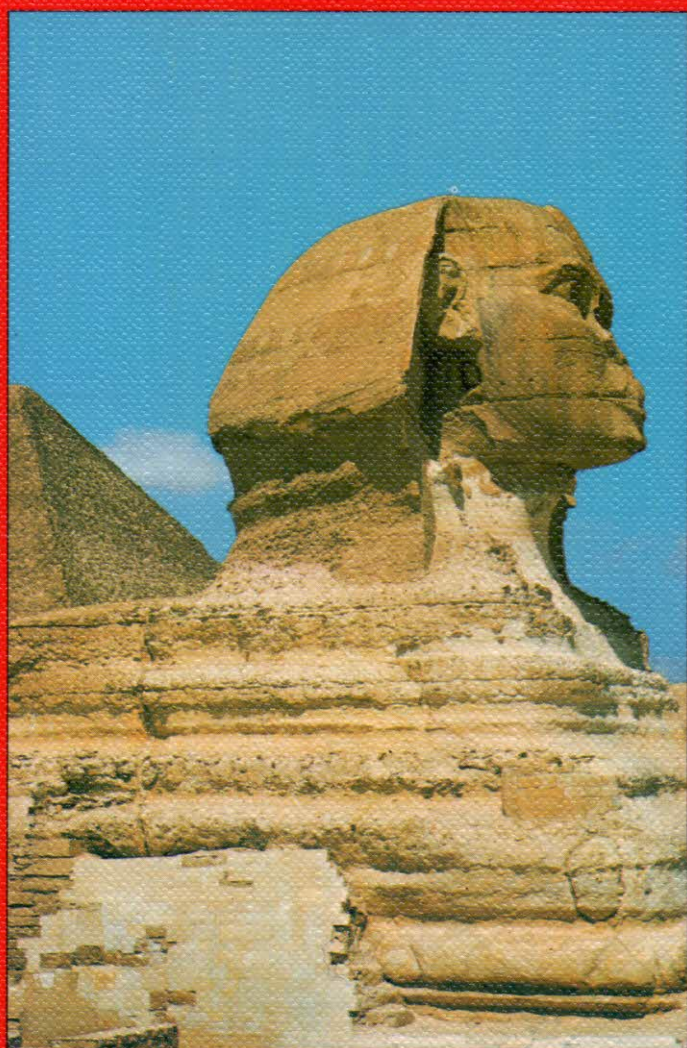


Baedeker's
Allianz  **Travel Guide**

Egypt



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The Complete Illustrated Travel Guide

Rejo

Baedeker's

EGYPT

Cover picture: Innermost gold coffin of Tutankhamun

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215 drawings and diagrams
68 maps and plans
1 fold-out map

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How to use this guide

The principal towns, sites and areas of tourist interest are described in alphabetical order. The names of other places referred to under these general headings can be found in the Index.

Following the tradition established by Karl Baedeker in 1844, sights of particular interest and hotels and restaurants of particular quality are distinguished by either one or two asterisks.

In the lists of hotels, etc., b. = beds. Only a selection of hotels and restaurants can be given: no reflection is implied, therefore, on establishments not included.

The symbol  at the beginning of an entry or on a town plan indicates the local tourist office or other organization from which further information can be obtained. The post-horn symbol on a town plan indicates a post office.

A brief glossary of topographical terms will be found on p. 369, a glossary of technical terms on p. 80 and a guide to the gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt on p. 26.

This guidebook forms part of a completely new series of the world-famous Baedeker Guides to Europe.

The English editions are now published for the first time in this country. Each volume is the result of long and careful preparation and, true to the traditions of Baedeker, is designed in every respect to meet the needs and expectations of the modern traveler and holidaymaker.

The name of Baedeker has long been identified in the field of guidebooks with reliable, comprehensive and up-to-date information, prepared by expert writers who work from detailed, first-hand knowledge of the country concerned. Following a tradition that goes back over 150 years to the date when Karl Baedeker published the first of his handbooks for travelers, these guides have been planned to give the tourist all the essential information about the country and its inhabitants: where to go, how to get there and what to see. Baedeker's account of a country was always based on his personal observation and

experience during his travels in that country. This tradition of writing a guidebook in the field rather than at an office desk has been maintained by Baedeker ever since.

Lavishly illustrated with superb color photographs and numerous specially drawn maps and street plans of the major towns, the new Baedeker Guides concentrate on making available to the modern traveler all the information he needs in a format that is both attractive and easy to follow. For every place that appears in the gazetteer, the principal features of architectural, artistic and historic interest are described, as are the main scenic beauty-spots in the locality. Selected hotels and restaurants are also included. Features of exceptional merit are indicated by either one or two asterisks.

A special section at the end of each book contains practical information to ensure a pleasant and safe journey, details of leisure activities and useful addresses. The separate road map will prove an invaluable aid to planning your route and your travel within the country.

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Introduction to Egypt

The normal pronunciation of the name of Egypt is 'Egypt'. This is assimilated to a following consonant, the letter 't' in the word 'Egypt'. It may appear as 't' in the word 'Egypt' and as 't' in the word 'Egypt'.

In this Guide, the word 'Egypt' is used in the sense of the word 'Egypt' in the Bible. The word 'Egypt' is used in the Bible to refer to the land of Egypt, and not to the people of Egypt. The word 'Egypt' is used in the Bible to refer to the land of Egypt, and not to the people of Egypt.

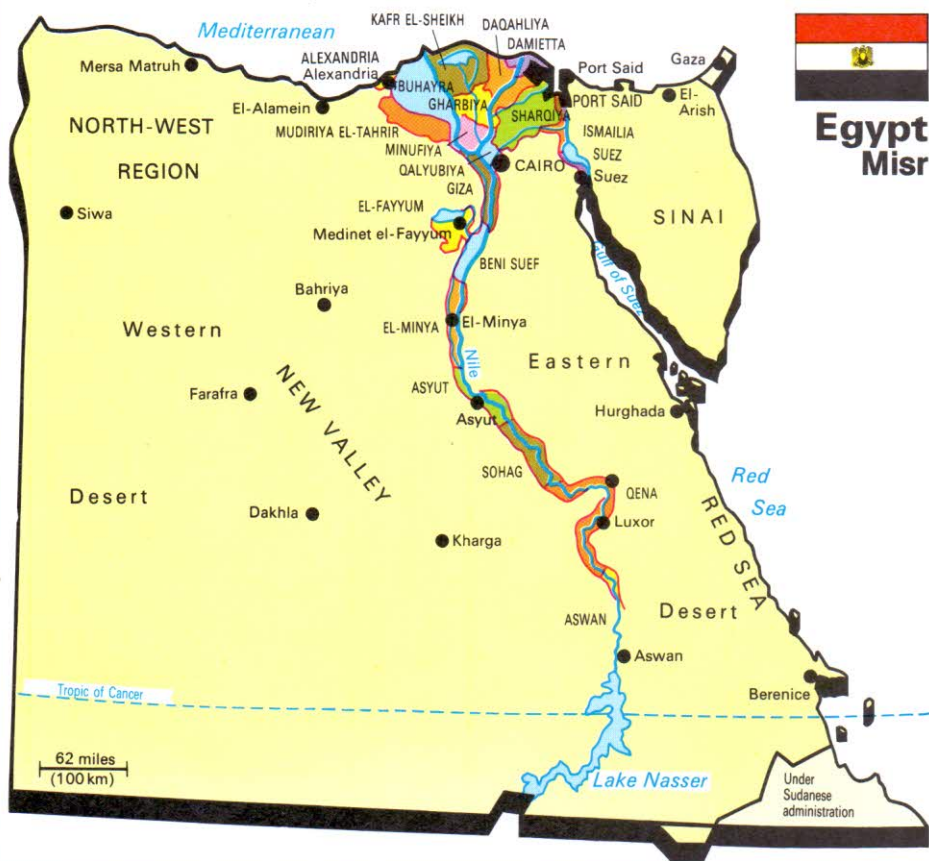
The transcription of Egyptian names is a perennial problem to which no agreed solution has yet been found. Since the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic script did not indicate vowels, place-names and personal names may appear in variant forms in different authors and in different languages, and there are also varying transcriptions of some ancient Egyptian names. There is even more variation in the transcription of Greek names in the transcription of Greek names in the transcription of Greek names in the transcription of Greek names.

The transcription of Egyptian names is a perennial problem to which no agreed solution has yet been found. Since the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic script did not indicate vowels, place-names and personal names may appear in variant forms in different authors and in different languages, and there are also varying transliterations of some ancient Egyptian consonants. There is even more variation in the transcription of Arabic: thus the definite article, transliterated in this guide as *el/-*, may appear as *a/-* or *il/-*, and in some cases the *l* – reflecting

the normal pronunciation – may be assimilated to a following consonant; the letter transliterated in this Guide as *q* may appear as *k*, the letter transliterated as *g* may appear as *j*; and so on.

In this Guide names are so far as possible given in the forms normally used by present-day authorities writing in English; but consistency is difficult to achieve, and visitors to Egypt must be prepared to encounter a variety of alternative forms.





CITY GOVERNORATES

	Area		Population (1978)	Administrative center
	sq miles	sq km		
Cairo	83	214	5,291,000	Cairo
Alexandria	112	290	2,415,000	Alexandria
Port Said	153	397	272,000	Port Said
Suez	119	307	205,000	Suez

GOVERNORATES

Lower Egypt

Buhayra	1773	4593	2,645,000	Damanhur
Kafr el-Sheikh	1348	3492	1,475,000	Kafr el-Sheikh
Damietta	231	599	584,000	Damietta
Daqahliya	1337	3462	2,868,000	El-Mansura
Gharbiya	770	1995	2,397,000	Tanta
Sharqiya	1815	4702	2,751,000	El-Zagazig
Minufiya	585	1514	1,793,000	Shibin el-Kom
Qalyubiya	364	944	1,761,000	Benha
Ismailia	320	829	372,000	Ismailia

Central Egypt

Giza	417	1079	2,547,000	Giza
El-Fayyum	692	1792	1,202,000	Medinet el-Fayyum
Beni Suef	507	1313	1,166,000	Beni Suef
El-Minya	878	2274	2,165,000	El-Minya

Upper Egypt

Asyut	600	1553	1,780,000	Asyut
Sohag	595	1540	2,020,000	Sohag
Qena	699	1811	1,781,000	Qena
Aswan	341	882	649,000	Aswan

FRONTIER DISTRICTS

North-West Region			123,000	Mersa Matruh
Sinai			158,000	
New Valley			89,000	Kharga
Red Sea			59,000	

Egypt

(including Frontier Districts)	386,660	1,001,449	c. 39,640,000	Cairo
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Egypt became an independent kingdom in 1922, and since 1954 has been a republic. Its official style is the **Arab Republic of Egypt** (*El-Gumhuriya Misr el-Arabiya*). It has a total area, including the Sinai Peninsula, of 386,660 sq. miles/1,001,449 sq. km and a rapidly growing population of some 45 million.

The country is divided into **21 governorates** and **4 frontier districts**, and the governorates in turn are divided into districts and communes. The governorates and frontier districts are each headed by a *Governor*, who is assisted by a directly elected *Representative Council*. Under the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty of 1979, following the Camp David Agreements, the Sinai Peninsula, which had been occupied by Israel during the Six Day War of 1967, was returned to Egypt in stages, the transfer being completed in 1982; the Gaza Strip, however, remained under Israeli control. – Egypt was united with Syria in the United Arab Republic in 1958, but this lasted only until 1961, when the union was dissolved.

Under the constitution which came into force in 1971 Egypt is a **PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC**. The original one-party system (Arab Socialist Union) has since 1976 increasingly given place to a multi-party system. The head of State and supreme commander of the armed forces is the *President*, who is appointed by the People's Assembly and confirmed in office by a National Referendum; the term of office is six years, but reappointment for a further term is possible. The President appoints the members of the *Cabinet*, which is responsible to the People's Assembly, and has wide powers

of initiating and reviewing legislation. He can appoint special *National Councillors* to carry through political measures.

The People's Assembly or National Assembly (last elected 1979) consists of not less than 350 members elected for a five-year term, together with ten members appointed by the President. The principal *parties* are the National Democratic Party, the Socialist Workers Party and the Social Liberal Party. The National Progressive and Unionist Movement and the independent members play only a minor part.

The basis of Egyptian civil law is the *Civil Code* promulgated in 1949, which incorporates many features borrowed from French and Swiss legislation. Much of the country's personal and family law is developed from traditional religious tenets and laws, but the old ecclesiastical jurisdiction was abolished in 1956.

Egypt is a member of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and it has a preferential tariff agreement with the European Community. It is no longer a member of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPAEC) or of the Arab League. It has a defense pact with Sudan, and in February 1981 the Egyptian Parliament ratified the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Soon afterwards the Government signed agreements with the United States, France and West Germany for the supply and erection of several nuclear power-stations.

From time immemorial Egypt, that land of ancient civilization on the Nile, has exerted an irresistible fascination. Here the traveler finds not only the natural attractions of this Eastern country, with its mild climate and sky that is perennially clear: he encounters also the origins of Western culture, and at the same time observes the sharp contrasts between an Oriental attachment to tradition and modern technical progress. Here, too, the holiday visitor can enjoy beautiful and impressive scenery and excellent beaches.

There is a wide divergence between the area included within the frontiers of Egypt and the area actually inhabited by its popu-

lation. Only about 3·5% of the total area is cultivable, and this 3·5% of the land surface is occupied by 98% of the population. The heartland of Egypt is the fertile **Nile Valley**, from the First Cataract at Aswan in the south to the wide Delta at the mouth of the river. This 930 mile/1500 km long strip of land, which above Cairo is only 6–12 miles/10–20 km wide, in places contracting to only 1100 yards/1000 m, is bounded on three sides by natural frontiers – in the north by the Mediterranean, on the east by the Eastern (Arabian) Desert, extending to the Red Sea, and on the west by the great plateau of the Western (Libyan) Desert. Only the southern frontier is without natural features to mark it, and throughout Egyptian history it was repeatedly a source of conflict.

Geography

Egypt extends for some 640 miles/1030 km from north to south, between latitude $31^{\circ} 5'$ and 22° N, and for 600 miles/960 km from west to east, between longitude $25^{\circ} 2'$ and $34^{\circ} 56'$ E, at the north-east corner of the African continent, bounded on the west by Libya, on the south by Sudan, on the east by the Red Sea – with the Sinai Peninsula extending eastward into Asia – and on the north by the Mediterranean.

The **Nile Valley** divides the country into two parts, which geologically and morphologically are very different from one another: to the east the Eastern (Arabian) Desert, to the west the Western (Libyan) Desert. The **Delta** is a region of Quaternary limestones and calcareous sandstones, predominantly formed from fragments of mollusc shells, quartz, oolites and detritus. At many places these rocks are overlaid by sand-dunes and other younger geological formations. The cultivable land in the Nile Valley and the Delta, with its north-western fringe of limestone, consists mainly of recent alluvial deposits, the fertile clayey mud and the fine sand brought down by the Nile and spread over the land by the inundation which in the past was a regular annual occurrence. Under this alluvium lie coarser yellowish sands and gravels of Pleistocene date, which outcrop here and there in the Delta as islands of barren sand amid the expanses of fertile agricultural land. They are related to the late deposits of sand and gravel in the adjacent deserts and to the remains of Pleistocene cliffs and shorelines which can be seen on both sides of the Nile Valley at Cairo and elsewhere. At Abu Sabal, NE of Nawa, a basalt hill 65 ft/20 m high projects into the south-eastern Delta.

The **Isthmus of Suez** consists of alluvial deposits from the Mediterranean in the north, Nile sediments with freshwater molluscs in the middle section, at the El-Gisar sill and around Lake Timsah, and Quaternary formations along the Red Sea in the south. Much of the shoreline of the Gulf of Suez is fringed by fossil coral reefs of the Quaternary era, sometimes rising to heights of up to 985 ft/300 m – reflecting a considerable upthrust of the mainland, or at any rate the coastal region, which occurred in relatively recent times and is perhaps still continuing. There are also

The name **EGYPT** is derived from the Greek **Aigýptos** ("dark") via Latin *Aegyptus*. The ancient Egyptians called their country **Kemit** (*Kemt, Kemi*), the "black land", after the dark color of the Nile mud, contrasting it with the "red land" of the desert. The Arabic name is **Misr** or *Masr*.

living coral reefs along large stretches of the coast and around the islands in the Red Sea.

To the south of the Pyramids of Giza and at many points on the east bank of the Nile between Cairo and el-Fashn are sandstones and marls of the Late Tertiary (Pliocene), with well-preserved fossils. In the small valley south of the pyramids of Zawiyet el-Aryan is one of the richest occurrences of Pliocene formations, associated with the emergence during the Pliocene of the first intimations of the Nile Valley, originally a funnel-shaped inlet on the Mediterranean coast.

In the Early Miocene the Nile Valley was not yet in existence: instead there was a mighty river flowing from the south-west towards what is now Lower Egypt. To this period belong the fluvio-marine deposits at El-Maghra in the Western Desert, with their petrified forests, and the purely marine coarse-grained limestones on the Libyan Plateau, to the north of the Siwa Oasis, on the eastern edge of the Eastern Desert (at the foot of Gebel Geneifa and Gebel Ataq) and around Gebel Set on the Gulf of Suez.

The "petrified forests" near Cairo, consisting of scattered pieces of silicified wood, and the siliceous red sandstones on Gebel el-Ahmar and similar conical hills along the northern edge of the Eastern and Western Deserts were created by siliceous hot springs which emerged during the Oligocene among the lagoons in these regions. These fossil tree-trunks are still more numerous in the area north-west of Lake Qarun, and the sandstones of the Oligocene contain large numbers of bones from extinct terrestrial and marine mammals and reptiles which were carried down by the river and buried in the alluvial deposits at its mouth. Remains of these animals can be seen in the Geological Museum in Cairo.

The hills flanking the Nile Valley above Cairo consist of fossiliferous nummulitic limestones of the Middle and Lower Eocene. In general the beds fall gently

away to the north-north-west, so that the strata outcropping become steadily older towards the south.

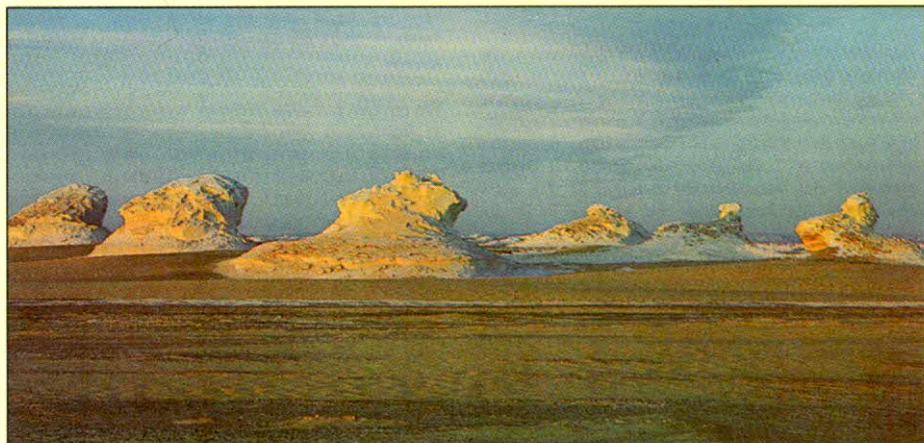
In the Edfu area we encounter sandstones of the Upper Cretaceous, which advance close to the river in Gebel Silsila and constrict it into a narrow bed. The "Nubian sandstone" covers an area of several thousand square miles extending from the oases to the Sudan. At certain points (e.g. at Aswan and, beyond the Sudanese frontier, at Wadi Halfa in the region of the Third and Fourth Cataracts) there are intrusions of crystalline rocks (granite, gneiss, diorite, etc.) which form black or reddish hills sharply contrasting with the low tabular masses of sandstone.

In the **Eastern (Arabian) Desert** a massive range up to 6560 ft/2000 m high runs close to the Red Sea coast. It consists solely of crystalline rocks (granite, gneiss, diorite, hornblende, micaceous and talc schists, andesites, etc.), which form a large group of very ancient volcanic minerals, and of porphyry (already worked in Roman times in the quarries on Gebel el-Dukhan). The sedimentary rocks on the eastern and western slopes of this chain – mostly Nubian sandstone, with some limestones and marls at the north end of the range – extend westward, forming a great plateau, of limestones in the north and sandstones in the south, in which the Nile Valley forms a narrow trough. Numerous deeply indented valleys give the Eastern Desert its characteristic aspect. Vegetation is almost wholly absent on the open plains; in the valleys it is rather more vigorous, particularly after rain; and it develops in

considerable luxuriance in the gorges lying in the shelter of the mountains, where occasional springs emerge.

Totally different from the Eastern Desert is the **Western (Libyan) Desert**, a limestone plateau (about 985 ft/300 m) extending westward and looming over the lower areas of Nubian sandstone to the south. In deep indentations in these lower southern hills are the **oases** of Kharga, Dakhla and Farafra; the Bahriya Oasis occupies a depression in the higher plateau to the north. The plateau is waterless and without vegetation; and small isolated hills show how rapidly the aeolian (wind) erosion of the desert surface is proceeding. In some places long ridges of dunes 100–200 ft/30–60 m high extend from north-north-west to south-south-east, sometimes for hundreds of miles; the most striking examples are to be seen to the west of the Dakhla Oasis. The soil of the Kharga and Dakhla oases consists mainly of dark-colored sands and clays of the Upper Cretaceous, sometimes containing alum and phosphates. At many points springs emerge from clefts in the rock or from wells sunk to depths of some 400 ft/120 m, providing water which makes cultivation possible.

To the south of the oasis extends the lower plain of Nubian sandstone, the gently undulating surface of which is covered with blackened flints and deposits of iron and manganese ore. The silicified trunks of fossil trees are found in considerable numbers. Everywhere there is yellow drifting sand, only occasionally forming dunes of any great size.



Geological formations in the Western Desert

The Farafra Oasis lies farther west with the Eocene limestone plateau extending north and west to the Siwa Oasis. The Siwa area consists mainly of Miocene sedimentary rocks, with an abundance of fossils which was remarked on by Herodotus and Eratosthenes.

The **Sinai Peninsula** is also a desert region. The southern part of the peninsula is occupied by the crystalline rocks of the Mount Sinai Massif (8665 ft/2641 m), the northern half by a great limestone and sandstone plateau.

Climate

Egypt has a hot **desert climate**. Its characteristic features, heat and aridity, result from the country's situation in the great arid zone of the Old World, created by the pattern of movement of the trade winds, which extends in a wide swathe on both sides of the Tropic of Cancer from the west coast of Africa far into Asia. The Egyptians say: "The desert is a hot land which becomes very cold at night." These are regions, technically classified as arid, in which the rate of evaporation is greater than the rainfall.

The country's landscape and patterns of land use are determined by the extreme scarcity of water. There are no real rivers apart from the Nile; salt accumulates in low-lying areas; the ground forms a hard crust; the predominant features of the topography are those shaped by mechanical erosion or wind action, such as stone pavements and dunes. Vegetation on any scale, and thus any form of agricultural activity, can exist only in areas supplied with water from more humid regions. This supply is provided by the **Nile**, which carries great masses of water from the rain-rich tropics through the desert to the Mediterranean, forming an immensely long and narrow river oasis. Truly, as Herodotus said, "Egypt is the gift of the Nile."

The generally desert climate is marked by regular variations, both over the course of the year and from north to south over the great length of the country. In the north the influence of the Mediterranean is still evident, with rain falling in winter; in the central and southern regions there is practically no rainfall at all. Still farther south, in Egypt's southern neighbor the Sudan, begins the zone of increasing summer rainfall, with tropical zenithal rain.

Regional climatic characteristics are illustrated in the **climatic diagrams** on p. 13, which give monthly average temperatures and rainfall. The blue columns show the rainfall in millimeters, in accordance with the blue scale in the margin. The orange band shows the temperature in °C, the upper edge giving the average maximum day temperature (reached in the early afternoon), the lower edge the average minimum night temperature, in accordance with the red scale in the margin.

The figures given for the three weather stations selected will apply also to their immediately surrounding regions. For areas between these stations intermediate values can be interpolated. It should be borne in mind, however, that differences in altitude can produce quite considerable variations over quite short distances.

Mediterranean coast *Alexandria weather station*

The climatic diagram for Alexandria applies to the narrow strip of steppe-like desert, in a zone of transition between the Mediterranean and the desert climate, which has regular though scanty winter rains. The rainfall, averaging $7\frac{1}{2}$ in./190 mm, occurs between October and April and is concentrated in a few days with abundant rain. The relative humidity of the air is high (60–70%); it is associated with onshore winds from the north (i.e. blowing off the Mediterranean) of force 3 (roughly 13 ft/4 m per second).

A feature of the spring is the *khamsin*, a hot, dry desert wind from the south which blows during this season on an average of five days in the month. It is caused by areas of low pressure moving east along the Mediterranean coast. The masses of dust which it carries with it can on occasion form dense yellow clouds.

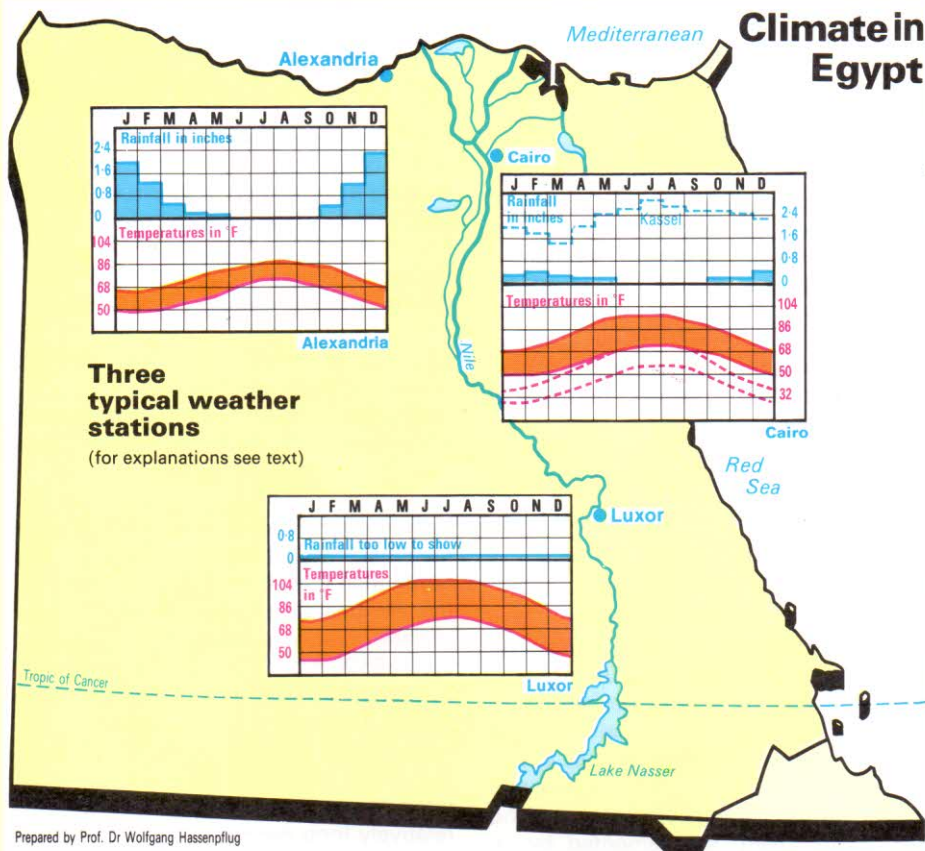
Thanks to the proximity of the sea the daily and yearly variations in temperature are comparatively small (respectively 18° F/10 °C and 25 °F/14 °C). There are no sharp temperature changes even in winter, since even northerly winds, passing over the warm Mediterranean, are scarcely any colder than those blowing from the south.

Northern desert region *Cairo weather station*

The climate here is characteristic of the deserts of northern Egypt. Rainfall over the year averages no more than 1 in./24 mm, occurring on a few days during the winter, mainly between December and February. As in other arid regions with low rainfall, however, there are considerable variations from year to year.

The relative humidity of the air is only about 50%, and in April–June falls below 40%. The duration of sunshine is correspondingly high, ranging between 236 hours per month in winter and 390 in summer. In Egypt the amount of sunshine is governed mainly by the astronomical possibilities rather than by the extent of cloud cover: the sky is cloudless, and days without sunshine are exceedingly rare. The Sahara is one of the regions in the world where solar radiation reaches its maximum.

Since with the low humidity of the air, the moderating influence of evaporation and condensation is lacking, the daily and annual temperature variations show a marked increase. In winter the average minimum night temperatures, reached shortly before sunrise, are about 50 °F/10 °C, the maximum noon temperatures



about 68 °F/20 °C; the corresponding summer figures are 72 °F/22 °C and 95 °F/35 °C. Extreme temperatures range in winter from freezing-point to 86 °F/30 °C, in summer from 59 °F/15 °C to 113 °F/45 °C.

Southern desert region Luxor weather station

The climatic pattern of Luxor is typical of the extreme desert climate of central and southern Egypt. The average annual rainfall of .04 of an inch/1 millimeter is too small to be shown on the diagram. This again covers wide variations from year to year: in some years 2 or 3 or even 6 millimeters have been known to fall in the form of brief showers during the winter, while in many other years hardly a single measurable drop is recorded. The average humidity of the air is always below 60%, and during the spring months falls to 30% or even lower. Temperature variations in these regions lying far from the coast are accordingly greater than in the more northerly parts of the country, as is shown by the greater width and more marked curve of the temperature band in the Luxor diagram. The variations are particularly sharp on the surface of the ground, where the midday temperature may rise above 140 °F/60 °C. In winter the temperature may occasionally fall below freezing-point (absolute minimum temperature for February 28 °F/-2 °C; the absolute summer maxima lie about 122 °F/50 °C (absolute maximum for June 120 °F/49 °C).

Evaporation is correspondingly high. A swimming-pool filled with water to a height of 13ft/4m would be emptied by evaporation in the course of a year (in

Cairo it would still have 12 ft/3.70 m of water after a year, in Alexandria 11½ ft/3.56 m). Lake Nasser suffers a comparable loss of water in the course of a year over its area of more than 1930 sq. miles/5000 sq. km.

Human behavior patterns – those of the local people no less than those of the unacclimatized visitor – must adapt to the conditions of this hot desert climate. The sun stands much higher in the sky than in more northerly regions, affording little possibility of shade; and the pitiless heat of the sun is reinforced by refraction from the hot ground. Provided, however, that care is taken to guard against the sun, the climate of this region, thanks to the low humidity of the air, is as a rule perfectly tolerable. Precautions should also be taken against the converse phenomenon – the correspondingly sharp fall in temperature at night, in extreme cases to below freezing-point – and some warmer clothing should always be included in the visitor's luggage.

In this desert climate it is necessary to drink plenty of water – 9 pints/5 litres per day or more. But sweating leads to a loss of minerals as well as liquid, and it is, therefore, advisable for visitors to take more salt with their food or to take special salt tablets with them.

In planning the daily program it is useful, particularly for photographers, to know the duration of daylight. The following times, given by way of illustration, relate to Cairo (latitude 30° N). Sunrise ranges between 7 a.m. in January and 5 a.m. in June, sunset between 5.10 p.m. in January and 7.05 p.m. in June, with barely half an hour of half-light in the morning and twilight in the evening.

Vegetation

Egypt lies at the eastern end of the North African belt of desert, one of the hottest, driest and most inhospitable regions in the world. In consequence more than 96% of its area has a vegetation cover of drought-resistant desert plants or no vegetation at all. The only permanent **vegetation** (i.e. consisting of plants which grow throughout the year) is found in the fertile Nile Valley, supplied with water from the Ethiopian Highlands, in the oases, which depend on artesian wells for their supply, and in some areas in the valleys of sporadically flowing rivers (wadis) which retain permanent moisture.

The Western (Libyan) Desert which extends westward from the Nile between the Mediterranean and the Sudan is a gently undulating tableland broken up by shallow depressions. Along the Mediterranean coast it is steppe-like in character, with a perennial garrigue (maquis, scrub), predominant in which are bushes and shrubs of the daphne and goosefoot families (Thymelaeaceae and Chenopodiaceae), supplemented by an ephemeral winter vegetation. Farther inland the vegetation cover becomes increasingly sparse, and eventually is reduced to sporadic clumps in which, depending on the constitution of the soil, mugworts (*Artemisia*) or capers (*Capparis*) predominate.

In salt-pans (*sebkhas*) – i.e. depressions containing brackish ground-water or terminal lakes or marshes of saline water in wadis – a salt-tolerant (halophile) vegetation is found, consisting of Chenopodiaceae, Compositae, tamarisks (Tamaricaceae), bulrushes (Typhaceae), rushes (Juncaceae) and sedges (Cyperus).

In oases fed by springs of fresh water many species common in Europe are found; but in general all the inhabited oases have been so much altered by the hand of man that their endemic vegetation survives only in remote corners or in the form of weeds. In addition to the date-palms and doum-palms, both cultivated and wild, there are tamarisks and several species of acacia. Ponds and pools are fringed by reeds (*Phragmites*) and bulrushes (*Typha*). In the wadis a sparse scrub of acacias, caper bushes, etc., may survive throughout the year.

The steppe-like strip of land along the Mediterranean coast continues east of the Nile Delta along the northern edge of the Eastern (Arabian) Desert and the Mediterranean coast of the Sinai Peninsula. To the south and south-east of this extends a barren and inhospitable belt of sandy and pebbly desert (*serir*). In the coarse sandy and gravelly soil of this region such moisture as is contributed by the very rare showers of rain rapidly seeps away, preventing the formation of a layer of humus which might have fostered plant growth. In these areas permanent vegetation is found only in the wadis, though elsewhere a fall of rain will bring out an ephemeral carpet of flowers.

In the mountains of the Eastern Desert and the Sinai Massif the water-supply is rather better than in the plains of the *serir*. Here the rain-bearing clouds, rare though they still are, come up against peaks rising well above 6500 ft/2000 m and discharge their contents. Showers are more frequent here than in the sandy and stony desert, and in addition the impervious rocks of which the desert hills are largely constituted retain the moisture in the surface soil for a relatively long period. Thus in the wadis of the mountain areas quite considerable groups of acacias, tamarisks and other drought-loving species flourish throughout the year, accompanied by a short-lived growth of smaller plants. In some of the wadis, particularly in the Sinai Peninsula, the ground-water comes to the surface, giving rise to oases in which agriculture is possible. Apart from this the



Date-palm, Memphis

rocky slopes and cliffs of the mountains are entirely without vegetation. – Along the Red Sea coast there is a narrow strip of salt- and drought-tolerant vegetation.

After millennia of cultivation the Nile Valley has almost entirely lost its endemic vegetation, and indigenous species, apart from species useful to man which are deliberately cultivated, occur only sporadically. The lotus (*Nymphaea lotus*, *N. cerculea* and *N. nelumbo*), once the emblem of the Egyptian kingdom, is now found only in parks. The thickets of papyrus in the marshes and along the banks of the river, once so extensive and so rich in wildlife, which appear so frequently in ancient Egyptian reliefs and paintings, disappeared during the Middle Ages, and papyrus (*Cyperus papyrus*) and giant bulrushes (*Typha elephantina*) can now be found growing wild only in the Wadi Natrun.

There were no real forests in Egypt, at any rate during the Historical period, and timber for shipbuilding and other purposes had to be imported from Lebanon,

the Aegean islands and the Land of Punt (Somali coast). Natural conditions are still adverse to the development of woodland, though there are small plantations of palms and fruit trees, and trees are also planted to provide protection from wind and erosion. The villages of the fellahin are shaded by groves of date-palms, and in Nubia of doum-palms. Along promenades and country roads there are frequently acacias, tamarisks and lebbek trees (*Albizzia lebbek*). Around wells the sycamore (*Ficus sycomorus*), a tree regarded as sacred, is found. Introductions from the New World are the eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus globulus*), casuarina and prickly pear (*Opuntia*), which is common in rural areas. The olive is not common, even in Mediterranean Egypt, and except in a few oases yields fruit of poor quality.

Favorite ornamental plants are bougainvillea, jasmine, oleander, hibiscus, papyrus, poinsettia, catalpa and bamboos. – For agricultural and industrial plants see the section on Economy (agriculture), p. 86.

Animal Life

The **animal life** of Egypt is characterized by the overlapping of the Palaearctic region (animals of the northern Old World) and the Ethiopian region (animals of central and southern Africa, including Madagascar), and accordingly includes species from both of these regions.

Animal life is closely dependent on vegetation: only where plants can grow is sufficient nourishment available for animals. Thus the animals of the desert, with its limited resources of vegetable food, are confined to the smaller and less demanding species; and even these species are not found in the real desert, but on the fringes of the desert, in areas of semi-desert and steppe-like character (the latter particularly along the Mediterranean coast). In these areas and, in increasingly smaller numbers, farther south are found such mammals as the dorcas gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*), and the graceful slender-horned gazelle, the desert fox (*Fennecus cerdo*), the hyena (*Hyaena hyaena*), the jackal (*Canis aureus*), gerbils (*Meriones*) and the gundi (*Ctenodactylus*

gundi). The reptiles are represented by several species of lizard, the chameleon (*Chamaeleo chamaeleo*), the desert monitor (*Varanus griseus*) and numerous snakes, many of them poisonous, including the horned viper (*Cerastes cornutus*), the spitting cobra (*Naja nigricollis*), the Egyptian cobra (*Naja haje*, the royal cobra or uraeus of the Pharaohs) and the sand-colored viper (*Psammophis schokari*). Typical endemic bird species of the arid regions are the desert sparrow (*Passer simplex*) and the Houbara bustard (*Chlamydotis undulata*); and in addition large numbers of migratory birds, including swallows, warblers, hoopoes and wagtails, pause in the oases and humid depressions during their journey south, supplied with an abundant stock of food in the myriads of insects (mosquitoes, butterflies, dragonflies).

The animal life of the Nile Valley, the Delta and the large Oasis of Fayyum is naturally more numerous and more varied, although many centuries of human encroachment on the natural setting have led to the disappearance of old-established species which feature



Dovecots, El-Minya

prominently in ancient reliefs and paintings. Thus the hippopotamus, which at many places in ancient Egypt was venerated as divine, was ruthlessly hunted down because of the damage it caused to the fields and also for the sake of the ivory of its teeth and its hide, and was finally exterminated. A similar fate befell the crocodile, which was common in ancient times but has now completely disappeared from the lower course of the Nile, though a few survivors are said to have remained in the Abu Simbel area before the construction of the High Dam at Aswan. Other species that have disappeared from Egypt are the lion and probably also the Barbary sheep (*Ammotragus lervia*) and the oryx (*Oryx gazella*), which appears in many ancient Egyptian paintings. A few leopards are said to survive in the Sinai Peninsula; and the lynx and the wild cat have withdrawn into the

inaccessible mountain fastnesses of the Eastern Desert.

There are, however, large numbers of the small mammals – hares, mice, rats, etc. – which accompany human settlement and cause considerable damage to agriculture. In Lower Egypt flying foxes (*Pteropodidae*) are numerous. The thickets of reeds fringing river-banks are the haunt of the ichneumon or African mongoose (*Herpestes ichneumon*; "Pharaoh's rat"), which was held in high regard by the ancient Egyptians as a predator on snakes. Reptiles include geckos, agamids, Nile monitors (*Varanus niloticus*), several species of lizards, the snakes which are also found in the deserts and the Egyptian tortoise. River-banks, canals and the lakes in the Delta are populated by frogs.

In the well-watered areas in the Delta live swarms of ducks, geese, flamingos, coots, herons, storks, rails, wagtails and other birds. Flocks of cattle egrets (*Ardeola ibis*) settle on the trees fringing the water; vultures, kites and falcons hover overhead; and everywhere there are sparrows, finches, ravens, peewits, quails, larks, snipe, guinea fowl, sunbirds, sand grouse and pigeons (kept all over Egypt in dovecots which are a conspicuous feature of the landscape). The sacred ibis of the ancient Egyptians (*Threskiornis aethiopica*) is now rare, and the ostrich, which was prized for its beautiful feathers, has completely disappeared.



Cattle egrets



Dromedaries

The donkey, the mule and the dromedary are still prized by the fellahin as beasts of burden and riding animals. Cattle and water-buffalo are kept both as draft animals and for the sake of their milk and meat. Sheep and goats are the principal domestic animals of the bedouin. Pigs, held by the Muslim population to be impure, are kept only by Copts.

Insects are numerous in the hot and humid river-basins and marshy lakes of the Delta. Mosquitoes and midges spread malaria and trachoma, an eye disease common in Egypt. Locusts descend in swarms on the crops and devour everything green in a short space of time. Scorpions are feared for their painful (though rarely fatal) bite. The dung-beetle (*Scarabeus sacer*), the sacred scarab of the ancient Egyptians, can still be encountered. – A serious health problem is

presented by bilharzia, a disease caused by a species of flukeworm (*Schistosoma haematobium*). The worms proliferate in an intermediate host, a species of water-snail (*Bulinus*) which lives in stagnant water, ponds and canals.

Many ancient reliefs show the abundance of fish then to be found in the Nile. Since the construction of the High Dam their numbers have been markedly reduced by the fall-off in the food-supply formerly provided by the Nile mud. – Off the Mediterranean coasts of Egypt there are large numbers of dolphins, tunny and swordfish, as well as sharks; and cuttlefish, crayfish, shellfish and sponges are also found all along the coast. – In the Red Sea sharks and rays are numerous, and the whole coast is fringed with colonies of coral.

Population

With some 51 million inhabitants, Egypt now has a population more than three times as large as in 1927, and greater by 21 million than its 1966 population; a hundred years ago, in 1882, it had only 6.8 million inhabitants. This population explosion is one of the country's most urgent problems, for all the increases in production achieved by modern technology have immediately been absorbed and overtaken by the continuing increase in population; while early marriage and religious resistance have so far frustrated all attempts to reduce the birth rate.

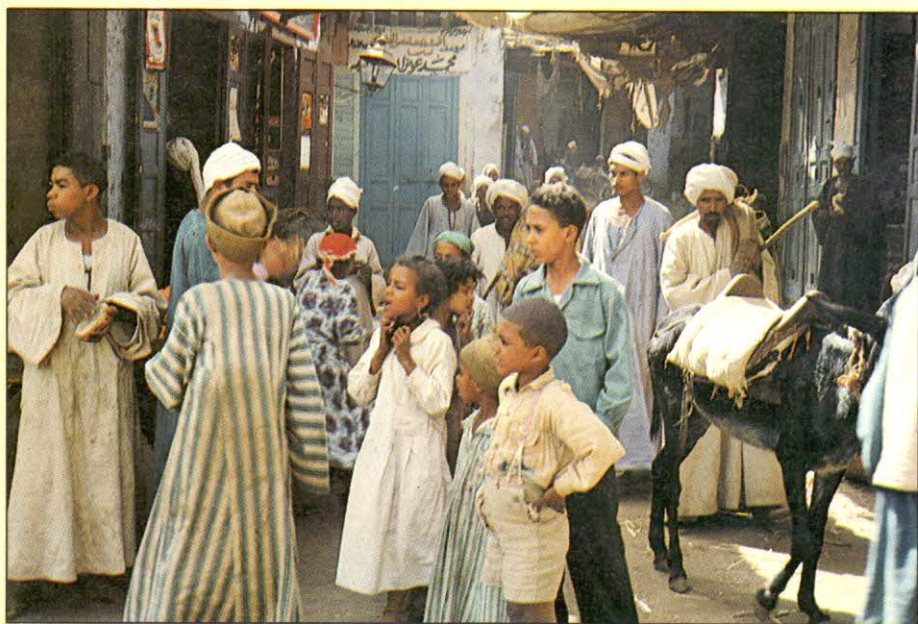
With an average *population density* of some 3240 inhabitants to the sq. mile (1250 to the sq. km) in the cultivated area, Egypt is one of the most densely populated countries in the world. There are particular concentrations of population around Cairo, with over 96,000 to the sq. mile (37,000 to the sq. km), and Alexandria, with over 26,000 to the sq. mile (10,000 to the sq. km).

The *social structure* of the country is characterized by wide differences between the small but very wealthy upper stratum of the population, a middle class with a modest standard of living and the great mass of the population, impoverished and living in the most primitive conditions. Unemployment and

the housing shortage have reached almost unimaginable proportions.

Some 90% of the population are descended from the ancient **Egyptians**. There are in the first place the *fellahin*, intermingled with Arab blood over many centuries, who make up four-fifths of the total population, living in very poor circumstances. Then there are the Christian *Copts* (from Greek *aiggyptos* by way of Arabic *qubt*), who account for some 10% of the population and form an educated middle class living in the towns, mainly in Upper Egypt. Finally, there are the Hamitic (Negroid) *Nubians*, incomers from the south, who are largely employed in the service sector of the economy. Two small Hamitic minorities are the *Berbers* in the Oasis of Siwa and the nomadic *Bisharin* in the south-east of the country. The *bedouin* (about 100,000), who have now largely given up their nomadic way of life, are reckoned to be pure **Arabs**. Of the *Jews* who were settled in Egypt from ancient times all but a few hundred have now left following the recent wars with Israel. — In hair and skin color the Egyptians are wholly of the dark Mediterranean type.

The overwhelming majority of the population (some 93%) is *Muslim* (Sunnite). The rest are *Christians*, belonging to the Coptic Church, which broke away from



In a rural bazaar

Rome under the Patriarch of Alexandria in 451. – Polygamy has now practically died out, though it is not forbidden by Islamic law.

The official language of Egypt, and the ordinary spoken language, is *Arabic*. Many people in the upper and middle ranges of the population speak English and French, so that visitors speaking these languages should have no difficulty in making themselves understood. Coptic, which is derived from ancient Egyptian, survives only as a liturgical language. Nubian and a few Berber dialects are of only local importance.

In the field of *education* six years' school attendance has been compulsory since 1923, but there are insufficient schools, particularly in the rural areas, to cope



Village slaughterhouse

with the steadily increasing numbers of children. The country's eight universities produce more graduates than the labor market can absorb, while there are inadequate facilities for technical education.

Religion in Ancient Egypt

In spite of the great numbers of religious texts, reliefs and paintings that have come down to us from ancient Egypt we still know relatively little about Egyptian religion. We know the names of many gods and goddesses, what they looked like and where they were worshiped; but of their real nature, on the significance they had for the priests and the ordinary worshipers, on the myths associated with them we are very inadequately informed. The Egyptians themselves never evolved any clear religious system. A variety of different concepts co-existed in their religious beliefs, and they never managed to reconcile popular religion and priestly wisdom, inherited traditions and new developments.

The complex religion which finds expression in the texts of the Later Period did not exist in the early days of Egyptian history. The country was originally made up of a variety of urban and village communities, each of which had its tutelary (protective) god or goddess. Many of these *local deities* are known to us, though we cannot always be sure where they originated: Horus, who was worshiped at Behdet (Damanhur), the ancient capital of Lower Egypt; Atum, the god of Heliopolis; Thoth, the local god of

Hermopolis; Month, the god of Thebes; Khnum, patron of Herwer (Beni Hasan); Ptah of Memphis; Herishef of Heracleopolis; Sobek (Suchos), whose principal cult center was apparently in the Fayyum, etc. Among local goddesses were Neith of Sais and Hathor of Dendera. Many of these local deities had lost their original names and were worshiped under names or epithets referring to some particular quality or some feature of their myth, as in the case of the lion goddess worshiped in the Memphis area, known as Sakhmet, the "Mighty One"; the god worshiped at Asyut in the form of a wolf, known as Wepwawet, "Opener of the Ways", no doubt because his image, carried at the head of the army, opened the way into enemy territory; and the local god of This, Enhuret (Greek Onuris), known as "He who brings the Distant One", apparently reflecting an ancient legend that he brought from some distant land the lion goddess who was worshiped with him. Other local deities were merely named after the towns where they were worshiped: thus the cat goddess of the Delta town of Bast (Bubastus) was called Bastet ("She of Bastet"), the goddess of Nekhab (El-Kab) was known as Nekhbet ("She of Nekhab"), etc.

The original conceptions of these deities were extremely crude, reminiscent of the fetishism of African Negroes. Thus the people of Busiris (Djedu) and Mendes



Anubis (from Tutankhamun's Tomb)

(Djedet) venerated a curious pillar (Djed) which was later associated with Osiris and Re, and the gods Min of Coptos and Ptah of Memphis were worshiped in the form of anthropomorphic fetishes. The goddess Hathor, originally worshiped to the south of Memphis, was thought to live in a sycamore tree, the god Nefertum in a lotus flower, while the goddess Neith of Sais was venerated in the form of a shield on which two arrows were nailed crosswise. Particularly common was the belief that divinities manifested themselves in the form of animals – cows, bulls, rams, goats, crocodiles, cats, lions, ichneumons, frogs, certain species of fish, ibises, falcons, vultures, etc. Thus the god Khnum was a ram, Horus a falcon, Thoth an ibis, Sobek a crocodile, the goddess Nekhbet a vulture, the goddess of Bubastis a cat, Hathor of Dendera a cow, the local goddess of Buto a snake.

