

The History of Ancient Egypt: An Overview

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RECONSTRUCTING EGYPTIAN HISTORY

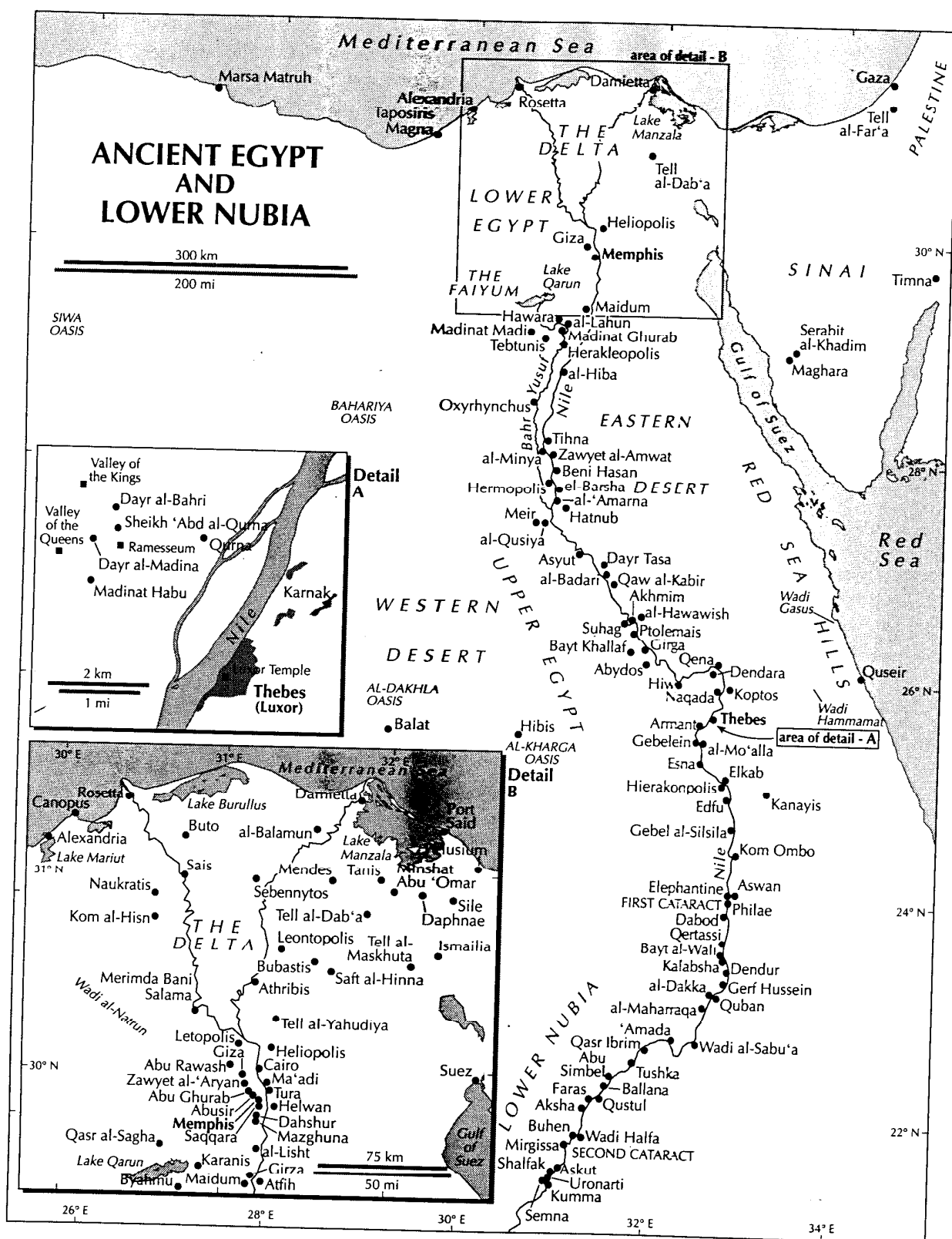
Little more than a century has passed since it became possible to base a history of pharaonic Egypt on contemporaneous sources. Modern readers now have access to a wealth of material that constantly keeps growing. They also benefit from a much improved understanding of the ancient language, as well as from increased contributions from archaeology on a number of levels. Paradoxically, however, even the most up-to-date histories are conceptually indebted to an ancient model.

Manetho, a priest who lived in the third century BCE, was ancient Egypt's only native historian. His work, written in Greek for a non-Egyptian audience, is a problematic guide—in the first place, because it survives mainly through drastic abridgments made by early Christian writers, along with a few later quotations; but also, and more significantly, because of its author's intellectual culture and his limitations. Manetho, like most Greek historians, was overly respectful of tradition, that medium which preserved the memory of "great and wonderful deeds." He also failed to control, or even to exploit fully, the factual data at his disposal: although the monuments of Egypt provided historical resources far richer than those available in other parts of the Mediterranean world, little of Manetho's work seems to have been based on

them. Moreover, in common with most historians in antiquity, Manetho was not able to distinguish among traditions that, while authentic as ancient records, distorted the past according to the biases or perspectives of their sources. As a result, facts in his *Aegyptiaca* are often mixed with legendary or partisan accounts that are neither reliable nor always attributed correctly.

These characteristics diminish Manetho's usefulness, although as a historian he was notably more accurate than his Greek predecessors. Modern writers, however, still follow the organization of his work by groups of kings (dynasties), not only because it is convenient and reflects an ancient convention, but also because most of Manetho's dynasties seem to correspond to genuine divisions in pharaonic times.

Modern writers have organized Egyptian history further by grouping Manetho's dynasties into an Early Dynastic period and four later epochs: Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom, and Late Period, each separated from the next by one of three "intermediate periods." Such divisions, like the dynasties, are partly ancient in inspiration. They are implied, for example, in the composition of a procession of royal statues shown on a wall from the Ramesseum, the mortuary temple of Ramesses (Ramses) II of the Nineteenth Dynasty on the West Bank at Thebes. (The Ramesseum is illustrated in "Palaces and Temples of Ancient Egypt" in Part 4, Vol. I). The successive ages of the past were represented by Menes, Nebhepetre Mentu-



hotep of the Eleventh Dynasty, and Ahmose (Amosis) of the Eighteenth Dynasty—all rulers who were credited with uniting the country after a period of disorder and who thus defined national unity as the supreme achievement of a successful regime.

For all its authenticity, this conception of the past has serious limitations for the modern historian. On the surface the ideology of power in pharaonic Egypt appears to have remained constant, for titles and epithets that defined kingly authority (once they had been formulated) tended to remain in use. Frequently, however, the literal meaning of such claims was compromised by political conditions: even a pharaoh who ruled only a fragment of the traditional kingdom could call himself “Lord of the Two Lands”; and the conventional style of kingship often masked actual limits placed on royal power. Institutions, for all their apparent changelessness, were constantly evolving in pharaonic Egypt. This capacity for cloaking change in the appearance of tradition, while not incompatible with the conventional periodization of Egyptian history, is not well addressed by it either. Although this essay uses the traditional periods to reflect broad political realities, it will occasionally point to other trends that imply somewhat different perspectives on Egyptian history.

THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE GROWTH OF PHARAONIC GOVERNMENT

Since developments in Predynastic Egypt are already discussed in the chapter on prehistory above, we begin this survey near the end of the fourth millennium, at the beginning of the dynastic period, when the influence of Upper Egyptian civilization had spread into both Nubia and the Delta. (See “Unification and Urbanization of Ancient Egypt” earlier in this volume.) The unification of Egypt as inferred from contemporary sources bears little resemblance to the version sanctified by tradition. Later Egyptians were taught, for instance, that the state had been formed out of two Predynastic kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt—but this model founders on the absence of any firm evi-

dence for such a kingdom in the north. Most scholars now see it as a later historical construct, reflecting not only the basic difference between the Delta and the southern river valley but also Egyptian ideology, which conceived the universe as balanced between equal and sometimes contending forces. If so, the Predynastic kings of the “Two Lands” whose names were recorded on the Palermo Stone (a fragment of royal annals, based on earlier sources, that was manufactured during the Fifth Dynasty) may represent early kinglets from various parts of the Delta and Upper Egypt rather than the primeval rulers of a unified pair of kingdoms in the north and south.

Tradition also took for granted the institution of monarchy. By the time of the New Kingdom, official history began with dynasties of “gods, demigods, and spirits of the dead” who preceded the first mortal rulers. Once again, however, more contemporary evidence suggests a different model. As in Mesopotamia, kingship seems to have developed around the figures of war leaders in the different proto-states of the Nile Valley. Differences in the development of ancient Egypt and Iraq are reflected in the style and survival of their governments. While later institutions and traditions in Mesopotamia preserved elements of the local oligarchies that held sway before monarchies arose, no trace of such polities (with the possible exception of town councils) survived in Egypt. Instead, from the late Predynastic period onward, supreme power was vested in a single ruler who, unlike the king in Mesopotamia, was regarded as an embodiment of divinity. The symbol of the falcon god Horus bestriding the palace, which persisted as an image of kingship throughout Egyptian history, made its appearance in the latest phases of the Predynastic period. (The term “pharaoh,” the title by which the Egyptian king is known in the Bible, literally means “big house,” and it originally referred to the palace. Only from the New Kingdom was it used to describe the king’s person.) Both the iconography of this primitive royalty and its style, which imply that the ruler’s official nature as the divine “Horus of the Palace” dominated any personal identity, foreshadow the classic ideology of royal power. (An illustration of Horus appears in “Theology, Priests, and Worship in Ancient Egypt” in Part 8, Vol. III.)

Egyptian tradition also credited one ruler,

Menes, with the creation of a united kingdom. This belief cannot be traced prior to the New Kingdom, and earlier records (notably the Fifth Dynasty annals already mentioned) recognized that the First Dynasty had been preceded by an unspecified number of kings who ruled over the "Two Lands." Archaeological evidence also suggests that Upper Egyptian expansion into the Delta was a gradual process. Thus the achievement of Horus King Narmer, who has often been identified with Menes on the strength of the triumph scenes on his ceremonial palette, may represent only one of the steps that led to the definitive unification of Egypt (if it was not already united at that time). "Menes," if his name is not a play on that of Amun (the leading god

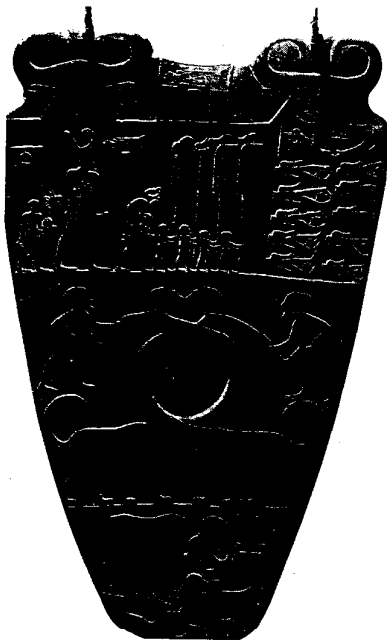
and divine ancestor of the New Kingdom pharaohs), may mean only "So-and-so" in Egyptian, and his historic position might well be another of those constructs through which the Egyptians mythologized their past.

