmise that the Pharaohs were making a statement about their own power and perhaps, about the glory and strength of their country. However, it should also be remembered that many of the latter pyramids were not nearly as large as the Great Pyramids at Giza (and elsewhere).

Pyramids evolved. The first of them was not a perfectly formed pyramid. In fact, the first Pyramid we believe that was built in Egypt, that of Djoser, was not a true pyramid at all with smooth sides and a point at the top. Rather, its sides were stepped, and the top of the pyramid truncated with a flat surface (as best we know). As the Egyptian pyramids evolved, there were failures as well glorious failures until finally, they got it right with what was probably the first smooth sided true pyramid built at Meidum. In fact, pyramids continued to evolve throughout their history, perhaps not always in outward appearances, but in the way that they were built and in the theology surrounding their construction. For example, towards the latter part of Egypt's Pyramid Age, Osirian beliefs seem to have had more and more impact on the arrangement and layout of the subterranean chambers.

However, soon after the first pyramids were built, their form became somewhat standardized. Royal pyramid complexes included the main pyramid, a courtyard surrounding the main pyramid, a much smaller cult pyramid for the king's soul, a mortuary temple situated next to the main pyramid, an enclosure wall and a causeway that led down to a valley temple. Some pyramid complexes included subsidiary, smaller pyramids for family members, and most were surrounded by some sort of tombs for family members.

Our thinking on pyramids has evolved considerably over the years. Many of us who are a bit older were taught that the pyramids were built using Jewish slave labor, which is a fabrication of immense proportions. Most of the pyramids were built long before the Jews made their appearance historically and currently, many if not most scholars believe they were not built using slave labor at all (or perhaps a nominal number of slaves).

Otherwise, we can also dismiss offhand alternative theories related to aliens or some lost culture being responsible for pyramid building. There is just far too much evidence, including tools, drawings, evolutionary changes, and even worker villages that rule these farfetched

ideas obsolete.

However, some mysteries remain, even in some of the best well known Pyramids. The most famous of them all, the Great Pyramid of Khufu, continues, year after year, to give up a few more secrets, and there doubtless remains much to learn from these Egyptian treasures. There may even be one or more pyramids yet to be discovered.
Also see http://www.nationalgeographic.com/pyramids/pyramids.html on the internet

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From http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2007/847/he1.htm

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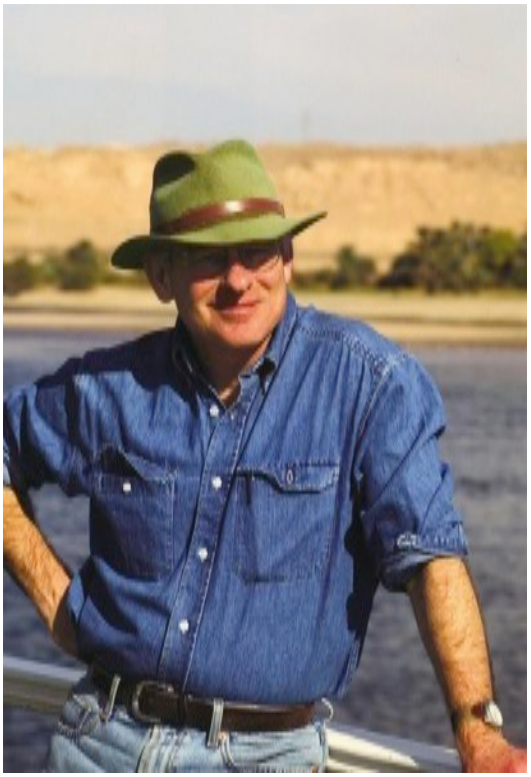
Who built the pyramids?

The Giza Plateau Mapping Project is searching for the human hand in the construction of these powerful symbols of remote antiquity which have intrigued and fascinated people for genera tions, says Jill Kam.



Overview of the site (above), Mark Lehner (right)

A search for the lost city

We may soon have an answer to the age- old question of who were the Pyramid builders and how the whole enterprise of pyramid-building was planned and controlled.

When the Millennium Project was launched at Giza its aim was two-fold: to find out as much information as possible about the ancient settlement site at the foot of the pyramids for science and posterity, and to protect it from infringement by the expanding community of Nezlet Al-Siman. What has emerged seven years down the line is a huge and wide-ranging operation in which American, British, Dutch, Egyptian, Finnish, French, German, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Polish, Swedish and Turkish scholars are working in their specialised fields of expertise while, at the same time, supervising a

field school -- four teams of students in total -- each led by an experienced excavator together with an qualified SCA inspector.

In archaeology, times have changed. Where at one time professionals in the discipline were primarily philologists, historians, artists and epigraphers who, in their search for material remains of the ancient Egyptian civilisation, dug and destroyed layers of archaeology, things are different today. The search is for information rather than museum-worthy objects. Multiple layers of complex stratigraphy are being scientifically excavated and analysed -- everything from pottery shards to sealings of mud, from a fish-hook to human to animal remains. Such evidence, in addition to the discovery of long galleries which might have been barracks for a rotating labour force from the countryside, and a village-like town that possibly housed permanent workers and their families, paints a picture of the pyramid-builders which boggles the imagination.

It all started with a question: Where were the tens of thousands of workers who built the monumental structures at Giza housed? A massive ancient gateway, which came to be known by early travellers as the Wall of the Crow, drew the attention of two figures instrumental in research on the Giza plateau. These were Zahi Hawass, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) and former director of the Giza Plateau who, in 1989-90, discovered the cemetery of the pyramid-builders, and Mark Lehner, director of the Giza Plateau Mapping Project (GPMP), who in 1991 had found ancient bakeries due south of the Sphinx. Few had previously questioned the purpose of this enigmatic structure, the Wall of the Crow, which has been visible for thousands of years and through which horse-riders from Neslet Al-Siman regularly passed. Whether it was a causeway, a bridge or a tunnel was not clear. However it did pose another question: a gateway to what? It seemed certain that something really big lay to the south, and in 2001 Lehner set workmen to clear a deep layer of sand and debris to the north side of the structure.

← ***Gateway in the Wall of the Crow***

It was no easy task. Sand bags were used to hold back the rubble that had accumulated along the sides of the wall, and only when cleared was it realised what an impressive structure it really was. The gate was more than 2.5 metres wide and about seven metres high, and the wall itself was more than 10 metres thick. It is one of the largest gateways of its kind in the world. The roadway passing through it was carefully paved with

what appeared to be abraded ceramic fragments, well trampled and worn. It sloped down several metres under the sand to what Lehner suspected might be a buried harbour to the north.

It seemed certain that the fourth-dynasty Egyptians who built the pyramids between 2613 and 2494BC constructed both the wall and the gateway, and that the purpose was to control the flow of people and material from a harbour into what, on further excavation, proved to be a pre- planned settlement area for seasonal workers. The Wall of the Crow was, in fact, an integral part of a production facility. It might also have served a secondary purpose: to protect the site from periodic flash floods. Lehner speculated that the design of the massive wall might have incorporated a symbolic function -- to demarcate the sacred pyramid-temple precinct from the production zone.

It was thus that a major discovery was made during routine excavations at Giza. The Chicago Oriental Institute, Harvard University, and the GPMP unearthed evidence that has revolutionalised our views about how the pyramids were built.

Lehner's team excavated a street that linked the workers' town to the pyramid complex and what was labelled the "eastern town with a huge royal building for storage and administration. From an early stage in the work, it seemed certain that it was all part of a vast ancient settlement site with streets, galleries, bakeries and industrial areas, and that it included barracks which could shelter and feed up to 2,000 rotating labourers who worked in shifts following the well-established Egyptian pattern whereby local town and village leaders sent teams from their provinces all over the country to share in great national projects. Bearing in mind that the Old Kingdom settlement continues under Nezlet Al-Siman, and, considered alongside other parts of the settlement not yet excavated, the whole area might have contained as many as 20,000 labourers (an Egyptologist's estimate), many of whom would have been in support industries like pottery and cloth manufacture.

Zahi Hawass had discovered the graves of the pyramid-builders, which laid to rest many legends about who built them. Now he and Lehner were providing the answer to how the royal house organised its pyramid-building infrastructure.

When the enormity of the discovery -- and its importance -- was realised, Lehner set about acquiring funding for an ongoing excavation. This was no easy matter. Money is not difficult to come by when objects of art are discovered, or even inscribed stone that might suggest a tomb or temple below ground. But this part of Giza had yielded little in the way of beautiful art objects or inscriptions. However, the ancient settlement did offer abundant evidence in the form of copper and alabaster work, weaving, pottery loom shuttles and mud loom weights, a tiny copper fish-hook and a fish-net weight. Although not a very inspiring collection for a fund-raising mission, Lehner -- whose affable manner disguises resolve and great strength of character -- nevertheless went on tour in the United States and announced his intention of salvaging and mapping this newly discovered City of the Pyramids. He said he aimed to retrieve information about the lives of the pyramid builders embedded in its ruins, and to throw light on the Great Pyramid Age.

Lehner set up the Ancient Egyptian Research Associates (AERA) and published its newsletter "AERAGRAM", designed to provide up- to-date information. The response was heartening, and with generous grants coming from the Ann and Robert H. Lurie Foundation, philanthropist David Koch, Peter Norton and others, the Millennium Project 2001 was

launched. The newsletter is now being published regularly, in English and Arabic, and describes the progressive clearing, mapping and excavation of the three areas of the town in order to study and analyze material as it comes to light.

In the past there was a delay between excavation and publication in order that questions could be resolved, and conclusions arrived at, before discoveries were made public. In today's archaeological methodology evidence is presented as it comes to light, and thus questions are posed that still need to be answered. Take, for example, the long colonnaded galleries that were unearthed. What were they? Might they have been massive barracks for workers? They were certainly large enough to accommodate between 40 and 50 individuals, and at first it seemed entirely possible that they were used by a rotating labour force. And perhaps the large house in one block of the barracks, at the eastern end of the galleries, was for the overseer who supervised the teams of workers?

When the vast modern layers of sand and debris had been stripped away, evidence of meat processing and feseekh (salted fish) production were found to the east, west and south of the galleries. Then a large royal storage and administrative complex was unearthed. Seven large mud-brick silos, obviously for the storage of grain, were found in a sunken courtyard 19 metres across. Sure enough, scores of bakeries were found nearby. Perhaps they were part of a whole series that may lie under the modern soccer field of the Sphinx Sports Club football field which was built in 1984.

"Settlement excavation is the most difficult and most subtle," Lehner says. "For instance, the small mud 'tokens', which may represent the special flat and conical bread eaten by the Egyptians, appear to have been used for accounting and administrative purposes. They might relate to fourth-dynasty social order and the organization of work."

Like today's cities, the extremely complex and historically important "eastern town" was crowded; there are traces of alleyways between the houses; of household granaries and bins; and of grinding stones for processing grain into flour. No fewer than 5,000 mud sealings were unearthed, some bearing the names of the kings Khafre and Menkaure, the builders of the Second and Third Pyramids, confirming the Old Kingdom date of the settlement.

Egypt's oldest known hypostyle hall was also found. "Its location suggests that it may originally have functioned as a communal dining facility," Lehner says. "Animal and fish bones that were found near low troughs and benches that run the length of the floor of the hall may have been droppings from meals. Fragments of pottery bowls, lids and stands for vessels point to food consumption rather than preparation."

Zahi Hawass and Mark Lehner together hypothesised on the workings of a pyramid city and how it was controlled; its housing, food and administration; whether or not the permanent workers and their families lived in the "eastern town", and whether there might indeed be other storehouses lying beneath the modern soccer field. Would trial pits beyond it reveal another vast archaeological site? In fact it did.

Giza has also provided evidence that pyramid building was planned like a long- term military campaign. A vast army of part-time workers was recruited, and every aspect was taken into account, from what numbers of labourers were required to where and how they were accommodated and how much sustenance they needed. Even their comfort was considered: a shady area was provided where they could comfortably eat their food.

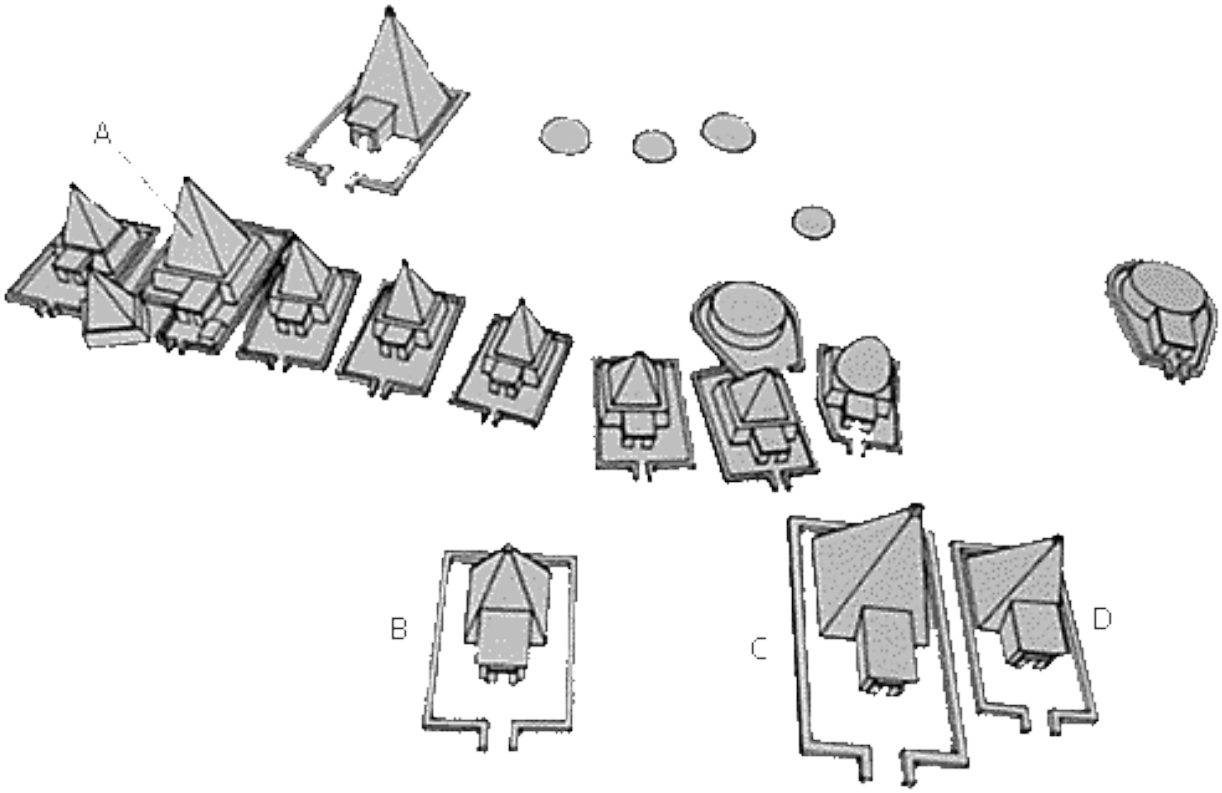
Will there soon be an answer to one of the longest-running questions of all time?

Kushite Pyramids in Nubia

Nubia was a reservoir of royal pyramids long after they had ceased to be built in Egypt itself. Above the 3rd cataract, about 180 steep-sided pyramids were built at the principle pyramid cemeteries at el-Kurru, Gebel Barkal, Nuri and Meroe. The Nubian sequence begins more than 800 years after the last royal pyramid was built in Egypt.

The Pyramids of el-Kurru

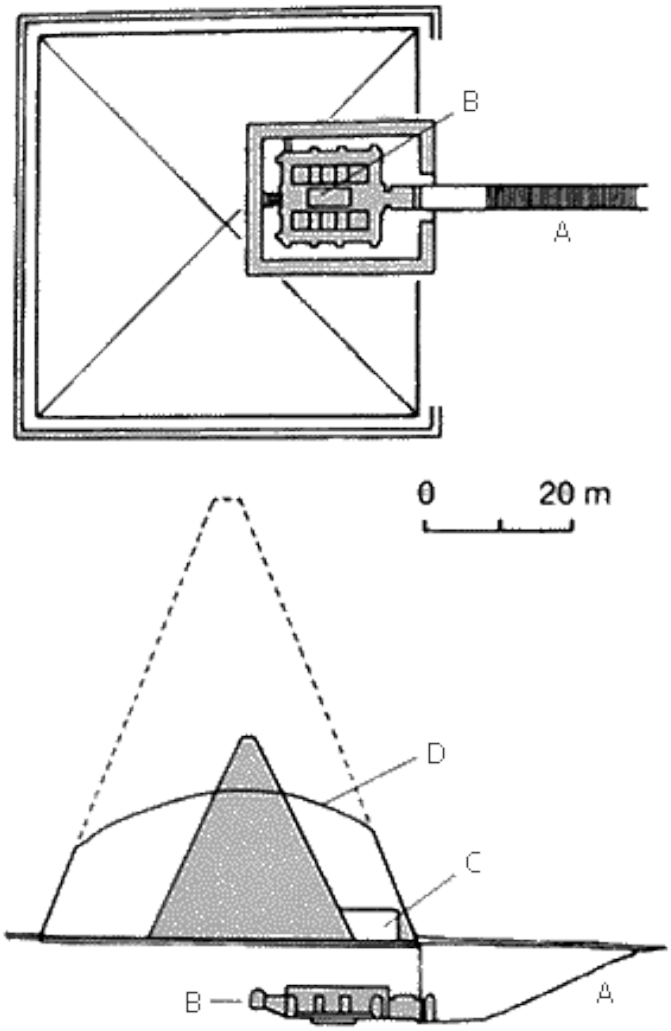
El-Kurru lies on the right bank of the Nile, about 13 km south from the Gebel Barkal. Excavations directed by G.Reisner in 1918-19 discovered pyramids of Piankhi, Shabaka, Shabataka and Tanutamon, which stood above tombs of kings of XXV Dynasty, at the cemetery. The pyramid of Piankhi had a base length of about 8 m and a slope of probably about 68 degrees. A stairway of 19 steps opened to the east and led to the burial chamber cut into the bedrock as an open trench and covered with a corbelled masonry roof. Piankhi's body had been placed on a bed which rested in the middle of the chamber on a stone bench with its four corners cut away to receive the legs of the bed, so that the bed platform lay directly on the bench. The pyramids of Piankhi's successors were similar. There were also 14 queens' pyramids at el-Kurru, 6 to 7 meters square, compared to the 8 to 11 meters of the kings' pyramids. Northeast of the royal cemetery, G.Reisner found the graves of 24 horses and two dogs.



A - Kashta
B - Piankhi

C - Shabaka
D - Tenutamon

The Pyramids of Nuri



A - stairway

B - burial chamber
C - first chapel
D - preserved height in 1916

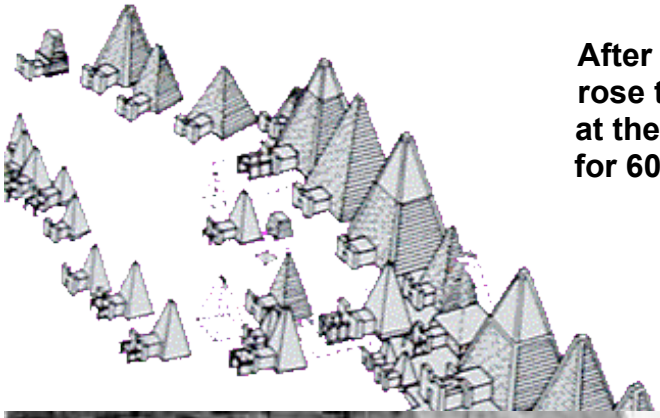
The pyramid field of Nuri contained 22 kings together with 54 queens and princesses. The first to build his tomb at Nuri was king Taharqa. His pyramid had 51.75 meter square and was 40 to 50 meters high. The Taharqa pyramid subterranean chambers are the most elaborate of any Kushite tomb. The entrance was by an eastern stairway trench north of the pyramid's central axis, reflecting the alignment of the original smaller pyramid. Three steps led to a doorway, with a molded frame, that opened to a tunnel, widened and heightened into an antechamber with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. Six massive pillars carved from the natural rock divide the burial chamber into two side aisles and a central nave, each with a barrel-vaulted ceiling. The entire chamber was surrounded by a moat-like corridor which was entered by steps leading down from in front of the antechamber doorway.

← ***Taharqa's Pyramid was built in two stages. The inner pyramid protrudes from the top of the ruins of the much larger outer pyramid. The true height of the outer pyramid is not known.***

After Taharqa, 21 kings and 53 queens and princesess were buried at Nuri under pyramids of good masonry, using blocks of local red sandstone.

The Nuri pyramids were generally much larger than those at el-Kurru, reaching heights of 20 to 30 m. The last king to be buried at Nuri died in about 308 BC.

The Pyramids of Meroe



After 308 BC Meroe, between the 5th and 6th cataracts, rose to prominence, and kings began to build pyramids at the cemetery there. Meroe remained the royal cemetery for 600 years, until 350 AD.

The 10 to 30 meter high step-sided pyramids of Meroe were built of sandstone.

As at Nuri, the pyramids were built on plinths. The triangular face was framed by smooth

bands of raised masonry along the edges where the faces met.

Unit 8 Theban Tombs

The Valley of the Kings

From http://www.egyptologyonline.com/valley_of_the_kings.htm

Hidden behind the Theban Hills, on the West Bank of the Nile, lies the Valley of the Kings (Wadi el-Muluk in Arabic), a limestone valley where tombs were built for the Pharaohs and powerful nobles of the New Kingdom during the 18-21st Dynasties. It was chosen as the burial place for most of Egypt's New Kingdom rulers for several reasons. As the crow flies, the Valley is very close to the cultivated banks of the river. It is small, surrounded by steep cliffs, and easily guarded. The local limestone, cut millions of years ago by torrential rains to form the Valley, is of good quality. And towering above the Valley is a mountain, al-Qurn (the horn in Arabic), whose shape may have reminded the ancient Egyptians of a pyramid, and is dedicated to the goddess Meretseger. The valley is separated into the East and West Valleys, with most of the important tombs in the East Valley, but as yet to date, not all the tombs in the Valley have been fully excavated.

There were 62* numbered royal and private tombs, ranging from a simple pit (KV 54) to a tomb with over 121 chambers and corridors (KV 5). Most were found already plundered. A few, like the tomb of Tutankhamen (KV 62) or that of Yuya and Thuyu (KV 46), and Maiherperi (KV36), contained thousands of precious artifacts. Some tombs have been accessible since antiquity, as Greek and Latin graffiti attest, some were used as dwellings or a church during the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Periods, and others have been discovered only in the past two hundred years. Some, like KV 5, had been "lost," and their location rediscovered only recently. (* KV 63 was discovered in 2006.)

The official name for the site was *"The Great and Majestic Necropolis of the Millions of Years of the Pharaoh, Life, Strength, Health in The West of Thebes"*, or more usually, Ta-sekhet-ma'at (the Great Field). The Valley was used for primary burials from approximately 1539 BC to

1075 BC, starting with Thutmose I and ending with Ramesses X or XI. The Valley also had tombs for the favourite nobles and the wives and children of both the nobles and pharaohs. Around the time of Ramesses I (c.1300 BC) work began on the Valley of the Queens, although some wives were still buried with their husbands.

Important tombs

The tombs are numbered in the order of 'discovery' from Ramesses VII (KV1) to the recently discovered KV63, although some of the tombs have been open since antiquity, and KV5 has only recently been rediscovered. A number of the tombs are unoccupied, the owners of others remain unknown, and some are merely pits used for storage.

KV1	**Ramesses VII**	**KV20**	**Thutmosis I and Hatshepsut**
KV2	**Ramesses IV**	**KV22**	**Amenhotep II**
KV3	**Son of Ramesses III**	**KV23**	**Ay**
KV4	**Ramesses XI**	**KV34**	**Tuthmosis III**
KV5	**Sons of Ramesses II**	**KV35**	**Amenhotep III**
KV6	**Ramesses IX**	**KV38**	**Tuthmosis I**
KV7	**Ramesses II**	**KV39**	**Amenhotep I ??**
KV8	**Merenptah**	**KV42**	**Hatshepsut Meryet-Re**
KV9	**Ramesses V and Ramesses VI**	**KV43**	**Tuthmosis IV**
KV10	**Amenmeses**	**KV45**	**Userhat**
KV11	**Ramesses III**	**KV48**	**Amenemipet**
KV15	**Seti II**	**KV54**	**Tutankhamun cache**
KV16	**Ramesses I**	**KV55**	**Tiye or Akenaten ??**
KV17	**Seti I**	**KV57**	**Horemheb**
KV18	**Ramesses X**	**KV62**	**Tutankhamun**

By the end of the New Kingdom, Egypt had entered a long period of political and economic decline. The priests at Thebes grew in power and effectively administered Upper Egypt, whilst

kings ruling from Tanis controlled Lower Egypt. The Valley began to be heavily plundered, so in response to this during the 21st Dynasty, the priests of Amun opened most of the tombs and moved the mummies into three tombs in order to better protect them, even removing most of their treasure in order to further protect the bodies from robbers. Later most of these were moved to a single cache near Deir el-Bahri (see separate article). During the later Third Intermediate Period and later periods, intrusive burials were introduced into many of the open tombs.