In addition to the deities worshiped in the form of animals certain *sacred animals* were worshiped in their own right. The animals, recognizable by particular signs, were kept within the precincts of the temple and when they died were buried with honor and succeeded by another of the same species. The best known of these sacred animals was the Apis bull worshiped in Memphis, which was black with white marks, a triangle on its forehead and a crescent moon on its right flank. The light-colored Mnevis bull was worshiped at Heliopolis, the Buchis bull at Hermonthis and Medamut; while a phoenix was also venerated at Heliopolis. These sacred animals were associated with the local deities: thus Apis was held to be the "servant of Ptah", Buchis the "servant of Month", the phoenix the "soul of the sun god". Later the worship of animals was carried even further, extending not only to these sacred animals but also to the animals in whose form the local deities were worshiped. These animals, too, were

kept within the temple precincts; and other animals of the same species might not be killed within the town where they were held sacred and after their death were solemnly buried in special cemeteries. From this later period date the cat tombs of Bubastis and Beni Hasan, the crocodile tombs of Kom Ombo, the ibis tombs of Ashmunein, the ram tombs of Elephantine, etc. It was no doubt this exaggerated animal cult that struck the Greeks as so extraordinary – though intimations of similar cults are found in various Oriental peoples and even in Greece and Rome (Cybele's lion, Athena's owl, Zeus's eagle).

The Egyptians moved away from their earlier fetishist beliefs when, at the beginning of the Historical period, they began to worship *deities in human form*. The god was now represented with human features and limbs, wearing the same dress as the Egyptians of that day. On his head he wore the helmet or crown of a prince and round his middle, like the kings of the Early Period, a loincloth or apron with an animal's tail to the rear; and as a symbol of his power he carried a scepter and a staff. The deities conceived as animals were now also given human form, but with the head of the animal in which they manifested themselves: thus Sobek was represented with a crocodile's head, Khnum with a ram's head, Thoth with an ibis's head, Horus with a falcon's head. The various cow goddesses were given a human head with a cow's horns; the vulture goddess Mut, who was worshiped at Thebes, was represented with a vulture over her head; and Neith of Sais, worshiped in the form of a bundle of arrows, bore the arrows on her head. Curious as all this may seem – and curious as it seemed to the Greeks – it must be recognized at least that the Egyptian artists, in both statues and reliefs, contrived the transition from a human body to an animal's head with remarkable skill.

In addition to the various local divinities, whose sphere of influence was confined to the area in which they were worshiped, there appeared at a very early stage *universal deities* worshiped throughout Egypt. Among them were the earth god Geb, the sky goddess Nut, the air god Shu, the dew goddess Tefnut, the sun god Re, the vegetation god Osiris, the Nile god Hapi and the ocean god Nun; among the star deities Orion and the goddess Sothis

(Sirius) were particularly prominent. These nature divinities were not confined to any particular place but were everywhere at home. Soon, however, these cosmic powers became associated with certain local gods and in some cases identified with them. The great sky divinities were given human form and cult centers of their own: thus the sun god Re, having become associated with Atum, was worshiped at Heliopolis, while the lion-headed divine couple, Shu and Tefnut, were venerated at Leontopolis.

At an early period the conception of many deities was extended and deepened by the increased emphasis given to particular qualities or functions. Thus the falcon-headed Month, a local god worshiped at Hermonthis, became a war god; the god Min of Coptos, where the track through the hills of the Eastern Desert from the Red Sea reached the Nile Valley, became the patron of desert travelers and later also a fertility and harvest god whom the Greeks equated with Pan; Ptah of Memphis was regarded as the protective god of artists, metalworkers and smiths, the Egyptian equivalent of Hephaestus; Sakhmet, the "Mighty One" of Memphis, became a fearsome war goddess who destroyed the enemy; while Hathor of Dendera, with emphasis placed on her friendlier aspects, became a goddess of love and joy (Greek Aphrodite). Many local deities were linked with the cosmic powers, in particular the moon and the sun. Thus Thoth of Hermopolis was venerated as the moon god who had created the terrestrial order and was the "Lord of Time"; he was also credited with the invention of hieroglyphs and was accordingly the patron of scribes and scholars. Even more significantly, Horus became a sky god associated with the sun and received the name of Re-Harakhty (i.e. the Sun, Horus the Horizon-Dweller). The cow goddess Hathor ("House of Horus") became a sky goddess. Many local deities were thus worshiped throughout Egypt in virtue of particular capacities attributed to them.

There were also many *minor gods*, demons and spirits who could in certain circumstances help or injure men, and whom, therefore, men sought to propitiate. Among them were, for example, the birth goddesses who could accelerate or hinder a birth, the grotesque god Bes who was the protector of the marriage-bed and of women in childbirth, the midwife toad Heqet, various harvest

goddesses, etc. Later certain particularly notable men came to be regarded as possessing sanctity and were venerated after their death as gods, such as Imhotep of Memphis, King Djoser's architect, and the sage Amenhotep, son of Hapu.

Like men, gods frequently had wives and sons, thus forming "triads" which dwelt and were worshiped in the temple. Examples of such divine families are Ptah, his wife Sakhmet and their son Nefertum, or Osiris, Isis and Horus. The theologians of the ancient city of Heliopolis (On) went even further, establishing a group of nine gods (an "ennead") headed by Atum, the city's protective god. The other members of the group were the four cosmogonical (universal) deities Shu and his wife Tefnut, Geb and Nut, together with Osiris, his wife Isis, Seth, protective god of Upper Egypt and legendary adversary of Osiris, and his wife Nephthys. This divine ennead was imitated in many temples, with the substitution for Atum of the principal local god.

The gods were, too, equipped with human virtues and passions, and there were many accounts of their exploits and adventures. Unfortunately most of these myths and legends have been lost. Among the few that have come down to us the best known, and the most popular among the Egyptians themselves, is the tale of Osiris. According to this legend Osiris was King of Egypt, a prosperous and popular ruler. He had, however, a wicked brother named Seth, who persuaded him on the occasion of a banquet to lie down in an ingeniously contrived chest, which Seth with his 72 accomplices then locked and threw into the Nile. The river carried it down to the sea, and it was eventually cast ashore at the Phoenician town of Byblos. Meanwhile Isis, Osiris's sister and wife, had been ranging over the world in search of the chest. Finding it after a long quest, she took it back to Egypt and mourned in solitude for her dead husband; then she concealed the coffin and went to Buto, where her son Horus was brought up. During her absence Seth had found his hated brother's body while hunting wild boar, cut it up and dispersed the 14 pieces. Then Isis set out in search of the separate pieces, and when she found one buried it and set up a memorial on the spot: hence the numerous "tombs of Osiris" in Egypt. According to a later legend Isis assembled the separate parts of her husband's body, whereupon Osiris

briefly returned to life in order to beget his son Horus. When Horus reached manhood he set out to wreak vengeance on his father's murderer, and eventually, after a fierce conflict, defeated and killed him. According to another account the two contestants were separated by Thoth and thereafter divided Egypt between them, Horus taking the south and Seth the north. Then, it was believed, Horus brought Osiris back to life again by magical means, and Osiris thereafter reigned in the Land of the West as King of the Dead.

Egyptian conceptions of the universe, in particular of the sky and the constellations, were also clad in the form of myth; and their picture of the world shows how narrow was the geographical horizon of the Egyptians in the Early Period. The world was conceived as an elongated oval, an island surrounded by the ocean and traversed from end to end by a broad river, the Nile, which was thought to emerge from the ocean in the south or alternatively to stem from two springs in the rocks at the Aswan cataracts. All around were high mountains, and on four of these peaks rested the sky, thought of as a level surface from which the stars hung down like lamps. Another view was that the sky was constituted like the earth, traversed by a river and dissected by numerous canals. Below the earth was another world known as Duat, the counterpart of the sky and identical to it in form, which according to a later conception was the land beyond the tomb, peopled by the dead. After the cow goddess Hathor became a sky goddess the sky was also conceived in the form of a cow with the sun set between its horns. Alternatively the sun was thought of as sailing across the cow's body during the day in a boat, as if on the celestial ocean, while at night the stars were set on its body. The air god Shu was believed to stand under the cow supporting it with his arms.

Different views were held in the various priestly schools about the two main luminaries in the sky, the sun and the moon. There was a very ancient conception that the sun and moon were the eyes of the great god who had created the world; and this great god was then identified with the sun god Re himself, giving rise to the paradoxical view that Re, the incarnation of the sun, had the sun as his eye. After Horus became the sun god the sun and the moon were also seen as his eyes. The eye of the sun featured

prominently in Egyptian mythology. It was thought of in the form of the sun and became an independent goddess, an emanation of the sun god. With this eye of the sun were identified the Lower Egyptian snake goddess Uto and other goddesses such as the lion-headed Tefnut and the cow goddess Hathor. The eye of the sun was also conceived as a venomous snake, the uraeus or cobra, which reared up on the sun god's forehead and spat fire at his adversaries. Hence the cobra which was later worn by Egyptian kings as a kind of diadem on their forehead. – Another conception of the sun was that the sun god Re sailed across the sky in a boat during the day and at night continued his journey in another boat through the Underworld. Since the sun god Re-Harakhty was a falcon the sun was also seen as a falcon, flying in brilliant plumage across the sky. Alternatively, like Horus, it was a young hero engaged in constant conflict with the hostile powers of darkness. Again, it was conceived as a scarab (dung-beetle); and just as the scarab rolled in front of it a ball of dung containing its egg, so the sun god was seen in the form of a scarab pushing the round solar disc in front of it.

The world, the gods and mankind had not, it was believed, existed from the beginning of time but had been created. The view most commonly held was that the earth god Geb and the sky goddess Nut had lain in intimate union within the primal ocean, Nun, until the air god Shu separated them and raised up the sky goddess in his arms. The sun god Re was also believed to have come out of the primal ocean; or alternatively he was the child of Geb and Nut, reborn anew each day. This, of course, ran counter to the other view that Re was himself the creator of the world.

In the course of history Egyptian religion underwent many changes. Certain gods gained for a time a dominant position in the Egyptian pantheon, either through the rise to power of a dynasty or a city particularly devoted to their cult or as a result of theological speculation and myth formation. When in the Early Period two independent kingdoms came into being in Upper and Lower Egypt the local gods of the two capitals, Seth of Ombos and Horus of Behdet, became the patrons of the two States; and when the rulers of Lower Egypt established a single Egyptian kingdom, with its capital presumably

at Heliopolis, Horus achieved pre-eminence and thereafter remained the protective god of the Pharaohs and of the country as a whole. In the last phase of the Prehistoric period Egypt again split into two kingdoms with capitals at Nekhab-Nekhen and Buto, whose tutelary divinities were the vulture goddess Nekhbet and the snake goddess Uto, who thus became the goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt. Similarly, at the end of the Old Kingdom, Ptah, god of the capital city of Memphis, became the principal Egyptian god.

An important part was played in the history of Egyptian religion by the city of On (Heliopolis), which seems to have been the religious center of Egypt from a very early period. The Temple of On was the scene of the royal coronation; and here, too, according to the myth, the goddess Seshat inscribed the years of the king's reign on the leaves of the sacred tree. Here also stood the obelisk-shaped column known as Benbe, the favorite seat of the sun god. The real tutelary god of the town, however, was Atum; and the priests of On accordingly declared him equal with the sun god, maintaining that he was merely another form and another name of Re-Harakhty. This doctrine was widely diffused throughout Egypt, and other local gods began to be identified with Re and to be given his attribute, the solar disc with the royal cobra (uraeus) entwined round it. Thus, for example, the crocodile god Sobek and Amun, the god of Karnak, became sun gods. This identification of local gods with Re, beginning in the Middle Kingdom, developed on a considerable scale during the New Kingdom, throwing Egyptian religion into considerable confusion. Attempts were indeed made to distinguish the various forms of Re, for example by regarding the sun god Harakhty as the morning sun and Atum, now also a sun god, as the evening sun; but no complete systematization was ever achieved.

Similarly the female local divinities were amalgamated, particularly when they had similar characteristics. Thus the sky goddess Hathor was identified with Isis, the cat goddess Bastet with the lion goddesses Sakhmet and Pakhet, and Sakhmet with the vulture goddess Mut.

A new phase in the development of Egyptian religion began when the center of

gravity of the kingdom moved south at the beginning of the New Kingdom. The god Amun of Karnak, an almost unknown deity under the Old Kingdom, who had become identified with the sun god under the name Amun-Re, was brought out of obscurity by the kings of the 12th Dynasty, some of whom were named after him (Amenemhet, "Amun is at the head"), and at the beginning of the New Kingdom, when Thebes replaced Memphis as capital, moved into the principal place in the Egyptian pantheon. The great war was waged by the Theban kings in Nubia and Asia were undertaken in his name; temples in his honor were built in the conquered territories; and the lion's share of the booty was assigned to his temples, particularly the temples in Thebes. Under the 18th Dynasty Amun became the national god of Egypt, displacing the old national god Horus (Re-Harakhty). The priests of Heliopolis, resenting this decline in their influence, took the earliest opportunity of bringing about the overthrow of Amun and restoring the sun god to his rightful place. When Amenophis IV came to the throne the sun god of Heliopolis (Re-Harakhty), in a particular form, was declared the principal god; and soon afterwards, in the sixth year of the King's reign, the sun itself (Egyptian Aten) became the sole divinity of the kingdom. One factor which undoubtedly influenced Amenophis in carrying through this revolution was his desire to put an end to the confusion in Egyptian religious doctrine and to replace the many gods long theoretically identified with the sun god by a single unique sun god. The images and names of Amun and his associated gods were everywhere destroyed. Soon after Amenophis's death, however, during the reign of Tutankhamun, the supporters of Amun gained the upper hand and the old faith was restored.

Egyptian religion thus remained in a confused state; the fusion of different divinities continued on an increasing scale, and the living faith hardened into rigidity. Men clung anxiously to the ancient traditions, and a superstitious belief in the efficacy of amulets and magic spells as man's sole protection against evil influences now gained ground. Little new religious thought is to be found in the innumerable texts which cover the walls of temples, tombs and sarcophagi. Individual Egyptian deities including Isis, Harpocrates and Sarapis (who was



Alabaster lamp from Tutankhamun's Tomb

introduced into Egypt in the Ptolemaic period) retained sufficient status to be adopted into the Greek and Roman pantheon and in Roman Imperial times to find many worshippers as far afield as Germany and Britain. Only with the coming of Christianity was Egyptian religion finally defeated.

The Egyptians never achieved any unified or systematic conception of the fate of man after death. The one generally accepted belief was that man's life did not terminate with death but that he continued to live in the same way as on earth provided that certain requirements for this continued existence were met. The main thing considered essential was to bury the dead man's body with care and to preserve it from destruction. A house was built for him in the likeness of his earthly dwelling in which he could live and which, it was believed, he could leave during the day if he wished. Statues set up in a special chamber in the tomb represented the dead man, his family and his servants. Votive offerings deposited in the tomb provided for his subsistence in the future life, and further offerings (foodstuffs, objects of everyday use, etc.) were depicted on the walls of the tomb or on the sarcophagus, in the belief that by some magical means the representations of the various objects would serve in place of the things themselves for the dead man's use. Garments, ornaments and jewelry, etc., were also placed in the tomb or represented in reliefs or paintings. The activities in which the dead man had

engaged during his life, the entertainments he had enjoyed, the honors he had gained – all these awaited him in the after-life, and to ensure that they would be available to him were depicted on the walls of the tomb, enabling us to gain an exact picture of the life of the tomb's owner. In earlier times only the great ones of the kingdom were allowed to have tombs of their own, and lesser mortals had to be content with more modest graves; later the middle ranks of the population, provided that they could meet the considerable expense, also constructed their "houses for eternity".

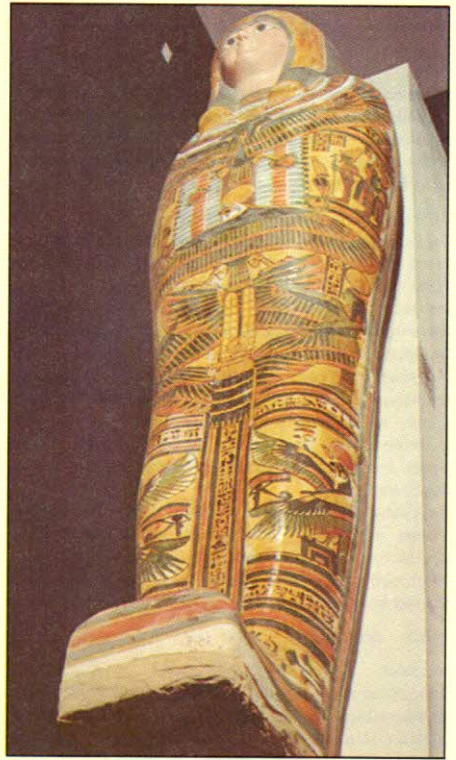
The dead were under the protection of their local gods, who were responsible for watching over their burial and their security in the tomb. In addition there was a special god of the dead who was venerated in many cities – Khontamenti, "first of the inhabitants of the Western Realm" (the kingdom of the dead), who was conceived in the form of a dog. Later all these various deities were overshadowed by Osiris. Thanks to the widely diffused myth associated with him, this old vegetation god gradually became accepted throughout Egypt as the Lord of the Dead, solely responsible for their welfare, with Abydos as the principal center of his cult. The death which Osiris had suffered was the fate which awaited every man; but just as Osiris had returned to life, so every man might begin a new life, provided that the same magical formulae were pronounced for him by his son; he then joined Osiris, and indeed became one with Osiris, became himself Osiris. His entry into Osiris's kingdom depended on the recitation of magical formulae and spells, a knowledge of which had to be communicated to the dead man; but in addition it was necessary to have led a virtuous life on earth, and for this purpose the dead man had to appear in Osiris's judgment hall and declare before 42 judges that he was free of major sin. Only when this had been done, and his heart had been weighed by Thoth on the scales of justice and found not to be wanting, could he enter into the Beyond.

There were divergent views about the whereabouts of the Afterworld. It was usually thought of as being in the west, the region of hills and desert in which the sun set. Alternatively the dead were believed to live in the celestial fields of Earu, a fertile region where they plowed

and harvested just as they had done on earth and where the corn grew seven cubits high – a paradise indeed for the Egyptian peasant. Since the work in the afterlife might sometimes prove too hard for the dead man, small figures known as *ushabtis* were, from the Middle Kingdom onwards, left in the tomb to help him, inscribed with a magical formula which would bring them to life and allow them to work in the fields. Another theory, designed to unify different conceptions of the afterlife, set the residence of the dead in the Underworld (Duat). This was divided into 12 sections corresponding to the 12 hours of the night, which, on one view, were separated from one another by large gates.

Alongside these conceptions there was also the popular belief that in addition to his body man also had a soul (*ba*) which lived on after his death. This was originally thought of as having the form of a bird (later a bird with a human head), which left the body after death and fluttered freely about the world, though able at any time to return to the body – always provided that the body remained intact and free from corruption. In order to enable the soul to find the right body, great pains were taken to ensure its preservation in good condition. Each man also had a *ka*, a personification of the life force and thus a kind of guardian spirit, which was born with him and accompanied him through life. Even after a man's death his *ka* lived on in order to dispense vital force to the dead man in the life beyond.

In the earliest times the dead were buried lying on their left side with their knees drawn up. During the Old Kingdom, under the influence of the Osiris myth, they began to be buried in a fully extended position – a practice perhaps first adopted in royal burials. At the same time the practice of embalming was introduced in order to preserve the bodies from dissolution. At first they were merely treated with saline solutions and asphalt and wrapped in



Mummy case

linen bandages and cloths. In later times the process was more elaborate. The brain was first extracted through the nostrils, using an iron hook; then the abdomen was opened with a stone knife and the entrails removed (Herodotus ii, 86). The entrails were put into four vessels (canopic jars), which in the later period had lids in the form of the four sons of Horus, who were charged with their protection. The heart was also removed from the body and replaced by a stone scarab set on the dead man's breast under the bandaging. According to Herodotus there were in the Late Period three methods of embalming, varying according to the expense to be incurred. Thanks to the great care expended on the embalming process many mummies have survived into modern times with clearly distinguishable features.

The Egyptian Pantheon

Aker

A divine couple of chthonian (Underworld) deities worshiped in Leontopolis, guardians of the entrance to the Underworld; associated with the sacred barque of the morning and evening sun. Represented as two lions back to back.

Amun (Amon, Ammon; the "Hidden One")

Originally a wind god venerated by the Nile boatmen. From the 11th Dynasty a creator god, the principal deity of Thebes and, as Amun-Re, elevated to the status of a sun god. From the New Kingdom worshiped as the national god of Egypt; in the reign of Amenophis IV/Akhenaten temporarily displaced by the Aten. In Hermopolis, together with his female counterpart *Amaunet*, goddess of the fresh north winds, he was worshiped as god of the air and of invisible things. Identified in Ptolemaic times with the Greek Zeus and particularly venerated, as Ammon, in the Siwa Oasis.

Represented in human form with a double feather crown, symbolizing his power over air and light; occasionally also as a ram or a goose. Occasionally, combined with Min of Coptos, ithyphallic.

Sacred animal: ram.

Anhur: see Onuris.

Antaeus

A legendary figure taken over from Greek mythology; an invincible Libyan king and giant who was identified with a curious local god. Principal place of worship: Antaeopolis (Egyptian Tukow) in Upper Egypt.

Anubis (Anup)

A very ancient god of the dead, local god of Kais and protective god of the 12th, 17th and 18th nomes of Upper Egypt. In later times believed to be a brother of Osiris or the son of Osiris and Nephthys, secretly conceived, exposed by his parents and brought up by Isis. His function was to show the dead the way to the Underworld. The Greeks equated him with Hermes and called him Hermanubis. Elsewhere in Egypt he was associated with Horus and Thoth. Principal place of worship: Cynopolis.

Represented as a dog or with a dog's or jackal's head. Sacred animal: dog or jackal.

Anukis (Anqet)

Goddess of the cataract region at Aswan; consort of

Khnun. Principal place of worship: island of Sehel, Aswan.

Represented wearing a white crown with two gazelle's horns.

Anup: see Anubis.

Apis (Hapi)

The sacred bull of Memphis; accorded divine status as the son of Ptah (or Atum or Osiris); combined with Osiris as Osir-Hapi (Osorapis; Greek Sarapis), ruler of the Underworld. The finding of a bull with the right attributes was an occasion for great celebration throughout Egypt. When an Apis bull died it was mummified and buried with great pomp in the Serapeum at Saqqara.

Represented as a black bull with a white triangle on its forehead, a solar disc between its horns and decorative trappings.

Arsnuphis (Harensnuphis)

The name under which Shu was worshiped on the islands of Bigga and Philae.

Aten

The sun as the sole divinity and vital force, embracing the whole world and manifested everywhere in nature. The worship of the Aten – the first monotheistic religious doctrine – was made the State religion by Amenophis IV/Akhenaten, a fanatical opponent of the polytheism which had hitherto prevailed in Egypt. The doctrine of the Aten contains some astonishingly modern conceptions.

Represented as a solar disc with rays ending in hands.

Atum

Creator and lord of the world; the principal divinity of the Heliopolitan ennead and the local god of Pithom. Created by self-generation the divine couple Shu, the air god, and Tefnut, the dew goddess. Associated with Re and venerated as the setting sun.

Represented with the double crown, scepter and girdle; occasionally as a snake.

Bastet

Principal goddess of Bubastis, goddess of joy and love, celebrated in a lively annual festival at Bubastis. Associated from an early period with Hathor, Isis, Mut, Neith, Pakhet, Sakhmet and Tefnut.

Represented as a cat, sometimes with kittens; or cat-headed, with a pectoral bearing a lion's or cat's head, a basket on her right arm, a sistrum in her left hand.

Sacred animal: cat.



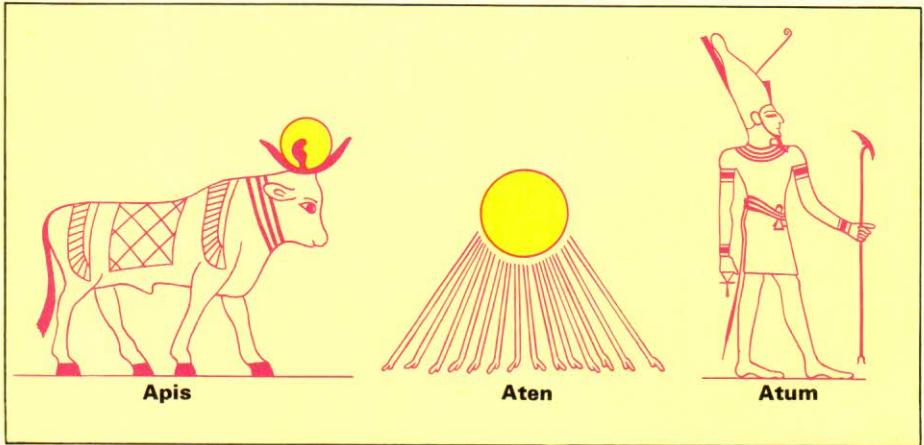
Amun



Amun-Re



Anubis

**Bes**

A popular god imported from the Land of Punt (Somali coast) about 1500 B.C.; protector of the marriage chamber and of women in childbirth, driver away of evil spirits and poisonous snakes. His image regularly appears in the birth-house (*mammisi*) of the larger temples.

Represented as a grotesque squatting dwarf; frequently wearing a feather crown and a cat's skin, with protruding tongue; occasionally depicted grinning grotesquely.

Buchis

The sacred bull of Hermonthis and Medamut.

Buto: see Uto.

Dedun

A Nubian god in the form of a bird of prey. Later compared with the Horus falcon.

Djehuti: see Thoth.

Duamutef

One of the four sons of Horus; protective god of the dead, guardian of the stomach.

Represented on the lid of a canopic jar with a jackal's head.

Ehi: see Ihi.

Emewet

God of the dead.

Represented with a dog's head, carrying a staff with a snake wound round it.

Enhuret (Onuris)

A local god of This and Sebennytus.

Epet: see Opet.

Eusos

Goddess of Heliopolis; wife of Harakhty.

Geb

Earth god and divine judge; husband of the sky goddess Nut and father of Isis, Osiris, Nephthys and Seth. He guides the first steps of the dead in the Underworld.

Hapi: see Apis.

Hapi

A Nile god and one of the manifestations of the Nile.

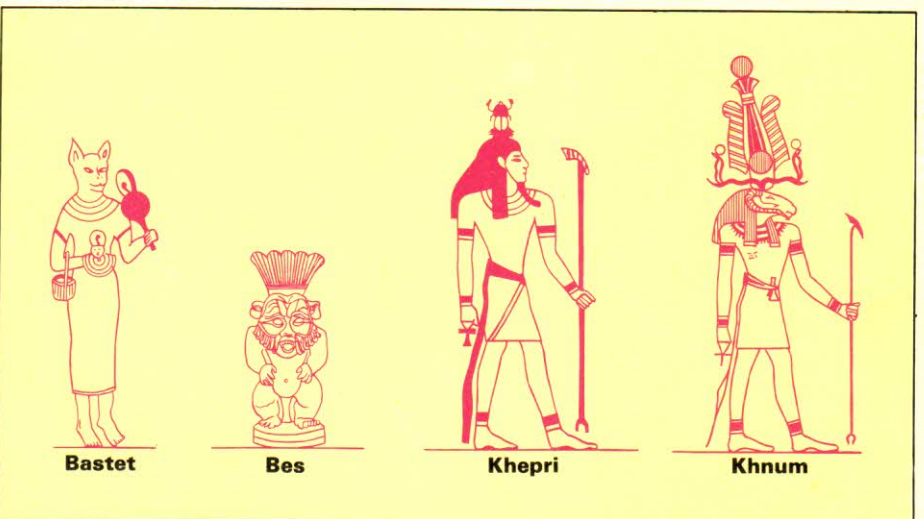
Hapi

One of the four sons of Horus; protective god of the dead, guardian of the lungs.

Represented on the lid of a canopic jar with a baboon's head.

Harakhty ("Horus of the Horizon")

One manifestation of the sun god Re associated with Horus, with the attributes of both gods. Associated with Re as Re-Harakhty, he was the national god



**Khons****Geb****Harakhty****Harendotes**

during the New Kingdom. Worshipped at Heliopolis and also highly venerated at many other places, sometimes in association with other gods (Re-Harakhty-Atum, Re-Harakhty-Amun, etc.). Represented with a falcon's head, on which is the solar disc. Sacred animal: falcon.

Harendotes (*Har-nedj-yotef*, "Horus, protector of his father Osiris")
A form of Horus. Temple at Philae.

Harkhentekhtai (*Khentekhtai*)
A crocodile (sometimes falcon) deity of Atribis (Kom el-Atrib), in the Delta.

Harmachis (*Haremakhet*, *Re-Harmachis*, "Horus in the Horizon")
A combination of Re and Horus, symbolizing the death-defeating powers of the sun. The name of the Sphinx of Giza.

Haroeris
The older Horus. Principal place of worship: Kom Ombo.
Represented with a falcon's head.

Harpocrates (*Hor-pa-khred*, "Horus the Child")
A form of Horus as a child, much venerated in the Late Period; to the Greeks a god of silence.
Represented with the side-lock of youth and his finger at his mouth.

Harsemtawi (*Harsomtut*, "Horus, unifier of the two lands")
Son of Horus and Hathor.

Harsiesis
Horus as a child, the son of Isis.
Represented with the side-lock of youth and his finger at his mouth.

Harsomtut: see Harsemtawi.

Hathor
Sky goddess; goddess of joy, of dancing and of love, later identified with Isis and the Greek goddess Aphrodite. At Thebes, associated with Osiris, she became the protectress of the necropolis. Venerated in Sinai as "Mistress of the Turquoises". Principal temple at Dendera; also large temples at Abu Simbel, Serabit el-Khadim (Sinai), Aphroditopolis, Aphroditopolis, etc. Represented as a cow; also in human form with a cow's horns, ears or head; later also with the solar disc between her horns. Her face appears on the capitals of pillars in her temples. Attributes: sistrum and menat (a broad collar).

Heh
God of time and of infinity.
Represented with tadpoles, each of which symbolizes 10,000 years.

Heqet
Goddess of birth.
Represented as a midwife toad.

**Hathor****Horus****Isis****Maat**

Herishef

A local god of Heracleopolis; national god during the First Intermediate Period. Closely associated with Re, Osiris and Amun; identified by the Greeks with Heracles. Cult center Hnes (later Heracleopolis Magna).

Sacred animal: ram.

Hor-pa-khred: see Harpocrates.

Horus

Worshiped everywhere as a sun god; the earliest national god of Egypt; a member of the Heliopolitan ennead. Usually regarded as son of Osiris and Isis, sometimes as son of Re and brother of Seth. The Pharaoh was believed to be an incarnation of Horus and accordingly the legitimate successor to Osiris: hence the "Horus names" of the kings which came into use at an early period. As a child Horus was known as Harsiesis or Harpocrates; the older Horus as Haroeris. His four sons Duamutef, Hapi, Imsety and Qebhsenuf – symbols of the four cardinal points – were regarded as protectors of the entrails of the dead and were frequently represented on the lids of canopic jars.

Represented in the early period as a falcon; later with a falcon's head, sometimes wearing the double crown; at Edfu as a winged solar disc.

Sacred animal: falcon.

Ihi (Ehi)

The young son of Hathor of Dendera; god of music and dancing; identified with the rising morning sun. Represented with a sistrum.

Imhotep (Imouthes)

High Priest of Heliopolis, a great sage and adviser to King Djoser; believed to have built Djoser's Pyramid at Saqqara, and hence the patron of architects. Venerated in the Late Period as a physician and a miraculous healer, he was equated by the Greeks with Asclepius. Main cult center the Asclepion at Saqqara; temples at Philae, Karnak, etc.

Represented with a papyrus scroll on his knees.

Imsety

One of the four sons of Horus; protective god of the dead, guardian of the liver.

Represented on the lid of a canopic jar with a human head.

Isis

A goddess much venerated in the Late Period; sister and wife of Osiris and mother of Horus; equated by the Greeks and Romans with Demeter, Ino and Hecate. The symbol of conjugal fidelity and protectress of children. Depicted on the sides of a coffin, she gave the dead man protection and vital force. Her principal temple was at Philae, where she continued to be worshiped into the Christian period; other temples at Behbeit el-Hagara (Iseum), Coptos, etc.

Represented standing erect with cow's horns and the solar disc on her head and a papyrus staff in her hand, or seated suckling the child Horus (Harsiesis or Harpocrates).

Kemuer (the "Great Black One")

Bull god of Athribis (Kom el-Atrib) in the Delta.

Khentekhtai: see Harkhentekhtai.

Khenti-Amentiu: see Khontamenti.

Khepri (the "Arising One")

The scarab (dung-beetle) as the incarnation of Re in his manifestation as the morning sun. From the Middle Kingdom scarabs of stone or pottery, with their name on the underside, were popular all over Egypt as seals or amulets.

Represented as a scarab.

Khnum

An ancient creator god, protector of the area around the First Cataract, where in the Early Period the Nile was believed to have its source. Principal temple on the island of Elephantine. As a creator god he shaped men on the potter's wheel. In the later period he was frequently identified with Osiris and Amun.

Represented with a ram's head and twisted horns.

Sacred animal: ram.

Khons (the "Wanderer")

God of the moon and of time; a member of the Theban triad, together with his parents Amun and Mut. Widely revered as a counsellor and helper in case of illness. Equated by the Greeks with Heracles. Principal temple at Karnak.

Represented with a falcon's head, often bearing the lunar crescent and lunar disc on his head; occasionally as a child with side-lock in the form of a mummy.

Sacred animal: falcon.

Khontamenti (Khenti-Amentiu)

A dog-headed god of the dead, particularly venerated at Abydos.

Maat

Daughter of Re (i.e. of the divine world order), goddess of truth and justice. In the judgment of the dead the dead man's heart was weighed against Maat's feather.

Represented with an ostrich feather on her head.

Mandulis

A Nubian local god, probably to be compared with Horus.

Mehit

A goddess equated with the destroying and fire-breathing cobra (uraeus), the eye of Re. In the later period associated with Hathor.

Represented in the form of a lion.

Min

Probably an ancient fertility god. Protective god of Coptos, starting-point of the caravan route across the Eastern Desert, and hence worshiped as the god of desert travelers. Later, combined with Amun, a harvest god, equated by the Greeks with Pan.

Represented as a black, ithyphallic mummiform figure with a head-dress of two feathers with a ribbon, holding a flail in his raised right hand.

Mnevis

The sacred bull of Heliopolis.

Month (Munt)

War god of Hermopolis, worshiped from an early period in the Thebes area (Medamut, Hermonthis, Karnak, etc.); under the 11th Dynasty protector of the royal family. Frequently associated with the Buchis bull.

Represented with a falcon's head, on which are the solar disc, a double uraeus and a double feather crown.

Sacred animal: Buchis bull.

Mut

Worshiped as a vulture goddess from an early period. A member of the Theban triad, wife of Amun and mother of Khons. Her incarnation was the queen, who accordingly sometimes wore a vulture crown. Principal temple at Karnak.

Represented with a lion's head, wearing a vulture cap or crown (either the white or the double crown).

Nefertum (the "Perfectly Beautiful")

Son of Ptah of Memphis and Sakhmet; a member of the Memphite triad. Sun child and dispenser of unguents.

Represented with a lotus-flower head-dress or two feathers; sometimes as a child seated on a lotus flower.

**Min****Month****Mut****Neith****Neith**

Town goddess of Sais; creator of all life and mother of the sun. Later a war goddess, closely associated with Osiris and Sobek. Watched over the bier of Osiris together with Isis, Nephthys and Selkit. Equated by the Greeks with Athena. Temples at Sais, Esna and Memphis, in the Fayyum, etc.

Represented wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt or two crossed arrows on her head and holding a papyrus staff and bow; occasionally with a shield as head-dress or in her hand.

Nekhbet (Smithis)

Goddess of Nekhab (El-Kab) and protective goddess of Upper Egypt. During the New Kingdom venerated as a birth goddess, and accordingly equated by the Greeks with Eileithyia.

Represented in the form of a vulture or with the skin of a vulture.

Sacred animal: vulture.

Nephthys

Originally a Heliopolitan goddess of the dead; sister of Osiris, Isis and Seth, wife of Seth and mother of Anubis. Together with Isis she lamented the dead Osiris on his bier. Associated with Anukis, goddess of the Aswan cataract region.

Represented in human form with the hieroglyph for "mistress of the house" on her head, holding a papyrus staff and the symbol for "life".

Nut

Sky goddess; wife of Geb and mother of Osiris, Isis,

Nephthys and Seth; alternatively mother of the sun god Re. In the cult of the dead she was closely associated with the belief in resurrection of the dead. Represented as an elongated female figure, supported by the god Shu to prevent her from falling on Geb, who swallows the sun at night to give birth to it anew in the morning.

Onnophris (Unnefer)

A name borne by Osiris.

Onuris: see Enhuret.**Opet (Epet, the "Harem")**

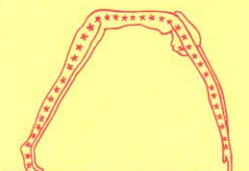
A popular birth goddess; worshiped, particularly at Thebes, as the mother of Osiris.

Represented as a hippopotamus painted with flowers and plants.

Osiris

Son of the earth god Geb and the sky goddess Nut, brother of Isis, Nephthys and Seth. Originally a vegetation god, identified at Busiris (Nile Delta) with the local god Anedjti. Venerated from an early period as the conqueror of death and equated with the god of the dead worshiped at Abydos, the "Lord of the West". Tomb at Abydos.

Represented in mummy form wearing the White Crown of Upper Egypt with a double feather and holding a flail and crook. Attribute: *djed* pillar.

**Nephthys****Nut****Osiris****Ptah**

Pakhet

Goddess of the Speos Artemidos.

Represented with a cat's or lion's head.

Sacred animals: cat and lion.

Ptah

Egyptian national god; a member of the Memphite triad, together with Sakhmet and Nefertum; patron of artists and craftsmen. Originally a creator god, combined at an early period with Sokar and Osiris in the form of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, who was associated with the Apis bull. Equated by the Greeks with Hephaestus. Temples at Thebes and Abydos, in Nubia, etc.

Represented in mummy form with a skull-cap, beard and three scepters.

Ptah-Tatjenen

A combination of Ptah with the Memphite god Tatjenen (the "High Land"), personification of the primal hill in which the primal river rose.

Qebhsenuf

One of the four sons of Horus; protective god of the dead, guardian of the entrails.

Represented on the lid of a canopic jar with a falcon's head.

Re (Ra)

Primal god; sun god and, as Atum, the principal figure in the Heliopolitan ennead. Combined with Harakhty at an early period to form Re-Harakhty. He was believed to sail in his boat across the heavens, appearing in the morning as a youth (Khepri), at midday as a man in the prime of life (Re) and in the evening as an old man (Atum). At night he sailed through the Underworld in the form of a ram, thus becoming a god of the dead. The solar barque of Re held for the dead the hope of a new life. Many other local gods sought and sometimes achieved upgrading by association with Re (e.g. Amun-Re, Sobek-Re, Khnum-Re). Re as the primal god may have been the origin of the monotheistic doctrine of the Aten.

The worship of Re centered on sun temples with obelisks, on the gilded tips of which (coated with electrum, an alloy of gold and silver) the rising sun could settle.

Represented in human form.

Re-Harmachis: see Harmachis.

Sakhmet

A manifestation of Bastet; a member of the Memphite triad, wife of Ptah and mother of Nefertum. War goddess and the wrathful eye of the sun god Re,

whom she defends with death-bringing zeal, bringing down famine and plague on his enemies.

Represented with a lion's head.

Sacred animal: lioness.

Sarapis (Serapis)

A foreign god introduced into Egypt by the Ptolemies and equated with Osiris-Apis, the dead Apis bull.

Satet (Satis)

Protective goddess of the Aswan cataract area, worshiped at Esna, Philae and Elephantine and on the island of Sehel.

Represented with a feather crown.

Sebek: see Sobek.

Sehat-Hor

A cow goddess who fed and cared for Horus.

Selkit (Serket, Selkis)

A goddess of Lower Egypt, protectress of the living and the dead, guardian of canopic jars. Together with Neith, Isis and Nephthys she watched at the bier of Osiris.

Represented in human form with a scorpion on her head; occasionally as a scorpion.

Sacred animal: scorpion.

Seshat

Goddess of writing and of scribes.

Depicted as a woman with writing materials (reeds, palette, pouches containing paint).

Seth (Sutekh)

God of Ombos (near Naqada) and in prehistoric times protective god of Upper Egypt, also worshiped at Tanis and Avaris. A member of the Heliopolitan ennead, as son of Geb and Nut; husband of his sister Nephthys. In the myth he was the wicked brother who slew Osiris; according to another story he was the brother and adversary of Horus. During the 22nd Dynasty he was excluded from the Egyptian pantheon and regarded as a god of the impure, of chaos, of storm and of war, equated with the Greek Typhon.

Represented with the head of an animal with a trunk-like snout, identified by the 19th c. German traveler Schweinfurth as an aardvark (*Orycteropus aethiopicus*).

Shu

Air god, lord of the four winds. With his sister Tefnut, the dew goddess, he was equated in Leontopolis with the divine couple Aker, represented as a pair of lions. Represented as a lion.

**Sakhmet****Shu****Selkit****Seshat**

**Seth****Sobek****Thoth****Thokeris**

Smithis see Nekhbet.

Sobek (*Sebek, Suchos*)

A crocodile god, worshiped particularly in the Fayyum, at Ombos (Kom Ombo), Gebelein and Esna. From the Middle Kingdom frequently associated with Horus or Re.

Represented with a crocodile's head or as a crocodile. Sacred animal: crocodile.

Sokar (*Seker, Sokaris*)

A god of the dead worshiped in the Memphis area, guardian of the entrance to the Underworld. His festival was celebrated with processions bearing his barque. In the Late Period frequently associated with Ptah and Osiris.

Represented with a falcon's head.

Sothis

The personification of the star Sirius; goddess of water and purifier of the dead. The appearance of Sirius in the sky marked the beginning of the Nile flood.

Suchos see Sobek.

Tatjenen see Ptah-Tatjenen.

Taweret see Thokeris.

Tefnut

Goddess of dew and of moisture; sister and wife of the air god Shu, and together with him equated at Leontopolis with the divine couple Aker.

Thokeris (*Taweret*, the "Great One")

A form of Opet, the hippopotamus goddess; patroness of pregnant women and women during and after childbirth.

Represented as a pregnant hippopotamus with human breasts and arms, standing erect.

Thoth (*Djehuti*)

Moon god; god of time, of measurement and later also of mathematics, learning and science; the inventor of writing. Town god of Hermopolis Parva and Hermopolis Magna, being equated by the Greeks with Hermes. He accompanied the sun god Re on his daily journey. Protector of Osiris. At the judgment of the dead he noted down all the dead man's actions.

Represented as an ibis or a baboon; also as an ibis-headed figure with the lunar crescent and disc on his head and writing materials in his hands.

Sacred animals: baboon and ibis.

Tum

God of immortality. As a primal god, in existence before the sun and moon, he was immune from death. Represented with the double crown.

Unnefer see Onnophris.

Urthekaw see Werthekaw.

Uto (*Buto*)

Town goddess of Buto in the Delta; protective goddess of Lower Egypt, associated with papyrus plant and cobra (uraeus). The counterpart of the Upper Egyptian goddess Nekhbet.

Represented with a lion's head, wearing the Red Crown, etc.

Sacred animals: snake, ichneumon, shrew.

Wepwawet ("Opener of the Ways")

Town god of Asyut; also worshiped as a god of the dead, corresponding to the Memphite Anubis. He accompanied Re on his journey through the Underworld.

Represented as a wolf, standing erect, or as a reclining dog.

Werthekaw (*Urthekaw*)

A lion-headed goddess, wife of Re-Harakhty.

Hieroglyphics

The term **hieroglyphics** (Greek "sacred carvings") is applied to a form of writing using picture symbols (*hieroglyphs*) devised by the ancient Egyptians, which was probably the model for the Hittite and Cretan hieroglyphic scripts; the oldest form of Babylonian cuneiform was also hieroglyphic. Hieroglyphic scripts were also used in the Indus Valley, in China (Moso script), on Easter Island and in Central America (Maya script).

After repeated attempts in modern times (e.g. by the learned Jesuit *Athanasius Kircher*, 1602–80) to decipher the Egyptian hieroglyphs and some promising preliminary work in the early 19th century by the French Orientalist *Antoine-Isaac Silvestre de Sacy* (1758–1838), the Swedish Egyptologist *Johann David Åkerblad* (1763–1819) and the English physicist *Thomas Young* (1773–1820), a French Egyptologist, *Jean-François Champollion* (1790–1832) finally succeeded in 1822 in identifying certain alphabetic signs and establishing the principles of the Egyptian hieroglyphic script. Thereafter he followed up his first discoveries so successfully that he is fully entitled to the credit of being the real decipherer of the hieroglyphs.

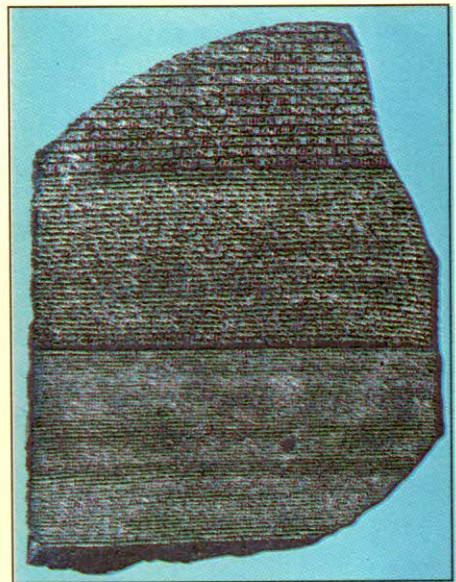
The key to the hieroglyphs was provided by the **Rosetta Stone**, an inscribed slab of basalt found by a French officer during constructional work at Fort Saint-Julien, Rosetta (some 45 miles/70 km east of Alexandria), in 1799. Coming into British hands in 1801, after the defeat of the French forces in Egypt, it was taken to London and is now in the British Museum.

The Rosetta Stone bears an inscription in three different scripts – *Egyptian hieroglyphics* at the top, *demotic* (a popular version of Egyptian which came into use in the Late Period) in the middle, and *Greek* at the bottom. The upper two are translations of the Greek text, which records a resolution by a body of Egyptian priests in honor of Ptolemy V Epiphanes dated 196 B.C. The first step in the decipherment was the realization that certain groups of signs enclosed within an oval ring represented the names of kings (the royal "cartouches") and must contain the name of Ptolemy.

After Champollion and his successors had succeeded in establishing the sound values of many hieroglyphs it became possible with the help of Coptic (the modern form of the ancient Egyptian language) not only to read the inscriptions but to understand their content. The German Egyptologist *Heinrich Karl Brugsch* (1827–94) elucidated the demotic lang-

uage and was the first to show that, like the Semitic scripts (Hebrew, Arabic), the ancient Egyptian script included only the consonants, omitting the vowels as of no significance.

The hieroglyphic script consists of **ideograms**, which originally were merely pictures of particular concrete objects. Abstract conceptions and verbs could also be represented by pictures of objects associated with the concept or action concerned. Thus the verb "to rule" was expressed by the picture of a royal scepter, the name of Upper Egypt by the reed, its heraldic plant, or the verb "to write" by the representation of writing implements.



Rosetta Stone (British Museum)

A great advance was made in the development of the script when words which had no signs of their own began to be expressed by hieroglyphs which had a different meaning but the same sound value. Thus the verb "to go out", pronounced *prj*, was represented by the sign for "house", which had the same sound; the word "son" (*s'*) by the sign for "goose", which was also pronounced *s'*; "first" (*tp*) by the sign for "dagger", also *tp*. Phonetic transfers of this kind were facilitated by the fact that only the consonants, which

Hieroglyphs for concrete objects



face



moon



pigeon



eye



sun



plow

Phonetic signs

alphabetic			bilateral	
hieroglyph	meaning	transcription	hieroglyph	transcription
	vulture	'		mn
	reed	i		h'
	forearm	'		k'
	quail chick	w		nb
	foot	b		m's
	stool	p		''
	viper	f		mr
	owl	m		šw
	water	n		wp
	mouth	r		t'
	reed shelter	h		š'
	twisted flax	ḥ		b'
	?	ḥ		śn
	animal's belly	ḥ		m'
	door bolt	s		ḥm
	folded cloth	š		rw
	pool	š		w'
	hill	k		š'
	basket	k		mj
	jar-stand	g		šw
	loaf	t		nw
	rope	t		wn
	hand	d		jr
	snake	d		tm

later signs

j	j	w	m	n

Semantic signs

original meaning		
hieroglyph	meaning	transcription
	sun	r'
	front	ḥ'-t
	moon	j' ḥ
	Maat	M' 't
	Re	R'
	Amun	'mn
	Horus	Ḥr
	Sobek	Šbk
	bull	k'
	be strong	nḥt
	rule (v.)	ḥw
	star	šb'

transferred meaning
originally

	scepter	strong	w'sr
	Osiris pillar	constant	ḏd
	hammer	majesty	ḥm
	gaming piece	strength	ph-t
	goose	son	s'
	animal's leg	repeat	whm
	axe	choose	štp
	ram	soul	b'
	lake	love	mr
	column	town of	jwn
	cloth	god	ntr
	seat	Isis	'št
	bird	spirit	'ḥ
	basket	festival	ḥb
	sandal-strap	live	'nḥ
	bowstring	grow	rwd
	chain	gold	nb
	beetle	exist	ḥpr

Determinatives

man	woman	tree	house	town
plural		royal cartouche		

carried the meaning of the word, needed to be taken into account.

