

riod. To the degree that the Philistine threat was a factor in the Israelites' ill-considered request for a king "like the nations," their influence remained in Israel many years after they themselves had disappeared. The archeological record in recent years has complemented the biblical record by illuminating their life and flourishing culture in ways that the biblical record did not.⁷⁴

Recommended Reading

Bierling, Neal. *Giving Goliath His Due: New Archaeological Light on the Philistines*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.

Brug, John F. *A Literary and Archaeological Study of the Philistines*. British Archaeological Reports, International Series 265. Oxford: British Archaeological Reports, 1985.

Dothan, Trude. *The Philistines and Their Material Culture*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982.

Dothan, Trude, and Moshe Dothan. *People of the Sea: The Search for the Philistines*. New York: Macmillan, 1992.

Sanders, Nancy K. *The Sea Peoples: Warriors of the Ancient Mediterranean, 1250–1150 B.C.* London: Thames & Hudson, 1978.

74. After this essay was completed, two books on the Philistines appeared: Neal Bierling, *Giving Goliath His Due: New Archaeological Light on the Philistines* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992); and Trude Dothan and Moshe Dothan, *People of the Sea: The Search for the Philistines* (New York: Macmillan, 1992). Both are popular overviews of the Philistines, the latter by two archaeologists who have directed digs at several Philistine sites. See my review of both books in *Archaeology in the Biblical World* 2.2 (1993).

Egyptians

James K. Hoffmeier

Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.
—Acts 7:22

Egypt, "the gift of the Nile," is strategically located at the northeastern tip of Africa, bordering on Sinai and Palestine. Surrounded by deserts on the east and west and naturally defended by a series of cataracts in the south, Egypt is an oasis sustained by the Nile and somewhat cut off from the rest of the world.¹

Strange as it may seem, the Egyptians had no single proper name for their land. Of their several expressions for Egypt, *t3.wy* ("the Two Lands") is one of the most common, and the title *Lord of the Two Lands* was regularly used by the pharaoh. Northern Egypt, including the delta, is known as Lower Egypt, while southern Egypt, moving upstream along the Nile, is Upper Egypt. In predynastic Egypt (before 3100), Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt had varying material cultures and worshiped different deities. The Memphite Theology, containing a tradition about the unification of Egypt by a southern king, says that the new capital, Memphis, was the "'Balance of the Two Lands' in which Upper and Lower Egypt had been weighed."² The striking contrast between the rich soil of the Nile Valley and its delta and the vast stretches of desert resulted in the names *kmt* ("the Black Land") and *dšrt*

1. For further information on Egyptian geography, see William C. Hayes, *Most Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960); Hermann Kees, *Ancient Egypt: Geographical History of the Nile* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); Karl W. Butzer, *Early Hydraulic Civilization in Egypt: A Study in Cultural Ecology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976); John Baines and Jaromír Málek, *Atlas of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Facts on File, 1980).

2. Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973–80), 1:53.

("the Red Land"). *Kmt* is probably the most frequently used expression by the indigenous population for Egypt.

The duality found in these terms is also reflected in the Old Testament name for Egypt: *miṣrayim*, which is dual in form. *Miṣrayim* occurs early in Genesis (10:6) as the name of the son of Ham, son of Noah, and is also used of Egypt by other Semitic-speaking peoples in Ugaritic texts, the Amarna letters, and Assyrian records.³ The present-day Arabic word for Egypt is *miṣr*, a survival of the ancient Semitic root. The Egyptians also called their country *t3-mri* ("the Beloved Land"), which says something about their notoriously ethnocentric attitude toward their country.

The word *Egypt* has an interesting history, deriving from the name of the temple of the patron deity of Memphis: *ḥw(t) k3 pth* ("the temple of the Ka (spirit) of Ptah").⁴ The earliest usage of this term for Egypt is found in the Amarna letters (fourteenth century) as *ḥikuptah*.⁵ It came into Greek as *Aigyptos* in the writings of Homer and Herodotus and then into English as *Egypt*.⁶ The term *Coptic* (Arabic *gibt*) is a survival of the same word.⁷

Egypt's ideal location between the great cultures of western Asia and Africa meant that it was destined to give to and take from these cultures, and thus it had significant impact on the history and culture of a vast region. While the Egyptians might well have been content to mind their farms and build their tombs for eternity, the richness of the Nile and the lush delta made it too attractive to Libyans in the west, Nubians to the south, and Semitic-speaking peoples in Syria-Palestine. Therefore, from the dawn of history, the pharaohs were called upon to defend Egypt. As early as Dynasty 1, Pharaoh Den is pictured bashing the head of a foreigner; an accompanying inscription reads, "The first occasions of smiting the easterners" (i.e., tribes from the Sinai).⁸ Throughout Egyptian history, the pharaoh was responsible for the defense of the two lands: pharaohs from the earliest dynasties down to the Hellenistic period are regularly pictured in this defensive posture. Perhaps the last king to be shown defending Egypt in this manner is the Roman emperor Titus (A.D. 79–81). The king's role as warrior, as the incarnation of the god Horus (the "son of Re"), and as high priest of the ma-

3. William S. LaSor, "Egypt," in *ISBE* 2:29.

4. Ptah was the creator/artisan god of that region; see M. Sandman Homberg, *The God Ptah* (Lund: Gleerup, 1946).

5. Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Egypt," in *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. James D. Douglas et al. (Leicester: InterVarsity/Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1980), 414.

6. Alan H. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 2.

7. The word *Gypsy* was mistakenly applied to a people originally from India under the faulty notion that they were from Egypt.

8. Emma S. Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites His Enemies*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien 44 (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986), fig. 9.

jor cult centers made the pharaoh extremely powerful, especially in the Old Kingdom (2700–2200).⁹

History

Prehistory (before 3100)

The final century of the fourth millennium saw the introduction of writing, thus demarcating history from prehistory. The Nile Valley was home to hunter-gatherers before 7000, and humans in the western oases of Egypt can be traced back as early as the Lower Paleolithic period (ca. 250,000–90,000).¹⁰ These people left behind only stone implements (e.g., hand axes) as evidence of their presence in an area that was by no means a desert then. Middle Paleolithic times saw the introduction of the spear. The bow and arrow likely appeared toward the end of the Paleolithic (ca. 12,000–10,000), preceding its appearance in Europe by at least three thousand years.¹¹ Ecological changes may have forced these hunter-foragers to migrate toward the Nile Valley to establish the Neolithic farming communities of the succeeding period.¹² In the late 1960s, evidence of the latest phase of Paleolithic humans in the Nile Valley was discovered at present-day el-Kab (ancient Nekheb). Carbon-14 dates for its three levels range from 6400 to 5980.¹³

The Neolithic revolution, marked by the introduction of animal husbandry, agriculture, and ceramics, burst on the scene in seventh-millennium Egypt around the same time as it did at Jarmo in Mesopotamia and at Jericho in Canaan. The next millennium saw the appearance of diverse cultures: from Merimde (at the base of the delta) and Fayum (just south of Cairo, along the shores of Lake Moeris or Birket el-Qarun) to the important sites of el-Badara and Naqada in Upper Egypt. The presence of flint sickle blades, querns, domestic architecture, distinctive pottery, and burials witness a developing culture. Circular, oval, and square pits, sometimes covered by a small mound of sand or dirt, served as the final resting place for the early Egyptians. A wide

9. Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948). On the divine nature of the pharaoh, see W. Barta, *Untersuchungen zur Göttlichkeit des regierenden Königs: Ritus und Sacralkönigtum in Altägypten nach Zeugnissen der Frühzeit und des Alten Reiches*, Münchner Ägyptologische Studien 32 (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1975); David Lorton, "Towards a Constitutional Approach to Ancient Egyptian Kingship," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99 (1979): 460–65.

10. M. A. Hoffman, *Egypt before the Pharaohs* (London: Ark, 1984), 53.

11. *Ibid.*, 67.

12. Robert J. Wenke, *Patterns in Prehistory*, 3d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 376.

13. Hoffman, *Egypt before the Pharaohs*, 99–100.

range of grave goods—the basics for life—were placed with the dead. Most of the pottery, flints, jewelry, and other artifacts now in museums come from the cemeteries of this period.

The predynastic period, comprised of the Naqada II (Amratian) and III (Gerzean) periods (ca. 4000–3100), was a formative period, shaping cultural, religious, and political concepts that would appear fully developed at the dawn of history (e.g., divine kingship). Rudimentary writing began to appear on artifacts toward the end of the fourth millennium.

The cultural differences between the north and south may have taken on hostile dimensions toward the end of this period, perhaps because of differences over irrigation rights. Karl Butzer argues that the emergence of a chieftain was due to a community's need to build, maintain, and control canals and irrigation projects.¹⁴ The Scorpion Macehead illustrates the agricultural ceremonies over which the king, shown wearing the so-called White Crown of Upper Egypt, presides.¹⁵ Sometime around 3100, Narmer, perhaps the legendary Menes, the chieftain (or king) of Nekhen (Hierakonpolis), conquered the northern chieftain. The Narmer Palette may provide a pictorial record commemorating this event, although recent study of the macehead and palette questions this interpretation.¹⁶ Even if these objects do not commemorate Egypt's unification, there is little doubt that the south subdued the north, resulting in the apparent founding of Memphis by Menes.¹⁷

The political unification of Egypt marks the beginning of Dynastic or Pharaonic Egypt. According to Manetho (a third-century Egyptian priest-historian), Menes was the founder of Dynasty 1, a tradition that finds some support in earlier inscriptions. The name *Meni* occurs first on king lists at Seti II's temple in Abydos (1294–1279).¹⁸ The problem with determining whether Menes and Narmer are one and the same king lies in the use of two different royal names for the pharaoh as early as Dynasty 1. *Pharaoh*, familiar to readers of the Bible, is a title deriving from the expression *pr ꜥꜣ* meaning “great house” (i.e., the palace). Attested in the Old Kingdom, it is not applied to the king as a title until the New Kingdom (fifteenth century).¹⁹

14. Butzer, *Early Hydraulic Civilization*.

15. John Wilson, *The Culture of Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), fig. 5a.

16. N. B. Millet, “The Narmer Macehead and Related Objects,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 27 (1990): 53–59.

17. Memphis in Egyptian is *mn-nfr*, which may contain a vestige of Menes' name in the term *mn*.

18. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 49, fig. 8.

19. Adolf Eрман and Hermann Grapow, *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1926), 1:515.

Archaic Period, Dynasties 1–2 (3100–2700)

The archaic period, comprised of Dynasties 1–2 (ca. 3100–2700), witnessed the beginnings of significant royal cemeteries at Sakkara (the necropolis at Memphis) and Abydos (the traditional spot of Osiris's burial). The burial structures, called “mastabas” after the Arabic word for mud benches, were large, single-floor buildings, likely fashioned after domestic architecture.²⁰ The superstructure served as a chapel to preserve the cult of the dead, while shafts contained the burial and vessels with food and other necessities for the afterlife. Writing is found on palettes, labels, seals, pots, and stone and wooden objects during the archaic period.

Contact between Egypt and Palestine is attested as early as Dynasty 1,²¹ and Narmer's name has been found on potsherds at Tell Arad and Tell Erani.²² On the Egyptian side, there is considerable inscriptional and pictorial evidence to show Egyptian interest in the Levant during Dynasties 1–6.²³ Scholars continue to debate the nature of this contact: some regard it as military in nature;²⁴ others maintain it was purely economic and peaceful.²⁵ The latter stance dismisses as unhistorical Egyptian militaristic motifs (e.g., those on the Narmer Palette) and attaches no significance to epithets such as *Conqueror of Asia*.²⁶ However, the two positions are not mutually exclusive. Ensuring Egypt's economic interest in Sinai and Palestine may well have required the use of military force, which for propagandistic purposes could be stretched a bit. This same combination of military and economic interest existed in Nubia during this same time.²⁷ And during the Middle Kingdom,

20. W. B. Emery, *Archaic Egypt* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1961), 128–64.

21. Shemuel Yeivin, “Early Contacts between Canaan and Egypt,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 10 (1960): 193–205; R. Gophna, “Egyptian Immigration into Canaan during the First Dynasty?” *Tel Aviv* 3 (1976): 31–37; Amnon Ben-Tor, “New Light on the Relations between Egypt and Southern Palestine during the Early Bronze Age,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 281 (1991): 3–10.