Tomb robbers

Almost all of the tombs have been ransacked, including Tutankhamun's, though in his case, it seems that the robbers were interrupted, so very little was removed. The valley was surrounded by steep cliffs and heavily guarded. In 1090 BC, or the year of the Hyena, there was a collapse in Egypt's economy leading to the emergence of tomb robbers. Because of this, it was also the last year that the valley was used for burial. The valley also seems to have suffered an official plundering during the virtual civil war which started in the reign of Ramesses XI. The tombs were opened, all the valuables removed, and the mummies collected into two large caches. One, the so-called Deir el-Bahri cache, contained no less than forty royal mummies and their coffins; the other, in the tomb of Amenhotep II, contained a further sixteen.

What's happening there now?

There are several archaeological projects currently at work in the Valley of the Kings. Christian Leblanc is excavating the tomb of Rameses II (KV 7) for the CNRS, while across the road, the Theban Mapping Project (TMP) is excavating, recording and conserving KV 5 (the sons of Rameses II). The tomb of Amenmeses (KV 10) is being cleared by the Memphis University mission led by Otto Schaden, and that team has found a previously unknown tomb , now designated KV 63 under a penel in the floor of the entrance ramp to KV 10. Elina Paulin-Grothe is directing a project of the Ägyptologische Seminar der Universität Basel, clearing and documenting in the tombs of Rameses X (KV 18), Siptah (KV 47), and Tiaa (KV 32). Nicholas Reeves and Geoffrey Martin are examining the area between the tombs of Horemheb (KV 57) and Rameses VI (KV 9). Edwin Brock continues his studies of royal sarcophagi with particular emphasis now on the remains in the tombs of Merenptah (KV 8) and Rameses VI (KV 9), where he is reconstructing the inner sarcophagus. Richard Wilkinson of the University of Arizona has been involved in an examination of symbolic alignments in the royal tombs. An expedition from Waseda University, Tokyo, under the direction of Jiro Kondo is clearing, documenting and conserving the area in and around the tomb of Amenhetep III in the West Valley (KV 22). A conjectural KV 64 has been spotted with ground penetrating radar, but it is not yet being excavated.

Information courtesy of the Theban Mapping Project and Wikipaedia

An Overview of the West Bank at Luxor (Ancient Thebes)

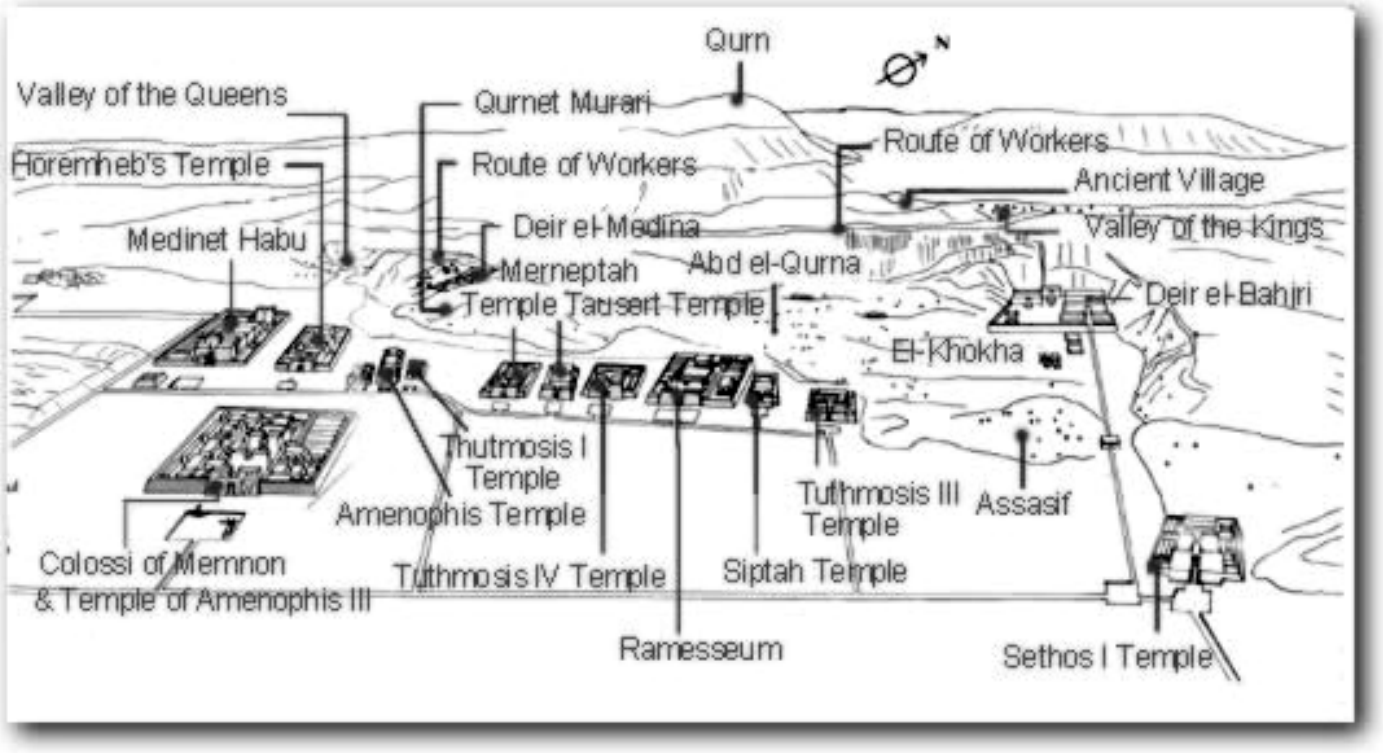
by Mark Andrews

The west bank at Luxor is one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. It is much more than what we refer to as the Valley of the Kings, though many have called the whole of the area by that name. In fact, many good books on the west bank at Luxor (ancient Thebes) are titled, "Valley of the Kings", even though they cover the entire area. It can be a bit confusing for the novice, particularly considering the actual conceptual scope of the religious concept. If one looks at just the Valley of the Kings, one only sees tombs, but the tombs were an integral part of larger mortuary complexes. Indeed, the whole west bank is honeycombed with tombs, not just of the ancient Egyptian Kings, but of their families and the noblemen who served them.

Layout of the West Bank

The west bank necropolis can be divided into a number of zones and sub-zones, of which the Valley of the Kings is only one zone. The northern sector of the west bank closest to the Nile River is often referred to as the Tombs of the Nobles, but it can be divided into about five different sub-zones. Farthermost north is an area known as el-Tarif, where large, row tombs were dug during the late Second Intermediate Period and early Middle Kingdom.

Just south of el-Tarif is Dra Abu el-Naga, which is a hillside with about 80 numbered tombs most belonging to priests and officials of the 17th through 20th dynasty, including some rulers of the 17th dynasty. Just southwest of Dra Abu el-Naga is an area called El-Assasif, where there are 40 tombs, mostly from the New Kingdom and later. Just south of El-Assasif is El-Khokha, a hill with five Old Kingdom tombs and 53 numbered tombs from the 18th and 19th dynasty.



As the Valley was in Egypt's Dynastic Period

Directly west of El-Khokha is Sheikh Abd el-Qurna. This hill was named for a mythical Muslim sheikh, and has 146 numbered tombs, most of which are from the 18th Dynasty. Here one finds some of the most beautiful private tombs on the West Bank.

Just north of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna is Deir el-Bahari, well known for the northernmost temples in the Valley, including that of Hatshepsut and Mentuhotep.

Finally, south of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna and near the Temple of Merenptah is Qurnet Murai, a hill with 17 numbered tombs mostly dating to the Ramesside period. Where there are probably thousands of tombs in these areas, Egyptologists have only explored and numbered a total of about 800 of them.

Further west is the highest of the peaks in the Theban range of hills. This is Qurn, which can be translated in Arabic to mean "horn", or "forehead". At this mountains northern base, fairly well separate from the other burials in the West Bank, is the Valley of the Kings. Along with a number of unfinished tombs, 62 numbered tombs are known to Egyptologists. This was the final resting place of many of the New Kingdom rulers.

South of the Valley of the Kings, and closer to the Nile lies the Valley of the Queens. This area is inappropriately named, because it houses family members of the kings, including both males and females, and even some high officials. There are about 80 numbered tombs in this area, probably the most famous of which is that of Queen Nefertari.

Just southeast of the Valley of the Queens is Deir el-Medina, the ruins of a village that housed

the craftsmen and workers who dug and decorated the tombs and other Theban monuments. It is a very important area to Egyptology, because it has revealed many of the facets of ordinary life in Egypt, and there are some wonderful tombs in its necropolis.

All along the border between the fertile section of the Valley and the hills we find Temples and one palace. The southern most temple is that of Ramesses III located at Medinet Habu. The palace, one of the southernmost monuments in the Valley, is at Malkata, just south of Deir el-Medina, and belonged to Amenhotep III, but was probably also inhabited by a few of his successors. At one time, it was a huge complex. The northernmost temple is that of Seti I, which at one time also probably served as an administrative center on the West Bank.

Religious significance and the Temples of Millions of Years.

The temples within the Valley, each built by individual kings or queens, were collectively known by the Egyptians as the "Temples of Millions of Years". Early Egyptologists referred to them as funerary or mortuary temples, but in fact they were temples built for the worship of

the deceased kings, and were even used for his worship while he lived. There were originally many more temples then one finds today, and those that remain are in much ruin.

Amun was the principle deity worshiped at Thebes, and the Pharaoh was considered his son. Celebrating this union, each year a celebration was held called the Beautiful Feast of the Valley, where the royal power was renewed and strengthened. Also, on the 30th year of the pharaoh's reign, the sed-festival took place in order to renew the king's strength, as well as the vitality of all Egypt. These celebrations took place in the Temples of Millions of Years, and so activity on the Theban West Bank was centered around the Temples, while the tombs themselves were for the most part off limits.

The temples were meant to honor the dead king, perhaps through eternity. In fact, they might more resemble a modern foundation or trust. They were intended to keep the king's cult alive, guaranteeing him eternal deification, and not simply through festivals.

For example, the storerooms of the Ramesseum were capable of storing enough grain for 15 to 20 thousand people. In effect, the temples were endowed with property and assets by the king before his death, so that after his death, the temple could continue to fund exploits and building projects in his name.

The Big Picture

Typically, tourists to the West Bank will spend a day there, or even a half day. They are shown a few tombs, including several in the Valley of the Kings, and perhaps one in the Valley of the Queens, and they visit several of the temples, most notably those of Deir el-Bahri. To an extent, this provides something of an overall picture of the West Bank, but its complexity and size are often not realized.

KV 5 (Tomb of the Sons of Rameses II)

From http://www.thebanmappingproject.com/sites/browse_tomb_819.html

Structure: KV 5
Location: Valley of the Kings, East Valley, Thebes West Bank, Thebes
Owner: Sons of Rameses II
Other designations: 5 [Lepsius], 8 [Hay], Commencement d'excavation ou grotte bouchée [Description], M [Burton]
Site type: Tomb

Description: KV 5 is located in the main wadi of the Valley of the Kings. The tomb may originally have been an Dynasty 18 tomb (consisting of chambers 1, 2, and part of 3) usurped by Rameses II as the burial place for several of his principal sons. Still under excavation, the tomb has so far revealed 121 corridors and chambers. Since the tomb appears to have several bilaterally symmetrical sections, it is likely that the number of chambers will increase to 150 or more in subsequent field seasons. KV 5 itself is the largest tomb in the Valley; pillared chamber 3 is the largest chamber of any tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

At least six royal sons are known to have been interred in KV 5. Since there are more than twenty representations of sons carved on its walls, there may have been that many sons interred in the tomb.

The tomb is decorated with scenes from the Opening of the Mouth ritual (pillared chamber 3) and representations of the king, princes and deities (chamber 1, chamber 2, gate 3, pillared chamber 3, corridor 7, chamber 8, gate 9, corridor 12).

Noteworthy features: The overall plan of this tomb is unusual: there is a change in the tomb's principal axis after chamber 3; several chambers lie beneath other chambers; two corridors extend toward the northwest beneath the entrance and the road in front of the tomb; the plan is unlike any other royal tomb. Pillared chamber 3 has more pillars (sixteen) than any other chamber in the Valley of the Kings. The sculpted Osiris figure in the recess at the end of corridor 7 is unique.
Axis in degrees: 134.18
Axis orientation: Southeast
Site Location
Latitude: 25.44 N
Longitude: 32.36 E
Elevation: 169.87 msl
North: 99,637.895
East: 94,095.771
JOG map reference: NG 36-10
Modern governorate: Qena (Qina)
Ancient nome: 4th Upper Egypt
Surveyed by TMP: Yes
Measurements
Maximum height: 2.85 m
Mininum width: 0.61 m

Maximum width: 15.43 m
Total length: 443.2 m
Total area: 1266.47 m^2
Total volume: 2154.82 m^3
Additional Tomb Information
Entrance location: Valley floor
Owner type: Prince
Entrance type: Staircase
Interior layout: Corridors and chambers
Axis type: Straight
Decoration
- **Grafitti**
- **Painting**
- **Raised relief**

Categories of Objects Recovered
- **Human remains**
- **Jewellery**
- **Mammal remains**
- **Religious objects**
- **Tomb equipment**
- **Transport**
- **Vessels**
- **Written documents**

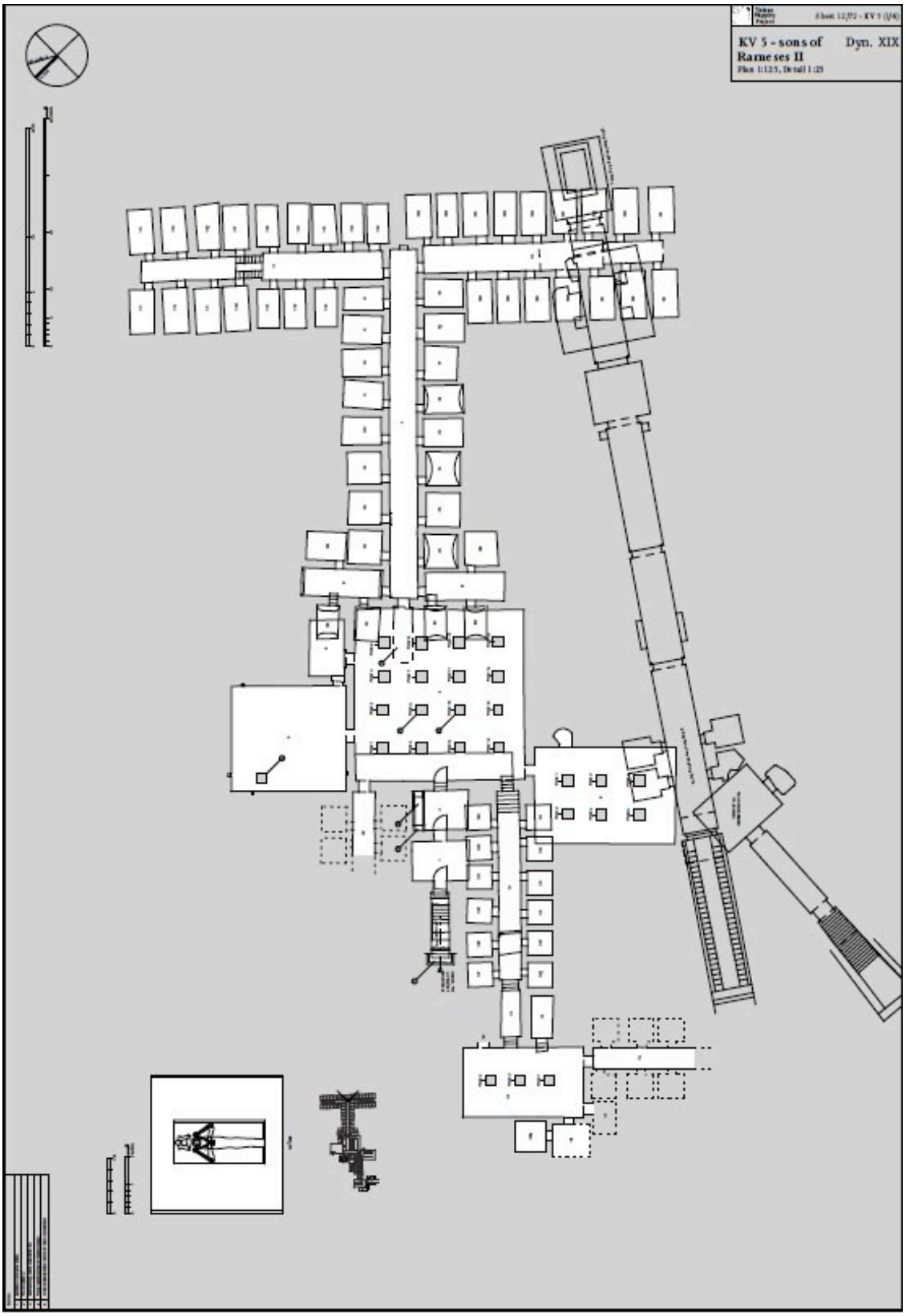
Site History
A small tomb perhaps dating to Dynasty 18 was appropriated by Rameses II and considerably enlarged in several phases. There is no evidence of re-use of KV 5 after the reign of Rameses II. The tomb was first visited in modern times by James Burton, who mapped its first nine chambers. Its greater extent was realized by the Theban Mapping Project in 1995, and more chambers continue to be discovered until today.

Dating:
This site was used during the following period(s):
- **New Kingdom, Dynasty 18 (entryway A, chambers 1 and 2, and part of chamber 3)**
- **New Kingdom, Dynasty 19, Rameses II**

History of Exploration
- **Burton, James (1825): Mapping/planning**
- **Carter, Howard (1902): Visit**
- **Theban Mapping Project (1987-): Epigraphy**
- **Theban Mapping Project (1987-): Excavation**
- **Theban Mapping Project (1994-): Conservation**
- **Theban Mapping Project (1995-): Photography Conservation**

Conservation history: The tomb is currently undergoing engineering and conservation work as it continues to be cleared.

Site condition: The tomb was robbed in antiquity. Since then, it has been hit by at least eleven flash floods caused by heavy rains in the Valley. These have completely filled the tomb with debris and seriously damaged its comprehensively decorated walls. From about 1960 to 1990, tour buses parked above the tomb; their vibrations caused serious damage to parts of the tomb near the roadway, as did a leaking sewer line installed over the entrance when the Valley of the Kings rest house was built.



KV63

KV63
Burial site of person(s) unknown

Area of the chamber in March 2005, before major excavation

Location	**East Valley of the Kings**
Discovery Date	**10 March 2005 (shaft)**
	8 February 2006 (announced)
Excavated by	**Otto Schaden**

KV63 is the most recently opened chamber in Egypt's Valley of the Kings pharaonic necropolis. (There is a radar anomaly that is referred to as KV64, but it has not been excavated, and its existence is denied by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.)[1] The chamber contained seven wooden coffins and many large storage jars. As of late June 2006, all coffins have been opened, and were found to contain only mummification materials, with the jars also containing mummification supplies including salts, linens, and deliberately broken pottery. Based on these finds, it has been tentatively decided that the room was a storage chamber for the mummification process and not, as initially believed, a royal tomb.[2] Some clay seal impressions contain text, such as the partial word 'pa-aten,'[3] part of the name used by Tutankhamun's wife, Ankhesenamun.[3] This inscription, the architectural style of the chamber, and the form of the coffins and jars all point to an Eighteenth Dynasty date, roughly contemporary with Tutankhamun, whose tomb is nearby.

Discovery

The vertical shaft of KV63 was re-discovered on 10 March 2005. The discovery that the shaft led to a chamber was announced on 8 February 2006, by the Supreme Council of Antiquities, which credited the find to a team of U.S. archaeologists from the University of Memphis, under the leadership of renowned Egyptologist Dr. Otto Schaden. The chamber — given the name "KV63" in accordance with the sequential numbering convention used in the Valley — was initially thought to be a tomb, the first new one to be revealed there since the discovery of KV62, the tomb of Tutankhamun, by Howard Carter in 1922.

KV63 is located in the area between KV10 (Amenmesse) and KV62 (Tutankhamun),[4] in the very centre of the Valley's eastern branch and near the main crossroads of the network of paths traversed by thousands of tourists every day. The discovery was made as the archaeological team was excavating the remains of 19th dynasty workmen's huts at the entrance to KV10, looking for evidence to clarify the succession of Amenmesse. The area around the huts had accumulated rubble from the occasional flooding. Both Theodore Davis and Howard Carter had dug in the area in the early twentieth century, but had not removed these particular huts. While exploring a layer of dark rock, the dig suddenly came across chips of white stone (these being the last level excavated by Carter). Further exploration revealed a straight edge of cut stone, which turned out to be on the upper lip of a vertical shaft. At that point the team knew they had discovered something much more elaborate and significant than the remains of the tomb-diggers' resthouses. Unfortunately, the discovery came at the very end of the 2004–05 digging season, and further excavations had to be postponed until the team recommenced its work the following autumn.

Zahi Hawass, head of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, travelled to Luxor to visit the new tomb on 10 February 2006, when the international press were also allowed their first glances through the breached door.

Description of chamber

The overhang on the shaft of KV63 has been compared with and found to be similar to two other Eighteenth Dynasty tombs (those of Yuya and Tjuyu), thereby dating the construction to the latter portion of the Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 14th century BCE) of the New Kingdom (16th century to 11th century BCE).[5] It is also broadly speculated that all the three tombs are the work of a same architect, or at least the same school of architects.

The newly revealed shaft descends some five metres. At the bottom of this pit stands a five-foot tall door made of stone blocks. Behind this door, in which the team originally opened up a small window for the 10 February 2006 event, stands the single chamber.

No seals were found on the door, and it was initially believed that KV63 was a reburial and had experienced some intrusion in antiquity. The blocking stones in the doorway were not original, suggesting that the doorway had been opened and closed a few times. The original blocking stones were found inside the tomb, giving evidence that someone had re-entered and sealed the tomb in antiquity.

The chamber measures some four metres by five and has plain white walls. It contained seven wooden coffins, including one scaled for a child and one for a small infant. Two of the adult coffins and the child's coffin feature yellow funerary masks; the others have black funerary masks. It has been suggested that those with yellow faces may have been designed for female occupants. There is extensive termite damage on some coffins and the result was likened by the exvacating team to "black paste"; however, at least two coffins were virtually untouched by termites. These termites seem to have come from the workers' huts above the shaft, and

therefore probably date from the pharaonic era. There was no evidence of water damage. However, now that the chamber has been opened, the site is at risk of damage from flash floods.[3]

The identity of the owners of the coffins is unknown. It is possible that the coffins were added to the chamber over a period of time. The collection might be an embalmers' cache or meant for an important family: glass, used for the eyes on one coffin, was a royal monopoly at the time of these burials, and one coffin features crossed arms, usually reserved for royalty. [3] Some have resin on them, which might have to be cleaned off to allow identification, as it is possible that the resin obscures the identifying marks. The adult coffin that was at the back of the chamber has visible hieroglyphs under its coating of black resin. The investigating team has not yet announced a translation of any text found on or around the coffins, but hopes remain that the text will help to identify at least one coffin owner. [3]

The chamber also held 28 large storage jars, approximately 75 cm tall, made from both pottery and alabaster. The jars weighed in at around 40 or 43 kg (90–95 pounds), varying slightly in size and weight. Three of them appear to have been broken in antiquity at the rim or lower neck. Most of the jars were discovered with intact lids, but did not bear pharaonic seal impressions. Shortly after their manufacture, the jars were whitewashed while standing in sand, and the bottoms show the original clay. A large ostracon, not identified to have come from one of the storage jars at this time, was discovered and broken during the modern opening of the tomb.

According to Dr. Schaden, the method of sealing the storage jars had been very deliberate. A mud plug was first inserted, then a seal, and then a large plaster seal. Apparently, the people doing it had thought it of prime importance that it should be done in this very precise manner. This supports the idea that there was a solid reason behind the placing of the artifacts and that the chamber was not merely a dumping ground.

There were quantities of natron in the chamber, some inside the coffins and some inside little sacks. The jars and contents are similar to those from KV54, the Tutankhamun embalming cache.