Many signs were transferred in this way to so many words that they gradually lost their semantic value and became purely **phonetic signs** representing groups of consonants, while signs representing a single sound became alphabetic letters. Then in the Late Period some consonants were used to represent vowels. The phonetic signs thus established were put together to write whole words, together with grammatical elements such as endings and suffixes, and were also used, in the frequent cases where there was ambiguity about the sound of a particular word, to indicate its pronunciation.

In addition to the semantic signs (representing words) and the phonetic signs (representing sounds) there was a third group of hieroglyphs, the **determinatives** – signs added after a word to indicate its approximate sense. In the Late Period much use was made of these signs, which greatly simplify the reading of the inscriptions.

In the earliest Egyptian texts that have come down to us the hieroglyphic script is in fully developed form, having already completed the evolution sketched out in the preceding paragraphs, and semantic signs, phonetic signs and determinatives are all employed.

As a rule the hieroglyphic script is written from right to left, sometimes in vertical and sometimes in horizontal lines; it is quite exceptional to find it written from left to right. It goes without saying that in the course of the 3000 years or more during which the hieroglyphs were in use there were considerable changes in the form of the characters and the orthography of the words; and visitors to Egypt will soon

learn to distinguish between the large and simple hieroglyphs of the Old Kingdom, the elegant characters of the 18th Dynasty (for example in the Deir el-Bahri Temple) and the small cramped script of the Ptolemaic inscriptions.

When a text was not carved on stone but written with a reed pen on papyrus, a piece of limestone, a potsherd or a wooden tablet the hieroglyphs took on simpler and usually rounder forms. There thus developed a *literary hieroglyphic* script, found mainly in religious manuscripts. In everyday use the script was still further simplified, and in quick writing characters were frequently joined, giving rise to a cursive form which is known as the **hieratic script** used in almost all types of literary work.

Later, as a result of further abbreviation and joining up of letters, there developed out of the hieratic script a new cursive form known as the **demotic script**, used during the Graeco-Roman period in administration, in letters, contracts, accounts, etc. This script was also known to the Greeks as the *epistolographic script*.

The use of the hieroglyphic script extended over the Egyptian borders, particularly into Nubia, where it was used in the temples built by the Pharaohs; and even after the Nubian (Ethiopian) kingdom became independent of Egypt the hieroglyphics continued in use. At first they continued to be used only for writing Egyptian, but were later adapted to the native language. The hieroglyphics were considerably modified for this purpose, giving rise to a special **Meroitic script**. During the Christian era there also developed a *Meroitic cursive*, apparently based on Egyptian demotic. Although the Meroitic scripts can be read, the language cannot be understood.

Development of hieroglyphic script

Example:
"owl" (m)



hieroglyph



literary script



hieratic



demotic

History

Like other peoples of antiquity, the Egyptians had no exact system of chronology, events being usually dated according to the years of a king's reign. For this purpose the priests maintained long lists of kings, several fragments of which have survived. The *Abydos King List* gives the names of 76 kings, from Menes to Sethos I; the *Tablet of Karnak* lists 32 kings, from Menes to Tuthmosis III; the *Tablet of Saqqara* lists 47, from Merbapen (Enezib?) to Ramesses II; the *Turin Papyrus*, written in hieratic script in the 19th Dynasty and preserved in fragmentary form, gives the names of 17 kings of the Pre-Dynastic and earliest Dynastic period; and the *Palermo Stone*, probably dating from the 5th Dynasty, of which only five small fragments survive, mentions eight kings of the 1st Dynasty and nine of the 2nd.



The Abydos King List

Lists of this kind provided the basis for the "History of Egypt" written by **Manetho** of Sebennytus (now Samannud), a priest of Heliopolis in the reigns of Ptolemy I Soter and Ptolemy II Philadelphus who compiled the three volumes of his history for Ptolemy II about 300 B.C. Since Manetho, as a priest, had access to all the writings and documents preserved in the temples the information he gives is likely to be reliable. The "History" itself is unfortunately lost, but extracts from it are preserved in the writings of **Josephus** (A.D. 37/38–c. 100), **Julius Africanus** (c. A.D. 200) and **Eusebius** (c. A.D. 340), who, 600 years after Manetho's death, still depended on the material he assembled in writing their own works.

It was Manetho who first arranged all the rulers of Egypt from the first king, Menes, to Alexander the Great in thirty dynasties broadly corresponding to the various ruling houses which successively (or at certain periods simultaneously) held sway in Egypt. This arrangement is still generally accepted; but in addition the dynasties are now grouped together in a number of kingdoms (Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Kingdom) and periods. In view of the gaps in our sources it is usually not possible to give exact dates for the dynasties up to the time of Psammetichus I: before the 2nd millennium, therefore, the dates given are subject to a margin of error of several decades or even centuries. Nor is the identity of the early kings of the 1st Dynasty clear beyond doubt, since all the Pharaohs had several names, which sometimes makes it difficult to establish their chronological relationships.

An important contribution to exact dating is made by the so-called *Sothic dates*, obtained from events recorded as having coincided with the heliacal rising of Sirius (Sothis). Such dates are, however, available only from the beginning of the Middle Kingdom.

Much information on Egyptian history can be gleaned from the accounts by **Herodotus** (c. 490–420 B.C.) and **Strabo** (c. 63 B.C.–c. A.D. 25) of their visits to Egypt. They can be regarded as reliable sources, however, only so far as they record the writers' own observations.

Prehistoric period (before 60,000 to c. 3000 B.C.). – The Prehistoric period is still largely obscure. Later traditions held that during this period the country was ruled by gods and demigods. It can at any rate be taken as certain that there was no unified State and that Egypt was broken up into numerous tribal territories at very different stages of cultural development.

Before 60,000 B.C. Palaeolithic period: finds of crudely worked stone tools in gravel-beds at Luxor bear witness to human settlement in the Nile Valley almost 2 million years ago.

After 7000 B.C. Neolithic period: adoption of a settled way of life (villages, agriculture, stock-rearing).

Circa 5000 B.C. Fayyum A culture: weaving, basket-making and pottery in simple forms. **Fayyum B culture:** agriculture and pottery unknown. Traces of Neolithic village settlements on the edges of the Delta. Burials in retracted position in Upper Egypt.

After 4000 B.C. Badarian culture in Nubia.

Circa 3600 B.C. The Naqada I culture (Amratian) spreads: white-painted burnished pottery, stone cosmetic palettes and small amulets found as grave-goods.

Circa 3200 B.C. The Naqada II culture (Gerzean) extends to the whole of Egypt. Decorated pottery ("Egyptian faience") and finely worked stone vessels. Metalworking introduced from the Near East.

Early Period (c. 3000 – c. 2640 B.C.). – In the middle of the 4th millennium B.C. there is a rapid development of crafts, architecture and, later, writing. It is established that important cultural impulses came from Mesopotamia; but whether how far there were also influences from another advanced culture is less clear. According to the Egyptian tradition – which has found some confirmation in archaeological evidence – a foreign people which sacrificed to Horus and is now seen as a "master race" moved into the Delta and the Nile Valley, bringing with them their culture and a highly developed State structure. This people seems to have formed the aristocracy out of which grew the later Egyptian kingdom. There thus emerged within a few centuries two highly developed monarchies, Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt.

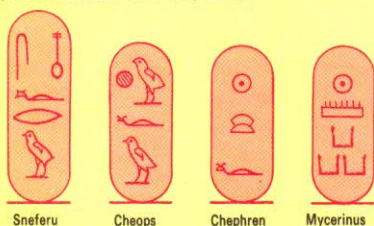
LOWER EGYPT comprised the whole of the Delta region, with Buto as its capital and the Red Crown as the symbol of royal authority. **UPPER EGYPT** extended up the Nile Valley from Memphis (Cairo) to the First Cataract at Aswan. The capital was Hierakonpolis, the symbol of royalty the White Crown. Each of these States was divided into provinces, originally no doubt independent principalities.

This division left its mark on the whole of subsequent Egyptian history. Thus when the two kingdoms were united the symbol for the new unified kingdom consisted of the two plants which had previously been the heraldic plants of Upper and Lower Egypt, the lotus and the papyrus. The king was styled "King of Upper and Lower Egypt" – a title still borne by the last

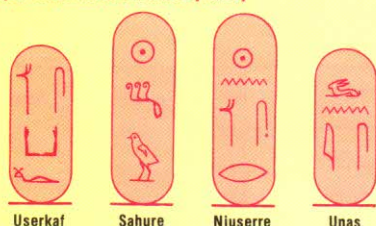
Cultures of the Ancient World

Time	Egypt	Mesopotamia	Palestine	Greece and Rome
NEOLITHIC	5000 — Fayyum A Fayyum B	Tell Hasuna	First temple in Jericho	
	4000 — Badarian (Nubia)		Beersheba En Gedi	
	Naqada I (Amratian)	Tell Halaf		
	Naqada II (Gerzean)	Sumerians Foundation of Babylon		Sesklo Dimini
	3000 — 1st-2nd Dynasties			
B.C.	OLD KINGDOM 3rd-6th Dyn.	1st dynasty of Ur Akkadian Empire	Amorites	Early Minoan
	1st Intermediate Period 7th-10th Dyn.			
	2000 — MIDDLE KINGDOM 11th-14th Dyn.			Middle Minoan
	Hyksos 15th-16th Dyn.	Destruction of Babylonian Empire Hammurabi		
	NEW KINGDOM 18th-24th Dyn.	Hittite Empire Tiglath-Pileser I	Abraham	Late Minoan Trojan War Dorian migration
	1000 — LATE PERIOD 25th-31st Dyn.		David Solomon Hezekiah	
	Greek rule Ptolemies	Esarhaddon conquers Egypt Nebuchadnezzar II	Alexander the Great conquers Palestine Maccabees	Persian wars Macedonian Empire Roman Empire
	A.D.			
	Roman rule		Bar-Kochba rebellion	Byzantium capital of Roman Empire
	Byzantine rule			
1000 —	Arab rule		Abu Bekr first Caliph Omar I Spread of Islam	

Royal cartouches of 4th Dynasty



Royal cartouches of 5th Dynasty



of the kings – or “Lord of the Two Lands”, and wore the double crown, which was a combination of the White Crown of Upper Egypt and the Red Crown of Lower Egypt. At the base of the walls of the temple the nomes of the South were represented on one side, the nomes of the North on the other. And the administration of the country almost always took account of the division, which in any event was matched by the geographical diversity of the two territories.

Circa 3000–2640 The country is united and consolidated after a period of military conflict. How this unification came about is not known, but it was undoubtedly initiated from Upper Egypt; it is ascribed to the legendary king **Menes**. – The rulers of the first two dynasties had their capital at This or Thinis (Abydos) in Upper Egypt, and accordingly are known as the **Thinites**.

The *Egyptian calendar*, based on the solar year of 365 days, is in use from the Early Period. The year begins in mid July with the onset of the Nile flood.

OLD KINGDOM (c. 2640–c. 2160; 3rd–6th Dynasties). – This period sees the building of the pyramids (the symbol of supreme power, both royal and divine) and a flowering of art. Djoser (Zoser) establishes the capital at Memphis (Cairo). An official caste endowed with hereditary landed property which is exempt from taxes develops in the course of generations into a dominant feudal force which brings about the fall of the kingdom at the end of the 6th Dynasty.

3rd Dynasty

Circa 2640–2575 Djoser (Zoser) transfers the capital to Memphis and builds the Step Pyramid of Saqqara as his tomb. The earliest mastabas date from this period.

4th Dynasty

Circa 2575–2465 Sneferu builds the Pyramid of Meidum. Cheops (Khufu), Chephren (Khafre) and Mycerinus (Menkaure) build the three great Pyramids of Giza. Redjedef builds his pyramid at Abu Roash.

5th Dynasty

Circa 2465–2325 Userkaf founds the 5th Dynasty. Most of the kings build their pyramids at Abusir, where sun-temples are also erected in honor of the sun god Re.

Circa 2455–2443 Sahure carries on wars with the Libyans and Asiatics.

Circa 2416–2392 Niuserre builds the Sun Temple of Abu Gurab.

Circa 2355 Unas (Onnos), last King of the 5th Dynasty, builds his pyramid at Saqqara, the interior walls of which bear the earliest funerary reliefs and

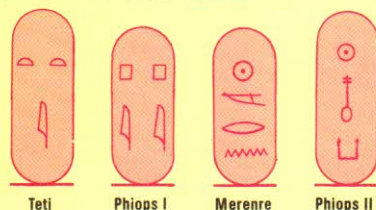
inscriptions. After his death internal dissensions appear to have broken out, bringing a new dynasty to power.

6th Dynasty

Circa 2325–2160 The power of the kings declines as the small local principalities increasingly recover their independence. Egypt has far-reaching trading relations with the Upper Nile, the Land of Punt (Somali coast) and Syria.

Teti (Othoes), Phiops (Pepi) I, Merenre (Methu-suphis) and Phiops (Pepi) II build their pyramids at Saqqara.

Royal cartouches of 6th Dynasty



First Intermediate Period (c. 2134–c. 2040; 7th–10th Dynasties). – Insecurity and dynastic strife weaken the kingdom, which falls at the end of the 6th Dynasty. The descendants of that dynasty may possibly have continued to reign at Memphis as the 7th and 8th Dynasties, but a new race of kings (9th and 10th Dynasties) establish themselves at Heracleopolis, and may for a time have gained control of the whole of Egypt. At the Court of Heracleopolis, particularly during the reign of King Khety (Achthoes) there is a flowering of literature, but the art of the period is degenerate and provincial.

MIDDLE KINGDOM (c. 2040–c. 1650; 11th–14th Dynasties). – The 11th Dynasty, established by energetic Theban princes, marks the beginning of a period of prosperity and cultural flowering during which the country extends to broadly its present extent.

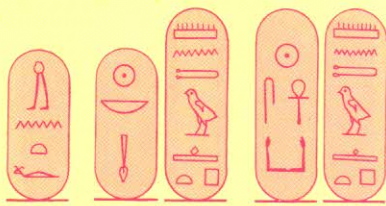
11th Dynasty

Circa 2040–1991 A race of Theban princes extend their power beyond their own province and gradually gain control of the whole of Egypt. Most of them bear the name of Antef or Mentuhotep (Mortuary Temple of Mentuhotep at Deir el-Bahri).

12th Dynasty

Circa 1991–1785 A prosperous period which sees much building. Remains of the structures erected by the kings of this dynasty are to be seen in almost

Royal cartouches of 11th Dynasty



Antef

Mentuhotep I

Mentuhotep II

every Egyptian town of any size. Flowering of art and literature.

1991–1962 *Amenemhet* (Ammenemes) *I* restores peace and rules over the whole of Egypt. His tomb is the Northern Pyramid at Lisht.

1971–1928 *Sesostris* (Senwosret) *I* conquers Nubia. His tomb is the Southern Pyramid at Lisht.

1929–1895 *Amenemhet* (Ammenemes) *II* builds his pyramid at Dahshur.

1897–1878 *Sesostris* (Senwosret) *II*. Pyramid at El-Lahun.

1878–1841 *Sesostris* (Senwosret) *III*, the Sesostris famed among the Greeks, consolidates his hold on Nubia. Pyramid at Dahshur.

1844–1797 *Amenemhet* (Ammenemes) *III* builds the Pyramid and the great Temple of Hawara, known as the Labyrinth.

1798–1790 *Amenemhet* (Ammenemes) *IV*.

1789–1786 Queen *Sobkneferu*.

Second Intermediate Period (c. 1785–c. 1650; 13th and 14th Dynasties). – Under the kings of this dynasty, mostly named *Sobkhotep*, the kingdom declines as a result of domestic dissensions. Many kings succeed one another, most of them reigning only for a brief period. While descendants of the old Theban kings may still have ruled in the south, a new race establishes itself in the western Delta as the 14th dynasty, with its capital at Xoïs. – Nubia becomes an independent State (capital Kerma).

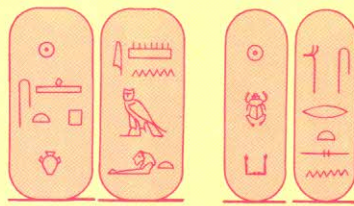
Hyksos period (c. 1650–c. 1551; 15th and 16th Dynasties). – The *Hyksos* ("Princes of the Foreign Lands"; in the past erroneously translated "Shepherd Kings"), a people of mixed Hurrian and Semitic origin, advance into Egypt from the north-east, conquer the whole country and rule over it for a century. Few remains of this period survive, but it is evident that the Hyksos largely assimilated Egyptian culture. They introduce the horse-drawn chariot into the Nile Valley, and the scarab becomes a popular symbol of good fortune. During this period Theban princes (17th Dynasty; tombs at Dra Abu el-Naga) rule in the south, at first as vassals of the Hyksos.

Circa 1560 *Seqenenre* and his sons *Kamose* and *Ahmose* lead a rebellion against the Hyksos King *Apophis* (Apopi) *I*. (Seqenenre's mummy was found at Deir el-Bahri; his wife was Queen *Ahotep*.)

Circa 1552 *Kamose* defeats the Hyksos.

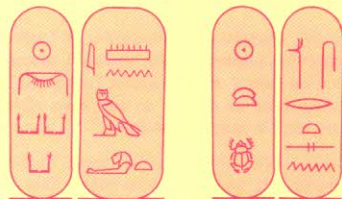
Circa 1551 *Ahmose* (Amosis) captures Avaris, the chief Hyksos stronghold in the eastern Delta, and expels the intruders. Egypt is reunited. (The Biblical story of the Exodus may possibly relate to the expulsion of the Hyksos.)

Royal cartouches of 12th and 13th Dynasties



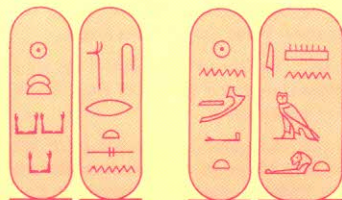
Amenemhet I

Sesostris I



Amenemhet II

Sesostris II



Sesostris III

Amenemhet III



Amenemhet IV

Sobkhotep III
(13th Dyn.)

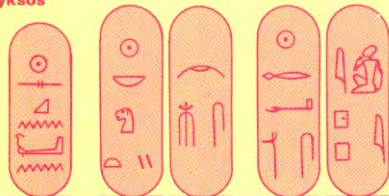
NEW KINGDOM (c. 1551–712; 18th–24th Dynasties). – Under the New Kingdom, with its capital at *Thebes*, Egypt becomes a Great Power. At first the culture of the New Kingdom differs little from that of the Middle Kingdom, but after the conquests of *Tuthmosis III*, when Egypt had close relations with western Asia, there are fundamental changes in Egyptian life and art. Enormous wealth flows into the country in the form of tribute from subject lands, especially into the capital. Splendid new buildings replace the older ones that had fallen into disrepair.

1555–1528 *Amenophis* (Amenhotep) *I*. He and his mother *Nefertari* are later regarded as guardian deities of the Theban necropolis.

1528–1510 *Tuthmosis* (Dhutmose) *I* conquers Upper Nubia. He is the first Pharaoh to have his tomb constructed in the Valley of the Kings.

1510–1490 *Tuthmosis* (Dhutmose) *II*. After his death there is conflict for the succession.

Royal cartouches of 16th and 17th Dynasties and Hyksos

Seqenenre
(16th Dyn.)Ahmose
(17th Dyn.)Apophis I
(Hyksos)

1490–1468 Hatshepsut, daughter of Tuthmosis I and wife of her stepbrother Tuthmosis II, assumes the Regency on behalf of her stepson Tuthmosis III and eventually rules as Queen in her own right. Her mortuary temple is at Deir el-Bahri.

1490–1436 After Hatshepsut's death **Tuthmosis (Dhutmose) III** becomes sole ruler. One of the greatest of Egyptian kings, he conquers Syria and establishes Egyptian influence in western Asia. Temples at Thebes, Amada, Buhen, etc.; tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

1438–1412 Amenophis (Amenhotep) II. Temple at Karnak; tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

1412–1402 Tuthmosis (Dhutmose) IV. He has the sand cleared from the Sphinx of Giza. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

1402–1364 Amenophis (Amenhotep) III, known to the Greeks as *Memnon*, establishes relations with the kings of Babylon, Assyria, Mitanni (on the Upper Euphrates), etc., evidence of which is provided by the clay tablets found at Tell el-Amarna. Temples in Nubia and at Luxor, Medinet Habu, etc. His tomb and that of his wife *Tiy* are in the Valley of the Kings.

1364–1347 Amenophis (Amenhotep) IV replaces the old religion by the worship of a single deity, the Sun. The new movement is directed primarily against Amun and his fellow Theban gods, who under the New Kingdom had overshadowed all other deities, and their figures and names are erased from temples and other monuments. Since the King's name includes the name of Amun he changes it to **Akhenaten** ("the solar disc is content"). The capital is moved from Thebes to *Tell el-Amarna*, where a new art style (the "Amarna style") develops. After the King's death (tomb in the Valley of the Kings) there is a troubled period during which the new religion is abolished. Akhenaten's wife was **Nefertiti**.

1347–1338 Tutankhamun, Akhenaten's youthful son-in-law, moves the capital back to Memphis. The discovery in 1922 of his intact tomb in the Valley of the Kings was one of the great archaeological sensations of modern times.

1339–1335 Ay, perhaps Nefertiti's father, succeeds Tutankhamun after his early death.

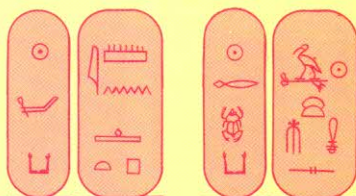
19th Dynasty

1306–1186 Egypt recovers its strength and in the reigns of Sethos I and Ramesses II reasserts itself as a World Power.

1333–1306 Horemheb (Harmais), Supreme Commander of the Army and Governor of the kingdom under Amenophis IV and his successors, restores internal peace. Campaign against Nubia. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

1306–1304 Ramesses I. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Royal cartouches of 18th Dynasty



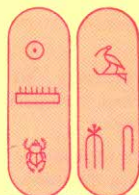
Amenophis I

Tuthmosis I



Tuthmosis II

Hatshepsut



Tuthmosis III

Amenophis II



Tuthmosis IV

Amenophis III

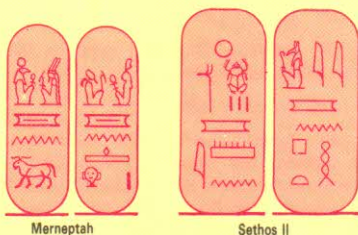
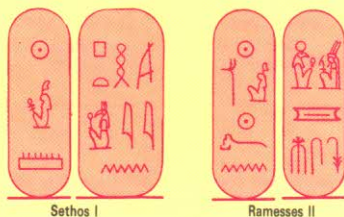
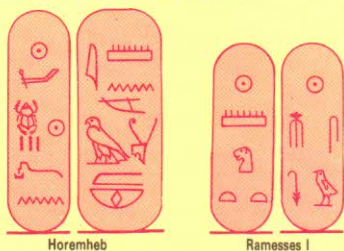


Amenophis IV (Akhenaten)

Tutankhamun

1304–1290 Sethos (Seti) I wages wars against the Libyans, the Syrians and the Hittites, a powerful people who during the 18th Dynasty had advanced from Asia Minor into northern Syria and threatened Egyptian possessions in Syria and Palestine. Large temples at Karnak, Qurna and Abydos. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Royal cartouches of 19th Dynasty



1290–1224 Ramesses II, the most celebrated of Egyptian kings, wages a long-drawn-out war with the Hittites (1285, Battle of Qadesh, near the present-day Syrian town of Homs). A peace treaty is signed in the 21st year of the King's reign, leaving Palestine proper in Egyptian hands, while northern Syria is required to pay tribute to the Hittites. During his 67 years' reign Ramesses develops extraordinary activity as a builder: approximately half the surviving temples date from his time, and his name is found on almost every ancient Egyptian site. Among the major temples of his reign are at Abu Simbel, Karnak, Luxor, the Ramesseum, Abydos, Memphis and Bubastis. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings. – Ramesses II has often been identified, but without any valid grounds, with the Pharaoh who oppressed the Israelites (Exodus 1: 11).

1224–1214 Merneptah (Menephtes), Ramesses II's only surviving son, makes war on the Libyans and the Mediterranean peoples allied with them, and on the Ethiopians. Mortuary temple in Thebes, tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

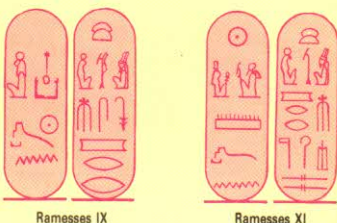
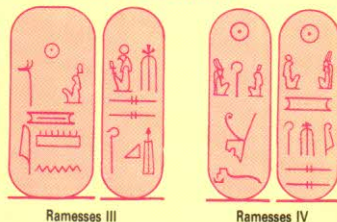
1214–1186 The reigns of *Sethos II* (1214–1208) and *Merneptah Siptah* (1208–1202) are followed by a period of anarchy and decline.

20th Dynasty

1186–1070 A brief period of relative (but deceptive) tranquility.

1186–1184 Sethnakhte restores peace and order. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

Royal cartouches of 20th Dynasty



The Plagues of Egypt

The ten plagues of Egypt recorded in the Old Testament (Exodus 7: 14 to 12: 30) were ten catastrophes visited on Egypt by God which forced the Pharaohs to release the children of Israel from their captivity.

- First plague:* all water turned into blood
- Second plague:* frogs
- Third plague:* lice
- Fourth plague:* flies
- Fifth plague:* murrain (cattle plague)
- Sixth plague:* boils
- Seventh plague:* hail
- Eighth plague:* locusts
- Ninth plague:* darkness
- Tenth plague:* death of the first-born

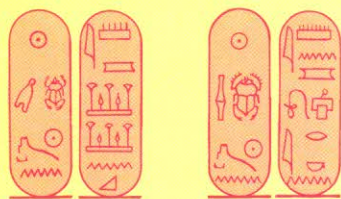
1184–1153 Ramesses III defeats the Libyans and in two great battles repels an invasion by barbarian peoples (Philistines, etc.), on land and sea, coming from Asia Minor. The 21 years of his reign seem a time of tranquility during which great buildings such as the Temple of Medinet Habu are erected; but there are also accounts of increasing unrest and poverty. The King presents lavish gifts to the gods, particularly (like his predecessors) to Amun of Thebes. In consequence the High Priest of Amun gradually becomes the most powerful figure in the country. Tomb in the Valley of the Kings.

1153–1070 After the murder of Ramesses III his successors *Ramesses IV–XI* fall increasingly under the influence of the priests of Amun, and finally, after the death of Ramesses XI, the High Priest *Herihor* briefly occupies the throne.

21st (Tanite) Dynasty

1070–945 After the break-up of the kingdom a new dynasty arises in Tanis which contests the power of the High Priests of Thebes. By contracting marriage alliances with the Tanite Royal House *Pinudjem* (Psusennes) *VI*, priest-king of Thebes, becomes King of the whole of Egypt, while his sons obtain the

Royal cartouches of 22nd Dynasty



Sesonchis I

Osorkon I



Takelothis I

Osorkon II

influential and lucrative dignity of High Priests of Thebes. Nubia becomes independent, and Egypt loses control of Palestine.

22nd Dynasty

945–722 Kings of Libyan origin, whose ancestors, belonging to the Meshwesh tribe, had come to Egypt as mercenary chieftains, settled in the eastern Delta and grew in power as the monarchy declined. Bubastis becomes the capital, and Thebes declines still further in importance. Princes of the Royal House become High Priests of Amun.

Circa 940 *Sesonchis* (Seshonq) I, the Shishak of the Old Testament, overthrows the Tanites. In the fifth year of the reign of King Rehoboam of Judah (924) he captures Jerusalem and plunders the Temple of Solomon, commemorating his victory by the erection of a temple at El-Hiba. – Under his successors *Osorkon*, *Takelothis* and *Sesonchis II* the kingdom declines and breaks up into small principalities.

23rd Dynasty

808–715 The capital of this dynasty is at Tanis. The kings of Ethiopia make themselves masters of Upper Egypt.

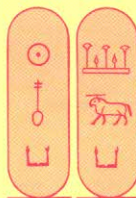
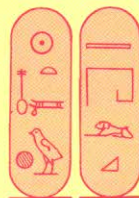
Circa 730 *Tefnakhte*, Prince of Sais and Memphis, attempts to gain control of the Lower Nile Valley but is defeated by the Ethiopian King *Piankhi*, who also conquers Memphis.

24th Dynasty

715–712 *Bocchoris* (Bekenrenef), Tafnakhte's son and successor, establishes sovereignty over Lower Egypt. Upper Egypt is in the hands of Ethiopian rulers. *Sabakon* (Shabaka) of Kush, son of *Kashta*, overthrows Bocchoris and has him burned to death. The whole of Egypt falls for a time into Ethiopian hands.

Late Period (712–332; 25th–31st Dynasties). – In spite of continual wars and a period of subjection to Persia this is a time of cultural flowering and prosperity. Egypt loses its independence for many centuries, but its new rulers like to present themselves

Royal cartouches of 24th and 25th Dynasties

Bocchoris
(24th Dyn.)Sabakon
(25th Dyn.)Taharqa
(25th Dyn.)

as the legitimate successors to the earlier Pharaohs and are concerned to preserve the great Egyptian cultural heritage.

25th Dynasty

712–664 Ethiopian kings.

712–700 *Sabakon* (Shabaka) supports the small Syrian States against Assyria.

700–688 *Sebichos* (Shebitku).

688–663 *Taharqa*, the Tirhaka of the Old Testament, also supports the Syrian and Palestinian princes against the Assyrians, but is defeated about 670 by the Assyrian King Esarhaddon, who also captures Memphis, and is compelled to flee to Ethiopia. Both Upper and Lower Egypt become subject to the Assyrians; the petty kings of Egypt (Necho of Sais, etc.) retain possession of their cities as Assyrian vassals. Several unsuccessful attempts to expel the Assyrians.

663 *Tanutamun*, Shabaka's son, attempts to recover Egypt. At first successful, he is later defeated by the Assyrians and driven back into Upper Egypt. Prince Psammetichus of Sais, Necho's son, takes advantage of the absence of the main Assyrian forces, which are tied down in Babylon and Elam, to shake off the Assyrian yoke, with the help of King Gyges of Lydia. The occupying forces are expelled, the power of the small independent principalities is curbed and Egypt is again united. Ethiopia is now finally separated from Egypt.

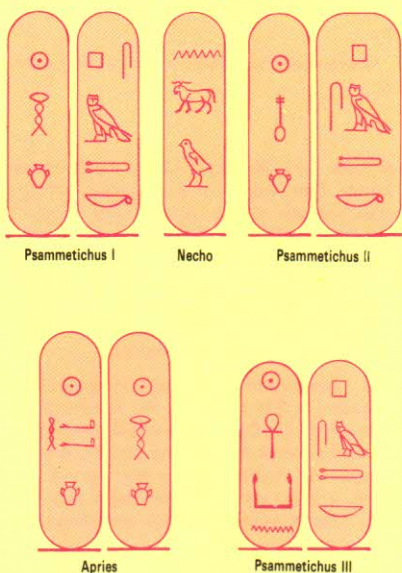
26th Dynasty

663–525 Egypt enjoys another period of prosperity. Trade begins to flourish as a result of the relations now established with Greece, and there is a fresh flowering of the arts. Even under the Ethiopian kings there had been a return to the models of the classical period of Egyptian art, the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and occasionally also the 18th Dynasty; and the Old Kingdom was now also imitated in other fields – in literature, the orthography of inscriptions and even the titles of officials.

663–609 *Psammetichus I*.

609–593 *Necho*. While the Assyrian Empire is fighting for its existence with Babylonia and Media he conquers Syria (Battle of Megiddo, in which King Josiah of Judah is killed), but is defeated by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at Carchemish and loses his possessions in Syria and Palestine. – The

Royal cartouches of 26th Dynasty



construction of a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea is begun, but is abandoned in obedience to an oracle.

593–588 *Psammetichus II*. War with Ethiopia.

588–569 *Apries* (Wahibre), the Hophrah of the Old Testament, seeks to recover Syria, but cannot prevent the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (587). Military rising in Libya: Apries's general Amasis is declared King and he himself is deposed.

569–525 *Amasis* (Ahmose) consolidates his position by marrying a daughter of Psammetichus II. After a campaign by Nebuchadnezzar against Egypt he abandons Egyptian claims to territory in Syria. Naucratis is ceded to the Greeks, and soon becomes the country's principal trading town. Friendship with Polycrates of Samos.

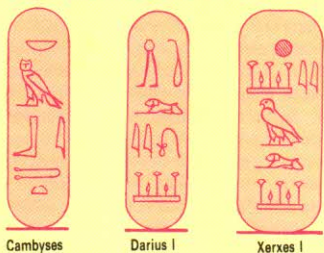
525 *Psammetichus III* is defeated by the Persian King Cambyses at Pelusium. Egypt becomes a Persian province.

27th (Persian) Dynasty

525–338 The Persian kings present themselves as successors to the native rulers; there is no interference with the ancient religion.

525–521 *Cambyses*. Unsuccessful expedition to the oases in the Libyan Desert; campaign against Ethiopia.

Royal cartouches of 27th Dynasty



521–486 *Darius I* seeks to promote the strength and prosperity of Egypt. He completes the canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, sends a strong garrison to the Kharga Oasis and builds a Temple of Amun (Ammon) there. After the Battle of *Marathon* (490) the Egyptians temporarily expel the Persians.

486–465 *Xerxes I* recovers Egypt and appoints his brother Achaemenes satrap (provincial governor).

465–425 *Artaxerxes I*.

463 Egypt again rebels against Persian rule. *Inarus*, Prince of Marea (on Lake Mareotis), defeats Achaemenes with Athenian help, but is himself defeated and crucified by the Persian General Megabyzus at the island of Prosopitis in the Delta.

After 449 *Herodotus* visits Egypt.

424–404 *Darius II*. Decline of Persian power.

404–338 In the reigns of *Artaxerxes II* (404–362) and *Artaxerxes III* (362–338) Egypt briefly recovers independence under native rulers (Manetho's 28th–30th Dynasties).

28th Dynasty

404–399 *Amyrtaeus* of Sais maintains his authority only for a brief period. Various dynasts contend for power in Lower Egypt.

29th Dynasty

399–379 A dynasty from Mendes, which relies mainly on Greek mercenaries for support.

398–393 *Nepherites* (Nefaurud) I.

392–380 *Achoris* (Hagor) beats off a Persian attack in a three years' war.

379 *Psammuthis* (Pshenmut). – *Nepherites II* reigns only for a few months.

30th Dynasty

378–341 Last native dynasty.

378–361 *Nectanebo* (Nekhtnebef) I of Sebennytus, a powerful ruler in whose reign large temples are again built (Philae, Medinet Habu; gateway at Karnak).

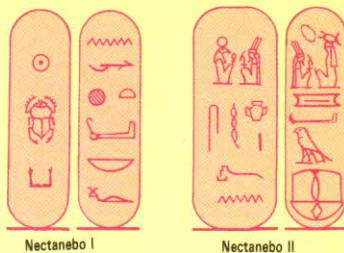
360–359 *Tachos* (Djeho) advances into Syria against the Syrians, but is deposed and dies at the Persian Court.

358–341 *Nectanebo* (Nekhtnarehe) II rebuilds some of the old temples (Temple of Isis at Behbeit el-Hagara; Karnak).

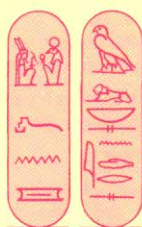
31st Dynasty

341–332 Egypt is ruled by foreign dynasts. – Artaxerxes III again conquers Egypt for Persia. Nectanebo flees to Ethiopia; the temples are plundered.

Royal cartouches of 30th Dynasty



Royal cartouches of Ptolemaic period



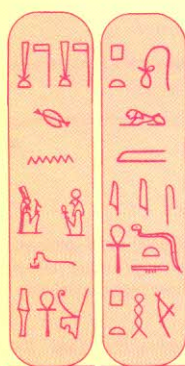
Alexander the Great



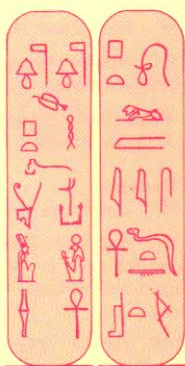
Ptolemy I Soter



Ptolemy II Philadelphus



Ptolemy III Euergetes I



Ptolemy IV Philopator



Ptolemy V Epiphanes



Ptolemy VI Philometor

341 King *Khabash*, perhaps belonging to an Ethiopian dynasty, briefly recovers the whole of Egypt.

332 **Alexander the Great** occupies the whole of Egypt.

Greek rule (332–30 B.C.). – Under the **Ptolemies** the Lower Nile Valley is once again, for three centuries, the seat of a flourishing kingdom. At first governed by gifted rulers, it is later reduced by internal dissension and struggles for power to political impotence, and finally becomes a dependency of Rome. The Ptolemies, like the Persians, present themselves as legitimate heirs to the Pharaohs and respect Egyptian religion and customs.

332–323 **Alexander the Great** fosters the ancient religion, and in 331 travels to the Temple of Zeus Ammon in the Siwa Oasis, where he is greeted by the priests as the son of Ammon and confirmed as King of Egypt. He founds Alexandria, which soon becomes a great center of commerce and Greek culture. After Alexander's death the Macedonian Empire falls apart.

322–285 Egypt becomes the satrapy of *Ptolemy I Soter* ("Saviour"), son of Lagus. At first he acts as Regent for *Philip Arrhidaeus*, Alexander the Great's feeble-minded half-brother, and *Alexander II*, his son, and later for Alexander alone. After Alexander's death (323) he assumes the royal title (305). Foundation of the Alexandrian Museum and of the town of Ptolemais Hermiou in Upper Egypt.

285–247 *Ptolemy II Philadelphus* ("Sister-Lover"). Married first to *Arsinoe I*, daughter of Lysimachus, and then to his sister *Arsinoe II*. *Arsinoe II* (d. 270) becomes the protective goddess of the Fayyum, which is named the Arsinoite nome in her honor. In the reigns of Philadelphus and his successors great elephant-hunts are held on the Somali coast, and the elephants captured are taken back to Egypt to be trained for military use.

247–222 *Ptolemy III Euergetes* ("Benefactor") I, whose wife is *Berenice* of Cyrene, makes a short-lived conquest of the Seleucid kingdom in Asia Minor. The external power of Egypt is now at its peak. – An unsuccessful attempt is made by the priests to reform the calendar by intercalating an extra day every four years.

222–204 *Ptolemy IV Philopator* ("Father-Lover"). – He and his successors start the kingdom on the road to ruin by their mismanagement. He defeats Antiochus III (the Great) of Syria, who had threatened the Egyptian frontier, in the Battle of Raphia (217), but then concludes a dishonorable peace. His wife is *Arsinoe III*, his sister. – Two native Pharaohs, Harmachis and Anchemachis, rule at Thebes (205–184).

204–182 *Ptolemy IV Epiphanes* ("Famous") comes to the throne at the age of five under the guardianship of Agathocles and Agathocles' mother Oenanthe. A rebellion in Alexandria compels Agathocles and Oenanthe to resign their office; and Antiochus the Great of Syria and Philip V of Macedon take advantage of Egypt's domestic troubles to invade its outlying provinces. Egypt offers the guardianship of Epiphanes to the Roman Senate, which cedes Coelestria and Palestine to Antiochus, while Egypt remains independent. Epiphanes marries Cleopatra, daughter of Antiochus. The affairs of the country fall into increasing confusion; one rebellion succeeds another, and anarchy prevails.

181 Epiphanes is poisoned.

181–146 *Ptolemy VI Philometor* ("Mother-Lover"), at first under the guardianship of his mother *Cleopatra*. He allows *Onias* to build a Jewish temple in *Leontopolis* (Tell el-Yahudiya).

171 *Battle of Pelusium*. *Philometor* is taken prisoner by *Antiochus IV* of *Syria* and *Memphis* is captured. His younger brother *Ptolemy VIII Physcon* ("Pot-Belly"), who at first also bears the name of *Philometor*, is proclaimed King by the people of *Alexandria*.

170–163 *Philometor* and *Physcon*, now reconciled, rule jointly, together with their sister *Cleopatra*, *Philometor's* wife.

163 The brothers again quarrel. *Philometor*, exiled by his younger brother, flees to *Rome*. He is brought back under *Roman* protection and thereafter rules alone, while *Physcon* becomes King of *Cyrene*.

146 *Philometor* dies and is succeeded by his son *Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator*, who reigns only a few months.

146–117 *Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon* becomes sole ruler. He marries his brother's widow and later his niece *Cleopatra III*.

130 *Euergetes II* is expelled in a revolution and flees to *Cyprus*. He is replaced by *Cleopatra*, with the names of *Philometor Soteira*. He murders his son *Memphis*, who had put forward a rival claim to the throne.

127–117 *Euergetes II* recovers the throne.

From 117 Joint rule by *Euergetes' widow Cleopatra Cocce* and her son *Ptolemy IX Soter II Lathyrus*.

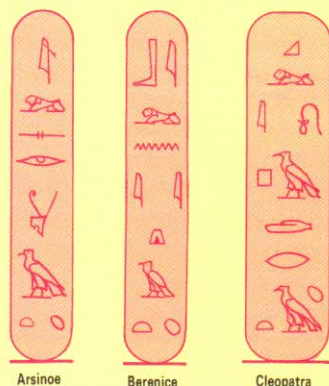
106 *Soter II* is expelled and replaced as co-ruler by his brother *Ptolemy X Alexander I*.

88 *Alexander* is deposed by a rebellion and is killed in a naval battle. *Soter II* is recalled to the throne. – Rising in *Thebes*, which is taken after a long siege.

81 After *Soter II's* death *Ptolemy XI Alexander II* marries *Cleopatra Berenice III* and rules jointly with her.

80 *Alexander* has *Cleopatra* murdered and is then killed by the people of *Alexandria*.

Queens' cartouches of Ptolemaic period



Arsinoe

Berenice

Cleopatra

81–51 *Ptolemy XI Neos Dionysos*, popularly known as *Auletes* (the "Flute-player"), ascends the throne and is formally recognized by *Rome*. In 59 he is temporarily expelled by his daughter *Berenice* (who marries *Archelaus*, putative son of King *Mithridates VI* of *Pontus*) but is restored by the *Romans* in 55. The *Temple of Edfu* is completed and the *Temple of Dendera* begun.

51–47 *Cleopatra VII* and *Ptolemy XIII Philopator Philadelphus*, daughter and son of *Neos Dionysos*, rule jointly under the protection of the *Roman Senate*. *Pompey* is appointed guardian.

48 *Ptolemy* banishes his sister *Cleopatra*. After his defeat in the *Battle of Pharsalus* (47) *Pompey* seeks refuge in *Egypt*, but, on the instigation of *Ptolemy*, is killed when he lands at *Pelusium*. – *Caesar* comes to *Alexandria*, takes the part of the banished *Cleopatra* and defeats *Ptolemy*, who is drowned in the *Nile*.

47 *Caesar*, now Dictator, appoints *Cleopatra's* 11-year-old brother *Ptolemy XIV Philopator* co-ruler.

45 *Ptolemy XIV* is murdered on *Cleopatra's* instigation and *Ptolemy XV Caesar* (*Caesarion*), her son by *Caesar*, is appointed co-ruler.

44 *Caesar* is murdered.

41 *Antony*, intending to call *Cleopatra* to account for the help given by her general *Allienus*, contrary to her wishes, to *Brutus* and *Cassius* in the *Battle of Philippi*, is captivated by her beauty and intelligence and spends years with her living a life of pleasure and indulgence. He is finally declared by the *Senate* an enemy of the *Roman* people.

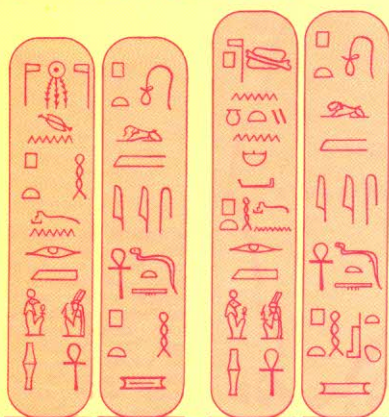
31 *Octavian* marches against *Antony*, defeats him in the *Battle of Actium* and takes *Alexandria*. *Antony* commits suicide in 30 B.C. and *Cleopatra* also takes her own life (traditionally by the bite of an asp).

30 *Egypt* is now a *Roman province* directly subject to the *Emperor* and governed by a *Prefect* appointed by him.

Roman rule (30 B.C.–A.D. 395). – Like the *Ptolemies*, the *Roman* emperors present themselves to the *Egyptian* people as successors to the *Pharaohs* and maintain the appearance of an *Egyptian* national State. – Christianity reached *Egypt* at an early stage and spreads rapidly.

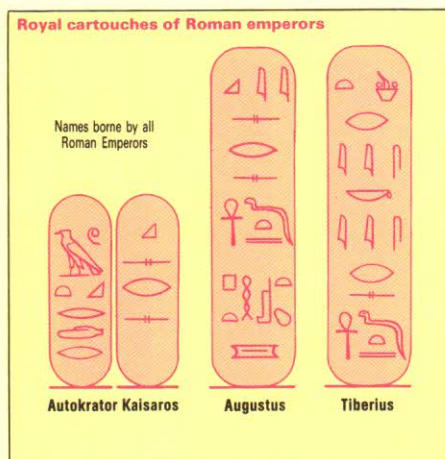
30/29 The first *Roman* Governor, *Cornelius Gallus*, represses a rebellion in *Upper Egypt* and fights the

Royal cartouches of Ptolemaic period



Ptolemy VII
Euergetes II Physcon

Ptolemy XII
Neos Dionysos



Ethiopians. Having fallen into disfavor with the Emperor, he is recalled in 27/26 and commits suicide. – Reformed calendar introduced by Augustus.

27 B.C. Octavian becomes Emperor under the name of **Augustus**.

24 B.C. Ethiopian invasion of Egypt under Queen *Candace*. – *Strabo* visits Egypt.

A.D. 14–37 **Tiberius**. He builds the Sebasteum in Alexandria.

A.D. 19 *Germanicus*, the Emperor's heir, visits Egypt.

30 The **Crucifixion**.

37–41 *Caligula*. Violent disturbances in Alexandria caused by strife between Greeks and Jews.

41–54 **Claudius**. The building of the vestibule of the temple at Esna and a temple at Philae is begun during his reign.

54–68 **Nero**. Egypt is now a center of the trade between India and Rome.

64 The Apostle *Paul* is martyred in Rome.

68–69 *Galba*, *Otho* and *Vitellius*.

69–79 **Vespasian** is proclaimed Emperor in Alexandria.

79 **Titus** (Vespasian's son). He sets out from Alexandria on his expedition against Palestine, which ends in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

81–96 **Domitian** promotes the cult of Isis and Sarapis in Rome.

96–98 *Nerva*.

98–117 **Trajan**. Reopening of the canal between the Nile and the Red Sea, now called the Amnis Traianus (Trajan's River).

117–138 **Hadrian**. He visits Egypt in 130. His friend Antinous is drowned in the Nile and he founds the town of Antinoupolis in his honor.

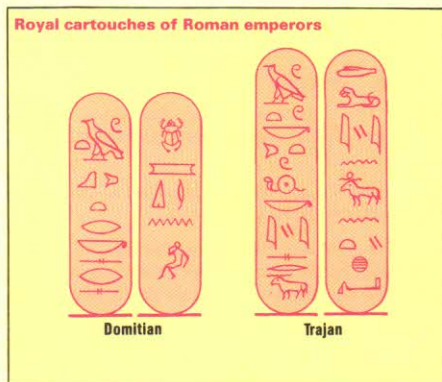
138–161 **Antoninus Pius**.

Circa 150 The astronomer and mathematician Ptolemy is active in Alexandria.

161–180 **Marcus Aurelius** (ruling jointly with *Lucius Verus* until 169).

172/173 Rebellion by the Bucoli, cowherds living in the marshes east of Alexandria, quelled by *Avidius Cassius*.

175 Avidius Cassius is proclaimed Emperor by the legions in Egypt but is murdered in Syria.



The Holy Family in Egypt

The flight of the Holy Family (Mary and Joseph with the infant Jesus) into Egypt to escape Herod's slaughter of the innocents is mentioned in the New Testament (Matthew 2: 13–15) without any further details. This map shows the main halting-places on their route, as given in various legends, which are still venerated today. – Between El-Maadi and Beni Mazar and between Gebel el-Teir and Ashmunein they would no doubt travel in sailing-boats on the Nile.