The rulers of the First Dynasty governed from a capital they built on land situated between Upper and Lower Egypt. Known first as "White Walls," and more fancifully later by the epithet "the Balance of the Two Lands," it is best known today as Memphis and was a major city throughout Egyptian history, even if it did not always function as the nation's capital.

Along with a national center of government, the basis of a truly national administration was established during the Early Dynastic period.



Statues of kings Menes, Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, Ahmose, Amenhotep I, and Thutmose I borne by attendants at the annual feast of the god Min. Drawing of a relief from the east wall of the second court of the Ramesseum, West Thebes. ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, CHICAGO



One side of the Palette of Narmer, Naqada III period, excavated from a temple at Hierakonopolis and now in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. The lower portion of the low-relief carving portrays a king in the form of a bull besieging a fortified city represented by the rounded wall with square bastions. HIRMER ARCHIVE, MUNICH

Resources now had to be managed on an unprecedented scale, not only in the interest of individual communities and the local elites that ran them, but more significantly in support of a much larger network of such groups and with special regard to the country's nominal owner, the king. The system had begun to evolve, no doubt, in late Predynastic times, with the conquest of the Nile Valley. Membership in the administrative elite was based for the most part on personal competence and (especially with the development of writing before the start of the First Dynasty) on literacy. Although officials often gained advancement through family connections and royal favor, promotion by merit was always a strong component of the bureaucracy's esprit de corps. By the early third millennium this government service had grown into a formidable organization, as witnessed not only by the ubiquity of objects bearing administrative titles but also by conspicuous displays of affluence

and power by high officials. At Saqqara, the earliest cemetery of Memphis, the great private tombs of the First Dynasty are so large and their contents so rich that they were once taken to be royal.

Successful officials later aspired to bequeath to their heirs not only their wealth but their offices as well. While such expectations were realized often enough to be expressed openly in prayers and instructional literature used by the elite, their fulfillment was not automatic: officials were expected to be totally dependent on the royal will. It is probably no accident that, at some periods during the Old Kingdom, the highest offices were reserved for members of the royal family, nor that individuals were shifted frequently among government departments. Methods such as these, by which the king could regulate the hierarchy or bypass it altogether by raising a personal favorite from obscurity, were characteristic of pharaonic government throughout Egyptian history.

The transition to a more settled way of life was also marked by changes in the regime's public image. The bellicose posture of the late Predynastic and First Dynasty kings, with names like Narmer ("Baleful Catfish") and Aha ("Fighter"), gave way in the Second Dynasty to a more pacific style that stressed the ruler's connections with the divine (as in the name Nynetjer, "He Who Belongs to the God"). One of the kingdom's growing pains seems to have involved forging a generally acceptable ideology. It is hard, otherwise, to explain why two kings of the later Second Dynasty, in place of the traditional Horus name, adopted the god Seth as their divine patron. Although earlier scholars viewed this episode as a civil war between partisans of Horus and their Sethian counterparts, this interpretation is not likely: the demonization of Seth as the enemy of Horus took place very much later. Also, how would the cult of a Seth king have survived into the Fourth Dynasty, as it did, if he was discredited? The obscurities of this period are such that we cannot even be sure whether certain Horus and Seth names belonged to the same king or to separate individuals. It seems likely, however, that the Seth name was an experiment, an attempt to enrich the king's official nature by giving him yet another of the alternative identities that were be-

ing formulated in this period. Some sort of resolution was reached by the end of the Second Dynasty, for its last king adopted a unique style that associated the figures of both Horus and Seth with a name that can be translated "The two powers are manifest, and the two gods who are in him are at peace."

Perhaps the best way to evaluate this apparent identity crisis is to observe how quickly it was overcome. The Sethian component of the king's name vanished after the Second Dynasty, while his identity as Horus remained the leading element in the royal titulary. Again, it is perhaps not coincidental that the period following the Second Dynasty saw the development of a new and lasting symbol of the religious dimensions of kingship, the pyramid.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE OLD KINGDOM

Starting with Djoser of the Third Dynasty in the middle of the third millennium, rulers systematically turned their efforts to a building program awesome both for its ambition and for its continuity. Although pyramid building is discussed in the chapter below, both the magnitude and novelty of this achievement are worth recalling here. Djoser's Step Pyramid, built on a scale far larger than any earlier royal tomb complex, was also the first to be constructed entirely of stone—an accomplishment that earned immortality and, by the Late Period, deification for its architect, the king's chief builder, Imhotep. More significantly, it set a standard that future kings felt compelled to emulate or surpass. (See the next chapter for an illustration of the funerary complex.)

Djoser's successors planned their monuments on a comparably ambitious scale, but not until the Fourth Dynasty were resources successfully harnessed to organization. The pyramids built by Khufu (Cheops), Chephren (Khafre, Re-khaef), and Mycerinus (Menkaure) at Giza, near the north end of the Memphite cemetery, are deservedly famous, not only for their size but for the quality of their construction. What is often forgotten is that this achievement had been more than equaled by Sneferu, the founder of the Fourth Dynasty, who built two substantial

pyramids for himself at Dahshur and worked on yet another behemoth (which he may only have completed for his predecessor, the last king of the Third Dynasty) at Maidum. These monuments were an unprecedented achievement, especially for so brief a time: remaining unequaled for the rest of the Old Kingdom, their scale was approached by very few other pharaohs, and they speak eloquently not only for the wealth at these kings' disposal, but for the expertise and command of logistics that made such works possible. (See illustrations in the next chapter.)

The pyramids have regularly been seen as the fruits of their builders' megalomania. More to the point, however, they were colossal statements of divine kingship. Third Dynasty funerary complexes still looked back to Early Dynastic models: the stepped pyramid was a new and commanding symbol (representing a stairway to the sky or the primeval mound of creation, or both), but it was grafted onto the traditional funerary palace—not merely the king's eternal residence, but a composite of all the settings in which he acted as the nexus between humanity and the gods. By the Fourth Dynasty, however, old priorities had been reversed. The complex surrounding the pyramid shrank and consisted of only a few cult buildings. Dwarfing all else was the pyramid itself—now a true pyramid, perhaps a model of the spreading rays of the sun upon which the dead king ascended to heaven.

At the same time, the classic ideology of kingship was being reformulated. Khufu's successor, Redjedef (Djedefre), was the first pharaoh to add "Son of Re" to his titulary, and although tradition had its defenders (notably in Shepseskaf, the last king of the Fourth Dynasty, who abandoned the pyramid design and built his tomb along lines that had gone out of fashion nearly two centuries earlier), future kings continued to be sons of the sun-god, Re, along with their more traditional divine identities. Earlier writers saw in these developments a victory for the clergy of Re at the expense of the monarch, but this assumption is gratuitous. The new solar temples built by most of the kings of the Fifth Dynasty functioned as appendages rather than competitors to the royal funerary establishments nearby. In these temples Re and the king functioned as

aspects of the same divine power, each in his appropriate sphere.

The evidence for Old Kingdom history is weighted heavily toward social or institutional trends and has very little to say about events. A supposed struggle between the sons of Khufu is generally discounted. Scholars are similarly wary of the tradition in the Middle Kingdom tales of Papyrus Westcar, in which the good-natured behavior of Sneferu contrasts with a grim portrait of his son Khufu, and this family is viewed as giving way, none too happily, to the three sons of Re, who go on to rule in succession as the founding kings of the Fifth Dynasty. (See "Tales of Magic and Wonder from Ancient Egypt" in Part 9, Vol. IV.) Attempts to extract any but the barest historical implications from this material have not been convincing. Manetho reports the assassination of Teti, founder of the Sixth Dynasty, but evidence identified in the monuments for infighting among rulers of the later Fifth and Sixth Dynasties is tenuous. A tantalizing glimpse of palace intrigue during the Sixth Dynasty is supplied by the "autobiography" of an official named Weni, who describes how he was charged with presiding over a secret trial of Pepy I's chief queen. This evidence is not enough, however, to permit an evaluation of the episode, even in the light of the king's later marriages with the two women who became the mothers of his heirs. Probably the most indicative signs of political change are found in the evidence for official careers—revealing, for instance, the banishment of kings' sons from the highest offices in the bureaucracy by the early Fifth Dynasty and periodic reorganizations of the government service thereafter. While these changes surely reflect efforts to define and restrict personal power, the reasons for most of them remain obscure.

A somewhat clearer, if not detailed, picture emerges of Egypt's foreign relations during this period. Commercial and cultural ties with the city of Byblos go back into the fourth millennium, and private tomb inscriptions occasionally refer to border fortresses and to Egyptian forays onto Asiatic soil (e.g., in Weni's autobiography, once again). It seems clear that such activities were essentially disciplinary and took place only to protect Egypt's security or pres-

tige. One cannot yet speak of an Egyptian empire extending its control over western Asia.

In the south, however, a closer relationship had existed with the Nubian Nile Valley since late Predynastic times. It is unclear what effect (if any) the expanding power of Egypt had on the abrupt disappearance of the early indigenous culture of Nubia (the "A" Group) during the earlier First Dynasty; but the Egyptians had a free hand in exploiting Lower Nubia for much of the Old Kingdom. At Buhen, near the Second Cataract, an Egyptian base of operations flourished until the late Fifth Dynasty. Divisions of "pacified Nubians" were recruited to serve with the pharaoh's forces in Egypt, while graffiti at mines and quarry sites in Nubia and the Eastern Desert attest to the vigorous activity of Egyptian expeditions, their way being smoothed whenever necessary by military operations (notably during the Fourth Dynasty).

Egyptian control over the south weakened, however, with the advent of a new cultural element (the "C" Group) during the late Old Kingdom. It was the threat of Egyptian power, no doubt, that prompted Nubian rulers to make formal obeisance to King Merenre of the Sixth Dynasty; but the growing independence of Nubian polities could not be contained. Tomb inscriptions of the governors of Aswan, on Egypt's southern border, tell of increasing difficulties with Nubians and other "desert dwellers" during the later Sixth Dynasty. This failure of the regime's grip on the south perhaps reflects its increasing insecurity at home.

Pepy II Neferkare, builder of the Old Kingdom's last important pyramid complex, was also its last ruler of any consequence. The troubles that seem to have overwhelmed the regime after his death, nevertheless, had been brewing for a long time. Declining resources, as seen in the decreased size and care evident in the building of pyramids after the middle of the Sixth Dynasty and in shrinking cult endowments during the later Fifth and Sixth Dynasties, help to define the problem but do not explain it. A decline in the annual levels of the Nile flood, accompanied by increasing aridity in the deserts adjoining the river valley, must have imposed strains on the economy. But while these problems surely contributed to the regime's malaise, they were compounded by other factors.