Work has been going on to carefully remove the coffins and the storage jars to KV10, which has adequate space for a conservation team to conduct a thorough examination and analysis of the coffins and jars in a proper, scientific manner. A pulley system was devised to facilitate the safe removal of the coffins and jars from the shaft. Grass buckets and bubblewrap were used to lift the jars out from the place where they were packed away for 3000 years. The removal of jars began on 2 March 2006 and most jars have been relocated safely along with one large sealed alabaster jar, which contained small pots packed in mud. Twelve of the storage jars have thus far been examined. Contents include natron, wood, seeds, shells, carbon, assorted pottery, small animal bones, papyrus fragments, mud trays, mud seals, and pieces of twine or rope.[6] Egyptologist Salima Ikram is supervising the removal and examination of the contents, a long drawn-out process.[7]

On first examination there appeared to be some kind of stuffing extruding between the lid and the bottom of the youth coffin labeled 'G'. When the coffin was opened this stuffing was revealed to be five pillows.[3],[8] As textile remnants from ancient Egypt are relatively rare, and pillows extremely so,[9] the materials used for these will be of great interest. On May 26, 2006, a 42 cm. pink gold leaf anthropoid coffinette was discovered inside the youth coffin, under the pillows.

The last and only completely sealed coffin was opened on June 28, 2006. As cameras were rolling, it was revealed that the coffin contained no mummy, only artifacts used for

mummification or to decorate a body. It looked like it had once been used, as there was an impression of a human body in the bottom of the coffin. It is theorized that this body was moved or destroyed in antiquity.

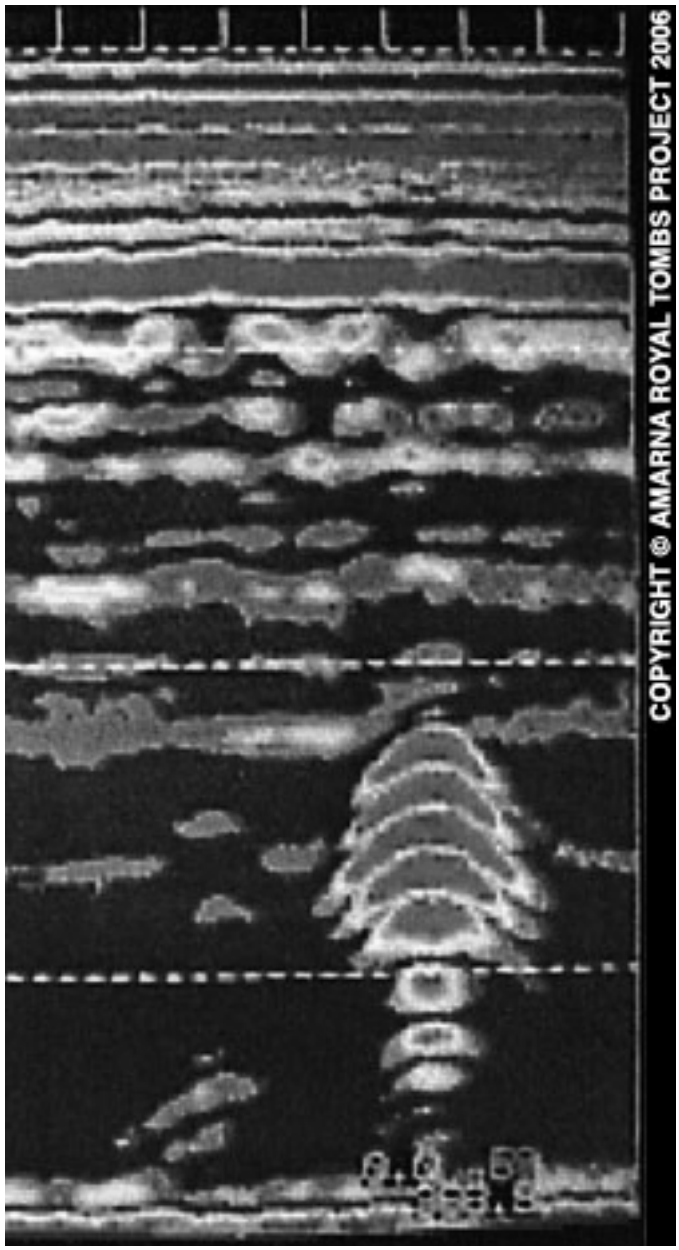
Footnotes and links are available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KV63

From http://www.archaeology.org/online/interviews/reeves.html

Another New Tomb in the Valley of the Kings?

August 3, 2006

A radar survey in 2000 had pinpointed KV63, the tomb excavated earlier this year. It has now been announced that this same radar survey may have revealed another tomb.



← ***Radar image shows the presumed shaft of what may be a tomb ("KV64") near the tomb of Tutankhamun and the recently excavated KV63. (Copyright © Amarna Royal Tombs Project 2006)***

From 1998 to 2002, the Amarna Royal Tombs Project (ARTP), led by Nicholas Reeves, undertook controlled stratigraphic excavation and geophysical surveying in the central area of the supposedly worked-out Valley of the Kings. Its impetus was both theoretical and practical, according to the project's website (www.valleyofthekings.org). It was influenced by a study of the immediate post-Amarna burials Tomb KV55 and Tomb KV62 (Tutankhamun) and what these two tombs seemed to reveal about other possible burials of the period in the immediate vicinity. And it was driven by a physical threat that the rubble fill of the Valley, and along with it most of the archaeology, might be removed wholesale to combat the seriously damaging effects of flash-flooding on the open tombs. "My particular quarry was the burial place of Nefertiti, Akhenaten's wife and coregent (who, I concluded, had been buried in the Valley as and when she died)," says Reeves. Also of interest were the "whereabouts of Akhenaten's secondary consort Kiya, his second daughter Meketaten and other lesser members of the royal family who had originally been interred at El-Amarna." As the work progressed, however, Reeves discovered that extensive key areas in the Valley were archaeologically intact, and priorities necessarily changed.

But the project was brought to a halt in 2002. Reeves was falsely accused of involvement in antiquities smuggling and his permit was revoked. In August 2005, he was officially cleared of any wrongdoing by Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA), though not allowed to return to his work in the Valley. In the interim, the area under investigation by ARTP had begun to be excavated by Otto Schaden and a team from the University of Memphis, which had been at work on KV10, the nearby tomb of Amenmesse. In 2005, Schaden found the top of the shaft leading to KV63, not knowing that it had been detected during geophysical

prospecting by ARTP in 2000. While admitting an understandable "obvious disappointment," Reeves states that it was "Otto Schaden who physically uncovered it and confirmed its character. Under those circumstances there can be no question that the credit for actual discovery should go to him and to the University of Memphis." Reeves immediately shared his geophysical evidence for the existence of KV63 with Dr. Zahi Hawass and the SCA and with Schaden and his colleagues. (For KV63, see the the excavation web site www.kv-63.com and our coverage, with links at www.archaeology.org/online/reviews/kv63/kv63.html.)

What Reeves did not reveal at this stage--because ARTP's survey data was still under review--was that the radar had revealed what appears to be yet another tomb some 15 meters due north of KV63. Reeves spoke to ARCHAEOLOGY about what this feature might represent and what the implications might be for future research in the Valley of the Kings.

This certainly looks similar to the radar images of what proved to be the shaft of KV63. You've labeled it "KV64" on your website, but do we know it's a tomb?

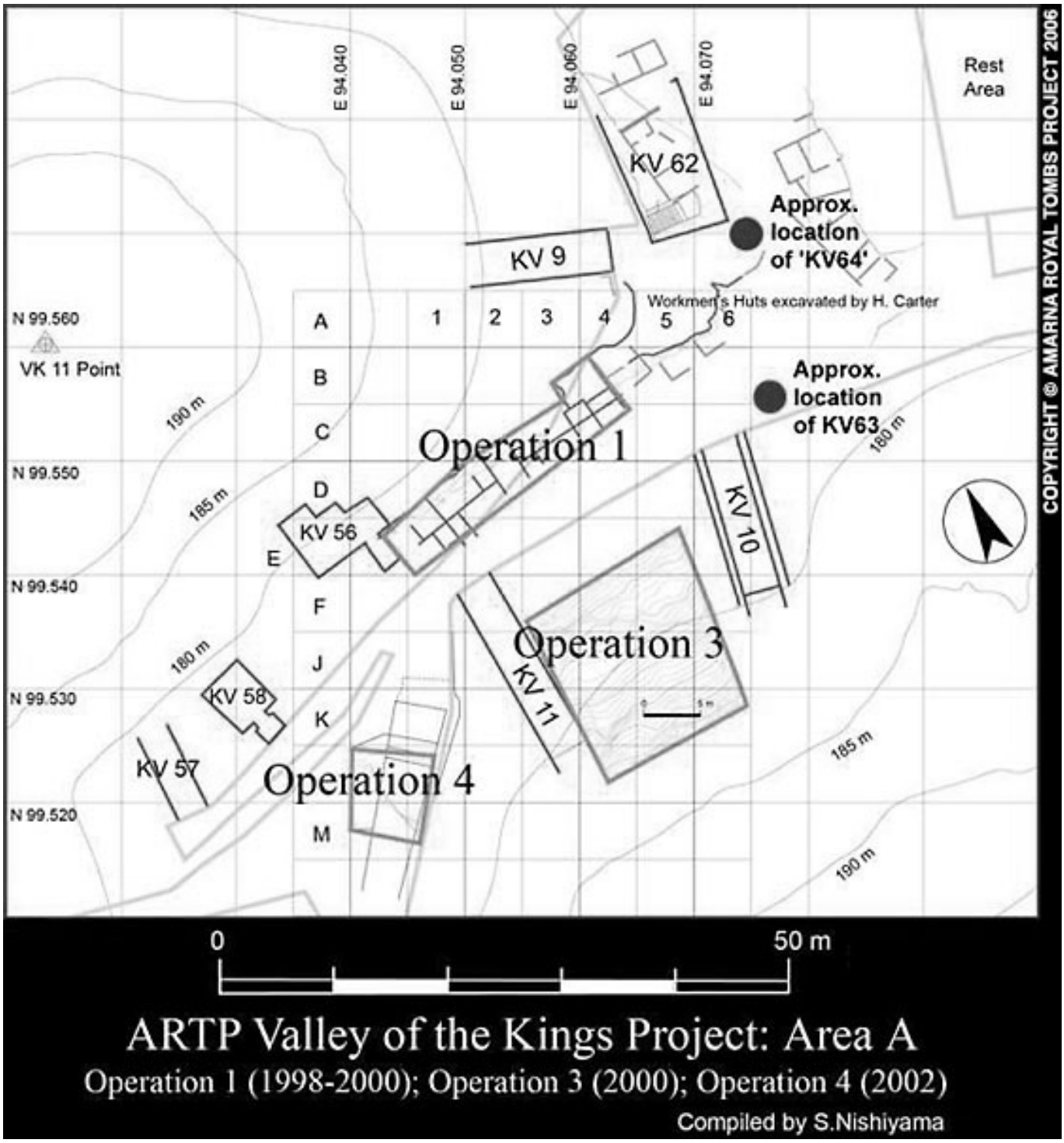
You never know anything for certain until a feature is excavated--and the tentative nature of the find is reflected in the use of quotation marks: "KV64." Radar is a less than straightforward technology to interpret, as you know. But I have every faith in the skills of our radar specialist, Hirokatsu Watanabe, one of the best in the world, with wide experience both in Japan itself and in Peru. He's confident that what we have here is the same as we had with KV63--a significant void, a tomb.

When did you detect "KV64"?

The anomaly first showed up in the autumn of 2000 during Watanabe's radar survey of our concession, and was necessarily shelved pending a negotiation of our return to the site--a return which of course never happened. The discovery of KV63 by Otto Schaden prompted us to look again at our radar data--now helpfully "calibrated," so to speak, by the physical uncovering of that find.

How do you and your radar specialist Hirokatsu Watanabe interpret the new radar images?

Radar is a tricky technology, but well-suited, it seems, to the Valley of the Kings terrain. The radar signal is emitted as a pulse, with the time and the force of the reflection echo measured and appearing on screen as real-time data. It's important to note that these data are mere patterns and do not represent the actual form or dimension of the object detected. These patterns have to be analyzed as aggregates of arcs, with the display colors varying according to the force and velocity of the various reflection echoes. Different types of underground features nevertheless produce distinctive screen patterns: a pipe, for example, will generate a couple of nested arcs; a ditch a cross-pattern above a couple of nested arcs; and a void or underground chamber--which is the intriguing prospect we seem to have here--a distinctive pattern of radiating arcs: "KV64." Located at some considerable depth, in a part of the Valley which has been out of bounds to most historical excavators, it's a feature which I guess hasn't seen the light of day for several millennia.



The valley of the Kings near the tomb of Tutankhamun (KV62). Dots mark the approximate positions of KV63 and "KV64" as established by ARTP radar survey in 2000 (copyright © Amarna Royal Tombs Project 2006)

Excitement was high with the opening of KV63, and people were tallying which pharaohs and queens were unaccounted for. Are there any clues as to what--or who--KV64 might hold?

It's been evident since 1997 that towards the end of Tutankhamun's reign the royal tomb at el-Amarna was evacuated and its occupants and the lighter tomb equipment transferred to Thebes for safety (the heavy stuff seems to have been left in situ at el-Amarna and smashed to prevent inappropriate reuse).

A close study of the tombs KV55 (see "Who's in Tomb 55") and KV62 (Tutankhamun) reveals how the process actually worked. Brought to the Valley of the Kings en masse, the Amarna burial furniture seems to have been dipped into first by the necropolis administration to help prepare a funerary equipment for Tutankhamun himself. What was left over was then redivided out among its original owners who were assigned fresh tombs in the Valley of the Kings. That's the reason Tutankhamun's core burial equipment is essentially made up of reused, secondhand stuff. And that's the explanation for KV55--why the tomb is such a hotch-potch of altered and adapted Amarna material.

Who else from this group is left to find? Well, several women--Akhenaten's secondary wife Kiya, for one; pharaoh's second daughter, Meketaten, for another. But there's Nefertiti also to consider--the great royal wife who in later years functioned as Akhenaten's co-regent. Her regal burial equipment--wholly Osirian in character and most likely prepared for a Theban interment--was also drawn upon to prepare a burial for Tutankhamun. The likelihood is that the lady herself was buried in the Valley of the Kings, too. Within "KV64"? I don't know. We shall just have to wait and see.

Why did you release this data now?

Because of the discovery and nature of KV63. It was clearly only a matter of time before the hunt was on in earnest for the further tomb which that deposit evidently signaled. It was becoming apparent to several observers that KV63 is to the Valley's next undiscovered tomb what the KV54 embalming cache was to the tomb of Tutankhamun. My principal fear was the impact that realization would have on the surrounding, less glamorous and certainly more vulnerable archaeology of the site: I don't want to see it damaged in a random, aimless hunt for more tombs. Of course I'm not against finding new tombs--how could I be?--but the work has to be done in a controlled fashion. I want to remove the element of chance, to focus any search. Public disclosure will hopefully do just that--point the way and reduce the danger and amount of collateral damage. I hope, too, it will provide a breathing space for archaeology, time for some sort of considered excavation procedure to be formulated for dealing with such a tomb by the wider international archaeological community--this is after all a World Heritage Site--and set in place by the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

Can you expand on what you mean by "less glamorous and certainly more vulnerable archaeology of the site"?

My aim in posting our data was not to claim a prize for discovering the next Tutankhamun. It was to alert people to the immense potential the Valley of the Kings still holds, despite two centuries of serious archaeological abuse. As we've demonstrated, there are indeed new tombs to be found; as important, though, is our discovery of extensive areas of intact stratigraphy which have by a miracle survived beneath the tourist paths. This stratigraphy is immensely significant for the history of the Valley and, properly treated, capable of providing a context for much of what has been dug up so badly in the past. The emphasis here is on the

words properly treated. The legacy is a fragile one. If not excavated systematically and with care, by specialist archaeologists, if allowed simply to be dug through in a manic search for more tombs, then this contextualizing data will be lost for good--a unique chance missed for ever. What I want from the announcement of "KV64" is for the treasure potential of the site to focus attention on the less spectacular though just as important aspects of work in the Valley of the Kings. We need to rein in our natural desire for more tombs, for the quick fix, to systematize our efforts and put a lot more emphasis, while we can, on every aspect of the Valley's miraculously preserved record.

What steps do you think should be taken--or not taken--next?

Archaeology in the Valley of the Kings is in many ways at a crossroads. The perceived lack of potential which since Tutankhamun had kept it safe is now gone for good. Do we forge ahead as in the old days, ripping through the ground, blinded to context like Loret, Davis, Carnarvon by the prospect of more tombs and the glint of gold? Or do we stop and reassess--formulate a systematic program of work; establish and publish a formal protocol for excavators on how to deal with what might turn up? I think the answer is obvious.

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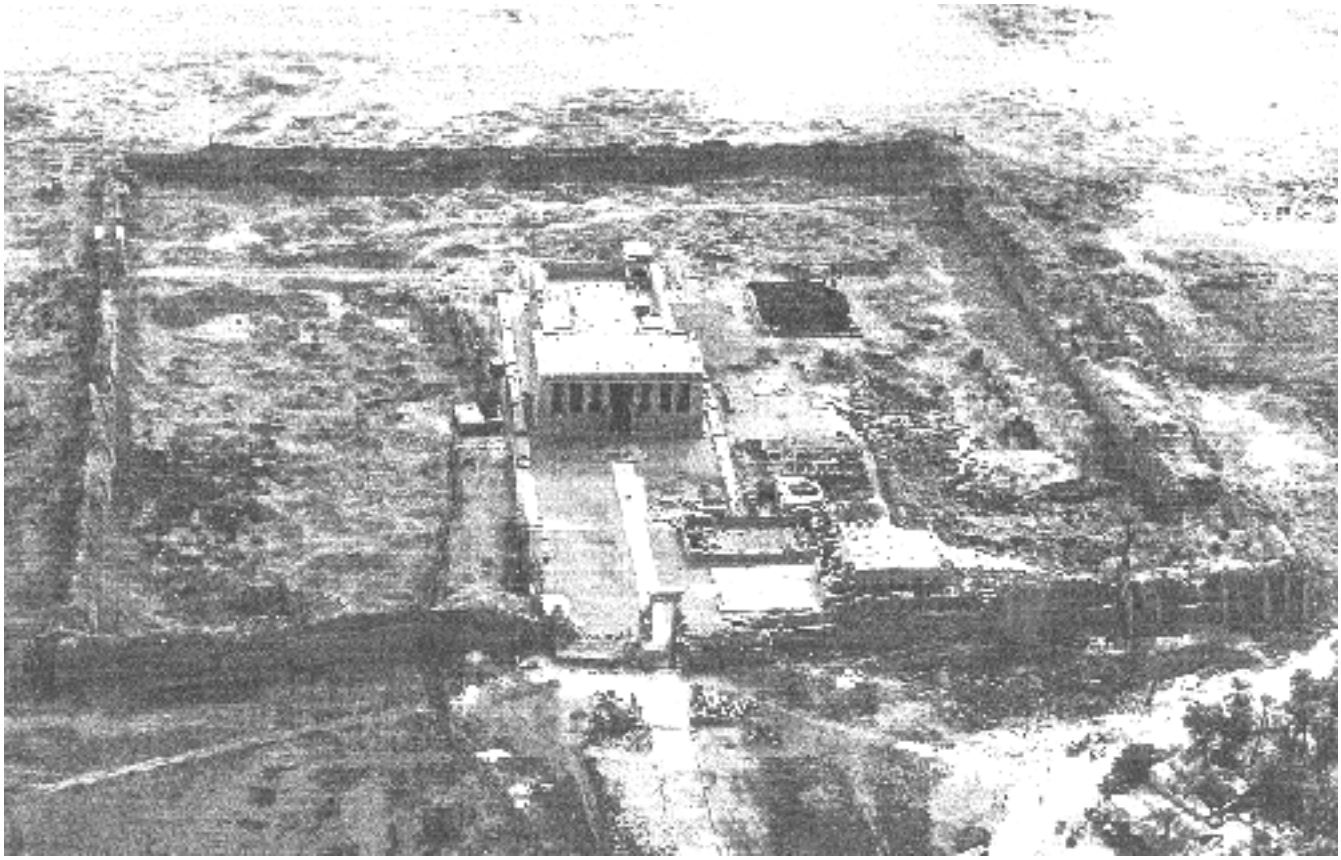
www.archaeology.org/online/interviews/reeves.html

Unit 9 Other archeological sites in Egypt



Dendera Hathor Temple

[Other Names: Het-Hert, Hetheru

Patron of: the sky, the sun, the queen, music, dance and the arts.

Appearance: A cow bearing the sun disk between her horns, or a woman in queenly raiment wearing the sun disk and horns on her head. Depictions of her as a woman with a cow's head do not occur until later periods.

Description: Hathor is a very ancient goddess, dating to predynastic times. When dynastic rule began, as Horus was associated with the king, Hathor was with the queen. Her name translates to "The House of Horus," and so she is associated with the royal family. But also, as the entire world could be said to be the House of Horus, Hathor can be seen as the mother-goddess of the whole world, similar to Isis.

Hathor's cult is unusual, as both men and women were her priests (most deities had clerics of the same gender as they). Many of them were artisans, musicians, and dancers who turned their talents into creating rituals that were nothing short of works of

art. Music and dance were part of the worship of Hathor like no other deity in Egypt. Hathor herself was the incarnation of dance, and stories were told of how Hathor danced before Ra when he was in despair to cheer him up.]

Archaeological sites in Egypt

There are too many sites even to list, much less to give any information. Find your favorite sites on the Internet. If you don't have an Internet connection, get one either at home or at the library where they will be glad to help you get on line.

The following Internet pages are good starting points, and once you have the name of a site, you can use Google to get much more information.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Archaeological_sites_in_Egypt

http://www.touregypt.net/egyptantiquities/

http://www.newton.cam.ac.uk/egypt/index.html

http://archaeology.about.com/od/archaeologicalsites/Archaeological_Sites_in_Egypt.htm

http://www.etana.org/abzu/

http://www.egyptsites.co.uk/links.html for links to other web sites

http://www.digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/Welcome.html

http://www.mythinglinks.org/afr~egy~otherarchaeol.html

http://www.teacheroz.com/egypt.htm

Unit 10: Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt

Palestrina Temple Mosaic of Ptolemaic Egypt (detail)

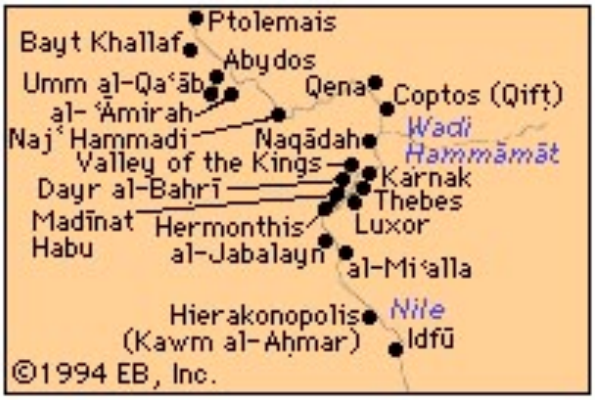
Egypt: PtolemaicEgypt

Encyclopædia Britannica Article

(left) Sites associated with Egypt from Predynastic to Byzantine times.

(above) Inset of the Nile Delta

(below) Area around Thebes



The Macedonian Conquest

In the autumn of 332 BC Alexander the Great invaded Egypt with his mixed army of Macedonians and Greeks and found the Egyptians ready to throw off the oppressive control of the hated Persians. Alexander was welcomed by the Egyptians as a liberator and took the country without a battle. He journeyed to Siwa Oasis in the Western Desert to visit the Oracle

of Amon, renowned in the Greek world; it disclosed the information that Alexander was the son of Amon. There may also have been a coronation at the Egyptian capital, Memphis, which, if it occurred, would have placed him firmly in the tradition of the pharaohs; the same purpose may be seen in the later dissemination of the romantic myth that gave him an Egyptian parentage by linking his mother, Olympias, with the last pharaoh, Nectanebo II.

Alexander left Egypt in the spring of 331 BC, dividing the military command between Balacrus, son of Amyntas, and Peucestas, son of Makartatos. The earliest known Greek documentary papyrus, found at Saqqarah in 1973, reveals the sensitivity of the latter to Egyptian religious institutions in a notice that reads: “Order of Peucestas. No-one is to pass. The chamber is that of a priest.” The civil administration was headed by an official with the Persian title of satrap, one Cleomenes of Naukratis. When Alexander died in 323 BC and his generals divided his empire, the position of satrap was claimed by Ptolemy, son of a Macedonian nobleman named Lagus. The senior general Perdiccas, the holder of Alexander's royal seal and prospective regent for Alexander's posthumous son, might well have regretted his failure to take Egypt. He gathered an army and marched from Asia Minor to wrest Egypt from Ptolemy in 321 BC; but Ptolemy had Alexander's corpse, Perdiccas' army was not wholehearted in support, and the Nile crocodiles made a good meal from the flesh of the invaders.