Royal cartouches of Roman emperors



Hadrian

Antoninus Pius

Septimius Severus

- 176 Marcus Aurelius visits Alexandria.
- 180–192 *Commodus*.
- Circa 190* *Pantaenus*, first known head of the theological school in Alexandria; succeeded by *Clement* (c. 200) and *Origen* (from 203).
- 193–211 **Septimius Severus**.
- 204 Edict prohibiting Roman citizens from becoming Christians. Many Christian communities in the Delta.
- 211–217 **Caracalla** visits Egypt. Massacre in Alexandria.
- 212 *Constitutio Antonina*: Roman citizenship granted to inhabitants of Roman provinces.
- 217–218 *Macrinus* murders Caracalla and is recognized as Emperor by the Egyptians. After his death there are contests for the succession in Alexandria.
- 249–251 *Decius*. Persecution of Christians in 250 in the time of Bishop Dionysius of Alexandria.
- 253–260 *Valerian*. Persecution of Christians.
- 260–268 *Gallienus*. Christians are granted a measure of toleration. Plague in Egypt.
- 260 *Macrianus*, recognized as Emperor by the Egyptians, is killed in Illyria in a battle with Gallienus's general Domitian.
- 265 *Aemilianus (Alexander)* is proclaimed Emperor by troops in Alexandria and recognized by the people, but is defeated and put to death by the Roman legions.
- 268 Lower Egypt is occupied by the army of Queen *Zenobia* of Palmyra and part of Upper Egypt by the Blemmyes.
- 268–270 *Claudius II*.
- 270–275 *Aurelian*.
- 270 Egypt is reunited with the Empire by the Roman general Probus.
- Circa 271* *Antony* (c. 251–356), a Copt from Coma in Middle Egypt, becomes a hermit in the desert.
- 276–282 *Probus* is proclaimed Emperor in Alexandria.
- 278 Successful campaign against the Blemmyes.

284–305 Diocletian.

- 292 Rebellion in Upper Egypt.
- 294 Rising in Alexandria. Diocletian captures the city (295).
- 303 Persecution of Christians.
- 305–313 *Maximinus*. Beginning of the Arian controversy.
- Circa 320* *Pachomius* founds the first monastery at Tabennese.
- 324–337 **Constantine the Great**, the first Emperor favorable to the Christians. Reorganization of Egyptian administration: the country becomes a "diocese" and is divided into six provinces – Egypt, Augustamnica, Heptanomis (later called Arcadia), the Thebaid, Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt.
- 325 **Council of Nicaea**. The doctrine of *Arius* of Alexandria, who held that Christ was created by God before time or the world was and was thus of like nature with God (*homoiousios*) but not very God, is condemned, and the contrary doctrine of *Athanasius*, that the Son is of the same nature (*homoousios*) as the Father, is declared alone valid.

- 328 *Athanasius* Archbishop of Alexandria.
- 330 Byzantium (Nova Roma, Constantinopolis) becomes capital of the Empire and a new center of Greek culture and learning. – Communities of ascetics are established in the Scetic and Nitrian desert.
- 337–361 *Constantius* favors Arianism. *Athanasius* is several times banished from Alexandria.
- 346 Death of St Pachomius.
- Circa 350* Earliest Coptic translations of the Bible.
- 361–363 *Julian the Apostate*.
- 373 *Athanasius* dies, having seen the triumph of his cause in the closing years of his life.
- 379–395 **Theodosius I, the Great**. Christianity becomes the State religion of the Empire. Persecution of Arians and pagans. Destruction of the Serapeum.
- 395 Division of the Roman Empire: *Arcadius* Emperor in the East, *Honorius* in the West.

Byzantine rule (395–638). – Christianity brings fundamental changes in art and intellectual life.

- 395–408 *Arcadius*. Patriarch *Theophilus* of Alexandria, a fierce advocate of the doctrine that God must be conceived in human form, vigorously pursues the opponents of this doctrine. – *Shenute* (d. 466), founder of the Egyptian Coptic Church, is Abbot of the White Monastery, Sohag, from about 383. – *Augustine* (354–430) Bishop of Hippo in North Africa from 395.
- 408–450 *Theodosius II*.
- 412 *Theophilus* dies and is succeeded as Patriarch by *Cyril*.
- 415 The pagan philosopher *Hypatia* is stoned to death in Alexandria.
- 431 At the Third Ecumenical Council, held at Ephesus, Patriarch *Cyril* defends the view – which is opposed by *Nestorius*, Patriarch of Constantinople since 428 – that the Virgin is the Mother of God (*Theotokos*).
- 444 Death of *Cyril*; he is succeeded by *Dioscurus* (until 451).

449 At the "Robber Council" of Ephesus Patriarch Dioscurus secures a declaration in favor of the doctrine of Monophysitism, which holds that before his incarnation Christ possessed two natures, human and divine, but that his human nature was afterwards absorbed into his divine nature.

450-457 *Marcian*. Wars with Nubians and Blemmyes.

451 At the Fourth Ecumenical Council, held at Chalcedon, the Monophysite doctrine is condemned and the doctrine that Christ's two natures remain unmixed and unchanged, but also indistinguishable and inseparable, is formally promulgated. The Egyptians stand by the Monophysite doctrine.

474-491 *Zeno*.

491-518 *Anastasius*.

502 Famine in Egypt.

527-565 *Justinian*. New administrative measures.

610-641 *Heraclius*.

619 The Persians under *Chosroes II* invade Egypt. Alexandria is captured. Chosroes rules with mildness and toleration.

622 *Mohammed* flees from Mecca to Medina: the *Hegira*, the starting-point of Muslim chronology.

626 The Persians are expelled by Heraclius.

632 Death of Mohammed. He is succeeded by *Abu Bekr* as first Caliph.

634 Beginning of the Arab conquest of Syria. *Abu Bekr* dies; *Omar* becomes second Caliph.

636 Decisive Arab victory over the Byzantines at the River Yarmuk; fall of Damascus.

637 Arab victory over the Persians at El-Qadisiya; fall of Ctesiphon. End of the Sassanid Empire.

638 Fall of Jerusalem. *Omar* in Syria.

Egypt as a province of the Caliphate (640-968). – Arab rule brings with it the conversion of the country to **Islam**. The Copts at first enjoy freedom of worship, but towards the end of the 8th century are subject to increased cultural and religious oppression.

640 *Amr ibn el-As*, Caliph *Omar*'s general, takes Pelusium and defeats Byzantine forces at Heliopolis.

641 The fortified town of Babylon is given up to the Arabs after the intervention of Patriarch *Cyrus* (Muquauqis).

642 Fustat founded as a military base and seat of government. Alexandria is captured.

644-656 *Othman*. He is overthrown by a rebellion originating in Egypt.

645/646 Alexandria is occupied by a Byzantine fleet but is recovered by *Amr*. Egypt is now firmly in Arab hands, providing a base for naval campaigns against Byzantium and the conquest of North Africa.

656-661 Civil war fought between Caliph *Ali*, Mohammed's son-in-law, and *Muawia*, founder of the Omayyad dynasty. Egypt is at first held by *Ali* but in 658 falls to the Omayyads.

Omayyads

658-750 A brilliant Arab dynasty with Damascus as capital. Arab tribes settle in the Nile Valley, and the system of government is based on Arab models. Many Copts embrace Islam. Egypt is ruled by governors, many of them Omayyad princes.

744-750 *Merwan II*, last of the Omayyads, flees to Egypt and is murdered there (buried at Abusir el-Melek). The Omayyads are exterminated, with the exception of *Abd el-Rahman*, who flees to Spain and founds an independent Caliphate in Córdoba (756).

Abbasids

750-868 This new dynasty, which had risen to power on Iranian soil and with Persian assistance, transfers the capital and seat of Government of the Caliphate from Syria to Iraq. Foundation of Baghdad. The Caliphate is now at its peak. Egypt is ruled by frequently changing governors. The Copts are oppressed; frequent revolts.

813-833 *Mamun*, son of Harun el-Rashid, comes to Egypt and breaks the resistance of the Copts and rebellious bedouin tribes. The fusion of Arabs and Copts begins, and Arabic becomes the language of the fellahin.

Under *Mamun*'s successors the Caliphate begins to decline; the Government becomes dependent on a guard of Turkish slaves, while the provinces make themselves independent.

Tulunids

868-905 Egypt enjoys a brief period of independence.

868-883 *Ahmed ibn Tulun*, Governor of Egypt, sets up as an independent Sultan and extends his authority by successful wars beyond Syria into Mesopotamia. There is great building activity during his reign and that of his son *Khumaraweih*.

883-895 *Khumaraweih* and his successors are unable to maintain Egyptian independence.

Abbasids

905-935 Egypt is once again governed from Baghdad.

925 An attack by the Fatimid (Shiite) caliphs of Kairouan is repelled.

Ikshidids

935-969 The Turkish Governor of Egypt, *Mohammed el-Ikshid* (935-946), seizes the throne and founds a short-lived dynasty.

966-968 Mohammed el-Ikshid's successors are dependent on an Abyssinian eunuch named *Kafur*, who later usurps the throne and recognizes the suzerainty of the Abbasids. Syria and Palestine are dependencies of Egypt, and there is a brilliant Court in Old Cairo. On *Kafur*'s death Mohammed el-Ikshid's grandson *Ahmed*, a minor, succeeds to the throne, and the Fatimids take advantage of this moment of weakness to conquer Egypt.

Egypt under independent rulers (969-1517). – Having gained possession of Egypt, the *Fatimids* set up their capital at Cairo. They are followed by the *Ayyubids*, who have to contend with the armies of the Crusades. Thereafter Egypt is ruled for two and a half centuries by the *Mamelukes*, with two dynasties and a long succession of sultans.

Fatimids

969-1171 The Fatimids, rulers of a kingdom in the western part of North Africa founded in 909 on the basis of a Shiite religious movement, trace their descent from Mohammed's daughter *Fatima*.

969 *Gohar* conquers Egypt for the Fatimid ruler *El-Muizz* and founds the new capital of Cairo.

970 Foundation of the El-Azhar Mosque.

- 973** El-Muizz comes to Cairo and resides there until his death in 975. He also conquers Syria.
- 975–996** *El-Aziz*, El-Muizz's son, notable for his tolerance and love of learning. Egypt flourishes under his rule.
- 996–1021** *El-Hakim*, El-Aziz's son by a Christian mother, is a religious fanatic, a man of capricious despotic impulses and capable of great cruelty. He later declares himself to be reincarnate of Ali and claims divine veneration. He disappears during one of his nightly rides in the Moqattam Hills – probably assassinated at the instigation of his sister Sitt el-Mulk. The Druses, a sect founded by El-Darazi, believe that he withdrew from the world because of its sinfulness and will one day reappear as Messiah.
- 1021–36** *El-Zahir*, El-Hakim's cruel and effeminate son, comes to the throne at the age of 16. Until 1024 his aunt Sitt el-Mulk acts as Regent.
- 1036–94** *El-Mustansir*, a weak and indolent ruler.
- 1047–77** *Christodulus*, Coptic Patriarch. The seat of the Patriarchate is moved from Alexandria to Cairo.
- 1065** The country is ravaged for seven years by plague and famine as a result of the absence of the Nile flood. Palestine and Syria are overrun by the Seljuks, pressing forward from the east. Rebellions of Turkish and Berber mercenaries. The palace and library are plundered.
- 1074–94** *Badr el-Gamali*, Mustansir's Armenian Vizier, restores order in the capital and rules the country well, with almost absolute power. Building of the stone walls and gates of Cairo and the Giyushi Mosque.
- 1094** *El-Afdal*, Gamali's son, becomes Vizier to the young Caliph.
- 1094–1101** *El-Mustali*, Mustansir's son, captures Jerusalem and the Syrian coastal towns (1096–98), but loses them to the armies of the First Crusade.
- 1099** King *Baldwin* of Jerusalem makes an unsuccessful attack on Egypt.
- 1101–59** Under a succession of incapable caliphs the Fatimid kingdom declines. The viziers, El-Afdal (murdered 1121) and his successors, are the real rulers of the country.
- 1160–71** *El-Adid*, last of the Fatimids. The office of vizier is contested by *Shawar* and *Dirgham*. Shawar is exiled and seeks refuge with *Nur el-Din*, ruler of northern Syria (with his capital at Damascus from 1154), who restores him to his Vizierate with the help of Kurdish mercenaries commanded by *Shirkuh* and *Saladin*.
- 1164** Shawar falls out with the Kurds and appeals for help to *Amalric I*, King of Jerusalem, who comes to Egypt and expels the Kurds. He drives back another Kurdish army which attacks Egypt in 1167.
- 1168** Amalric himself seeks to obtain possession of Egypt, whereupon Shawar appeals to Nur el-Din for help and sets fire to Fustat (November 1168).
- 1169** On a third campaign in Egypt Shirkuh and Saladin compel Amalric to withdraw and gain control of the country. Shawar is killed and replaced as Vizier by Shirkuh.
- 1169–93** After Shirkuh's death he is succeeded by **Saladin** (*Salah el-Din Yusuf ibn Ayyub*), who at first rules in the name of the incapable Caliph and after his death becomes absolute ruler.
- Ayyubids**
- 1171–1250** The reign of Saladin, founder of the Ayyubid dynasty, is the most brilliant period in the medieval history of Cairo, although the Sultan lives for only eight years in the city and spends the rest of his time campaigning in Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia. He begins the building of the Citadel and the town walls. The Shiite doctrines introduced into Egypt by the Fatimids are extirpated. Syria is conquered.
- 1200–18** *Malik el-Adil*, Saladin's brother, briefly preserves the unity of the Empire (which was split up on Saladin's death).
- 1211** Adil's wife, *El-Shemsa*, builds the Imam el-Shafii Mosque in Cairo. After Adil's death the Empire falls apart: Egypt passes to his son.
- 1218–38** *Malik el-Kamil*, his son, is a shrewd and capable ruler.
- 1218** Damietta is taken by the army of the Fifth Crusade but is given up in 1221.
- 1229** The Emperor *Frederick II* arrives in Palestine with a Crusading army. Kamil concludes a treaty with him under which he is granted possession of Jerusalem and the coastal towns for a period of ten years.
- 1238–40** El-Kamil is succeeded by his son *El-Adil II*.
- 1240–50** *El-Salih Ayyub*, brother of El-Adil II, who builds a castle on the island of Roda.
- 1249** *Louis IX* (St Louis) of France, on the Sixth Crusade, takes Damietta, but a year later is defeated and taken prisoner at El-Mansura by *Turan Shah* (who had succeeded his father El-Salih). During the negotiations for Louis's release Turan Shah is murdered by his bodyguard, the Mamelukes. One of the Mameluke leaders, *Aibek*, succeeds to the throne after a brief interregnum of rule by a woman, and founds a new Mameluke dynasty.
- Bahrite Mamelukes**
- 1250–1382** The Mamelukes were slaves (*mamluk*, "white slave") purchased by the sultans and trained to serve as their bodyguard or elite troops in their army. They are known as the Bahrite Mamelukes because their barracks were on the island of Roda in the Nile (*bahr*, "river"). In only 132 years of rule there are no fewer than 25 Bahrite sultans, some of whom reign several times.
- 1260–77** **Baibars I**, one of the ablest members of this dynasty, destroys the last remnants of the kingdom of Jerusalem in four campaigns. He brings to Cairo a scion of the Abbasid dynasty of caliphs, who had been driven into exile by the capture of Baghdad and the execution of the last Caliph, El-Mustasim, by Hulagu's Mongols, and installs him and his successors as nominal rulers (1261–1517). Building of the El-Zahir Mosque (1269).
- 1279–90** **Qalaun** (*El-Mansur Qalaun*) succeeds to the throne, displacing Baibars's son, who is a minor. He holds off the Mongols and establishes relations with the Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg and other rulers. Much building in Cairo: emergence of a distinctively Egyptian style of Islamic architecture.
- 1290–93** *El-Ashraf Khalil* captures Acre, the last Christian stronghold in Palestine (1291).
- 1293–1340** *Mohammed el-Nasir* (Mohammed ibn Qalaun) succeeds his elder brother Khalil at the age of nine, but is compelled by internal dissensions to flee to Syria. From 1296 Egypt is ruled by El-Mansur Lakin. With the aid of the Syrian emirs El-Nasir

regains his throne in 1298, but in 1309 flees to the Castle of Kerak (to the east of the Dead Sea) in order to escape from the influence of the two emirs who hold the real power, Baibars and Sallar. *Baibars II* is chosen as Sultan, but when El-Nasir returns in 1310 he makes his submission and is killed. Thereafter El-Nasir occupies the throne until his death. Mistrustful, vindictive and greedy, he behaves with the utmost capriciousness, lavishing gifts on his emirs or having them beheaded. The only one who retains his favor was *Ismail Abulfida*, an Ayyubid, also noted as a historian, who died as Prince of Hama (Syria) in 1331. El-Nasir shows himself liberal to the mass of the people and indulgent to the priesthood. In order to provide the enormous sums required to maintain his Court and finance his building program he appoints Christians – who have a reputation for competence and astuteness – to his departments of finance and customs.

1302 Cairo destroyed by an earthquake.

1347–61 El-Nasir is succeeded by his sixth son *Hasan*, who is still under age. The emirs and Mamelukes are free to rule the country at their pleasure, and take advantage of a plague in 1348–49 which carries off whole families to confiscate property thus left ownerless. *Hasan* is deposed in 1351 by *Salih*, recovers his throne in 1354, but is assassinated in 1361. The Sultan *Hasan Mosque* in Cairo is one of the great masterpieces of Islamic architecture in Egypt. – Later sultans are increasingly dependent on the emirs.

Circassian Mamelukes

1382–1517 A Circassian slave named *Barquq* sets aside the six-year-old *Haggi*. El-Nasir's great-grandson, seizes the throne and founds a new dynasty.

1382–99 *Barquq's* reign is briefly interrupted in 1389/90, when he is displaced by the emirs. He wages successful wars against the Mongols of *Tamerlane* and the Ottomans under *Bayezid*.

1399–1412 *Farag*, *Barquq's* son, has barely ascended the throne at the age of 13 when Egypt is again threatened by the Ottomans and soon afterwards by the Mongols. He advances victoriously as far as Damascus, but is obliged to return to Cairo by dissensions among his emirs. After the Mongol victory over the Turks at Angora in 1402 *Farag* enters into negotiations with *Tamerlane*. The emirs rebel against his rule, led by Sheikh *El-Mahmudi*, later Sultan *El-Muayyad*. *Farag* is finally besieged by the rebels in Damascus, taken prisoner and executed.

1412–21 Sheikh *El-Muayyad* conducts victorious campaigns in Syria, aided by the military skill of his son *Ibrahim*. He re-enacts and rigorously enforces the laws promulgated by Omar el-Mutawakkil (847–861), El-Hakim and El-Nasir prescribing the clothes to be worn by Christians and Jews. He not only lays down the colors (for Christians dark blue clothing, a black turban and a wooden cross weighing 5 pounds hung from the neck; for Jews yellow clothing, a black turban and a black ball round the neck) but also regulates the length of the sleeves and the turban, in order to ensure that the cut as well as the colors of their garments are different from the clothes worn by Muslims.

1422–38 *El-Ashraf Bars Bey* ascends the throne, after governing for some time on behalf of an underage Sultan. Successful campaigns against Cyprus and the Mongols.

1468–96 *Qait Bey*, one of the last independent Mameluke sultans. Both as a general and a diplomat

he maintains his position against the Turks (Sultans Mohammed II and Bayezid II), and inflicts considerable losses on them; but the refractory Mamelukes hamper his efforts and finally compel him to abdicate in favor of his 14-year-old son Mohammed.

1501–16 *El-Ghuri* (Qansuh el-Ghuri), a former slave of Qait Bey's, becomes Sultan at the age of over 60, but still possesses sufficient energy to keep the unruly emirs in check. By imposing high taxes and debasing the coinage he does further damage to Egyptian trade with India at a time when it is already endangered by the Portuguese discovery of the route round the Cape of Good Hope. Instigated by the Venetians, he sends a fleet against the Portuguese in India and wins a naval victory over Francisco d'Almeida, son of the Viceroy, at Chaul (south of Bombay); but his ships are compelled in 1509 to withdraw to Arabia. He is killed in a battle with the army of the Ottoman Sultan Selim I at Dabiq (north of Aleppo) in Syria.

1517 *Tuman Bey* is deposed by Sultan Selim I and Cairo is taken by storm. Egypt becomes a *Turkish pashalik*. Selim has *Mutawakkil (III)*, last scion of the Abbasid dynasty, to be brought to Constantinople, from which he returns to Cairo after the Sultan's death. According to a tradition of somewhat doubtful authenticity, Selim compels *Mutawakkil* to convey to him his status as Caliph, the temporal head of all Muslim believers – an act on which the Ottoman sultans' claim to the Caliphate is based.

Turkish rule (1517–1882). – The authority of the Ottoman sultans soon declines, and with it that of their governors. The Egyptian pashas (governors) are required, before introducing any measure, to obtain the consent of 24 Mameluke leaders, the beys ("princes") who govern the provinces. The beys collect the taxes, command the militia and merely pay tribute to the pasha.

1768–73 *Ali Bey*, originally a slave, rises to the dignity of Sultan. He conquers Syria, but during his absence his son-in-law *Mohammed Bey Abu Dahab* seizes power in Egypt.

1798 *Napoleon Bonaparte* appears off Alexandria, hoping to destroy British trade in the Mediterranean and British power in India. He takes Alexandria by storm and defeats the Mameluke army in the *Battle of the Pyramids*; but soon afterwards his fleet is destroyed by Nelson in the *Battle of the Nile*, fought in Abuqir Bay.

1799 Napoleon conquers Middle and Upper Egypt and inflicts an annihilating defeat on the Turks at Abuqir. He then returns from Alexandria to France.

1800 General Kléber defeats the Turks at Matariya, but is assassinated in Cairo.

1801 The French are compelled by British forces to surrender in Cairo and Alexandria, and evacuate Egypt.

Mohammed (Mehemet) Ali and his successors

1805–82 The period of the French withdrawal saw the rise to prominence of **Mohammed (Mehemet) Ali**, the ablest ruler that the East had produced for a long time. Born at Kavala in Macedonia in 1769 (the same year as Napoleon), he was the son of Albanian parents. At first he made his living as a coffee-dealer; then, during the fighting between Turks and Mamelukes, the new Governor, Kusruf Pasha, put him in command of an Albanian Corps. In this position Mohammed Ali, under the appearance of

Napoleon's Egyptian Expedition

The French campaign in Egypt between 1798 and 1801 is known to history as the **Expédition d'Égypte**, the Egyptian Expedition.

The ostensible occasion for the expedition was an appeal for help in 1795 from the French Consul in Cairo, alarmed by the excesses of the local Bey; but its real object was to destroy British commercial predominance in the Mediterranean. The French began by seizing the island of Malta, held by the Knights of St John (June 12–13, 1798); then followed the storming of Alexandria (July 2), the defeat of the Mameluke army in the Battle of the Pyramids and the occupation of Cairo. After Nelson's destruction of the French fleet in the Battle of the Nile (August 1) the French forces in Egypt were cut off from France, but they nevertheless pressed on into Upper Egypt and routed the Turkish army at Abuqir (July 25, 1799). After Napoleon's return to France (landing at Fréjus on October 9, 1799) General Jean-Baptiste Kléber won a number of further victories over the Turks, but was murdered in Cairo on June 14, 1800. Finally the French were defeated by a British army in September 1801, surrendered in Cairo and Alexandria and left Egypt.

The French expedition was accompanied by many scholars and scientists (Orientalists, archaeologists, etc.), whose work gave a powerful boost to the study of Egypt and its antiquities (e.g. to Champollion's decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphics).

impartiality, maneuvered with great adroitness for the destruction of both sides and for his own establishment as ruler of Egypt.

1805 After the expulsion of the Turkish Governor Mohammed Ali proclaims himself Pasha and takes possession of the Citadel of Cairo.

1807 With the support of the Mamelukes he defeats the British forces which had occupied Alexandria and Rosetta and compels them to withdraw.

1811 On the occasion of a banquet to which 480 Mameluke leaders had been invited Mohammed Ali has them treacherously massacred by his Albanian troops. The way is now clear for him to rule with almost absolute power. – A campaign against the Wahhabis who had seized control of Arabia, undertaken on behalf of the Turkish Government, is successfully carried through by Mohammed Ali's son *Tusun* and, from 1816 by his son (or adoptive son?) **Ibrahim Pasha**, a military commander of outstanding quality.

1819 After fierce fighting the resistance of the Wahhabis collapses. Mohammed Ali turns his attention to military reforms. He employs his lawless Albanians in Nubia and the Sudan and raises an army of fellahin, which fights in Greece, under Ibrahim's command, during the Greek War of Independence (1824–27).

1827 In the Battle of *Navarino* the whole Turkish and Egyptian fleet is annihilated. – Mohammed Ali seeks to increase the strength and resources of Egypt by encouraging agricultural improvement and promoting the development of industry.

1832 After the Russian victories over Turkey in 1828–29 Mohammed Ali decides that the time has

come to shake off Turkish suzerainty. Ibrahim advances into Syria and within a year is master of Asia Minor. Following intervention by the European Powers, however, the Treaty of Kütahya is concluded, in terms favorable to the Turkish Government.

1839 The Turkish Government makes another attempt to enforce its authority on Mohammed Ali, who has now gained control of south-western Arabia. Ibrahim inflicts an annihilating defeat on the Turkish Army at *Nisibin*, to the west of the Euphrates. After the death of Sultan *Mahmud II* the entire Turkish fleet, under Ahmed Pasha, the Turkish High Admiral, goes over to Mohammed Ali. Again, however, the European Powers intervene, and Ibrahim is defeated in Lebanon by a British and Austrian expeditionary force. A fleet appears off Alexandria and compels Mohammed Ali to submit.

1841 A "firman of investiture" issued by the Sultan grants hereditary sovereignty over Egypt to Mohammed Ali's family in accordance with the Turkish law of succession. Egypt is required in future to pay tribute to the Sultan, but the Pasha is granted the right to conclude non-political treaties and to appoint all Egyptian officials and officers up to the rank of colonel.

1848 Ibrahim Pasha governs on behalf of Mohammed Ali, who has fallen into a state of imbecility, but dies in the course of the year.

1849–54 After Mohammed Ali's death he is succeeded by his grandson *Abbas I*, who is opposed to all European innovations but maintains strict discipline among his officials.

1854–63 *Said*, Mohammed Ali's fourth son, takes over the Government. He introduces a more equitable system of taxation, abolishes monopolies, builds railways and enthusiastically supports the construction of the Suez Canal.

1863–79 *Ismail*, Ibrahim Pasha's French-educated son, carries through many innovations, including factories, canals, locks, bridges, railways, the telegraph and a postal system. The **Suez Canal** is opened in 1869.

1873 *Ismail*, who since 1867 has had the status of Khedive or Viceroy, gains political independence for Egypt, although the tribute remains in force, and indeed is increased. His military successes extend the frontier of Egypt to the borders of Abyssinia, and his nominal authority reaches as far south as the 2nd parallel of northern latitude. Huge public works and other enterprises result in an astronomical increase in the National Debt.

1879 *Ismail* is compelled to abdicate. He dies in Istanbul in 1895.

1881 Under *Ismail's* son *Taufiq* the national finances and administration are brought under control. A nationalist revolt against increasing European influence is led by the Minister of War, *Arabi Bey*, with the slogan "Egypt for the Egyptians".

1882 British and French forces land at Alexandria in order to protect Europeans and occupy the city. *Arabi* is exiled to Ceylon. Thereafter British influence is predominant in Egypt.

Egypt under British administration (1882–1922). – The conflict between nationalist and Islamic aspirations on the one hand and British commercial interests on the other leads to political tensions which are reflected in repeated unrest, bloodshed and military action.

1883 *Sir Evelyn Baring* (later *Lord Cromer*), British Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General, reorganizes the country. – The Sudanese, led by *Mohammed Ahmed*, the so-called “Mahdi”, shake off Egyptian control of their country, defeating two Egyptian forces under British officers, Hicks Pasha and Baker Pasha.

1884 General *Gordon* (who had been Governor of the Sudan in 1877–79) advances to Khartoum with inadequate forces and is besieged there by the Mahdi's troops. The town is taken and Gordon is killed; the relieving force led by General *Wolseley* arrives too late.

1885 The British authorities now devote their attention to developing and improving the administration of Egypt proper. Negotiations undertaken by Turkey to end the British occupation produce no result. – Agreement with France on the unconditional neutrality of the Suez Canal.

1892 *Abbas II Hilmi*, *Taufiq's* son, becomes Khedive. His independence of action is limited by the British presence.

1896 General *Kitchener* (from 1902 Viscount Kitchener of Khartoum) sets out from Wadi Halfa with a British and Egyptian army to recover the Sudan, annihilates a Mahdist army and takes Omdurman.

1899 Establishment of an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium in the Sudan, under a British Governor whose appointment must be confirmed by the Khedive. – In Egypt itself many reforms are carried through by the British authorities. The development of agriculture is promoted by the building of light railways and the extension of the irrigation system.

1902 The **Aswan Dam** is completed.

1904 Anglo-French agreement on the maintenance of the status quo in Egypt. – There is an upsurge of anti-European feeling.

1907 Lord Cromer is succeeded by Sir Eldon Gorst.

1911 Field-Marshal Lord Kitchener (from 1914 Earl Kitchener of Khartoum) succeeds Sir Eldon Gorst as Governor, with increased powers, and serves until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

1914 **First World War:** Egypt declares war on the Central Powers, and Alexandria becomes a British naval base. Egypt is declared a British Protectorate; *Abbas II Hilmi*, who is pro-Turkish, is deposed, and his uncle *Husein Kamil* is appointed Sultan of Egypt. Britain appoints a High Commissioner to Egypt.

1915–17 Attacks by the Senussi, under the leadership of Sheikh *Sidi Ahmed Sherif*, on the western frontiers of Egypt; Sollum and the Bahriya, Farafra and Dakhla oases are temporarily occupied. Turkish attacks on the Suez Canal in 1915 and 1916 are repelled.

1917 British advance into Palestine, supported by the new railway line from El-Qantara to El-Arish and its continuation, the Palestine Railway. – *Husein Kamil* dies and is succeeded as Sultan by his brother *Ahmed Fuad*.

1918 Armistice with Turkey. – In Europe, armistice between the Allies and Germany.

1919 Egyptian nationalists, led by *Saad Zaghlul Pasha*, son of a peasant in the Delta, demand full independence. The arrest and deportation to Malta of Zaghlul Pasha and three of his supporters in March is followed by serious disturbances. General *Allenby* is appointed Special High Commissioner and restores order. Zaghlul Pasha returns to Egypt.

1922 The British Protectorate comes to an end and Egypt is declared independent. Britain retains responsibility for the maintenance of communications with the British Empire, the defence of Egypt against foreign attack, the protection of European interests and the settlement of the problem of the Sudan. Sultan *Ahmed Fuad* becomes King under the title of *Fuad I*.

Kingdom of Egypt (1922–52). – After more than 400 years of foreign rule Egypt is now free to manage its own internal and external affairs as a largely autonomous State, no longer subject to alien tutelage or tribute.

1922 (April 19) Promulgation of Constitution: the kingdom of Egypt a hereditary constitutional monarchy.

1923 The first General Election under the new constitution produces a strong nationalist majority. Zaghlul Pasha becomes Prime Minister. New national flag (green, with a white crescent and three stars).

1924 Opening of first Egyptian Parliament.

1927 Death of Zaghlul Pasha.

1936 Anglo-Egyptian Treaty ending the British military presence in Egypt, except in the Canal Zone. – Accession of King **Farouk**, at first under a Regency.

1937 Egypt becomes a member of the League of Nations. Under the Convention of Montreux the privileges of foreigners in Egypt are abolished.

1939 Under its defence agreement with Britain Egypt enters the **Second World War** on the side of the Allies and becomes a theater of war (El-Alamein).

1942 Britain compels King Farouk, who is of pro-German leanings, to appoint a pro-British Government. Nationalist feeling grows.

1948 Egypt intervenes in the war in Palestine and suffers considerable losses.

1949 **Nasser** (*Gamal Abd el-Nasir*), organizes resistance to the monarchy in the officer corps.

1951–52 Increasing economic difficulties enhance the prestige of the army.

Egypt as a republic (since 1952). – Economic and social reforms are carried through in an attempt to solve the country's domestic problems, but the old authoritarian style of government is still retained.

1952 General *Mohammed Neguib* seizes power. King Farouk, whose extravagant life-style has been bitterly criticized, abdicates and goes into exile in Italy. The country is governed by a Revolutionary Council consisting of members of the “League of Free Officers”, which introduces a *land reform* designed to destroy the power of the nobility and the large landowners.

1954 Proclamation of a republic. Colonel Nasser becomes Prime Minister and excludes the radical Communist and clerical forces from power.

1955 As a non-aligned country Egypt distances itself from the Western Powers and seeks to improve relations with the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

1956 Colonel Nasser is elected President of Egypt. – When the Western Powers withdraw their offer of assistance towards the construction of the Aswan High Dam Nasser responds by nationalizing the Suez Canal Company.

- 1956 October 19–November 6 Suez crisis:** Britain and France intervene in the conflict between Egypt and Israel. Cease-fire agreed, providing for a United Nations peace-keeping force and a guarantee of free passage through the Suez Canal.
- 1958** Syria and Egypt combine to form the *United Arab Republic (UAR)*, which is later joined by the Yemen.
- 1960–65** First Five Year Plan on the Soviet model: nationalization of banking and industry. Nasser's "Arab Socialism" claims to offer a model for the whole Islamic World. – The Soviet Union undertakes to provide financial and technical help for the construction of the High Dam (on which work begins in January 1960).
- 1961** Syria secedes from the United Arab Republic.
- 1964** Under a temporary constitution Egypt becomes a "Democratic Socialist State", with Islam as the national religion. The single Government party is the Arab Socialist Union.
- 1965–67** Nasser seeks to distract attention from the country's increasing economic difficulties by Muslim/nationalist and anti-Israeli policies.
- 1967** The **Six Day War** (June 5–10) ends in a devastating military defeat, the loss of the Sinai Peninsula and the closing of the Suez Canal. The loss of revenue from canal dues and the Sinai oilfields is an almost overwhelming blow to the Egyptian economy.
- 1970** Nasser dies suddenly and is succeeded by his deputy, **Mohammed Anwar el-Sadat**. – Completion of the **Aswan High Dam**.
- 1971** Sadat seeks to overcome Egypt's economic difficulties by a *rapprochement* with the West. He excludes Soviet influence from every field in the country's life but concludes a Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union. – A new constitution is approved by National Referendum: Egypt is now the *Arab Republic of Egypt*, a Socialist and Democratic State.
- 1972** Expulsion of 17,000 Soviet military advisers.
- 1973** The military advantages gained by Egypt in the **Yom Kippur War**, which begins with a surprise attack on Israel, strengthens Sadat's position and provide a basis for peace negotiations with Israel.
- 1974** A National Referendum approves the new policy of *rapprochement* with the West and a gradual liberalization of the economy.
- 1976** Egypt terminates the Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union.
- 1977** The ban on political parties is lifted. – Increases in the price of basic foodstuffs and everyday necessities lead to violent disturbances; demonstrations and strikes are prohibited.
- November 19–20, 1977** President Sadat's historic journey to Jerusalem as the first sign of a desire for reconciliation.
- 1978** A National Referendum approves President Sadat's style of leadership and shows that the overwhelming majority of the population agree with the idea (bitterly opposed in the rest of the Arab World) of making peace with Israel.
- 1979 (March 19–20) Peace treaty with Israel** on the basis of the agreements reached at Camp David (Maryland, USA). The treaty, negotiated through the mediation of US President Carter, provides for the phased return to Egypt of Israeli-occupied territory (with the exception of the Gaza Strip), the process to be completed by 1982.
- 1980** Foundation of the Council of the League of Arab and Islamic Peoples – a response to the exclusion of Egypt from the Arab League because of its policy of reconciliation with Israel. An amendment to the Constitution making it possible for President Sadat to be elected President for life (in place of the previous provision allowing two six-year terms) is approved in a Referendum. Some nationalized undertakings are returned to the private sector. Resumption of diplomatic relations and normalization of trade with Israel. The ex-Shah of Iran, dying in exile in Egypt, is given a State funeral – a decision by President Sadat which is approved by the majority of the population but arouses opposition from radical Muslim groups in sympathy with the Iranian Revolution.
- 1981** Tensions between Muslim fundamentalists and Copts increase still further, leading to violent riots in the working-class district of Cairo. Sadat takes severe measures against radical groups on both the Muslim and the Coptic sides. There are mass arrests, and the head of the Coptic Church, *Shenuda III*, is banished to a monastery in the Wadi Natrun. The Government's action is approved in a National Referendum. On October 6, during a military parade on the anniversary of Egypt's victory over Israel in the Yom Kippur War, President Sadat is assassinated. He is succeeded by Air Marshal *Hosni Mubarak*, Vice-President since 1974, who promises to follow the political course set by President Sadat. A state of emergency is declared, to last for a year. Many people are killed in clashes between radical Muslims and the police in Asyut (October 3–9).
- 1982** At the beginning of the year President Mubarak appoints his deputy *Fuad Mohieddin* as Prime Minister. Mubarak meets President Numeiri of the Sudan at Aswan (January). The last strip of land (a strip up to 600 m wide near Taba on the Red Sea) is returned to Egypt by Israel (25 April). Extension of the state of emergency until October 1983. Huge trial of 300 members of the El-Dshihad (Holy War) movement on suspicion of implication in the murder of Sadat and of an attempted coup (December).
- 1983** Renewal of trade relations with Jordan which had been broken off in 1979 (April). First meeting of the Parliament of the Nile under the chairmanship of Mubarak and Numeiri (May).
- 1984** Following the upsurge in the Islamic faith Christmas is removed from the official list of public holidays (January). Egypt again takes part in the conference of the Islamic Organisation (ICO; January). Extension of the emergency laws until summer 1985. Resumption of diplomatic relations with Jordan (September).
- 1985** The Coptic patriarch Shenuda III is restored to his spiritual office and celebrates his first mass in Cairo (January). The hijacking of the Italian cruise liner "Achille Lauro" to Alexandria by Palestinian terrorists leads to political tension with Italy and the USA.
- 1986** Rebellion by the riot police (January) and numerous strikes and unrest because of continuing economic difficulties are the impetus for the Islamic fundamentalists openly to demand the introduction of Sharia (Islamic law).
- 1987** Early Parliamentary elections (April). On September 27 the first section of the Cairo underground railway (subway) comes into operation.

The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt

Architecture

Little survives of the architecture of the Prehistoric period and Early Dynastic Period compared with the large numbers of remains ranging over the long period from the Old Kingdom to Graeco-Roman times. The remains of these early periods consist mainly of tombs, constructed of clay or sun-dried bricks of Nile mud – the materials which were also used in building houses or temples. Round palm-trunks were used to support the roof and frequently to form the roof itself; barrel-vaulted roofs were also common. – Stone began to be used in tombs and temples only at the beginning of the Old Kingdom; but brick never ceased to be the characteristic Egyptian building material. Such typical features of ancient Egyptian architecture as the cavetto cornice and torus had their origin in the primitive huts of an early period and were imitated in brick-built and later in stone structures; and the form of the round Egyptian column was modeled on the timber supports of earlier brick buildings. The square pillar, on the other hand, originated in stone architecture. Other features characteristic of stone architecture which appear at the beginning of the 3rd Dynasty in the temple buildings attached to the Step Pyramid of Saqqara are the fluted pilaster, the engaged column with papyrus capital and a semi-engaged column imitating a bundle of reeds – though these very soon go out of use as decorative elements.

The square **pillar** first appears in the tombs of the Old Kingdom. The lateral surfaces are frequently decorated with reliefs or inscriptions, the front with other forms of ornament. Thus projecting papyrus or lily stems are found on pillars of the time of Tuthmosis III at Karnak, a *sistrum* (a kind of rattle used by women) and the head of Hathor at Abu Simbel. The pillar was made octagonal or 16-sided by beveling off the corners, and the flat surfaces were then grooved or fluted to produce a play of light and shade. The top of the pillar, however, was left square to form a transition to the roof; and the foot rested on a round cushion-like base. Fluted 16-sided pillars, also known as

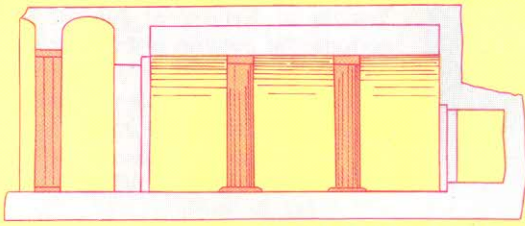
Proto-Doric columns, are found in tombs of the Middle Kingdom (Beni Hasan, Aswan) and in temples of the time of Tuthmosis III (Karnak, Deir el-Bahri). The name was suggested by certain points of resemblance to the Doric columns of the Greeks, in particular the fluting and the tapering of the shaft; but they differ from the true Doric column in lacking the echinus (rounded moulding) which is an essential constituent of a Doric capital and in resting on a base, while the Doric column springs directly from the ground. The fronts of Egyptian Proto-Doric columns are frequently not fluted but left flat for the reception of inscriptions.

From the beginning of the 5th Dynasty the square pillar and Proto-Doric column are joined by the round **column**. Its simplest form is the *tree-trunk column*, which imitates in stone the palm-trunks used as supports in an earlier period and is first found in the Mortuary Temple of Sahure at Abusir. This consists of two elements, a low circular base and a cylindrical shaft, decorated in front with a band of inscriptions.

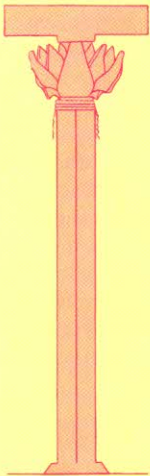
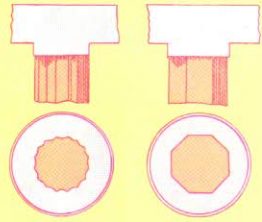
Usually, however, the column has a third element, in the form of a capital surmounted by a square stone slab (*abacus*) which in turn supports the architrave bearing the stone slabs of the roof. Reflecting the Egyptians' delight in plant forms, the columns from the Old Kingdom onwards frequently have the form of plants. Two types of plant are particularly favored, a species of lotus (*Nymphaea lotus*) and papyrus (*Cyperus papyrus*). Sometimes the column represents a single plant stem, sometimes a bundle or cluster of stems held together by bands, while the capital takes the form either of a closed bud or an open flower. There are thus a variety of types – the simple plant column with either a closed (bud) capital or an open (floral or calyx) capital and cluster-columns with either closed or open capitals.

Of the various types of *lotus column* – which, to judge from the many representations of them in reliefs and paintings, were widely used – relatively few have been preserved. Lotus cluster-columns with bud capitals are found in the Old Kingdom (Mastaba of Ptahshepses at Abusir) and Middle Kingdom (tomb at Beni Hasan), but seem to have disappeared in the New Kingdom. The

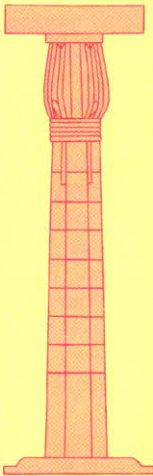
Ancient Egyptian Columns and Capitals



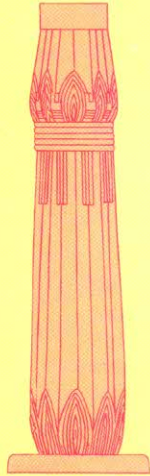
Proto-Doric columns (Beni Hasan)



Lotus column
with calyx capital



Lotus column
with bud capital



**Papyrus
cluster-column**
with closed capital



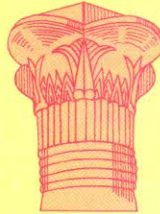
**Papyrus
cluster-column**
(ornamented)



Hathor column
(sistrum column)



Calyx capital



**Composite
plant capital**



Palm capital

column at Beni Hasan consists of four round stems rising from a circular base held together at the top by bands. The capital is formed of buds, the green sepals of which reach up to the top of the white petals of the corolla. Between the bands which hold the stems together at the top are smaller stems. Examples of lotus cluster-columns with calyx capitals are frequently depicted in reliefs in Old and Middle Kingdom tombs, and they are

particularly common in buildings of the Late Period.

Much more common are the *papyrus columns*, which are very different from the lotus columns. In the lotus column the stems are circular in section, while in the papyrus column they are triangular, and moreover taper at the base, which is surrounded by lance-shaped leaves, a feature absent from the lotus columns.



Papyrus column, Karnak

The capitals are also different: while in the lotus column the sepals reach up to the upper edge of the flower the leaves surrounding the umbel of the papyrus are considerably shorter. The simple papyrus column with a closed capital is known only in reliefs and paintings, but the papyrus cluster-column is very commonly found. It usually consists of eight stems held together at the top by bands, while between the stems and under the bands are smaller clusters of three stems, also fastened by bands. These smaller clusters, however, lost their independent treatment at an early period. – Towards the end of the 18th Dynasty the papyrus cluster-columns underwent a major change. In order to provide room for reliefs and inscriptions all the irregularities were abandoned and the shaft was made perfectly smooth, while the capital was rounded off and became a truncated cone, its cluster form now represented only by the ornament. – Papyrus columns with open capitals – in which it is difficult to distinguish between simple columns and cluster-columns – are found in most of the temples of the New Kingdom, usually in the higher central aisles. They invariably have a plain shaft, no longer articulated into separate stems, which is adorned with inscriptions and reliefs.

Among other, less common, types of plant column is the *palm column*. In this the shaft is round, though without the taper-

ing foot of the papyrus column, and the capital consists of a cluster of palm branches, turned out at the top and held together by bands. The earliest and finest palm columns are those in the Mortuary Temple of Sahure at Abusir. In later periods the column is frequently found without a base. – In the Ptolemaic period the comparatively simple plant capitals of earlier times were elaborately developed into vividly colored clusters of different plants (papyrus, sedge, lilies).

In addition to these plant columns there are other different types of column. The *Hathor column* or *sistrum column* has a round shaft, at the top of which, on four sides, is a head of Hathor (with cow's ears), topped by a sistrum in the form of a temple. This representation of a sistrum (a type of rattle used by women) is found only in temples dedicated to female deities, and is particularly common in the Ptolemaic period (e.g. at Dendera). – Another curious type is the *tent-pole column*, imitating a primitive form of tent-pole. This is found, for example in the Festival Temple of Tuthmosis III at Karnak, where the capitals have the unusual form of an inverted calyx.

Comparatively few of the **secular buildings** of ancient Egypt, even those of the later periods, have survived. There are quite a number of remains of ancient towns; but the houses of earlier periods are almost invariably concealed under later structures and thus very difficult to examine and investigate. The remains of such earlier houses are found undisturbed by later building only in exceptional cases – beside the Valley Temple of the Pyramid of Mycerinus, at El-Lahun and most notably at Tell el-Amarna. These remains, together with the representations of houses in reliefs and paintings and the offering-tables in the form of houses, give us some idea of the structure and interior arrangements of private houses, which in many respects resembled the Arab houses of more recent times in Egypt.

The house of the simple peasant or workman was as simple then as it is today: an open courtyard in which the family lived during the day (and in summer also during the night); a few dimly lighted sleeping-rooms and stalls for livestock; and a staircase in the courtyard leading up to the flat roof, on which there might be a few smaller rooms. The houses of the more

prosperous citizens of the Middle Kingdom also centered on the courtyard. On the rear side of this, on a terrace, was a portico of light columns, usually facing north, which offered protection from the sun. From here a door led into a wide hall, the roof of which was borne on columns, and beyond this a deep hall, also with columns, which was probably the dining-room. Beyond this again were bedrooms for the master of the house and his grown-up sons. Adjoining these central apartments were the women's rooms or harem, also centered on an open courtyard, and various offices (store-rooms, kitchen, stalls for livestock) and rooms for slaves. – This arrangement seems to have remained basically the same in all periods, and even in *royal palaces* (e.g. at Tell el-Amarna and Medinet Habu) the principal rooms are found in the same sequence. The 18th Dynasty houses which have been excavated at Tell el-Amarna show a rather different layout.

The walls of the private houses and palaces were built of sun-dried bricks of Nile mud; the roofs were made of wooden beams covered with straw or reeds and daubed internally and externally with Nile mud; and the columns were either of timber or stone, and in the palaces inlaid with colored stones or glass paste. Color was also used extensively in the interior: the walls were whitewashed and hung with brightly colored mats or decorated with paintings, and even the floors were often given a colored coating.

Many *fortified structures* have been preserved, including the Fort of El-Kab and the fortified town of El-Lahun (Kahun), probably dating from the Middle Kingdom. There are also the Nubian forts of Kuban, Qasr Ibrim and Aniba, now under the waters of Lake Nasser but thoroughly investigated before they disappeared, and the very many forts on Sudanese territory, to the south of Wadi Halfa (Buhen, Kor, etc.), which protected the land route between the cataracts. – Mention should also be made in this connection to the "simulated fortresses" (royal palaces built in the manner of forts) which have been found at Abydos, Kom el-Ahmar and Medinet Habu.