22. For Tell Arad, see Ruth Amiran, “An Egyptian Jar Fragment with the Name of Narmer from Arad,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 24 (1974): 4–12; idem, “The Narmer Jar Fragment from Arad: An Addendum,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 26 (1976): 45–46. For Tell Erani, see Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible 10,000–586 B.C.E.* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 106–7.

23. A review of all the sources is Donald B. Redford, “Egypt and Western Asia in the Old Kingdom,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 23 (1986): 125–43.

24. In addition to sources in nn. 21–22, see Yigael Yadin, “The Earliest Record of Egypt's Military Penetration into Asia?” *Israel Exploration Journal* 5 (1955): 1–16.

25. See recently William A. Ward, “Early Contacts between Egypt, Canaan, and Sinai: Remarks on the Paper by Amnon Ben-Tor,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 281 (1991): 11–26.

26. *Ibid.*, 12.

27. Bruce G. Trigger et al., *Ancient Egypt: A Social History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 61–63. On Egypt's interest in Nubia during the Old Kingdom, see G. E.

the height of Egyptian economic interest in Nubia coincided with a great military buildup, to judge from the dozen or so massive forts in the second cataract area.²⁸

Dynasty 2 appears to have been marred by a rebellion in the north, which resulted in warfare that was resolved when a northern princess, Nemathap, married Khasekhemwy, the last king of Dynasty 2.²⁹ Resistance to political unity in Egypt arose periodically in the following centuries, resulting in the establishment of competing dynasties in the north, followed by warfare and then reunification.

Old Kingdom, Dynasties 3-6 (2700-2200)

The transition from the archaic period to the Old Kingdom remains problematic since the lengths of the various dynasties remain subject to debate. The date 2700 is commonly conjectured for the beginning of Dynasty 3.³⁰ Manetho's 214 years for this dynasty have been reduced to 138 years by recent investigations.³¹

The Old Kingdom, Dynasties 3-6 (ca. 2700-2200), the pyramid era, saw Egypt rise to its cultural apex, to judge from the execution of the massive pyramids and accompanying complexes for the burial of the pharaoh. The concept of divine kingship had been shaped in the predynastic period, and from Dynasty 1 onward, the king bore a Horus name, Horus being the son of Re, the sun.³² During Dynasty 5 a further development on the royal titulary occurred: *Son of Re* became the new appellation that continued throughout and beyond pharaonic history.³³ Because of the divine nature of the king, it is not surprising that the monarch could initiate massive building projects for the gods and for himself.

With the reign of Pharaoh Netjerikhet, better known as Djoser, Egypt entered the pyramid age. His vizier Imhotep is credited with supervising the

Kadish, "Old Kingdom Egyptian Activity in Nubia: Some Reconsiderations," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 52 (1966): 23-33.

28. Bruce G. Trigger, "The Reasons for the Construction of the Second Cataract Forts," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 12 (1982): 1-6. Trigger shows that there is a link between the military (i.e., the forts) and trade.

29. Hoffman, *Egypt before the Pharaohs*, 351.

30. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 433; Wilson, *Culture of Ancient Egypt*, 319.

31. Nabil M. A. Swelim, *Some Problems on the History of the Third Dynasty*, Archaeology and Historical Studies 7 (Alexandria: Archaeological Society of Alexandria, 1983), 224.

32. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 148-61; A. Rosalie David, *The Egyptians: Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982); David Silverman, "Divinity and Deities in Ancient Egypt," in *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. B. E. Shafer (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 58-87.

33. Wilson, *Culture of Ancient Egypt*, 84-85.

transition of Djoser's original mastaba into a pyramid.³⁴ Surrounded by a wall that measures 1,800 feet by 900 feet, the six-stepped, limestone pyramid stands 204 feet high.³⁵ Many impressive chambers and chapels still stand within the funerary complex. Subsequent monarchs in Dynasty 3 built stepped-pyramids, but none approached that of Djoser's in size or quality (several are incomplete).³⁶ While Djoser was believed by many to have been the founder of Dynasty 3,³⁷ it now appears that at least one or more monarchs preceded him and experimented with pyramid structures.³⁸

The development of the true pyramid came about in Dynasty 4, possibly during the reign of Sneferu, although it is conceivable that the last monarch of Dynasty 3, Huni, Sneferu's father-in-law, built the first true pyramid.³⁹ Sneferu constructed two large pyramids (and several subsidiary pyramids) at Dashur (south of Memphis). The southern pyramid is known as the "bent" pyramid because around half-way up the angle shifts from 54°31' to 43°21' (it stands just over 310 feet high). This somewhat experimental pyramid yielded to a second one, about the same height and approximately the same angle as the top of the bent pyramid.⁴⁰

The Palermo Stone (an early Egyptian king list) records that during Sneferu's reign of twenty-four years he conducted military campaigns against Libya and Nubia and that forty ships bearing cedar (probably from Byblos) reached Egypt.⁴¹ This and other evidence shows that Egypt continued to assert its interests in international affairs in the Mediterranean and Africa throughout the Old Kingdom.⁴²

Sneferu's successor, Khufu (Hellenized as Cheops by Herodotus), moved the royal burial site from Dashur to Giza, where Egyptian pyramid building reached its apex. The great pyramids of Giza display the full development of

34. Imhotep was deified in later history; see J. B. Hurry, *Imhotep the Egyptian God of Medicine* (repr. Chicago: Ares, 1978); D. Wildung, *Imhotep und Amenhotep* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1977); idem, *Egyptian Saints: Deification in Pharaonic Egypt* (New York: New York University Press, 1977).

35. On this pyramid and the reconstruction of the complex, see J. P. Lauer, *Sakkara* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976); I. E. S. Edwards, *The Pyramids of Egypt* (Penguin: Baltimore, 1961), 55.

36. Swelim, *Some Problems*, chaps. 2-3.

37. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 72.

38. W. Stevenson Smith, "The Old Kingdom in Egypt and the Beginning of the First Intermediate Period," in *CAH* 1/2:145-46; Swelim, *Some Problems*, 17-40.

39. Ahmed Fakhry, *The Pyramids* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 63-70; Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 90-97.

40. Fakhry, *Pyramids*, 71-97; Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 109.

41. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 78.

42. Donald B. Redford, "The Acquisition of Foreign Goods and Services in the Old Kingdom," *Scripta Mediterranea* 2 (1981): 5-16.

the pyramid complex of valley temple, causeway, upper (or funerary) temple, and pyramid proper. The function and purpose of these structures, especially the valley and upper temples, continue to be discussed by Egyptologists.⁴³ A funerary, cultic function seems most likely, despite recent theories suggesting that the function of the upper temple was to celebrate "the rituals of divine kingship."⁴⁴ The great pyramid stood 481 feet high and its base covered 13.1 acres.⁴⁵ One of the treasured discoveries from Khufu's complex is an impressive boat measuring 143 feet in length and 19.5 feet wide. It was probably used during the king's lifetime, but could have had afterlife functions too.⁴⁶

The recent discovery of tombs, living quarters, bakery, and various workshops sheds new light on the workers who built the pyramids.⁴⁷ Such information helps us understand the human dimension of these massive building projects.

The arrangement of the Giza pyramids—moving southward from Khufu's tomb to those of Khafre and Menkaure (Hellenized, respectively, as Chephren and Mycerinus by Herodotus)—might lead one to think that these latter kings were the immediate successors of Khufu. However, some inscriptional evidence and the Turin Canon (an Egyptian king list) suggest that Redjedef succeeded Khufu for eight years before the accession of Khafre.⁴⁸ The appearance of Redjedef's name on the roofing blocks of Khufu's boat pit suggests that he presided over the interment of his father, which is the role of the successor.⁴⁹ But the hasty abandonment of his pyramid site at Abu Roash (five miles north of Giza) and the battered condition of his statues suggest that a rival party supporting Khafre was responsible for the damage and perhaps for Redjedef's demise.⁵⁰

Khafre's pyramid complex is the best preserved of the Giza group. Its valley

43. For a thorough study of the Giza group that reviews the literature and proposes a different interpretation, see Zahi Hawass, *The Funerary Establishments of Khufu, Khafre, and Menkura during the Old Kingdom* (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1987).

44. Ibid., xxv; James K. Hoffmeier, "The Use of Basalt in Floors of Old Kingdom Pyramid Temples," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 30 (1993): 117–23.

45. Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 118.

46. Christine Hobson, *The World of the Pharaohs* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1987), 76–77. On the boat, see also Ahmed Kadry, "Finding a Pharaoh's Funeral Bark," and Peter Miller, "The Riddle of the Pyramid Boats," both in *National Geographic* 173.4 (April 1988): 513–33, 534–50.

47. Presently only press reports are available. Although she examines the workforce of the Twelfth Dynasty pyramid builders, A. Rosalie David's *The Pyramid Builders of Ancient Egypt: A Modern Investigation of Pharaoh's Workforce* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), also provides an accurate picture of conditions in Dynasty 4.

48. Smith, "Old Kingdom in Egypt," 172; Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 434.

49. Smith, "Old Kingdom in Egypt," 173.

50. Ibid., 174.

temple is constructed of massive red granite blocks from Aswan, and it stands in the shadow of the sphinx, which is likely the work of Khafre's artisans. Statues of Khafre and Menkaure are among the most magnificently executed in ancient Egypt. Beyond these impressive burial complexes, little can be said about their accomplishments. Herodotus (2:124, 128) preserves the tradition that these two kings were tyrannical, but this may be the result of belief that Khufu employed one hundred thousand slaves to build his pyramid—an assessment that the Egyptian evidence does not support.

After Bakare's brief reign (two years according to the Turin Canon), Menkaure, generally thought to be a usurper, succeeded. His twenty-eight-year reign⁵¹ is marked by the construction of the third and smallest pyramid at Giza, standing only 204 feet in height.⁵² Some of Menkaure's famous statues, including the triads showing the king in the company of two deities, were found in his valley temple.⁵³

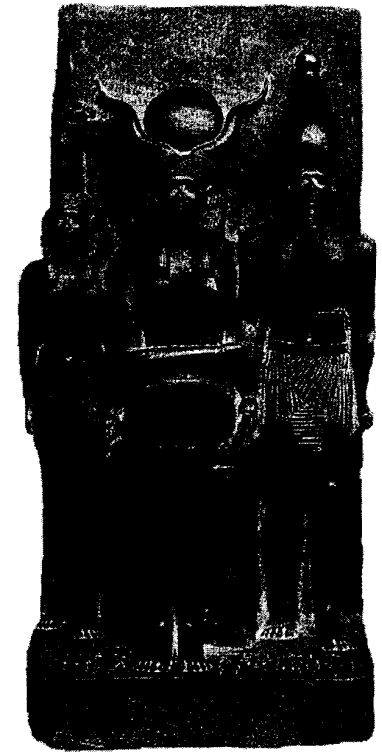
Menkaure's death signaled the virtual end of Dynasty 4. His successor, Shepseskaf, ruled but four years (so the Turin Canon) and was buried in a mastabalike structure located between Dashur and Sakkara.⁵⁴ What led to the demise of this once powerful dynasty and the establishment of Dynasty 5 is not certain. There may be a link between the dynasties:

51. Ibid., 175. Manetho's 63 years is likely exaggerated.

52. Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 161.

53. George A. Reisner, *Mycerinus: The Temples of the Third Pyramid at Giza* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931), 41–47.

54. Gustave Jéquier, *Le Mastabat Faraoun* (Cairo: IFAO, 1928).



Triad of King Menkaure (Mycerinus) and two goddesses, 2548–2530 B.C. (height: 32.9"; width: 15.5")

Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Userkaf, the founder of the new dynasty, appears to have been the son of Neferhetepes, the daughter of the usurper king Redjedef, but the identity of his father remains a mystery.⁵⁵

Since Userkaf's claim to the throne was questionable, a number of steps were taken to legitimize the new king. He married Khentkawes, probably the daughter of Menkaure; she in turn became the mother of two succeeding kings of Dynasty 5: Sahure and Neferirkare.⁵⁶ Although it is not beyond dispute, the "Tale of Three Wonders" (Papyrus Westcar) might have been composed as propaganda to authenticate Userkaf's rule.⁵⁷ In the tale, the sage Djedi informs Khufu that a woman is pregnant with triplets sired by Re. Djedi assures Khufu that these children will not come to the throne until Khufu's grandson has ruled. Because Papyrus Westcar is written in good Middle Egyptian, William K. Simpson believes it dates to Dynasty 12,⁵⁸ the early kings of which were masters of propagandistic literature.⁵⁹ Since Papyrus Westcar would have little political advantage for these kings, one is inclined to think that the section of Papyrus Westcar that legitimizes Fifth Dynasty monarchs is based on an Old Kingdom tradition.