The Ptolemaic dynasty

Until the day when he openly assumed an independent kingship as Ptolemy I Soter, on Nov. 7, 305 BC, Ptolemy used only the title satrap of Egypt, but the great hieroglyphic Satrap stela, which he had inscribed in 311 BC, indicates a degree of self-confidence that transcends his viceregal role. It reads, “I, Ptolemy the satrap, I restore to Horus, the avenger of his father, the lord of Pe and to Buto, the lady of Pe and Dep, the territory of Patanut, from this day forth for ever, with all its villages, all its towns, all its inhabitants, all its fields.” The inscription emphasizes Ptolemy's own role in wresting the land from the Persians (though the epithet of Soter, meaning “Saviour,” resulted not from his actions in Egypt but from the gratitude of the people of Rhodes for his having relieved them from a siege in 315 BC) and links him with Khabbash, who had laid claim to the kingship during the last Persian occupation in about 338 BC.

Egypt was ruled by Ptolemy's descendants until the death of Cleopatra VII on Aug. 12, 30 BC. The kingdom was one of several that emerged in the aftermath of Alexander's death and struggles of his successors. It was the wealthiest, however, and, for much of the next 300 years, the most powerful politically and culturally, and it was the last to fall directly under Roman dominion. In many respects, the character of the Ptolemaic monarchy in Egypt set a style for other Hellenistic kingdoms; this style emerged from the Greeks' and Macedonians' awareness of the need to dominate Egypt, its resources, and its people and at the same time to turn the power of Egypt firmly toward the context of a Mediterranean world that was becoming steadily more Hellenized.

The Ptolemies (305–145 BC)

The first 160 years of the Ptolemaic dynasty are conventionally seen as its most prosperous era. Little is known of the foundations laid in the reign of Ptolemy I Soter (304–282 BC), but the increasing amount of documentary, inscriptional, and archaeological evidence from the reign of his son and successor, Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BC), shows that the kingdom's administration and economy underwent a thorough reorganization. A remarkable demotic text

of the year 258 BC refers to orders for a complete census of the kingdom that was to record the sources of water; the position, quality, and irrigation potential of the land; the state of cultivation; the crops grown; and the extent of priestly and royal landholdings. There were important agricultural innovations in this period. New crops were introduced, and massive irrigation works brought under cultivation a great deal of new land, especially in the Fayyum, where many of the immigrant Greeks were settled.

The Macedonian-Greek character of the monarchy was vigorously preserved. There is no more emphatic sign of this than the growth and importance of the city of Alexandria. It had been founded, on a date traditionally given as April 7, 331 BC, by Alexander the Great on the site of the insignificant Egyptian village of Rakotis in the northwestern Delta, and it ranked as the most important city in the eastern Mediterranean until the foundation of Constantinople in the 4th century AD. The importance of the new Greek city was soon emphasized by contrast to its Egyptian surroundings when the royal capital was transferred, within a few years of Alexander's death, from Memphis to Alexandria. The Ptolemaic court cultivated extravagant luxury in the Greek style in its magnificent and steadily expanding palace complex, which occupied as much as a third of the city by the early Roman period. Its grandeur was emphasized in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus by the foundation of a quadrennial festival, the Ptolemaieia, which was intended to enjoy a status equal to that of the Olympic Games. The festival was marked by a procession of amazingly elaborate and ingeniously constructed floats, with scenarios illustrating Greek religious cults.

Ptolemy II gave the dynasty another distinctive feature when he married his full sister, Arsinoe II, one of the most powerful and remarkable women of the Hellenistic age. They became, in effect, co-rulers, and both took the epithet Philadelphus (“Brother-Loving” and “Sister-Loving”). The practice of consanguineous marriage was followed by most of their successors and imitated by ordinary Egyptians too, even though it had not been a standard practice in the pharaonic royal houses and had been unknown in the rest of the native Egyptian population. Arsinoe played a prominent role in the formation of royal policy. She was displayed on the coinage and was eventually worshiped, perhaps even before her death, in the distinctively Greek style of ruler cult that developed in this reign.

From the first phase of the wars of Alexander's successors the Ptolemies had harboured imperial ambitions. Ptolemy I won control of Cyprus and Cyrene and quarreled with his neighbour over control of Palestine. In the course of the 3rd century a powerful Ptolemaic empire developed, which, for much of the period, laid claim to sovereignty in the Levant, in many of the cities of the western and southern coast of Asia Minor, in some of the Aegean islands, and in a handful of towns in Thrace, as well as in Cyprus and Cyrene. Family connections and dynastic alliances, especially between the Ptolemies and the neighbouring Seleucids, played a very important role in these imperialistic ambitions. Such links were far from able to preserve harmony between the royal houses (between 274 and 200 BC five wars were fought with the Seleucids over possession of territory in Syria and the Levant), but they did keep the ruling houses relatively compact, interconnected, and more true to their Macedonian-Greek origins.

When Ptolemy II Philadelphus died in 246 BC, he left a prosperous kingdom to his successor, Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–222 BC). His reign saw a very successful campaign against the Seleucids in Syria, occasioned by the murder of Euergetes' sister, Berenice, who had been married to the Seleucid Antiochus II. To avenge Berenice, Euergetes marched into Syria, where he won a great victory. He gained popularity at home by recapturing statues of

Egyptian gods originally taken by the Persians. The decree promulgated at Canopus in the Delta on March 4, 238 BC, attests both this event and the many great benefactions conferred on Egyptian temples throughout the land. It was during Euergetes' reign, for instance, that the rebuilding of the great Temple of Horus at Idfu (Apollinopolis Magna) was begun.

Euergetes was succeeded by his son Ptolemy IV Philopator (222–205 BC), whom the Greek historians portray as a weak and corrupt ruler, dominated by a powerful circle of Alexandrian Greek courtiers. The reign was notable for another serious conflict with the Seleucids, which ended in 217 BC in a great Ptolemaic victory at Raphia in southern Palestine. The battle is notable for the fact that large numbers of native Egyptian soldiers fought alongside the Macedonian and Greek contingents. Events surrounding the death of Philopator and the succession of the youthful Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205–180 BC) are obscured by court intrigue. Before Epiphanes had completed his first decade of rule, serious difficulties arose. Native revolts in the south, which had been sporadic in the second half of the 3rd century, became serious and weakened the hold of the monarch on a vital part of the kingdom. These revolts, which produced native claimants to the kingship, are generally attributed to the native Egyptians' realization, after their contribution to the victory at Raphia, of their potential power. Trouble continued to break out for several more decades. By about 196 a great portion of the Ptolemaic overseas empire had been permanently lost (though there may have been a brief revival in the Aegean islands in about 165–145 BC). To shore up and advertise the strength of the ruling house at home and abroad, the administration adopted a series of grandiloquent honorific titles for its officers. To conciliate Egyptian feelings, a religious synod that met in 196 to crown Epiphanes at Memphis (the first occasion on which a Ptolemy is certainly known to have been crowned at the traditional capital) decreed extensive privileges for the Egyptian temples, as recorded on the Rosetta Stone.

The reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145 BC), a man of pious and magnanimous character, was marked by renewed conflict with the Seleucids after the death of his mother, Cleopatra I, in 176 BC. In 170 BC Antiochus IV of Syria invaded Egypt and established a protectorate; in 168 BC he returned, accepted coronation at Memphis, and installed a Seleucid governor. But he had failed to reckon with more powerful interests: those of Rome. In the summer of 168 BC a Roman ambassador, Popillius Laenas, arrived at Antiochus' headquarters near Pelusium in the Delta and staged an awesome display of Roman power. He ordered Antiochus to withdraw from Egypt. Antiochus asked for time to consult his advisers. Laenas drew a circle around the King with his stick and told him to answer before he stepped out of the circle. Only one answer was possible, and by the end of July Antiochus had left Egypt. Philometor's reign was further troubled by rivalry with his brother, later Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon. The solution, devised under Roman advice, was to remove Physcon to Cyrene, where he remained until Philometor died in 145 BC; but it is noteworthy that in 155 BC Physcon took the step of bequeathing the kingdom of Cyrene to the Romans in the event of his untimely death.

Dynastic strife and decline (145–30 BC)

Physcon was able to rule in Egypt until 116 BC with his sister Cleopatra II (except for a period in 131–130 BC when she was in revolt) and her daughter Cleopatra III. His reign was marked by generous benefactions to the Egyptian temples, but he was detested as a tyrant by the Greeks, and the historical accounts of the reign emphasize his stormy relations with the Alexandrian populace.

During the last century of Ptolemaic rule, Egypt's independence was exercised under Rome's protection and at Rome's discretion. For much of the period Rome was content to support a dynasty that had no overseas possession except Cyprus after 96 BC (the year in which Cyrene was bequeathed to Rome by Ptolemy Apion) and no ambitions threatening Roman interests or security. After a series of brief and unstable reigns, Ptolemy XII Auletes acceded to the throne in 80 BC. He maintained his hold for 30 years, despite the attractions that Egypt's legendary wealth held for avaricious Roman politicians. In fact, Auletes had to flee Egypt in 58 BC and was restored by Pompey's friend Gabinius in 55 BC, no doubt after spending so much in bribes that he had to bring back Rabirius Postumus, one of his Roman creditors, to Egypt with him to manage his financial affairs.

In 52 BC, the year before his death, Auletes associated with himself on the throne his daughter Cleopatra VII and his elder son Ptolemy XIII (who died in 47 BC). The reign of Cleopatra was that of a vigorous and exceptionally able queen who was ambitious, among other things, to revive the prestige of the dynasty by cultivating influence with powerful Roman commanders and using their capacity to aggrandize Roman clients and allies. Julius Caesar pursued Pompey to Egypt in 48 BC. After learning of Pompey's murder at the hands of Egyptian courtiers, Caesar stayed long enough to enjoy a sightseeing tour up the Nile in the Queen's company in the summer of 47 BC. When he left for Rome, Cleopatra was pregnant with a child she claimed was Caesar's. The child, a son, was named Caesarion ("Little Caesar"). Cleopatra and Caesarion later followed Caesar back to Rome but, after his assassination in 44 BC, they returned hurriedly to Egypt and she tried for a while to play a neutral role in the struggles between the Roman generals and their factions.

Her long liaison with Mark Antony began when she visited him at Tarsus in 41 BC and he returned to Egypt with her. Between 36 and 30 BC the famous romance between the Roman general and the eastern queen was exploited to great effect by Antony's political rival Octavian. By 34 BC Caesarion was officially co-ruler with Cleopatra, but his rule clearly was an attempt to exploit the popularity of Caesar's memory. In the autumn Cleopatra and Antony staged an extravagant display in which they made grandiose dispositions of territory in the east to their children, Alexander Helios, Ptolemy, and Cleopatra Selene. Cleopatra and Antony were portrayed to the Roman public as posing for artists in the guise of Dionysus and Isis or whiling away their evenings in rowdy and decadent banquets that kept the citizens of Alexandria awake all night. But this propaganda war was merely the prelude to armed conflict, and the issue was decided in September 31 BC in a naval battle at Actium in western Greece. When the battle was at its height Cleopatra and her squadron withdrew, and Antony eventually followed suit. They fled to Alexandria but could do little more than await the arrival of the victorious Octavian 10 months later. Alexandria was captured and Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide—he by falling on his sword, she probably by the bite of an asp—in August of 30 BC. It is reported that when Octavian reached the city he visited and touched the preserved corpse of Alexander the Great, causing a piece of the nose to fall off. He refused to gaze upon the remains of the Ptolemies, saying "I wished to see a king, not corpses."

Government and conditions under the Ptolemies

The changes brought to Egypt by the Ptolemies were momentous; the land's resources were harnessed with unparalleled efficiency and the result was that it became the wealthiest of the Hellenistic kingdoms. Land under cultivation was increased, new crops were introduced (especially important was the introduction of naked tetraploid wheat, triticum durum, to replace the traditional husked emmer, triticum dicoccum). The population, estimated at

perhaps 3,000,000–4,000,000 in the Late Dynastic Period, may have more than doubled by the early Roman period to a figure of 7,500,000 or 8,000,000, a level not reached again until the late 19th century. Some of the increase was due to immigration; particularly during the 2nd and 3rd centuries many settlers were attracted from the cities of Asia Minor and the Greek islands, as well as large numbers of Jews from Palestine. The flow may have decreased later in the Ptolemaic period, and it is often suggested, on slender evidence, that there was a serious decline in prosperity in the 1st century BC. If so, there may have been some reversal of this trend under Cleopatra VII.

Administration

The foundation of the prosperity was the governmental system devised to exploit the country's economic resources. Directly below the monarch were a handful of powerful officials whose competence extended over the entire land: a chief finance minister, a chief accountant, and a chancery of ministers in charge of records, letters, and decrees. A level below them lay the broadening base of a pyramid of subordinate officials with competence in limited areas, which extended down to the chief administrator of each individual village (komarches). Between the chief ministers and the village officials stood those such as the nome-steward (oikonomos) and strategoi, whose competence extended over one of the more than 30 nomes of Egypt, the long-established geographic divisions. In theory this bureaucracy could regulate and control the economic activities of every subject in the land, its smooth operation guaranteed by the multiplicity of officials capable of checking each upon the other. In practice, it is difficult to see a rigid civil-service mentality at work, involving clear demarcation of departments; specific functions might well have been performed by different officials according to local need and the availability of a person competent to take appropriate action.

By the same token, rigid lines of separation between military and civil, legal and administrative matters are difficult to perceive. The same official might perform duties in one or all of these areas, and the law in particular regulated every activity to an extent that the use of the terms legal and judicial tends to hide. The military was inevitably integrated into civilian life because its soldiers were also farmers who enjoyed royal grants of land, either as Greek cleruchs (holders of allotments) with higher status and generous grants, or as native Egypt machimoi with small plots. Interlocking judiciary institutions, in the form of Greek and Egyptian courts (chrematistai and laokritai), provided the means for Greeks and Egyptians to regulate their legal relationships according to the language in which they conducted their business. The bureaucratic power was heavily weighted in favour of the Greek speakers, the dominant elite. Egyptians were nevertheless able to obtain official posts in the bureaucracy, gradually infiltrating to the highest levels, but in order to do so they had to Hellenize.

Economy

The basis of Egypt's legendary wealth was the highly productive land, which technically remained in royal ownership. A considerable portion was kept under the control of temples, and the remainder was leased out on a theoretically revocable basis to tenant-farmers. A portion also was available to be granted as gifts to leading courtiers; one of these was Apollonius, the finance minister of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who had an estate of 10,000 arourae (about 6,500 acres) at Philadelphia in the Fayyum. Tenants and beneficiaries were able to behave very much as if these leases and grants were private property. The revenues in

cash and kind were enormous, and royal control extended to the manufacture and marketing of almost all important products, including papyrus, oil, linen, and beer. An extraordinarily detailed set of revenue laws, promulgated under Ptolemy II Philadelphus, laid down rules for the way in which officials were to monitor the production of such commodities. In fact, the Ptolemaic economy was very much a mixture of direct royal ownership and exploitation by private enterprise under regulated conditions.

One fundamental and far-reaching Ptolemaic innovation was the systematic monetarization of the economy. This too the monarchy controlled from top to bottom by operating a closed monetary system, which permitted only the royal coinage to circulate within Egypt. A sophisticated banking system underpinned this practice, operating again with a mixture of direct royal control and private enterprise and handling both private financial transactions and those that directed money into and out of the royal coffers. One important concomitant of this change was an enormous increase in the volume of trade, both within Egypt and abroad, which eventually reached its climax under the peaceful conditions of Roman rule. Here the position and role of Alexandria as the major port and trading entrepôt was crucial: the city handled a great volume of Egypt's domestic produce, as well as the import and export of luxury goods to and from the East and the cities of the eastern Mediterranean. It developed its own importance as an artistic centre, the products of which found ready markets throughout the Mediterranean. Alexandrian glassware and jewelry were particularly fine; Greek-style sculpture of the late Ptolemaic period shows especial excellence; and it is likely that the city was also the major production centre for high-quality mosaic work.

Religion

The Ptolemies were powerful supporters of the native Egyptian religious foundations, the economic and political power of which was, however, carefully controlled. A great deal of the building and restoration work in many of the most important Egyptian temples is Ptolemaic, particularly from the period of about 150–50 BC, and the monarchs appear on temple reliefs in the traditional forms of the Egyptian kings. The native traditions persisted in village temples and local cults, many having particular associations with species of sacred animals or birds. At the same time, the Greeks created their own identifications of Egyptian deities, identifying Amon with Zeus, Horus with Apollo, Ptah with Hephaestus, and so on. They also gave some deities, such as Isis, a more universal significance that ultimately resulted in the spread of her mystery cult throughout the Mediterranean world. The impact of the Greeks is most obvious in two phenomena. One is the formalized royal cult of Alexander and the Ptolemies, which evidently served both a political and a religious purpose. The other is the creation of the cult of Sarapis, which at first was confined to Alexandria but soon became universal. The god was represented as a Hellenized deity and the form of cult is Greek; but its essence is the old Egyptian notion that the sacred Apis bull merged its divinity in some way with the god Osiris when it died.

Culture

The continuing vitality of the native Egyptian artistic tradition is clearly and abundantly expressed in the temple architecture and the sculpture of the Ptolemaic period. The Egyptian language continued in use in its hieroglyphic and demotic forms until late in the Roman period, and it survived through the Byzantine period and beyond in the form of Coptic. The Egyptian literary tradition flourished vigorously in the Ptolemaic period and produced a large number of works in demotic. The genre most commonly represented is the romantic tale,

exemplified by several story cycles, which are typically set in the native, Pharaonic milieu and involve the gods, royal figures, magic, romance, and the trials and combats of heroes. Another important category is the Instruction Text, the best known of the period being that of Ankhsheshonq, which consists of a list of moralizing maxims, composed, as the story goes, when Ankhsheshonq was imprisoned for having failed to inform the pharaoh of an assassination plot. Another example, known as Papyrus Insinger, is a more narrowly moralizing text. But the arrival of a Greek-speaking elite had an enormous impact on cultural patterns. The Egyptian story cycles were probably affected by Greek influence; literary and technical works were translated into Greek; and under royal patronage an Egyptian priest named Manetho of Sebennytos wrote an account of the kings of Egypt, in Greek. Most striking is the diffusion of the works of the poets and playwrights of classical Greece among the literate Greeks in the towns and villages of the Nile Valley.

Thus there are clear signs of the existence of two interacting but distinct cultural traditions in Ptolemaic Egypt. This was certainly reflected in a broader social context. The written sources offer little direct evidence of racial discrimination by Greeks against Egyptians, but Greek and Egyptian consciousness of the Greeks' social and economic superiority comes through strongly from time to time; intermarriage was one means, though not the only one, by which Egyptians could better their status and Hellenize. Many native Egyptians learned to speak Greek, some to write it as well; some even went so far as to adopt Greek names in an attempt to assimilate themselves to the elite group.

Alexandria occupied a unique place in the history of literature, ideas, scholarship, and science for almost a millennium after the death of its founder. Under the royal patronage of the Ptolemies, and in an environment almost oblivious to its Egyptian surroundings, Greek culture was preserved and developed. Early in the Ptolemaic period, probably in the reign of Ptolemy I Soter, the Museum (“Shrine of the Muses”) was established within the palace complex. Strabo, who saw it early in the Roman period, described it as having a covered walk, an arcade with recesses and seats, and a large house containing the dining hall of the members of the Museum, who lived a communal existence. The Great Library of Alexandria (together with its offshoot in the Sarapeum) was indispensable to the functioning of the scholarly community in the Museum. Books were collected voraciously under the Ptolemies, and at its height the library's collection probably numbered close to 500,000 papyrus rolls, most of them containing more than one work.

The major poets of the Hellenistic period, Theocritus, Callimachus, and Apollonius of Rhodes, all took up residence and wrote there. Scholarship flourished, preserving and ordering the manuscript traditions of much of the classical literature from Homer onward. Librarian-scholars such as Aristophanes of Byzantium and his pupil Aristarchus made critical editions and wrote commentaries and works on grammar. Also notable was the cultural influence of Alexandria's Jewish community, which is inferred from the fact that the Pentateuch was first translated into Greek at Alexandria during the Ptolemaic period. One by-product of this kind of activity was that Alexandria became the centre of the book trade, and the works of the classical authors were copied there and diffused among a literate Greek readership scattered in the towns and villages of the Nile Valley.

The Alexandrian achievement in scientific fields was also enormous. Great advances were made in pure mathematics, mechanics, physics, geography, and medicine. Euclid worked in Alexandria in about 300 BC and achieved the systematization of the whole existing corpus of mathematical knowledge and the development of the method of proof by deduction from

axioms. Archimedes was there in the 3rd century BC and is said to have invented the Archimedean screw when he was in Egypt; Eratosthenes calculated the Earth's circumference and was the first to attempt a map of the world based on a system of lines of latitude and longitude; and the school of medicine founded in the Ptolemaic period retained its leading reputation into the Byzantine era. Late in the Ptolemaic period Alexandria began to develop as a great centre of Greek philosophical studies as well. In fact, there was no field of literary, intellectual, or scientific activity to which Ptolemaic Alexandria failed to make an important contribution.

The Ptolemies:

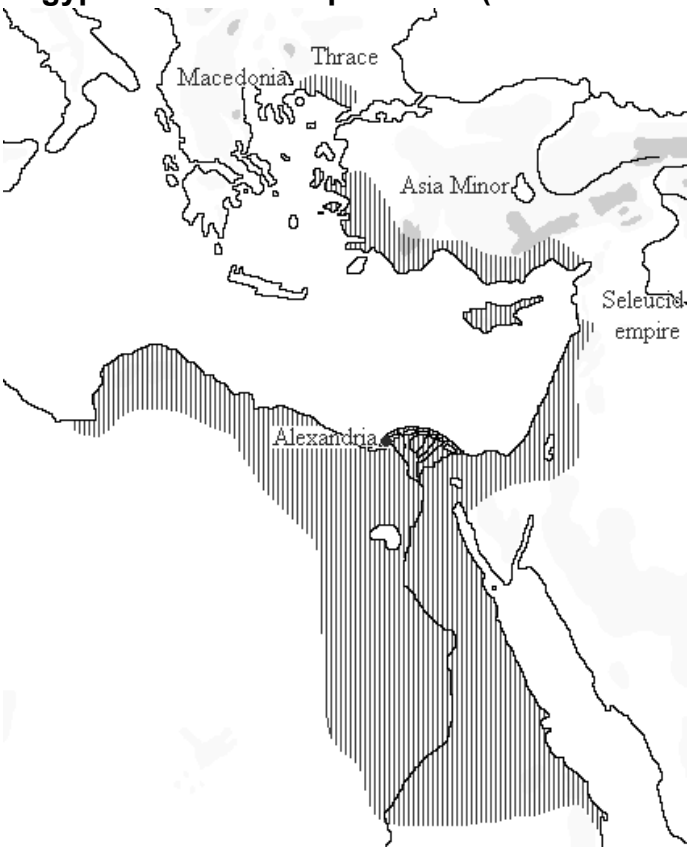
The last dynasty of independent Egypt

From http://www.livius.org/ps-pz/ptolemies/ptolemies.htm

In 332, the Macedonian king Alexander the Great conquered Egypt and gave a new capital to the old kingdom along the Nile, Alexandria. After his death (11 June 323), his friend Ptolemy became satrap of Egypt, and started to behave himself rather independently. When Perdiccas, the regent of Alexander's mentally unfit successor Philip Arridaeus arrived in 320, he was defeated. This marked the beginning of Egypt's independence under a new dynasty, the Ptolemies (or Lagids). Ptolemy accepted the royal title in 306.

← *Ptolemy I*

The fourteen kings of this dynasty were all called Ptolemy and are numbered by modern historians I to XV (Ptolemy VII never reigned). A remarkable aspect of the Ptolemaic monarchy was the prominence of women (seven queens named Cleopatra and four Berenices), who rose to power when their sons or brothers were too young. This was almost unique in Antiquity. Another intriguing aspect was the willingness of the Ptolemies to present themselves to the Egyptians as native pharaohs (cf. the pictures below, some of which are in Egyptian style). This was less unique: the Seleucid dynasty that reigned the Asian parts of Alexander's empire did the same.