The bureaucracy, for one, having been entrenched in the nomes (or provinces) to serve the king's will more efficiently, was now in a good position to demand greater access to the perquisites of power as the price of its continuing service. Such pressures, when combined with unfavorable natural conditions, created a dynamic between the king's house and its servants that gradually undermined the foundations of royal power. We know virtually nothing about the troubles of Pepy II's successors (who are barely attested but are mostly assigned by tradition to Manetho's Seventh and Eighth Dynasties); but their insignificance is patent, and their story ends in a humiliating reversal of fortune. Even before the regime at Memphis died out (circa 2130), its last kings had been reduced to the sidelines of power—conferring the veneer of legitimacy on the magnates, nominally viziers and nomarchs (provincial governors) of Upper Egypt, who lorded over an increasingly fractious country. A story, perhaps dating to the Middle Kingdom, which portrays Pepy II as the compromised leader of a corrupt court, is a characteristic judgment on what posterity must have seen as the unworthiness of a failed dynasty.

CIVIL WAR AND THE QUEST FOR LEGITIMACY

The disappearance of the regime at Memphis brought the latent power struggle among the nomarchs into the open and initiated what is known as the First Intermediate period. Kingship was successfully claimed by the rulers of Herakleopolis (Ihnasya al-Madina), but their regime (Ninth to Tenth Dynasties) flourished only in the northern half of the country and failed to gain firm control over Upper Egypt. About half a century of warfare between different contenders in the south was brought to an end by the triumph of a Theban family (Eleventh Dynasty) who passed gradually from vassalhood to rivalry with the Herakleopolitans.

In the ensuing civil war, success initially favored the Tenth Dynasty. The Theban Inyotef II's victory in the region of Abydos was reversed in the first part of the reign of his grandson, Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, and further progress

by the Eleventh Dynasty in Middle Egypt was blocked by its rival's partisans (most notably the governors of Asyut). It has also been maintained that Herakleopolis enjoyed the initiative in the war of words, but this claim is now less certain. The *Eloquent Peasant*, ostensibly set in the time of Nubkaure, can be redated to the later Twelfth Dynasty. It may still be argued that the *Instruction for King Merykare* was written to promote the Tenth Dynasty's image among its subjects. The themes that are sounded in this work—concerns for social justice, humane treatment of subordinates, and the king's moral responsibility—are new, less in substance than for the explicitness with which they were now advanced in justifying the legitimacy of royal government.

Despite their early success, the kings of Herakleopolis could not sustain their regime. Most of the nomarchs in Middle Egypt, who held the balance of power between the two sides, either defected to the Theban cause or tacitly allowed Nebhepetre Mentuhotep to avenge his early defeat and eliminate the northern kingdom. Thus, after nearly a century and a half of civil war, Egypt was reunited under one ruler.

Nebhepetre Mentuhotep's victory in about 1980 BCE marks the beginning of the second period of unified rule in Egypt, which historians call the Middle Kingdom. Even during this period of relative calm, however, there were occasional convulsions, as the ruling house and various elements of the body politic contended with one another. The first of these upsets brought the dynasty of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep to an abrupt end. Although it had demonstrated evenhandedness in absorbing former administrators of the Herakleopolitan regime into its government, the orientation of the Eleventh Dynasty remained resolutely Theban. It is as impossible to assess whether or how much this provincialism was resented as it is to measure the impact of hard times that persisted into the first decade of the Twelfth Dynasty and are mentioned (perhaps in exaggerated terms) in the letters of a prosperous farmer named Hekanakhte. What is clear is that the last king of the Eleventh Dynasty, Nebtowyre Mentuhotep, was succeeded by the man who had almost certainly served as his vizier before he ascended the throne as Amenemhet (Ammenemes) I.

Although the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty also hailed from Upper Egypt, Amenemhet I made a point of shifting the center of government away from Thebes and back to the north: the royal residence was now located at Itjtawy ("Grasper of the Two Lands"), between Heralopolis and Memphis, where it remained for more than three centuries. In his regime's first essay in political propaganda, the *Prophecy of Neferti*, Amenemhet I had himself presented as a national savior, coming after a protracted period of chaos. Governing, to all appearances, by universal consent (even with the support of the remaining nomarchs, who now constituted a hereditary nobility in their provinces), the Twelfth Dynasty ruler seemed well launched as the acknowledged "Lord of the Two Lands."

The regime's own propaganda indicates, however, that consent was far from unanimous. The *Instruction of Amenemhet*, which presents itself as Amenemhet I's personal testament to his successor, Senwosret I (see illustrations of these rulers in the chapter "The Middle Kingdom in Egypt" later in this volume), implies that the latter had been raised to the throne after an attack on the elder king's life that, apparently, came very close to succeeding. "Have women ever marshaled the ranks? Are brawlers nourished within a house?" Such passages suggest that the dissidents came from within the royal court, but their deeper purposes are unknown to us. What seems to be a different plot, centered on another son of Amenemhet I, was put down by Senwosret I just after his father died. So widely felt was the harshness of the regime's reaction, however, that the king was eventually forced to moderate it. This accommodation is the theme of another of the Twelfth Dynasty's brilliant manipulations of literature, the *Story of Sinuhe*, which traces its hero through flight and exile to his honored reinstatement at court. Scholars have long believed that Amenemhet I and Senwosret I reacted to these challenges by inaugurating the first coregency of the Twelfth Dynasty and that kings of the later Twelfth resorted frequently to this expedient to ensure a smooth transition from one reign to the next. While this model is still widely followed, readers should be aware that it remains open to debate. (See "The Middle Kingdom in Egypt" later in this volume.)

The nomarchs in Middle Egypt, though apparently uninvolved in the troubles that beset the first two kings of the new dynasty, were another potential problem for the regime. Independence, limited but significant, had been the price of their adherence to the reunited kingdom of the Eleventh Dynasty. In view of the circumstances of its rise to power, the Twelfth Dynasty had little choice but to honor this arrangement, though with some precautions. Asyut, whose old ruling family had gone down with the Heralopolitans, was placed under the control of a royal appointee whose title ("great overlord of the south" instead of the usual "great overlord of nome X") could imply a supervisory role in Middle Egypt. Similarly, when the Twelfth Dynasty installed a new line of governors at Aswan, on the southern border, these magnates exercised all of their predecessors' traditional powers except the important military command.

To all appearances, though, if the regime expected trouble from its over-mighty subjects, it got none. The nomarchs and their families proved to be loyal and energetic servants of the crown who presumed to nothing beyond the purely local prominence they enjoyed. By its mere existence, however, an entrenched elite class implicitly compromised the monarch's claim to absolute power and, by extension, his legitimacy. A sudden coup by Senwosret III has been seen as the means of the government's final attack on nomarchs' power, but this view is not tenable: the great provincial families disappeared gradually, some of them dying out perhaps one or two generations before Senwosret III's reign and with at least one surviving into the time of Amenemhet III. The little that is known about the individual cases also suggests that the nomarchs as a group went quietly for the most part—perhaps fading into the ranks of the higher bureaucracy, where people of this background had been serving since the Twelfth Dynasty began. A number of "pessimistic" works, such as the *Lament of Khakheperresonb*, have been seen as protesting these changes in the social order, but this is doubtful; and in any case, they failed to budge the regime and achieved only a posthumous triumph as literary classics.

The government, for its part, sponsored an outpouring of "loyalist" literature that glorified the king as the divine center of society. On a

more practical level, it also reorganized the administration along lines more centralized than any that had been since the fall of the Old Kingdom. Not surprisingly, the traditional provinces were de-emphasized in the new system, which created two large districts, corresponding to Upper and Lower Egypt, in their place. Local affairs in each of these districts were run by officials who answered to the central government, headed by the vizier, at the capital. Although the new system failed in its attempt to eliminate the nomes as foci of regional identity, its simplicity, with its straightforward chain of command under a chief minister who served at the king's pleasure, must have been one of the factors that kept it operating along these lines for nearly a millennium. Much of its success can also be traced to the government's efforts, particularly the active recruiting of qualified personnel through the presentation of the rewards of the scribal profession and of government service in the propagandist literature of the Twelfth Dynasty.

Bolstered by their many works of peace, such as the extensive land reclamation that increased the productive capacity of the Faiyum under Amenemhet III, the kings of the Twelfth Dynasty could claim to have revalidated royal rule in Egypt. Their quiet revolution, with its credible restoration of strong central government, overcame all opposition and public criticism. This preeminence, along with the overall prosperity that marks its nearly two centuries of rule, surely added to the classic status that the "House of Itjtawy" achieved in the eyes of future generations.

THE TWELFTH DYNASTY AND ITS NEIGHBORS

The *Story of Sinuhe*, in its account of its hero's enforced residence abroad, offers many revealing insights into contemporary western Asia—one of the most notable being Egypt's quite limited involvement in Asiatic affairs. The border with Asia was fortified, and only officially permitted traffic was allowed into the Nile Valley. Egyptian messengers journeyed through Sinuhe's lands on unspecified state errands, but

they do not seem to have engaged the greater powers of the Near East—whether Mesopotamians or Anatolians—in any noticeable way.

Interaction with the Syrian and Palestinian localities within Egypt's orbit was not always peaceful. From the *Execration Texts* of the later Twelfth Dynasty it appears that the Egyptians differentiated probable enemies from other spots (such as Byblos) where trouble was less likely. Actual war records are rare. Incursions into Asia are attested under Amenemhet II and Senwosret III—the latter in the autobiography of the official Khusobek, although this inscription is expressed so cryptically that neither its locality nor even its outcome is certain. Traditions preserved in Greek authors credit vast Asiatic conquests to a "Sesostris," but this figure is surely a composite of later empire builders, and there is now broad consensus against assuming that any Middle Kingdom pharaoh governed even the most loosely organized empire in Asia. The pharaohs' interests in the Levant, far more commercial than they were political, were addressed by occasional intervention, and Egyptian policy toward the north remained essentially what it had been during the Old Kingdom.

In the south, by contrast, the Twelfth Dynasty intervened more forcefully. Egyptian control over Lower Nubia had been reestablished by Nebhepetre Mentuhotep, who recruited mercenaries from there to serve in his final thrust against the Herakleopolitans. Pressure from Nubian territories farther south and from nomadic desert tribesmen who sought homes in the Nile Valley, however, were potential dangers that the kings of the Twelfth Dynasty decided they could not ignore. Their solution was the construction of an unprecedented chain of fortresses running through Lower Nubia. Begun early under Senwosret I, they were completed by Senwosret III, whose impact on the defenses of the Second Cataract region was so profound that he was subsequently worshiped as a local deity. It is clear that these forts served as staging posts for campaigns farther south, notably under Senwosret III himself, but their more regular function was to control the principal routes that led into the Egyptian stretch of the Nile Valley. For all that they greatly increased Egypt's investment in the south, nevertheless the forts re-

maintained glorified bases of operations rather than centers of a foreign power ruling over Lower Nubia. True empire would come only with a more thoroughgoing occupation, which was probably not yet conceived during the Middle Kingdom.