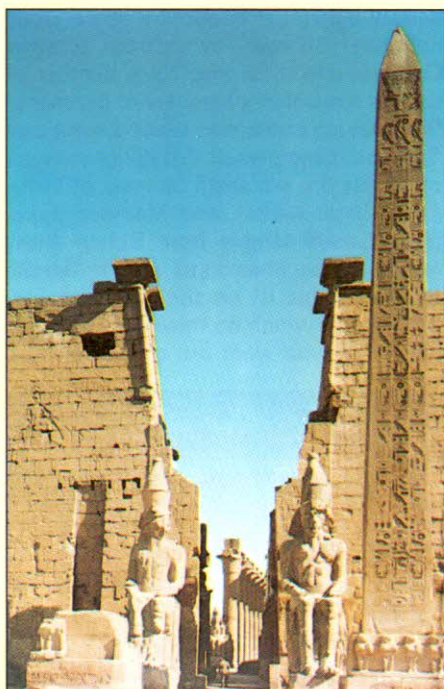
Since taxes were levied and salaries paid in kind, large *storehouses* were required both by the State and by temples for the reception and storage of tribute. Remains of such magazines can be seen, for

example, in the Ramesseum at Thebes (West).

Surely in no other country have such large numbers of *temples* survived from ancient times within a relatively small area as in Egypt. Most of them date from the New Kingdom and the Ptolemaic period, so that we have a clear picture only of the temples of these periods; few complete temples, or none at all, have survived from the Old and Middle Kingdoms and the Late Period.

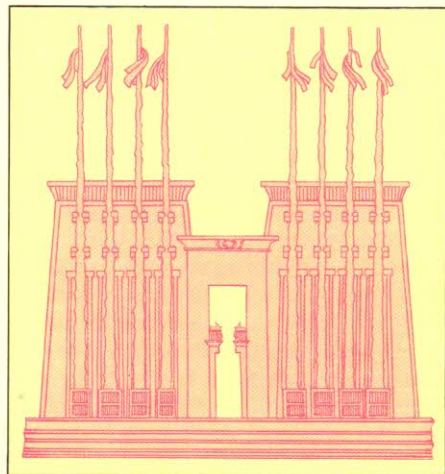
Of the *temples of the Old Kingdom*, apart from the mortuary temples associated with the pyramids, only one example of a particular kind has been preserved: the Sun Temple of King Niuserre at Abu Gurab. It consisted of a large court surrounded by covered passages and containing only a few buildings, with a large obelisk at the rear of the court. The walls of the passages and some of the chambers were decorated with reliefs depicting festivities, hunting scenes and country life.

The *temples of the Middle Kingdom* are scarcely better represented. There are only scanty remains of the great temples of Luxor and Karnak, Coptos, Abydos, Medinet el-Fayyum, Heliopolis, Bubastis and Tanis, some of which exceeded in size



Pylon and obelisk, Luxor

the temples of later periods. All probably fell into decay during the troubled period of Hyksos rule and were replaced under the 18th Dynasty by new buildings, which as far as possible incorporated masonry from the earlier temples. They appear to have been very similar in form to later temples, many of which were no doubt built on the same plan as their predecessors. The decoration was also the same as in later temples. The reliefs on the interior walls depicted the king in communion with the gods; the roofs of the halls were supported on columns of the various types; and in front of the entrance stood colossal statues of the Pharaohs and great obelisks.



Second Pylon, Karnak (from an Egyptian relief)

Although at first sight the *temples of the New Kingdom* appear very different from one another, they can be reduced without difficulty to two basic types. One of these types – reminiscent of the Greek peripteral temple (i.e. a temple surrounded by colonnades), though the resemblance is no doubt purely accidental – was much favored during the 18th Dynasty, in the reigns of Tuthmosis III and his successors. The rectangular cella (sanctuary) which contained the sacred barque with the image of the god stands on a masonry base topped by a cavetto cornice and approached by a flight of steps. It has doorways at each end and is surrounded on all four sides by a colonnade of square pillars (or frequently Proto-Doric columns) linked by stone screens. Occasionally there may be a number of smaller subsidiary chambers to the rear of the main structure, also serving some cult function. Examples of this peripteral type of temple are the small temples of Tuthmosis III at Karnak and Medinet Habu, the southern temple from Buhen (now re-erected at Khartoum) and a Temple of Amenophis III on the island of Elephantine of which no trace now remains. Later this type went out of fashion but,

curiously enough, was revived in the Ptolemaic period, with modifications, in the form of the *birth-houses (mammisi)* dedicated to the maternal goddess (Isis, Hathor) and her child which stood beside the main temple at Dendera, Edfu, Philae and other sites. In these the sanctuaries were also surrounded by colonnades, though now the roofs were supported on the curious sistrum columns topped by Hathor heads or figures of the god Bes.

The second basic type of Egyptian temple is best illustrated by the small temples built by Ramesses III at Karnak in honor of Khons and Mut. The entrance is formed by a pylon, two massive masonry towers flanking the gateway. Their walls, slightly inclined and framed by torus mouldings, afford ample space for reliefs. The imposing effect of the towers was still further enhanced by the obelisks and colossal statues which stood in front of them (features introduced in the Middle Kingdom) and the tall flagstaffs set in grooves on the façade and secured by huge clamps. The gateway leads into a spacious open court, flanked on right and left by colonnades. In the center of this court stood the great altar, round which the people assembled on festival occasions. To the rear of the court is the temple proper, standing on a terrace of moderate height topped by a cavetto cornice and approached by one or more flights of steps. The temple is entered through a vestibule or pronaos, the roof of which is borne on columns. The columns in the front row are linked by stone screens, shutting off the temple from the court. Beyond the vestibule is a hypostyle hall occupying the whole breadth of the



Mammisi (birth-house), Dendera

building. In the larger temples of the 19th and later dynasties (e.g. the Ramesseum and the Temple of Khons at Karnak) this is in the form of a multi-aisled basilica, the three central aisles being considerably higher than the lateral aisles. The roof of the central aisles is borne on four rows of columns – tall papyrus columns with open capitals in the two inner rows, lower columns with closed capitals in the outer rows. The difference in height between the inner and outer columns is made up by square pillars resting on the lower columns, with windows in the walls between the pillars. Beyond the hypostyle hall is a relatively narrow and deep chamber, the sanctuary containing the statue of the god, usually in a sacred barque, which was carried in procession by the priests. Only the king or his representative, the high priest, might enter the sanctuary and “look upon the god”. If the temple was dedicated to a triad of deities (like Ramesses III’s Temple at Karnak) the sanctuary of the principal god (Amun) was flanked by the chapels of the other two (Mut and Khons). Around the sanctuary were various other chambers of different sizes, serving some ritual purpose or for the storage of liturgical vessels and utensils; and staircases led up to the roof and a variety of other rooms used either for the accommodation of temple guards and attendants or for the performance of particular ceremonies.

This type of temple, which is found in most of the larger temples of the New Kingdom and continued into the Ptolemaic period, closely corresponds to the layout of the early Egyptian house or palace as described above. The open courtyard of the house, accessible to every visitor, is represented by the great temple court; the portico of the house by the pronaos of the temple; the broad hall of the house by the hypostyle hall of the temple; and the deep hall beyond this in which the master of the house spent his time by the sanctuary which was the residence of the god. And just as the main apartments of the house were surrounded by other rooms serving a variety of purposes, so the temple sanctuary had around it a range of subsidiary chambers, store-rooms, etc. Thus the temple was literally, as the Egyptians called it, the “house of the god”.

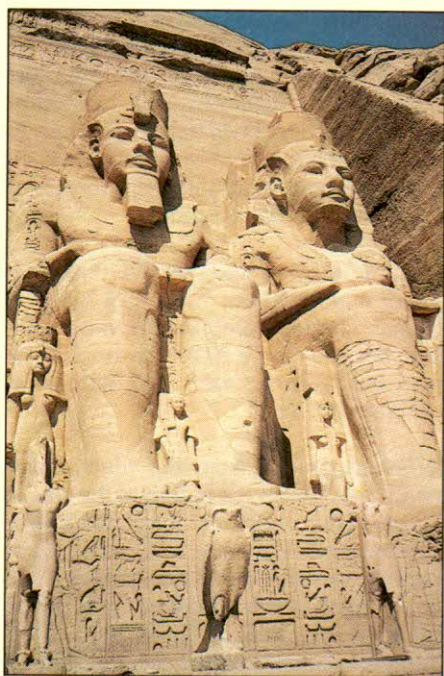
In many temples the hypostyle hall is separated from the sanctuary by one or

more smaller chambers (with or without columns) which steadily diminish in height. Beyond the sanctuary there are often other chambers; and not infrequently the hypostyle hall is preceded by two colonnaded courts instead of one. It is usually difficult to establish the purpose of the various additional rooms.

If some temples, such as the Temple of Luxor and the Great Temple of Amun at Karnak, show a more complex form, this is because they were not built to a unified plan but were the work of a number of different builders.

Other deviations from the normal plan might result from the nature of the site. In Lower Nubia the sandstone cliffs come so close to the Nile that the temples had to be partly or wholly hewn from the rock. Thus in the Gerf Husein Temple, now unfortunately engulfed by Lake Nasser, the court was constructed of masonry and the hypostyle hall and sanctuary hewn from the rock, while the larger temple at Abu Simbel, including the pylon and the colossal figures, was entirely rock-cut. At Abydos the part of the temple containing the slaughter-court and various subsidiary chambers was set at right angles to the main structure, giving the temple as a whole an L-shaped plan.

Although there are remains of many small *temples of the Libyan and Late Periods*, practically nothing has survived of the large temples of these periods, apart from the Temple of Hibis (Kharga Oasis), built during the period of Persian rule. Almost all the kings resided in the Delta (Bubastis, Sais) and accordingly built most of their temples in the north, where the material used was limestone. In medieval and modern times the masonry of the temples found its way into limekilns or, since building stone was scarce in the Delta, was reused in later structures, usually leaving behind only the more refractory blocks of granite. It was only in Ptolemaic times that attention was again turned to the south and many large temples were built, usually on the site of ruined temples of earlier periods. All these temples are built on a standard plan, little different from that of earlier temples (cf. the Ramesseum and the Temple of Edfu). Only two significant changes appear in most of the temples: the hypostyle hall is no longer basilican in form, with higher central aisles, but is a large hall of uniform



Colossal figures of Ramesses II, Abu Simbel

height, and the sanctuary is surrounded on three sides by corridors with smaller chambers opening off them. This latter innovation, first attested in the Temple of Khons at Karnak, gives the temple a central chapel enclosed on all sides. Earlier temples were frequently altered to conform with this new plan and provided with a special chamber for the sacred barque (as in the temples of Luxor and Karnak). Among the smaller chambers which were also common in this period mention may be made of the small sacrificial court or offering-court and the elegant kiosk adjoining it to be seen at Edfu – features which also occur, however, in some earlier temples.

From the earliest times all flat surfaces in temples – on pylons, interior walls, column shafts and ceilings – were adorned with reliefs and inscriptions. The reliefs on the outer walls, the pylons and the walls of the courts – i.e. those parts of the temple that were exposed to public view – were mostly devoted to glorifying the king's exploits and the great events of his reign, such as military campaigns, great festivals, etc., with the object of constantly keeping the power and splendor of the Pharaoh before the eyes of his people. Elsewhere in the temple the reliefs depict the various rituals and sacred ceremonies that took place there. The king, who according to Egyptian religious

theory was the only mortal who might have commerce with the gods, appears again and again, offering gifts and homage to the deities and receiving earthly blessings from them. In the later period, particularly under the Ptolemies, the secular scenes on the outer walls and on the walls of the court give place to religious scenes: the battle scenes and triumphal processions are superseded by offering scenes and sacred ceremonies, depicted at tedious length. Only the pylons still present the traditional figures of the king smiting his enemies in the presence of the god.

Moreover to the Egyptians the temple, like any architectural structure (a house, a tomb), was a small-scale image of the world. The roof corresponded to the sky, and was accordingly adorned with stars painted on a blue ground, while over the central aisle hovered vultures, protecting the king as he passed along below. Not infrequently, particularly in the temples of the Ptolemaic period, the ceiling is covered with astronomical representations – the gods and spirits of the months and the days, the planets, various constellations and the sky goddess herself, with the solar barque sailing over her body. The floor of the temple corresponded to the earth, and here (i.e. along the base of the walls) were depicted flowers blooming and long processions of representatives of the nomes and provinces, the river and the canals, bringing their produce as offerings to the deities of the temple. And since Egypt was traditionally regarded as consisting of two parts, the South and the North, the world as represented in the temple was similarly divided into a southern and a northern half. On one side are seen the representatives of the South, on the other the representatives of the North; and this division is frequently carried into the representations of religious ceremonies. The whole temple was surrounded by a massive brick wall, the gateway in which (usually the pylon) was approached by an avenue of sphinxes or, as at Thebes, of reclining rams. Within the walls were dwellings for the priests, store-rooms, stalls for animals, etc., so that the temple itself, like a mosque of the present day, stood in the midst of a large complex of buildings.

In view of the high value of cultivable land in Egypt the **tombs** of the ancient

Egyptians were from the earliest times constructed not in the alluvial soil of the valley but on the higher ground on the edge of the desert, which had the additional advantage of being out of reach of the Nile inundation and, therefore, better adapted for the preservation of the dead. The tomb always had a double function: it was a safe resting-place for the dead, and it was a place where the living might assemble on certain days and bring their gifts to the dead. It thus consisted of two parts, an underground burial chamber and a cult chamber above ground.

The earliest tombs were mere pits in which the bodies were laid, often walled with bricks and covered with wooden beams. Larger graves were divided into separate chambers by partition walls. The grave was covered with a pile of stones or a mound built up from bricks of Nile mud, on the east side of which a stela or grave-stone was set up; and in front of the stela was a small court in which the mourners could assemble and deposit their offerings. From this early form of tomb developed the *mastabas* in which the dignitaries of the Old Kingdom were buried. These consist of a rectangular superstructure of bricks or limestone blocks with sloping sides, with a perpendicular shaft (10–100 ft/3–30 m in depth) or a staircase leading down to the burial chamber containing the body, often in a wooden or stone coffin. On the east side of the superstructure was a small court (now usually destroyed) with a shallow recess, the “false door”, which was thought of as the entrance to the tomb and to the realm of the dead. Here the relatives of the dead man laid their offerings of food and drink and other gifts on the flat offering-table or recited their prayers for his welfare. From the end of the 3rd Dynasty a chapel was often built in front of the false door, or a cult chamber was constructed within the mastaba and the false door set on its west wall. The 5th Dynasty enlarged the inner chamber and added further rooms.

The dimensions which might be reached by these tombs can best be seen in the Mastaba of Mereruka at Saqqara, which, like any large house of the period, has a series of apartments for the dead man, another suite (the harem) for his wife and a third, to the rear, for his son, together with various store-rooms. The interior walls were adorned with inscriptions and reliefs representing the dead man enjoy-

ing his favorite recreations (hunting, fishing), the various activities on his estates, his craftsmen at work, and so on. The object of these scenes was to ensure that all the various activities and objects depicted would be available to him in the afterlife. The dead man and the members of his family were represented by statues set up in one or more special chambers, the *serdabs* (“cellars”), generally built in the thickness of the walls but occasionally separate structures, with a small aperture to admit light and air. Most of the statues now to be seen in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo came from serdabs.

Just as the streets of a town were laid out around the royal palace, so the mastabas of high dignitaries were set in rows around the king's tomb. In the earliest period this was also a large mastaba containing within the structure or underneath it chambers for the king's body, those of his relatives and the various grave-goods. Later the royal mastaba was enlarged by increasing its height and surrounding it with a series of outer casings, each lower than the one before, to produce a *stepped mastaba* or *step pyramid*, like the Step Pyramid of Saqqara or the Pyramid of Meidum. The true pyramid with a plane surface evolved from the stepped mastaba at the beginning of the 4th Dynasty and thereafter remained in use for royal tombs until the beginning of the 18th Dynasty.

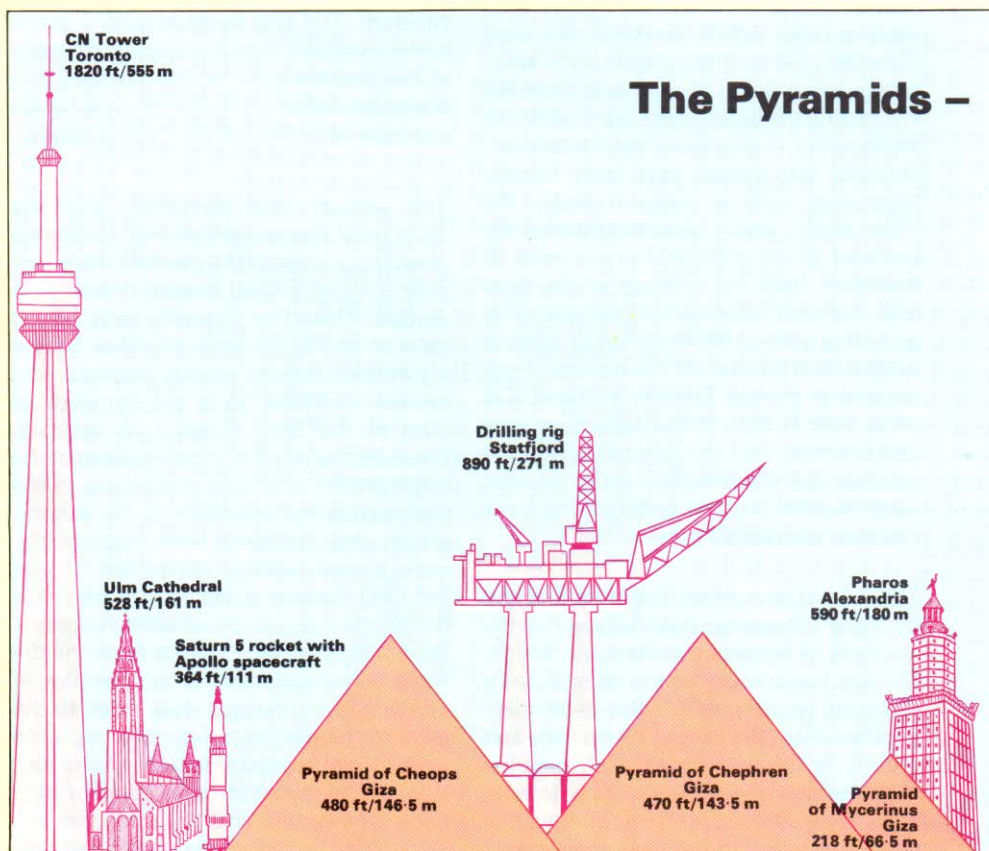
The earliest true **pyramid** was the Pyramid of Sneferu at Dahshur. Under the great stone mass of the pyramid there was only a sloping shaft leading down to a corridor, closed by portcullis slabs, which gave access to the tomb chamber. Where a pyramid contains several passages and several chambers, as in the Pyramids of Giza or the Step Pyramid of Saqqara, these are the result of modifications of the original plan or of later alterations. In the early period the chambers in the interior, which after the burial were inaccessible, were almost without decoration; it was not until the end of the 5th Dynasty that the practice began of inscribing religious texts (the so-called Pyramid Texts) on the walls. – The recess or the cult chamber in which votive offerings were made to the dead in the mastabas was now replaced by a special *mortuary temple* on the east side of the pyramid, consisting of two parts, one public and the other private. The central feature of the public part was

a large open court surrounded by colonnades, off which opened five chambers for statues of the dead king, while the principal chamber in the private part was the sanctuary with the false door. The mortuary temple on the edge of the desert plateau had its counterpart in a *valley temple*, a monumental gateway on a riverside quay which was connected with the upper temple by a long covered causeway.

While the walls of the pyramid temples of the 3rd and 4th Dynasties were left bare, those of the Abusir temples frequently have reliefs, many of them of the same types as are found in the temples of the gods (the king as a griffin triumphing over foreign foes, booty captured from the enemy, military campaigns, etc.). The best-preserved mortuary temples of the Old Kingdom are Djoser's Temple beside the Step Pyramid of Saqqara, the temples of Chephren and Mycerinus at Giza and those of Sahure, Neferirkare and Niuserre at Abusir. The Middle Kingdom is represented by the mortuary temples associated with the pyramids of Lisht, Dahshur, El-Lahun and Hawara. Most

of them are badly ruined, such as Amenemhet III's Temple (the Labyrinth), while others have not been adequately excavated; the best preserved is the Mortuary Temple of Mentuhotep II (11th Dynasty) at Deir el-Bahri, though this, with its unusual terraced layout, can hardly be regarded as typical. In a much later period the pyramid as a form of royal tomb was revived by the kings of Napata and Meroe. — A type of structure which has so far remained unique is the Festival Temple within the precinct of Djoser's Step Pyramid at Saqqara, probably built on the occasion of the King's 30th Jubilee. The hypostyle hall of this temple is the earliest known example of a basilican hall with a higher central aisle.

From the end of the Old Kingdom many high dignitaries and officials preferred to be buried in their home area rather than at the foot of the king's pyramid. These provincial tombs, like the tombs within the royal funerary precinct, were built on the edge of the desert and took the form of small mastabas or small brick pyramids on a square or rectangular base. The burial chamber was either within the masonry or

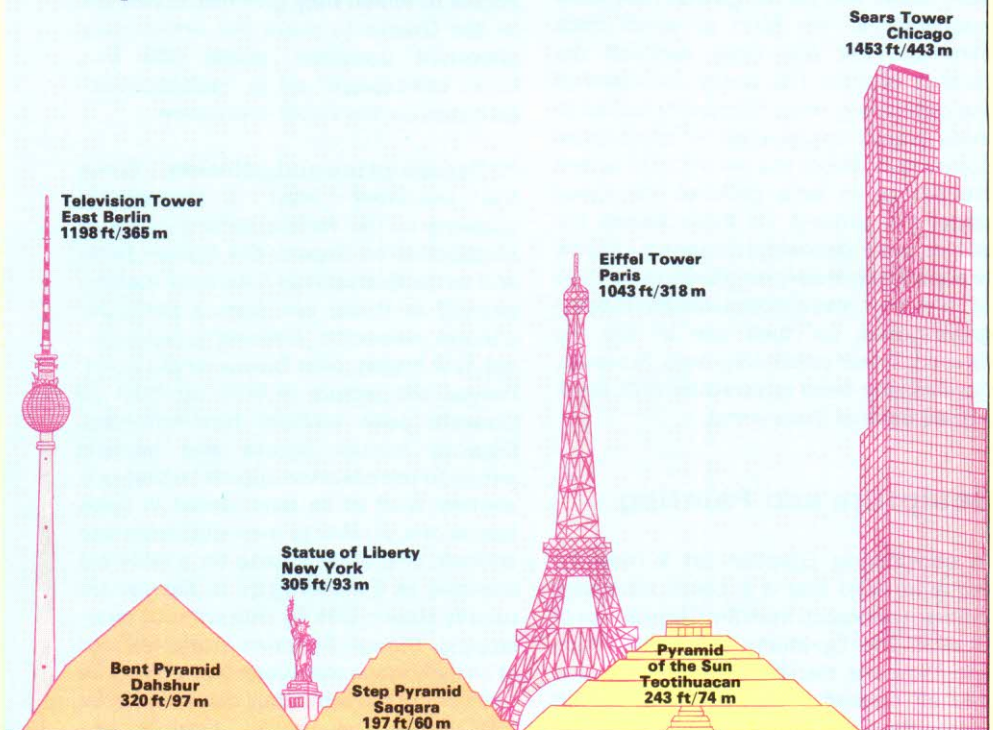


in the underlying rock. Outside the tomb was set a gravestone in the form of a false door or a round-topped stela, in front of which the dead man's relatives recited their prayers or made their offerings. Frequently, too, the tombs were hewn from the rock on the slopes of the desert hills. The simpler tombs consisted of a single chamber with a "false door" recess, but in larger tombs chambers were cut in the rock in imitation of those in a mastaba. Usually, however, the layout was based on the conception of the tomb as the dead man's house, with the four principal elements of an ancient Egyptian dwelling-house – the open courtyard, the portico or vestibule, the broad hypostyle hall and the deep and narrow dining-room. The tombs thus consisted of an open forecourt, usually surrounded by a brick wall, a small rock-cut vestibule with two columns or pillars, a larger chamber with columns or pillars and beyond this a small chamber or recess which contained a statue of the dead man and frequently of his wife as well, also carved from the living rock, and corresponded to the serdab of the earlier mastabas. – The best examples of this type are the rock tombs of Beni Hasan and

Aswan. The walls of the chambers are covered with inscriptions and reliefs, more varied in subject than those in earlier tombs but, like them, designed to enable the dead man to enjoy the activities and objects depicted. From the first chamber a shaft runs down through the rock to the undecorated tomb chamber.

The tombs of the New Kingdom are similar in form to those of the Old and Middle Kingdoms, and during this period, too, there are both free-standing tombs (mastabas and pyramids) and rock tombs, depending on the nature of the terrain. Of the free-standing tombs, however, few remains survive. From the beginning of the 18th Dynasty the kings ceased to build pyramids as their last resting-place and had their tombs hewn from the rock in a secluded valley on the west bank of the Nile opposite Thebes. These *royal tombs of the New Kingdom* consisted of long corridors and chambers adorned with religious scenes and inscriptions. Like the chambers and corridors of the pyramids, they were designed to house the sarcophagus and the grave-furnishings, with the living rock here replacing the

Comparisons of Size



huge masonry superstructure of the pyramid; but since there was no room for mortuary temples in the rugged desert valley these were built, usually on a large scale, in the plain below, where their remains can still be seen.

Just as the dignitaries of the Middle Kingdom frequently imitated the pyramids of their kings in constructing their own tombs, so the grandees of the Late Period, at least in Thebes, took as their model the rock-hewn tombs of the Pharaohs. The tombs, which can be seen in the Theban cemetery of El-Asasif, show a complex pattern of passages and chambers exclusively adorned with religious scenes and texts. – Of the royal tombs of the last native dynasties, constructed around the great capitals in the Delta, only those of Tanis (near the village of San el-Hagar) have so far been located and properly investigated. They imitate the form of the earlier rock tombs in the looser soil of the Delta and have a massive stone casing, the material for which had to be brought from a considerable distance away.

The tombs of the humbler classes of the population must have been much more numerous than those of the dignitaries and officials, but apart from the pits which contained the bodies and a few grave-stones they have left no traces. We know from reliefs and paintings that they were frequently in the form of small brick pyramids, but few have survived the ravages of time. The poorer members of the population were frequently buried in mass graves constructed by speculative contractors within the precincts of ruined temples or in long galleries excavated under the ground. In these tombs the bodies were deposited in simple coffins, or sometimes merely on planks or on mats of palm fiber, and accompanied by modest grave-goods for their use in the life beyond. These common graves, however, have mostly been covered by drift sand, and all trace of them is lost.

Sculpture and Painting

In considering Egyptian art it must be borne in mind that it is based on a very different approach from the Classical art of Greece. The Egyptians, the Babylonians and Assyrians, the Hittites and the Cretans had all created their own styles of art before the Greeks; and one characteristic



Relief in the Mastaba of Ti, Saqqara

they shared with primitive peoples and with children was that they did not reproduce the external world merely as the eyes saw it but as the human mind conceived it. In one notable respect they departed from the visual impression of a subject: neither in painting nor in sculpture did they go in for oblique views, with the foreshortenings and distortions of angles to which they give rise. It was left to the Greeks to make the enormously important transition, about 500 B.C., from "conceptual" art to "perspectivist" art based on the visual impression

Relief sculpture and painting. – Since the pre-Greek artist is completely unaware of the foreshortening effect of perspective he depicts the human body and its various parts as if he were looking straight at them, not from a particular oblique viewpoint. Nothing is represented as if it were seen from a single point: instead the picture is built up from its separate parts without foreshortening. Objects, human figures and animals which to the observer appear behind one another tend to be represented in rows beside one another or over and under one another, and objects lying on a table are depicted as if standing on it. Figures are usually shown side by side without overlapping, though Egyptian artists realized at an early stage that when two objects lie one behind the other they cannot both be fully visible. The principal figure in any

scene is depicted on a larger scale than the other figures: thus in a battle scene the king, shown dashing against the enemy in his chariot, will be considerably larger than the other persons involved in the scene.

The central element in Egyptian representational art is the human figure, which is built up from its separate parts as seen from various different viewpoints. The head is shown in profile, while the eye is depicted frontally. The shoulders are represented in their full breadth as seen from the front, without foreshortening, but the breast, abdomen, legs and feet are seen from the side. Alongside this basic form, of which the Relief of Hesire is a striking example, there gradually developed a type of representation in profile, which occasionally appears during the 5th Dynasty but is practiced with complete confidence in the second half of the 18th Dynasty. Egyptian draftsmanship then reached its peak of achievement, never thereafter surpassed. The finest examples of the work of this period are to be seen at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna and Tell el-Amarna. – Since animals were depicted almost wholly in profile, the different Egyptian approach to the representation of nature can usually be observed only in small subsidiary details.

Egyptian art had at its disposal from an early period a range of subjects which were treated again and again, though some modifications were gradually introduced. In the course of the centuries, however, new themes were introduced. Thus the art of the Old Kingdom depicts many scenes of life on large landed estates, often showing an astonishing freshness and a delicate observation of nature. Under the 5th Dynasty the repertoire is increased by the military scenes depicted in the mortuary temples, while in the Middle Kingdom there are scenes depicting life at the courts of the provincial princes and some new funerary scenes. The great increase in the range of subject-matter, however, comes under the 18th Dynasty, when Egypt had become a World Power as a result of its political relationships with western Asia and the artists' horizons had become increasingly wider. During the reign of Amenophis IV/ Akhenaten even the intimate life of the royal family and the Court, which no one would previously have ventured to represent, came for a time within the field

of art. Under the 19th Dynasty and during the reign of Ramesses III artists were called on to celebrate the military exploits of the kings and depict great battle scenes. The beginnings of this trend can already be observed under the 18th Dynasty (reliefs on Tuthmosis IV's chariot in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo). At the end of the New Kingdom the range of subject-matter shrank again until it was more restricted than under the Old Kingdom. In scenes of the kind just referred to the artists had scope for invention, but in depicting ceremonial scenes – the king's commerce with the gods (praying, making offerings), the celebration of festivals, the slaughter of animals for sacrifice, etc. – they had to adhere more or less rigidly to established models.

The Egyptian artists practiced both *low relief* (*bas-relief*) and *sunk relief* (*relief en creux*). Low relief, the earliest and at all periods the commonest type of relief carving, was carried to a high pitch of refinement. Sunk relief, a form peculiar to Egypt in which the design is sunk below the surface of the stone, first appeared in the 4th Dynasty and always served as a cheaper substitute for bas-relief work; but the artists of the New Kingdom were able to achieve very attractive effects by skillful use of its particular characteristics. The heyday of the Egyptian relief was during the 5th Dynasty, and the technical and artistic achievement of this period is seen at its best in the mastabas of Ti and Ptah-hotep at Saqqara and the mortuary temples of the 5th Dynasty kings. Under the 6th Dynasty and the Middle Kingdom the quality of execution declined, and the earlier standard was not approached again until the 18th Dynasty (e.g. in the temples of Luxor and Deir el-Bahri and some tombs at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna). Thereafter the decline continued, though a few graceful and attractive reliefs were produced in the reign of Sethos I (e.g. in the temples of Qurna and at Abydos). In the reign of Ramesses II the excessive demands on artistic resource for the decoration of the many temples of the period led to the production of much coarse and skimmed work, and the quality fell still further in the reign of Merneptah.

The artists of the Saite period also took the reliefs of the Old Kingdom as their models, though their imitative work could not achieve the standard of the earlier masters. Nevertheless the reliefs of this

period offer considerable attraction with their exact and delicate execution, their elegance and their pleasing smoothness of form. – The art of the Ptolemaic period at first followed the manner of the Saite artists, but then gradually declined in standard. The subtle feeling for the right proportion between decorated and undecorated surfaces was now lost, and the temple walls were covered indiscriminately with row after row of reliefs. The figures of both men and gods became heavy and shapeless, so that their features and limbs have a swollen appearance. It is unfortunately the reliefs of this Late Period that occur most frequently and most prominently in Upper Egypt and have thus contributed to giving Egyptian relief art a much lower reputation than it deserves.

All the reliefs were originally painted, but many of them have lost their coloring. Where relief decoration is replaced by painting on a flat surface, either because of the lesser cost or on account of the poor quality of the stone (e.g. in the 18th Dynasty tombs at Abd el-Qurna) the paintings follow the same stylistic principles as the reliefs.

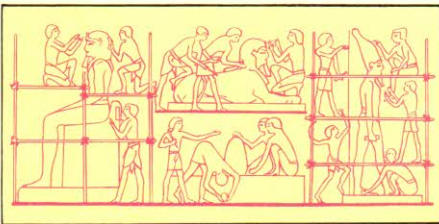
Sculpture in the round. – The pre-Greek approach – very different from our own – to the reproduction of nature is reflected also in Egyptian sculpture in the round, particularly the statues of men and animals, and produces a marked departure from the visual impression. In contrast to Greek sculpture with its freedom and variety of viewpoint, Egyptian statues are presented frontally. The trunk faces squarely forward, with both shoulders in the same plane, and if the head is turned at all it is turned at a right angle, while the limbs lie in a plane at right angles to the trunk. Departures from this strict frontality are very occasionally found, just as occasional examples of foreshortening occur in Egyptian reliefs. – Persons invested with particular dignity are represented

standing or seated in a chair in an attitude of repose, or sometimes seated on the ground with their legs folded under them, and are frequently shown in family groups. There is greater freedom in the statues of servants and attendants, depicted engaging in their workaday activities, which were deposited in the tomb with the dead man.

Even in the earliest period of Egyptian history we find primitive figures of men and animals, usually carved from bone or ivory. The animal figures in particular display a high degree of technical skill. The statues of the late 2nd Dynasty and *Early Old Kingdom* already show all the qualities of Egyptian sculpture, having lost their earlier primitive character, though they still have a certain stiffness, frequently attributable to the refractory nature of the material (granite, metamorphic schist, occasionally limestone). They are mostly seated figures of medium size and squat build, with the right hand resting on the breast, the left hand on the thigh. Where they bear inscriptions these are usually in relief. Even these early works of sculpture, however (among the best of which are the statues of Kings Khasekhem and Djoser), already show an attempt to depict the features in as accurate a likeness as possible.

The art of statuary reached a high point under the 4th and 5th Dynasties. The works of this period, to be seen in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, are mostly in limestone or wood. The main stress is laid on a faithful representation of the face, while the rest of the body, in particular the hands and feet, is conventionally represented. The effect is frequently enhanced by the insertion of eyes of black and white quartz, with wooden or copper studs to represent the pupil.

After a period of decline the sculpture of the *Middle Kingdom* rose to a fresh peak of achievement. Among the masterpieces of this period are the fine figure of Amenemhet III in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and the statues and sphinxes which were formerly attributed to the Hyksos but probably represent Amenemhet III and other rulers of the late 12th Dynasty. They are notable for their profoundly spiritual expression and deep seriousness. This period also produced work of much inferior quality, such as the conventional



Sculptors at work (from an Egyptian relief)



statues of Sesostris I from Lisht, with their vacant faces.

The statues of the *New Kingdom* (mostly designed to serve decorative purposes), which have come down to us in relatively large numbers, are very different from those of the Middle Kingdom. The rather melancholy seriousness of the earlier period now gives place to a tranquil and attractive serenity. Among the magnificent likenesses produced in this period, comparable with the finest achievements of the past, are the statue of Tuthmosis III, the portrait heads of Queen Nefertiti, the busts of a married couple, the head of King Horemheb (?), the statue of the god Khons and the head of the goddess Mut in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and a number of works to be seen in European museums. In many cases the sculptors have abandoned portrait-like accuracy in favor of an ideal beauty, devoting much attention to the treatment of the flowing garments then fashionable, the coiffure and the ornaments and jewelry. A number of new types were created during this period, such as the figure of a man squatting on the ground clad in a voluminous cloak.



Gilded statue from Tutankhamun's Tomb

From the 20th Dynasty onwards the standard of sculpture showed a steady decline until the period of Ethiopian rule, when it enjoyed a revival based on models of the Old and Middle Kingdoms and occasionally also of the New Kingdom. This late flowering has been called the "Egyptian Renaissance". Much of the work of this period is so close to its models that it is sometimes difficult, even for a practiced eye, to distinguish between the earlier and the later work. During the Ethiopian period (c. 675 B.C.) there also developed a school of sculpture which went beyond mere imitation and sought to pour new wine into old bottles by striving for an exact likeness, producing such masterpieces as the head of an elderly man of Negroid type and the statue of Mentemhet, Governor of Upper Egypt under the Ethiopian ruler Taharqa. The same school produced – perhaps several centuries later – a number of fine portraits of bald-headed priests, in which subsidiary details are ignored and characteristic features (e.g. the form of the skull) reproduced with masterly skill.

These works, striving for truth to nature and then again strictly stylized, show no

trace of Greek influence, but from the Ptolemaic period onwards Egyptian sculpture became increasingly subject to the influence of Greek art. Side by side with purely Greek works (chiefly in Alexandria) and with purely Egyptian works clinging mechanically to the older style we find a curious *hybrid Graeco-Egyptian style* in which a Greek figure is depicted with Egyptian garments, hair-style and ornaments, or conversely (e.g. in the Tomb of Petosiris) the figure is of Egyptian type but the clothing is Greek. These figures are valuable for the light they throw on Egyptian culture in the Late Period, but artistically they are unsatisfying.

Much work of notable quality was produced in the field of the **applied arts**, particularly cabinet-making, glass-blowing and the production of colored faience. The finest achievements, however, were produced by the goldsmiths and metalworkers, who had attained complete mastery of their materials, practicing the techniques of enameling, damascening, etc., with consummate skill, and giving their products (especially with the aid of colored gemstones and faience inlays) a charm and brilliance which reflects the high cultural level achieved by Egyptian society.

Given the different Egyptian approach to the representation of nature, it is not always easy for people of the present day to understand and appreciate Egyptian

art. The best method of getting to know it is to study the statues and reliefs in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and the reliefs on the walls of the mastabas, rock tombs and temples, particularly the temples of Deir el-Bahri and Luxor and the Temple of Sethos I at Abydos. Genuine works of art are, it is true, relatively thin on the ground in Egypt, and amid the great mass of work that has been preserved it may sometimes be difficult for the non-expert to distinguish between work of real quality and mere journeyman work. To the latter category belong some of the most striking and prominent colossal statues, sphinxes and temple reliefs, which with few exceptions served a purely decorative function.

The Egyptian imagination, more than that of any other people, was closely tied to natural things, only occasionally evolving original concepts. It does, however, display a genuine understanding of nature and a delight in its details. At the same time it shows a trend, which may at first sight tend to put the outside observer off, towards geometrical forms and an urge towards the monumental, not only in works of gigantic size but also in its smallest products. But even those who find it difficult to appreciate the real beauty of Egyptian art cannot fail to be impressed by the supreme craftsmanship and technical mastery which still commands our admiration.

Islamic Architecture

Islamic art in Egypt begins in the 8th–9th centuries with the Nilometer and the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo; but in order to understand these two monuments it is necessary to know something of the early history of Islam.

In the time of Mohammed the Arabs had nothing that could properly be called architecture. The house which he built in Medina after his flight from Mecca consisted of a large courtyard 180 ft/55 m square enclosed by 10 ft/3 m high walls, the lower part of which was built of undressed stone without mortar, the upper part of mud bricks. This court, which later became a place of prayer, was at first quite open, but later it was covered with a roof of palm leaves and daub supported on palm-trunks to give protection from the burning sun. At the south-east corner of the courtyard, outside the wall, were the huts occupied by Mohammed's wives

Sauda and Aisha, also constructed of palm leaves and daub. As Mohammed acquired other wives additional huts were built, all opening into the courtyard. There were no lamps: the evening prayers took place by the light of a fire of palm leaves.

At first the community turned when praying towards Jerusalem, under the influence of the Jews who then enjoyed great influence in Medina and had provided Mohammed with many of his religious and political conceptions. But after failing, in 18 months of discussion, to reach an understanding with them he finally broke with the Jews. The first external sign of the break was the change in the direction of prayer (the *qibla*): from January 10, 624 the faithful were required when praying to face not towards Jerusalem but towards the Kaaba in Mecca.

After Mohammed's death in 632 a period of great military campaigns began. The Arab armies fighting for the new faith fanned out from their peninsula, advancing north-west into Syria, where they came into contact with Syro-Byzantine civilization, and north-east towards Mesopotamia and Persia, where they encountered the civilization of the Sassanid Empire. The Arab advances in these directions had great influence on the development of Islamic architecture, as was to be demonstrated in the second half of the 7th century. – The bedouin from the interior of eastern Arabia who formed the bulk of the Islamic armies knew Mohammed and the Koran only by name and saw the campaigns as a means of winning booty rather than propagating the faith. They were not interested in art or architecture and, as nomads, disliked living in towns. When, after two generations or so, they began to adopt a settled way of life and felt a need for permanent houses they turned in Mesopotamia to Sassanid and in Syria to Byzantine architects. The semicircular prayer-niche, the pulpit and the screened-off area in a mosque for the Caliph or the provincial governor (*maqsura*), which first appeared at the turn of the 7th and 8th centuries, were all of non-Islamic origin.

In Syria the earliest mosques were mostly converted churches: the west doorways were built up, new entrances were constructed on the north side and the south wall gave the direction of prayer, towards

Mecca. Hence the marked preference in Syria for a sanctuary with two rows of columns (the old three-aisled basilica). – In Mesopotamia, where the principal Arab settlements were the new foundations of Kufa and Basra, a different type of mosque developed. At Basra the arrangement was very simple: an area was marked out, and within this the faithful prayed in the open. At Kufa a site for the mosque was selected, and from this spot a man fired four arrows – one to the south in the direction of the *qibla* and others to the north, east and west. The area to be occupied by the mosque was thus marked out at a square measuring two bowshots each way. Within this area, which was surrounded by a ditch, the only structure was a hypostyle hall open on all sides (*zulla*) on the south side of the enclosure, constructed with columns from the ruins of Hira. Adjoining the precinct on the south was the residence of the military commander. The type of mosque thus created in 638 remained in use for several centuries.

A far-reaching influence on the development of Islam was the fall of the Omayyads, the only genuinely Arab dynasty, in 750 and the rise of the Abbasids, who moved the seat of government to El-Mansur's new foundation of Baghdad. This change had a similar effect on Islam to the effect on the Roman Empire of the transfer of the capital from Rome to Constantinople: in both cases the center of gravity was moved eastward. The Syrian and Byzantine influence on Islamic art and architecture was now reduced and the influence of Sassanid Persia and Central Asia greatly increased. The first large mosque built in Baghdad appears to have occupied an area 395 ft/120 m square, with a court (*sahn*) in the middle and a flat-roofed sanctuary which had a hall with five rows of columns on the *qibla* side and halls with two rows of columns on the other sides. From 836 to 889 the seat of the Caliphate was in the great city of Samarra, some 60 miles/100 km farther up the Tigris, where excavation of the extensive remains has brought to light fragments of stucco ornament and (in the Caliph's palace) pointed arches.

The architecture of Egypt remained backward, since as a conquered province it was exploited over a period of two centuries by a succession of rapacious governors, few of whom remained longer than three years in office. The architecture

of the Omayyad period is, therefore, not represented in Egypt. The situation changed, however, when Ahmed ibn Tulun made himself independent ruler of Egypt. A native of Samarra, he brought with him its architectural traditions. His mosque in Cairo, with a ground-plan similar to the Baghdad mosque and ornament in the style of Samarra, is an alien Mesopotamian creation on Egyptian soil. The story that it was designed by a Christian architect was no doubt invented to explain the use of pillars in place of the columns which had previously been normal. All the basic types of ornament found in Samarra reappear here, together with the earliest examples of geometric ornament in Islamic art (the lower parts of the arches on the south-west side of the court). The whole structure is built in brick, with slightly stilted pointed arches.

The *Fatimid period* (969–1171) began with the conquest of Egypt by Gohar, General of the Fatimid Caliph El-Muizz, in 969. That year saw the foundation of Cairo (El-Qahira), to the north of the earlier settlement of Fustat and Ibn Tulun's foundation of El-Qatai. The new town originally consisted of a fortified area some 1200 yds/1100 m square, with two palaces for the Caliph (a larger one to the east and a smaller one in the west), Government buildings, barracks for the garrison, a treasury, a mint, a library, a mausoleum, an arsenal, etc. Until the fall of the Fatimids (1171) no one might enter the town except members of the garrison and high officials: in this respect Cairo was reminiscent of Peking as laid out by Kublai Khan from 1267 onwards, with its Chinese town, its Tartar town and its Forbidden City. Nothing now remains of the walls or the buildings of the original foundation, though there are a few carved wooden friezes from the smaller Fatimid palace in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo.

In 970–971 Gohar built the El-Azhar Mosque, in which columns rather than pillars were used. In spite of the considerable changes made in later periods it is still possible to make out that the original sanctuary had five aisles and the lateral halls three; the number in the hall on the north side is uncertain. A striking feature is a kind of nave or central aisle which runs from the court (*sahn*) to the prayer-niche (*mihrab*), interrupting the rows of arches. This is the first example of the kind in

Egypt, though it is found in the earlier Great Mosque in Damascus, built by El-Walid in 705–715. This curious feature seems to have been carried west by the last of the Omayyads, Abd el-Rahman (Great Mosque, Córdoba), and it is also found in the Great Mosque of Kairouan (Tunisia), the Fatimid capital, from which it apparently traveled east to Cairo. The two corners at the rear of the sanctuary of the El-Azhar Mosque were probably covered by domes, as in the El-Hakim Mosque built in Cairo between 990 and 1012. The El-Hakim Mosque shows very clearly the foreign influences at work in its design. Its almost square plan, its many doorways, the five aisles (each with 17 arches) of the sanctuary, the pillars and the small relieving arches above them are all Mesopotamian features; the transept and the doorways (now walled up) on the north-east and south-east sides come from Syria. The fortress-like impression created by the two large projections with the minarets is again typically Mesopotamian, found in the mosques of Baghdad and Samarra and in the Great Mosque of Bostam in northern Iran, which according to the account by the Arab geographer El-Muqaddasi (985) stood like a fortress in the center of the market-place.

Within a century Cairo had outgrown Gohar's original circuit of walls, and in 1087–92 it was surrounded with new walls by Badr el-Gamali. Of this circuit there still survive three well-preserved gates – Bab el-Nasr, Bab el-Futuh and Bab Zuwaila – and a 350 yd/300 m stretch of wall reinforced by square towers. Each of these gates is different from the others, since they were the work of different builders, three Armenian refugees from Edessa (Urfa), which a year earlier (1086) had fallen into the hands of the Seljuk Turks. The wall, gates and towers are of particular interest, since they are among the few surviving examples of Islamic military engineering of the period before the Crusades. The Bab el-Nasr has two machicolations (parapets with openings), such as are not found in Europe until the end of the 12th century. The gateways of the Bab el-Futuh and Bab Zuwaila are roofed with shallow domes of freestone borne on pendentives – the earliest example of this form in Egypt. Every feature in the structure of these fortifications, which were influenced by Byzantine practice, can be paralleled in northern Syria.

A characteristic feature of Fatimid architecture is its use of ornament remarkable for the boldness and variety of its design. It consists solely of decorative Arabic script and arabesques of consummate artistry, sometimes within a geometric framework. During this period purely geometric ornament plays an entirely subordinate part, and even the famous interlaced star pattern, which in later periods had ten, twelve or even more points, is found only in its simplest form, the eight-pointed star. In contrast to the Tulunid period, in which Mesopotamian influences had predominated, the art of the Fatimid period shows Syrian influences, which were to become increasingly prominent in the Ayyubid and Early Mameluke periods. The decorative script, on the other hand, shows Persian and northern Mesopotamian influences. A number of characteristic forms, including the intertwining of the stems of letters, is found in these areas a century earlier than in Egypt. It is not possible to reach a firm judgment on this question in view of the scarcity of contemporary examples outside Egypt; and this fact alone enhances the importance of the fine Fatimid buildings which have been preserved in Cairo.

The *Ayyubid period* (1171–1250) began with the erection by Saladin of the Citadel which still dominates Cairo and of much of the present town walls. Unfortunately none of the religious buildings which he erected in Egypt have survived. The towers on Saladin's walls were not square, like those of the Fatimids, but semicircular, measuring some 21 ft/6.5 m across; each has three loopholes for archers, one facing outwards and one on either side. The Citadel walls have a 3 ft/90 cm wide wall-walk running round the inside, but this is lacking on the town walls except on the east side, where there is a short covered passage adjoining each tower.

The most notable innovation in Saladin's fortifications is the right-angled entrance passageway of the gates, so contrived as to hold up any enemy attack. A device of this kind was known in ancient Egypt but was apparently quite unknown in Babylon, Rome, Byzantium and the Early Islamic period. The Bab el-Mudarrag in the Citadel, behind the much later Bab el-Gedid built by Mohammed Ali, is the earliest dated example in the Middle East

(1184). Another example dating from the same period is the Bab el-Qarafa on the opposite side of the Citadel, which was excavated by Creswell in 1923.