Userkaf built his pyramid, which was poorly constructed and is not well preserved, at Sakkara near the funerary complex of Djoser. After only a seven-year reign (according to the Turin Canon),⁶⁰ he was succeeded by Sahure, who reigned twelve years.⁶¹ Sahure, Neferirkare, Neferefre, and Neuserre all built their pyramid complexes at a new site, Abu Sir, situated between Giza and Sakkara. Neferirkare's pyramid originally stood around 228 feet in height and was the largest at that site.⁶² Poorer construction techniques and irregular sizes of blocks contributed to the dilapidated condition

55. Smith, "Old Kingdom in Egypt," 178.

56. Ibid., 178–79.

57. Translations are found in William K. Simpson (ed.), *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, and Poetry*, rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), 16–30; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:215–22.

58. Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 15.

59. Adriaan de Buck, "La Littérature et la Politique sous la Douzième Dynastie Égyptienne," in *Symbolae ad Jus et Historiam Antiquitatis pertinentes Julio Christiano van Oven Dedicatae*, ed. M. David, B. A. van Groningen, and E. M. Meijers (Leiden: Brill, 1946), 1–28; E. Otto, "Weltanschauliche und politische Tendenzschriften," in *Handbuch der Orientalistik* 1/2, ed. B. Spuler (Leiden: Brill, 1952), 111–19; G. Posener, *Littérature et Politique dans l'Égypte de l'Égypte de la XII^e Dynastie* (Paris: Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, 1956); Ronald J. Williams, "Literature as a Medium of Political Propaganda in Ancient Egypt," in *The Seed of Wisdom: Essays in Honour of T. J. Meek*, ed. W. S. McCullough (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 14–30.

60. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 435.

61. Ibid.

62. Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 186.

of the pyramids. Comparing the pyramids of Dynasties 4 and 5 might lead one to think that the power and prestige of the pharaoh had been somehow diminished. In one sense, this is true. John Wilson says, "In the Fourth Dynasty the pharaoh had dominated Re; in the Fifth Dynasty Re dominated the pharaoh."⁶³ Wilson believes that the Re priesthood at Heliopolis was jealous for their patron deity, whose power was being overshadowed by the pharaoh.⁶⁴ Evidence for this theory comes from two areas. Beginning with Userkaf, at least six of the nine monarchs built impressive sun temples near Abu Sir. And every king from Dynasty 5 onward used the epithet *son of Re* (*s3 r*), perhaps signaling a more humble status for the king.⁶⁵

Only two of these six sun temples have been discovered and excavated (those built by Userkaf and Neuserre, the other four are known only from contemporary textual evidence).⁶⁶ Neuserre's sun temple is situated at Abu Gurob, about a mile north of Abu Sir. Built completely of limestone, its focal point was a "ben-ben" or truncated obelisk erected on a raised platform (the "ben-ben" stone was the sacred symbol of the shrine of Re at Heliopolis).⁶⁷ The surviving reliefs from the sun temple are well executed. It is fair to say that the cost and energy of erecting the sun temples resulted in the smaller pyramid complexes for the royal burials. Concerning this economic reality of building both a personal burial structure and a sun temple, Sir Alan Gardiner says,

The strain upon his [the king's] resources must have been enormous, the more so since there is good evidence that the predecessors' foundations were not abandoned at their demise. It is not surprising that the cumulative responsibility proved too much for Izozi [Isesi, Dynasty 5, king 8], in whose time such enterprises came to an end.⁶⁸

Isesi abandoned both Abu Sir as a burial site and the practice of building sun temples. His humble pyramid complex was built closer to Sakkara⁶⁹

63. Wilson, *Culture of Ancient Egypt*, 88.

64. Ibid., 87–88.

65. This epithet is used earlier by Khafre, but with Dynasty 5 its use is regular, not an option; see Smith, "Old Kingdom in Egypt," 179–80; Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 84–85.

66. Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 171.

67. The temple at Heliopolis was called *hwt bnbw* ("Mansion of the Benben"); see Cyril Aldred, *The Egyptians*, rev. ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 1984), 108. This same name was later used by Akhenaten for one of his solar temples at Thebes and then at Amarna; see Donald B. Redford, *Akhenaten: The Heretic King* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 63, 71–78.

68. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 85.

69. Fakhry, *Pyramids*, 180–81.

and betrays his lengthy reign (probably more than the twenty-eight years assigned him in the Turin Canon). One text indicates that this king celebrated a Heb Sed, or renewal of kingship jubilee, which normally occurs on the thirtieth year.⁷⁰

The last king of Dynasty 5, Unas, like Userkaf, the founder of the dynasty, moved his pyramid complex close to that of Djoser at Sakkara. The pyramid complexes of Dynasties 5 and 6 continued to use the layout established by Dynasty 4 at Giza. Unas's complex has two additional features: a 2,190-foot-long causeway and inscriptions engraved within the pyramid itself. Prior to the time of Unas, texts were likely recorded on papyri and have not survived.⁷¹ The walls of Unas's pyramid, along with those of a number of Sixth Dynasty kings and queens, are covered with what Egyptologists call Pyramid Texts.⁷² Comprising the most important corpus of Egyptian religious literature from the Old Kingdom, the Pyramid Texts include liturgical spells used in the funerary cult and magical incantations for the king in his journey through the netherworld.

In contrast to Wilson's view, some believe that the power of the king was not reduced during Dynasty 5.⁷³ However, funerary establishments of high-ranking Fifth Dynasty officials rival Old Kingdom royal tombs in size and quality (e.g., the mastaba of Vizier Ptahshepses at Abu Sir).⁷⁴ During Dynasty 4, the viziership and other top administrative posts were held by the king's sons. But this practice comes to an end during Dynasty 5.⁷⁵ Thus, while the king ideally was still the mythic son of Re and incarnation of Horus, power was no longer completely in the grasp of the royal family. This trend continues in Dynasty 6, as the kings continue to build humble pyramid establishments in the Memphite region, still the seat of power.

Officials could build their mastabas near the kings they served or in their home districts or nomes. Two Sixth Dynasty officials, Weni and Harkhuf,

70. Smith, "Old Kingdom in Egypt," 186.

71. An important discovery of several funerary-liturgical papyri from Dynasty 5 may hold the clue to the origin of the Pyramid Texts and provide other spells not attested in the standard critical edition (see n. 72). These papyri are being studied by Jean Leclant of Paris.

72. A critical edition of the Pyramid Texts was published by Kurt Sethe, *Die altaegyptischen Pyramidentexten*, vols. 1-2 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1908). A complete translation in English is contained in Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969).

73. R. Anthes, "Egyptian Theology in the Third Millennium B.C.," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18 (1959): 180; D. O'Connor, "Political Systems and Archaeological Data on Egypt: 2600-1780 B.C.," *World Archaeology* 6.1 (1974): 16.

74. Z. Žába, M. Verner, et al., *Preliminary Report on Czechoslovak Excavations in the Mastaba of Ptahshepses at Abu Sir* (Prague: Charles University Press, 1976).

75. Triggler et al., *Ancient Egypt*, 77.

chose to be buried in their home districts. These and other officials recounted in tombs and on steles their careers and service for their sovereign.

Weni traces his elevation from rather humble beginnings in Nekheh, modern el-Kab (south of Thebes), where he started as "custodian of the storehouse," moved on to the robing room of king Pepi I, and finally to chief justice and vizier. He boasts of hearing the case of Queen Weret Yamtes, who was implicated in a harem conspiracy against the king, but he is so preoccupied with relating the king's confidence in him that he never tells the outcome of the case. He led five military campaigns against troublesome nomads in the Sinai and quarrying expeditions to Hatnub (in Middle Egypt), Elephantine (at the first cataract), and Nubia to obtain stone for the funerary estate of King Merenre.

A scout who led trade expeditions to Nubia, Harkhuf also records an informative biography. He became the seal bearer of the king, making him something akin to the secretary of commerce. He was specially decorated by the youthful Pharaoh Pepi II for bringing an African pygmy to Egypt. Included in Harkhuf's tomb as part of his biography, the king's letter instructs Harkhuf to ferry the pygmy safely to Egypt:

Come north to the residence at once! Hurry and bring with you this pygmy whom you brought from the land of the horizon-dwellers live, hale, and healthy, for the dances of the god, to gladden the heart, to delight the heart of King Neferkare [Pepi II] who lives forever! When he goes down with you into the ship, get worthy men to be around him on deck, lest he fall into the water! When he lies down at night, get worthy men to lie around him in his tent. Inspect [him] ten times at night!⁷⁶

This somewhat humorous anecdote shows the human side of the young king.

As we move through Dynasty 6, the influence of the governors increased. In part, because the nomarch's office became hereditary rather than being by royal appointment (which usually guaranteed loyalty to the crown).⁷⁷

The reign of Pepi II, the last significant ruler of Dynasty 6, exacerbated the problem.⁷⁸ When crowned, he was but a child, and in his final years he was a senile old man. Both ends of his near-century-long reign, when royal power was weak, provided golden opportunities for the nomarchs to assert their power.⁷⁹ Further influence was gained when the Sixth Dynasty kings made

76. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:27.

77. William A. Ward, *The Spirit of Ancient Egypt* (Beirut: Khayats, 1965), 36.

78. The Turin Canon assigns 90+ years to him, which makes Manetho's 99 years possible; see Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 436.

79. Ward, *Spirit of Ancient Egypt*, 36.

various temple estates tax exempt.⁸⁰ While this may have had a short-term benefit of currying favor with nomarchs and regional cult centers, it weakened the economic and political base of the crown. Pepi II's long reign posed another serious dilemma: he outlived his heirs. The reign of Nitocris, a woman, marked the end of both Dynasty 6 and the Old Kingdom.⁸¹

First Intermediate Period, Dynasties 7-10 (2200-2000)

Egypt then plunged into a dark age known as the First Intermediate period.⁸² Manetho's description of Dynasty 7 suggests confusion and uncertainty: "Seventy kings of Memphis, who reigned for seventy days."⁸³ The little knowledge we have of Manetho's Dynasty 8 comes from the names of its monarchs recorded by the Abydos King List. It is customary to allot forty to fifty years for Dynasties 7 and 8, but this is by no means certain.⁸⁴ Tombs and funerary steles surviving from this period furnish little historical information.⁸⁵

The Turin Canon shows no separation between Dynasty 9 and Dynasty 10, together commonly called the Heracleopolitan period. During these dynasties, several kings bear the name *Khety*, the apparent founder of the dynasty. Little is known about Heracleopolis, which has been minimally excavated in recent years.⁸⁶ The dark age did not end until Dynasty 11, when Montuhotep II, a Theban king, reunited Egypt under his rule.

Middle or classical Egyptian replaced Old Egyptian as the vernacular during the First Intermediate period, and it remained the standard well into Dynasty 18 (ca. fourteenth century) when Late Egyptian began to emerge.⁸⁷ One

80. Hans Goedicke, *Königliche Dokumente aus dem alten Reich*, Ägyptische Abhandlungen 14 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967). A translation of a decree of Pepi I found at the temple of Min at Coptos is found in Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:28.

81. Manetho records Nitocris's reign as twelve years in duration; her reign (but not its length) is attested on the reliable Turin Canon. See Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 436.

82. Recent historians avoid the term *dark age* for the First Intermediate period since some of the finest ancient Egyptian literature comes from this time. Consequently, *dark age* should be used to describe our lack of knowledge about the political or royal history, not the culture of this period.

83. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 437.

84. Smith, "Old Kingdom in Egypt," 197.

85. See, e.g., H. G. Fischer, *Denderah in the Third Millennium B.C. down to the Theban Dominion* (Locust Valley, N.Y.: Augustin, 1969); idem, *Inscriptions of the Coptite Nome*, *Analecta Orientalia* 40 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute Press, 1964); J. Clère and J. Vardier, *Textes de la Première Période Intermédiaire et de la XIème Dynastie*, *Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* 10 (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1948).