STAGNATION AND INVASION

The last ruler of the Twelfth Dynasty, Nefrusobek (Sobeknefru), took the throne after the premature death of her brother, Amenemhet IV (circa 1763). Both the brevity of her rule and its position at the end of the dynasty may suggest that her reign was an expedient that failed; but the nature of political change is especially hard to pin down in this instance, for the regime that continued to reside at Itjtawy after her death was clearly very different from the Twelfth Dynasty. Of at least fifty-five kings in the Thirteenth Dynasty, only a handful reigned for five years or more, with most being attested for much shorter terms during a period of less than a century and a half. Nor was the Thirteenth Dynasty a single family, for more than one king openly traced his descent from nonroyal roots.

The assumption that these short, unstable reigns were the result of political turmoil is hard to credit, however, for we know that the country remained united under this curious regime. Moreover, a remarkable stability is seen in the ranks of government outside the royal house. During this period it was not uncommon for several kings to have been served by a single vizier, and many of these high officials were related to one another. Offices also tended to remain in the hands of the same extended families, some of whom could claim earlier kings and queens of the dynasty among their ancestors. In other words, it is hard to avoid the impression that real power in the Thirteenth Dynasty had devolved onto the administrative class that the later kings of the Twelfth Dynasty had created in their own interest. The traditional style of monarchy now cloaked a system in which the ultimate prize of high government office was kingship, held by representatives of family groups who gave way to one another with the ebb and flow of their accumulated influence. Although it would be

inaccurate to speak of constitutional monarchy, the participants in this system could not avoid conniving at an interesting double standard: at no other time, surely, was the autocratic style of political power less in line with its real foundations, or its dependence on the officials who actually ran the government more pronounced.

A system thus operated in its members' interest might seem, in principle, no worse than the more purely monarchical governments that had preceded it. In practice, however, the Thirteenth Dynasty could not sustain the high level of cohesiveness and security maintained by the Twelfth. In the far south, for example, the tight discipline maintained at the forts under the Twelfth Dynasty gradually gave way to a more relaxed regimen, as garrison troops married local women and became permanent residents, while the forts themselves took on the character of border towns rather than strictly military installations. Eventually, toward the end of the Thirteenth Dynasty, the Egyptian occupation of Lower Nubia was terminated: the forts seem to have been abandoned and lay empty for a time.

Another symptom of the regime's ineffectiveness lay in the onset of political separatism: the last kings of the dynasty were unable to prevent the secession of at least part of the Delta, which pursued an independent course under rulers who are referred to as the Fourteenth Dynasty. The worst danger came, however, from an unexpected quarter. For a long time past, Canaanite immigrants had infiltrated into the Delta and settled there. This element proved to be a nucleus, and perhaps even the fifth column, of an invading force that was to disrupt the entire Nile Valley.

"Tutimaïos: in his reign, for what cause I know not, a blast of God smote us; and unexpectedly, from the regions of the east, invaders of obscure race marched in confidence of victory against our land." With these words, quoted by Josephus, Manetho begins his account of the Asiatic invaders known as "Hyksos." Later memory may have exaggerated the suddenness of their onslaught, but there is no doubting their impact on Egypt. Both the Thirteenth and the Fourteenth Dynasties fell, about 1630 or shortly thereafter. A leading Asiatic family, whom historians refer to as the Fifteenth Dynasty, ruled from its headquarters at Avaris and controlled a

bloc of territories from the Delta up to Hermopolis (al-Ashmunein) in Middle Egypt. These Hyksos ("rulers of foreign countries" in Egyptian) did not rule the entire country, however, nor did they govern all of their part of Egypt directly. Egyptian vassals served as proxies in the Nile Valley, and some regions of the Delta were controlled by a number of minor Asiatic princes who are grouped for convenience into Manetho's Sixteenth Dynasty.

The only potential rival of the Hyksos Fifteenth Dynasty was in Upper Egypt, where a rump state centered at Thebes had survived the fall of the Thirteenth Dynasty. The early rulers of this Seventeenth Dynasty also acknowledged the Hyksos' suzerainty, however, while to the south they were hemmed in by another of the Asiatics' allies—the kingdom of Kush, which had expanded from its base at Kerma, near the Third Cataract, and had reoccupied the abandoned Egyptian forts farther north. This is the situation referred to by Kamose, last king of the dynasty, when he complains rhetorically that "one ruler is in Avaris and another in Kush, while I sit associated with an Asiatic and a Nubian. Each man has his slice of Egypt, dividing the land with me."

In Kamose's victory inscription, the muted resistance of the royal councillors to the war policy proposed by the king illustrates the political paralysis of all too many Egyptians during this Second Intermediate period. The accommodation that is urged with the Hyksos was perhaps prudent in view of the status quo, with its seductive prosperity and calm. It was just this normality, though, and the ease with which Egyptians consented to their own weakness that grated on the last rulers of the Seventeenth Dynasty. Especially hard to tolerate was the frequency with which their own subjects took service in Kush, returning to a comfortable retirement at home after serving as garrison troops in the very forts the Nubians had appropriated less than a century before. Accommodation was finally repudiated by Seqenenre Tao II, Kamose's elder brother and predecessor, who died in battle with the Hyksos and their allies. Kamose's successful raids on Kushite territory and even against Avaris itself foreshadowed the final struggle that was to regain Egypt's independence and result in a very different order in the Near East.

THE NEW IMPERIAL STATE

The war of liberation was brought to a triumphant conclusion by Kamose's successor, Ahmose (Amosis), in or shortly after 1529. The Asiatics were routed in a series of campaigns against Hyksos bases in Lower Egypt and the Levant. Later tradition honored this achievement by initiating a new period with Ahmose, who might otherwise be considered a member of the Seventeenth Dynasty. The break with the past was real, however, for the era inaugurated by the Eighteenth Dynasty was marked not only by national unity but by an approach to foreign affairs fundamentally different from any that had preceded it.

The new policy is seen earliest in Nubia. Control over the Second Cataract area, already re-established under Kamose, was consolidated by Ahmose. No longer could the Egyptians view this buffer zone as a sufficient protection against the Nubian threat, however. Under Amenhotep I and Thutmose I, a sharply fought series of campaigns carried the war farther south, to the center of the kingdom of Kush and beyond, until Egyptian armies had quelled not only the Kushites but any other powers that might support them. Further wars during the next two reigns only confirmed the permanence of Egypt's hold on the south and the regime that was now imposed there. All conquered territory was annexed, extending the boundaries of Egypt to include not only Wawat and Kush (Lower and Upper Nubia) but still remoter regions that lay upstream from the Fourth Cataract and the great bend of the Nile. A few native rulers were allowed to survive, acting as local intermediaries between their people and the Egyptians. Otherwise, the government of occupation was set up along military lines and was headed by a viceroy whose title, "King's Son of Kush," stressed the status of its nonroyal holder as the pharaoh's deputy in Nubia.

Now, more than ever, Nubia's resources could be exploited freely. Not only its mineral wealth (a traditional interest of Egypt's) but also Nubian agricultural land was appropriated by the crown or given to temple estates based in Egypt. Old attitudes died hard, as is shown by the letter of a tipsy Amenhotep II, preserved on a stela of his viceroy, which gives jocular advice on the proper treatment of Nubians. Once the per-

manence of the Egyptian presence had been recognized, however, the Nubians in the Nile Valley accepted it on the whole with equanimity. Nubia erupted in general rebellion only once after the mid Eighteenth Dynasty, in Merneptah's year 4, and most of the wars Egypt fought in the south were against marauders in the river valley or in outlying territory. Also having a profound influence on Nubia were Egyptian material and intellectual culture, whose dominance no doubt eased Nubia's integration into the new superstate.

After some initial trouble (when Ahmose had to face two rebellions in Upper Egypt), the new regime established itself firmly at home. For a while, however, it seemed as if the dynasty might end just as soon as it had properly begun. Generations of intermarriage, a regular practice of the Seventeenth Dynasty that was continued in the Eighteenth, were probably at the root of the difficulty that surfaced under Amenhotep (Amenophis) I, when the royal family ceased producing viable male heirs.

Ultimately the dynasty saved itself by choosing a successor from outside its main line. We do not know why Amenhotep I chose Thutmose I as his heir; but Thutmose's marriage into the royal family must have offered an acceptable solution to the dynasty's problems. The marriage, however, produced only a daughter, Hatshepsut; and Thutmose I was compelled to beget his male heir on another woman. Since the marriage of Thutmose II with his half-sister Hatshepsut also proved barren of male issue, once again the heir was begotten on a woman who did not belong to the family of Ahmose. Although some writers have seen these matrimonial expedients as evidence for an essentially matrilineal principle of succession for the Seventeenth and early Eighteenth dynasties, it is more probable that they reflect nothing more than the dynasty's eagerness to maintain as long as possible the connection with its founding family.

The dynastic crisis came to a head when Thutmose II died unexpectedly, leaving the child Thutmose III as his heir. The extreme youth of the new pharaoh created a vacuum that his aunt Hatshepsut filled, first as regent and finally when she had herself declared king by an oracle of the god Amun. Her tenure as senior coregent, which lasted until her death, gave Thutmose III the time he needed to mature into his royal

office. Instead of implying any lingering resentment of his aunt's usurpation, the official dishonoring of Hatshepsut's memory that occurred toward the end of Thutmose III's life may well reflect an overreaction in the concern the king felt for his own son's imminent succession, though it may also have been planned to defuse any latent opposition to the Thutmoside line now that Ahmose's family had died out.

Thutmose III's accession to sole rule, in the twenty-second year of his reign, coincided with another crisis, this time in western Asia. Here, despite the recent trauma of foreign domination, the Egyptians had found it more difficult to take the decisive measures they had applied in the southern Nile Valley. The civilization of the "wretched Asiatics" was richer and technologically more sophisticated, and they were far more alien in speech and culture, than the inhabitants of "vile Kush." Moreover, it was not easy to contemplate even a limited occupation of lands that did not share a common river with Egypt. Although Ahmose had followed his victories over the Hyksos with campaigning on Asiatic soil, and Thutmose I had even carried Egyptian arms as far as the Euphrates, almost certainly against the growing kingdom of Mitanni, no permanent occupation seems to have followed. Here, as in Nubia, it was becoming obvious that temporary measures were ineffective against an entrenched foe.