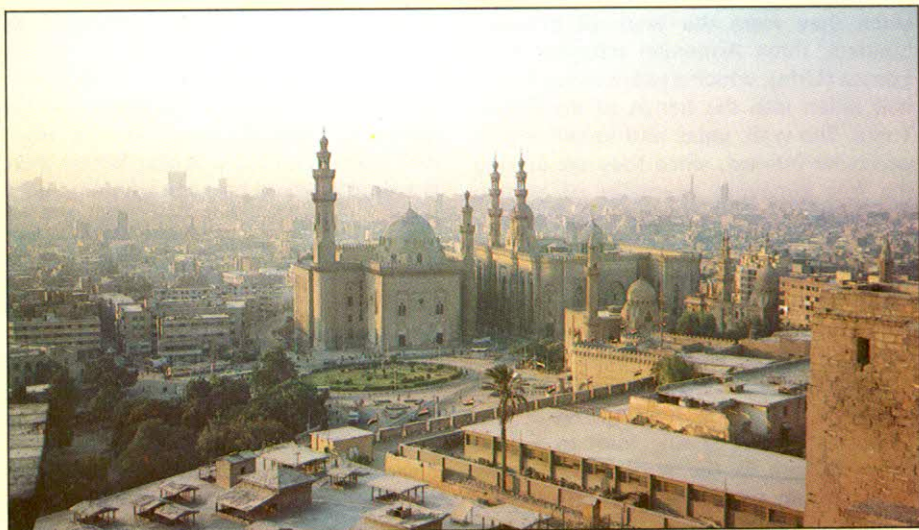
Saladin's brother El-Adil strengthened the Citadel at some points by the erection of large square towers and at other points by making the semicircular towers round and tripling their diameter; examples of this are the two large towers on the Abbasiya side. – Saladin also introduced the *medrese* (theological college) into Egypt, although its characteristic cruciform ground-plan did not appear until almost a century later.

In addition to these works of military and religious architecture the Ayyubid period was notable also for the increased use of freestone, the introduction of marble cladding for prayer-niches (e.g. in the Mosque of Sultan El-Salih Ayyub), a liking for stucco ornament of almost exaggerated elegance, the first use of glass in association with stucco lattices (Tomb of the Abbasid Caliphs) and the first beginnings of the stalactitic pendentive.

The period of the *Bahrite Mamelukes* (1250–1382) saw an important advance in the structure of mosques. The small dome over the space in front of the prayer-niche (found, for example, in the El-Hakim Mosque) now gave place to a large timber dome spanning nine bays (3×3) and dominating the sanctuary: examples can be seen in the mosques of Baibars I

(Abbasiya quarter; 1269), Mohammed el-Nasir (Citadel; 1318–35) and El-Mardani (1340). The practice of having three doorways and the form of the doorways were taken over from Syria during this period; and Baibars I also introduced from Syria the stalactitic doorway which now became a characteristic feature of Egyptian architecture. The largest building of this period was the Sultan Hasan Mosque (1356–63), which is 490 ft/150 m long and 225 ft/68 m across at its widest point and has a total area of almost 86,000 sq. ft/8000 sq. m. Anyone standing at the entrance to its great forecourt and contemplating its imposing dimensions, its rich but restrained decoration, the nobility and simplicity of its lines, the height and breadth of its dome and the richly decorated minarets at its south-west corner must surely agree that the Sultan Hasan Mosque is one of the great architectural achievements of Egypt. Under the following dynasty richer and more elegant buildings were erected, but as an expression of power and majesty this mosque can hardly be equalled.

Among the major innovations of this period was the cruciform ground-plan of the *medrese*. The façade was embellished by the use of banded stonework (*ablaq*), and the stucco ornament reached its fullest development and then gradually disappeared, while the lower parts of the walls now began to be faced with many-colored marble.



Cairo – view from the Citadel of the Sultan Hasan Mosque (on left)

The architecture of the *Circassian Mamelukes* (1391–1517) followed without any break in development. The rich stucco decoration which had fallen out of favor towards the end of the preceding period was not immediately replaced by any other form of ornament. At first the stone was left bare, with marble cladding as the principal decorative feature; then about 1440, when greater skill had been achieved in the working of stone, the decoration of the wall surfaces with elaborate incised or chiseled patterns became a regular feature. This period also carried the stalactitic pendentive to its highest peak of development: the niches were set within a triangular frame, after the Syrian fashion; but, in contrast to the Syrian pendentives, each row was offset from the adjoining rows instead of cutting off the corner in a straight line. The number of rows increased considerably: seven, eight or nine commonly occur, and there may be as many as thirteen. The dome now also reached its finest form: always constructed of stone during this period, they are of incomparable lightness, beauty of line and richness of decoration. A superb example is provided by the Barquq Mosque in the cemetery of the so-called Tombs of the Caliphs. – Towards the end of the period the ground-plan of the mosque underwent a change, giving place to the type of structure previously used only for medreses.

The *Turkish Conquest* (1517) at first brought a sharp fall in building activity. Many craftsmen were sent to Constantinople, and some trades are said to have died out altogether. The architecture of the Turkish period has sometimes been dismissed as of little account; but this is not entirely fair, since it suffered not so much from a decline in artistic achievement as from a reduction in the resources devoted to large building projects. The little mosques of Sidi Sariya in the Citadel, Sinan Pasha in Bulaq and Malika Safiya can be cited in support of this view. The final blow to a distinctively Islamic architecture came later, with the steady increase in European influence, and fortunately this came much later in Egypt than elsewhere. The disastrous effects of this influence, which can be observed in Istanbul in the Nuruosmaniye Mosque, completed about 1753, and in a Baroque fountain of 1798 in Damascus, appear to have reached Egypt only about 1820.

As we have seen, the most important works of Islamic architecture are the **mosques**. These are of two types, the *gami*, the mosque for the communal Friday prayer, and the *masgid*, a place for prayer; to which may be added the *zawiya*, a small chapel. The earliest form of the communal mosque is of Mesopotamian origin (cf. the Ibn Tulun). Around an almost square court (*sahn*) lie four flat-roofed arcaded halls (*riwak*). The main *riwak*, in the direction of Mecca, usually has five (Ibn Tulun, El-Azhar, El-Hakim) or six aisles (Baibars I), the others only two (Ibn Tulun) or three (El-Azhar, El-Hakim and Baibars I).

The religious, dogmatic, ritual, social and moral prescriptions of Islam developed in four main schools, founded by the Imams Abu Hanifa, Malik ibn Anas, El-Shafii and Ahmed ibn Hanbal. To provide instruction in these rites, and also to train the large numbers of officials required for the administration of the Seljuk Empire, the Sultans introduced in the 9th century the institution of the **medrese**, a kind of theological college. There was no hostility between the four schools of Islamic thought, and more than one rite might sometimes be housed in the same building. The first medreses were established by Nur el-Din in Syria, and after the fall of the Fatimid dynasty Saladin introduced them into Egypt in order to combat the Shiite heresy of the Fatimids and ensure the victory of the Sunnite reaction by the establishment of orthodox teaching institutions.

The medreses built in Egypt after the middle of the 13th century took the form of a square central court surrounded by four open halls (*liwan*) forming the arms of a cross. The whole structure occupied a rectangle, at the corners of which were various subsidiary structures including the main doorway, a staircase leading to the roof, teaching halls, cells for the professors, etc. In the earliest examples the liwans had barrel-vaulted roofs; later they had flat timber roofs with a single arcade on the side facing the court. The predominance of this basic form gave rise to the view that the Egyptian medreses were always built to serve all four rites; and the fact that the institution of the medrese had been taken over from Syria was seen as implying that the cruciform plan also came from Syria. Both views are erroneous. Syria has no fewer than eight medreses built before 1270, none of them with a cruciform ground-plan or four large liwans; but in Egypt Sultan Baibars I built a cruciform medrese as early as 1263. It thus seems certain that the cruciform plan was first used for a medrese in Egypt.

The cruciform plan of the medrese also influenced the development of the mosque. The disadvantage of the type of

mosque with its arcaded halls bordering the inner court was the poor visibility between the preacher and the congregation – as can be seen by mounting the pulpit of the Ibn Tulun Mosque and observing how the pillars interfere with the view. In the medrese, on the other hand, there is an unobstructed view of the assembled faithful. It is not surprising, therefore, that the cruciform plan of the medrese gradually displaced the older ground-plan of the mosques, being employed occasionally in the 14th century (Emir el-Malak, 1319; Aslam el-Silahdar, 1345) and becoming common in the 15th (Gamal el-Din el-Ustadar, 1408; Gani Bek, 1427; Gohar el-Lala, 1430; Qagmas el-Ishaqi, 1481, etc.). In the final century of the Mameluke period the court became much smaller. – After the Turkish Conquest in 1517 the influence of the Byzantine/Ottoman style gave rise to a type of sanctuary roofed with a large dome, in front of which was a court surrounded by arcades covered by small domes (El-Malika Safiya, 1610).

The **exterior** of the earliest mosques was absolutely plain. The walls were crenelated, with many unpretentious doorways. Later, under Syrian influence (e.g. the Great Mosque of Damascus), the number of doorways was reduced to three (Bairbars I, 1269; El-Nasir Mohammed, 1318–35; El-Mardani, 1340). The walls were now broken up into narrow panels containing the windows, which were usually quite small. – Particular attention was paid to the *entrances*, which usually consisted of a deep rectangular recess with stalactitic vaulting. The doorway at the inner end was surmounted by an architrave and a corbeled relieving arch. The door itself was frequently covered with bronze panels in intricate geometric designs. The sill sometimes consisted of a block of granite from some ancient Egyptian monument, often with hieroglyphs still showing.

The **court** (*sahn*) usually contained a *fountain* (*fisuya*), under a timber canopy supported on columns. This was not, however, used for the ritual ablutions, which after the Turkish Conquest were performed in an adjoining court. The practice which then came into favor of having a small structure surrounded by taps (*hanafiya*) in the center of the court would in earlier times have been regarded as a desecration of the mosque.

In the **sanctuary** are –

- (1) the *prayer-niche* (*mihrab*; not *qibla*, which means merely "the direction of Mecca");
- (2) the *pulpit* (*minbar*), often elaborately decorated;
- (3) the *dikka*, a platform supported on columns on which the *muballighin*, the assistants of the imam who leads the prayers, repeat the genuflections, etc., so that they can be seen and imitated by the whole body of worshippers;
- (4) the *lamps* and lanterns (*tannur*, a large chandelier) which hang from the ceiling. Most of the old bronze chandeliers and the enamel-decorated glass lamps from the mosques of Cairo are now in the Museum of Islamic Art.



Fountain, Alabaster Mosque, Cairo

The earliest mosques had no **minarets**, the call to prayer being given from the roof of the mosque. The first minaret of the Ibn Tulun Mosque appears to have been spiral in form, following the model of the Great Mosque in Samarra. In the 11th century we find a slender square shaft topped by a small domed kiosk (El-Giyushi, 1085). In the course of time the kiosk was steadily developed and elaborated; the roof was fluted, and the lower part increased in height to such an extent that the minaret finally came to have three storeys, the bottom one square, the middle one octagonal and the top one round (Sangar el-Gauli Mosque, 1303). This development is so clear, and took place so gradually, that the old theory which asserted that the minaret was derived from the Pharos, the ancient lighthouse of Alexandria, is no longer tenable. From about 1340 the predominant form was an octagonal shaft topped by a small domed kiosk (El-Mardani Mosque, 1340; Sheikhhu Mosque, 1355).

The **mausoleums** of sultans and emirs were usually incorporated in the mosques or medreses they had founded. The actual burial chamber, under ground, was undecorated. The body was wrapped in white linen, with the head in the direction of Mecca. Over the burial vault was a chamber, almost invariably square, containing a cenotaph (*tarkiba* if of stone, *tibut* if of wood); and the transition from this square plan to the circular dome presented the architects with an interesting problem. The earliest Islamic domes in Egypt (El-Hakim Mosque, El-Giyushi Mosque) rest on spherical niches at the four corners of the square, which is thus converted into an octagon providing a convenient base for the dome. Later the single niche at each corner gave place to a more elaborate structure with a lower row of three niches surmounted by a fourth (Mausoleum of Gafari and Sayyida Atika, c. 1125). The next step was to fill the space on either side of the upper niche with two further niches, thus producing a

pendentive with two rows of three niches each (Tomb of the Abbasid Caliphs, 1242–43). A further development is seen in the Mausoleum of Sultan El-Salih Ayyub (1250), which has a comparatively large dome. Here it seems to have been felt that a gradual transition was required, and a pendentive modelled on the form used in the Tomb of the Abbasid Caliphs was surmounted by a row of four niches. Then came a pendentive with four rows of niches (Mausoleum of Baibars el-Gashenkir, 1306–09), and later with five (Mausoleum of Emir Sarghatmish, 1356). This development must have taken place in Egypt, since the Syrian type was quite different. There the rows of niches did not form an arched shape but cut across the corners, being merely blind niches carved out of projecting courses of stone. Moreover in Egypt the number of niches in each row is usually more or less the same, while in Syria there is only one niche in the bottom row, two in the second, three in the third, and so on.

Coming now to secular buildings, the fortifications of Cairo have already been discussed and the particular importance of the Fatimid walls and gates has been noted. – A number of old **palaces** have been preserved, none of them earlier than the mid 14th century. The ground floor is built of good solid masonry and has a vaulted roof, while the ceilings on the upper floor are almost always of painted and gilded wood, as in the Palace of Emir Beshtak (1341). Projecting oriel windows were a characteristic feature.

Dwelling-houses had rarely more than two storeys. On the ground floor were the men's apartments, the *salamlik*, on the upper floor those of the women and children, the *harim*. The main decorative features on the façade were the beautiful *mushrabiya*s (lattice-enclosed balconies or oriels). Unfortunately almost all the houses of this type have disappeared since the end of the 19th century, so that the streets of Cairo have largely lost their old-world aspect.

In general the principal rooms of a house are on the north side (the direction of the prevailing wind), facing into the courtyard. On the street side there are only a few windows, high up on the wall. The entrance passage from the street into the court turns through a right angle in order to prevent passers-by from looking in. The entrance to the *harim* is in a second courtyard or on the far side of the first one. The reception rooms, servants' quarters, kitchen, etc., are located around the first courtyard.

The principal apartments, which are usually the only rooms with any decoration, are the *mandara*, the reception-room for male visitors, with the *khazna* (private apartment), the *takhtabosh*, a square recess one or two steps above the level of the court, and the *maqad*, on a kind of entresol. These rooms, together with a marble-paved courtyard, form the *salamlik*. – On the upper floor is the *kaa*, the family living-room, which is similar to the *mandara*. Occasionally the *kaa* is on the ground floor (e.g. the Hall of Osman Katkhuda in the Palace of Mohammed Muhibb el-Din, Sharia Beit el-Qadi). The *kaa* is a long narrow room consisting of three parts with ceilings of different heights and forms. The floor of the square central section, the *durqaa*, is one step below the *liwans* on either side. The *liwans* are sometimes of different widths; in that event the wider one is regarded as the place of honor. The *durqaa* usually has a wooden cupola or lantern with windows of colored glass known as *kamariyas*, set in plaster frames and decorated with vases of flowers, geometric patterns, etc. The floor of the *durqaa* is usually paved with marble, and there is often a fountain in the middle. On one side is the *suffa*, a marble shelf for coffee-cups, etc., supported by graceful arches. The walls of the *liwans* are faced with marble to a height of 6–10 ft/2–3 m, and above this there is sometimes a ledge for porcelain, metal vessels and vases of various kinds. The upper part of the walls usually has a plain plaster surface. The painted and gilded wooden ceilings of the *liwans* are borne on a deep concave cornice, also painted and gilded. Light and air are admitted by *mushrabiya*s on the lower part and *kamariyas* on the upper part of one of the end walls.

The **public baths** have usually a quite unpretentious exterior. The Baths of Emir Beshtak in Sharia Suq el-Silah in Cairo has a beautiful little doorway.

The **caravanserais** (*wikala*) are often very large buildings of several storeys built round a central courtyard. On the ground floor, facing on to the street, are shops, and above these are rooms for traveling merchants or permanent residents. A monumental gateway in the center of the façade leads into the courtyard, round which are store-rooms for the merchants' goods; and above these, too, are rooms, entered from the external galleries or balconies running round the courtyard. These buildings, a combination of warehouses and dwelling-houses, were frequently used as a form of investment. Wealthy citizens desiring to make a benefaction to a mosque or medrese would often build a caravanserai, the income from which was managed by curators. A foundation of this kind was known as a *waqf*.

The beauty of Islamic architecture in Egypt, with its magnificent 14th- and 15th-century façades, its innumerable graceful domes and minarets and its

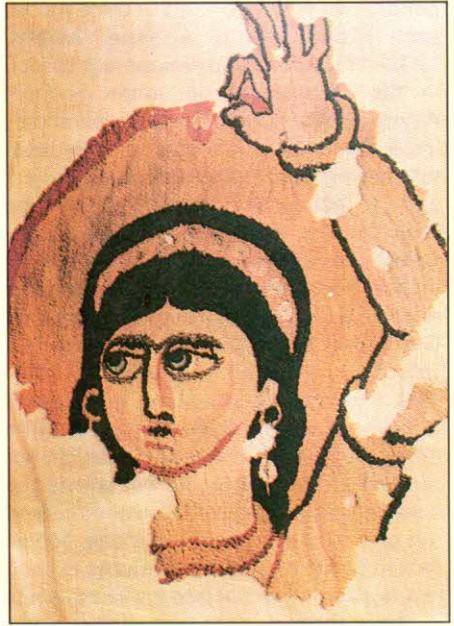
delicate ornament, tends to be overshadowed by the overwhelming splendors of ancient Egypt; but the better Islamic art is known, the more strongly will its particular charm and fascination be felt.

Coptic Art and Architecture

The history of Christian art in Egypt can be divided into two parts with very different characteristics, the first extending from the early 4th century to the Arab Conquest (640–642), the second from the conquest to the early modern period.

During the first period Egypt was, culturally as well as politically, a province of the Byzantine Empire, and there is clear evidence of the close relationships between the Nile Valley and the capital and between Egypt and other provinces of the Empire, particularly Syria. During this period Alexandria had developed into one of the greatest cities in the Eastern Mediterranean, a flourishing center of cultural and commercial life, with a port which handled goods from all over the East and was the meeting-place of merchants from all over the known world. The upper classes of the population were Hellenized, and although the mass of the population clung to ancient traditions the art of the period shows the dominance of the educated class. This interaction between native and imported styles led to the emergence of a local art of considerable quality.

The earliest known monuments of Christian art are **tombs**, such as the catacombs of Alexandria (near Pompey's Pillar) and the mausoleums of the Kharga necropolis. The tombs in the cemetery of Oxyrhynchus (El-Bahnasa) show the small funerary basilica in its perfected form; and the Emperor Arcadius (345–408) built a large basilica with a transept over the Tomb of St Menas in the Lake Mareotis area which is the first securely datable example of Christian architecture in Egypt. About 430 a Byzantine Prince named Caesarius built the large basilica of the Deir el-Abyad Monastery, to which the Coptic saint Shenute belonged. The characteristic feature of this basilica is the chancel with its cruciform plan of three apses, a pattern



Dancing-girl (textile, 5th c A.D. Louvre, Paris)

imitated at Deir el-Akhmar and in the basilica adjoining the Temple of Dendera. These large **arcaded basilicas**, with their many decorated niches and their frescos, originally covering the whole surface of the walls, are the finest achievements of the first period of Christian architecture in Egypt.

The churches of the Monastery of St Jeremias at Saqqara and the Monastery of St Apollonius (Apa Apollo) at Bawit are smaller, and were built at a rather later date. They were rich in decorative sculpture, the best fragments of which are now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. This type of church shows closer affinity to the basilicas of Syria. The Church of Deir Abu Hennis is another important church of this period, but it was much altered and rebuilt during the medieval period.

At Armant in Upper Egypt the scholars who accompanied Napoleon's Egyptian Expedition found a large basilica with an apse at each end. This has now disappeared, but the Northern Basilica at Abu Mena and a ruined church at Mersa Matruh are of the same type.

The hermits who lived in the Egyptian desert in the early days frequently chose tombs of the Pharaonic period as a suitably remote dwelling-place and converted other tombs into churches by adding long niches to serve as apses; the most

interesting examples of such conversions can be seen in a number of tombs at Beni Hasan, Meir and El-Sheikh Said, in the Tomb of Penehse at Tell el-Amarna and in the tombs at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna (Nos 84, 95 and 97) in western Thebes. Several of these tombs have very interesting Christian inscriptions and frescos. Around the hermitages there gradually came into being numbers of small monasteries which used the rock tombs as churches. In the space in front of the entrance were cells, store-rooms and a tower to provide a place of refuge in case of danger. One of the best examples of an arrangement of this kind is the Monastery of the Epiphany at Sheikh Abd el-Qurna.

When the tombs of the Pharaonic period were no longer sufficient to meet the needs of the Christians they turned to the old temples and converted their vestibules into churches, as at Dendera, Edfu, Esna, Philae and elsewhere; almost all such Christian additions have been removed by the excavators of the temples in modern times. Elsewhere one of the inner chambers of a temple was converted to Christian use, as at Karnak, where the church occupied the whole of Tuthmosis III's large Festival Temple, and where the remains of frescos depicting Coptic saints can still be seen on the columns. A third possibility was to install the church in a

temple court, as happened in the second court of the temple at Medinet Habu (remains of church demolished in the 1920s). – In Upper Egypt the Christians rarely destroyed the old temples. The reliefs were sometimes damaged, but for the most part merely covered with a thick coat of plaster, which preserved them in excellent condition into recent times.

The Christian buildings erected in the early period were constructed with great care. The walls were of accurately dressed stone (mainly limestone), the roofs were of timber and the apses had vaulted semi-domes. The finely worked columns of Aswan granite bore **reliefs** with crosses and other symbols, and sometimes also inscriptions by the founders. They were richly decorated with carved ornament – foliage, flowers and interlace patterns, and frequently also geometric designs. The sculptors of Middle Egypt, whose main center is believed to have been at Ahnas (Ahnasiya el-Medina), the ancient Heracleopolis, produced large compositions featuring human figures in a high relief of a depth and structure which achieved an almost Baroque interplay of light and shadow. Although the basic architectural elements – capitals, architraves, pilasters – came from Syria or Byzantium, the decoration was entirely individual, with a rich repertoire of forms



Relief with Christian symbols



Fresco, St Antony's Monastery

and motifs such as was attained by no other architecture in the Christian East.

Christian art in Egypt was fundamentally and almost exclusively decorative; and the walls, column shafts and capitals of the buildings were covered with **paintings** and **frescos**. Unfortunately only a small proportion of this work has survived, but even the fragments that remain are sufficient to throw light on the history of the period. Like the Alexandrian art from which it stemmed, this is a highly realistic art. The "Fayyum portraits" now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo are magnificent examples of a tradition which was taken over into Christian art and found expression in the frescos from Saqqara and Bawit (also in the Egyptian Museum). With the Alexandrian tradition, however, there now mingled much more marked Oriental influences.

Greek traditions maintained their influence in decorative art. Along the base of the walls of churches were paintings

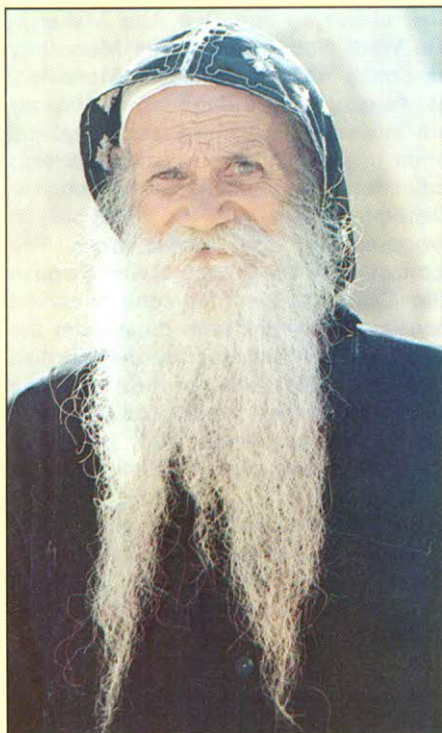


Panel-painting in Abu Sarga Church, Old Cairo

imitating marble inlays and friezes of circles and rhombs containing flowers, fruit, baskets, birds, portraits, genre scenes and symbolic figures. Higher up are broad friezes with figures of prophets and saints, monks, angels and the Virgin. In the conch of the apses Christ is frequently depicted in a chariot with the beasts of the Apocalypse. The same style is found in the famous miniatures of the "Christian Topography" (composed by Cosmas Indicopleustes of Alexandria about 547–549), which mingle the picturesqueness beloved of the Alexandrians with a monumentality more in line with the aesthetic sensibilities of Asia.

The conquest of Egypt by the **Arabs** had a major effect on the further development of Christian art. The fact that Christianity was no longer the State religion – though there was little persecution of Christians in Egypt – entailed the increasing impoverishment of the Church, so that large building projects were no longer possible. A further consequence of Arab rule was the victory of the Monophysites, who tended to be more nationalist and more attached to local traditions, over the Catholics, more closely identified with classical Greek culture. The influence of Asiatic Monophysitism, still predominant in Syria and Mesopotamia, was also strongly felt in Egyptian Christianity. Thus the link with the Greek World gave place to a still stronger leaning towards the culture of western Asia. Building techniques also changed: where previously freestone had been used, kiln-fired or sun-dried bricks were now employed even for load-bearing walls, and the shortage of timber for roofing led to the use of stone vaulting. All this brought with it changes in the ground-plan of churches, and the basilican plan was practically abandoned except in Old Cairo.

The most notable Christian buildings in northern Egypt are the **monasteries** in the *Wadi Natrun*. Of particular interest is the Deir el-Suryan (Monastery of the Syrians), which was rebuilt in the early 9th century. Its large church is an aisled basilica with a barrel-vaulted roof; the choir has the form of a transept, and the sanctuary consists of three square sections. The fine Mesopotamian-style stucco-work in the central section, probably done in the time of Abbot Moses of Nisibis (10th century), shows strong



Coptic monk

affinities with stucco ornament in the Third Style at Samarra (Mesopotamia). There are also two notable wooden doors with ivory inlays (913–914 and 926–927). The little Church of St Mary in the same monastery is modelled on the churches at Tur Abdin (25 miles/40 km north-east of Nisibis). The monasteries of Deir Amba Bshoi and Deir Abu Makar are older than Deir el-Suryan; Deir Amba Baramus was almost completely rebuilt in the 14th century. – Some 30 miles/50 km north-west of the Wadi Natrun is the Kelya area (from Latin *cella*, “cell”), which was discovered in 1964 during the construction of irrigation works and partly excavated. In the ruins of a 7th-century monastery some remarkable frescos have been preserved. There were at one time something like 700 hermitages in this area.

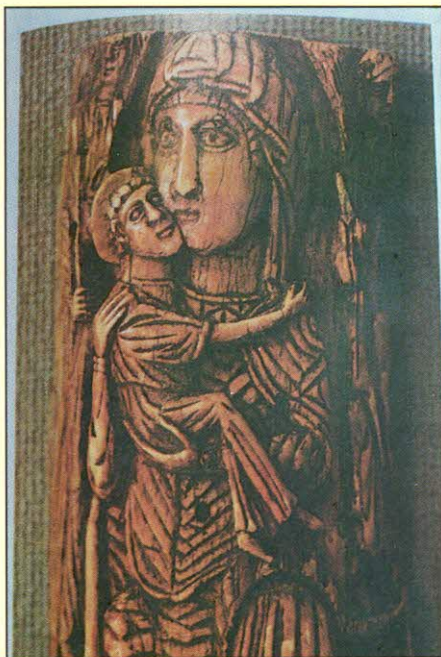
Mesopotamian influence is still more evident in another group of buildings in Upper Egypt. The church of St Simeon’s Monastery at Aswan had one aisle roofed with two domes borne on cross ribs and others with barrel vaults – two features which are undoubtedly of Asiatic origin. The ground-plan of the church points in the same direction: there is a comparable building at Amida (now Diyarbakir) in

south-eastern Anatolia. The church of St Simeon’s is the best-preserved example of the type in Egypt; the Monastery of Deir el-Shuhada at Esna has a church on similar lines.

The monasteries between Naqada and Qamula are also of interest. They are not by any means all of the same period: even within a particular monastery there are buildings of different periods. The finest are the churches of El-Adra and Mari Girgis in Deir el-Magma; the latter has a system of parallel vaulting on transverse arches which points to a model in Sassanid Persia.

During the 12th century a new type of church developed in Egypt and soon spread throughout the whole country, remaining in favor until the latter part of this period. Rectangular in plan, the church consisted of a series of square areas bounded by columns or pillars and roofed by domes. The number of domes might be very large: thus the Church of Amba Pakhom (St Pachomius) at Medamut had 29. A notable example of this type of church is the one in the Deir el-Maharraq, where, according to the Coptic legend, the Holy Family halted on their flight into Egypt.

The churches of *Old Cairo* stem from a different architectural tradition. They are



Virgin and Child (wood-carving)

medieval rebuildings of churches of the pre-Arab period, from which they inherited their general layout as well as various structural elements, such as the columns, with their bases and capitals, and the timber roof. The wood-carving shows the Western influence which reached Egypt as a result of the Crusades, and also through trading contacts with the Italian maritime republics.

In this second period the arts suffered a total decline. Sculpture in stone disappeared almost entirely after the 8th century; a few stone slabs with crude interlace designs and clumsily carved capitals dating from subsequent centuries have been found, but in the 11th century the art of stone-cutting died out altogether.

There are some examples of the painting of this second period in the monasteries of

Deir el-Suryan and Deir Abu Makar in the Wadi Natrun, the White Monastery at Sohag and St Simeon's Monastery at Aswan; but though these frescos are interesting from the iconographical point of view they show strong foreign influences, particularly from Armenia. Decorative techniques are found only in wood-carving and intarsia work. The iconostasis of the Church of Abu Sarga in Old Cairo has six 11th-century carved panels, which rank with those from the Church of El-Moallaqa (now in the British Museum) as the finest of their kind. The Coptic craftsmen also produced fine carving in geometric and polygonal designs showing clear Arab influence.

In the 14th century Coptic art as a distinctive and independent form disappeared; thereafter the work of Coptic craftsmen had nothing to distinguish it from Arab and Islamic art.

Glossary of Technical Terms

Abacus:

The flat top of the capital of a column.

Aha:

Horus name of the second King of the 1st Dynasty, perhaps the legendary Menes.

Akh:

Part of a man's personality.

Akhet:

Time of the Nile inundation; the first season of the ancient Egyptian year.

Amenti:

The realm of the dead; in contrast to Duat (q.v.), the western part of the Underworld.

Amulet:

An object thought to protect its owner from evil or bring him good fortune and success. The most popular types of amulet in ancient Egypt were the scarab, the ankh sign, the winged sun and the lotus (qq.v.).



Ankh:

The hieroglyphic sign for "life", taken as a symbol for life beyond the tomb. It originally represented a sandal-strap. As an amulet, made in a wide variety of materials, it was thought to bring its bearer good fortune and a long life.

Ankham:

A bunch of flowers laid in a coffin to convey vital force to the dead man.

Apopis:

A snake-like demon, the adversary of Re and of the dead on their common journey into the Beyond.



Canopic chest (Luxor Museum)

Architrave:

A stone slab resting on columns or a wall and supporting the superstructure or roof structure.

Atef:

See *Crowns*.

Ba:

A spiritual entity associated with man, his "soul".

Barque, sacred:

The boat in which the statue of a deity traveled.

Coptic Christianity



Birth-house:
See *Mammisi*.

Blommeyes:
A nomadic people which ranged over the southern part of the Arabian Desert in antiquity and made repeated incursions into Upper Egypt and Nubia.

"Book of the Dead":
A collection of religious and magical texts, largely derived from the older "Pyramid Texts" and "Coffin Texts". Under the New Kingdom it became the practice to deposit in tombs a selection of such texts written on papyrus.

Canopic jars:
Vessels containing the entrails of a dead man which were buried with him. They were thought to be under the protection of the four sons of Horus, represented on the lids of the jars as a man, a baboon, a dog and a falcon. The four jars might be contained in a canopic chest or shrine.

Capital:
The top of a column, usually richly ornamented, supporting the architrave. See under *Art and architecture*.

Cartouche:
An oval ring containing the name and titles of a king; originally derived from the representation of the solar disc above the horizon. For examples see under *History*.

Cataract:
The name given to the various rapids on the Nile between Khartoum (Sudan) and Aswan. Of the seven cataracts (First-Sixth and Dai Cataract) six served at different periods of Egyptian history to mark the country's southern frontier.

Cavetto cornice:
A concave moulding along the tops of walls, doorways, stelae, etc., often with relief decoration. Below it ran a torus moulding (q.v.).

Cenotaph:

An empty or simulated tomb as a place of worship or memorial.

Colonnade:

A row or rows of columns supporting a flat roof.

Column:

See chapter on *Art and architecture*.

Conch:

The semi-dome of an apse (from the Greek word for a shell).

Copts (from Greek *aiguptos*, via Arabic *qubt*):

Christian descendants of the ancient Egyptians. They now constitute about 10% of the population of Egypt, mostly belonging to the middle classes (craftsmen, shopkeepers, doctors, teachers, etc.).

Crowns:

The crowns and head-dresses worn by kings and deities in ancient Egypt derive from three main types, the **Red Crown** of Lower Egypt, the **White Crown** of Upper Egypt and the **Double Feather Crown** of the gods Amun and Min.

By the combination, alteration and elaboration of these three basic types there came into being in the course of time an extraordinary range of different crowns, the significance and symbolic value of which cannot always be satisfactorily determined. The combination of the red and white crowns produced the double crown (*pschent*) worn by the rulers of the united kingdom. The *atef* crown worn by Osiris was a combination of the red crown and the double feather crown. The *blue crown* which first appeared under the 18th Dynasty, wrongly called the "war helmet of the Pharaohs", can be seen as a modification of the double crown. The *hemhemet* is a triple *atef* crown on rams' horns with royal cobras and the solar disc.

Crypt:

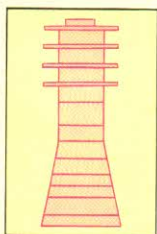
An underground chamber.

Demotic (Greek "popular"):

A script developed out of hieratic (q.v.) which came into use in Lower Egypt in the 7th century B.C. and became the everyday script of the whole of Egypt in the Late and Graeco-Roman periods. It disappeared about the middle of the 5th century A.D. See the chapter on *Hieroglyphics*.

Det:

See *Duat*.

**Djed:**

A fetish in pillar form, the origin of which is unknown; an attribute of Osiris. Worn as an amulet, it brought stability and durability.

Duat (Det):

The Underworld, into which the sun sank in the evening and through which it traveled during the night.

Dynasty:

A family or succession of rulers. According to Manetho Egypt was ruled by 31 dynasties before Alexander the Great, normally reigning in succession to each other but occasionally concurrently.

Electrum:

An alloy of gold and silver (85% gold, 15% silver) used to gild the tips of obelisks.

Ennead (Egyptian *pesedjet*, "community of the nine")

A group of nine deities (three sub-groups of three) representing the primal forces of the universe. The best-known such group was the great Heliopolitan ennead, which was headed by the creator god *Atum* and included his son and daughter *Shu* (air) and *Tefnut* (dew), his grandson and granddaughter *Geb* (earth) and *Nut* (sky), and their children, *Isis* and *Osiris* and *Nephthys* and *Seth*. Where more than nine gods were to be venerated together a lesser ennead might be added, or the number in the group might simply be increased, though it was still referred to as an ennead.

Gods:

See the section on the *Egyptian pantheon*.

Headcloth:

See *Nemes*.

Heb-sed (Sed festival):

The king's jubilee after reigning for thirty years (thereafter celebrated every three years).

Hemhemet:

See *Crowns*.

Hieratic (from Greek *hieros*, "sacred"):

A script used throughout ancient Egyptian history but reserved in the Late Period for religious texts. See the chapter on *Hieroglyphics*.

Hieroglyphs:

See the chapter on *Hieroglyphics*.

High Priest:

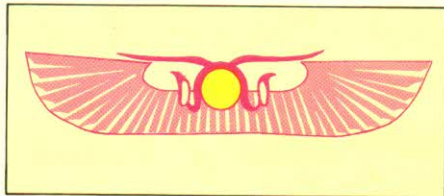
The head of the local priesthood.

Hittites:

An Indo-European people settled in eastern Asia Minor (Cappadocia) from the 2nd millennium B.C.

Horbehted:

The sun goddess, represented in the form of a winged sun, who accompanied the god Re on his journey over the sky. The winged sun was depicted on pylons and above temple doorways to protect them from collapse.

**Horus name:**

The first name in the king's titulary, designating him as the legitimate successor to Horus (see the section on the *Egyptian pantheon*).

Hydraeum (hydreuma):

A fortified watering-point in the desert.

Hyksos ("Princes of the Foreign Lands"):

A people of mixed Hurrian and Semitic origin who moved into Egypt from the north-east and ruled the country from 1650 to 1551 B.C. See the chapter on *History*.

Hypostyle hall:

A columned hall.

Ichneumon ("Pharaoh's rat"; *Herpestes ichneumon*):

A small predator much esteemed as a killer of snakes and accorded divine veneration. In the Late Period large numbers of ichneumons were mummified and buried in special tombs.

Isis knot:

A sign resembling the ankh (q.v.) but with the transverse arms folded downwards.

Ithyphallic:

With erect phallus, as a symbol of fertility.

Jubilee:

The anniversary of a king's accession.

Ka:

The immortal element in man, the vital force inherent in him, which always accompanies and protects him. In the Beyond the dead man is united with his ka. Represented as an effigy or statue of the living man with his arms raised above his head, designated by the hieroglyph *ka*.

Khamsin:

A hot desert wind, blowing mainly in spring.

Kiosk:

A small open temple in which the statue of a god was set up during his festival.

Lotus:

The emblem of Pharaonic Egypt. Worn as an amulet, it was believed to give eternal youth.

Mamelukes (Arabic *mamluk*, "slave"):

Originally Turkish or Circassian slaves, who rose to become rulers of Egypt. See the chapter on *History*.

Mammisi:

The "birth-house": a term first applied by Champollion (see chapter on *Hieroglyphics*) to a small subsidiary building associated with temples of the Late Period in which the annual rebirth of the local god or the son of the local goddess was celebrated.

Mastaba (Arabic "bench"):

A private tomb of the Early Dynastic Period or Old Kingdom; a square or rectangular structure of brick or stone with slightly sloping walls and a flat roof. By the addition of further stages the mastaba developed into the step pyramid and eventually into the true pyramid.

Medrese (medersa, madrasa):

A Koranic school or Islamic theological college with the status of a university. The first medrese was founded in Baghdad in 1067. See the chapter on *Islamic architecture*.

Menat:

An attribute of Hathor; a necklace held in place by a richly ornamented counterpoise to the rear.

Mihrab:

The prayer-niche in a mosque, always on the side facing in the direction of Mecca.

Minaret (Arabic "lighthouse"):

The tower attached to a mosque from which the muezzin gives the call to prayer.

Mosque:

An Islamic place of worship. See the chapter *Islamic architecture*.

Mummy:

A body protected from decay by embalming. Herodotus gives a detailed account of the process. The brain was first extracted with the aid of a hook inserted through the nostrils, and the entrails were removed through an incision in the side and preserved in canopic jars (q.v.). The resultant cavities were then filled with natron and a variety of spices, and the body was stitched up again and immersed for 70 days in a natron bath. Now thoroughly dehydrated, it was washed in Nile water and wrapped in fine linen bandages soaked in perfumes and oils.

There were different methods of embalming, in varying degrees of thoroughness, the method selected depending on the financial resources available. This explains why royal mummies are usually better preserved than those of ordinary people.

Naos:

A small chapel or shrine for the statue of a deity.

Narthex:

A porch or vestibule leading into a church or temple.

Necropolis:

Literally, a "city of the dead". A place of burial used over a long period, usually consisting of a number of separate cemeteries.

Nemes:

The headcloth worn by a king, falling down over his shoulders and breast on both sides. The style of the royal headcloth is an important aid to the dating of statues.

Nilometer:

A device for measuring the water-level of the Nile. It consisted of a deep shaft with steps running down inside and a scale of heights marked on the wall. Communicating with the Nile by an underground channel, it filled up with water during the annual inundation, enabling the height to be measured.

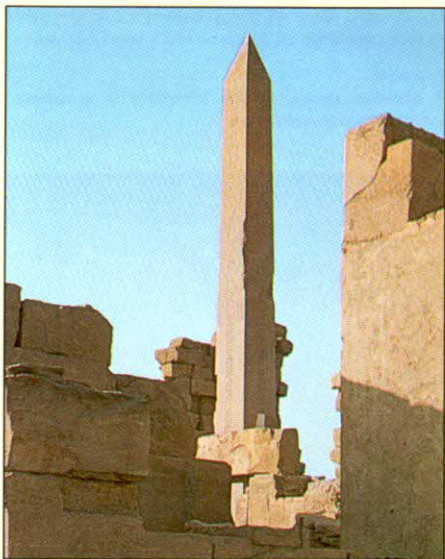
Nome (Greek *nomos*; Egyptian *sepat*):

An administrative unit in ancient Egypt. The nomes developed out of the independent principalities of the Pre-Dynastic and Early Dynastic Periods, their number and size varying in the course of history. When there was a strong central power their importance was reduced, but in times of domestic dissension and weakness they grew in power and independence.

Obelisk (Greek "spit"):

A monolithic four-sided pillar, usually of pink Aswan granite, tapering towards the top and ending in a gilded apex (pyramidion); covered on all sides with hieroglyphs.

The earliest obelisks (5th and 6th Dynasties) were the central feature of the great sun-temples, the gleaming tip of the obelisk being the first resting-place of the rising sun. In later times obelisks were set up, usually in pairs, at the entrances to temples (Luxor, Karnak) to



Obelisk, Karnak

commemorate great events like victories and jubilees. During the Roman period and in the 19th century a number of obelisks were carried off to Europe (Rome, London, Paris, Munich) and to New York.

Opening of the mouth:

A ritual ceremony, performed mostly on mummies but also on statues, designed to ensure that the dead man had the use of his mouth in the Afterworld for eating, drinking and breathing.

Ostrakon:

A potsherd or small limestone tablet used as cheap writing material instead of the expensive papyrus. Large numbers of ostraka from all periods of Egyptian history have been found.

Papyrus:

A paper-like material made from the pith of the papyrus plant (*Cyperus papyrus*) by pressing it together in layers. Sheets or volumes of this material are known as papyri. It was used as a writing material in Egypt from the 3rd millennium B.C.

Papyrus staff:

The scepter of a goddess.

Pendentive:

Spherical triangle formed by intersection of dome with two adjacent arches springing from supporting columns.

Peristyle:

An open court surrounded by colonnades.

Persea:

A sacred tree of ancient Egypt (*Mimusops schimperi*), in medieval literature identified with the lebbek tree.

Pesedjet:

See *Ennead*.

Pharaoh's rat:

See *Ichneumon*.

Pilaster:

A pillar engaged in a wall, either to strengthen the wall, articulate the interior of a building or support the roof or vaulting.

Pillar:

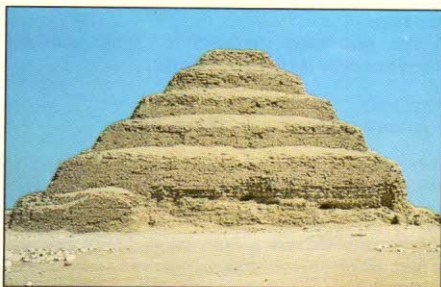
See the chapter on *Art and architecture*.

Portico:

The covered entrance or vestibule of a building, with its roof supported on columns and a solid rear wall.

Pronaos:

A chamber preceding the sanctuary of a temple, sometimes with columns.



Step Pyramid, Saqqara

Propylon:

A gateway set in front of a pylon.

Proto-Doric column:

A 16-sided fluted pillar on a round base, much used in Egyptian architecture. See the chapter on *Art and architecture*.

Pschent:

See *Crowns*.

Punt:

A country in East Africa, on the Somali coast, to which, from the 3rd millennium B.C., the Egyptians sent expeditions in quest of incense, resins and fine woods.

Pylon (Greek "gate"):

The monumental entrance and façade of an ancient Egyptian temple, flanked by two towers with grooves for flagstaffs. The front walls are slightly inclined, with a cavetto cornice (q.v.) along the top and torus mouldings (q.v.) down the sides. Large temples have several pylons, one behind the other. See the chapter on *Art and architecture*.

Pyramid:

A structure on a square base with four triangular sides sloping up to an apex, used for royal burials from the 3rd to the 17th Dynasty and by the Kushites (25th Dynasty). The origin of the pyramids is probably to be seen in the burial mounds of the Pre-Dynastic Period, which developed into mastabas in the Early Dynastic Period. By the addition of further stages the mastaba in turn developed into the **Step Pyramid** of Djoser (though this is not, properly speaking, a pyramid, since it still has the rectangular ground-plan of a mastaba).

The filling in of the steps of a step pyramid produced the **true pyramid**, with straight sides, which came into use in the 4th Dynasty. The major structural



Pyramid of Mycerinus and small women's pyramids, Giza

problems involved are impressively demonstrated by the Pyramid of Meidum, which collapsed under the weight of its casing, and the **Bent Pyramid** of Dahshur, in which the angle of inclination was reduced half-way up in order to lessen the weight of masonry.

The high point of pyramid-construction was reached with the three massive pyramids of Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus at Giza, all dating from the 4th Dynasty. They are all built of sandstone blocks, originally enclosed within a casing of fine-grained Tura limestone. Later pyramids were mostly built of less durable materials and are now badly ruined or totally destroyed.

All the pyramids lay high above the Nile Valley on the edge of the desert. From the *valley temple* on the margin of the plain a *causeway* (originally open, later covered) ran straight up to the *mortuary temple* on the east side of the pyramid. Almost all the pyramids had their entrance on the north side. Until the early 4th Dynasty the *tomb chamber* was hewn from the native rock under the base of the pyramid; later it was constructed within the pyramid itself. The passages leading to the tomb chamber were barred by heavy stone portcullises and the entrance was built up. Adjoining the main pyramid were smaller *subsidiary pyramids* for female members of the royal family.

Pyramidion:

The pyramid-shaped apex of an obelisk, which was gilded with electrum (an alloy of gold and silver). The term is also applied to the apex of a pyramid, which was usually of a particularly hard stone (granite).

Qibla:

The direction in which Muslims face when praying (towards Mecca; originally towards Jerusalem).

Relief:

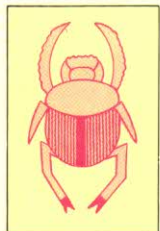
A work of sculpture in which the forms stand out from a flat or curved surface, with little depth. During the Old and Middle Kingdoms the favored technique was **bas-relief** or **low relief**, in which the carving might be confined to the chiseling-out of the outlines or the figures might be modeled as well. A peculiar form of low relief sometimes used was **sunk relief** (technically called *coelanaglyphic* relief), in which the surface of the stone is left as the background and the figures are incised.

Saff tomb (Arabic "row"):

A private tomb of the early 11th Dynasty preceded by a rock-cut colonnade.

Sanctuary:

The inmost shrine; in an Egyptian temple the chamber in which the god's sacred barque was kept.



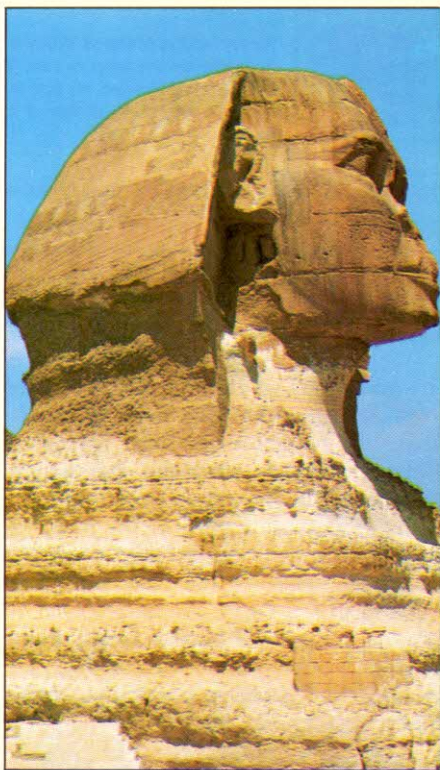
Scarab:

The sacred dung-beetle (*Scarabaeus sacer*), an anthracite-colored species of beetle common in Egypt which was seen by the ancient Egyptians as a symbol of the rising sun. A stone or pottery scarab worn as an amulet was believed to bring good fortune and a long life. A scarab with the 30th chapter of the "Book of the Dead" inscribed on its underside

was placed on a mummy in the position of the heart.

Sebbakh:

The rubble from ancient sites, used as a fertilizer. Brickwork made from Nile mud yielded very fertile soil when it disintegrated.



The Sphinx of Giza

Sed festival:

See *Heb-sed*.

Sepat:

See *Nome*.