86. Baines and Málek, *Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, 129.

87. W. V. Davies, *Egyptian Hieroglyphs*, *Reading the Past* 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press/London: British Museum, 1987), 6-9.

piece of literature composed in this era is "The Eloquent Peasant," which portrays a resident of the Wadi en-Natrun oasis coming to Heracleopolis to trade at the capital.⁸⁸ En route, the peasant is robbed of his goods, and he lodges a complaint with the high steward, Rensi, who in turn makes Pharaoh Nebkaure aware of the situation.⁸⁹ The peasant's eloquent speeches on justice (*maat*) may have more to do with Egyptian rhetoric than with a historical description of the state of affairs.⁹⁰

"Wisdom for Merykare," a didactic work by Merykare's father, Meryibre Khety, provides further evidence of civil strife between Heracleopolis and Thebes, the new emerging power.⁹¹ The king confesses,

Lo, a shameful deed occurred in my time;
The Nome of This was ravaged;
Though it happened through my doing,
I learned it after it was done.⁹²

This event is probably what prompted the king to say earlier:

Egypt fought in the graveyard,
Destroying tombs in vengeance: destruction.
As I did it, so it happened,
As is done to one who strays from god's path.
Do not deal evilly with the Southland. . . .
I attacked This 'straight to' its southern border 'at Taut',
I engulfed it like a flood;
King Meriyebre, justified, had not done it;
Be merciful on account of it,
— renew the treaties.⁹³

While caution is needed in extracting history from ancient literature, it is hard to believe that the king would admit wrongdoing if it were not true.⁹⁴ That a monarch would make such a confession shows how far the power and prestige of kingship had fallen. Accepting the historicity of Meryibre's state-

88. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1: 69-84.

89. William C. Hayes, "The Middle Kingdom in Egypt," in *CAH* 1/2:465, suggests that this is Khety II, the fourth king of this dynasty.

90. William W. Hallo and William K. Simpson, *The Ancient Near East: A History* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1971), 240-41.

91. For a translation see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:97-109.

92. *Ibid.*, 105.

93. *Ibid.*, 102.

94. Gun Björkman, "Egyptology and Historical Method," *Orientalia Suecana* 13 (1964): 9-33.

ment that his troops penetrated south to the area of Abydos, possibly desecrating the monuments of the sacred city of pilgrimage, suggests that the Heracleopolitans were able to wield considerable clout well into Upper Egypt.

The reasons for the hostility could have been economic. Gardiner suggests that trade from the south was able to flow north because of this incursion.⁹⁵ The Heracleopolitan kings certainly would have felt squeezed between powerful southern nomarchs and a significant Asian population in the delta that apparently had infiltrated the region during the waning years of Dynasty 6. In "Wisdom for Merykare" there is specific reference to the foreign presence to the north.⁹⁶ The instruction may reflect a push north and south to provide the Middle Egyptian kingdom with breathing room.

One of the most important developments in the First Intermediate period is the rise of Thebes (in modern Luxor).⁹⁷ In the Old Kingdom, it was "no more than an insignificant village stretching along the eastern bank of the Nile."⁹⁸ During the New Kingdom, it rivaled Memphis in political and religious power. Under the energetic leadership of several nomarchs, Thebes engaged Heracleopolis and emerged as the winner.

Middle Kingdom, Dynasties 12-13 (2000-1700)

The fifth king of Dynasty 11,⁹⁹ Montuhotep II Nebhepetre, either began or continued a movement north to secure Middle Egypt under his control. Bearing the name of the Theban war god Montu, this king had three different Horus names, indicating his aspirations and accomplishments as the "uniter of the Two Lands": Sankhibtawy ("He who makes the heart of the Two Lands live"), used at his coronation in 2033; Netjerhedj ("Lord or possessor of the White Crown"; year 14), which may have signaled his northward march to gain control of Upper Egypt;¹⁰⁰ and Sematawy ("Uniter of the Two Lands"; year 39), indicating the reunification of Egypt and the end of the First Inter-

95. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 116.

96. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:104.

97. On the history of Thebes and its development as the imperial city, see James K. Hoffmeier, "Thebes," in *Major Cities of the Biblical World*, ed. Roland K. Harrison (Nashville: Nelson, 1985), 249-57.

98. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 116.

99. The time from Montuhotep I through Intef III is approximately 2106-2033, according to Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Supplementary Notes on 'The Basics of Egyptian Chronology,'" in *High, Middle or Low? Acts of an International Colloquium on Absolute Chronology Held at the University of Gothenberg 20th-22nd August 1987*, ed. Paul Åström (Gothenberg: Åströms, 1989). I thank Prof. Kitchen for providing me with a prepublication typescript of this article.

100. Hayes, "Middle Kingdom in Egypt," 479-80.

mediate period. Thus, a little after the midpoint in his lengthy fifty-one-year reign, around 2000, the Middle Kingdom began.

Montuhotep II followed the lead of his predecessors in establishing his funerary estate in the area of western Thebes at Deir el-Bahri. The size of his magnificent funerary temple is testimony to the success of his reign and the revitalization of Egypt. Epigraphic evidence suggests that he moved south below the first cataract, Egypt's southern border, and possibly into Sinai to reassert Egyptian influence.¹⁰¹

An expedition to quarry stone for the sarcophagus of Montuhotep IV Nebtawyre left inscriptions at Wadi Hammamat, east of Coptos.¹⁰² Heading up the expedition was the mayor of Thebes and Montuhotep IV's vizier, Amenemhet, who is almost certainly the founder of Dynasty 12.¹⁰³ Nothing suggests that Amenemhet usurped the throne; rather, this energetic official seemed most qualified to fill a vacancy. Aware of his nonroyal pedigree, Amenemhet (ca. 1963-1934)¹⁰⁴ took a number of steps to secure his throne and the place of his successors:

1. He utilized propagandistic literature to ensure his legitimacy. The "Prophecy of Neferti," set in the court of Sneferu (Dynasty 4), proclaims that after a period of instability and chaos, Ameny (short for Amenemhet) would become king, dispel the anarchy, and establish *maat* (order and justice).¹⁰⁵
2. He secured Egypt's frontiers by building forts in Nubia and on Egypt's northeastern frontier. Neferti prophesied that Ameny would build "the Walls of the Ruler," which is the name given to the military posts mentioned in the "Tale of Sinuhe" that comes from the reign of Senusert I.¹⁰⁶
3. He initiated the practice of coregency with the crown prince to secure dynastic succession.¹⁰⁷

101. Ibid., 480.

102. For a translation, see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:113-15.

103. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 244.

104. Dates for Dynasties 12 and 18-20 follow Kitchen's chronology in "Supplementary Notes."

105. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:143. Concerning the use of literature for political propaganda, see note 59.

106. For a translation of Sinuhe, see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:222-35; and ANET 18-22. The mention of the "Walls of the Ruler" is found in line B/15. For the Nubian evidence, see Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 136; and Trigger, "Reasons for the Construction."

107. William K. Simpson, "Single-dated Monuments of Sesostri I: An Aspect of the Institution of Coregency in the Twelfth Dynasty," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 15 (1956): 214-19.

4. He established a new capital at Itjtawy ("Seizer [i.e., Amenemhet] of the Two Lands") (modern Lisht). It remained the capital into Dynasty 13.¹⁰⁸
5. He reduced the power of the powerful nomarchs and reassigned nome boundaries to their previous position. The office of nomarch remained hereditary, but now allegiance was clearly to the crown, and the governors were obliged to gather taxes in their district for the king.¹⁰⁹

These policies contributed to making Dynasty 12 one of Egypt's most stable, peaceful, and prosperous periods. Thanks to vigorous international trade, the Middle Kingdom was a period of considerable wealth, and Egypt began to wield more influence in the Levant.¹¹⁰ As early as the second half of Dynasty 11, trade via the Red Sea was reopened.¹¹¹ There was significant contact with the Levant (principally Byblos) and the Aegean. Mining expeditions to Sinai were a regular feature of the Middle Kingdom.¹¹²

At his death after a reign of nearly thirty years, Amenemhet was laid to rest in a pyramid at Lisht.¹¹³ The pyramid complexes of Dynasty 12 follow the pattern popular at the end of Dynasty 6. In fact, Senusert I's establishment has been called "a near facsimile of that of Pepy II."¹¹⁴

Senusert I, the second king of Dynasty 12, is portrayed as an effective ruler and warrior in the "Tale of Sinuhe," probably written on his behalf for propagandistic purposes.¹¹⁵ Although Karnak temple in Thebes may have its origin in Dynasty 11, its beautifully preserved White Chapel of Senusert I stands as a tribute to the god Amon, who emerged during this period as the preeminent deity in Egypt.¹¹⁶ The name *Amenemhet* ("Amon is foremost"), borne by four monarchs during Dynasty 12, reflects this new status. Of the

108. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 244-45; Trigger et al., *Ancient Egypt*, 149, 160; Stephen Quirke, "Royal Power in the 13th Dynasty," in *Middle Kingdom Studies*, ed. Stephen Quirke (Surrey, Kent: SIA, 1991), 123-40.

109. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 245.

110. James M. Weinstein, "Egyptian Relations with Palestine in the Middle Kingdom," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 217 (1975): 1-16; William A. Ward, *Egypt and the East Mediterranean World* (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1971); idem, "Egyptian Relations with Canaan," in *ABD* 2:399-403.

111. Hayes, "Middle Kingdom in Egypt," 491-92.

112. Ronald J. Leprohon, "History of Egypt: Middle Kingdom—2d Intermediate Period (Dyn. 11-17)," in *ABD* 2:346-47; Trigger et al., *Ancient Egypt*, 115-48.

113. Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 218-19.

114. Hallo and Simpson, *Ancient Near East*, 246.

115. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:222-35.

116. W. S. Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt*, rev. ed. by William K. Simpson (New York: Penguin, 1981), 168-69.

new temple built in Heliopolis by Senuser, today only a single obelisk stands surrounded by corn fields as a memory of its past glory.¹¹⁷ Senusert I won a complete victory in Lower Nubia in his eighteenth year and established an Egyptian military presence as far south as Buhen near the second cataract and perhaps as far south as Kerma at the third cataract.¹¹⁸

Under Senusert III (1862-1843), the fifth pharaoh of Dynasty 12, the fortress building in Nubia reached its zenith.¹¹⁹ His stele from the Semna fortress near the third cataract indicates that he considered this spot Egypt's southern boundary.¹²⁰ More than a dozen massive forts in this area defended Egypt's southern frontier and safeguarded its economic interests.¹²¹

Amenemhet III ruled nearly a half-century (1843-1798). With Egypt militarily secure and economically prosperous, Amenemhet ruled Egypt during its greatest prosperity, surpassed perhaps only by the New Kingdom. No fewer than fifty-nine Sinai inscriptions attest to his acquisition of turquoise for jewelry.¹²²

To Amenemhet III goes the credit for completing a land-reclamation project begun under Senusert II.¹²³ Some 17,000 acres of marshland were drained and made arable in the Fayum by diverting the Nile via channels. Amenemhet built energetically in this area: several temples, colossal statues of himself, and two pyramids. While this enduring and vibrant reign was a boon for Egypt in many ways, the long life of the monarch, as happened with Pepi II in Dynasty 6, contributed to the demise of the dynasty. Amenemhet IV must have been an old man when he came to the throne, for he reigned only nine years and was succeeded by Sobekneferu, a female coregent, who ruled independently for three years.¹²⁴

Historians debate whether the following dynasty (13) was the end of the Middle Kingdom or the beginning of the Second Intermediate period. While a cultural continuity is evident and the royal family that succeeded the house of Amenemhet remained at Lisht, the power of the court began to wane toward the end of Dynasty 13, when rival kings arose in opposition to

117. Aldred, *Egyptians*, 130.

118. Hayes, "Middle Kingdom in Egypt," 499-500.

119. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 134-35.

120. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:118-20.

121. Trigger, "Reasons for the Construction." On the size of these forts, see W. B. Emery, H. S. Smith, and Anne Millard, *The Fortress Buhen: The Archaeological Report* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1979); the fortified area is about 1,650 feet by 575 feet.

122. Alan H. Gardiner and T. Eric Peet, *The Inscriptions of Sinai*, 2d edition by Jaroslav Černý, 2 vols. (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1952-55).

123. Hayes, "Middle Kingdom in Egypt," 510-11.

124. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 141.