Thutmose III's recognition of this fact and his ability to initiate a suitable new policy constituted his greatness and laid the basis for Egypt's empire in Asia. Soon after Hatshepsut's death (circa 1458), he marched into Palestine to quell a coalition of 330 local princes. What distinguished this campaign from all earlier Egyptian triumphs in Asia was the way in which Thutmose III sought to normalize relations with his Asiatic neighbors. Instead of slaughtering his opponents, the king extracted only an oath of loyalty, tribute, and hostages—usually princes' heirs, who learned a vassal's duties in the impressive atmosphere of the court and went home only when their fathers had died. Carving out a permanent sphere of influence took many years: by the time Thutmose III's annals run out, some twenty years after his "first campaign of victory," he had secured the Levantine coast from Palestine to southern Syria and had battled many of its princes into sullen submission. Their



Red granite statue of the sphinx of Hatshepsut found at Dayr al-Bahri, Eighteenth Dynasty. The statue weighs more than fourteen thousand pounds and is over five feet (150 cm.) high. METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

continued rebelliousness was abetted by the power of Mitanni, which was as mistrustful of her rival's intentions as Egypt was of hers; but although Amenhotep II seems to have extended Egypt's power north to Ugarit on the coast, the two spheres had already reached their natural inland limits in southern Syria, just north of Qadesh.

Gradually the two superpowers moved toward peace. A full rapprochement was finally achieved under Thutmose IV, in token of which he was able to marry the daughter of the Mitannian king. By the next generation at the latest, the relationship had blossomed into a defensive alliance whereby each side promised to aid the other if it asked for help against a third party. Although this partnership between Mitanni and

Egypt, sealed by diplomatic marriages over three generations, lasted less than a century, it was to form a cornerstone of a continuing relationship between the great powers of the Near East. (See the chapter on Akhetaten for an illustration of a royal couple.) In the fourteenth century it meant that the "great kings" of Babylon, Egypt, and Mitanni acknowledged equality ("brotherhood") with one another and kept their respective vassals in line. Complete peace was unattainable, for the many nomadic and otherwise unsettled groups in the Near East were given to banditry and took sides in local wars between city-states. In general, though, the superpowers were able to keep lawlessness from spreading beyond acceptable limits, and the prevailing accord between leading states fostered a form of internationalism that was to last into the early years of the twelfth century.

The reign of Amenhotep III marks the apogee of the Eighteenth Dynasty's prosperity. The regime commanded the ample resources of the Nile Valley along with a mineral wealth that made her the envy of her neighbors. "Let my brother send me in great quantities gold that has not been worked," King Tushratta of Mitanni urges Amenhotep III, ". . . [for] in my brother's country gold is as plentiful as dust." Affluence occasionally bred insolence. When Kadashman-Enlil I of Babylon wrote requesting for himself a daughter of Amenhotep III in marriage, the pharaoh felt able to issue a stinging reply: "From of old, no daughter of the king of Egypt has been given to anyone!" The Babylonian king replied in the same vein—the pharaoh should send one of his court ladies instead: who would know the difference?—but the honors in this exchange went to Egypt, for the pharaoh was able to get away with receiving a Babylonian bride without making what, in Egyptian eyes, was an inappropriately submissive return.

At home, the regime's position seemed secure and unassailable: the central administration, run essentially along late Middle Kingdom lines (with significant changes in the organization of the armed services and a new government of conquests), served the royal will in a style that recalled the most glorious days of the Old or Middle Kingdoms. This serene majesty came to an abrupt end, however, as the convulsions of the next reign shook the regime to its very foundations.

THE REVOLUTION OF AKHENATEN AND ITS AFTERMATH

Amenhotep III should have been succeeded by his eldest son, Thutmose V. Because the crown prince died young, however, it was his brother who ultimately came to the throne about 1353 as Amenhotep IV. His choice of this personal name, so long associated with the dynasty, reflected the very special place held by the god Amun in the current version of the royal myth.

The idea that the king was the son of a god, which had been part of the ideology since the Old Kingdom, implied that the monarch's official identity derived from his divine father's nature. In view of the dynasty's southern background, it is not surprising that the font of the king's divinity was seen in the chief god of Thebes. Amun, or "Amun-Re, King of the Gods," had already achieved more than local status by the Middle Kingdom. The war of liberation and then Egypt's imperial conquests had been conducted under his sponsorship, while his clergy's special relationship with the dynasty was strengthened by the royal family's financial interest in the cult. The Estate of Amun was probably the richest in Egypt (although its wealth can be documented only in records from two centuries later); and a good indication of the cult's preeminence is the fact that, as of the mid Eighteenth Dynasty, Amun's high priest was often given official recognition as "overseer of all the priests of all the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt." In other words, Amun's was unquestionably the country's leading cult when Amenhotep IV became king.

We do not know what set Amenhotep IV so violently against Egypt's traditional gods. In the Earlier Proclamation of his new order, inscribed on boundary stelae at el-Amarna, the king spoke of hearing things that were "worse than what I had heard" in the first years of his reign, "worse than those things Thutmose III [?] had heard, . . . worse than those things heard by any king who had assumed the white crown," but we can only guess what they were. Of the king's hostility to Egypt's ancestral religion, however, there is no doubt.

During the first four years of his reign these measures were directed toward the creation of a

new cult devised by the king himself. Its central figure was the solar disk, the Aten, which was traditionally a rather neutral term for the sun's physical presence but one that had come into increasing prominence in recent years. This figure, now represented in the traditional guise of divinity in Egypt, was given a cult apparatus, with temples and a clergy of its own. At Thebes, the "city of Amun," Amenhotep IV had the audacity to build the Aten's temple directly in front of the shrine where commoners had normally prayed to the god of Thebes. New religious texts proclaimed the superiority of the Aten, "who knew no crafting," to the other gods with their ephemeral cult images. Older temples were even taxed to support this new god, whose high priest was none other than the king himself.

Finally, in the fifth year of his reign (circa 1349), Amenhotep IV moved still more decisively against the old order. The king changed his name to Akhenaten ("He Who Is Effective for Aten") and began building, at a vacant site in Middle Egypt, modern el-Amarna, a new capital that was ostensibly located at the place where the god had first "appeared" in primeval times. Akhetaten ("Horizon of Aten") was the preferred royal residence for the rest of Akhenaten's reign. The traditional centers were neglected, apart from the new order's subsidiary cult places elsewhere in Egypt, and their temples were eventually closed. Most gods, particularly Amun, had their names hacked out and their carved or painted figures destroyed, the better to blot out their memory. The only authorized cult was the Aten's, who was now shown literally as the solar disk whose rays gave life and other powers. The Aten, Akhenaten, and Nefertiti, his chief queen, formed a new divine triad that embodied the primeval forces of life and was the sole official focus of the people's worship. This arrangement transformed what Akhenaten saw as the recent, unhealthy dependence of the king on an outside force (Amun) into an integrated system that restored the monarch's central position as the nexus of humanity and the divine. (For the development of images of the royal family, see "Akhetaten: A Portrait in Art of an Ancient Egyptian Capital" later in this volume.)

Even the luckiest and most adroit of rulers would have had difficulty getting public acceptance for such drastic reforms. Hints of Akh-

enaten's failure can be detected in some slight evidence for covert worship of the old gods, as well as in changes of the Aten cult's religious rhetoric that suggest a greater spiritual isolation toward the end of Akhenaten's reign.

Akhenaten also happened to challenge the old order at a time when Egypt faced serious difficulties abroad. The collapse of the Mitannian kingdom knocked an essential support from under the international system in the Near East. Its replacement by the Hittite Empire was too sudden to permit this new power to come to easy terms with Egypt. The disarray among the superpowers also allowed some of Egypt's vassals to reconsider their options. As a result, Egypt not only lost her northernmost border provinces to the Hittites, but she now faced a state of tension in her near eastern possessions for which she was not prepared. Although the empire did not fall, it was diminished, while at home most of the blame could be conveniently laid to the king's religious policy.

The retreat began very quickly, about the time of Akhenaten's death. His two ephemeral successors—Nefernefruaten (who may have been Akhenaten's queen, Nefertiti) and his son-in-law Smenkhkare (possibly also a son of Akhenaten)—took steps that reestablished Amun, and presumably the other gods, to some degree. It was only under Tutankhamun (another son-in-law, and probably Smenkhkare's brother), however, that the traditional cults were fully restored and the religious revolution was repudiated. The dynasty's resources were now committed to repairing the damage that Akhenaten's agents had inflicted all over Egypt—a massive task that required the next three generations to complete. Well might Tutankhamun's lavish burial have seemed to reflect a renewal in the accord between the regime and society.

In fact, the premature death of Tutankhamun, without an heir, precipitated the Eighteenth Dynasty's final crisis. The extinction of the royal family suddenly opened the way for the powerful individuals who had ruled, in effect, since Akhenaten's death: Ay, adviser to two generations of kings, and the "generalissimo" Horemheb. A desperate expedient, whereby Tutankhamun's widow tried to settle both dynastic and foreign crises by asking for a Hittite prince in marriage, came to nothing when the

young man died, either assassinated or a victim of the plague then rampant in the Near East. The dynasty's former "servants" then ruled in succession—Ay first, briefly, and then Horemheb, whose reign provided the healing measure of strong rule that brought the Eighteenth Dynasty to a close about 1292.

THE RAMESSIDE STATE

Horemheb's childlessness caused him to leave the kingdom to a carefully chosen associate, Ramesses (Ramses) I, who already had an adult son and possibly a grandson. Having benefited from the sobriety of Horemheb's rule, the country was ready to accept his designated heirs. The international situation also favored the new Nineteenth Dynasty by permitting Sety I to recover Qadesh and Amurru, two border states that had defected to the Hittites during the later Eighteenth Dynasty. With the succession already secure when the young Ramesses II came to the throne, the dynasty seemed to ride on an easy swell of popularity and good fortune. (See "Pharaoh Ramesses II and His Times" later in this volume.)

The Hittites had never acquiesced in their loss of territory, however, and by about 1275 Ramesses II was setting out to recover Qadesh. Plagued by poor intelligence, the Egyptian armies marched into a Hittite trap: the most that could be said for the Battle of Qadesh was that Ramesses II avoided total annihilation and was able to retreat in good order, although Qadesh and Amurru were subsequently lost forever. (See "Hittite Military Organization" in Part 4, Vol. I.) After a protracted period of fighting and cold war, relations between the two superpowers were again normalized, this time by a treaty (circa 1259) with provisions for mutual assistance quite similar to the earlier arrangement between Egypt and Mitanni. The pharaoh's later marriages to two Hittite princesses further restored the general accord among the great powers which had broken down during the Amarna period.

Ramesses II's long reign was another of those periods in which Egypt seemed to function at its peak. This impression must be balanced,



The great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, early Nineteenth Dynasty, submerged in a heap of rubble during restoration at the beginning of the twentieth century CE. THE FRANCO-EGYPTIAN CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE TEMPLES OF KARNAK, LUXOR/ PHOTO: GEORGES LEGRAIN

however, against a number of persistent problems. Political instability, the least enduring of them, can be traced to feuding among branches of Ramesses II's large family after his death. Twice between 1204 and 1190 the country plunged into civil war. First Sety II and the usurper Amenmesse contended for the throne. Then, on the death of the Nineteenth Dynasty's last pharaoh, Queen Tewosret, the pretensions of Chancellor Bay, an ambitious court favorite of Asiatic stock, were successfully opposed by members of the country's higher administration, led by an Egyptian contender of uncertain origins, Sethnakhte.