Serdab:

A walled-up chamber in a tomb for the dead man's statue.

Shabti (ushabti):

Small mummiform figures placed in the tomb to act as servants to the dead man in the life beyond.

Sistrum:

A form of rattle sacred to Hathor. It had a handle with a Hathor head and a metal hoop on which were a number of metal loops.

Speos:

A cave or cave shrine.

Sphinx:

A hybrid creature with the body of a lion and the head of a king (more rarely a queen).

Talatat:

Originally a unit of measurement in Islamic architecture, the term was also applied to stones from ancient Egyptian buildings with painted or relief decoration.

Torus:

A concave moulding used on the sides of pylons, stelae, etc.

Triad:

A group of three deities (father, mother and son). The most celebrated were the Theban triad (Amun, Mut and Khons), the Memphite triad (Ptah, Sakhmet and Nefertum) and the Edfu triad (Horus, Hathor and Har-somtut). See the section on the *Egyptian pantheon*.

**Udjat:**

The sacred Eye of Horus. Worn as an amulet on the wrist or arm, it was believed to ward off evil, in particular snakebite, illness or a curse.

Uraeus:

The golden cobra, the sacred animal of Uto, which the

king wore on his forehead; venerated as the fiery eye of Re.

Ushabti:

See *Shabti*.

Winged sun:

See *Horhebuted*.

Economy

The main pillar of the Egyptian economy since ancient times has been **agriculture**, in particular **arable farming**. Almost half the employed population are engaged in this sector, accounting for something under a third of the national income. The main agricultural areas are the fertile Valley of the Nile, the great expanse of the Delta, the large Oasis of Fayyum and several smaller oases, some of which are being extended and linked up by irrigation schemes under the "New Valley" project.

From time immemorial the alluvial soil of the Nile Valley and the Delta, annually renewed by the inundation of the Nile, yielded one and sometimes two abundant crops. The narrow range of temperature variation over the year – a factor which influenced the choice of crops to be grown – made cultivation possible all year round had it not been for the inundation, which interrupted work in the fields for some months each year. In modern times, however, the successive steps taken to regulate the flow of the river – the Nile Dam, to the north of Cairo, built by Mohammed Ali in the first half of the 19th century, the dams constructed at Aswan, Asyut, Nag Hammadi and Esna about the turn of the century and finally the Aswan High Dam (el-Sadd el-Ali) completed in 1970 – have freed the peasants of Egypt from their dependence on the annual flood and made it possible to provide regular irrigation throughout the year.

The loss of the great quantities of fertile Nile mud which now remain in the artificial lakes above the dams, however, has made it necessary to supply the land lower down the valley with other types of fertilizer. In the past the peasants found a ready supply of fertile soil (*sebbakh*) in the mounds of rubble marking ancient sites, with their crumbling brickwork of Nile mud; but most of these mounds have

now been destroyed, and the Government is concerned, in the interests of archaeology, to preserve what still remains. Regular crop rotation, with periods of fallow, can compensate only to a limited extent for the loss of the rich Nile mud, and it is now necessary, therefore, to use artificial fertilizers to improve the soil and increase yields. The need is being met to an increasing extent from Egypt's large deposits of phosphates on the Red Sea coast and in the Dakhla and Kharga oases; but considerable quantities of artificial fertilizers still have to be imported. Government agencies are now trying out methods of dredging up Nile mud from the reservoirs and making it available for fertilizing the cultivated land.

Throughout Egyptian history **irrigation** has been vital to the cultivation of the land, and much effort was devoted from an early period to making the best use of the water-supply. Embankments were built dividing the land into basins, to which water was conducted by canals. This prevented the water from draining away too rapidly and ensured that the soil was thoroughly soaked and that the salt which threatened the fertility of the land was leached out. Various devices, still in use today in many places, were employed for raising water and feeding it into the canals. The *saqiya* is a large water-wheel (usually overshot, that is, turned by water flowing above it, but in the Fayyum



Sakiya



Tanbur (Archimedean screw)

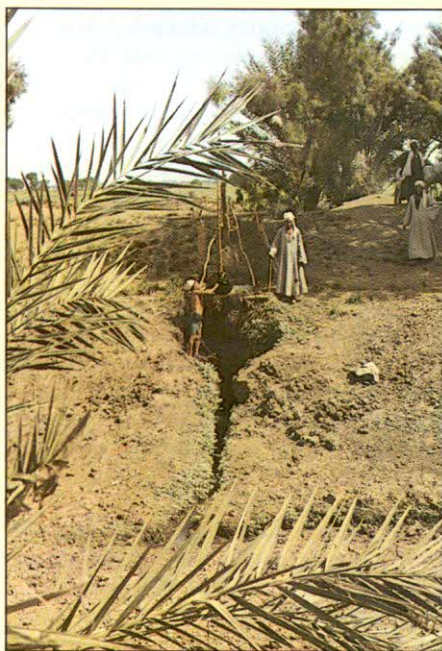
sometimes undershot) up to 30 ft/9 m in diameter, worked by oxen, buffalo and sometimes camels and fitted with scoops or buckets (*qadus*) of wood or pottery. The *shaduf* draws water in a bucket attached to a long swiveling pole with a counterweight at the other end; a number of shadufs arranged in series can raise water through a considerable height. The *tanbur* is an Archimedean screw. These traditional methods, however, have now largely been superseded by modern pumping stations.

On small peasant holdings without modern agricultural machinery the same farming techniques and implements are used as are represented in ancient Egyptian reliefs. The plow is still of the same form as 5000 years ago. It has a shaft some 6½ ft/2 m long, to one end of which the draft animal (almost invariably an ox) is harnessed; at the lower end is a curved piece of wood shod with a triple-bladed share. A plow of this type cuts only a very shallow furrow. – Instead of a harrow a roller with iron spikes is used. Other implements employed for tilling the soil and for earth-moving are the hoe and shovel. – The corn is cut with a sickle or merely pulled out of the ground. Threshing is done with a sledge running on rollers fitted with sharp semicircular iron discs, which is drawn over the grain by oxen turning in a circle until the ears and stems are broken up. The grain is then separated from the chaff by winnowing with a large screen.

Two or even three crops are now taken off the land every year. The area under cultivation is some 7,400,000 acres, of which more than 6,900,000 acres are arable land, 346,000 acres are under permanent cultivation (pasture, fruit trees) and only 4950 acres are occupied by woodland. More than 90% of all agricultural holdings

are smaller than 5 feddans (a feddan is roughly equal to an acre), and only 0.5% of all holdings are larger than 50 feddans. All these larger farms, as well as smaller holdings which have combined to form co-operatives, are equipped with modern agricultural machinery and use modern methods of cultivation.

The most important agricultural product is **cotton**, introduced into Egypt only in 1821. It is long-fibered cotton (*mako*) of excellent quality, and is for the most part processed within Egypt. More than 1,100,000 tons of raw cotton are harvested every year from an area of more than 1,500,000 acres; and cotton is the



Shaduf

country's principal export, accounting for almost two-fifths of total exports. Other crops grown include maize (3,200,000 tons), rice (2,300,000 tons), wheat (2,000,000 tons), sugar-cane (9,200,000 tons), millet (660,000 tons), barley (130,000 tons), groundnuts (25,000 tons), clover (for fodder), pulses, vegetables, onions and garlic. The Siwa and Bahriya oases produce mainly dates, citrus and tropical fruits, wine and olives. – The State-owned wine-producing estate at Abu Hummus, on the north-western fringe of the Delta, has an annual output of some 3,300,000 gallons of *wine* from 17,300 acres of vineyards. Since Islam prohibits the consumption of

alcohol, the domestic market is confined to Copts and visitors; attempts to establish an export trade have so far met with little success. A considerable proportion of the grape crop is used to produce brandy in Alexandria for export; the rest comes on to the market in the form of table grapes or raisins.

Compared with arable farming **stock-rearing** is of secondary importance. The numbers of cattle and goats are increasing, but the ancient Egyptian occupation of sheep-rearing is in decline. There are only small numbers of pigs, kept by the Christian members of the population, since to the Muslim the pig is impure. Cattle, buffalo and poultry are mainly kept by the settled fellahin, sheep and goats by the nomadic bedouin, who are able in the course of their journeying over the great expanses of steppe and semi-desert country to take advantage of seasonally available pasture. Donkeys, mules and camels are still used as beasts of burden. The rearing of poultry (chickens, ducks, pigeons, etc.) makes an important contribution to the country's meat-supply.

Egyptian agriculture is not able, however, to supply all the food required for the rapidly growing population. Although encouraging increases in agricultural yields have been achieved it is still necessary to import substantial quantities of foodstuffs.

The considerable resources of fish in Egypt's inland waters and off its coasts have not been sufficiently exploited. As a result of the difficulty of keeping fish in the hot Egyptian climate and the limited canning and preserving facilities available, the country's **fisheries** have not yet made their full contribution to the economy. The richest fishing-grounds are in the lakes and waterways of the Delta, and in recent years also in Lake Nasser, which is being artificially stocked. The numbers of fish in the Nile has fallen as a result of the reduced food-supply due to the absence of the annual inundation. Measures to develop Egyptian fisheries are planned. – *Sponge-fishing* has been practiced on Egypt's Mediterranean coasts since antiquity.

Egypt possesses a variety of **minerals**, which promote the development of **industry**. There are significant deposits of iron ore (annual output 1,100,000

tons) around Aswan and in the Bahriya Oasis, manganese in the Sinai Peninsula, chromium and tin around Mersa Alam and Bur Safaga on the Red Sea coast. Phosphates and gypsum are worked on a considerable scale (500,000 tons and 260,000 tons annually) along the Red Sea coast (between Quseir and Hurghada and around Mersa Alam), in southern Sinai (at El-Tor), in the Dakhla and Kharga oases and in the Esna area. In addition there are workable deposits of asbestos, titanium, sulphur and coal (Sinai) still awaiting exploitation. – Salt is extracted from the salt-pans in the Delta lakes.

The problem of **energy supply** is not one that ought to trouble Egypt. There are large *oilfields* in western Sinai (at Abu Rudeis), around Hurghada and to the south of El-Alamein in the Western Desert, and it is hoped to find more in the Qattara Depression. Natural gas is being worked to the south of the El-Alamein oilfields and in the Delta, near the Mediterranean coast. There are oil-refineries near Alexandria, at Tanta and Helwan, and at Port Said and Suez on the Suez Canal. The oilfields are linked by pipeline with Cairo and with the Mediterranean ports of Alexandria and El-Alamein. With an annual output of almost 30 million tons of crude oil, Egypt can not only meet its own steadily growing needs but can also earn valuable foreign currency by its increasing export of oil, its situation on the Mediterranean giving it a considerable advantage over other oil-exporting countries.

In spite of its large reserves of oil, however, Egypt still suffers from a shortage of energy, due mainly to its inadequate number of power-stations and poor distribution system. The cities of Lower Egypt obtain their electric power from thermal power-stations, while Upper Egypt is supplied with power by the hydroelectric station at the Aswan High Dam, which came into operation in 1968. Rural areas and oases which are not yet served by the national grid must rely for power on diesel generators. – In order to meet the increasing demand for power Egypt plans, with the co-operation of Western industrial States, to construct 15 nuclear power-stations by the year 2000, and agreements for this purpose have been reached with France, the United States and West Germany.



The Sphinx and the Pyramid of Cheops floodlit

The processing industries are concentrated in the main centers of population. The most important by a considerable margin is the **textile industry**, particularly cotton spinning and weaving, which accounts for 16% of the country's total exports. Other rapidly expanding industries are foodstuffs (sugar-refineries, canning factories, grain- and oil-mills), the tobacco industry, aromatics, chemicals (fertilizers), pharmaceuticals, and iron and steel (steelworks at Helwan). Foreign automobile firms are increasingly establishing assembly plants in Egypt (Volkswagen at Alexandria, Daimler-Benz utility vehicles near Cairo). The building and building materials industries are flourishing, thanks to massive State encouragement (dams, industrial plants, housing).

Egypt has a relatively well-developed **transport** system. Some 2735 miles/4400 km of railway lines and 16,450 miles/26,500 km of roads (including 7750 miles/12,500 km of surfaced roads and 8700 miles/14,000 km of tracks) follow the Nile Valley, spread out over the Delta and link the major oases and the Suez Canal zone with the Egyptian heartland. The number of motor vehicles in urban areas is increasing rapidly, so that the street system of central Cairo has already come up against the limits of its capacity.

Internal shipping services continue to be of great importance, handling fully half the total amount of freight carried. The largest international seaports are Alexandria, Port Said and Suez, and it is planned to develop other large ports. A major contribution to Egypt's foreign currency earnings is made by the *Suez Canal*, which still carries most of the sea traffic between Europe and the Far East. – More than 30 international airlines fly *air services* to and from Egypt. Domestic air services are provided by the national airline, EgyptAir, which also flies international services between Cairo and cities in Europe, Africa and the Middle and Far East. In addition to the major central airport of Cairo-Heliopolis there are airports at Alexandria, Luxor, Aswan, Mersa Matruh and Port Said, as well as many small airstrips.

As an important source of foreign currency, and also as a provider of employment for the increasing numbers of young people looking for jobs, **tourism** is energetically promoted by the Government. It is planned to increase and modernize the country's hotel resources and thus, in spite of its political and economic problems, to attract increasing numbers of visitors both to its antiquities and to its beaches and develop tourism into one of the major branches of the economy. The plan contemplates increasing the number of visitors from its 1980 level of 1¼ to 4 million by 1984.

Taken as a whole, however, Egypt's economic situation is unfavorable and, from the social point of view, contains potentially explosive elements. With a gross national product of 480 US dollars per head Egypt occupies a middle-ranking position among the nations of the world; but the country's very successful efforts to promote rapid industrial development

have been outpaced by the enormous increase in population. The increasing amounts of foreign currency being earned by oil, cotton, Suez Canal dues and tourism are being more than counter-balanced by steadily rising imports of foodstuffs, and further investment is possible only at the cost of ever-growing foreign debts.

Egypt A to Z

The transcription of Egyptian names is a perennial problem to which no agreed solution has yet been found. Since the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic script did not indicate vowels, place-names and personal names may appear in variant forms in different authors and in different languages, and there are also varying transliterations of some ancient Egyptian consonants. There is even more variation in the transcription of Arabic: thus the definite article, transliterated in this Guide as *el-*, may appear as *al-* and *il-*, and in


some cases the */-* reflecting the normal pronunciation – may be assimilated to a following consonant; the letter transliterated in this Guide as *q* may appear as *k*, the letter transliterated as *g* may appear as *j*; and so on.

In this Guide names are so far as possible given in the forms normally used by present-day authorities writing in English; but consistency is difficult to achieve, and visitors to Egypt must be prepared to encounter a variety of alternative forms.



Abu Gurab

Middle Egypt. – Governorate: Giza.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

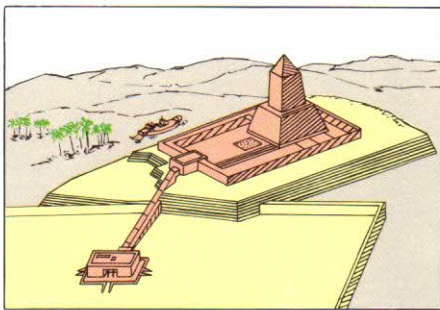
ACCESS. – 1½–2 hours on donkey-, camel- or horse-back or in a cross-country vehicle; or by car from Saqqara to Abusir, then 20 minutes on foot.

Some 7½ miles/12 km S of the Pyramids of Giza and ¾ mile/1 km NW of the Pyramids of Abusir, on the edge of the desert, are the imposing remains of the Sun-Temples of Abu Gurab, built by Pharaoh Niuserre (5th Dynasty) to mark the 30th anniversary of his accession.

Of the six sun-temples which are known to have been built during the 5th Dynasty (c. 2465 – c. 2325 B.C.), when the solar cult was declared the State religion and successive rulers took the name of “son of Re [the sun god]”, only two have been identified – the well-preserved Temple of Abu Gurab and the nearby temple erected by Userkaf. The Temple of Abu Gurab is said to have been modelled on the Great Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis.

The temple, formerly known as the Pyramid of Righa, was excavated in 1898–1901 by the German archaeologist Ludwig Borchardt (1863–1938) on behalf of the Berlin Museum. The various finds made during the excavations, including in particular the many fine bas-reliefs with which the walls were covered, can now be seen in the museums of Cairo and Berlin.

Like earlier Egyptian temples, the sun-temples of the 5th Dynasty were built on the edge of the desert and consisted of a valley temple and the main temple, with a causeway linking the two. Unlike the earlier temples, however, they were purely temples for the worship of the divinity and not the burial-place of the Pharaoh who built them. All the sun-temples had an open courtyard enclosing the obelisk of the sun – the focal point of worship, representing the first resting-place of the rising sun. At the foot of the obelisk (the form of which can be reconstructed from hieroglyphic representations) was a massive altar on which the cult of the sun was celebrated.



Sun-temple (reconstruction drawing)

THE TEMPLE. – The **Sun-Temple of Niuserre** stands on a low, artificially levelled hill. The courtyard, 330 ft/100 m long by 245 ft/75 m wide, is surrounded by a brick-built wall with an entrance at the E end. At the W end of the enclosure stood the large obelisk of the sun. From the entrance two passages, to the left and right, originally covered, ran along the inside of the enclosure wall, with handsome relief decoration depicting festival and hunting scenes and representations of nature. The left-hand passage extended along the E and S sides of the courtyard and then turned to the right (N) to reach the obelisk. Nothing is now left of the obelisk, which reared up to a height of some 230 ft/70 m on a masonry platform (partly preserved) 65–100 ft/20–30 m high. The passage, still decorated with relief representations of nature and Egypt's three seasons, continued up through the interior of the platform to a terrace around the foot of the obelisk.

In front of the E side of the platform, in the middle of the court, stands the **Altar**, measuring 18 ft/5.5 m by 20 ft/6 m, built of five massive blocks of alabaster. – The **chapel** on the S side of the obelisk was also embellished with fine reliefs. Its entrance (on the E side) was flanked by two uninscribed granite stelae and two ablution-basins set into the ground.

At the NE corner of the court was the place where the sacrificial animals were slaughtered, with channels in the paving which carried the blood into ten *alabaster basins*, nine of which have been preserved. On the N side of the obelisk was a smaller sacrificial court. – The N side of the main court was occupied by store-rooms and treasuries, to which the covered passage to the right of the entrance gave access.


Outside the enclosure wall, some 35 yds/30 m S, is the base, built of sun-dried brick, for a solar barque, the vessel which conveyed the sun god Re on his daily journey across the sky. – Little can now be seen of the gateway in the valley below the NE side of the hill or of the covered causeway which connected it with the

temple; the remains of these were excavated, but have for the most part been covered up again by the encroaching sand.

SURROUNDINGS of Abu Gurab. – To the SE of Niuserre's Temple, half-way between this and the Pyramids of Abusir, is the **Sun-Temple of Userkaf**, founder of the 5th Dynasty, the second sun-temple so far located, which was excavated by Swiss and German archaeologists in 1954–57. It is similar in layout to Niuserre's Temple but is considerably smaller (145 ft/44m by 270 ft/83 m) and is in a very poor state of preservation: much of the masonry seems to have been pulled down and reused in ancient times (in the reign of Ramesses II(?)). A black stone head, probably belonging to a statue of the goddess Neith, which was found during the excavations is now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

Abu Mena

Lower Egypt. – North-West Frontier District.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Midan Saad Zaghlul,
Alexandria;
tel. 80 79 85.

ACCESS. – From Bahig Station (on road and railway between Alexandria and Mersa Matruh) 9 miles/15 km S on a desert track.

The ruins of * **Abu Mena, the City of St Menas**, the greatest Christian place of pilgrimage in the East during the early medieval period and the largest Coptic town so far known, lies in the Mareotic Desert some 50 miles/80 km SW of Alexandria, half-way to the Wadi Natrun. This extensive site, known to the bedouin as Karm Abu Mina, the "Vineyard of St Menas", aroused wide international interest when it was discovered in 1905 by a German archaeologist, Carl Maria Kaufmann, and since then has been extensively excavated and studied, with long interruptions, particularly during the two world wars. Most of the finds from the site are displayed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo.

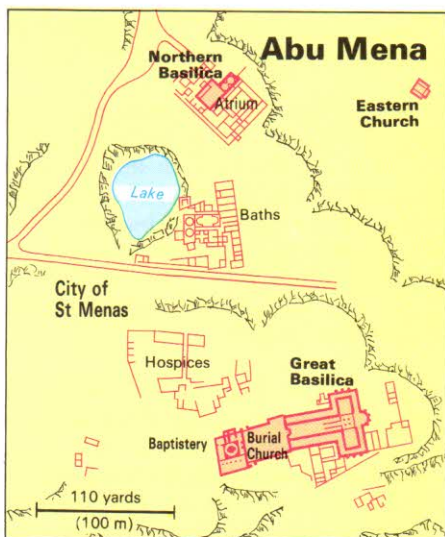
HISTORY. – The story of **St Menas**, a very popular Egyptian Saint (feast-day November 11) and the patron of merchants, is the subject of numerous legends and myths. Of Egyptian or Libyan origin, he was a Roman legionary in the time of Diocletian who was converted to the Christian faith and suffered a martyr's death in Phrygia in A.D. 296. Tradition asserts that when his comrades were carrying his body home the camels suddenly stopped on the edge of the Libyan Desert and could not be persuaded to move from the spot. Seeing this as a sign from Heaven, the soldiers buried Menas at the place indicated:

whereupon 90 springs of water gushed out of the ground and gave rise to a variety of miracles. Then pilgrims from all over the Near East began to flock to the site seeking a cure for their ailments, taking some of the water home with them in small pottery bottles made on the spot, usually decorated with a representation of St Menas between two crouching camels.

It is certain at any rate that on the site of the present burial church there was a grave of the period in question, within a cemetery bordering a settlement of some kind. In the course of time this tomb was steadily enlarged at the expense of surrounding burials, and towards the end of the 4th c. a small oratory was built over it. In the first half of the 5th c. this gave place to a basilica, which in turn was replaced at the beginning of the 6th c. by the Basilica of the Crypt, the present burial church. At about the same time the Great Basilica was built on to its eastern end, also on the site of an earlier structure. After the destruction of the holy place by fire, presumably as a result of the spread of Islam from the 7th c. onwards, the Patriarch Joseph (830–849) built, shortly before 850, a new five-aisled basilica in which much of the older church was incorporated.

Round this much-venerated shrine there grew up a magnificent city, which according to contemporary accounts was built entirely of marble and was equipped with all the attributes of an established place of pilgrimage, rather in the manner of present-day Lourdes. The heyday of the City of St Menas was in the 5th and 6th c.; but from the 7th c. onwards it was subject to repeated raids by bedouin converted to Islam, and about 900 it was plundered and devastated by the Abbasids. It was not finally abandoned by its last surviving inhabitants, however, until the 13th c. Thereafter the remains were buried under the sand of the advancing desert.

THE SITE. – Visitors are shown round the site by a monk from the nearby Monastery of St Menas. The central feature of the ancient city, the streets and houses of which can be clearly identified from the excavated remains, is the complex consisting of the Basilica of the Crypt built



over the Saint's grave, the Great Basilica adjoining its E end and the Baptistry at its W end.

The first burial church, built at the beginning of the 6th c. over an older basilica of the early 5th c., was a tetraconch oriented from W to E, with shallow apses marked out by columns. After its destruction by fire it was replaced, shortly before the middle of the 9th c., by the **Basilica of the Crypt** now visible. This is a five-aisled basilica 125 ft/38 m long and 75 ft/22.5 m wide, built over the spacious *Crypt* which contains the Saint's tomb; lying 25 ft/8 m below the level of the church, it is approached by a staircase of 30 marble steps. – To the N of the church is an extensive complex of cisterns and baths.

Adjoining the E end of the Burial Church is the **Great Basilica** (erroneously called the *Basilica of Arcadius*), a three-aisled structure 220 ft/67 m long by 105 ft/32 m wide with aisled transepts 165 ft/50 m long by 65 ft/20 m across. Under the crossing the position of the altar is marked by four columns which once supported a baldaquin. The main entrance, with three doorways, is on the S side of the nave; there were other entrances at the NW end of the nave and in the N transept. Flanking the nave are a variety of rooms, underground burial chambers, corridors and cellars.

At the W end of the Burial Church is the octagonal **Baptistry** (5th–6th c.), enclosed within a square external structure, with a large stepped marble font in the middle. Like the Burial Church and the Great Basilica, it was several times rebuilt, but always in the original form.

In the middle of a large cemetery on the N edge of the site is the three-aisled **Northern Basilica** (7th–9th c.), with an atrium at its W end. It is surrounded by extensive residential buildings and offices. This may have been the residence of the Patriarch when visiting Abu Mena. Adjoining the right-hand aisle is an elegant *Baptistry*.

On the eastern edge of the site are the remains of the **Eastern Church**, on a centralized tetraconchal plan. The square central area probably had a timber roof; on each of the four sides is a double conch, the inner one supported on a row of

columns. On the W side is an atrium. Outside the church, in the angles between the conches, are annexes, which, curiously, are built on different plans and thus disturb the strict symmetry of the plan as a whole. At the NE corner is a *Baptistry*, also containing a stepped piscina.

Among the secular buildings on the site are a number of *potters' workshops* and *kilns*, in which clay flasks for the use of pilgrims were produced in large quantities, as well as *cisterns*, Early Christian *hospices* and *bath-houses*.


Excavations by the Coptic Museum in Cairo, with the help of German archaeologists, are still in progress.

Abuqir

See under Alexandria

Abu Roash

Lower Egypt. – Governorate: Giza.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

ACCESS. – The Pyramids of Abu Roash, NW of Giza (Mena House), can be reached by cross-country vehicle, camel, donkey or horse-drawn carriage on a track which runs along the edge of the cultivated land (canal); then a ½ hour climb on foot.

Some 5 miles/8 km NW of the Pyramids of Giza near the village of Abu Roash, commandingly situated on a steep-sided rocky plateau some 500 ft/150 m above the Nile Valley in the Western (Libyan) Desert, are the remains of the Pyramid of Djedefre (4th Dynasty), son of Cheops, and his subsidiary wife Henutsen. This is the most northerly of all the pyramids.

Djedefre ensured his succession to the throne by marrying his half-sister Hetepheres II, the legitimate heiress. During his short reign of only eight years – a period of serious internal tensions – he built his relatively small and modest pyramid well away from the burial area at Giza, opposite Heliopolis, the City of the Sun, thus demonstrating his devotion to

the cult of the Sun. The cause of his death is unknown; and it is uncertain whether his pyramid was left unfinished or whether its poor state of preservation is the result of its use as a quarry of building material – a process which continued into modern times.

THE SITE. – The rocky plateau, almost inaccessible from the E, can be reached either by a steep and strenuous path on the S side or, more easily, on the ancient causeway running up from the Wadi el-Karen to the NE, which survives for a length of 1975 yds/1800 m, still carried at certain points on an embankment 40 ft/12 m high.

The remains of the **Pyramid of Djedefre** now stand only some 33 ft/10 m high, with a base length of 105 yds/97 m (originally 110 yds/100 m). From the top can be seen the entrance to the 140 ft/43 m long shaft, faced with granite blocks, leading to the *tomb chamber*. – To the E of the pyramid are the remains of the brick walling of the mortuary temple, and adjoining this a cavity in the rock which housed the solar barque. In this area were found numerous fragments of sculpture, including a fine head of Djedefre (now in the Louvre, Paris), depicted for the first time with the royal headcloth and the uraeus. – The *view from the plateau extends far into the Nile Valley and the wadis of the Western (Libyan) Desert.


Farther to the SW are the scanty remains of a smaller *stone-built pyramid*. – In the plain, N of the village of Abu Roash, was another brick-built pyramid which still stood to a height of 55 ft/17 m in the mid 19th c. but has since been entirely demolished except for the granite core containing the tomb chamber.

Some 1 mile/1.5 km E of the Abu Roash Pyramid, on a rocky spur of the plateau above the village, lies a *cemetery* of the Old Kingdom with large mastabas (excavated by French archaeologists 1922–24). Farther S, on a rocky ridge, are *tombs* of the 2nd–4th Dynasties.

SURROUNDINGS of Abu Roash. – In the nearby village of **Kerdasa** woven carpets in native traditional patterns are made and offered for sale.

Abu Simbel

Nubia. – Governorate: Aswan.

 **Tourist Information Office,**

Tourist Bazaar,

Aswan;

tel. 32 97.

ACCESS. – By air from Aswan (5 hours for the round trip, including sightseeing).

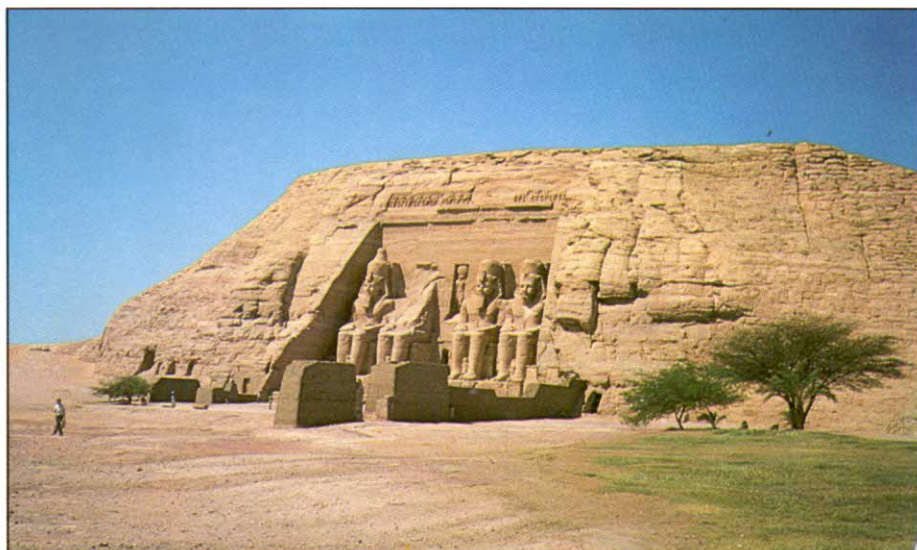
HOTEL. – *Nefertari* (Nov 1 to May 31 only), 32 b., SP, club.

Some 175 miles/280 km S of Aswan and 25 miles/40 km N of the Egyptian-Sudanese frontier at Wadi Halfa, near the Second Cataract (now drowned under the waters of Lake Nasser), are the ** rock temples of Abu Simbel, which rank among the most stupendous monuments of ancient Egypt. Both temples were constructed during the reign of Ramesses II (1290–24 B.C.) to mark the 30th anniversary of his accession. The larger of the two temples was dedicated to Amun-Re of Thebes and Re-Harakhty of Heliopolis, the principal divinities of Upper and Lower Egypt, but Ptah of Memphis and the deified Ramesses himself were also worshiped here. The smaller temple to the N was dedicated to the goddess Hathor and Ramesses II's favorite wife Nefertari, also deified.

HISTORY. – We can only speculate why Ramesses decided to construct such magnificent temples on this particular site. Probably there were already cave sanctuaries here at a very early period, since such sanctuaries were numerous in Nubia. With the creation of a temple dedicated to himself Ramesses became the first Pharaoh to take the final decisive step towards equating king and god; and at the same time the construction of the temples symbolized his royal and divine claim to rule the flourishing region of Nubia, the gold and copper of which were of great importance to Egypt. In addition the treasuries and store-rooms hewn deep into the rock provided a place of security for the riches acquired by war or the payment of tribute.

In the course of millennia many armies, merchants, caravans and other travelers passed this way, often leaving inscriptions and graffiti which throw light on the circumstances of the period. Traces of soot inside the temples show that they were sometimes used as dwellings. Later both temples were buried under the desert sand and sank into an oblivion which lasted until the early years of the 19th c. On March 22, 1813 the Swiss traveler Johann Ludwig Burckhardt (1784–1817) discovered the heads of the colossal figures of Ramesses emerging from the drifts of sand, but was unable to establish what they were or to penetrate into the interior of the temple. The systematic excavation of the temples was begun by an Italian,





New Abu Simbel – Ramesses II's Great Temple in its new position

Giambattista Belzoni (1778–1823), in 1817, and thereafter they ranked among the principal sights of Egypt.

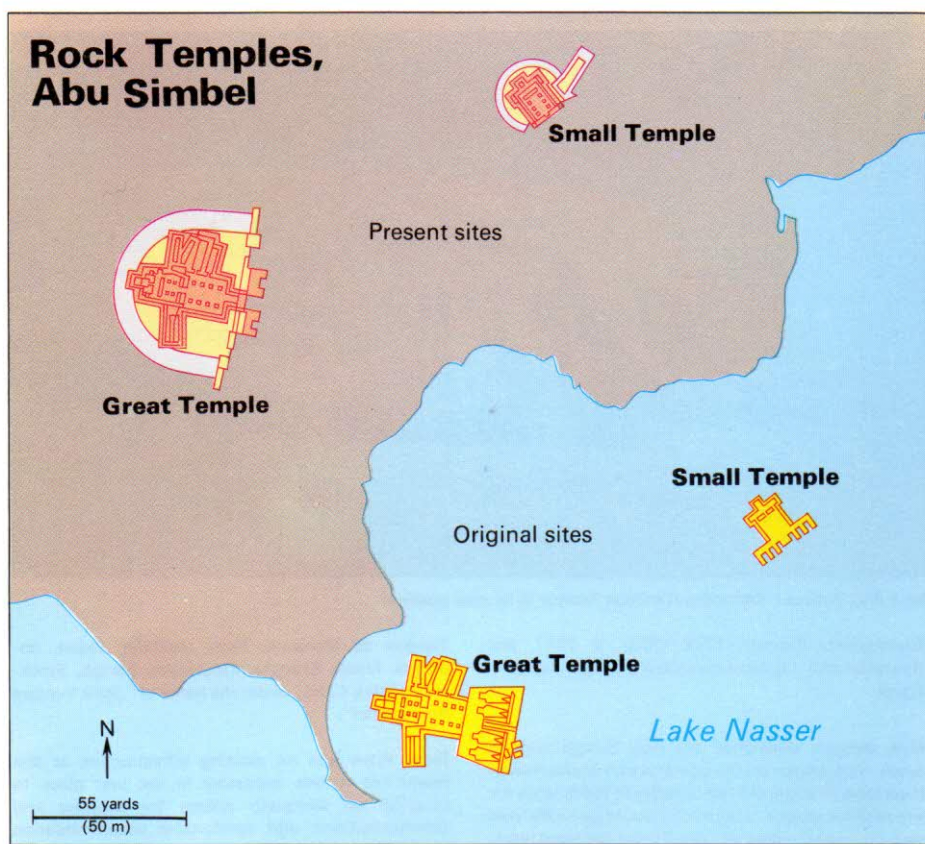
New dangers threatened the Abu Simbel temples when work began on the construction of the Aswan High Dam (Sadd el-Ali) on January 9, 1960, since the site of these unique monuments would be swallowed up by the rising waters of Lake Nasser, the huge reservoir to be created by the new dam. At the joint request of Egypt and Sudan Unesco put in train a massive rescue operation which saved the two temples for posterity. After decisions had been reached on responsibility for the expenditure involved there was much discussion of possible means of saving the temples. Among the projects considered were plans (put forward by the United States) for floating both temples on pontoons, which as the lake rose would carry them up to a new site on higher ground, and a Polish proposal for enclosing the whole site within a spherical shell into which visitors would descend in lifts. Another proposal was to enclose the site in a kind of glass aquarium and take visitors down to see it in enclosed glass cabins. Most of the plans put forward were rejected on either technical or aesthetic grounds, and the only proposal which seemed acceptable was a French one. This involved cutting both temples out of the solid rock in their entirety, setting them on huge slabs of concrete and then raising them to a new site by the use of hydraulic jacks. To raise the larger temple, weighing 265,000 tons, 440 jacks would have been required; for the smaller temple, weighing 55,000 tons, 94 jacks. But this project, too – comparable in its boldness with the original construction of the temples – had to be abandoned on account of the gigantic cost.

Finally, as the level of the lake continued to rise and time grew ever shorter, the decision was taken to adopt a proposal put forward by the Egyptian sculptor Ahmad Osman for sawing the temples into manageable blocks and re-erecting them on higher ground near their original sites. The costs, estimated at 36 million US dollars, were to be shared equally by Egypt, the United States and Unesco. The contract for the execution of the project was given to a consortium of six international civil engineering firms (Grands

Travaux de Marseille, Paris; Hochtief, Essen; Impregila, Milan; Skanska, Stockholm; Sentab, Stockholm; Atlas, Cairo) under the name of "Joint Venture Abu Simbel".

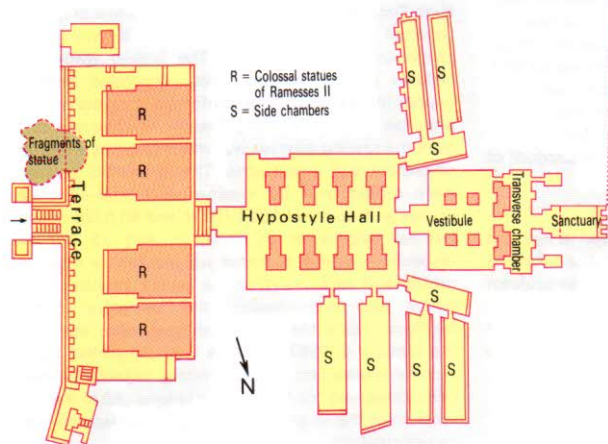
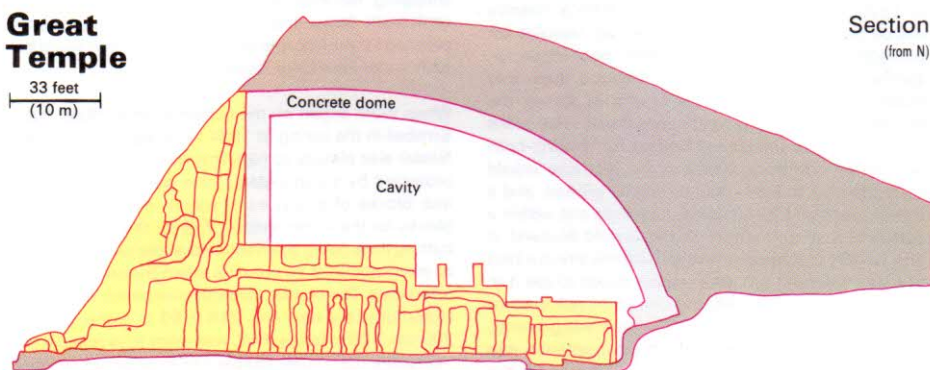
Since there was no existing infrastructure at this desert site it was necessary in the first place to establish an adequate system for supplies and communications; and comfortable accommodation for 2000 people was provided, with all necessary shopping facilities and social amenities. This new settlement forms the core of a much larger town planned for the future in the center of an oasis supplied with water from Lake Nasser.

When work began on the construction of **New Abu Simbel** in the spring of 1964 the water-level of Lake Nasser was already so high that the temples had to be protected by a coffer-dam. They were then sawn up into blocks of a maximum weight of 20 tons (807 blocks for the larger temple, 235 for the smaller), the cutting lines being so arranged that the joins would be as inconspicuous as possible when the temples were re-erected. The blocks, carefully numbered, were then stored until the new site, 215 ft/65 m higher up and 200 yds/180 m farther NW, was ready to receive them. Thereafter the smaller temple had to be raised another 6½ ft/2 m as a result in a change in the design of the High Dam, so that there is now a difference in height between the two temples of only 6 ft/1.80 m (previously 12½ ft/3.80 m). The interior walls and ceilings of the temples were suspended from a supporting framework of reinforced concrete which provides increased stability. The loss of stone resulting from the sawing process was made good by a mortar of cement and desert sand. The re-erected temples were roofed over by massive reinforced-concrete domes with spans of 165 ft/50 m and 80 ft/24 m and internal heights of 60 ft/19 m and 25 ft/7 m respectively which provided support for the mass of rubble and rock covering the whole structure and which also accommodate the necessary tourist facilities (movie-theater, refreshment-room, etc.). By the summer of 1968 the work was completed and a cultural monument of outstanding importance had been preserved for future generations. After the re-erection of the larger temple a slight displacement of its principal axis was detected.



Great Temple

33 feet
(10 m)



THE SITE. – The **Great Temple** was hewn out of the rock to a depth of 207 ft/63 m. The axis of the temple was aligned from W to E in such a way that twice every year, on February 20 and October 20 (now one day later, on February 21 and October 21), the rays of the rising sun reached the divine figures on the rear wall of the sanctuary.

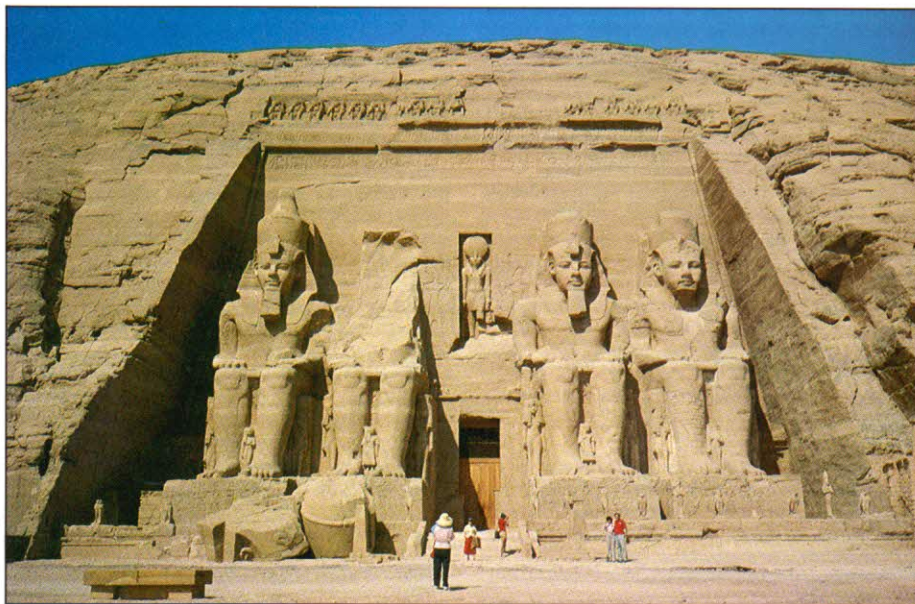
The *forecourt* in front of the temple was enclosed on the N and S by brick walls, at the E ends of which were pylon-like towers. The E side of the court was open, looking on to the Nile, while the W side was bounded by the long temple terrace. Remains of the original brick paving have been preserved. – From the forecourt a flight of nine low steps with a ramp in the middle leads up to the *terrace* in front of the temple. To the right and left, before the ramp, are steps leading up to two recesses which probably contained basins for ritual ablutions. In the recesses are *stelae* depicting Ramesses making offerings: on the one to the right (N) he is shown burning incense to Amun-Re, Re-Harakhty and Thoth and offering them flowers, on the one to the left (S) he is making offerings to Amun-Re, Thoth and the lion-headed Sakhmet. Along the front of the terrace is a decorative frieze depicting representatives of many different peoples making obeisance to the King, and above this is a cavetto cornice. In front of the balustrade, which has a dedicatory inscription running along its

whole length, are figures of falcons alternating with small statues of the King; the figures at the S end of the balustrade were probably destroyed by the collapse of the upper part of the second of the colossal figures.

In front of the massive façade of the temple, 108 ft/33 m high, are four **colossal figures** hewn from the solid rock. Seated on simple thrones, they are 65 ft/20 m high – comparable in size with the Colossi of Memnon at Thebes (see p.346). With their finely carved features and their stylized tranquility and harmony they dominate the mighty temple façade. All four represent the deified Ramesses II – the two on the left as Heka-tawi and Re-en-hekaw, the two on the right as Meri-Amun and Meri-Atum. The King's mild countenance and characteristic nose are best preserved in the first of the colossi (far left). The second figure lost its head and shoulders in ancient times, perhaps as a result of a rock fall or an earthquake (or a combination of both), and these now lie on the ground in front of it.

Some authorities believe that this collapse may have taken place during the reign of Ramesses II; but in that event the damage would surely have been made good, since the technical skills to do so were available in that period. It must at any rate have taken place not later than the end of the last dynasty, since in Christian times the temple was largely covered by sand. – The upper part of the third figure was repaired in the reign of Sethos II, when a support was added under the right arm.

The King wears on his head the royal headcloth, double crown and uraeus and is represented with the formal spade-like beard. His hands rest on his knees, and on his breast and upper arms and between his legs are the royal cartouches. To the right and left of each figure and between their legs are figures, on a smaller scale but still over-life-size, representing members of the royal family: flanking the first colossus the Princesses Nebt-tawi (left) and Bent-anat (right),



Colossal figures of Ramesses II on the façade of the Great Temple, Abu Simbel

with an unnamed Princess between the legs; flanking the second the King's mother, Tue (left), and his wife Queen Nefertari (right), with Prince Amen-herkhepshef between the legs. On the inner sides of the thrones of the two central colossi, flanking the entrance to the temple, are figures of the two Nile gods wreathing the floral emblems of Upper and Lower Egypt, the papyrus and the lotus, round the hieroglyphic sign meaning "unite", while below are rows of prisoners – on the left Kushites (depicted as Negroes), on the right Syrians.

On the two southern colossi are numbers of Greek, Carian and Phoenician inscriptions of great linguistic and historical interest, carved by mercenaries who had passed this way on various military expeditions. On the left leg of the second figure is a Greek inscription written by mercenaries sent by Psammetichus II (26th Dynasty; c. 595–589) from Elephantine into Nubia; after advancing as far as the Second Cataract they had left this record of their passage. The inscription reads: "When King Psammetichus had come to Elephantine this was written by those who traveled with Psammetichus, son of Theocles, and had gone beyond Kerkis so far as the river allowed. The foreigners were led by Potasimto, the Egyptians by Amasis. This was written by Archon, son of Amoibichos, and Pelekos, son of Udamos."

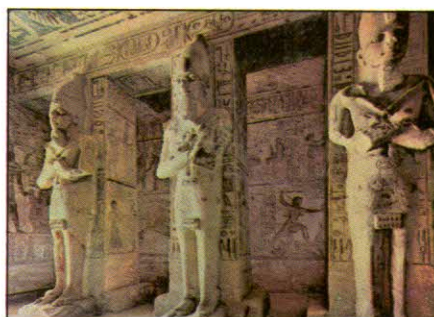
On the smoothed-down S wall of the terrace is a *stèle* of the 34th year of Ramesses II's reign commemorating the Pharaoh's marriage with Naphtari, daughter of the Hittite King Hattusilis III, who had been brought to Egypt by her father in the late summer of the year 1269 and had been given the Egyptian name of Maat-neferu-re. In the upper part of the stèle is Ramesses seated between two deities under a canopy, with the Hittite Princess and her father in attitudes of veneration in front of them. – The space between the southernmost colossus and the rock face forms a small open recess entered by a doorway. On its W wall is a long poetic inscription in the name of Ramesses II. – On the W wall of the space between the northernmost colossus and the rock face is a large *memorial inscription*, also by Ramesses, representing him in the presence of Re-Harakhty. – On the N wall to the left of the entrance to the court dedicated to the worship of the sun at the northern end of the terrace is a *memorial inscription* by Merneptah Siptah (19th Dynasty; c. 1208–1202 B.C.) in which he is represented burning incense to Amun-Re, Mut, Re-Harakhty and other deities.

Behind the four colossal figures is the trapezoid *façade* of the temple, which here represents the pylon found in free-standing temples. Along the top of the façade runs a frieze of 22 praying baboons, their hands raised to greet the rising sun, and below this is a cavetto cornice with royal cartouches surrounded by uraeus serpents and representations of Amun-Re (left) and Re-Harakhty (right). Below this again is Ramesses II's dedicatory inscription to Amun-Re and Re-Harakhty. These inscriptions, together with many other representations, show that the southern part of the temple was dedicated to Amun-Re and the northern part to Re-Harakhty.

Above the *entrance doorway* in the center of the façade is a large figural relief giving the King's name in the form of a rebus. In the middle is the falcon-headed figure of the sun god, flanked by the jackal-headed staff known as *user* and by Maat, goddess of truth and justice. Taken together, these give the King's coronation name, User-Maat-Re. On either side of the relief are representations of Ramesses making offerings to

the sun god and to his own deified name. On the door-lintel he is shown laying the foundation-stone of the temple in the presence of Amun and Mut (left) and Re-Harakhty and his lion-headed spouse Wert-hekaw (right). The doorway was closed by a single door, opening on the S side.