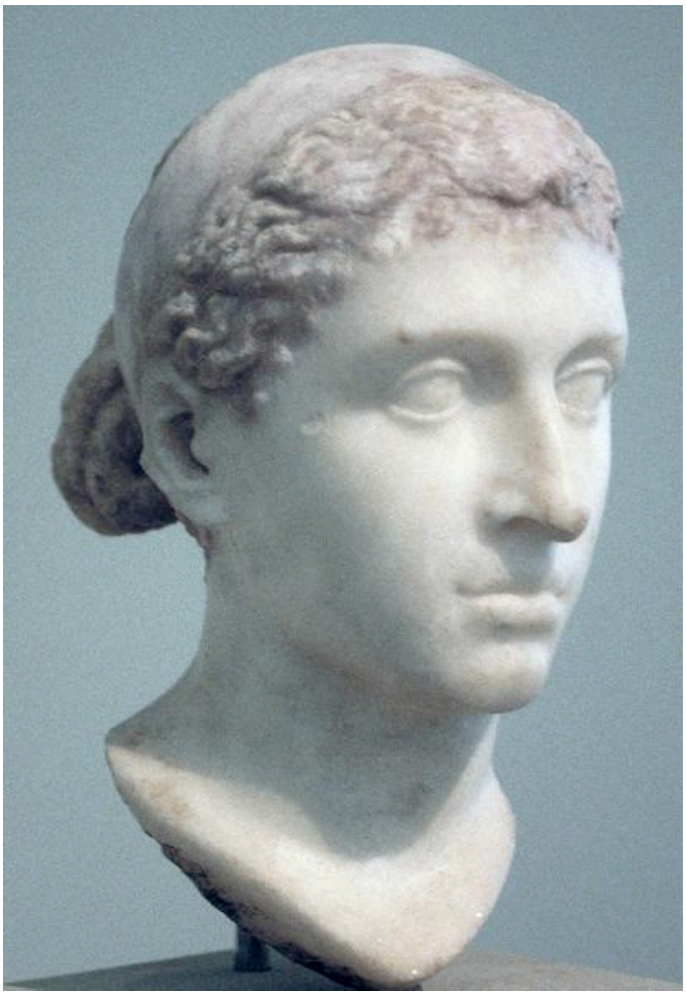
The Ptolemaic Empire →

Although Ptolemy I had refused the regency after the death of Perdiccas, he aimed at more than Egypt alone. In the last years of the fourth century, he managed to seize Coele Syria, which is more or less equivalent to modern Israel, Palestine, Lebanon and southern Syria (and included the small Jewish

state around Jerusalem). The possession of this area was, however, hotly contested: several Syrian wars were fought to defend it against the claims of the Seleucids. At first, Egyptian power was great: Cyprus, several Aegean islands, parts of Asia Minor and parts of Thrace belonged to the Ptolemaic empire.

However, after the death of Ptolemy IV Philopator in 204, his son Ptolemy V Epiphanes was too young to rule, and his wife Arsinoe was murdered. During this crisis, the Seleucid king Antiochus III the Great and Philip V of Macedonia decided to attack the Ptolemaic empire and divide the booty. When a peace treaty was signed in 195, Egypt had lost Coele Syria and all oversea possessions, except for Cyprus. The next years saw several revolts inside Egypt. In 169 and 168, the Seleucid king Antiochus IV Epiphanes invaded Egypt, conquered the Delta, and laid siege to Alexandria. However, the Romans intervened and forced him to return. From now on, the Ptolemies were increasingly dependent on Rome.

The first Roman plans to conquer Egypt were made in the 140's, but the famously rich kingdom was too high a prize for one man to win: every Roman senator wanted to be the man who conquered Egypt, and hence all senators jointly prevented any Roman magistrate who wanted to go to Alexandria from doing so. Egypt was left to its own until 47, when Julius Caesar -who had defeated all other senators- arrived. He made Cleopatra VII queen (together with her twelve-year old brother Ptolemy XIV) and demanded money. Seventeen years later, Caesar's adoptive son Octavian drove Cleopatra into suicide, murdered her son Ptolemy XV Caesarion and annexed the country.



Cleopatra VII Philopator

('father-loving'): The last queen of the Ptolemaic Empire, ruled from 51 to 30.

Egyptian title: *Nejeret-merites* ('Father-loving goddess')

Relatives:

- **Father: Ptolemy XII Auletes**
- **Mother: An Egyptian lady from a Memphite priestly family**
- **First husband: Gaius Julius Caesar**
  - **Son: Caesarion**
- **Second husband: Marc Antony**
  - **Children: the twins Alexander Helius and Cleopatra Selene (married to king Juba II of Mauretania), Ptolemy Philadelphus**

Main deeds:

- **December 70 / January 69: Born**
- **February/March 51: Death of Cleopatra's father, Ptolemy XII Auletes.**
- **Summer 50: Cleopatra accepts her brother Ptolemy XIII as co-ruler**
- **Summer 49: Sole rule of Ptolemy XIII, recognized by both Gaius Julius Caesar, the Roman dictator, and his opponent, Pompey the Great**
- **Cleopatra remains queen in the Thebaid, and accepts another brother, Ptolemy XIV, as co-ruler**
- **48: Cleopatra tries to return, but her army is defeated near Pelusium.**
- **48: Caesar defeats Pompey (battle of Pharsalus); Pompey flees to Egypt and is killed by courtiers of Ptolemy XIII**
- **Caesar arrives in Egypt and orders Ptolemy XIII and Cleopatra VII to disband their armies, but instead, war breaks out (text)**
- **January 47: Ptolemy XIII is killed in action**
- **Ptolemy XIV and his sister Arsinoe IV are made rulers of Cyprus**
- **Spring 47: Cleopatra VII is sole ruler of Egypt; she presents herself as the goddess Isis**
- **23 June 47: Birth of a son, named Caesarion; Caesar is said to be the father**
- **46: Ptolemy XIV is recognized as Cleopatra's co-ruler again; the two are in Rome**
- **March 44: Julius Caesar is killed (text); Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIV return to Egypt, where Ptolemy is soon killed and Caesarion recognized as king; first of a series of bad harvests**
- **Summer 43: Cleopatra has achieved control of Cyprus; she supports the faction of Caesar, led by the Second Triumvirate (Marc Antony, Octavian, Lepidus), in its war against the assassins, led by Brutus and Cassius**
- **42: Battle of Philippi: the triumvirs defeat Brutus and Cassius; Marc Antony will visit the east**
- **41: Cleopatra meets Marc Antony in Tarsus. The Roman needs the Egyptian queen in his war against the Parthian Empire, and returns the rule of old Ptolemaic territories to her**
- **39: Birth of the twins Alexander Helius and Cleopatra Selene**
- **38: Parts of Cilicia and Chalcis are given to Cleopatra; later, she is allowed to govern, as vassal, parts of Phoenicia, Judaea (cordial relations with king Herod), Cyrenaica, and Crete**
- **37; Marc Antony and his wife Octavia are separated**
- **36: Marc Antony's Parthian War**
- **34: Marc Antony celebrates the conquest of Armenia; Cleopatra is called 'new Isis' and 'queen of kings',**
- **32: Marc Antony divorces his wive Octavia; outbreak of war between Octavian and Marc Antony**
- **31: Marc Antony and Cleopatra move to Greece, where they are isolated by Octavian's admiral Agrippa; although they are able to win a tactical victory and break out of their isolated position at Actium, the campaign is a distaster and Octavian is able to achieve control of the east**
- **Cleopatra flees to Alexandria and opens negotiations with Octavian; her purpose is to save her children and keep the Ptolemaic kingdom intact**
- **12 August 30: After Octavian has declined to negotiate, Cleopatra commits suicide; Marc Antony does the same. Their children survive, but Caesarion is killed.**

Succeeded by: Annexation by the Roman empire

Egypt – Ptolemaic and Roman

map: The Hellenistic world)

Ptolemaic

In the period from the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC until the defeat of Cleopatra with Antony at Actium in 31 BC the Egyptian throne was held by Macedonians, and from 304 by the one family, the Prolemies (who were descended from Alexander's general Ptolemy I son of Lagus). Externally the main problem remained the extent of the kingdom, while internally the nature of administrative control and relations with the native Egyptians formed the major concerns of this new resident dynasty of foreign pharaohs. For the modern observer it is the incomplete nature of the historical record which presents problems. Contemporary historical analysis is limited in period (Polybius, Diodorus Siculus), much of it concentrating on the scandalous and sensational (Pompeius Trogus, Justin), and while numerous papyri and ostraca, preserved through the dry desert conditions, join with inscriptions to make Egypt better documented than other Hellenistic kingdoms, these illustrate the details of administration and everyday life without its wider context.

Territorially the Nile valley formed a natural unit. Ptolemy I added Cyrene and Cyprus to the kingdom, both significant territories in Ptolemaic history. Under Ptolemy II control was extended over much of the Aegean and the coast of Asia Minor organized as the Island League; this was later lost. But the territory most fought over with the Seleucid rulers of Syria was Coele ('Hollow') Syria: Palestine and the Gaza strip. This strategic area was Ptolemaic until the battle of Panion in 200, when it passed to Seleucid control. The final episode in the struggles of these two kingdoms came in 168 when Antiochus IV's successful invasion of Egypt was halted at Eleusis (a suburb of Alexandria) by Roman intervention. To the south the doubtful loyalty of the Thebaid proved an ongoing threat to the traditional unity of Upper and Lower Egypt. The area was in revolt from 206 to 186, under the control of rebel kings Haronnophris and Chaonnophris and again for three years from 88. The destruction of Egyptian Thebes by Ptolemy IX brought relative peace to the south for 75 years.

Internally the Ptolemies used local expertise as they set up their royal administration based on the traditional divisions or nomes of Egypt. Self-governing cities were few: Alexandria, which served as capital from 312 BC, the Greek Delta port of Naucratis and Ptolemais (mod. El-Mensh) founded by Ptolemy I as a Greek city in the south. Through a hierarchical bureaucracy, taxation of rich agricultural land and of the population and their livestock was based on a thorough census and land-survey. Greek was gradually introduced as the language of the administration and Greeks were privileged, both socially and in the tax-structure. The categorization however of Greek was now not an ethnic one, but rather one acquired, through employment and education. The wealth of the country (from its irrigation-agriculture and from taxes) was employed both for further development in the countryside (with agricultural initiatives and land-reclamation, especially in the Faym) and, in Alexandria, for royal patronage and display. The cultural life of the capital, with the Museum and library strongly supported under the early Ptolemies, played an important role in the definition of contemporary Hellenism.

Like other Hellenistic monarchs, the Ptolemies depended for security on their army, and Ptolemaic troops were tied in loyalty to their new homes by land-grants in the countryside. From the reign of Ptolemy VI local politeumata were also founded as settlements for both soldiers and attached civilians. As the flow of immigrant recruits grew less, Egyptian troops were increasingly used, a development Polybius noted (5. 107. 3) as dangerous to the country. These troops too might become settlers (cleruchs) in the countryside (with smaller plots), as might the native police and other security forces. Land was further used in gift-estates to

reward high-ranking officials; the dioikts (‘finance minister’) Apollonius under Ptolemy II was one of these.

In a soft approach to Egyptian ways, the Ptolemies early recognized the importance of native temples, granting privileges, and supporting native cults. For the Ptolemies were both Egyptian pharaohs and Greek monarchs. The new god Sarapis with his human aspect, an extension of the native Osiris-Apis bull, typifies this dual aspect of the period. Royal co-operation—for mutual ends—with the high priests of Memphis, central city of Lower Egypt where from the reign at least of Ptolemy V the king was crowned Egyptian-style, contrasts with the problems posed by the breakaway tendencies of Thebes and Upper Egypt. General tolerance and even financial support for native temples characterize the religious policy of the regime. In the important field of law two separate legal systems continued in use.

The sister-marrying Ptolemaic dynasty is, from the late 3rd cent., consistently represented as in decline. From the mid-2nd cent. the shadow of Rome loomed large, yet Egypt was the last Hellenistic kingdom to fall under Roman sway.

Dorothy J. Thompson

Roman

After two centuries of diplomatic contacts, Egypt was annexed as a province of the Roman people in 30 BC by Octavian (Augustus) after his defeat of Mark Antony and Cleopatra. Although the Romans adapted many individual elements of the centralized bureaucracy of the Ptolemaic kingdom, and although the emperor could be represented as a pharaoh, the institutions of the Ptolemaic monarchy were dismantled, and the administrative and social structure of Egypt underwent fundamental changes. The governor (prefect) and other major officials were Roman equites appointed, like the administrators of other ‘imperial’ provinces, by the emperor for a few years. Egypt was garrisoned with three, later two, legions and a number of auxiliary units. For private business pre-existing Egyptian and Greek legal forms and traditions were generally respected, but under the umbrella of the principles and procedures of Roman law. A closed monetary system based on the Alexandrian silver tetradrachm was maintained, but the tetradrachm was made equivalent to the Roman denarius. The Egyptian temples and priesthood were allowed to keep most of their privileges, but in tacit return for the ubiquitous spread of the Roman imperial cult (see ruler-cult). Local administration, previously entrusted to salaried officials and private contractors, was gradually converted to a liturgic system, in which ownership of property brought an obligation to serve. This was enabled by Augustus' revolutionary conversion of the category of ‘cleruchic’ land, allotments held in theory at royal discretion in return for military service, into fully private property, of which there had been very little in Ptolemaic Egypt. The Romans also increased the status of the towns and their inhabitants. Alexandria enjoyed the greatest privileges, but the mtropolis (‘mother-city’, i.e. chief town) of each regional administrative unit (nome), was under Augustus given some self-administration through liturgic magistrates, then encouraged to erect public buildings and to behave like cities elsewhere, until in AD 200/1 Septimius Severus granted boulai (councils) to Alexandria and all the mtropoleis. As part of this urbanization the Romans introduced a strict social hierarchy with ethno-cultural overtones: Roman and Alexandrian citizens were legally marked off, mainly by their exemption from the poll-tax, from the other inhabitants, who were called ‘Egyptians’. Within

the category of ‘Egyptians’ the metropolites (original residents of the mtropoleis) enjoyed some privileges, principally a reduced rate of poll-tax, and within them a theoretically hereditary group of ‘Hellenic’ descent, defined by membership of the gymnasium, formed the socio-political élite of each mtropolis. Large private estates developed in the 2nd cent. and flourished in the 3rd, so that Egypt, like other eastern provinces, was dominated and run by a local ‘Greek’, urban-based landowning aristocracy. Despite urbanization, the bulk of the population remained peasants, many of them tenant-farmers of ‘public’ (previously ‘royal’) and ‘sacred’ land for the traditional, variable, but quite high, rents in kind. The imperial government exported some of this tax-wheat to feed Rome, but it was equally if not more interested in the cash revenues of Egypt. Roman tax-rates often followed Ptolemaic precedent, though the annual poll-tax in cash was a striking novelty; the chronic fiscal problems uniquely documented in the papyri were probably typical of much of the ancient world. Whether economic conditions were better or worse than in previous periods is difficult to judge. The single greatest disaster of the Roman period was the Antonine plague of the mid-160s to 170s, but the country seems to have recovered fully by the early 3rd cent. Generally Roman Egypt had a vigorous and increasingly monetized economy. The main cultural division was between the ‘Hellenic’ life of the metropolites and the village life of the Egyptian-speaking majority, even after the universal grant of Roman citizenship in 212. But most peasants were involved in the money economy, many acquired some literacy in Greek, and the scale of urbanization implies considerable social mobility. The political and fiscal reforms of Diocletian at the end of the 3rd cent., capping longer-term developments such as the growth of Christianity—which led to the re-emergence of Egyptian as a literary language (Coptic)—brought about another social, administrative, and cultural revolution which marked the end of ‘Roman’ Egypt. Egypt remained a province of the Byzantine empire until it came under Arab rule in AD 642.
Dominic W. Rathbone

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Cleopatra -- Daughter of the Pharaoh

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Cleopatra VII was born in 69 BC in Alexandria, which was then the capital of Egypt. Her father was Egypt's pharaoh, Ptolemy XII, nicknamed Auletes or "Flute-Player." Cleopatra's mother was probably Auletes's sister, Cleopatra V Tryphaena. (It was commonplace for members of the Ptolemaic dynasty to marry their siblings.)

There was another Cleopatra in the family -- Cleopatra VII's elder sister, Cleopatra VI. Cleopatra VII also had an older sister named Berenice; a younger sister, Arsinoe; and two younger brothers, both called Ptolemy. The family was not truly Egyptian, but Macedonian. They were descended from Ptolemy I, a general of Alexander the Great who became king of Egypt after Alexander's death in 323 BC.

Ptolemy XII was a weak and cruel ruler, and in 58 BC the people of Alexandria rebelled and overthrew him. He fled to Rome while his eldest daughter, Berenice, took the throne. She married a cousin but soon had him strangled so that she could marry another man, Archelaus. At some point during Berenice's three-year reign Cleopatra VI died of unknown causes. In 55 BC Ptolemy XII reclaimed his throne with the help of the Roman general Pompey. Berenice was beheaded (her husband was executed, as well).

Cleopatra VII was now the pharaoh's oldest child. When her father died in 51 BC, leaving his children in Pompey's care, Cleopatra and her brother Ptolemy XIII inherited the throne.

Queen of Egypt

Cleopatra was 17 or 18 when she became the queen of Egypt. She was far from beautiful, despite her glamorous image today. She is depicted on ancient coins with a long hooked nose and masculine features. Yet she was clearly a very seductive woman. She had an enchantingly musical voice and exuded charisma. She was also highly intelligent. She spoke nine languages (she was the first Ptolemy pharaoh who could actually speak Egyptian!) and proved to be a shrewd politician.

In compliance with Egyptian tradition Cleopatra married her brother and co-ruler, Ptolemy XIII, who was about 12 at the time. But it was a marriage of convenience only, and Ptolemy was pharaoh in name only. For three years he remained in the background while Cleopatra ruled alone.

Ptolemy's advisors - led by a eunuch named Pothinus - resented Cleopatra's independence and conspired against her. In 48 BC they stripped Cleopatra of her power and she was forced into exile in Syria. Her sister Arsinoe went with her.

Cleopatra and Caesar

Determined to regain her throne, Cleopatra amassed an army on Egypt's border. At this time Pompey was vying with Julius Caesar for control of the Roman Empire. After losing the battle of Pharsalas he sailed to Alexandria, pursued by Caesar, to seek Ptolemy's protection. But

Ptolemy's advisors thought it would be safer to side with Caesar, and when Pompey arrived he was stabbed to death while the pharaoh watched.

Three days later Caesar reached Alexandria. Before he entered the city, Ptolemy's courtiers brought him a gift -- Pompey's head. But Pompey had once been Caesar's friend, and Caesar was appalled by his brutal murder. He marched into the city, seized control of the palace, and began issuing orders. Both Ptolemy and Cleopatra were to dismiss their armies and meet with Caesar, who would settle their dispute. But Cleopatra knew that if she entered Alexandria openly, Ptolemy's henchmen would kill her. So she had herself smuggled to Caesar inside an oriental rug. When the rug was unrolled, Cleopatra tumbled out. It is said that Caesar was bewitched by her charm, and became her lover that very night.

When Ptolemy saw Caesar and Cleopatra together the next day, he was furious. He stormed out of the palace, shouting that he had been betrayed. Caesar had Ptolemy arrested, but the pharaoh's army -- led by the eunuch Pothinus and Cleopatra's sister Arsinoe -- laid siege to the palace.

In hopes of appeasing the attackers Caesar released Ptolemy XIII, but the Alexandrian War continued for almost six months. It ended when Pothinus was killed in battle and Ptolemy XIII drowned in the Nile while trying to flee. Alexandria surrendered to Caesar, who captured Arsinoe and restored Cleopatra to her throne. Cleopatra then married her brother Ptolemy XIV, who was 11 or 12 years old.

Soon after their victory Cleopatra and Caesar enjoyed a leisurely two-month cruise on the Nile. The Roman historian Suetonius wrote that they would have sailed all the way to Ethiopia if Caesar's troops had agreed to follow him. Cleopatra may have become pregnant at this time. She later gave birth to a son, Ptolemy XV, called Caesarion or "Little Caesar." It has been suggested that Caesar wasn't really Caesarion's father -- despite his promiscuity, Caesar had only one other child - but Caesarion strongly resembled Caesar, and Caesar acknowledged Caesarion as his son.

After the cruise Caesar returned to Rome, leaving three legions in Egypt to protect Cleopatra. A year later he invited Cleopatra to visit him in Rome. She arrived in the autumn of 46 BC, accompanied by Caesarion and her young brother/husband, Ptolemy XIV. In September Caesar celebrated his war triumphs by parading through the streets of Rome with his prisoners, including Cleopatra's sister Arsinoe. (Caesar spared Arsinoe's life, but later Mark Antony had her killed at Cleopatra's request.)

Cleopatra lived in Caesar's villa near Rome for almost two years. Caesar showered her with gifts and titles. He even had a statue of her erected in the temple of Venus Genetrix. His fellow Romans were scandalized by his extra-marital affair (Caesar was married to a woman named Calpurnia). It was rumored that Caesar intended to pass a law allowing him to marry Cleopatra and make their son his heir. It was also rumored that Caesar -- who had accepted a lifetime dictatorship and sat on a golden throne in the Senate - intended to become the king of Rome.

On March 15, 44 BC a crowd of conspirators surrounded Caesar at a Senate meeting and stabbed him to death. Knowing that she too was in danger, Cleopatra quickly left Rome with her entourage. Before or immediately after their return to Egypt, Ptolemy XIV died, possibly poisoned at Cleopatra's command. Cleopatra then made Caesarion her co-regent.

Cleopatra and Mark Antony

Caesar's assassination caused anarchy and civil war in Rome. Eventually, civil peace was temprorarily restored by the formation of the "Second Triumvirate": the empire was divided among three men: Caesar's great-nephew Octavian, who later became the emperor Augustus; Marcus Lepidus; and Marcus Antonius, better known today as Mark Antony. (The "First Triumvirate" had been the short-lived "peaceful co-existence" of Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus, an aristocratic financier -- tkw)

In 42 BC Mark Antony summoned Cleopatra to Tarsus (in modern-day Turkey) to question her about whether she had assisted his enemies. Cleopatra arrived in style on a barge with a gilded stern, purple sails, and silver oars. The boat was sailed by her maids, who were dressed as sea nymphs. Cleopatra herself was dressed as Venus, the goddess of love. She reclined under a gold canopy, fanned by boys in Cupid costumes.

Antony, an unsophisticated, pleasure-loving man, was impressed by this blatant display of sex and luxury, as Cleopatra had intended. Cleopatra entertained him on her barge that night, and the next night Antony invited her to supper, hoping to outdo her in magnificence. He failed, but joked about it in his good-natured, vulgar way. Cleopatra didn't seem to mind his tasteless sense of humor -- in fact, she joined right in. Like Caesar before him, Antony was enthralled. Forgetting his responsibilities, he accompanied Cleopatra to Alexandria and spent the winter with her there.

The Greek writer Plutarch wrote of Cleopatra, "Plato admits four sorts of flattery, but she had a thousand. Were Antony serious or disposed to mirth, she had at any moment some new delight or charm to meet his wishes; at every turn she was upon him, and let him escape her neither by day nor by night. She played at dice with him, drank with him, hunted with him; and when he exercised in arms, she was there to see. At night she would go rambling with him to disturb and torment people at their doors and windows, dressed like a servant-woman, for Antony also went in servant's disguise... However, the Alexandrians in general liked it all well enough, and joined good-humouredly and kindly in his frolic and play."

Finally, "rousing himself from sleep, and shaking off the fumes of wine," Antony said goodbye to Cleopatra and returned to his duties as a ruler of the Roman empire. Six months later Cleopatra gave birth to twins, Cleopatra Selene and Alexander Helios. It was four years before she saw their father again. During that time Antony married Octavian's half-sister, Octavia. They had two daughters, both named Antonia. [Girls in all the important gentes (families) were unimaginatively named. The were given the feminine form of the gentes name -- in this case Antonia after the family name Antonius -- and were called Majora and Minora, or Prima, Secunda, Tertia, etc. -- tkw]

In 37 BC, while on his way to invade Parthia, Antony enjoyed another rendezvous with Cleopatra. He hurried through his military campaign and raced back to Cleopatra. From then on Alexandria was his home, and Cleopatra was his life. He married her in 36 BC and she gave birth to another son, Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Meanwhile, back in Rome, Octavia remained loyal to her bigamous husband. She decided to visit Antony, and when she reached Athens she received a letter from him saying that he would meet her there. However, Cleopatra was determined to keep Antony away from his

other wife. She cried and fainted and starved herself and got her way. Antony cancelled his trip, and Octavia returned home without seeing her husband.