While later tradition recognized Sethnakhte as the founder of the Twentieth Dynasty, the new regime was not entirely freed from internal strife. In the next generation, for instance, members of the king's family and the highest circles

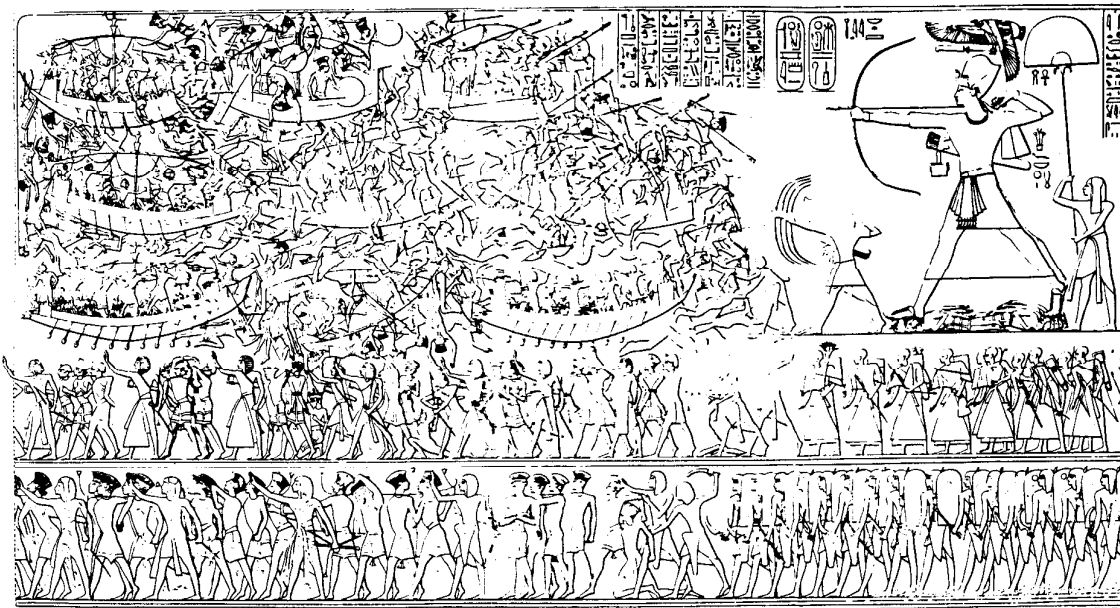
at court were executed in connection with a failed harem conspiracy late in the reign of Ramesses III. It is possible, though not certain, that this struggle between branches of the royal house had repercussions in subsequent reigns. Ramesses VI's enmity to his two predecessors has been inferred from sporadic erasures on the monuments of Ramesses IV and V, but the evidence is too ambiguous to prove the seriousness or even the existence of animosity among these kings. So little is known about the later Ramesseses that it is impossible to say much about them, even when the political crisis at the dynasty's end erupted into the open.

More apparent in contemporary records, however, is the impact of current population movements in the Mediterranean world. Wandering groups of "Sea Peoples" (see the chapter on the Philistines and the accompanying illus-

tration) had been harassing the Delta in Rameses II's time, and nearer home there was rising pressure from an overpopulated Libya as its inhabitants sought to emigrate into the Nile Valley. A string of forts constructed by Rameses II along the main coastal road from Cyrenaica proved to be ineffective, for small bands of Libyans continued to infiltrate via desert tracks into the western Delta and became a menace to its inhabitants. The crisis became acute in the reign of Merneptah, Rameses II's successor, when an alliance between a Libyan confederacy and several groups of Sea Peoples threatened to detach the Delta and destroy the integrity of the kingdom. The armed might of Egypt successfully repulsed this challenge, as well as a contemporary, probably related, revolt in Nubia. It did so again under Rameses III, who faced two separate invasions from Libya and a fresh, even more formidable, wave of Sea Peoples. Among the casualties, however, were Egypt's possessions in the Near East and her chief diplomatic partner, the Hittite Empire, which disappeared completely. Either because Egypt's military "umbrella" was overextended, or because it was

seen as no longer necessary now that the Sea Peoples had eliminated the other superpower, the Egyptian presence in western Asia was withdrawn by the later Twentieth Dynasty. A more delayed repercussion came later from the unresolved "Libyan problem" in the Delta and the impact of Libyan prisoners of war who were now settled in military colonies throughout the north.

The onset of territorial separatism, on which the New Kingdom ultimately foundered, is difficult to chart. It is certainly true that new royal residences in the eastern Delta, Pi-Ramessé and later Tanis, were much patronized by the kings of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties. While the impression that the later Ramesside kings seldom left Lower Egypt may be only that, there seem to have been fewer royal visits to Upper Egypt, and a growing responsibility for management in the south was given to Amun's high priests. The result did not exactly fulfill the dread of a usurping clergy that a ruler such as Akhenaten might have felt, for with exceptions (e.g., during the rebellion of Amenmesse in the later Nineteenth Dynasty), the priests remained



Drawing of a relief showing the battle between Rameses III and the fleet of the "Sea Peoples" after a relief found on the north wall of Rameses III's Memorial Temple, Medinet Habu, Twentieth Dynasty. ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO, CHICAGO

loyal to the regime. While it is possible that Upper Egypt became accustomed to going its own way by the growing remoteness of royal rule, such attitudes are hard to demonstrate, and the outcome may owe more to other circumstances.

One of these circumstances was surely the economic hardships evident in records of the later Twentieth Dynasty. Runaway inflation in the price of grain may owe something to changing climatic conditions, but it could also have been compounded by the interaction of ineptness and venality in a system that depended on an efficient redistribution of goods. A vicious circle of economic desperation, fueling outbreaks of pilferage, tomb robbery, and embezzlement, emerges from trial records of the late Twentieth Dynasty.

This picture is hardly impressionistic either, for it was probably early in Ramesses XI's reign that Upper Egypt exploded in revolt. So serious and widespread were the disturbances that the government's chief representative in Upper Egypt, the high priest of Amun, proved unable to contain them and was even held prisoner by rebels for about eight months. Order was only restored when the viceroy of Kush (appropriately named Pinehas, "the Nubian") intervened and subdued the rebels in a campaign that ranged far north into Middle Egypt. His victory heralded the success of other, essentially military regimes that were to prevail in Egypt for the remainder of its ancient history.

After ruling at Thebes for a number of years, Pinehas was driven out and replaced by another, even mightier subject, the "generalissimo" Herihor, a soldier with Libyan connections whose tenure in Upper Egypt dates from about 1090. We cannot know the extent to which Ramesses XI sought to manipulate events or was manipulated by others. Certainly by the last decade of his reign he had been marginalized, and real power was held by two magnates who divided all Egypt between them. In the south, Herihor had promoted himself to the office of high priest, by virtue of which he eventually claimed the title of king within the temple complex of Amun. The Nubian portion of the empire was gone, detached by Pinehas despite ineffectual attempts by Herihor and his successor, Payankh, to keep it under their dominion, so the Upper Egyptian polity stretched roughly from

Aswan to al-Hiba. The northern sector was governed by Smendes, a relative of Herihor's, who ruled from Tanis with a woman named Tentamun who may have been Ramesses XI's queen. Against such unanimity the Ramesside dynasty could not prevail, although for their own convenience the magnates permitted it to retain a surface legitimacy until a new dispensation became necessary.

EGYPT DIVIDED AND CONQUERED

The death of Ramesses XI in roughly 1075 ushered in the so-called Third Intermediate period. The kingship devolved onto the rulers in the north (Twenty-first Dynasty). The current high priest of Amun, Pinudjem I, renounced the titular kingship which, like Herihor, he had claimed at Thebes, and Smendes was recognized as the new king of record. This continuing arrangement, by which the Theban pontiffs deferred to their northern relatives at Tanis, with whom they regularly intermarried, resolved an ideological conundrum, for both sides now based their legitimacy on the divine will of Amun. Northern rulers established their credentials by displaying in their official titularies birthnames such as Amenemnisu ("Amun Is King") and Psusennes ("The Star Who Appeared in Thebes"), or by claiming the title of Amun's high priest. Theban pontiffs, for their part, regularly maintained the style, and occasionally the titles, of kingship. This balance between the appearance of traditional hierarchy and a de facto regional independence preserved the peace in Egypt even while the country was divided between two regimes.

The closeness of the two ruling families seems to have resulted in another reunification about 960, for the Theban pontiff Psusennes is believed to have succeeded to the throne of the Twenty-first Dynasty as Psusennes II. The ultimate benefit, however, accrued to another group that had been playing a discreet but vital role in affairs since the later Twentieth Dynasty. Captive Libyans, who had been settled as military colonists in the north by Ramesses III, had evolved into a professional military class that,

led by their own chiefs, played a major part in sustaining the two regimes during the Twenty-first Dynasty. Control over these forces, which were swelled by other Libyan immigrants into the Delta, eventually fell to the leader of the Meshwesh Libyans. The influence of these military magnates was soon felt in the highest circles. Not only did they marry into the royal family (which was itself part Libyan, at least through its connection with the family of Herihor), but it appears that, late in the dynasty, a "great chief of the Ma" was father (or step-father?) of King Osorkon (Osochor) the Elder. Libyan control over the regime was complete by the end of Psusennes II's reign, when the great chief of the Ma, Shoshenq, had maneuvered himself into a position of such power that he succeeded to the throne on his nominal master's death.

The founder of this Twenty-second Dynasty is best known for having led a raid into Palestine that is mentioned in the Bible (1 Kings 14:25-26) and recorded in a triumph relief in the temple of Amun at Thebes. Somewhat more enduring, however, was Shoshenq I's attempt to rebuild his kingdom's economy and inner cohesiveness. Particularly at Thebes, by salting the hierarchy with appointees from the royal family and contracting alliances with influential native Thebans, the dynasty succeeded in maintaining unity with the rest of the country for nearly a century. Intimations of a revived separatism during Osorkon II's reign showed up more seriously in the next generation, though, and by the later ninth century the country was split into warring factions. Records from the reign of Shoshenq III imply a growing fragmentation, as the king backed his own candidates in the struggle for power in Upper Egypt and conceded a measure of independence to other princes in the Delta. At the height of this "Libyan anarchy," no fewer than nine major kingdoms and principalities vied for dominance in an increasingly splintered Nile Valley. By the later eighth century, however, the balance of power was gravitating toward two relatively recent powers: a large principality in the western Delta, whose rulers were extending their influence over the rest of Lower Egypt and farther south into the Nile Valley; and a polity in the far south, where the

Theban Twenty-third Dynasty was coming into the orbit of a state that was waxing beyond the borders of Egypt.