Itjtawy.¹²⁵ A contributing factor may have been hard economic times brought on by inconsistencies in the Nile, as Cyril Aldred observes:

Fluctuating climatic conditions seem to have returned to Egypt and caused irregularities in the flow of the Nile. High floods, slow to fall and allow seed to be sown at the proper time, were as disastrous in their effects as feeble inundations. The manifest inability of the pharaoh to control the Nile may have been the chief reason for another slump in the prestige of the kingship, which is apparent throughout the Thirteenth Dynasty, with a host of pharaohs each ruling in obscurity for a short time and leaving few monuments behind him.¹²⁶

Second Intermediate Period, Dynasties 14–17 (1700–1540)

By the end of Dynasty 13, Egypt had slipped into its second major period of political turmoil, an “intermediate” period between the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom, also described as the “Hyksos period” because Dynasties 15–17 were ruled by the Hyksos according to Manetho. “Who are the Hyksos?” and “where did they come from?” are questions that have vexed historians for centuries. Jewish historian Josephus (*Against Apion* 1:75, 78) quotes Manetho:

Tutimaecus. In his reign, I know not why, a blast of God’s displeasure broke upon us. A people of ignoble origin from the east, whose coming was unforeseen, had the audacity to invade the country, which they mastered by main force without difficulty or even a battle. . . . Having discovered in the Sethroite nome a city very favorably situated on the east of the Bubastis arm of the river, called after some ancient theological tradition Auaris.

Manetho interpreted the term *Hyksos* to mean “king-shepherds,” which reflects a garbled understanding of *ḥkꜣ ḥꜣswt* (“foreign ruler[s]”), which indeed they were. Manetho’s claim of a Hyksos invasion and subjugation of Egypt is commonly interpreted this way: owing to the presence in the delta of Asiatics (i.e., Semitic-speaking people from Syria-Palestine) and the breakdown of Egypt’s defenses, more people infiltrated from the Levant and eventually took over.¹²⁷ For example, Manfred Bietak, the excavator of Tell ed-Dab’a (most likely Avaris), suggests “a kind of exodus by Byblites to the Eastern

125. Quirke, “Royal Power,” 125–26.

126. Aldred, *Egyptians*, 131.

127. This scenario is espoused by William C. Hayes, “Egypt: From the Death of Ammenemes III to Seqenenre II,” in *CAH* 2/1:54–60; John Van Seters, *The Hyksos: A New Investigation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966); T. Säve Söderbergh, “The Hyksos Rule in Egypt,” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 37 (1951): 53–71; Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 157.

Delta, particularly to Tell ed-Dab’a, where their own people had already strongly established themselves on most advantageous terms against the background of the declining 13th Dynasty.” On the other hand, Donald B. Redford vigorously argues for a genuine foreign invasion that swept the Hyksos to power, thus supporting the Manethonian tradition.¹²⁸

The nature of the Hyksos arrival remains unresolved, but there is a growing consensus that their place of origin was Syria-Palestine.¹²⁹ Based on ceramic evidence, Bietak believes it could be Phoenicia (i.e., the Byblos region).¹³⁰ And whether they came by force or by default, the precise date of the beginning of Hyksos rule also remains problematic. However, the dating of their expulsion from Egypt is well established. Ahmose I acceded to the throne in Thebes around 1550,¹³¹ but his defeat of Avaris did not occur until his fifteenth regnal year (1535).¹³² According to Redford’s understanding of the Turin Canon, only 108 years can be accounted for and only eight true kings can be correlated between the king lists and epigraphic remains.¹³³ Thus it appears that the Hyksos domination of Egypt during the Second Intermediate period was just over a century in length.

New Kingdom, Dynasties 18–20 (1550–1100)

The liberation of Egypt and its eventual reunification under Ahmose I appear to go back to the Seventeenth Dynasty Theban ruler Seqenenre Tao II. The Late Egyptian “Story of Apophis and Seqenenre” suggests that hostilities toward the north began with this king. This may be confirmed by the shattered remains of Seqenenre’s skull, careful investigation of which reveals wounds consistent with those caused by Hyksos weapons.¹³⁴ His legacy as a freedom

128. Manfred Bietak, “Canaanites in the Eastern Nile Delta,” in *Egypt, Israel, Sinai: Archaeological and Historical Relationships in the Biblical Period*, ed. Anson F. Rainey (Jerusalem: Tel Aviv University Press, 1987), 52; Donald B. Redford, “The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition,” *Orientalia* 39 (1970): 1–51; idem, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 101–6; and idem, “Hyksos (History),” in *ABD* 3:341–44.

129. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 114–15.

130. Bietak, “Canaanites in the Eastern Nile Delta,” 46–55. James M. Weinstein (“Hyksos (Archaeology),” in *ABD* 3:345) is not compelled by the Syrian/Byblian origin averred by Bietak.

131. Kitchen, “Supplementary Notes,” 42; Redford, “Hyksos (History),” 343–44.

132. Claude Vandersleyen, *Les Guerres d’Amosis* (Brussels: Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1971), 34.

133. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan and Israel*, 106–11.

134. Thomas G. H. James, “Egypt: From the Expulsion of the Hyksos to Amenophis I,” in *CAH* 2/1:289; George Steindorff and Keith C. Seele, *When Egypt Ruled the East*, rev. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 27–29; J. E. Harris and K. R. Weeks, *X-Raying the Pharaohs* (New York: Scribner, 1973), 29; Manfred Bietak and E. Strouhal, “Die Todesumstände des Pharaos Seqenenre (17. Dynastie),” *Annual of the Natural History Museum, Vienna* 78 (1974): 29–52.

fighter was passed to his son Kamose: Karnak steles boast of Kamose's success against Apophis at Avaris.¹³⁵ Since it was left to Ahmose to dislodge the Hyksos from Avaris, it appears that Kamose had only marginal success, perhaps reclaiming areas of Middle Egypt under Hyksos control.¹³⁶ If Claude Vandersleyen is correct in allotting four years until Ahmose achieved victory,¹³⁷ then the time from Seqenenre's initial attempts until the Hyksos defeat might have taken decades.¹³⁸ Because of his successful conquests, Ahmose is generally credited with being the founder of Dynasty 18 (even though he is related to the Theban Dynasty 17) and the New Kingdom.

For the past half century it has been thought that Ahmose and his successors, especially Amenhotep I and Thutmose I, were largely responsible for bringing the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine to a conclusion, with the devastation of twenty or more major city-states.¹³⁹ However, in the past decade serious questions have been raised about this interpretation of the Egyptian historical records and the Palestinian archeological record.¹⁴⁰ While the traditional explanation for the end of Middle Bronze Age in Palestine is certainly plausible, it lacks the support of Egyptian sources. My challenge of the generally accepted understanding of the end of the Middle Bronze Age touched off a heated discussion.¹⁴¹ The general consensus is that the Egyptians tried to

135. L. Habachi, *The Second Stela of Kamose and His Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and His Capital* (Glickstadt: Augustin, 1972).

136. James, "Egypt," 289–93. For the military aspects of this campaign, see Alan R. Schulman, "Chariots, Chariotry and the Hyksos," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 10 (1980): 105–53.

137. Vandersleyen, *Les Guerres d'Amosis*, 40.

138. Donald B. Redford, "Contact between Egypt and Jordan in the New Kingdom," in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*, ed. Adnan Hadidi (Amman: Department of Antiquities, 1982), 1:117.

139. See James M. Weinstein, "The Egyptian Empire in Palestine: A Reassessment," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 241 (1981): 1–28.

140. James K. Hoffmeier, "Reconsidering Egypt's Part in the Termination of the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine," *Levant* 21 (1989): 181–93. My article provides a historical review of this debate and offers a new analysis of key Egyptian terms describing sieges and demolition of cities.

141. William G. Dever, "'Hyksos,' Egyptian Destructions, and the End of the Palestinian Middle Bronze Age," *Levant* 22 (1990): 75–81; James K. Hoffmeier, "Some Thoughts on William G. Dever's 'Hyksos,' Egyptian Destructions, and the End of the Palestinian Middle Bronze Age," *Levant* 22 (1990): 83–89; James M. Weinstein, "Egypt and the Middle Bronze IIC/Late Bronze IA Transition," *Levant* 23 (1991): 105–15; and James K. Hoffmeier, "James Weinstein's 'Egypt and the Middle Bronze IIC/Late Bronze IA Transition,'" *Levant* 23 (1991): 117–24. In support of my position see Piotr Bienkowski, "The Division of Middle Bronze IIB–C in Palestine," *Levant* 21 (1989): 176 n. 7; Manfred Bietak, "The Middle Bronze Age of the Levant—A New Approach to Relative and Absolute Chronology," in *High, Middle or Low? Acts of an International Colloquium on Absolute Chronology Held at the University of Gothenburg 20th–22nd August 1987*, ed. Paul Åström (Gothenburg: Åströms, 1989), 3:107 n. 133; and Redford, *Egypt, Canaan and Israel*, 138–40.

control the coastal areas (which permitted the empire-minded monarchs of Dynasty 18 to have access to key ports) and the Via Maris (the coastal highway) up to Phoenicia and points east into Syria. There is little archeological and no epigraphic evidence to place Egyptian military actions in the hill country of Ephraim and Judea.¹⁴² Thutmose I and Thutmose III campaigned north to the Euphrates, and the latter crossed the great river to take on the Mitanni-ans, whose rising power posed a threat to Egyptian hegemony in the Levant.¹⁴³

Egypt's empire extended south into Nubia and north into Syria-Palestine. Just as Egypt had virtually colonized Nubia during the Middle Kingdom, the Theban kings now realized the economic benefits of once again controlling Nubia. As early as Ahmose I's reign, Egyptian troops marched south to reassert Egyptian influence, and Amenhotep I concentrated on securing Ahmose's gains. Various titles—"King's Son of Cush," "Commandant of (Fort) Buhen," and "Overseer of Southern Lands"—indicate a significant bureaucracy governing Nubia.¹⁴⁴

Before Thutmose III was able to secure the throne and establish Egypt's empire, he had to watch from the sidelines as coregent while his aunt, Hatshepsut, wife of Thutmose II and daughter of Thutmose I, ruled for twenty-one years.¹⁴⁵ For two decades Egypt enjoyed prosperity and peace under this dowager queen. She built extensively at Karnak in the Theban area, including temples and two towering 97-foot obelisks made of single pieces of granite. The one that still stands is inscribed with all the titles of kingship and with her speech to the patron of Thebes, Amon, for whom she built.¹⁴⁶ Her impressive funerary temple at Deir el-Bahri in western Thebes records many of her achievements, including a celebrated expedition to the mysterious land of Punt to obtain gold and incense.¹⁴⁷

Only a matter of weeks after Hatshepsut's demise, Thutmose III launched his first campaign into western Asia because of a rebellious coalition rallied at Megiddo by the king of Kadesh.¹⁴⁸ Between his twenty-second and forty-

142. Hoffmeier, "Reconsidering Egypt's Part," 190.

143. For a documentation of these sorties, see *ibid.*, 182–88; Donald B. Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia during the Early 18th Dynasty," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99 (1979): 270–87; *idem*, "Contact between Egypt and Jordan," 115–19; *idem*, *Egypt, Canaan and Israel*, 138–40.

144. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 169–70.

145. William C. Hayes, "Egypt: Internal Affairs from Tuthmosis I to the Death of Amenophis III," in *CAH* 2/1:316–17.

146. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:25–29.

147. See Édouard Naville, *The Temple of Deir el-Bahri*, vols. 3–4 (London: Quaritch, 1898–1908).

148. W. J. Murnane, "Rhetorical History? The Beginning of Thutmose III's First Campaign to Western Asia," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 26 (1989): 183–89.

second regnal years, Thutmose III sent expeditions into the Levant nearly every year to collect taxes or to establish order. Thutmose III's annals were inscribed on the walls of his Karnak temple at Thebes.¹⁴⁹

Under the succeeding kings, Amenhotep II, Thutmose IV, and Amenhotep III, Egypt's interests in Syria-Palestine and Nubia were maintained, and commercial contact with the Aegean was established. The resulting booty, tribute, and trade brought incredible wealth and prosperity to Egypt. Beginning with Thutmose I, the kings of the New Kingdom were buried in lavishly decorated tombs in the Valley of the Kings in western Thebes, while massive funerary temples and estates were built at the edge of the flood plain. Little remains of the mortuary establishments of the early Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs in this area. Of Amenhotep III's temple, only the famous Colossi of Memnon (actually statues of Amenhotep III) stand at what was the entrance to his temple, while a few blocks are found at the rear of the temple along with a large stela that chronicled his many building accomplishments.¹⁵⁰ During Amenhotep III's thirty-eight-year reign, he built a new palace at Malkata (western Thebes), an adjacent lake (or harbor) that measured 6,200 feet by 1,200 feet,¹⁵¹ and temples at Karnak, Luxor, and Nubia. Amenhotep III's political marriages saw Mitanni and Babylonian princesses come to Egypt. While the practice of diplomatic marriage precedes this period, during Dynasties 18 and 19 it was especially used to solidify diplomatic ties throughout the realm.¹⁵²

Born during this heyday of the empire period, Amenhotep IV succeeded his father around 1353. Shortly after his accession he changed his name to Akhenaten and elevated Aten, the visible image of the sun, to a place of supremacy and closed the temples of other deities. During his first five years he built an extensive temple complex for Aten at Karnak called *pr-itn* ("the domain of the Aten"). After his death, these temples were unceremoniously dismantled and many of the blocks reused in other building projects.¹⁵³ The

149. Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961), 647–734. Portions of the annals are translated in ANET 234–38 and Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:29–35.

150. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:43–48.

151. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 206–7.

152. Alan R. Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage in the Egyptian New Kingdom," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 38 (1979): 177–93.

153. For the excavations of the Akhenaten Temple Project, see Donald B. Redford, *Akhenaten the Heretic King* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), chaps. 5–8; R. W. Smith, Donald B. Redford, et al., *Akhenaten Temple Project*, vol. 1 (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1976); and Donald B. Redford (ed.), *Akhenaten Temple Project*, vol. 2, *Aegypti Texta Propositae* 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

Karnak temples were found in 1975–76 in the area where a number of colossal statues of Akhenaten had been discovered in 1922.¹⁵⁴

For about a decade Akhenaten relocated his capital to what is now modern el-Amarna, a site north of Thebes in Middle Egypt. According to the boundary steles that surrounded this capital (inscribed in his sixth year), he dedicated this area to Aten and declared his intention to stay there the rest of his life.¹⁵⁵

Irrespective of whether Akhenaten was a monotheist, his expression of Aten worship had some unique elements (as the famous "Hymn to Aten" attests), but it drew largely on Old Kingdom solar theology.¹⁵⁶ Akhenaten's concern with religious matters and building projects may have prevented his maintaining firm control in Palestine, since his "preoccupation in his intellectual revolution permitted . . . disintegration."¹⁵⁷ To be sure, the disintegration began as early as Amenhotep II; nevertheless, Akhenaten is blamed for letting the empire slip away. The Amarna letters from Egyptian vassal-kings in Palestine and Syria and from rulers in Anatolia and Mesopotamia indicate internecine strife in the Levant.¹⁵⁸ Since we do not have the Egyptian responses to these requests for help, it is generally assumed that Akhenaten did nothing.¹⁵⁹ However, Alan R. Schulman maintains that Akhenaten initiated military activity beyond Egypt's borders,¹⁶⁰ a view reinforced by the discovery of reliefs at Karnak showing battle scenes with Hittites.¹⁶¹ Akhenaten apparently was not negligent in maintaining the empire, but sent his general, Horemhab, on military missions.

154. Redford, *Akhenaten the Heretic King*, 89.

155. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:48–51.

156. James K. Hoffmeier, "Hymns to Aten: Their Antecedents and Implications," in *Tell el-Amarna, 1887–1987*, ed. Barry Beitzel and Gordon D. Young (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, forthcoming). This volume will contain many essays on the Amarna period in Egypt and Palestine, including several papers dealing with the famous Amarna letters.

157. Wilson, *Culture of Ancient Egypt*, 230.

158. Some of the letters are translated in ANET; a complete authoritative translation of the letters is William L. Moran's *Les Lettres d'el-Amarna: Correspondance Diplomatique du Pharaon* (Paris: Cerf, 1987), now available in English: *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992).

159. Robert North, "Akhenaten Secularized?" *Biblica* 58 (1977): 249–52; Cyril Aldred, *Akhenaten Pharaoh of Egypt: A New Study* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1968), 65–68.

160. Alan R. Schulman, "Some Observations on the Military Background to the Amarna Period," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 3 (1964): 51–69; idem, "The Nubian War of Akhenaten," in *L'Égyptologie en 1979: Axes Prioritaires de Recherches* (Paris: CNRS, 1982), 1:307–11.

161. Alan R. Schulman, "Hittites, Helmets and Amarna: Akhenaten's First Hittite War," in *Akhenaten Temple Project*, vol. 2, ed. Donald B. Redford, *Aegypti Texta Propositae* 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 53–79. Schulman firmly believes that the reliefs belong to Akhenaten, although he refers to scholars who maintain that they belong to Tutankhamun.

Because Akhenaten was branded a heretic, much information about him and his immediate successors (Smerkhkare, Tutankhamun, and Ay) has been lost. King lists (e.g., the Abydos list) skip over these four kings. In the same way that Akhenaten and his iconoclastic followers hacked out the name of Amon and other gods from monuments, so Horemhab eradicated the memory of the Amona kings. Tutankhamun apparently sought to restore relations with the Amon priests in Thebes and reopen the temples.¹⁶² If it were not for the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun with its splendid contents, very little would be known about this king.

Although not related to the royal family, Horemhab (Akhenaten's general) took the throne and is usually listed as the last king of Dynasty 18. He apparently lacked a male heir, and so the torch passed to an elderly military colleague, Ramesses, whose origin was in the delta. Although Ramesses reigned only sixteen months, he was the founder of Dynasty 19, which ran from 1295 to 1187.¹⁶³ The practice of burying kings in the Valley of the Kings (traced to Thutmose I) continued with Ramesses I down to the end of Dynasty 20 in 1069.¹⁶⁴

Seti I was an energetic king who placed Egypt on a track like his empire-minded predecessors Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. His building at Karnak included work on the famed Hypostyle Hall, which was begun under Horemhab and continued briefly under Ramesses I.¹⁶⁵ One of its walls records numerous scenes of Seti's military campaigns into Syria-Palestine.¹⁶⁶ Seti built a summer palace at Avaris in the shadow of the old Hyksos capital.¹⁶⁷ He also built a magnificent cenotaph at Abydos, which contains the famous Abydos King List.

Ramesses II (the Great) succeeded Seti and went on to become one of Egypt's most celebrated monarchs and one of its most prolific builders. Characterized by their grand size, his temples can be found from the delta to Nubia, including the famous Abu Simbel temples that had to be relocated during

162. Tutankhamun's stele documenting this restoration was usurped by Horemhab; see ANET 251–52.

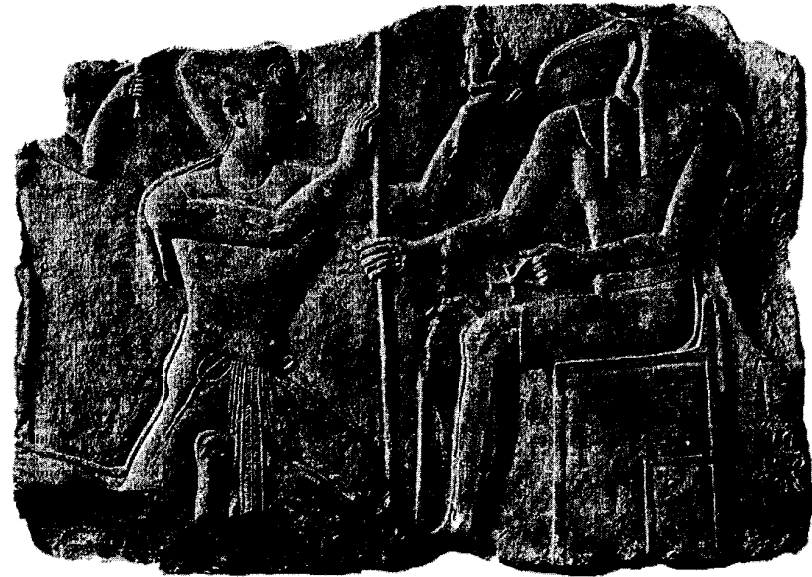
163. Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), 18–20.

164. On the Valley of the Kings, see C. N. Reeves, *The Valley of the Kings: The Decline of the Royal Necropolis* (London/New York: Kegan Paul, 1990); idem (ed.), *After Tutankhamun: Research and Excavation in the Valley of the Kings* (London/New York: Kegan Paul, 1992).

165. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 245, 255.

166. For a historical interpretation of these reliefs, see W. J. Murnane, *The Road to Kadesh: A Historical Interpretation of the Battle Reliefs of King Sety I at Karnak*, 2d ed., *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 42 (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1990).

167. Raymond O. Faulkner, "Egypt: From the Inception of the Nineteenth Dynasty to the Death of Ramesses III," in *CAH* 2/2:222.



Seti I (Dynasty 19) bowing before the god Thoth, 1294–1279 B.C. (height: 30.3"; width: 42.4")

Courtesy of the Cincinnati Art Museum, John J. Emery Fund

the Nubian salvage campaign in the 1960s.¹⁶⁸ While Thebes and Memphis remained capitals, Ramesses built a new capital just northeast of Seti's summer palace and named it Pi-Ramesses ("the house [or domain] of Ramesses").¹⁶⁹ This name is likely behind the toponym *Rameses* in Exodus 1:11.¹⁷⁰ By locating his capital in the northeast delta, Ramesses was able to keep a close watch on affairs in western Asia, which would become an epicenter of military activity.

In Ramesses' fourth year he campaigned in Palestine, followed the next year by the famous Battle of Kadesh against the armies of Hattushili III, the

168. For a popular treatment of this project, see Georg Gerster, "Abu Simbel's Ancient Temples Reborn," *National Geographic* 135.5 (May 1959): 724–44.

169. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 119–23.

170. Edward F. Wente, "Rameses," in *ABD* 5:617–18; Manfred Bietak, *Avaris and Pi-Ramesses* (Oxford: British Academy, 1979); E. P. Uphill, "Pithom and Raamses: Their Location and Significance," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 27 (1968): 291–316; idem, "Pithom and Raamses: Their Location and Significance," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 27 (1969): 15–39; idem, *The Temples of Per Ramesses* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1984).

Hittite king—an event well documented in Egyptian sources.¹⁷¹ The near military disaster for Ramesses and his forces was turned into a victory by propagandistic rhetoric and monumental battle scenes at the Luxor temple, the Ramesseum (his mortuary temple in western Thebes), and Abu Simbel. Relations remained cool between the two superpowers for over a decade, but gradually warmed up. The rising power of Assyria prompted Hattushili to take a conciliatory approach with Egypt, which led to a treaty with Ramesses and eventually a diplomatic marriage between the Hittite and Egyptian courts.¹⁷²

Ramesses outlived his first twelve sons (he ruled into his sixty-seventh year) and was succeeded by Merenptah, the thirteenth, who was in his fifties when crowned.¹⁷³ Despite his age, he apparently led the campaign into Canaan recorded on the famous Israel Stele—the earliest nonbiblical attestation of Israel.¹⁷⁴ Frank Yurco suggests that a sequence of Karnak reliefs is a pictorial version of the renowned stele.¹⁷⁵ One of the vignettes, Yurco believes, portrays the Israelites in Canaanite attire and coiffure.

After Merenptah's death, Dynasty 19 limped along with several kings whose combined reigns lasted only thirty years and then concluded with Queen Tewosret. The Ramesside family, it appears, died off, bringing the dynasty to an end and resulting in the emergence of Dynasty 20. According to the Great Harris Papyrus, Setnakht, the founder of Dynasty 20, claims that he took control of Egypt after a period of social upheaval in which "Isru the Asiatic was with them as chief."¹⁷⁶ Isru may have been Bay, a Syrian who bore the title *Chancellor of the Entire Land*,¹⁷⁷ but it is unclear whether he ruled before or after Tewosret.

171. Alan H. Gardiner, *The Kadesh Inscriptions of Ramses II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960); Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:57–72.

172. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 74–81. For Hittite and Egyptian versions of the treaty, see Ernst F. Weidner, *Politische Dokumente aus Kleinasien*, *Boghazköi Studien* 8–9 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1923), 112–23; and Kenneth A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 2/5:225–32; with translations in *ANET* 199–203. The Hittite princess arrived in Egypt in 1245, but Ramesses did not reciprocate; see Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 83–88. This one-sided policy of welcoming foreign princesses to Egypt but not sending the pharaoh's daughters abroad continued until the time of Solomon (1 Kings 3:1); see Schulman, "Diplomatic Marriage."

173. Faulkner, "Egypt," 232.

174. William M. F. Petrie, *Six Temples at Thebes* (London: Quaritch, 1897), pls. xiii–xiv; for a translation, see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:74–78.