The Roman people were disgusted by the way Antony had treated Octavia. They were also angry to hear that Cleopatra and Antony were calling themselves gods (the New Isis and the New Dionysus). Worst of all, in 34 BC Antony made Alexander Helios the king of Armenia, Cleopatra Selene the queen of Cyrenaica and Crete, and Ptolemy Philadelphus the king of Syria. Caesarion was proclaimed the "King of Kings," and Cleopatra was the "Queen of Kings."

Outraged (at least professing to be -- tkw), Octavian convinced the Roman Senate to declare war on Egypt, (meaning, of course, war on Antony -- tkw). In 31 BC Antony's forces fought the Romans in a sea battle off the coast of Actium, Greece. Cleopatra was there with sixty ships of her own. When she saw that Antony's cumbersome, badly-manned galleys were losing to Octavian's lighter, swifter boats (commanded by Agrippa -- tkw), she fled the scene. Antony abandoned his men to follow her. Although it is possible that they had prearranged their flight, the Romans saw it as proof that Antony was enslaved by his love of Cleopatra, unable to think or act on his own.

For three days Antony sat alone in the prow of Cleopatra's ship, refusing to see or speak to her. They returned to Egypt, where Antony lived alone for a time, brooding. Cleopatra, more realistically, prepared for an invasion by Rome. When Antony received word that his forces had surrendered at Actium and his allies had gone over to Octavian, he left his solitary home and returned to Cleopatra to party away their final days.

Cleopatra reportedly was experimenting with poisons (on non-essential servants, presumably) to learn which would cause the most painless death. She also built a mausoleum to which she moved all of her gold, silver, emeralds, pearls, ebony, ivory, and other treasure.

In 30 BC Octavian reached Alexandria. Mark Antony marched his army out of the city to meet the enemy. He stopped on high ground to watch what he expected would be a naval battle between his fleet and the Roman fleet. Instead he saw his fleet salute the Romans with their oars and join them. At this Antony's cavalry also deserted him. His infantry was soon defeated and Antony returned to the city, shouting that Cleopatra had betrayed him. Terrified that he would harm her, Cleopatra fled to the monument that housed her treasures and locked herself in, ordering her servants to tell Antony she was dead. Believing it, Antony cried out, "Now, Antony, why delay longer? Fate has snatched away your only reason for living." (These details, reported by Plutarch and others, may, of course, be historians' embroidery -- tkw.)

He went to his room and opened his coat, exclaiming that he would soon be with Cleopatra. He ordered a servant named Eros to kill him, but Eros killed himself instead. "Well done, Eros," Antony said, "you show your master how to do what you didn't have the heart to do yourself." Antony stabbed himself in the stomach and passed out on a couch. When he woke up he begged his servants to put him out of his misery, but they ran away. At last Cleopatra's secretary came and told him Cleopatra wanted to see him.

Overjoyed to hear Cleopatra was alive, Antony had himself carried to her mausoleum. Cleopatra was afraid to open the door because of the approach of Octavian's army, but she and her two serving women let down ropes from a window and pulled him up. Distraught,

Cleopatra laid Antony on her bed and beat her breasts, calling him her lord, husband and emperor. Antony told her not to pity him, but to remember his past happiness. Then he died.

The Death of Cleopatra

When Octavian and his men reached her monument Cleopatra refused to let them in. She negotiated with them through the barred door, demanding that her kingdom be given to her children. Octavian ordered one man to keep her talking while others set up ladders and climbed through the window. When Cleopatra saw the men she pulled out a dagger and tried to stab herself, but she was disarmed and taken prisoner. Her children were also taken prisoner and were treated well.

Octavian allowed Cleopatra to arrange Antony's funeral. She buried him with royal splendor. After the funeral she took to her bed, sick with grief. She wanted to kill herself, but Octavian kept her under close guard. One day he visited her and she flung herself at his feet, nearly naked, and told him she wanted to live. Octavian was lulled into a false sense of security.

Cleopatra was determined to die -- perhaps because she had lost Mark Antony, perhaps because she knew Octavian intended to humiliate her, as her sister Arsinoe had been humiliated, by marching her through Rome in chains. With Octavian's permission she visited Antony's tomb. Then she returned to her mausoleum, took a bath, and ordered a feast. While the meal was being prepared a man arrived at her monument with a basket of figs. The guards checked the basket and found nothing suspicious, so they allowed the man to deliver it to Cleopatra.

After she had eaten, Cleopatra wrote a letter, sealed it, and sent it to Octavian. He opened it and found Cleopatra's plea that he would allow her to be buried in Antony's tomb. Alarmed, Octavian sent messengers to alert her guards that Cleopatra planned to commit suicide. But it was too late. They found the 39-year old queen dead on her golden bed, with her maid Iras dying at her feet. Her other maid, Charmion, was weakly adjusting Cleopatra's crown. "Was this well done of your lady, Charmion?" one of the guards demanded.

"Extremely well," said Charmion, "as became the descendent of so many kings." And she too fell over dead.

Two pricks were found on Cleopatra's arm, and it was believed that she had allowed herself to be bitten by an asp that was smuggled in with the figs. As she had wished, she was buried beside Antony.

Cleopatra was the last pharaoh; after her death Egypt became a Roman province. Because Caesarion was Julius Caesar's son and might pose a threat to Octavian's power, Octavian had the boy strangled by his tutor. Cleopatra's other children were sent to Rome to be raised by Octavia. Cleopatra Selene married King Juba II of Mauretania and had two children, named Ptolemy and Drusilla. No one knows what happened to Alexander Helios and Ptolemy Philadelphus.

Who Was Cleopatra?
Mythology, propaganda, Liz Taylor—and the real Queen of the Nile

By Amy Crawford

"Anthony and Cleopatra" by Lawrence Alma-Tadema, 1885

The struggle with her teenage brother over the throne of Egypt was not going as well as Cleopatra VII had hoped. In 49 B.C., Pharaoh Ptolemy XIII—also her husband and, by the terms of their father's will, her co-ruler—had driven his sister from the palace at Alexandria after Cleopatra attempted to make herself the sole sovereign. The queen, then in her early twenties, fled to Syria and returned with a mercenary army, setting up camp just outside the capital.

Meanwhile, pursuing a military rival who had fled to Egypt, the Roman general Julius Caesar arrived at Alexandria in the summer of 48 B.C., and found himself drawn into the Egyptian family feud. For decades Egypt had been a subservient ally to Rome, and preserving the stability of the Nile Valley, with its great agricultural wealth, was in Rome's economic interest. Caesar took up residence at Alexandria's royal palace and summoned the warring siblings for a peace conference, which he planned to arbitrate. But Ptolemy XIII's forces barred the return of the king's sister to Alexandria. Aware that Caesar's diplomatic intervention could help her regain the throne, Cleopatra hatched a scheme to sneak herself into the palace for an audience with Caesar. She persuaded her servant Apollodoros to wrap her in a carpet (or, according to some sources, a sack used for storing bedclothes), which he then presented to the 52-year old Roman.

The image of young Cleopatra tumbling out of an unfurled carpet has been dramatized in

nearly every film about her, from the silent era to a 1999 TV miniseries, but it was also a key scene in the real Cleopatra's staging of her own life. "She was clearly using all her talents from the moment she arrived on the world stage before Caesar," says Egyptologist Joann Fletcher, author of a forthcoming biography, *Cleopatra the Great*.

Like most monarchs of her time, Cleopatra saw herself as divine; from birth she and other members of her family were declared to be gods and goddesses. Highly image-conscious, Cleopatra maintained her mystique through shows of splendor, identifying herself with the deities Isis and Aphrodite, and in effect creating much of the mythology that surrounds her to this day. Though Hollywood versions of her story are jam-packed with anachronisms, embellishments, exaggerations and inaccuracies, the Cleopatras of Elizabeth Taylor, Vivien Leigh and Claudette Colbert do share with the real queen a love of pageantry. "Cleopatra was a mistress of disguise and costume," says Fletcher. "She could reinvent herself to suit the occasion, and I think that's a mark of the consummate politician."

When Cleopatra emerged from the carpet—probably somewhat disheveled, but dressed in her best finery—and begged Caesar for aid, the gesture won over Rome's future dictator-for-life. With his help Cleopatra regained Egypt's throne. Ptolemy XIII rebelled against the armistice that Caesar had imposed, but in the ensuing civil war he drowned in the Nile, leaving Cleopatra safely in power.

Though Cleopatra bore him a son, Caesar was already married, and Egyptian custom decreed that Cleopatra marry her remaining brother, Ptolemy XIV. Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C., and with her ally gone Cleopatra had Ptolemy XIV killed to prevent any challenges to her son's succession. To solidify her grip on the throne, she dispatched her rebellious sister Arsinoe as well. Such ruthlessness was not only a common feature of Egyptian dynastic politics in Cleopatra's day, it was necessary to ensure her own survival and that of her son. With all domestic threats removed, Cleopatra set about the business of ruling Egypt, the richest nation in the Mediterranean world, and the last to remain independent of Rome.

What kind of pharaoh was Cleopatra? The few remaining contemporary Egyptian sources suggest that she was very popular among her own people. Egypt's Alexandria-based rulers, including Cleopatra, were ethnically Greek, descended from Alexander the Great's general Ptolemy I Soter. They would have spoken Greek and observed Greek customs, separating themselves from the ethnically Egyptian majority. But unlike her forebears, Cleopatra actually bothered to learn the Egyptian language. For Egyptian audiences, she commissioned portraits of herself in the traditional Egyptian style. In one papyrus dated to 35 B.C. Cleopatra is called *Philopatris*, "she who loves her country." By identifying herself as a truly Egyptian pharaoh, Cleopatra used patriotism to cement her position.

Cleopatra's foreign policy goal, in addition to preserving her personal power, was to maintain Egypt's independence from the rapidly expanding Roman Empire. By trading with Eastern nations—Arabia and possibly as far away as India—she built up Egypt's economy, bolstering her country's status as a world power. By allying herself with Roman general Mark Antony, Cleopatra hoped to keep Octavian, Julius Caesar's heir and Antony's rival, from making Egypt a vassal to Rome. Ancient sources make it clear that Cleopatra and Antony did love each other and that Cleopatra bore Antony three children; still, the relationship was also very useful to an Egyptian queen who wished to expand and protect her empire.

Though some modern historians have portrayed Cleopatra as a capable, popular Egyptian leader, we tend to imagine her through Roman eyes. During her lifetime and in the century after her death, Roman propaganda, most of it originating with her enemy Octavian, painted Cleopatra as a dangerous harlot who employed sex, witchcraft and cunning as she grasped for power beyond what was proper for a woman. The poet Horace, writing in the late first century B.C., called her "A crazy queen...plotting...to demolish the Capitol and topple the [Roman] Empire." Nearly a century later, the Roman poet Lucan labeled her "the shame of Egypt, the lascivious fury who was to become the bane of Rome."

After Roman tempers cooled, the Greek historian Plutarch published a more sympathetic biography. Cleopatra became a tragic heroine, with love of Antony her sole motivation. Over the next two millennia, countless paintings and dramatizations—including Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and John Dryden's *All for Love*—focused on the fantastic details of her suicide after Octavian defeated Antony. We know almost certainly that Cleopatra, along with her two most trusted servants, killed herself on August 12, 30 B.C., to escape capture by Octavian. However, since the facts of her death were unclear even to the men who found the bodies, we will never know if it was the famous asp that killed the queen, or a smuggled vial of poison. The asp legend has prevailed, however, and the image of her death, more than anything else, gave Cleopatra immortality.

In February 2007, a recently discovered coin bearing a portrait of Cleopatra went on display at Newcastle University in England, sparking renewed interest in the queen and a debate about whether she was really as beautiful as we imagine. The coin, dated to 32 B.C., shows a rather homely Cleopatra with a large nose, narrow lips and a sharp chin. She looks nothing like Elizabeth Taylor. But ancient historians never characterized Cleopatra as a great beauty, and in her time she was not considered a romantic heroine. In his A.D. 75 *Life of Antony*, Plutarch tells us, "Her actual beauty...was not so remarkable that none could be compared with her, or that no one could see her without being struck by it, but the contact of her presence...was irresistible.... The character that attended all she said or did was something bewitching."

Cleopatra's beauty (or lack thereof) was irrelevant to the Romans who knew her and the Egyptian people she ruled. The real Cleopatra had charisma, and her sexiness stemmed from her intelligence—what Plutarch described as "the charm of her conversation"—rather than her kohl-rimmed eyes. Pharaoh Cleopatra VII was a brilliant leader, says Joann Fletcher. "She was one of the most dynamic figures the world has ever seen. And I don't think that's an exaggeration."

"The Death of Cleopatra" by Reginald Arthur, 1892

Dated to 32 B.C., this coin bearing a portrait of Cleopatra has renewed the debate over whether she was actually beautiful. It's an irrelevant question, says biographer Joann Fletcher. "The impact she made on the ancient world is overlooked, because the world has this obsession when it comes to women. People can only judge them on whether they were beautiful. Nobody ever said, 'Mark Antony: how handsome was he?'"

[Actually, Antony <u>is</u> consistently described as extremely fit and handsome, and there are plenty of well-attested statues and busts to prove this correct. Interestingly, Antony's coins show the same type of hooked nose that the Cleopatra coin shows, and this is inconsistent with the statuary. This leads us to question whether Cleopatra's hooked nose

on the coin was an accurate depiction of her real physiognomy – hooked noses may have been an idio. – tkw]

Coins of Mark Antony showing him with an elkarged and hooked nose.

Egypt as a province of Rome

Encyclopædia Britannica Article

“I added Egypt to the Empire of the Roman people.” With these words the emperor Augustus (as Octavian was known from 27 BC) summarized the subjection of Cleopatra's kingdom in the great inscription that records his achievements. The province was to be governed by a viceroy, a prefect with the status of a Roman knight (eques) who was directly responsible to the emperor. The first viceroy was the Roman poet and soldier Cornelius Gallus, who boasted too vaingloriously of his military achievements in the province and paid for it first with his position and then with his life. Roman senators were not allowed to enter Egypt without the emperor's permission, because this wealthiest of provinces could be held militarily by a very small force; and the threat implicit in an embargo on the export of grain supplies, vital to the provisioning of the city of Rome and its populace, was obvious. Internal security was guaranteed by the presence of three Roman legions (later reduced to two), each about 6,000 strong, and several cohorts of auxiliaries. In the first decade of Roman rule the spirit of Augustan imperialism looked farther afield, attempting expansion to the east and to the south. An expedition to Arabia by the prefect Aelius Gallus in about 26–25 BC was undermined by the treachery of the Nabataean Syllaeus, who led the Roman fleet astray in uncharted waters. Arabia was to remain an independent though friendly client of Rome until AD 106, when the emperor Trajan (ruled AD 98–117) annexed it, making it possible to reopen Ptolemy II's canal from the Nile to the head of the Gulf of Suez. To the south the Meroitic people beyond the First Cataract had taken advantage of Gallus' preoccupation with Arabia and mounted an attack on the Thebaid. The next Roman prefect, Petronius, led two expeditions into the Meroitic kingdom (c. 24–22 BC), captured several towns, forced the submission of the formidable queen, who was characterized by Roman writers as “the one-eyed Queen Candace,” and left a Roman garrison at Primis (Qasr Ibrim). But thoughts of maintaining a permanent presence in Lower Nubia were soon abandoned, and within a year or two the limits of Roman occupation had been set at Hiera Sykaminos, some 50 miles south of the First Cataract. The mixed character of the region is indicated, however, by the continuing popularity of the goddess Isis among the people of Meroe and by the Roman emperor Augustus' foundation of a temple at Kalabsha dedicated to the local god Mandulis.

Egypt achieved its greatest prosperity under the shadow of the Roman peace which, in effect, depoliticized it. Roman emperors or members of their families visited Egypt—Tiberius' nephew and adopted son, Germanicus; Vespasian and his elder son, Titus; Hadrian; Septimius Severus; Diocletian—to see the famous sights, receive the acclamations of the Alexandrian populace, attempt to ensure the loyalty of the volatile subjects, or initiate administrative reform. Occasionally its potential as a power base was realized. Vespasian, the most successful of the imperial aspirants in the “Year of the Four Emperors,” was first proclaimed at Alexandria on July 1, AD 69, in a maneuver contrived by the prefect of Egypt, Tiberius Julius Alexander. Others were less successful. Avidius Cassius, the son of a former prefect of Egypt, revolted against Marcus Aurelius in AD 175, stimulated by false rumours of Marcus' death, but his attempted usurpation lasted only three months. For several months in AD 297/298 Egypt was under the dominion of a mysterious usurper named Lucius Domitius Domitianus. The emperor Diocletian was present at the final capitulation of Alexandria after an eight-month siege and swore to take revenge by slaughtering the populace until the river of blood reached his horse's knees; the threat was mitigated when his mount stumbled as he rode into the city. In gratitude, the citizens of Alexandria erected a statue of the horse.

The only extended period during the turbulent 3rd century AD in which Egypt was lost to the central imperial authority was 270–272, when it fell into the hands of the ruling dynasty of the Syrian city of Palmyra. Fortunately for Rome, the military strength of Palmyra proved to be the major obstacle to the overrunning of the Eastern Empire by the powerful Sasanian monarchy of Persia.

Internal threats to security were not uncommon but normally were dissipated without major damage to imperial control. These included rioting between Jews and Greeks in Alexandria in the reign of Caligula (Gaius Caesar Germanicus; ruled AD 37–41); a serious Jewish revolt under Trajan (ruled AD 98–117); a revolt in the Delta in AD 172 that was quelled by Avidius Cassius; and a revolt centred on the town of Coptos (Qift) in AD 293/294 that was put down by Galerius, Diocletian's imperial colleague.

Administration and economy under Rome

The Romans introduced important changes in the administrative system, aimed at achieving a high level of efficiency and maximizing revenue. The duties of the prefect of Egypt combined responsibility for military security through command of the legions and cohorts, for the organization of finance and taxation, and for the administration of justice. This involved a vast mass of detailed paperwork: one document of AD 211 notes that in a period of three days 1,804 petitions were handed into the prefect's office. But the prefect was assisted by a hierarchy of subordinate equestrian officials with expertise in particular areas. There were three or four epistrategoi in charge of regional subdivisions; special officers were in charge of the emperors' private account, the administration of justice, religious institutions, and so on. Subordinate to them were the local officials in the nomes (strategoi and royal scribes) and finally the authorities in the towns and villages.

It was in these growing towns that the Romans made the most far-reaching changes in administration. They introduced colleges of magistrates and officials who were to be responsible for running the internal affairs of their own communities on a theoretically autonomous basis and, at the same time, were to guarantee the collection and payment of tax quotas to the central government. This was backed up by the development of a range of "liturgies," compulsory public services that were imposed on individuals according to rank and property to ensure the financing and upkeep of local facilities. These institutions were the Egyptian counterpart of the councils and magistrates that oversaw the Greek cities in the eastern Roman provinces. They had been ubiquitous in other Hellenistic kingdoms, but in Ptolemaic Egypt they had existed only in the so-called Greek cities (Alexandria, Ptolemais in Upper Egypt, Naukratis, and later Antinoöpolis, founded by Hadrian in AD 130). Alexandria lost the right to have a council, probably in the Ptolemaic period. When it recovered its right in AD 200 the privilege was diluted by being extended to the nome capitals (metropoleis) as well. This extension of privilege represented an attempt to shift more of the burden and expense of administration onto the local propertied classes, but it was eventually to prove too heavy. The consequences were the impoverishment of many of the councillors and their families and serious problems in administration that led to an increasing degree of central government interference and, eventually, more direct control.

The economic resources that this administration existed to exploit had not changed since the Ptolemaic period, but the development of a much more complex and sophisticated taxation system was a hallmark of Roman rule. Taxes in both cash and kind were assessed on land, and a bewildering variety of small taxes in cash, as well as customs dues and the like, was

collected by appointed officials. A massive amount of Egypt's grain was shipped downriver both to feed the population of Alexandria and for export to Rome. Despite frequent complaints of oppression and extortion from the taxpayers, it is not obvious that official tax rates were very high. In fact the Roman government had actively encouraged the privatization of land and the increase of private enterprise in manufacture, commerce, and trade, and low tax rates favoured private owners and entrepreneurs. The poorer people gained their livelihood as tenants of state-owned land or of property belonging to the emperor or to wealthy private landlords, and they were relatively much more heavily burdened by rentals, which tended to remain at a fairly high level.

Overall, the degree of monetarization and complexity in the economy, even at the village level, was intense. Goods were moved around and exchanged through the medium of coin on a large scale and, in the towns and the larger villages, a high level of industrial and commercial activity developed in close conjunction with the exploitation of the predominant agricultural base. The volume of trade, both internal and external, reached its peak in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. But by the end of the 3rd century AD, major problems were evident. A series of debasements of the imperial currency had undermined confidence in the coinage, and even the government itself was contributing to this by demanding more and more irregular tax payments in kind, which it channeled directly to the main consumers, the army personnel. Local administration by the councils was careless, recalcitrant, and inefficient; the evident need for firm and purposeful reform had to be squarely faced in the reigns of Diocletian and Constantine.

Society, religion, and culture

One of the more noticeable effects of Roman rule was the clearer tendency to classification and social control of the populace. Thus, despite many years of intermarriage between Greeks and Egyptians, lists drawn up in AD 4/5 established the right of certain families to class themselves as Greek by descent and to claim privileges attaching to their status as members of an urban aristocracy, known as the gymnasial class. Members of this group were entitled to lower rates of poll tax, subsidized or free distributions of food, and maintenance at the public expense when they grew old. If they or their descendants were upwardly mobile, they might gain Alexandrian citizenship, Roman citizenship, or even equestrian status, with correspondingly greater prestige and privileges. The preservation of such distinctions was implicit in the spread of Roman law and was reinforced by elaborate codes of social and fiscal regulations such as the “Rule-Book of the Emperors' Special Account.” The “Rule-Book” prescribed conditions under which people of different status might marry, for instance, or bequeath property and fixed fines, confiscations, and other penalties for transgression. When an edict of the emperor Caracalla conferred Roman citizenship on practically all of the subjects of the empire in AD 212, the distinction between citizens and noncitizens became meaningless; but it was gradually replaced by an equally important distinction between honestiores and humiliores (meaning, roughly, upper and lower classes), groups that, among other distinctions, were subjected to different penalities in law.

Naturally, it was the Greek-speaking elite that continued to dictate the visibly dominant cultural pattern, though Egyptian culture was not moribund or insignificant; one proof of its continued survival can be seen in its reemergent importance in the context of Coptic Christianity in the Byzantine period. An important reminder of the mixing of the traditions comes from a family of Panopolis in the 4th century, whose members included both teachers of Greek oratory and priests in Egyptian cult. The towns and villages of the Nile Valley have preserved thousands of papyri that show what the literate Greeks were reading: the poems of

Homer and the lyric poets, works of the classical Greek tragedians, and comedies of Menander, for example. The pervasiveness of the Greek literary tradition is strikingly demonstrated by evidence left by an obscure and anonymous clerk at the Fayyum village of Karanis in the 2nd century AD. In copying out a long list of taxpayers, the clerk translated an Egyptian name in the list by an extremely rare Greek word that he could only have known from having read the Alexandrian Hellenistic poet Callimachus; he must have understood the etymology of the Egyptian name as well.

Alexandria continued to develop as a spectacularly beautiful city and to foster Greek culture and intellectual pursuits, though the great days of Ptolemaic court patronage of literary figures had passed. But the flourishing interest in philosophy, particularly Platonic, had important effects. The great Jewish philosopher and theologian of the 1st century, Philo of Alexandria, brought a training in Greek philosophy to bear on his commentaries on the Old Testament. This anticipates by a hundred years the period after the virtual annihilation of the great Jewish community of Alexandria in the revolt of AD 115–117, when the city was the intellectual crucible in which Christianity developed a theology that took it away from the influence of the Jewish exegetical tradition and toward that of Greek philosophical ideas. There the foundations were laid for the teaching of the heads of the Christian catechetical school, such as Clement of Alexandria. And in the 3rd century there was the vital textual and theological work of Origen, the greatest of the Christian Neoplatonists, without which there would hardly have been a coherent New Testament tradition at all.