The kingdom of Kush had arisen from the ashes of Egypt's viceregal administration in Nubia. Being highly egyptianized in culture and religion, its leaders eventually turned their eyes toward the ancient centers in the northern Nile Valley, and by the mid eighth century the rulers of the "city of Amun" at Thebes had recognized the Kushite Kashta as their overlord. It was to prevent consolidation of any comparable power in the north that Piye (or Piankhy, as he was called in Egyptian) launched his great campaign to achieve domination in the Nile Valley. Piye was content to remain an absentee ruler after his victory, however, and it was only by 712 that his brother Shabaka took steps to wipe out a resurgent "kingdom of the West" by occupying Egypt himself.

The Nubian Twenty-fifth Dynasty contained the "Libyan anarchy" without eliminating it altogether. Although the regime ruled the reunited kingdom from the ancient capital at Memphis and asserted its legitimacy by conspicuously evoking its respect for traditional forms in its public works, it also preserved the former military magnates. Even at Sais, where a Nubian governor ruled for a time, a native "dynasty" was eventually allowed to take power, while many of the other princes seem to have preserved their heads by keeping them down. The use that might be made of these princes against the Nubian regime was not lost on its foreign enemies. When Shebitku and later Taharqa (see the chapter on Kush below for an illustration) challenged Assyrian power in the Levant, it was only a matter of time before the wolf breached the door of Egypt. First Esarhaddon (in 671) and then Assurbanipal (in 667-666) drove Taharqa from Egypt; and when a final revanche was attempted by Tantamani, Taharqa's successor, Assurbanipal returned once again to wreak havoc as far south as Thebes (in 663). Although the kingdom of Kush survived in the Sudan for another millennium, the Nubian regime in Egypt was defunct. In its place were the princely rulers, whom the Assyrians trusted to keep Egypt safely disunited.

Once again, however, Egyptian nationalism

was able to rise above faction. The ruler of Sais, whose proven loyalty had earned him favor with the Assyrians, shrewdly exploited this advantage by tightening his grip on Egypt while keeping his overlords at a distance. As a result, Psamtik I united the entire country by 656, at the beginning of what is known as the Late period. For the last time under indigenous rule, under the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, Egypt was a great power.

At the end of the seventh and in the early sixth century, as Assyrian hegemony gave way to the Neo-Babylonian Empire, later pharaohs built a navy and pursued a vigorous diplomatic and military policy in an effort to reestablish the buffer zone that Egypt had possessed in the Near East during the New Kingdom. A vital factor in this policy's initial success was the dynasty's growing ties with the northern Mediterranean world, particularly its large-scale employment of Ionian Greek and Carian mercenaries. These forces, being better armed and disciplined than both the Egypto-Libyan military class at home and the enemy armies of the east, proved indispensable to the Saite regime. Resentment at the dynasty's preferment of these mercenaries came to a head in 570, when a native rebellion brought Amasis to the throne and thrust Apries into an ill-fated alliance with the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (Nebuchadrezzar) II. Despite this xenophobic upsurge, however, Amasis could not do without the Greeks, and the regime only masked its continued employment of them with a series of cosmetic restrictions—the most significant of them being the concentration of Greek trade at Naukratis, in the western Delta. Egypt's armed might and Amasis's diplomacy kept the Babylonians at bay; but they could not withstand the growth of Persian power, as Cyrus's empire systematically conquered or warned off Egyptian allies in the Mediterranean. In the end, diplomatically isolated and betrayed by its own supporters at home, Egypt fell to Cambyses in 525.

Although the first Persian rulers (Twenty-seventh Dynasty) adopted the pharaonic style that was expected of them in the Nile Valley, the Egyptians never fitted comfortably into the Persian Empire. Over the next two centuries, their subjection was punctuated by frequent revolts

and a lengthy period of independence. The native regimes that ruled Egypt from 404 to 343 (Twenty-eighth to Thirtieth Dynasties), by continuing to cultivate the Greeks, enjoyed some success in fending off the Persians. Their efforts were constantly sabotaged, however, by their own allies. Part of the problem can be traced to the fickle policies of the various Greek city-states to whom Egypt turned for help, for increasingly during the fourth century Egyptian allies in Greece cultivated the Persians in an effort to dominate other Greeks. Just as disruptive, though, were divisions among the magnates at home, which tended to destabilize the monarchy. The instability that came as a result of such usurpations or attempted coups may be seen in the brief tenure of Amyrtaeus, sole ruler of the Twenty-eighth Dynasty, and intermittently in the Twenty-ninth Dynasty, during the reign of Hakoris and in the rapid suppression of his son, Nephertites II, by Nectanebo I. These upsets did not enhance Egypt's strategic position and sometimes took place at the expense of her defensive interests. A case in point was in 360, when Nectanebo II, aided by the Spartan king Agesilaos, deposed Teos (Tachos) just as he was about to join a major satraps' revolt against Persia.

The Persians reconquered Egypt in 343, but their regime ("Thirty-first Dynasty") was unpopular, perhaps being interrupted for a time by a native pharaoh named Khababash, and it did not last long. The fall of the Persian Empire in the 330s did not, however, bring with it the triumph of the savior pharaoh whose coming was longed for in contemporary literature. Alexander the Great's interest in her traditional divine kingship did not alter the fact that Egypt's passage into the orbit of Hellenism brought her career as an independent power in the ancient world to a permanent end.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CIVILIZATION

The effect of the European conquests on Egyptian civilization was more lasting and fundamen-

tal than that of any earlier alien regimes. One important factor is that political and military control was more absolute under the Macedonian Ptolemies, and later the Romans, than ever before. The political priorities of these rulers were also different: for them, Egypt was important only to the extent that it supported their wider interests—as a base in the struggle for preeminence among the Hellenistic kingdoms, for example, or as part of the Roman Empire. The difference also lay in the impact of Hellenistic civilization, for never before had an invader imported so much of an alien culture into the Nile Valley or imposed it on so wide a scale. The system not only made Greek the official language of government, but it discriminated even against Egyptians who learned it and kept them in the lower ranks of the bureaucracy. Alexandria, a thoroughly Greek city, was the administrative, commercial, and intellectual capital of Egypt from the time it was built, near the end of the fourth century BCE, into the seventh century CE. Native institutions were supported insofar as it was pragmatic to do so. Egyptians continued to be judged in their own courts, for example, and the authorities maintained good relations with the country's temples, whose priests paid for the state support they received by conferring

a patina of traditional legitimacy on their foreign "pharaohs."

Yet practices such as these masked a deeper indifference on the part of the ruling minority. So predominant was Hellenism in Egypt, with its adherence to values native to the Greek world, that the remnants of Egypt's ancient civilization were effectively marginalized within her own borders. Some of its usages secured a firm, if not always acknowledged, place in Western civilization—notably the Egyptian calendar and elements of its medical learning (treated in Part 8). For the most part, however, Greek and Roman writers mined the Egyptian tradition selectively, often quite superficially. To an increasing extent in late antiquity, its ancient lore was confined to the priests who used it in the remaining temples in which the old religion was practiced. With widespread conversions to Christianity, however, came the eventual withdrawal of state support. When the last "pagan" temples closed in the fourth and fifth centuries, the visible traditions of ancient Egypt and all knowledge of its hieroglyphs soon vanished. Their rediscovery in modern times reflects, in a sense, the final triumph of that Western civilization which had effectively superseded them fourteen centuries before.

Chronology of Egyptian History

Only more important rulers are mentioned. All dates are BCE.

Dynasty "0" (ca. 3100–3000)

An uncertain number of rulers, including Scorpion and Horus King Narmer ("Baleful Catfish")

Early Dynastic Period (ca. 3000–2675)

First Dynasty (ca. 3000–2800)

The traditional founder of the united kingdom, Menes, has been identified with Narmer or Aha, but he may be a composite figure or a historical construct dating to the earlier New Kingdom. The First Dynasty proper consists of seven rulers, including Horus Kings Aha ("Fighter"), Djer ("Stockade"?), Djet ("Snake"?), Den; and Neith Queen Meryet ("Beloved") or Queen Merneith

Second Dynasty (ca. 2800–2675)

Nine rulers, including Hotepsekhemwy, Nynetjer (also read as Netjer or Neterimu),

Seth Peribsen, and Horus-and-Seth Khasekhemwy

Old Kingdom (ca. 2675–2130)

Third Dynasty (ca. 2675–2625)

At least five kings, including Djoser, Sekhemkhet, and Huni

Fourth Dynasty (ca. 2625–2500)

Sneferu (ca. 2625–2585)
Khufu or Cheops (ca. 2585–2560)
Redjedef (ca. 2560–2555)
Chephren, or Khafre or Rekhaef (ca. 2555–2532)
Mycerinus, or Menkaure (ca. 2532–2510)
Wehemka? (ca. 2510–2508)
Shepseskaf (ca. 2508–2500)

Fifth Dynasty (ca. 2500–2350)

Userkaf (ca. 2500–2485)
Sahure (ca. 2485–2472)
Neferirkare Kakai (ca. 2472–2462)
Shepseskare } (ca. 2462–2455)
Reneferref }

The History of Ancient Egypt

Chronology of Egyptian History (continued)