175. Frank Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 23 (1986): 189–215; idem, "3,200-Year-Old Picture of Israelites Found in Egypt," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 16.5 (1990): 20–38.

176. Faulkner, "Egypt," 240.

177. Ibid., 240–41.

Ramesses III is the only Twentieth Dynasty monarch to distinguish himself by his building projects and international affairs. His mortuary temple at Medinet Habu in western Thebes is the best surviving of New Kingdom funerary estates. The inscriptions and scenes provide a detailed report of much of his reign, including extensive reliefs of the Sea Peoples invasion, which included the biblical Philistines.¹⁷⁸ While Egypt was able to defend itself against this invasion, it never really recovered. The debate on whether the Egyptians relocated the Philistines to the coastal area of Canaan or whether they settled there on their own accord has recently been rekindled.¹⁷⁹ While an Egyptian presence in Palestine is attested as late as the time of Ramesses VI (1143–1136), its influence was clearly beginning to wane.¹⁸⁰

Troubled by strikes and inflation at home toward the end of Ramesses III's reign,¹⁸¹ Dynasty 20 quickly declined. Before the death of Ramesses XI in 1069, Herihor, the priest of Amon and "commander of the army," was the *de facto* ruler in Thebes.¹⁸² Meanwhile in the north, Smendes established a rival dynasty (Manetho's Twenty-first) in Tanis, a newly founded city.¹⁸³ With this political bifurcation, Egypt entered the so-called Third Intermediate period. Except for a few futile attempts during the next centuries by Neco II and Apries, Egypt would never again be a dominant force in the Near East. The Late Egyptian "Tale of Wenamon" well reflects this situation.¹⁸⁴ Wenamon, a Theban official, confers with Smendes in Tanis before embarking for Phoenicia to buy timber. Upon his arrival in Byblos, he is rudely treated by the prince. After being snubbed for twenty-nine days, Wenamon is finally granted an audience, thanks to the divine intervention of Amon via an ecstatic utterance by a young man. The treatment of this royal envoy shows that Egypt was no longer held in high esteem in the Levant. The once-proud empire could be aptly called "that splintered reed of a staff" by the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib in 701 (2 Kings 18:21).

178. *Medinet Habu*, 4 vols., Oriental Institute Publications 8, 9, 23, 51 (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1930–40).

179. Bryant G. Wood, "The Philistines Enter Canaan—Were They Egyptian Lackeys or Invading Conquerors," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 17.6 (1991): 44–52; and Itamar Singer, "How Did the Philistines Enter Canaan? A Rejoinder," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 18.6 (1992): 44–46. See also the entry "Philistines" in this volume.

180. Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 296–300.

181. Trigger et al., *Ancient Egypt*, 226–29; William F. Edgerton, "The Strikes in Ramses III's Twenty-ninth Year," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 10 (1933): 135–45; J. Janssen, "Background Information on the Strikes of Year 29 of Ramesses III," *Oriens Antiquus* 18 (1979): 301–8.

182. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 302–3.

183. Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period (1100–650 B.C.)*, 2d ed. (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), 6–9.

184. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 2:224–30; *ANET* 25–29.

Third Intermediate Period and Beyond (1100 to the Christian Era)

Egypt was politically divided for much of the Third Intermediate period, except for part of Dynasty 22, all of Dynasty 26, and brief intervals between foreign conquests. Undoubtedly because of Egypt's weakness during this time, Israel's monarchy was able to flourish and, for a short time, become a major power in the Levant.

Under the energetic Shoshenq I (biblical Shishak), Egypt was reunited, even as far south as Thebes, by his fifth year.¹⁸⁵ He was of Libyan origin¹⁸⁶ and hailed from the delta city of Bubastis, but Tanis remained his capital. In his penultimate year, Shoshenq invaded Palestine, received tribute from Rehoboam in Jerusalem (1 Kings 14:25), and attacked the northern kingdom of Israel.¹⁸⁷

Dynasties 23 and 24 were of little significance and, in fact, overlapped toward the end of the eighth century. Dynasty 25 was made up of Cushite kings from Nubia. For reasons that remain unclear, Piankhy (or Piye) sailed north from Napata (just above the fourth cataract), conquered Egypt, and claimed to be the legitimate pharaoh. His campaign is well documented in the annalistic style of the New Kingdom.¹⁸⁸ After uniting Egypt, Piankhy returned to Napata. Perhaps as a result of seeing the Egyptian pyramids, Piankhy abandoned the mastaba and used a small pyramid as his burial structure, a practice continued by his successors.¹⁸⁹

Dynasties 25 and 26 were characterized by an artistic and literary renaissance.¹⁹⁰ Pyramid and Coffin texts from the Old and Middle Kingdoms were utilized on coffins and in tombs of this period. In the Memphite Theology on the famous black stone now in the British Museum, Shabako (Piankhy's successor) states, "This writing was copied out anew . . . for his majesty found it to be a work of the ancestors which was worm-eaten, so that it could not be understood from beginning to end."¹⁹¹ This renewed interest in the literature of the past was not limited to Egypt, but is also found in Assyria (as the

185. Kitchen, *Third Intermediate Period*, 287–88.

186. The origin of the Libyans in Egypt can be traced to the late New Kingdom; see Kenneth A. Kitchen, "The Arrival of the Libyans in Late New Kingdom Egypt," in *Libya and Egypt: c. 1300–750 B.C.*, ed. A. Leahy (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, Center of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, 1990).

187. Evidence for this campaign comes from a toponym list inscribed at Karnak and a Megiddo stele fragment bearing this monarch's name; see ANET 263; and Maza, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible*, 398.

188. N. C. Grimal, *La Stèle Triomphale de Pi(ankh)y au Musée du Caire* (Cairo: IFAO, 1981); for English translation, see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 3:66–84.

189. Edwards, *Pyramids of Egypt*, 250.

190. Aldred, *Egyptians*, 176.

191. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:52.

discovery of Ashurbanipal's library attests)¹⁹² and Israel, where Hezekiah was actively editing earlier Solomonic wisdom texts and adding them to the corpus of Proverbs (cf. Prov. 25:1).

A series of invasions by the Assyrians during the reigns of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal rocked Egypt,¹⁹³ resulting in the demise of Dynasty 25. In anticipation of these events, the Cushites tried to stymie the Assyrians in Palestine, hence Taharqa's intervention when Sennacherib attacked Hezekiah in Jerusalem in 701.¹⁹⁴ Despite Taharqa's valiant efforts, the Assyrians prevailed, and Thebes was sacked (cf. Nah. 3:8).¹⁹⁵ Subsequently, an Egyptian prince from Sais in the western delta was appointed king.¹⁹⁶ This Neco (I) is credited with founding Dynasty 26, although it was his successor, Psammetichus I, who reunited and rebuilt Egypt after the Assyrian invasion.¹⁹⁷ With the crum-

192. Simo Parpola, "Assyrian Library Records," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 42 (1983): 1–29.

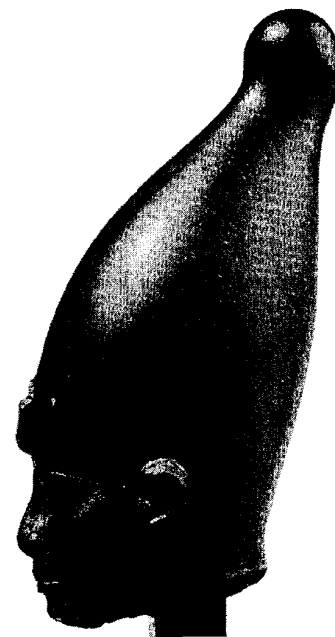
193. A. Kirk Grayson, "Assyria's Foreign Policy in Relation to Egypt in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 11 (1981): 85–88; Anthony J. Spalinger, "Esarhaddon and Egypt: An Analysis of the First Invasion of Egypt," *Orientalia* 43 (1974): 295–326, and idem, "Ashurbanipal and Egypt: A Source Study," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 94 (1974): 316–28.

194. Kitchen, *Third Intermediate Period*, 383–86; idem, "Egypt, the Levant and Assyria in 701 B.C.," in *Fontes atque Pontes: Eine Festgabe für Hellmut Brunner*, ed. Manfred Görg, *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 5 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), 243–53; Alan R. Millard, "Sennacherib's Attack on Hezekiah," *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985): 61–77; and James K. Hoffmeier, "Egypt as an Arm of Flesh: A Prophetic Response," in *Israel's Apocatastasis and Restoration: Essays in Honor of Roland K. Harrison*, ed. Abraham Gileadi (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 88–90.

195. Georges Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, 3d ed. (Baltimore: Penguin, 1992), 331.

196. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 352.

197. Anthony J. Spalinger, "The Concept of the Monarchy during the Saite Epoch—an Essay of Synthesis," *Orientalia* 47 (1978): 12–36.



Head of a king (late Dynasty 25), ca. 690–656 B.C. (height: 8.1"; width: 3.0"; diameter: 4.5")

Courtesy of the Cincinnati Art Museum, John J. Emery Memorial Fund, A. J. Howe Endowment, Henry Meis Endowment, Phyllis H. Thayer Purchase Fund, Israel and Caroline Wilson Fund, On To The Second Century Art Purchase Fund, and Museum Purchase: Various Deaccession Funds

bling of Assyria and the rise of Babylon, Neco II saw his chance to reassert Egyptian influence in Syria-Palestine, and he marched to the Euphrates to stake his claim. En route, he was opposed by King Josiah of Judah, who was killed at Megiddo (2 Kings 23:29–30). From 609 to 605, Egyptian troops occupied Carchemish and manipulated events in Judah. But with the coronation of Nebuchadnezzar, the new Babylonian king moved quickly to oust the Egyptian garrison,¹⁹⁸ thus opening the way to control Palestine and eventually invade Egypt in 568.

Under Cambyses, Egypt was invaded and made a Persian satrapy from 525 to 404. During the Persian era (Manetho's Dynasty 27), temples continued to be built and decorated in the Egyptian artistic tradition, and the name of Darius appears as a dedicatory inscription on the sarcophagus of the Apis bull at Sakkara.¹⁹⁹ Inscriptions record that Cambyses ordered the removal of squatters in the temple precinct of Neith in Sais, indicating Persian support for Egyptian traditions.²⁰⁰

Dynasties 28–30 represent the last periods of Egyptian independence, because in Dynasty 31 Egypt fell back under Persian control until Alexander's conquest in 332. The Hellenization of Egypt continued under Ptolemy I and his successors,²⁰¹ and the Ptolemaic period saw the blending of Egyptian and Greek cultures. Egyptian temples, such as those of Horus at Edfu and Isis at Philae, continued to display traditional Egyptian architecture and were covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions, some of them harking back to the Old and Middle Kingdoms.²⁰²

Despite the arrival of Greek culture with the Ptolemaic kings and the subsequent domination by Rome, Egyptian religion and culture were not dismantled. Ironically, what finally pulled Egypt out of its ancient polytheism was not an invading army, but Christianity. By the early fourth century, Christianity was the dominant force in Egypt.²⁰³ Egyptian worship centers became churches, and the name of Ramesses the Great was plastered over and replaced by Christian symbols. Centuries earlier, Isaiah of Jerusalem

198. Translated by Donald J. Wiseman in *Documents from Old Testament Times*, ed. D. Winton Thomas (London: Nelson, 1958), 78–79.

199. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 364.

200. For recent translation and discussion of this text, see, James K. Hoffmeier, "Sacred" in *the Vocabulary of Ancient Egypt*, *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 59 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht/Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1985), 216–17.

201. For a survey of this period down to the Arab invasion in A.D. 642, see A. K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs, 332 BC–AD 642* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

202. L. V. Zabkar, "Adaptation of Ancient Egyptian Texts to the Temple Ritual at Philae," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 66 (1980): 127–36; see also, Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs*, 165–202.

203. Harold I. Bell, *Cults and Creeds in Graeco-Roman Egypt* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1953, repr. Chicago: Ares, 1975), 78–105.

said, "The LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians, and in that day they will acknowledge the LORD" (19:21 NIV). In a sense, the birth of Christianity heralded the death of Egypt as it had been known. Today in Egypt, six to eight million Christians think of themselves as Egyptians, not Arabs. In the liturgy of the Egyptian Orthodox Church, Coptic—the last vestige of the ancient Egyptian language—can still be heard.

Religion

As in all ancient societies, religion was a dominating factor in Pharaonic Egypt. Even in the twilight of Egyptian history, Herodotus observed, "They are beyond measure religious, more than any other nation. . . . Their religious observances are, one might say, innumerable" (2:37).