Outside the Greek ambience of Alexandria, traditional Egyptian religious institutions continued to flourish in the towns and villages; but the temples were reduced to financial dependence on a state subvention (syntaxis) and they became subject to stringent control by secular bureaucrats. Nevertheless, like the Ptolemies before them, Roman emperors appear in the traditional form as Egyptian kings on temple reliefs until the middle of the 3rd century; and five professional hieroglyph cutters were still employed at the town of Oxyrhynchus in the 2nd century. The animal cults continued to flourish, despite Augustus' famous sneer that he was accustomed to worship gods, not cattle. As late as the reign of Diocletian (AD 285–305) religious stelae preserved the fiction that in the cults of sacred bulls (best known at Memphis and at Hermonthis), the successor of a dead bull was “installed” by the monarch. Differences between cults of the Greek type and the native Egyptian cults were still very marked, in the temple architecture as in the status of the priests. Priests of Egyptian cult formed, in effect, a caste distinguished by their special clothing, whereas priestly offices in Greek cult were much more like magistracies and tended to be held by local magnates. Cult of Roman emperors, living and dead, became universal after 30 BC, but its impact is most clearly to be seen in the foundations of Caesarea (Temples of Caesar) and in religious institutions of Greek type, where divine emperors were associated with the resident deities.

One development that did have an important effect on this pagan religious amalgam, though it was not decisive until the 4th century, was the arrival of Christianity. The tradition of the foundation of the church of Alexandria by St. Mark cannot be substantiated, but a fragment of a text of the Gospel According to John provides concrete evidence of Christianity in the Nile Valley in the second quarter of the 2nd century AD. Inasmuch as Christianity remained illegal and subject to persecution until the early 4th century, Christians were reluctant to advertise themselves as such, and it is therefore difficult to know how numerous they were, especially because later pro-Christian sources may often be suspected of exaggerating the zeal and the numbers of the early Christian martyrs. But several papyri survive of the libelli submitted in the first official state-sponsored persecution of Christians, under the emperor Decius (ruled

249–251): these were certificates in which people swore that they had performed sacrifices to pagan gods in order to prove that they were not Christians. By the 290s, a decade or so before the great persecution of Diocletian, a list of buildings in the sizeable town of Oxyrhynchus, some 125 miles south of the apex of the delta, included two Christian churches, probably of the house-chapel type.

Roman Egypt

From Ancient History Sourcebook (http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/romanegypt1.html)

While the ancient history of Egypt is both rich and well documented, western interest in the nation of pharaohs began primarily with the conquests of Alexander the Great. By the time of Alexander, Persian influence had taken control of Egypt and the power of the eastern nation didn't escape his notice. In order to finance his coming expeditions, Alexander crossed first to Egypt crushing what little Persian resistance there was. Taking control with relative ease, and being welcomed for his deliverance from Persian rule, Alexander abruptly altered Egyptian culture that would last for the next 900 years.

He first founded the city of Alexandria to act as a Greek style seat of government for the Nile nation. Many Macedonian and Hellenistic supporters were appointed to various positions of power and a unique social structure of ethnicities began to develop. Greeks and Macedonians occupied the elite status, of which native Egyptians had little to no ability or interest to joing, while they occupied the common classes. Occupying the lower tiers were other outside cultures such as Jews, Nubians and other neighbors.

After the death of Alexander in 323 BC, his conquests began to crumble into factional kingdoms. In Egypt, the Macedonian general Ptolemy I Soter (Saviour) eventually took the throne. He established a dynasty that would last 300 years, until Cleopatra and the age of Caesar. In this time, a successive line of Ptolemic Kings, of Macedonian descent ruled Egypt with varying degrees of success.

The early Ptolemies exanded Egyptian and Macedonian influence in the region through various conquests of neighboring territories. Immense wealth was accumulated in the process and Egypt was slowly becoming the power it once was. The Ptolemies also wisely adopted many Egyptian customs while encouraging Greek Hellenism to prosper. By the end of the Ptolemy dyansty, the rulers of Egypt were as much Egyptian in culture as they were Macedonian in ethnicity.

Roman contact with the Egyptian state began most likely in the 3rd century BC. Because of Egypts Macedonian ties, there was certainly some diplomacy between the two during the Macedonian Wars against Philip V and his heir Perseus. During the related Syrian War, Philip and the Seleucid King Antiochus III formed an alliance to wrestle away Egyptian concerns in the region. Pressed by this alliance, the Egyptians turned to the growing Mediterranean power of Rome in an alliance of their own. Roman victory assured Egypt its continued independence, but closer ties to Rome would eventually turn against them.

The late Ptolemy dynasty did little to insure Egyptian stability. The rise of several infant kings, with rule by appointed regents, was the source of political and civil strife on a near routine basis. By the 1st century BC, the former great Nile power was becoming more and more a protectorate of Rome. Due to its inability to govern effectively and efficiently, it fell upon Rome to act as mediator on several occasions. By the eastern campaigns of Pompey in the 60's BC, Rome had taken at least nominal control of much of Alexander's former conquests. Influence

in the Hellenistic east belonged to Rome and Egypt's star was waning. In 58 BC, Ptolemy XII Auletes was driven out of his kingdom by the mob in Alexandria and Rome was forced to step in again. The first triumvirate of Caesar, Pompey and Crassus restored him to power shorly after but in 51 BC the king died. His death left the kingdom to the 10 year old Ptolemy XIII and his 17 year old sister Cleopatra VII. The husband and wife siblings, as was the custom in both ancient and Ptolemic Egypt, ruled jointly, but as rivals. The struggle for Egyptian power would soon bring the direct focus of the now supremely powerful Rome.

The civil wars between Caesar, Pompey and the Republican Senators brought Egypt front and center into the conflict. After the battle of Pharsalus in 48 BC, in which Caesar was the victor, Pompey fled to Egypt hoping for safe passage. The rival Egyptian rulers were in the middle of their own pitched effort for ultimate power, and the result would be disastrous for Pompey. Attempting to win favor from Caesar in his own civil efforts, Ptolemy and his regent Potheinus, had Pompey killed and beheaded when he arrived. Knowing little of Caesar's famous clemency towards his enemies, they presented the head to him as a gift. Ancient reports suggest a variety of reactions, but all clearly relate Caesar's anger and disappointment by this act. Unwittingly, Ptolemy XIII pushed Caesar into the camp of Cleopatra and his reign was to be short lived.

Caesar met with Cleopatra and a historic affair blossomed. He soon gave full support to her bid for the throne against her brother and husband and a civil war erupted in the streets of Alexandria. With only a nominal force Caesar was hard pressed against Ptolemy, but eventually prevailed. In the fighting that ensued, Ptolemy XIII was killed and the Great Library of Alexandria sustained considerable, but repairable damage. While Caesar and Cleopatra continued their affair resulting in the birth of a son, Caesarion, Cleopatra's even younger brother Ptolemy XIV rose to rule with Cleopatra. She later accompanied Caesar to Rome where she became more in tune to the political environments and made contact with Caesar's Legate, Marcus Antonius. With Caesar's murder in 44 BC, Cleopatra murdered her brother and elevated her son Caesarion to the position of King. She next attached herself with what appeared to be the next great Roman power in Antony, but it was to be a fateful decision.

Caesar's true heir, Octavian eventually came to prominence and more Roman civil war was to come. First working together with Octavian to eliminate Caesar's assassins, the two eventually split. At the battle of Actium, in 31 BC Octavian defeated the forces of Antonius and would head to Egypt. As victory for Octavian closed in both Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide in 30 BC, and Egypt fell permanently into Roman control for the next 700 years. Octavian had another motive for his invasion of Egypt, however. Cleopatra had propped her son Caesarion up as the true heir of Caesar, and Octavian was forced to react. If there was any doubt over whether the boy was really Caesar's son, Octavian ended the potential trouble by having him killed.

Egypt was next set up as a Roman province with a unique difference from other provinces. With all of its great wealth Octavian, soon to be Augustus, kept the province as personal hereditary property, in which the Senate had no jursidiction at all. While Roman administration would follow in the Imperial period under appointed Prefects, many Greeks continued to staff important administrative funtions. The Romans also followed the Ptolemy example and did little to alter Egyptian customs, and Greek influence continued to flourish. While the Egyptian gods were adopted into Roman culture, the Emperors did gradually introduce Imperial cult worship.

Egypt flourished under Roman rule and the region prospered. Factional dissent between Greeks and Jews was a recurring issue, but relative peace reigned. Trajan suppressed a Jewish revolt, but his successor, Hadrian had retuned the region to a relative calm. Opressive taxation later led to a general revolt of the Egyptian natives that lasted several years, and the revolt of Avidius Cassius under the reign of Aurelius led to general disorder in the east. The emergence of Christianity also played a part in general disturbances from the 2nd century on, but Egypt, for the most part was a peaceful and steady Roman province.

From the beginning of Roman rule, 2 legions occupied the province. Legio II Cyrenaica garrisoned Alexandria until 106 BC when Legio II Traiana Fortis replaced it. Legio XXII Deiotariana also garrisoned Alexandrian until the mid 1st Century AD, but it seems to have been destroyed in the Judaean Revolt of Simon ben Kosiba. Legio II Traiana Fortis garrisoned Alexandria and monitored Egypt at least until the 5th century AD. At this point the administration of the west collapsed and the province continued under Byzantine or Romanion rule until the 7th century AD.

The economy of Egypt was chiefly agricultural as the Nile valley was extremely fertile. Vast amounts of grain and other consumables were regularly exported. Textile manufacturing, especially clothing seems to have been a key industry as well. Additionally, Papyrus and its end products, such as paper, were a key contribution to the Roman world. [Introduction (adapted from Davis)]:

Roman rule was established in Egypt after Octavian (Augustus) displaced the last ruler of the Ptolemaic line, the famous Cleopatra VII. It proved to be a great and rich province for Augustus, who organized the country not so much as a Roman Province but as the emperor's own special domain land. In Egypt, the Emperor was considered the successor of the ancient Pharaohs; his deputy - the prefect - ruled the country with an authority permitted to few other governors.

Strabo, Geography, c. 22 CE XVII.i.52-53, ii.4-5; XVIII.i.12-13:

At present [in Augustus's time] Egypt is a Roman province, and pays considerable tribute, and is well-governed by prudent persons sent there in succession. The governor thus sent out has the rank of king. Subordinate to him is the administrator of justice, who is the supreme judge in many cases. There is another officer called the *Idologus* whose business is to inquire into property for which there is no claimant, and which of right falls to Caesar. These are accompanied by Caesar's freedmen and stewards, who are intrusted with affairs of more or less importance.

Three legions are stationed in Egypt, one in the city of Alexandria, the rest in the country. Besides these, there are also nine Roman cohorts quartered in the city, three on the borders of Ethiopia in Syene, as a guard to that tract, and three in other parts of the country. There are also three bodies of cavalry distributed at convenient posts.

Of the native magistrates in the cities, the first is the "Expounder of the Law" - who is dressed in scarlet. He receives the customary honors of the land, and has the care of providing what is necessary for the city. The second is the "Writer of the Records"; the third is the "Chief Judge"; the fourth is the "Commander of the Night Guard." These officials existed in the time of the Ptolemaic kings, but in consequence of the bad administration of the public affairs by

the latter, the prosperity of the city of Alexandria was ruined by licentiousness. Polybius expresses his indignation at the state of things when he was there. He describes the inhabitants of Alexandria as being composed of three classes, first the Egyptians and natives, acute in mind, but very poor citizens, and wrongfully meddlesome in civic affairs. Second were the mercenaries, a numerous and undisciplined body, for it was an old custom to keep foreign soldiers---who from the worthlessness of their sovereigns knew better how to lord it than to obey. The third were the so-called "Alexandrines," who, for the same reason, were not orderly citizens; however they were better than the mercenaries, for although they were a mixed race, yet being of Greek origin they still retained the usual Hellenic customs.

Such, then, if not worse, were the social conditions of Alexandria under the last kings. The Romans, as far as they were able, corrected -- as I have said-many abuses, and established an orderly government -- by setting up vice-governors, nomarchs, and ethnarchs, whose business it was to attend to the details of administration.

Herodotus and other writers trifle very much when they introduce into their histories the marvelous, like (an interlude) of music and song, or some melody; for example, by asserting that the sources of the Nile are near the numerous islands, at Syene and Elephantine, and that at this spot the river has an unfathomable depth. In the Nile there are many islands scattered about, some of which are entirely covered, others in part only, at the time of the rise of the waters. The very elevated parts are irrigated by means of screw pumps. Egypt was from the first disposed to peace, from having resources within itself, and because it was difficult of access to strangers. It was also protected on the north by a harborless coast and the Egyptian Sea; on the east and west by the desert mountains of Libya and Arabia, as I have said before. The remaining parts towards the south are occupied by Troglodytae, Blemmyes, Nubians, and Megabarzae Ethiopians above Syene. These are nomads, and not numerous nor warlike, but accounted so by the ancients, because frequently, like robbers, they attacked defenseless persons. Neither are the Ethiopians, who extend towards the south and Meroë, numerous nor collected in a body; for they inhabit a long, narrow, and winding tract of land on the riverside, such as we have before described; nor are they well prepared either for war or the pursuit of any other mode of life.

At present the whole country is in the same pacific state, proof of which is that the upper country is sufficiently guarded by three cohorts, and these not complete. Whenever the Ethiopians have ventured to attack them, it has been at the risk of danger to their own country. The rest of the forces in Egypt are neither very numerous, nor did the Romans ever once employ them collected into one army. For neither are the Egyptians themselves of a warlike disposition, nor the surrounding nations, although their numbers are very large.

Cornelius Gallus, the first governor of the country appointed by Augustus Caesar, attacked the city Heroöpolis, which had revolted [in 28 B.C.], and took it with a small body of men. He suppressed also in a short time an insurrection in the Thebaïs which originated as to the payment of tribute. At a later period Petronius resisted, with the soldiers about his person, a mob of myriads of Alexandrines, who attacked him by throwing stones. He killed some, and compelled the rest to desist.

To what has been said concerning Egypt, we must add these peculiar products; for instance, the Egyptian bean, as it is called, from which is obtained the ciborium, and the papyrus, for it is found here and in India only; the persea [peach] grows here only, and in Ethiopia; it is a lofty tree, and its fruit is large and sweet; the sycamine, which produces the fruit called the

sycomorus, or fig-mulberry, for it resembles a fig, but its flavor is not esteemed. The corsium also (the root of the Egyptian lotus) grows there, a condiment like pepper, but a little larger. There are in the Nile fish in great quantity and of different kinds, having a peculiar and indigenous character. The best known are the oxyrhynchos [the sturgeon], and the lepidotus, the latus, the alabes, the coracinus, the choerus, the phagrorius, called also the phagrus. Besides these are the silurus, the citharus, the thrissa [the shad], the cestreus [the mullet], the lychnus, the physa, the bous, and large shellfish which emit a sound like that of wailing.

The animals peculiar to the country are the ichneumon and the Egyptian asp, having some properties which those in other places do not possess. There are two kinds, one a span in length, whose bite is more suddenly mortal than that of the other; the second is nearly an *orguia* [six feet] in size, according to Nicander, the author of the *Theriaca.* Among the birds are the ibis and the Egyptian hawk, which, like the cat, is more tame than those elsewhere. The nycticorax is here peculiar in its character; for with us it is as large as an eagle, and its cry is harsh; but in Egypt it is the size of a jay, and has a different note. The tamest animal, however, is the ibis; it resembles a stork in shape and size. There are two kinds, which differ in color; one is like a stork, the other is entirely black. Every street in Alexandria is full of them. In some respects they are useful; in others troublesome. They are useful, because they pick up all sorts of small animals and the offal thrown out of the butchers= and cooks= shops. They are troublesome because they devour everything, are dirty, and with difficulty prevented from polluting in every way what is clean and what is not given to them.

Herodotus truly relates of the Egyptians that it is a practice peculiar to them to knead clay with their hands, and the dough for making bread with their feet. *Caces* is a peculiar kind of bread which restrains fluxes. Kiki (the castor-oil bean) is a kind of fruit sowed in furrows. An oil is expressed from it which is used for lamps almost generally throughout the country, but for anointing the body only by the poorer sort of people and laborers, both men and women. The coccina are Egyptian textures made of some plant, woven like those made of rushes, or the palm tree. Barley beer is a preparation peculiar to the Egyptians. It is common among many tribes, but the mode of preparing it differs in each. This, however, of all their usages is most to be admired---that they bring up all children that are born. They circumcise the males, as also the females [*i.e.,* cliterodectomy], as is the custom also among the Jews, who are of Egyptian origin, as I said when I was treating of them.

THE RUIN OF EGYPT BY ROMAN MISMANAGEMENT

By J. GRAFTON MILNE.

It seems to be the accepted view among historians who deal with Egypt under Roman rule to regard the two first centuries after the Roman conquest as a period of prosperity and happiness in Egypt, and the last three before the Arab invasion as one of absolute ruin and misery, though there are differences of opinion as to the point when the decline began and the causes to which it is to be ascribed. There is, however, considerable ground for believing that the condition of the country steadily deteriorated from the very beginning of Roman rule, and that this deterioration was the inevitable result of the mistakes made in the scheme of organisation adopted by Augustus.

In the first place, it should be noted that the evidence now available from contemporary documents shows that the state of Egypt in the first century B.C. was not, economically, so unsound as was assumed from the allusions in Roman writers which, until lately, were our main source of information on this point: these allusions were usually prompted by complications in Roman political circles arising from dealings of the later Ptolemies with. Roman speculators and adventurers, and they suggested at any rate that the condition of the country was as rotten as that of the royal house. But at this time the royal house was almost a negligible factor in the economic situation. The three centuries of Ptolemaic rule fall into two well marked divisions, of almost equal length-the dividing point being about 180 B.C.: and the important distinction between the two is to be found in the relation of the kings to the upper and middle class population, which consisted partly of Greeks, partly of natives. In the first period the kings were closely linked with the Greek settlers in Egypt, who worked with them in the development of the country on the lines of autocratic monarchy, while the more important sections of the natives, such as the priests, were subsidised to keep them quiet: in the second there was a growing estrangement between the kings and the Greeks, who tended to enter more and more into association with the higher-class natives-a process due to various causes, which need not now be discussed, but amongst which, in view of subsequent events, should be noted the eth.nica1 separation : the first Ptolemy was, if not Greek, at any rate pure Macedonian; the last ruler of his house, Cleopatra VII, was possibly at most one-sixteenth Macedonian. The essential fact is that in the first century B.C. there was in Egypt a king or two, or a queen or two, who received what revenues the finance officers chose to hand over, and for the rest supported the royal dignity on borrowed money: but the main business and trade of the country were done by a considerable body of merchants, chiefly Greeks and Jews, of landed proprietors, Grecised Egyptians or Egyptianised Greeks, and of temple communities, predominantly Egyptian: and they all seem to have worked in fair harmony and to have prospered in their dealings. At any rate the documentary evidence does not disclose any serious economic distress in the country during the century nor any decline in the internal standard of credit: such troubles as arose mainly affected Alexandria, when the members of the royal house

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A lecture delivered to the Oxford Branch of the Classical Association, on March 10th, 1927 [Old, but still valid conclusions – tkw]

came to open warfare and their troops interfered with trade by fighting in the streets, or the southern frontier, which was disturbed by its Meroitic neighbors: the farmers of Middle and Lower Egypt and the village artisans went on their way regardless of the quarrels or the incompetence of their rulers.

The actual position, therefore, when Augustus took possession of Egypt as the conqueror of Antony and Cleopatra, was that he became master of an estate, the tenants of which had for some generations been left to manage it for their own benefit: the nominal owners had been practically bankrupt, though the property in itself was perfectly solvent. He naturally desired to secure that it should become a source of revenue to him, and for this purpose carried out a scheme of reorganisation in all departments of the administration. There is no record of the terms of his orders, nor of their date: as the country was under his direct control, legislation was unnecessary, and he could alter any detail of government, small or great, by a message to his personal representative the prefect, so that such a record is not likely to be found: but from incidental references it seems most likely that the chief changes were introduced under Petronius, the third prefect, who held office from about 25 to about 15 B.C.: one at least, the secularisation of temple property, is definitely ascribed to his action in 19 B.C., and facts known in regard to others suggest a date in that decade.

In respect of the methods of raising revenue, a radical alteration was probably forced upon Augustus by the Roman commercial interests. The main sources of the income of the Ptolemies can be grouped under two heads: they received payments in kind, largely in corn, from the farmers of the Nile-valley, and they controlled all the more important branches of trade by monopolies. In theory, of course, both these classes of taxation originate in the same doctrine of absolute monarchy: the whole of the land belongs to the king, and the whole of the people are his servants, so that he is entitled to take what share he pleases of the produce of their labour, whether in cultivation of the soil or in manufacture of articles of commerce: in practice the incidence of burdens may vary as between individuals or between occupations, but the broad principle remains. Under the new government of Egypt, the corn-tax continued as before: there was apparently little modification in the rate of the charge on the occupiers of crown land, which passed into the personal possession of the Roman Emperor, and the main alteration of note was that the Government steadily pursued a policy of resuming direct control of estates which had been granted away; so that the actual cultivators as a rule may have had no increase in their liabilities, though landowners lost their property : but an important economic change, to which further reference will be made later, was effected by the diversion of the produce of the corn-tax from the maintenance of an indigenous court and its appurtenances to the feeding of the population of Rome. The monopolies, on the other hand, disappeared: their existence depended on a system of protection against external competition by heavy duties on imports, which had to be abandoned in the interests of the Roman merchants, who desired to exploit the Egyptian market for themselves: and they were replaced, as a source of revenue from manufactures, by direct taxes on traders in the form of license fees, a fixed number of licenses for each trade being granted by the government in each town or village on payment of a regular monthly fee : this system was much more convenient, as regards ease of collection, for a foreign government, but in its lack of elasticity was quite unsuited to the conditions of Oriental trade.

An entirely new direct tax was also imposed on the country in, the form of the poll-tax, the earliest evidence for which is in receipts of 18 B.C., while the periodic census by which it was regulated appears shortly afterwards: it was paid by all male inhabitants between the ages of 14 and 60, with a few special exemptions, at rates varying between different districts on some

principle not yet ascertained. The theory underlying this tax was presumably, as the age limits suggest, that it was a payment in lieu of military service: but, as it was of far wider application, being practically universal and continuous, than any call for military service was likely to be, it represented a serious addition to the charges on the Egyptians. Another form of personal service, which had existed in Egypt from time immemorial, and continued till quite recently-the liability to work on the upkeep of the irrigation system-was maintained by the Romans at the old quota of five days' labour annually, which might be commuted by a money payment: the scanty evidence suggests that commutation was more frequent under the Romans than under the Ptolemies, which would accord with the tendency to reduce everything, except the corn-tax, to payments in cash., instead of in kind or service, which was favoured by the emperors, and which did not work out to the advantage of the natives in view of the collapse of currency values to which reference will be made.

Summarily, it may be said that in the immediate result of the new scheme of taxation, the peasantry were hit by the additional burden of the poll tax, and the middle classes still further by the taxes on trades. The upper classes-that is, the landed proprietors, who were, as already mentioned, a mixture of Greeks and Egyptians, and with whom may be grouped the colleges of priests attached to the temples-suffered more directly by the confiscation of their lands by the Roman government. So far as the lay holders are concerned, there is no evidence of any sweeping measure of expropriation, but the frequency of references in papyri to estates which had passed out of private ownership to that of the State suggests that a persistent though unobtrusive course of policy had been pursued to this end. In the case of the temple estates there is more definite information: from the narratives in two papyri it appears that in 19 B.C. the temples were called upon to surrender their real property to the government, with the promise of a fixed annual subvention for the future. In some cases the priests were allowed to remain in occupation of their lands, or part of them, but only as tenants of the State, and on payment of a rent: and, although the former estates of the temples were managed as a special department by a branch of the Alexandrian treasury-a sort of Ecclesiastical Commission-it is rather suggestive of the nature of the claim which the government conceived itself to have upon them that they were administered by the same chief finance officer as the bond caduca et vacantia. It is clear in the one instance where details are preserved that the revenues of the priests were diminished by the change, and it is not improbable that this was the usual result. But the important fact, from an economic point of view, is that the government plainly aimed at securing direct control over all landed property in Egypt.

Another change which worked out to the detriment of the wealthier classes was in the appointment of persons responsible for local administration and for the collection of the revenue. Under the Ptolemies, as Professor Rostovtzeff has pointed out, the majority of the officials were the personal salaried agents of the king-virtually a Civil Service according to the modern conception. But under the Emperors the salaried officers rapidly diminished in number, and were soon reduced to the few Romans who were sent over to hold the highest posts and to the clerical class, while the intermediate grades were filled by Graeco-Egyptians, who were required to give their services to the state without remuneration, ' thus introducing a sort of compulsory work for the higher and richer classes who were free from the manual forced labour of the lower classes.' And not only were these conscripted magistrates unpaid: they were responsible for the collection of the taxes, and were personally liable for any deficiency in the quota fixed for their districts, the liability attaching to all ranks from the strategos, the chief civil officer of the nome, down through the hierarchy in towns and villages to the actual collector, so as to secure that, whatever might happen, the Roman Emperor would get his taxes from some one. The change was apparently introduced gradually: under

Augustus the old and the new systems were working side by side: but there is no reason to doubt that it was planned from the beginning, and within a century practically all local officials were appointed compulsorily: the Egyptians were classified according to their incomes, and positions were allotted according to the amount of liability that each man's income would meet: there was a rota of eligible candidates, and nominally a period of respite was allowed before a man who had held an office could be called up again, but instances occur where this rule was disregarded. Thus the State was in possession of a guarantee that it would receive whatever amount it demanded, and got this amount raised without any cost of collection.