- Nyuserre (ca. 2455–2425)
 Menkauhor (ca. 2425–2415)
 Djedkare Isesi (ca. 2415–2371)
 Unas (ca. 2371–2350)
 Sixth Dynasty (ca. 2350–2170)
 Teti (ca. 2350–2338)
 Meryre Pepy I (ca. 2338–2298)
 Merenre, or Nemtyemzaf (ca. 2298–2288)
 Neferkare Pepy II (2288–2224/2194)
 A few later rulers, including a queen, Nitocris
 Seventh–Eighth Dynasties (ca. 2170–2130)
 An indeterminate number of monarchs ruling from Memphis
- First Intermediate Period (ca. 2130–1980)**
 Herakleopolitan Ninth–Tenth Dynasties (ca. 2130–1980)
 Eighteen rulers, including Akhtoy (Achthoes) I (fl. ca. 2130–2120), Nubkaure (fl. ca. 2025–2020?), and Merykare (fl. ca. 2015–2000?)
 Theban Eleventh Dynasty (ca. 2081–1938)
 Mentuhotep, “The Ancestor” (ca. 2081–2075)
 Inyotef I (ca. 2075–2065)
 Inyotef II (ca. 2065–2016)
 Inyotef III (ca. 2016–2008)
 Nebhepetre Mentuhotep (ca. 2008–1957)
 Sankhkare Mentuhotep (ca. 1957–1945)
 Nebtawyre Mentuhotep (ca. 1945–1938)
- Middle Kingdom (ca. 1980–1630)**
 The Middle Kingdom begins in the Eleventh Dynasty, with the victory of Nebhepetre Mentuhotep
 Twelfth Dynasty, “The House of Itjtawy” (ca. 1938–1759)
 Amenemhet (or Ammenemes) I (ca. 1938–1909)
 Sesostris (or Senwosret) I (ca. 1919–1875)
 Amenemhet II (ca. 1876–1842)
 Sesostris II (ca. 1844–1837)
 Sesostris III (ca. 1836–1818)
 Amenemhet III (ca. 1818–1772)
 Amenemhet IV (ca. 1773–1763)
 Sobeknefru (Regnant Queen, ca. 1763–1759)
 Thirteenth Dynasty (ca. 1759–after 1630)
 A large number of kings, most of them ephemeral, governing from Itjtawy
 Fourteenth Dynasty (dates uncertain, but contemporaneous with later Thirteenth Dynasty)
- Second Intermediate Period (ca. 1630–1539/23)**
 “Hyksos” Fifteenth Dynasty (ca. 1630–1523)
 Six rulers, including Apophis (ca. 1575–1535)
 “Sixteenth Dynasty” (contemporaneous with Fifteenth Dynasty)
- Theban Seventeenth Dynasty (ca. 1630–1539)
 About fifteen rulers, ending with Seqenenre Tao II (?–1543?) and Kamose (ca. 1543?–1539)
- New Kingdom (ca. 1539–1075)**
 Eighteenth Dynasty (ca. 1539–1295/92)
 Ahmose (or Amosis) (ca. 1539–1514)
 Amenhotep (or Amenophis) I (ca. 1514–1493)
 Thutmose (or Tuthmosis) I } (ca. 1493–1479)
 Thutmose II
 Hatshepsut (Regnant Queen, ca. 1478/72–1458)
 Thutmose III (ca. 1479–1425)
 Amenhotep II (ca. 1426–1400)
 Thutmose IV (ca. 1400–1390)
 Amenhotep III (ca. 1390–1353)
 Amenhotep IV, later called Akhenaten (ca. 1353–1336)
 Nefernefruaten } (ca. 1336–1332)
 Smenkhkare }
 Tutankhamun (ca. 1332–1322)
 Ay (ca. 1322–1319)
 Horemheb (ca. 1319–1292)
 Nineteenth Dynasty (ca. 1292–1190)
 Ramesses (or Ramses) I (ca. 1292–1290)
 Sety (or Sethos) I (ca. 1290–1279)
 Ramesses II (ca. 1279–1213)
 Merneptah (ca. 1213–1204)
 Sety II (ca. 1204–1198)
 Amenmesse (ca. 1203–1200)
 Siptah (ca. 1198–1193)
 Tewosret (Regnant Queen, ca. 1193–1190)
 Twentieth Dynasty (ca. 1190–1075)
 Sethnakhte (ca. 1190–1187)
 Ramesses III (ca. 1187–1156)
 Ramesses IV (ca. 1156–1150)
 Ramesses V (ca. 1150–1145)
 Ramesses VI (ca. 1145–1137)
 Ramesses VII (ca. 1137–1129)
 Ramesses VIII (ca. 1128–1126)
 Ramesses IX (ca. 1126–1108)
 Ramesses X (ca. 1108–1104)
 Ramesses XI (ca. 1104–1075)
 The last ten years of the reign correspond to the “Repeating of Births” (or “Renaissance”) under three high priests of Amun at Thebes (“King” Herihor, Paiankh, and “King” Pinudjem I), and to the regency (?) of Smendes at Tanis.
- Third Intermediate Period (ca. 1075–656)**
 Tanite Twenty-first Dynasty (ca. 1075–945)
 Smendes (ca. 1075–1049)
 Amenemnisu (ca. 1049–1045)
 Psusennes I (ca. 1045–997)

Continued on the next page

Chronology of Egyptian History (continued)

- Amenemope
Osorkon the Elder (or Osochor) } (ca. 999-959)
Siamun
Psusennes II (ca. 959-945)
Bubastite Twenty-second Dynasty (ca. 945-712)
About ten rulers, including Shoshenq I (ca. 945-924), Osorkon II (ca. 874-835/30), and Shoshenq III (ca. 835/30-783/78)
"Twenty-third Dynasty" (ca. 838-712)
Rival rulers at Thebes and in various northern principalities
Saite Twenty-fourth Dynasty (ca. 727-712)
Tefnakhte (ca. 727-719)
Bocchoris (or Bakenrenef) (ca. 719-712)
Nubian or Kushite Twenty-fifth Dynasty (ca. 760-656)
Kashta (ca. 760-747)
Piye or Piankhy (ca. 747-716)
Shabaka (ca. 716-702)
Shebitku (ca. 702-690)
Taharqa (690-664)
Tantamani (664-656)
Late Period (664-332)
Saite Twenty-sixth Dynasty (664-525)
Psamtik (or Psammetichus) I (664-610)
Necho II (610-595)
Psamtik II (595-589)
Apries (589-570)
Amasis (570-526)
Psamtik III (526-525)
Twenty-seventh Dynasty (first Persian period: 525-404)
Eight rulers, including Cambyses (525-522), Darius I (521-486), Xerxes I (485-465), and Darius II (423-404)
Twenty-eighth Dynasty (404-399)
One ruler, Amyrtaeus of Sais
Twenty-ninth Dynasty from Mendes (399-380)
Nepherites I (399-393)
Hakorais (393-381)
Nepherites II (381)
Thirtieth Dynasty from Sebennytos (381-343)
Nectanebo I (381-362)
Teos (365-362)
Nectanebo II (362-343)
"Thirty-first Dynasty" (second Persian period: 343-332)
Three rulers, including Artaxerxes III Ochus (343-338) and Darius III Codoman (335-332). A rebel native ruler, Khababash, may belong here
Greco-Roman Period (332 BCE-642 CE)
Macedonian Dynasty (332-305)
Alexander III, "the Great" (332-323)
Philip III Arrhidaeus } (323-305)
Alexander IV
Ptolemaic Dynasty (305-30)
Ptolemy I Soter I (323-282: as "satrap" 323-305; as king of Egypt 305-282)
Ptolemy II Philadelphos (285-246)
Ptolemy III Euergetes I (246-222/1)
Ptolemy IV Philopator (222/1-205)
Ptolemy V Epiphanes (209/8-180)
Ptolemy VI Philometor (180-164, 163-145)
Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator (145)
Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II, or Physkon (170-163, 145-116)
Ptolemy IX Soter II, or Lathyros (116-110, 109-107, 88-80)
Ptolemy X Alexander I (110-109, 107-88)
Ptolemy XI Alexander II (80)
Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos, or Auletes (80-58, 55-51)
Cleopatra VII Philopator (51-30), at first with her brothers Ptolemy XIII and XIV
Ptolemy XV Caesarion (45-30)
Roman, later Byzantine, Empire (30 BCE-642 CE)

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Two important surveys by WOLFGANG HELCK, on government (*Zur Verwaltung des Mittleren und Neuen Reichs* [1958]) and foreign relations (*Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.* [1962; 2nd ed. 1971]), are fundamental. For Kamose's victory stelae, see H. S. SMITH and A. SMITH, "A Reconsideration of the Kamose Texts," *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 103 (1976). Studies of individual Eighteenth Dynasty reigns are: CLAUDE VANDERSEYEN, *Les Guerres d'Amosis* (1971); DONALD B. REDFORD, "The Reign of Hatshepsut," in his *History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt* (1967); PETER DER MANUELIAN, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II* (1987); BETSY M. BRYAN, *The Reign of Thutmose IV* (1991); and DAVID O'CONNOR and ERIC CLINE, eds., *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign* (forthcoming). On military matters, see TORCNY SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH, *The Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty* (1946); ALAN R. SCHULMAN, "Chariots, Chariotry, and the Hyksos," *Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities* 10 (1979); and *Military Rank, Title, and Organization in the Egyptian New Kingdom* (1964), supplemented by the review article of JEAN YOYOTTE and JESÚS LÓPEZ, "L'Organisation de l'armée et les titulatures de soldats au Nouvel Empire égyptien," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 26 (1969).

Akhenaten remains a controversial figure. Among the most interesting views are CYRIL ALDRED, *Akhenaten, King of Egypt* (1988); and DONALD B. REDFORD, *Akhenaten, The Heretic King* (1984). A convenient work on the late Amarna period and the reign of Tutankhamun is NICHOLAS REEVES, *The Complete Tutankhamun: The King, the Tomb, the Treasures* (1990).

A good survey of the reign of Ramesses II and the Nineteenth Dynasty is KENNETH A. KITCHEN, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt* (1982); and the great population movements during the Late Bronze Age are ably covered by N. K. SANDARS, *The Sea Peoples* (1978; rev. ed. 1985). The later Ramesside period is less well surveyed, though the inflation during the Twentieth Dynasty is documented by J. J. JANSSEN, *Commodity Prices from the Ramessid Period* (1975). Criminal trials in the later part of this period are covered by T. E. PEET, "A Historical Document of Ramesside Age," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 10 (1924); and idem, *The Great Tomb-Robberies of the Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty* (1930). The beginning of the revolt against constituted authority in Ramesses XI's reign is discussed by EDWARD F. WENTE, "The Suppression of the High Priest Amenhotep," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 25 (1966).

The History of Ancient Egypt

Third Intermediate, Late, and Greco-Roman Periods

Of fundamental importance is KENNETH A. KITCHEN, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100–650 BC)* (2nd ed. 1986). See also ANTHONY LEAHY, ed., *Libya and Egypt, c. 1300–750 BC* (1990); and, for the overlapping rulers during the “Libyan anarchy,” DAVID. A. ASTON, “Takeloth II—A King of the ‘Theban Twenty-third Dynasty’?” *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 75 (1989). For lack of a modern book-length study of the Late Period proper, see the chapter by ALAN B. LLOYD in *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*, edited by BRUCE

G. TRIGGER ET AL. (1983), and pertinent sections of revised *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vols. 4–7; and, on the latest phase of the Persian period in Egypt, see JOHN D. RAY, “Egypt: Dependence and Independence (425–343 BC),” in *Achaemenid History*, vol. 1, *Sources, Structures, and Synthesis*, edited by HELEEN SANCISI-WEERDENBURG. The literature on the Greco-Roman period is vast: for a good survey of developments in Egypt, see ALAN K. BOWMAN, *Egypt After the Pharaohs: 332 BC–AD 642, from Alexander to the Arab Conquest* (1986); see also ROGERS S. BAGNALL, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (1993), for the period 275–450 CE.

SEE ALSO **Royal Ideology and State Administration in Pharaonic Egypt** (Part 4, Vol. I); **Chronology: Issues and Problems** (Part 5, Vol. II); and **Ancient Egyptian Reliefs, Statuary, and Monumental Paintings** (Part 10, Vol. IV).