Even before Menes united Egypt, the Egyptian pharaohs were viewed as divine and were associated with Horus.²⁰⁴ The foundation for this belief was rooted in the myth of Osiris, Horus, and Seth, which is known from the Old Kingdom Pyramid Texts, the later Coffin Texts, and the Memphite Theology.²⁰⁵ Because of this mythic foundation, the pharaoh was always the focal point of Egyptian religion, the ultimate high priest who built temples and oversaw their maintenance.

Egyptian religion can be divided into three areas: state, popular, and funerary. The foundation of state religion was laid in the previous paragraph, and a number of excellent studies on state religion and the gods are available.²⁰⁶ Major deities like Atum-Re of Heliopolis, Ptah of Memphis, and Amon of Thebes dominate much of Egyptian history, but scores of other divinities were worshiped at local sanctuaries.

Popular religion, perhaps owing to the less glamorous nature of the evidence compared with that of state religion, has not been thoroughly studied. Ashraf Sadek corrects this imbalance by introducing the sources for the study of the religious practices of the common folk.²⁰⁷ While in their basic assump-

204. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 15–50.

205. For translations, see Faulkner, *Egyptian Pyramid Texts*; idem, *The Egyptian Coffin Texts*, vols. 1–3 (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1973–77); and Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, 1:51–57.

206. S. Morenz, *Egyptian Religion* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973); Erik Hornung, *Conceptions of God in Ancient Egypt: The One and the Many* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); A. Rosalie David, *The Ancient Egyptians: Religious Beliefs and Practices* (New York/London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982); and Byron Shafer (ed.), *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths and Personal Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

207. Ashraf I. Sadek, *Popular Religion in Egypt during the New Kingdom*, *Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge* 27 (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1987). See my favorable review in *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 78 (1992): 338–39.

tions the two branches are identical, the differences come in practice. The large New Kingdom temples at Karnak and Luxor, for instance, were not normally accessible to the common people. Only on special festive occasions were they able to enter the massive walls, but they could not enter the holy place, which was reserved for the priesthood.²⁰⁸ Perhaps because of this exclusion from or limited access to state temples, small cult centers were established close to towns and villages in the Old and Middle Kingdoms.²⁰⁹ It is only in the New Kingdom that sufficient evidence survives to enable a fuller description of these religious practices. Lay priests operated small chapels at Deir el-Medineh, where hundreds of small offering steles and votive objects have been found.²¹⁰ The votive objects show that the same deities worshiped in the state religion were also revered by common people. However, the latter had patron deities that were not worshiped elsewhere, such as the divinized Amenhotep I.²¹¹

Yielding perhaps the largest body of sources for the study of religion, burial customs are well attested in Egypt from predynastic through Roman times.²¹² In addition to the corpora of funerary texts mentioned already,²¹³ the Book of the Dead (a later development of the Pyramid and Coffin texts recorded on papyrus) was popular from the New Kingdom on.²¹⁴

From the various mortuary sources, it is evident that a mythic foundation stands behind funerary practices. The god Osiris, who presides over the netherworld and before whom everyone stands for judgment, appears to have been a historical figure of predynastic times who was killed by his violent brother Seth.²¹⁵ Isis, the sister-wife of Osiris, wept and searched for him. Through sexual union with Osiris, Isis gave birth to Horus, who succeeded his father. Anubis gathered the fallen Osiris and assisted in his mummification and burial. While in the Old Kingdom only royalty was associated with Osiris in the next life, the funerary cult was democratized during the First Intermediate period (as seen in the Coffin Texts), and others were able to share in the same privilege.²¹⁶

208. Hoffmeier, "Sacred" in the Vocabulary of Ancient Egypt, 208–20.

209. Sadek, *Popular Religion*, 5–10.

210. Ibid., 79–83.

211. Ibid., 131–40.

212. For a comprehensive study of Egyptian burial practices, see A. J. Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1982).

213. See n. 205.

214. Raymond O. Faulkner, *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*, ed. Carol Andrews (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990).

215. J. G. Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth* (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 1960), 2–22; idem, *The Origins of Osiris and His Cult* (Leiden: Brill, 1980).

216. Wilson, *Culture of Ancient Egypt*, 116.

Because people had to stand before Osiris's tribunal for judgment, it was necessary to live according to *maat*, the Egyptian concept of justice and righteousness.²¹⁷ Admission to heaven was contingent on an individual's being pronounced "*maa hrw*." Spell 125 (the so-called negative confession) of the Book of the Dead contains a list of sins and taboos that the deceased claims not to have done so as to merit divine favor. These provide good insights into Egyptian morals and ethics. It could be that the moral dimension of Egyptian wisdom literature served as a practical guide to help individuals live according to the principles of *maat* and thus be vindicated in the judgment.

Tombs and their accompanying chapels or temples aimed to preserve the body of the deceased and provide a place for the Ka (the spirit or alter ego) to come and go. Through the so-called false door of the chapel, the Ka could return to eat and drink the foodstuffs placed on altars.²¹⁸ It was, naturally, the obligation of the family to provide the offerings on behalf of the departed. In the New Kingdom, a type of ancestor worship developed, as the *sh ikr in R'* steles show.²¹⁹

Because of the plethora of information regarding mortuary religion, one might think that the Egyptians were preoccupied with death, and thus lived morbid lives. However, from Dynasty 5 onward, tomb scenes make it clear that this is not so. On the contrary, in paintings and reliefs we see people engaged in various types of recreation—hunting and fishing being favorites. Egyptian nobility and middle classes frequented parties with music, dancing, drinking, and banqueting, as paintings of the New Kingdom illustrate.²²⁰

Herodotus was right: the Egyptians were a most religious people. Religion affected every area of life: piety, ethics, politics, and death. If we eliminate all the archeological remains connected to religion (i.e., temples, funerary structures, cultic statues, steles, etc.), little would remain.

Egypt and Israel

During the Second Millennium B.C.

Abraham had a brief visit to Egypt sometime in the early second millennium (Gen. 12:10–20). Since the name of the Egyptian monarch is not given, only the title *Pharaoh*, there is no way to determine the identity of the king. If

217. Morenz, *Egyptian Religion*, 113–30.

218. Spencer, *Death in Ancient Egypt*, 58.

219. R. J. Demaree, *The sh ikr in R'-Stelae: On Ancestor Worship in Ancient Egypt* (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut in het Nabije Oosten, 1983).

220. Examples of this type of scene are found in the tomb of Nefer at Sakkara and on the relief of Hetep Horakhti at Leiden.

Abraham is placed broadly within the first third of the second millennium,²²¹ Dynasties 12–13 would be a likely period for his descent to Egypt.

The next contact between the Hebrews and Egypt is found in the Joseph story of Genesis 39–50. Once again, the biblical text is vague about historical matters, making the dating of the accounts difficult. However, Egyptian coloring to the story is well established, which lends credibility to the historicity of the Joseph cycle.²²² Redford argues that the Egyptian personal names in the story, Potiphar and Asenath, point to the first millennium.²²³ However, equally compelling arguments have been offered for the antiquity of the Genesis record.²²⁴ Joseph's rise to power from a domestic to a high-ranking official is not without parallel in Egypt. Bay, a non-Egyptian, was elevated to "Chancellor of the Entire Land" during Dynasty 20. Gardiner writes, "There is good reason for thinking that Bay was a Syrian by birth, possibly one of those court officials who in this age frequently rose to power by the royal favor."²²⁵ The Hyksos period, when foreigners controlled the delta and northern Egypt, is a likely time for Joseph to have come to prominence and for Jacob's family to have settled in Goshen in the delta.

In the years intervening between Joseph's death and the birth of Moses, the Hebrew population grew to the point that the Egyptian pharaoh saw their presence as threatening. Exodus 1:8 reports that "a new king, who did not know about Joseph, came to power in Egypt." Clearly, time had passed since the death of Joseph (Exod. 1:6), and the *new king* probably refers to a new dynasty, not just a different king than the one mentioned in Genesis.²²⁶ The

221. This dating is challenged by John Van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975); and Thomas L. Thompson, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham*, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 133 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1974). For criticism of these works, which question the historicity of the Genesis patriarchs, see Alan R. Millard and Donald J. Wiseman (eds.), *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1983); Alan R. Millard, "Abraham," in *ABD* 1:35–41; and James K. Hoffmeier, "The Wives' Tales of Genesis 12, 20 and 36 and the Covenants at Beersheba," *Tyndale Bulletin* 43 (1992): 81–99.

222. J. M. A. Janssen, "Egyptological Remarks on the Story of Joseph in Genesis," *Jaarbericht . . . ex Oriente Lux* 14 (1955–56): 63–72; Jozef Vergote, *Joseph en Égypte*, *Orientalia et Biblica Lovaniensia* 3 (Louvain: Peeters, 1959); idem, "Joseph en Egypte: 25 Ans Après," in *Pharaonic Egypt: The Bible and Christianity*, ed. Sarah Israelit-Groll (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1985), 289–306; Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Joseph," in *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, ed. James D. Douglas et al. (Leicester: InterVarsity/Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale, 1980), 812–15; and idem, "Joseph," in *ISBE* 2:1126–30.

223. Donald B. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph (Genesis 37–50)*, *Vetus Testamentum Supplement* 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1970).

224. See Kitchen's two articles on Joseph in n. 222 and his review of Redford's book (cited in n. 223) in *Oriens Antiquus* 12 (1973): 233–42.

225. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 277.

226. Nahum M. Sarna, *Exploring Exodus* (New York: Schocken, 1986), 15.

expulsion of the Hyksos and the establishment of the New Kingdom with Dynasty 18 seems to be a logical time for the change in attitude toward the Israelites. One can imagine Ahmose's exasperation upon finding a sizable Semitic population in the very region where the hated Hyksos had lived. This new king feared that the Hebrews would join his enemies if war broke out (Exod. 1:10). Could Egypt's enemies have been the Hyksos?

The absence of direct archeological or historical evidence for the Israelite sojourn and exodus from Egypt leads some scholars to question the historicity of the exodus narratives.²²⁷ The result is to regard Israel as just another Canaanite tribe that emerged from obscurity to become a nation.²²⁸ However, the exodus tradition is too deeply entrenched in the Old Testament to be dismissed as an innovation of the late period of Israelite history.²²⁹ Similarly, the historicity of Moses is undeniable, although his name is not attested in any contemporary literature and even though his precise historical setting cannot be proven. Siegfried Herrmann affirms this conclusion: "Thus we are left ultimately with only the mighty figure of Moses, which cannot be put aside as invention or interpolation, but which is constitutive for the whole account."²³⁰

In recent decades, two main positions have emerged on the dating of the exodus from Egypt.²³¹ The so-called early date is computed from 1 Kings 6:1: 967 (Solomon's fourth year) + 480 years (from the exodus to Solomon) = 1447.²³² A second view, the late date, regards the figure 480 as the result of multiplying 12 x 40 years (the symbolic length of a generation). Since a generation is actually closer to 25 years, 967 + 300 (12 x 25) = 1267, which would fall in the reign of Ramesses II.²³³ That the Israelites were forced to

227. Donald B. Redford, "An Egyptological Perspective on the Exodus Narrative," in *Egypt, Israel, Sinai: Archaeological and Historical Relationships in the Biblical Period*, ed. Anson F. Rainey (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1987), 138–61; idem, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 257–80.

228. Gösta W. Ahlström, *Who Were the Israelites?* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1986); Robert B. Coote, *Early Israel: A New Horizon* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

229. See Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Exodus, The," in *ABD* 2:700–708; and Nahum M. Sarna, "Exodus, Book of," in *ABD* 2:689–700. In addition, the lengthy sojourn of the Israelites is reflected in Egyptian influence on Hebrew history and culture, and some of the Hebrew names of this period were likely Egyptian: Moses, Merari, Phinehas, and Miriam.

230. Siegfried Herrmann, *Israel in Egypt* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1973), 41–42.

231. For an evaluation of both positions' merits and weaknesses, see William Stiebing, *Out of the Desert?* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus, 1989).

232. Charles Aling, *Egypt and Bible History from Earliest Times to 1000 B.C.* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981), 77–96.

233. Kenneth A. Kitchen, *The Bible in Its World: The Bible and Archaeology Today* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1977), 75–79; idem, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 70–71; and Roland K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969), 315–25.

- . *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. Edited by Carol Andrews. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1990.
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Part 3

Transjordan