The financial strain of payments to Rome was probably accentuated by the alterations made by Augustus in the Egyptian currency, which may have been intended to help in stabilising the exchange, but do not show any real grasp of the problem. A national metallic currency had only been introduced into Egypt after the Greek conquest, and the ordinary Greek system of an interrelated coinage of gold, silver, and copper, which was adopted at first, soon broke down, apparently in consequence of the inability of the Egyptian to under- stand why a lump of copper, his traditional unit of value, should be subordinated in its use for purchasing purposes to foreign ideas about silver: after 180 B.C. the internal currency of Egypt was on a copper standard, and the copper drachma was maintained at a fairly steady weight, while the silver drachma, or rather tetradrachm, which continued to be struck, was considerably debased. Augustus thus found in existence a dual system, with a ratio for purposes of exchange of about 480 copper drachmas to a silver drachma, and a silver coinage with a metal content of only about one quarter of its nominal value-a system which worked well enough so long as internal trade only was concerned and the silver ignored, but could not apply to transactions with other countries. In order to fix the exchange between Alexandria and Rome, he substituted for the old copper pieces of 80, 40, 20, and 10 copper drachmas, which could at need serve as obols, half-obols, dichalka, and chalkoi in relation to the silver, a new series of three denominations, apparently diobols, obols, and dichalka, of reduced weight, reckoned on a silver standard: but the old Ptolemaic debased silver tetradrachms were left in circulation, and still regarded as tetradrachms for internal currency, though they were only tariffed as the equivalent of the denarius, i.e., at one-fourth of their nominal value-on the Roman market. The result was that Egypt was the one province of the Roman empire where the ordinary imperial coinage did not circulate: till late in the third century it remained a watertight compartment for purposes of currency, and imperial silver or copper coins of earlier date are virtually never found there. This was bound to operate in restriction of trade, and thus increased the disability under which Egypt lay on account of the inequality of the exchange.

This treatment of the currency gives a very clear illustration of the line of policy which Augustus adopted in regard to Egypt, as Roman historians bear witness: the province was to be one apart from the rest of the Empire, under the sole control and management of the Emperor, who could use it at his pleasure for administrative experiments. And the changes which have been mentioned as effected by him suggest that it was so used with the purpose of trying how far it was possible to go in the direction of absolute autocracy. He took away from the chief city its power of self-government as a Hellenic polity, and imposed novel liabilities on the propertied classes: the native system of religion was reduced to a position of dependence on the goodwill of a foreign ruler for its maintenance: and the peasantry were treated as serfs.

It did not take long for $he results of this action to manifest themselves. So far as regards the actual productiveness of Egypt, it is true that the immediate effects of the Roman conquest were beneficial: it has always been essential for the proper cultivation of the Nile-valley that

the system of irrigation, by canals from the river and by control of the annual flood, should be organised as a whole throughout the country, and the decay of the central authority in the later years of the Ptolemaic dynasty had rendered this impracticable: for instance, the larger estates poached water to the detriment of their neighbours, and communicating channels were neglected and choked. One of the first works of the Romans in the prefecture of Petronius was to re-establish the irrigation system, and the crop returns went up with a bound. There was also a notable development in the mercantile activities of Alexandria and the Red Sea ports, in connexion with the transport trade from India and East Africa, under more efficient policing of the sea routes, as well as of traffic with Central Africa on the establishment of an understanding with the Meroitic kingdom. But this revival of agriculture and commerce did not mean a corresponding increase in the wealth of Egypt: though more corn was produced, a great part of it was immediately shipped off to Rome without compensation, and the carrying trade was largely in the hands of Roman companies and Jews. The pressure was naturally felt first by the Greek merchants of Alexandria: and it is significant that the first signs of discontent with the Roman government-other than local risings immediately after and incidental to the change of masters-occurred amongst them, and that, as they dared not defy Rome openly, they tried to annoy it by attacking the Jews, who had obtained special privileges at Alexandria from Augustus, and so were regarded as not only successful competitors in business but favourites of the foreign despot. The first anti-Semitic riots at Alexandria recorded were in the reign of Caligula, and thereafter they broke out again at intervals till the death of Hadrian: and the accounts of these riots show clearly that they were directed as much against the Roman government as against the Jews, and were organised by the Greek section of the community, whose recognised chiefs, the gymnasiarchs, regularly appeared as the leaders and spokesmen of the rioters. The landed proprietors and headmen of the country towns were less vocal-they had few opportunities of making themselves heard-but an indication of the increasing impoverishment of this class may be found in the difficulty, which became more and more acute as the century went on, in filling up the honorary magistracies of the towns, which involved the holders in considerable expense for the advantage of their neighbours: at first purely voluntary, these offices gradually became compulsory: arrangements were made for sharing the burden originally placed on one man between two or more : and in one instance at least an endowment was provided for their relief.

Before the end of the first century, the pauperisation of the middle classes must have been fairly complete: the stores of capital which they had accumulated under the later Ptolemies had been exhausted, and, as there was no more to be squeezed out of them, the pressure was transferred to the actual cultivators of the soil. The peasants of the Nile-valley always lived on a bare margin of subsistence, and consequently an increase in the demands upon them broke them at once: a document lately published shows that as early as A.D. 56 no less than 44 men in the village of Philadelphia, a place probably with three to four thousand inhabitants, had left their homes to escape the payment of the poll-tax for the year: and this withdrawal of labour meant not only decay in cultivation, but also neglect of the dykes and canals, which made matters worse. On the top of all came the Jewish revolt at the end of the reign of Trajan, which created a state of guerrilla warfare over the greater part of Lower Egypt for many months, and forced the government to take the unprecedented step of arming the Egyptian peasantry as a sort of militia to assist in suppressing the revolt. The effect of this, both from the actual destruction of crops in the struggle and from the neglect of the fields when the labourers were called away to fight, was most serious, as is shown by a rescript issued in the second year of Hadrian, providing for a general revision of rentals of public land, which resulted, in several instances of which records are preserved, in substantial reductions. But this alleviation

produced no permanent effect: as the second century went on, the signs of distress became more evident, until in 172 the Egyptian peasantry rose in organised revolt for the first time since the Roman conquest. The focus of the disturbance was in the marshes of the Delta, and the insurgents were probably composed to a large extent of fugitives from their homes who had taken refuge in these trackless wastes: it is noteworthy that the rising was headed by an Egyptian priest, which points to a recrudescence of nationalist feeling fostered by the ministers of the old worships: and there are other indications that the native religion had been steadily regaining the position of influence, from which Augustus had deposed it, from the time of Domitian onwards. The revolt was so dangerous that it required the summoning of reinforcements from Syria to assist in crushing it: and it may be taken as indicating that the system of Augustus had now sucked the last drop of blood out of the peasantry, as well as the middle classes, of Egypt.

Thus, when Severus visited Egypt in zoo, he found the economic position desperate: a memorandum has been preserved, which was presented to him, describing the complete ruin of certain villages by the burden of liturgies for financial and administrative duties, and other evidence goes to show that this was by no means an isolated case. His reorganisation of the machinery of government, which is regarded as the beginning of the collapse of Egypt, in this light looks more like an attempt to devise a new method of extracting money to replace one that had proved a failure: it is true that conditions grew constantly worse in the third century, and the bankruptcy of Roman credit became more glaringly obvious, but the rot had set in long before, and only gathered speed as it went on. The plan adopted by Severus to secure the collection of the revenue was to grant a larger measure of nominal local autonomy, which carried with it larger financial responsibility: senates were established in the chief towns of the nomes, with the task of supervising the taxation of their towns and the surrounding villages: they had to arrange the rota of service in the various magistracies, and in the last resort were responsible for providing the sums assessed upon their districts. It does not appear whether the government got a better income in consequence of this ' reform,' but it is quite clear that the situation of the local officials was not improved: the fragmentary records of the proceedings of the senate of Oxyrhynchus suggest that a main part of the business consisted in forcing magistracies on reluctant candidates, and the plaudits which greeted the patriotism of a man who accepted office are pathetically ludicrous. As for the peasantry, their condition simply went from bad to worse: edicts of prefects under Severus and Caracalla show that the country was infested by bands of men who had been driven from their homes to live by brigandage: and practically every assessment list preserved specifies considerable areas of land as unoccupied or waste. The decline of the State credit is shown by the deterioration in the coinage: the tetradrachm, which, it must be remembered, was virtually a token, for internal circulation only, and so reflects in its changes no more than the relation of the provincial government with its subjects-had not depreciated much from the time of Augustus to that of Severus: but in the third century it went down to about one-half the weight and one-tenth of the fineness of the previous issues: bronze coins disappeared, to be replaced partly in some districts by tokens of lead, but still more by a return to the primitive system of payments in kind : Rostovtzeff has drawn attention to the fact that on one large estate in the Fayum at this time wine was the chief currency. The one alleviation of the situation for the peasantry was in the disorganisation of the empire: as the century went on, their would-be masters were often too much occupied in fighting one another to spare much thought for systematic taxation, and it might be easier to hide a little property from the spasmodic military plunderer than from the permanent official collector.

The administrative changes made by Diocletian were more revolutionary for most other parts of the Empire than for Egypt, since several of the basic principles had already been anticipated in that field for imperial experiments. Put briefly, the plan of Diocletian was an extension of the Orientalisation of the Roman government which had been begun by Severus under the influence of his wife, and rendered inevitable the transfer of the centre of administration further east, where it endured for over a thousand years, while the west passed speedily to the development of a system better suited to its character: and nowhere in the Empire would an orientalised bureaucracy be more at home than in Egypt. But so far as the economic conditions of the country were concerned, Diocletian did no more than effect a temporary slackening in the pace of the down- ward rush: for a few years the currency, now assimilated to that of the rest of the Empire-a fact of some significance, as marking the end of the old attempt at financial isolation-remained fairly stable, and there were some signs of revival of foreign trade in the reign of Constantine I, possibly encouraged by the new freedom of monetary exchange. But there was no improvement in the lot of the agriculturists: a group of documents from the Fayum shows that in the reign of Constantine nearly all the inhabitants of a village had fled, and only three, out of twenty-five whose names appeared on the assessment lists, were left to pay taxes on land of which the greater part was unwatered and barren. The depreciation of the currency began again, and went on more rapidly than ever, so that by 350 the unit of reckoning was not the denarius, but the myriad, ten thousand denarii: and a few years later it appears that the gold solidus was worth over 20 million denarii. As this was a local devaluation of a coinage which, under the system of Diocletian, was current throughout the Empire, and which had not depreciated to anything like the same extent in other provinces, it made not only trade, but taxation in money, impossible: and the practice of raising taxes in kind, which had been normal in Egypt before the Greek conquest, and had been partially revived in the third century in the form of requisitions of food and clothing for the use of the government, became the regular one. Instead, however, of demanding from landholders a proportion of their produce, and from artisans a proportion of their manufactures, the state assessed its levies by juga, parcels of land of varying size but theoretically equal value, the tenants of which were required to furnish a fixed amount of food, clothing, etc. ; and thereby it nullified any advantage which might have accrued to the Egyptian farmers by the return to what was, for them, a natural system of taxation. The imperial edicts of the latter part of the fourth century furnish ample evidence of the misery of the taxpayers: but the most significant is a slightly earlier one aimed against the custom of patronage, by which a community put itself under the protection of some wealthy or influential individual.

In the fifth century, the growth of this patronage virtually destroyed the authority of the imperial government in Egypt: all over the country great families absorbed into their own estates public as well as private property, and townspeople and villagers alike became their dependants, as it was only from them that any effective protection could be obtained. They held a position very like that of the feudal lords of the Middle Ages, keeping bands of armed retainers who could and did defy the imperial troops, and in some cases even arrogating the issue of coinage: and in the end the central government was forced to accept the situation and to recognise them as the responsible rulers of their districts, under the title of pagarchs: their only token of acknowledgement of the Emperor was the payment of a sum in respect of the taxes due from their lordships, which they apparently raised as they thought fit. Side by side with these territorial magnates there grew up an extremely strong and wealthy group of ecclesiastical corporations: in some areas practically the whole of the population was under monastic vows, and the heads of the communities stood in much the same relation to the government as the great landlords, and defied it at their pleasure: even in Alexandria, at the

beginning of the century, the representative of the Emperor was helpless against the patriarch, who had assumed the r81e of the leader of the nationalist party against the Romans which had formerly been filled by the gymnasiarchs and carried it out far more effectively than any of them had ever done. Probably during this century the lot of the small cultivator or workman, whether as the serf of a great lord or as a lay brother in a monastic community, was a good deal more tolerable than it had been when he owed allegiance only to the Emperor: but this was due to the fact that all attempts to patch up the Roman system of administration had failed, and the government had thrown in its hand.

One more effort to assert the imperial authority was made in the next century by Justinian, when he tried to strengthen his position in Egypt and to secure the support of the church by granting part of the powers of the prefect as his viceroy to the patriarch of Alexandria. But it was too late: for some eighty years the Egyptians as a whole had been in theological revolt against Constantinople, since the Council of Chalcedony: and the immediate result was to accentuate their opposition to the Emperor's nominee, who was now unacceptable on both political and religious grounds. The local magnates and native churches seem to have entered into an alliance, which was making Egypt into a string of petty autocracies, when the Persian and Arab invasions finally put an end to Roman authority in the country: the history of the Arab conquest shows how the various districts acted on their own initiative, some making common cause with the invaders, others offering an isolated resistance; but nowhere was there any concerted action either between the local troops or with the imperial garrison.

The intent of this survey has been to show that the prosperity of Egypt declined constantly under Roman rule from the time of the conquest till the central government lost its grip upon the country: and, though the decline was more rapid at some periods than at others, there was never any sign of recovery or even any real check. The burden of supplying the tribute to Rome was first thrown on the upper and middle classes, then, as their resources were exhausted, it was passed on to the peasantry: the administrative changes of Severus were a fresh attempt to put the screw on the middle classes, those of Diocletian to do the like with the peasants: but all through there was no departure from the great principle of policy, first laid down by Augustus, that Egypt was to be exploited solely for the benefit of the imperial treasury. It should be noted that the circumstances which contributed to the economic decay of other provinces of the Empire did not affect Egypt. There was no question of the exhaustion of the soil: this is impossible in Egypt so long as the annual floods of the Nile continue, and though a ' bad Nile ' may result in a poor crop, and bad Niles may occur in consecutive years, nature has always redressed the balance in due course. The neglect of irrigation works on canals and dykes will reduce the area under cultivation, but this is purely a matter of administration: it has occurred from time to time when the central authority was incompetent, and been remedied as soon as efficiency was restored at headquarters. Nor was there any permanent diminution of population: the numbers of the fellahin of Egypt respond almost as quickly as those of the lower animals to changes in the food supply. There is a high birth rate. If there is sufficient food, the children live: if not, they die. And good government in Egypt, which means plenty of food, has always been accompanied by an increase in the agricultural population. Barbarian invasions did not trouble the province: occasional plundering raids by the Nubian tribes from the south or the Libyan nomads of the west took place, but rarely on a serious scale, never on one to be compared with the irruption of whole nations which swept all the northern shores of the Mediterranean.

It seems clear that the explanation of the state of absolute ruin to which Egypt was reduced after four centuries of Roman rule, in spite of the fact that the natural fertility of the country

was not and could not be permanently impaired, must be found primarily in the uninterrupted drain of capital to Rome: and this drain took a form which was at once most insidious in its operation and most fatal in the end--the tribute of corn. It must be remembered that the enormous quantities of corn shipped annually from Alexandria to Rome, or later to Constantinople, were a dead loss to Egypt: not a penny was paid for them, and, though they might be regarded in theory as a rent paid by the cultivators to the Emperor as owner of the soil, the landlord was an absentee, and no part of the rent accrued to the benefit of the country by his expenditure of it: on the contrary, it was wasted in the most vicious way economically possible by being used to pauperise the inhabitants of Rome. The corn-tribute was a fixed one, which had to be supplied whether the harvest was good or bad-unless, as occasionally happened, a prudent Emperor remitted part when the Nile flood was poor-and the evidence suggests that it was fixed at the amount which could be found in a good year. This meant that in a bad year the quota for Rome had to be made up by drawing either on the seed-corn or on the food supply of the fellahin (probably the latter in the first instance). This resulted in a diminution of population, and so in a further reduction in the yield of corn: and the vicious circle continued. Augustus initiated this drain of capital in corn, and it is to him in the first instance that the ruin of Egypt must be ascribed, rather than to any of his successors, who only followed too faithfully in his footsteps.

In conclusion it should be remarked that the view here adopted, which shifts the commencement of the economic decline of Egypt under Roman rule by some two centuries, is mainly based on the evidence of the papyri found and published in the last thirty years, which have brought us more closely into touch with the conditions of the lower classes of the population than was possible so long as our knowledge was derived from Roman historians, who got their information from official records-and foreign ones at that. In their eyes all was well with the country, so long as the corn-tribute came regularly to Rome and no calls were made on the army to suppress revolts or repel invasions. The ephemeral documents which have survived in the rubbish-heaps of Egypt tell a very different tale: reports of tax-collectors, returns about cultivation, local police proceedings, private letters, and so forth, show the first obscure traces of the internal decay which did not become evident to the outside observer till it had slowly but surely corrupted the whole body. Even after allowance is made for the proverbial habit of farmers to grumble at the badness of the times, the cries of despair which are constantly reiterated in the papyri of the first and second centuries seem more genuine than the complacent language of inscriptions set up by officials to testify to the excellence of their own administration and the virtues of their employers.

The Ruin of Egypt by Roman Mismanagement

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Egypt under Rome and Byzantium, 30 B.C.-A.D. 640
From http://countrystudies.us/egypt/14.htm

With the establishment of Roman rule by Emperor Augustus in 30 B.C., more than six centuries of Roman and Byzantine control began. Egypt again became the province of an empire, as it had been under the Persians and briefly under Alexander. As the principal source of the grain supply for Rome, it came under the direct control of the emperor in his capacity as supreme military chief, and a strong force was garrisoned there. Gradually, Latin replaced Greek as the language of higher administration. In 212 Rome gave the Egyptians citizenship in the empire.

The emperor ruled as successor to the Ptolemies with the title of "Pharaoh, Lord of the Two Lands," and the conventional divine attributes assigned to Egyptian kings were attributed to him. Rome was careful, however, to bring the native priesthood under its control, although guaranteeing traditional priestly rights and privileges.

Augustus and his successors continued the tradition of building temples to the local gods on which the rulers and the gods were depicted in the Egyptian manner. The Romans completed the construction of an architectural jewel, the Temple of Isis on Philae Island (Jazirat Filah), which was begun under the Ptolemies. A new artistic development during this period was the painting of portraits on wood, an art that originated in the Fayyum region. These portraits were placed on the coffins of mummies.

The general pattern of Roman Egypt included a strong, centralized administration supported by a military force large enough to guarantee internal order and to provide security against marauding nomads. There was an elaborate bureaucracy with an extended system of registers and controls, and a social hierarchy based on caste and privilege with preferred treatment for the Hellenized population of the towns over the rural and native Egyptian population. The best land continued to form the royal domain.

The empire that Rome established was wider, more enduring, and better administered than any the Mediterranean world had known. For centuries, it provided an ease of communication and a unity of culture throughout the empire that would not be seen again until modern times. In Western Europe, Rome founded a tradition of public order and municipal government that outlasted the empire itself. In the East, however, where Rome came into contact with older and more advanced civilizations, Roman rule was less successful.

The story of Roman Egypt is a sad record of shortsighted exploitation leading to economic and social decline. Like the Ptolemies, Rome treated Egypt as a mere estate to be exploited for the benefit of the rulers. But however incompetently some of the later Ptolemies managed their estate, much of the wealth they derived from it remained in the country itself. Rome, however, was an absentee landlord, and a large part of the grain delivered as rent by the royal tenants or as tax by the landowners as well as the numerous money-taxes were sent to Rome and represented a complete loss to Egypt.

The history of Egypt in this period cannot be separated from the history of the Roman Empire. Thus, Egypt was affected by the spread of Christianity in the empire in the first century A.D. and by the decline of the empire during the third century A.D. Christianity arrived early in Egypt, and the new religion quickly spread from Alexandria into the hinterland, reaching Upper Egypt by the second century. According to some Christian traditions, St. Mark brought

Christianity to Egypt in A.D. 37, and the church in Alexandria was founded in A.D. 40. The Egyptian Christians are called Copts, a word derived from the Greek word for the country, *Aegyptos*. In the Coptic language, the Copts also called themselves "people of Egypt." Thus the word *Copt* originally implied nationality rather than religion.

In the third century A.D., the decay of the empire gradually affected the Roman administration of Egypt. Roman bureaucracy became overcentralized and poorly managed. The number of qualified applicants for administrative positions was seriously reduced by Roman civil war, pestilence, and conflict among claimants to imperial power.

A renaissance of imperial authority and effectiveness took place under Emperor Diocletian. During his reign (284-305), the partition of the Roman Empire into eastern and western segments began. Diocletian inaugurated drastic political and fiscal reforms and sought to simplify imperial administration. Under Diocletian, the administrative unity of Egypt was destroyed by transforming Egypt from one province into three. Seeing Christianity as a threat to Roman state religion and thus to the unity of the empire, Diocletian launched a violent persecution of Christians.

The Egyptian church was particularly affected by the Roman persecutions, beginning with Septimius Severus's edict of 202 dissolving the influential Christian School of Alexandria and forbidding future conversions to Christianity. In 303 Emperor Diocletian issued a decree ordering all churches demolished, all sacred books burned, and all Christians who were not officials made slaves. The decree was carried out for three years, a period known as the "Era of Martyrs." The lives of many Egyptian Christians were spared only because more workers were needed in the porphyry quarries and emerald mines that were worked by Egyptian Christians as "convict labor."

Emperor Constantine I (324-337) ruled both the eastern and western parts of the empire. In 330 he established his capital at Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople (present-day Istanbul). Egypt was governed from Constantinople as part of the Byzantine Empire. In 312 Constantine established Christianity as the official religion of the empire, and his Edict of Milan of 313 established freedom of worship.

By the middle of the fourth century, Egypt was largely a Christian country. In 324 the ecumenical Council of Nicea established the patriarchate of Alexandria as second only to that of Rome; its jurisdiction extended over Egypt and Libya. The patriarchate had a profound influence on the early development of the Christian church because it helped to clarify belief and to formulate dogmas. In 333 the number of Egyptian bishops was estimated at nearly 100.

After the fall of Rome, the Byzantine Empire became the center of both political and religious power. The political and religious conflict between the Copts of Egypt and the rulers of Byzantium began when the patriarchate of Constantinople began to rival that of Alexandria. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 initiated the great schism that separated the Egyptian Church from Catholic Christendom. The schism had momentous consequences for the future of Christianity in the East and for Byzantine power. Ostensibly, the council was called to decide on the nature of Christ. If Christ were both God and man, had he two natures? The Arians had already been declared heretics for denying or minimizing the divinity of Christ; the opposite was to ignore or minimize his humanity. Coptic Christians were Monophysites who believed that after the incarnation Christ had but one nature with dual aspects. The council, however, declared that Christ had two natures and that he was equally human and equally divine. The

Coptic Church refused to accept the council's decree and rejected the bishop sent to Egypt. Henceforth, the Coptic Church was in schism from the Catholic Church as represented by the Byzantine Empire and the Byzantine Church.

For nearly two centuries, Monophysitism in Egypt became the symbol of national and religious resistance to Byzantium's political and religious authority. The Egyptian Church was severely persecuted by Byzantium. Churches were closed, and Coptic Christians were killed, tortured, and exiled in an effort to force the Egyptian Church to accept Byzantine orthodoxy. The Coptic Church continued to appoint its own patriarchs, refusing to accept those chosen by Constantinople and attempting to depose them. The break with Catholicism in the fifth century converted the Coptic Church to a national church with deeply rooted traditions that have remained unchanged to this day.

By the seventh century, the religious persecutions and the growing pressure of taxation had engendered great hatred of the Byzantines. As a result, the Egyptians offered little resistance to the conquering armies of Islam.