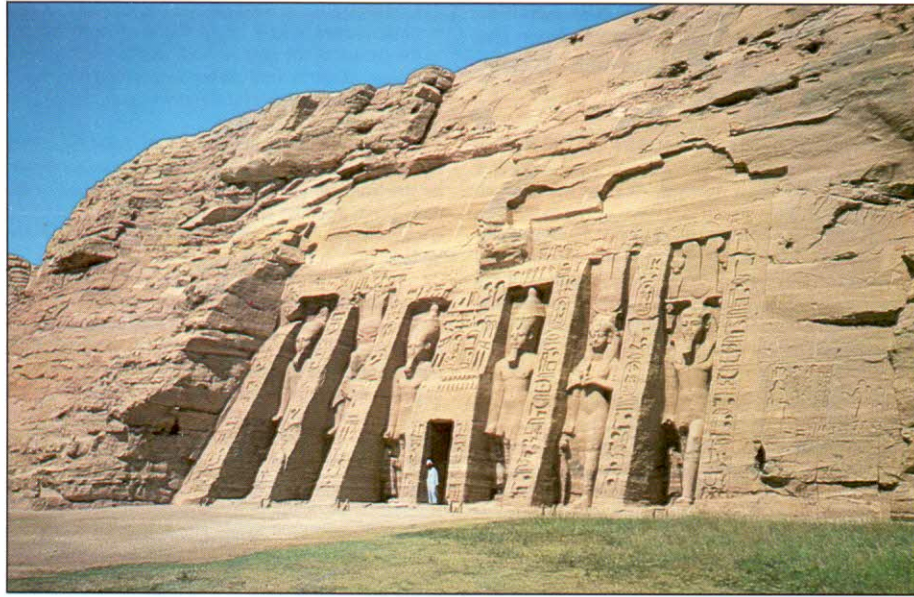
The doorway gives access to the large **Hypostyle Hall**, 58 ft/17.7 m long by 54 ft/16.43 m across, which here replaces the pillared court of free-standing temples. It is divided into three aisles, the central one being twice the width of the other two, by two rows of four square pillars, on the inner sides of which are *Osiris figures* of the King holding the scourge and the crook, almost 33 ft/10 m high. The figures on the right-hand side were the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt, those on the left the crown of Upper Egypt. The stylized symmetry of these massive figures is very striking. The finest is the fourth on the right, with its energetic features and well-preserved powerful nose. On the other sides of the pillars are representations of the King making offerings, his favorite wife Nefertari and his daughter (later his wife) Bent-anat. The ceiling of the central aisle has paintings of flying vultures; those of the lateral aisles are adorned with stars.



In the Hypostyle Hall of the Great Temple

The *mural reliefs*, some of which have preserved their vivid colors, are of great historical interest. On the right-hand side of the entrance wall the King, accompanied by his *ka*, is shown smiting his enemies in the presence of Re-Harakhty, who hands him a curved sword; below this scene are the Princesses with their sistra. On the left-hand side of the entrance wall is a similar representation of the King in the presence of Amun-Re, with his sons in the lower part of the scene. – On the S wall (to the left), in the upper register, are five magnificent *reliefs*, mainly of religious content, notable among them being the fourth scene, which shows the King kneeling before Re-Harakhty under the sacred persea tree; the fruits of the tree bear his name. In the lower register are three large battle scenes. To the left the King is shown storming a Syrian fortress in his war chariot under the protection of the weapon god Month and shooting the enemy on the battlements, who sue for mercy; he is followed by three Princes, while below a herdsman is shown fleeing into the town with his herd. In the middle scene the King is shown piercing a prostrate Libyan with his lance. The right-hand scene depicts his triumphal return from battle with his African prisoners.

On the N wall (to the right) are scenes from the King's campaign against the Hittites, also depicted in the temples of Abydos and Luxor and in the Ramesseum. In the lower register can be seen, at the left-hand end, the Egyptian army on the march; then, between two



New Abu Simbel – the Small Temple

doors to side chambers, the Egyptian camp, with shields set round it in a kind of stockade. The various activities in the camp are depicted in a lively way – the horses being given their fodder, the troops resting after their march, the camp-followers and servants, etc. To the right is the royal tent. The third scene shows the King and Princes holding a Council of War, while below two enemy spies are being beaten. The last scene depicts the battle between Egyptian and Hittite charioteers. – The scenes in the upper register take us into the thick of the battle. To the left the King is shown dashing against his enemies, who have surrounded him with their chariots; in the center is the enemy stronghold of Qadesh, encircled by the River Orontes, with the defenders looking down from the battlements; and to the right the King in his chariot watches while his officers count the severed hands and limbs of the enemy and bring in prisoners.

In the right-hand half of the rear wall Ramesses is shown leading two files of Hittite prisoners into the presence of Re-Harakhty, his own deified effigy and the lion-headed Wert-hekaw. In the left-hand half he presents Negro (Kushite) prisoners to Amun, the deified Ramesses and Mut. – Between the last two pillars on the left is a stela dating from the 35th year of Ramesses's reign recording in florid language the buildings and the gifts dedicated by him to Ptah of Memphis.

To the right and left of the Hypostyle Hall are eight small *side chambers*, some of which served as treasuries and store-rooms. Their decoration is of varying quality, but in general is simpler than that of the main chambers of the temple. Some of the rooms have stone tables along the walls.

Beyond the Hypostyle Hall is a second hypostyle hall or **Vestibule**, 36 ft/11 m by 25 ft/7.58 m, divided into three aisles by four square pillars. On the sides of the pillars are representations of the King being received into the company of the gods. On the S wall is the barque of Amun-Re, on the N wall that of the deified Ramesses in the form of the divine unity Ramses-meri-Imen-em-pa-per-Ramses. The barques are borne in

procession, preceded by the King and his wife Nefertari making offerings of food and incense. On the S wall the royal couple are shown wearing sandals; on the N wall they are barefoot.

From the Vestibule three doorways lead into a long and narrow **Transverse Chamber**. On the walls of this chamber the King is shown making offerings to Min, Horus and Khnum (left-hand end) and to Atum, Thoth and Ptah (right-hand end), who were also worshiped here, almost with the status of guest divinities. – From the Transverse Chamber three doors lead into three small rooms at the farthest end of the temple. In the center is the rectangular **Sanctuary**, which could be entered only by the King. On the right-hand and left-hand walls Ramesses is depicted burning incense. On the rear wall are over-life-size figures of Ptah, Amun-Re, the King himself and Re-Harakhty (from left to right) – again giving expression to the King's complete equality with the gods.

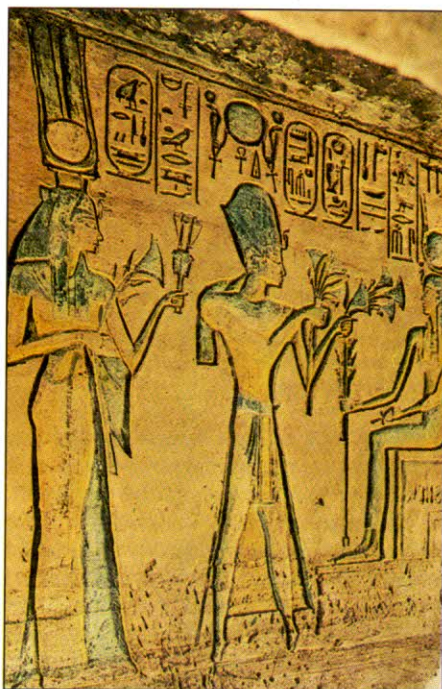
Every year on February 20 and October 20 (one of which may have been the date of Ramesses II's Coronation) the rays of the rising sun penetrated into the Sanctuary, illuminating the faces of the divine figures. This recurring phenomenon was undoubtedly an occasion for ritual celebration, and is still an impressive spectacle. – In front of the figures is the square base, hewn from the rock, of the sacred barque which was kept here.

To the N of the Great Temple, reached by way of a gate constructed by Ramesses in the brick wall enclosing the forecourt, is the **Small Temple** of Abu Simbel (*Temple of Hathor*), originally situated on a rocky promontory reaching out towards the Nile and separated from the Great Temple by a sand-filled valley. Also built by Ramesses II, this was dedicated to Hathor, goddess of love, and to the deified Nefertari, Ramesses's wife. It is oriented

from NW to SE. During the Nile inundation it could be reached directly from the river by way of a quay of which no trace survives; it had no forecourt.

The *façade*, 92 ft/28 m long and 39 ft/12 m high, is hewn from the rock in imitation of a pylon with a cavetto cornice (now missing). It does not form an exact right angle with the main axis of the temple, so that there is a gap between the N end of the façade and the rock face. Here the Royal Steward and Scribe Iuni of Heracleopolis, who was probably in charge of the construction of the Abu Simbel temples, had himself represented in the act of demonstrating his devotion to his royal and divine master.

Along the façade are six ***colossal statues**, more than 33 ft/10 m high, of Ramesses and his Queen. The colossal figures on either side of the doorway represent the King in the union of the divine beings Heka-tawi with Meri-Imen (to the left) and Re-en-hekaw with Meri-Atum (to the right). On either side of these central figures are statues of Queen Nefertari, and beyond these again are two further statues of the King. Unusually, the Queen is the same size as the King. Flanking the colossal statues are smaller figures of the royal children, the Princesses (depicted with their left foot advanced in front of them) being larger than the Princes. Beside the figure of Nefertari are the Princesses Merit-Amun (right) and Hent-tawi (left); beside the figures of Ramesses at each end of the façade are the Princes Meri-Atum (right) and Meri-Re (left); and beside the central figures of the King are Amen-her-khopshef (right) and Re-her-unemef (left). Between the colossal figures are projecting sections of rock like buttresses, so that the statues appear to be set in niches. In view of the extreme friability of the stone the whole area of the façade was plastered and painted. All the buttresses are covered with hieroglyphic inscriptions.



Relief in the Small Temple of Abu Simbel

The *doorway* is cut through the rather wider central buttress; above it is a broad frieze of royal cobras. In the center of the façade, high above the doorway, is a block of undressed stone, which may have been reserved for a carving of the Hathor cow.

The doorway leads into an almost exactly square *Hypostyle Hall*, divided into three aisles by six pillars, on the fronts of which are sistra with the head of the cow-eared goddess Hathor. On the other sides of the pillars are figures of the royal couple and various deities.

The *mural reliefs* are simpler and less colorful than those in the Great Temple but are also of great artistic and historical value. On the entrance wall the King, accompanied by the Queen, is shown smiting a Libyan in the presence of Re-Harakhty and a Negro (Kushite) in the presence of Amun-Re. On the left-hand wall, from left to right, are: 1. Ramesses in the presence of Hathor; 2. Ramesses crowned by Seth and Horus; 3. The Queen in the presence of Anukis; 4. Ramesses presenting an image of Maat to Amun. On the right-hand wall, from right to left, are: 1. Ramesses offering food to Ptah; 2. Ramesses in the presence of the ram-headed god Herishef of Heracleopolis; 3. The Queen in the presence of Hathor; 4. Ramesses offering wine to Re-Harakhty. On the rear wall the Queen is depicted in the presence of Hathor (left) and of Mut (right).

From the Hypostyle Hall three doorways lead into a narrow *Transverse Chamber*, with reliefs of less interest. To the left and right are two unfinished side chambers, over the doors of which are fine reliefs of the Hathor cow in a papyrus marsh, worshiped respectively by the King and the Queen. Beyond the Transverse Chamber is the *Sanctuary* in the rear wall of which is a recess in the form of a chapel, its roof supported by sistra. In this recess is a figure in high relief of the goddess Hathor as a cow; under her head (and thus under her protection) is the King. On the left-hand wall the Queen offers incense to Mut and Hathor; on the right-hand wall the King offers incense and pours a libation in front of his own image and that of the Queen.

Abusir

Middle Egypt. – Governorate: Giza.

Tourist Information Office,
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

ACCESS. – By road from Giza: 7½ miles/12 km S.

The ***Pyramids of Abusir** stand on a low bluff above the W bank of the Nile near the village of that name, roughly half-way between the Pyramids of Giza and the Step Pyramid of Djoser near Saqqara. They were erected by three kings of the 5th Dynasty – Sahure (2455–2443), Neferirkare (2443–2423) and Niuserre (2416–2392). The first ruler of the 4th Dynasty and the kings

of the 6th Dynasty built their funerary monuments farther S, around Saqqara. – The Abusir Pyramids, originally 14 in number, were first excavated in 1901–08 by the German Oriental Society under the direction of Ludwig Borchardt. Further investigations were carried out in 1955–57.

The solar cult reached its climax under the 5th Dynasty. The rulers of this dynasty no longer saw themselves merely as the sons of their deified predecessor but as sons of their divine father Re, the Sun which gave life and light to the world. The mortuary temples now became temples of the sun which were the king's home after his death. – The mortuary temples of Abusir are similar to those of earlier rulers: the only new feature is the extraordinary profusion of relief decoration. This has unfortunately been decimated by stone robbery; and most of the reliefs still surviving when the monuments were excavated were removed and are now in museums, mostly in Europe. These magnificent reliefs depict everyday events and special occasions in the life of the king: scenes of religious ritual are relatively rare. Built of soft limestone, often with no great care, the Pyramids and temples of Abusir have suffered much damage in the course of the centuries.

The northernmost monument in the group is the **Pyramid of Sahure**. As the earliest of the three kings, Sahure selected the best site for his pyramid, a low-lying area within convenient reach of the Nile Valley. The vertical height of the pyramid was originally 228 ft/69.4 m (now 115 ft/35 m), the length of the base 257 ft/78.3 m (now 216 ft/65.8 m), the angle of incline 51° 42' 35". It was originally faced with smooth marble slabs and probably had a cap (pyramidion) of red Aswan granite with the King's cartouche. From the N side of the pyramid a passage walled and paved with granite led down to the tomb chamber (now destroyed) containing the royal sarcophagus.

On the E side of the pyramid are the extensive remains of the **mortuary temple**, laid out on a clearly articulated axial plan, which was connected with the valley temple by a gently sloping causeway 245 yds/225 m long, once richly decorated with reliefs.

A narrow rectangular vestibule on the E side of the temple gives access to a large *colonnaded court* (80 ft/24 m by 55 ft/17 m) which is the central feature of the plan. Fragments of the 16 granite palm columns (6 along the sides and 4 along the ends) which once supported the roof of the colonnade around the walls of the court are scattered about. The columns bore the names and titles of the King and dedicatory inscriptions, while the walls were decorated with reliefs depicting important and glorious events in his reign. The basalt paving of the court is well preserved. At the rear end of the court stood the altar of light-colored alabaster, decorated with incised representations of religious themes. – Around the outside of the court ran a passage, also richly decorated with reliefs. In the southern part of this there is a well-preserved scene depicting the King hunting hoofed game; in the northern part he is shown hunting wildfowl and hippopotamuses in a papyrus marsh.

From the court a narrow passage runs W into a transverse chamber, beyond which, on a slightly higher level, is a small room with five niches in its rear wall which originally contained statues of the King in his five divine qualities. From here a side door on the left led through narrow passages to the innermost sanctuary at the foot of the pyramid, with the large false door which symbolized the entrance to the Realm of the Dead. – To N and S of the sanctuary are a series of two-storeyed *store-rooms* and *treasuries* for the provisions and equipment which the King would require in his afterlife.

At the SE corner of the temple, in a separate court but still within the precinct wall of the temple, was the small Pyramid of the Queen.

Under the New Kingdom Sahure's Mortuary Temple gained increased importance through the introduction of the cult of the goddess Sakhmet, who was probably worshiped here into Ptolemaic times. During the Roman period the temple fell into disuse and was systematically demolished by stone-robbers. In Early Christian times a modest Coptic church was built in the colonnaded court, but this, too, has now disappeared.

S of the Pyramid of Sahure is the **Pyramid of Niuserre** (2416–2392), the ruins of whose once-mighty sun-temple lie a short distance away to the NW at Abu Gurab (see that entry). The layout of the funerary complex is similar to that of Sahure, but the structures are in a much worse state of preservation. From the *valley temple*, of which practically nothing is left, a covered causeway led up to the Pyramid of Neferirkare (see below) – perhaps making use of the earlier causeway leading to that pyramid – and then, reaching the higher ground, turned towards Niuserre's Mortuary Temple. A massive precinct wall enclosed the pyramid, the mortuary temple to the E of the pyramid and a smaller subsidiary pyramid at its SE corner. The causeway led into a forecourt, on either side of which

were store-rooms. Adjoining this was an open court paved with basalt slabs and originally surrounded by papyrus columns, fragments of which lie about. Little trace is left of the temple itself. To the N, outside the enclosure wall, are large *mastabas* for female members of the Royal House and high dignitaries. In the Mastaba of Userkafankh, a High Priest and Court official, which stood close to the temple, was found a statue of Userkafankh himself (now in the Liebieghaus in Frankfurt).

A few paces SE of the Pyramid of Sahure is the *Mastaba of Ptahshepses* (5th Dynasty), Niuserre's son-in-law, the largest and most richly furnished private tomb of the Old Kingdom. From the large hypostyle hall (only partly cleared) with 20 square columns a doorway leads into another room with three niches for statues. On the walls are reliefs (goldsmiths and workmen carving statues of the dead man in wood and metal). In a third room (to the right) were found the two oldest and largest known lotus cluster-columns of the Old and Middle Kingdoms (height 20 ft 5 in./6.28 m, diameter 3 ft 5 in./1.05 m) and remains of fine mural reliefs (ships, market scenes, craftsmen, etc.).

A short distance SW of the Pyramid of Niuserre stands the **Pyramid of Neferirkare**, the largest of the Abusir group. It originally had a base length of 360 ft/109 m (now 325 ft/99 m) and a height of 225 ft/69 m (now 165 ft/50 m). On the E side are remains of the *mortuary temple*, built of freestone and brick. – Farther S is the **Pyramid of Neferefre**, fifth King of the 5th Dynasty, who ruled only a few days in 2416 B.C.

Abusir (Busiris)


See under Behbeit el-Hagara

Abusir (Taposiris Magna)

See under Alexandria

Abydos

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Sohag.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Tourist Bazaar,
Luxor;
tel. 22 15.

ACCESS. – By car from Sohag (28 miles/45 km, going S along the Nile road) or Luxor (87 miles/140 km: NW via Qena and Nag Hammadi to El-Balyana, then 7½ miles/12 km SW). – By rail to El-Balyana, then taxi.

Some 95 miles/150 km NW of Luxor on the W bank of the Nile, between the villages of El-Khirba and El-Araba el-Madfuna (the "buried" village), are the ruins of the *Temples of Abydos (Egyptian Abodu), with one of the oldest necropolises in Egypt, associated with the nearby city of Thinis (This), the first Egyptian capital. From the time of the 1st and 2nd Dynasties (beginning of 3rd millennium B.C.) Abydos played an important role as the burial-place of kings and high Court dignitaries. Here were celebrated the rituals for the burial of the dead king and the accession of his successor, symbolizing the transitory and recurrent character of all earthly things.

HISTORY. – The city and its necropolis were both devoted to the worship of the death god Khontamenti, "first of the inhabitants of the Western Kingdom", who had the form of a dog. Even under the Old Kingdom, however, the cult of Osiris, which originated in the Delta, had gained a foothold at Abydos; and thereafter Osiris took possession of the ancient temple and was recognized as Khontamenti's equal. The nearby hill of Umm el-Gaab was believed to be Osiris's Tomb, and from the 6th Dynasty onwards the dead from all over Egypt were buried at Abydos. Several kings of the Middle Kingdom as well as wealthy private citizens erected cenotaphs or stelae here, for to the pious Egyptian there was no greater bliss than to be buried beside the Tomb of Osiris, or failing this to have his mummy brought temporarily to Abydos to receive the desired consecration, or at the very least to recommend himself to the favor of Osiris, lord of the Underworld, by the erection of a cenotaph or a memorial stone. In the mystery plays performed annually at Abydos in honour of Osiris the eternal terrestrial cycle of death and rebirth was celebrated. Osiris's sister and wife Isis, their son Horus and, under the New Kingdom, Ptah, Re-Harakhty and Amun were also worshiped at Abydos.

Strabo gives an interesting account of Abydos: "Above Ptolemais lies Abydos, the site of the Memnonium, a wonderful palace built of stone in the manner of the Labyrinth but with fewer passages and corridors. Under the Memnonium is a spring, reached by passages with low vaults consisting of a single stone and notable for their extent and mode of construction. This spring is connected with the Nile by a canal, which flows through a grove of thorn-acac. It is sacred to Apollo. Abydos seems once to have been a



A sakiya bringing up water for irrigation near Abydos

large city, second only to Thebes, but now it is only a small place." – Ammianus Marcellinus (4th c. A.D. speaks of the oracle of the god Bes which flourished here.

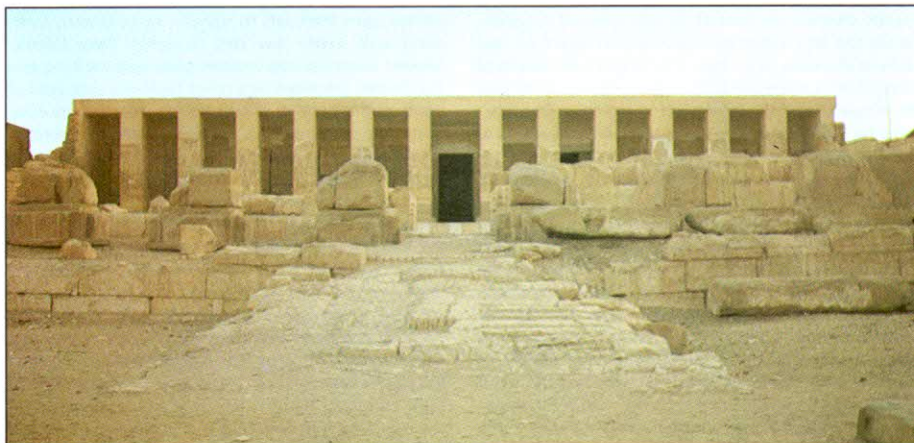
SIGHTS. – The most important part of ancient Abydos was its extensive **Necropolis**, situated in the desert. Four separate areas can be identified. In the most southerly part of the necropolis, near El-Araba, are the tombs of the New Kingdom, the temples of Sethos I and Ramesses II and the so-called Osireion. To the N of this is a hill containing burials of the Late Old Kingdom. Still farther N, between the Sanctuary of Osiris and the remains of walls at Shunet el-Zebib, are the tombs of the Middle Kingdom, many of them in the form of small brick pyramids; here, too, are burials of other periods, particularly the 18th–20th Dynasties (c. 1500–c. 1000 B.C.) and the Late Dynastic Period. Finally in the hill of Umm el-Gaab, to the W, are the royal tombs of the earliest dynasties and the sacred Tomb of Osiris.

The chief feature of interest is the ***Temple of Sethos I**, Strabo's *Memnonium*. This magnificent structure, completed by Sethos's son and successor Ramesses II, was almost completely excavated in 1859 by the French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette (1821–81) at the expense of the then Viceroy, Said.



Anubis (Temple of Sethos I)

The temple complex is laid out on three levels. The walls are built of fine-grained limestone, the columns, architraves and door-posts of a harder limestone. The layout differs in many respects from that of other Egyptian temples. There are not one but no fewer than seven chapels, dedicated to Osiris, Isis, Horus, Ptah, Re-Harakhty, Amun and the deified Sethos. The front part of the temple is thus divided into seven individual temples, each with its own doorway, and the chambers behind the chapels are not arranged behind one another, as in other temples, but side by side. Another unusual feature is the wing, containing various subsidiary chambers, which branches off the main



Temple of Sethos I (Memnonium)

structure at right angles. Of particular interest is the decoration of the temple, in particular the *reliefs dating from the reign of Sethos I, which rank among the finest achievements of Egyptian sculpture.

The temple is entered from the NE. In front of it, to the left, is the façade wall of a small building, probably a festival temple, facing on to the axis of the main temple. The first pylon is in ruins; on its rear side are shallow niches which contained statues of Sethos I and Ramesses II in the form of Osiris. – The **First Court** is largely destroyed. On its SE wall (to the left) are scenes from Ramesses II's wars and victories in Asia (Battle of Qadesh against the Hittites; counting of the severed hands of the enemy dead; dedication of booty to Amun). On the SW side of the court, on a higher level, is a *Hypostyle Hall*, with representations of Ramesses II's children on the base of the walls; the scenes are continued on the rear wall of the second pylon. In front of the hall can be seen two wells.

The **Second Court** is better preserved. To the right and left are dedicatory inscriptions in the name of Ramesses II. Ramesses is also depicted making offerings to various deities and smiting his enemies in the presence of Amun. On the far side of the court a low ramp leads up to the TEMPLE proper, which stands on a platform. It comes first to a vestibule, which, like the Hypostyle Hall in the First Court, had 12 pillars constructed of blocks of sandstone and limestone. It originally had seven doors in the rear wall. On the wall to the left of the main doorway is an inscription in 95 vertical columns recording the completion of the temple by Ramesses II. The reliefs depict Ramesses in the presence of various deities; one scene (adjoining the doorway) shows him presenting an image of the goddess Maat to the triad of Osiris, Isis and Sethos I (here taking the place of Horus). – The seven doors corresponded to the temple's seven chapels. Processions in honor of the King passed through the first door, at the left-hand end, while the other doors were used by processions honoring Ptah, Re-Harakhty, Amun, Osiris, Isis and Horus. Six of these doors were walled up by Ramesses II, leaving only the one in the middle as the main entrance.

The central doorway leads into the **First Hypostyle Hall** (170 ft/52 m by 35 ft/11 m), the roof of which (partly fallen in) is supported on 24 papyrus cluster-columns with bud capitals. The columns are so arranged that the five central processional aisles leading to the chapels are flanked by two pairs of columns, while the two outermost aisles are bounded on one side by the walls of the hall. The reliefs on the shafts of the columns show the King in the presence of the god to whose chapel the aisle leads, sometimes accompanied by the other deities of his triad. The carving is of mediocre quality; the reliefs date from the time of Ramesses II, who caused Sethos I's bas-reliefs to be chiseled out and replaced by sunk reliefs. Notable among the other reliefs are those in the lower row on the end wall to the right. They show (to the right) Thoth and Horus pouring holy water, in the form of the hieroglyphs for "purity" and "life", over Ramesses II; to the left the dog-headed Wepwawet and the falcon-headed Horus, "avenger of his father", lead the King into the temple and hold the hieroglyph for "life" to his nostrils, with Hathor of Dendera to the left; farther to the left Ramesses presents to Osiris, who is accompanied by Isis and Horus, a case for papyrus rolls in the shape of a column held by a kneeling king, with a falcon's head on the top as a lid.

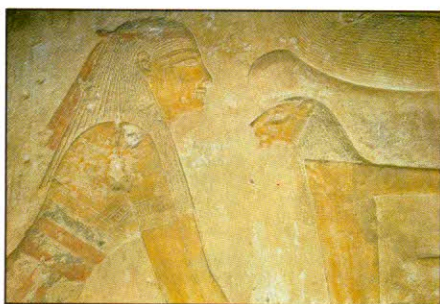
Seven doors, corresponding to the walled-up entrance doorways, lead into the **Second Hypostyle Hall**, with 36 columns set in three rows supporting the architraves and the roofing slabs which rest on them. The arrangement of the columns flanking the processional aisles is similar to that in the preceding hall. The 24 columns in the first two rows have closed papyrus capitals. The columns in the third row, set on a raised platform, are tree-trunk columns with cylindrical shafts and no capitals, on which rest stone slabs forming an abacus for the support of the architrave.

The inscriptions and reliefs on the walls and columns, which date from the time of Sethos I, are of excellent workmanship, but the subjects are of little interest. Particular attention should be paid, however, to the magnificent *reliefs on the right-hand end wall. To the right Sethos is shown standing before Osiris and Horus holding a censer and pouring water out of three flower-decked vases. In the next scene the King, with his censer, stands in front of a shrine in which Osiris is enthroned, with Maat and Ronpet (goddess of the year) in front of him and Isis, Amentet (goddess of the West) and Nephthys behind him and nine small gods in the background. On the pier at the far end of the wall is a richly decorated *djed* pillar, the emblem of Osiris of Busiris, flanked on the right and left by a figure of the King wearing the crown of Lower Egypt (cf. the representation on the corresponding pier at the other end of the hall). To the left of the pier Sethos is depicted presenting an image of the goddess Maat to Osiris, Isis and Horus. In all these figures of the King his profile, evidently a faithful likeness, is executed with great artistic skill.

Adjoining this hall, in a direct line with the seven entrance doorways, are seven CHAPELS. The one in the middle is dedicated to Amun, the principal god of the New Kingdom, the three on the right to Osiris, Isis and Horus and the three on the left to Re-Harakhty, Ptah and the King. In each chapel stood the sacred barque of the particular deity. The chapels, which were originally closed by double doors, are approached by ramps, with the exception of the central one, which has a flight of steps. The roofs of the chapels, which are formed by projecting courses of stone capped by roof-slabs, are decorated with stars and the names of Sethos I. The walls are covered with *reliefs* depicting the ceremonies which took place in the chapels. The colors are excellently preserved. In the piers between the entrances to the chapels are square niches, also decorated with reliefs.

The following description of the chapels and the niches goes from left to right. – **KING'S CHAPEL.** Left-hand wall, lower row (left to right): three falcon-headed and three dog-headed gods bear the King into the chapel, preceded by a priest (with the side-lock of youth and a panther skin) offering incense; the King seated on a throne at a banquet, with his guardian spirit behind him and the ibis-headed god Thoth in front of him; the gifts offered by the King are detailed in a long list presented to the god. Left-hand wall, upper row: the priest before nine gods (in three rows); the King between Thoth and Nekhbet (on the right) and Horus and Buto (on the left), who bestow blessings on him; Thoth and the priest making offerings to the sacred barque, which has heads of the King on the bow and stern and stands in a shrine crowned with serpents (the priest in front of the King has been effaced). Right-hand wall, lower row (left to right): the King, his guardian spirit and the priest, as on the opposite wall; the King seated between Nekhbet and Buto on a throne which is supported by the hieroglyph for "union", around which Thoth and

Horus twine papyrus and lotus, the emblems of Lower and Upper Egypt (symbolizing the unification of the two parts of the country under one king); Seshet inscribes the King's name for eternity; the priest in the presence of nine gods. Right-hand wall, upper row: the priest and Thoth in front of the (defaced) image of the King, while six dog-headed and falcon-headed gods bring him vases; Month and Atum conduct the King to the temple, followed by Isis. – As in all the other chapels except that of Osiris, the rear wall was occupied by two false doors, the rounded pediments of which (only partly preserved) were richly ornamented. Between the two doors is a plant on which a serpent lies. – Niche to the right of the chapel: Thoth holds the hieroglyph for "life" to the King's nostrils (left); the priest of the dead offering incense to the King (rear); Thoth and the King seated opposite one another (right).



Relief in the Temple of Sethos I

The CHAPEL OF PTAH is partly destroyed. On the side walls the King is shown worshipping Ptah. – Niche to the right of the chapel: Sethos before Sakhmet (left), Ptah (rear) and Re-Harakhty (right).

CHAPEL OF RE-HARAKHTY. The reliefs depict the King before Re-Harakhty, Atum, the goddess Eusos of Heliopolis and Hathor. – Niche to the right: the King before Harakhty, to whom he presents an image of Maat (left), Amun-Re (rear) and Mut (right).

CHAPEL OF AMUN. The colors of the reliefs in this chapel are excellently preserved. Sethos is depicted offering sacrifices to Amun in his various forms and burning incense before the sacred barques of Amun (decorated with rams' heads), Khons and Mut (decorated with the heads of these deities), which stand in a shrine. On the false door are inscriptions dating from the Greek period. – Niche to the right: the King sacrifices to Mut (left), anoints Amun (rear) and offers incense to Khons (right).

CHAPEL OF OSIRIS. The King before the various forms of Osiris, who is frequently accompanied by Isis or other deities. On the right-hand wall (above) he sacrifices to the sacred barque of Isis; on the left-hand wall (above) he offers incense to the reliquary of Osiris at Abydos, which stands under a canopy with five images of deities borne on poles in front of it. To right and left of the entrance the King is depicted before the dog-headed Wepwawet. – Niche to the right: the King before Osiris, Isis and Nut.

CHAPEL OF ISIS. Sethos appears before Isis, who is frequently accompanied by her son, the falcon-headed Horus, and the goddess's barque. – Niche to the right: the King before Osiris, Horus and Isis.

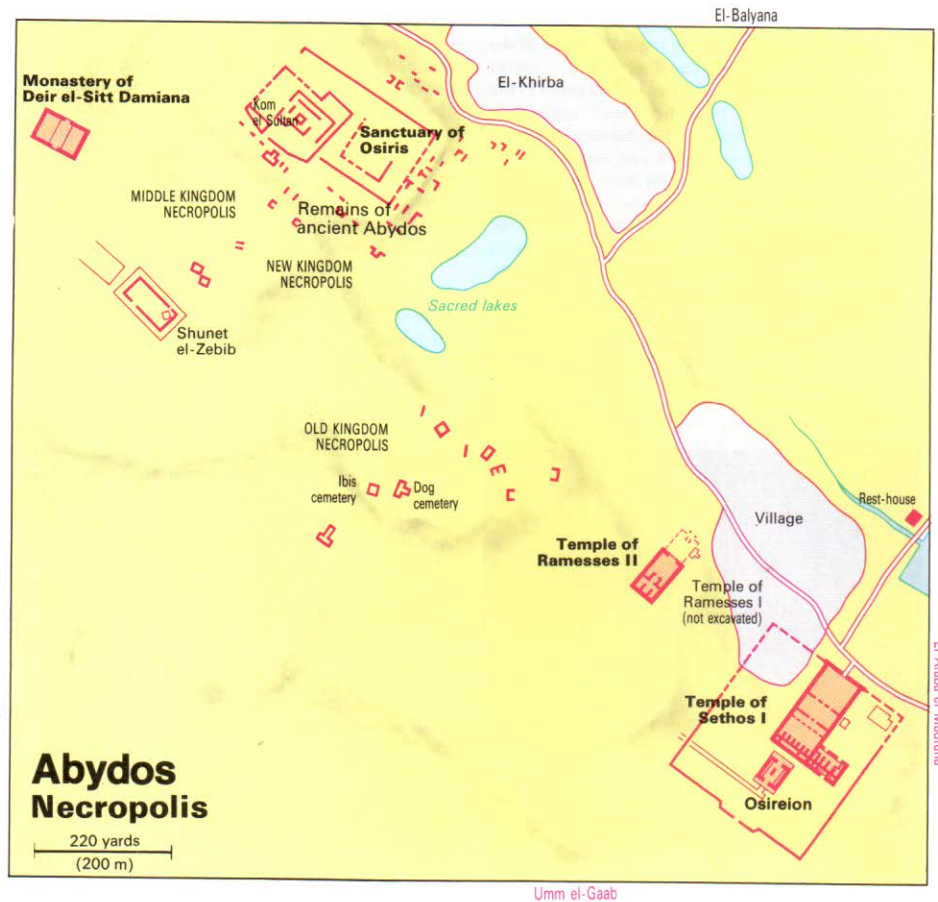
CHAPEL OF HORUS. The King before the falcon-headed Horus, Isis and Horus's barque.

A door in the Chapel of Osiris leads into a series of rooms dedicated to the special cult of Osiris. The first is a hall, the roof of which was supported on ten columns without capitals. To the right of this are three chapels with fine colored reliefs, dedicated respectively (from left to right) to Isis, the King revered as Osiris and Horus. Behind the chapels is another room (not accessible). To the left of the hall is a small room with four columns, on the E wall of which are four niches containing reliefs. Adjoining are three small chapels, largely destroyed.

The SOUTH WING contains a slaughter-yard, a well, store-rooms, etc., as well as a *Chapel of Ptah-Sokar*, the death god of Memphis, which is entered from the Second Hypostyle Hall, turning left immediately in front of the King's Chapel. The roof is supported by three tree-trunk columns. The fine reliefs show Sethos I revering Ptah-Sokar, his son Nefertum and other deities. In the E wall are four niches decorated with reliefs. – Off the main chapel open two smaller ones roofed with false (corbeled) vaults, dedicated to Sokar (right) and Nefertum (left). On the left-hand wall of the former is a relief of Horus and Isis by the bier of Osiris, on whose mummy sits a falcon (Isis); at the head and foot are two other falcons with drooping wings. On the right-hand wall are Isis and Horus at the bier of Sokar-Osiris, who holds his left hand to his brow and grasps his phallus in his right.

By far the most important feature of the S wing, however, is the **Gallery of the Kings**, a long and gradually rising corridor which is entered from the Second Hypostyle Hall (doorway between the second and third rows of columns). On the right-hand wall of the gallery is the famous **Abydos King List** (illustration, p.36), which has yielded important information on the sequence of Egyptian rulers. It depicts Sethos I with a censer and the Crown Prince, later Ramesses II (with the side-lock of youth), who is reciting hymns from a papyrus roll. They are revering their royal ancestors, 76 of whom are listed in the two upper rows. The list begins with the first King of Egypt, Menes (Hor-aha?), and continues to Sethos, the names of unimportant or illegitimate rulers being omitted. The inscription above the list reads as follows: "The performance of the prayer for the dead ('May Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, lord of the tomb, who dwells in the temple of Sethos, increase the gifts for the kings of Upper and Lower Egypt') by King Sethos: 1000 loaves of bread, 1000 barrels of beer, 1000 head of cattle, 1000 geese, 1000 offerings of incense, etc., by King Sethos for King Menes, . . .", followed by the list. In the bottom row the phrases "by King Men-mat-re" and "by the son of Re, Sethos" are repeated over and over again. – On the left-hand wall of the gallery Sethos, holding a censer in his left hand, is depicted with Ramesses, wearing the panther skin of a priest, who pours a libation on the altar. The inscription gives a long list of the names and shrines of the gods to whom they are making sacrificial offerings.

A door half-way along the right-hand wall of the Gallery of the Kings leads into a passage, beyond which is a vaulted stone staircase, originally leading out of the temple but walled up in ancient times. The reliefs in the passage date from the reign of Ramesses II. On the right-hand wall the King and a Prince are shown lassoing a bull in the presence of the dog-headed god Wepwawet, to whom (farther left) they sacrifice it. On the left-hand wall Ramesses conducts four sacred oxen to Khons and King Sethos. Beyond this are other scenes: Ramesses pacing out the precincts of the temple; Ramesses and four gods catching birds in a net; Ramesses and a Prince offering the captured



geese to Amun and Mut. – On the walls of the staircase are numerous Phoenician and Aramaic inscriptions left by Semitic visitors to the temple.

Another door in the right-hand wall of the Gallery of the Kings leads into a small **Hypostyle Hall** (six columns), with paintings (designs for reliefs which were never completed) dating from the reign of Sethos I and sunk reliefs of Ramses II's reign. Along the walls are benches, probably for offerings.

From the S end of the Gallery of the Kings, where there are Coptic inscriptions (prayers) in red paint, a doorway leads into the **slaughter-court**, with a colonnade (never completed) of seven columns. The scenes and hieroglyphics on the walls were sketched in color in the reign of Sethos I, but only a few of them were later finished as sunk reliefs. They depict Sethos sacrificing to various deities and (in the lower row) the slaughter and cutting up of sacrificial animals. The screen between the first column and the left-hand wall was intended to block the view from the Gallery of the Kings into the slaughter-court.

Adjoining this court are four unfinished rooms, two of which are closed. In three of them the scenes on the walls are merely sketched in; in the fourth they have been completed in color. From the first room (immediately on the right, close to the doorway into the slaughter-court) a staircase leads up to five other rooms (two of them closed) containing unfinished paintings dating from the reign of Merneptah. From the middle room a doorway leads into the open air and

to the Osireion. – Beyond the E corner of the S wing, outside the temple proper, is a deep circular *well*.

SW of the Temple of Sethos I, its rear wall only 26 ft/8 m away, stands the large structure known as the **Osireion**, reminiscent in its majestic simplicity of Chephren's Temple at Giza. Often taken for the Tomb of Osiris, it is in reality a cenotaph of Sethos I, closely associated with the main temple. It was discovered in 1903 by Margaret A. Murray and excavated between 1911 and 1926 by the Egypt Exploration Society under the direction of E. Naville and Dr Frankfort. The building, originally covered by an artificial mound and surrounded by trees, was erected by Sethos I, but remained unfinished. Later some rooms were decorated with religious scenes and inscriptions by Merneptah. The main structure is built of white limestone and reddish sandstone, red granite being used only for the pillars and roof of the main hall and some of the doorways.

The *entrance*, on the N side of the building, was roofed with a strong brick vault and was reached by a vertical

shaft, brick-lined, running down through the mound. From the entrance a sloping corridor 120 yds/110 m long, its walls decorated with scenes and texts from the books of the Underworld dating from the reigns of Sethos I and Merneptah (on the right-hand wall from the "Book of Gates", on the left-hand wall from the "Book of what is in the Underworld"), leads into an *antechamber*, also decorated with religious scenes and texts, with another small room to the right of it. From the antechamber another corridor runs E to a large saddle-roofed *transverse chamber* (20 ft/6 m by 66 ft/20 m), also decorated with religious texts ("Book of the Dead") dating from the reign of Merneptah. Adjoining this is a large three-aisled *Hypostyle Hall* (98 ft/30 m by 66 ft/20 m) surrounded by 16 small chambers opening off a narrow corridor only 2 ft/60 cm wide. Between the central hall and the small chambers runs a ditch, perhaps symbolizing the primal water out of which, according to the Egyptian creation myth, the terrestrial hill (the earth) emerged along with the sun god. At the end of the central hall (representing the terrestrial hill) steps lead down to the water. Between the two rows of pillars in the hall are two cavities in the floor, a rectangular one in the middle which may have housed a sarcophagus and a square one at the E end, perhaps for a canopic chest. At the far end of the hall is another *transverse chamber*, the shape of which may represent the royal sarcophagus; on its well-preserved saddle roof are fine *reliefs* dating from the reign of Sethos I (representations of the sky; the sky goddess Nut supported by the air god Shu; Nut screening the dead King with her arms).

NW of the Temple of Sethos I, lying partly under the modern village, is a Temple of Ramesses I, and a short distance away is the (destroyed) *Temple of Ramesses II*, also dedicated to Osiris and the cult of the dead King. In front of the present entrance was a large court of which only a few traces remain. The masonry of the temple itself is preserved only to a height of 6½ ft/2 m, but it is still possible to trace the outlines of a court surrounded by colonnades with pillars and Osiris figures (as in the Ramesseum), two halls with chapels at their far ends and many subsidiary rooms. To judge from the surviving remains, the temple was much more sumptuous and more carefully built than any of the other buildings of Ramesses II known to us. It was constructed of fine-grained limestone, with red and black granite for the doorways, sandstone for the columns and alabaster for the innermost sanctuary. The mural decorations, the colors of which are remarkably well preserved, are in delicate low relief, reminiscent of the fine work done in the reign of Sethos I, in the rooms to the rear; the cruder sunk reliefs are found only in the court, the first hall and the rooms adjoining that hall. The reliefs in the first court depict a sacrificial procession. On the outer walls are warlike scenes, on the S wall lists of donations to the temple.

On the right-hand (N) wall peasants are shown bringing various sacrificial animals (oxen, antelopes, geese) to four priests, the first of whom records the gifts, while the second offers incense. Farther right the animals are being slaughtered. On the left-hand (E and S) walls are similar scenes. To the left of the entrance are people with sacrificial offerings, who are met by a procession of priests, soldiers, the royal war chariot, Negro and Asian prisoners, etc. The colors are surprisingly fresh. – In the rooms to the rear are badly damaged religious scenes.

The reliefs on the outside of the temple (N and W sides), worked in fine white limestone, are among the finest produced in the reign of Ramesses II. They depict scenes from the King's war against the Hittites; adjoining is an account of the campaign. On the S wall is a long inscription recording the building of the temple and its endowments.

NW of Ramesses II's temple are the ruins of **Shunet el-Zebib**, surrounded by an outer and an inner (and higher) wall of sun-dried brick. The complex, 145 yds/133 m long, probably dates from the 2nd Dynasty and may have been a palace. The popular view of this structure as a fortress is undoubtedly erroneous.

A few hundred yards NE of Shunet el-Zebib, near the village of El-Khirba, are the remains of the **ancient city of Abydos** and the *Sanctuary of Osiris*, which dates back to the beginnings of Egyptian history. Of the sanctuary there remain only the brick enclosure walls built during the Middle Kingdom and scanty remains of the temple. – To the W is the Coptic Monastery of *Deir el-Sitt Damiana* (or Amba Musa), which dates from year 1306 of the Coptic era (A.D. 1590); it scarcely repays a visit.

1 mile/1.5 km SW of the Temple of Ramesses II is a mound of rubble known as the **Umm el-Gaab** ("mother of pots"), in which Amelineau and Flinders Petrie found the cenotaphs of kings of the 1st and 2nd Dynasties, including those of Djer (1st Dynasty), believed during the Middle Kingdom to be the Tomb of Osiris, Usaphais (1st Dynasty; c. 3100 B.C.) and Miebisi (1st Dynasty; c. 3100 B.C.). Practically nothing of these monuments is now to be seen. – S of Abydos, at *Nag el-Ghabat*, is an ancient quarry.

Agilka


See under Philae

Ain Sukhna

See under Red Sea

Akhmim

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Sohag.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Tourist Bazaar,
Luxor;
tel. 22 15.

ACCESS. – By car or taxi from Sohag, crossing to the right bank of the Nile on the 725 yd/665 m long bridge (middle section swing bridge).

The modest district capital of Akhmim lies 3 miles/5 km E of Sohag on the right bank of the Nile, just N of a wide loop in the river. It has a number of cotton-mills and a lively bazaar. Akhmim is one of the great centers of the Coptic faith, with several churches.

HISTORY. – Akhmim occupies the site of the ancient **Chemmis** or **Panopolis**, which was the chief town of a nome. The Egyptians called it *Epu*, and also *Khente-Min*, after its protective deity, the ithyphallic harvest god Min; hence the Coptic name of Shmin and the Arabic Akhmim. Herodotus (ii, 91) praises the citizens of Chemmis as the only Egyptians who favored Greek customs and relates that they erected a temple to Perseus and worshiped him with Hellenic rites. Strabo refers to the weavers and stone-cutters of Panopolis. The town continued to flourish during the Roman period, and its ancient and famous temple was enlarged in the 12th year of Trajan's reign (A.D. 109). In Christian times many religious houses were built around Panopolis. The Patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, who had been banished to the Kharga Oasis because he did not acknowledge the Virgin Mary to be the Mother of God, died in Panopolis. Even after the Arab Conquest Akhmim was described by Abulfida and other writers as a great city, with temples which were among the finest remains of the Pharaonic period.


There are only scanty remains of the once-flourishing ancient city, among them a few sandstone blocks belonging to a *temple* in the NE of the town and a number of columns, some of which still stand erect. – During excavations in 1981 the *colossal statue* of an Egyptian queen, with an estimated total height of 33 ft/10 m, was brought to light.

SURROUNDINGS of Akhmim. – Extensive **necropolises** have been found in the low hills some 3 miles/5 km NE of Akhmim. They are reached by way of the village of *El-Hawawish* (2½ miles/4 km), just beyond which, in a hill, are many ancient tombs, now totally destroyed. N and W of the village extends a Christian cemetery used from the 5th to the 15th c. In the vicinity is a *Coptic monastery*. The tombs farther to

the N are older, dating from the Roman, Ptolemaic and Egyptian periods. Higher up in the hills lie 6th Dynasty tombs. – S of Akhmim is a rock chapel constructed in the reign of King Ay (18th Dynasty). – **Sohag**: see separate entry.

El-Alamein

Western Mediterranean coast. – North-West Frontier District.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Shari' Salah Salem 33,
Alexandria;
tel. 2 50 25.

ACCOMMODATION. – *Rest-house* at British military cemetery. – In Sidi Abd el-Rahman: *Hotel Sidi Abd el-Rahman*, L, 64 b. (some in chalets).

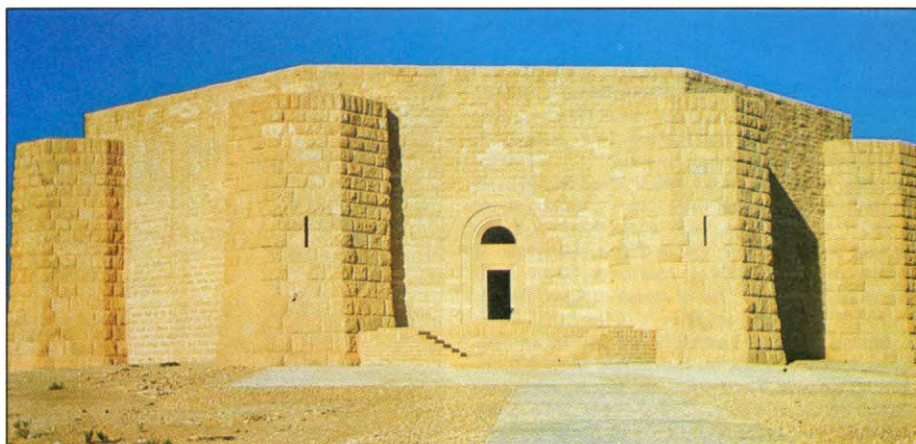
ACCESS. – Good asphalt road from Alexandria (68 miles/110 km; bus services). – By rail from Alexandria.

The modest village of El-Alamein gained a place in history during the Second World War, when, in the late summer and autumn of 1942, the advance of Rommel's Afrika Korps was halted by British forces in a series of bloody battles in which some 80,000 men on both sides were killed or wounded. El-Alamein now attracts many visitors to its military cemetery and war memorials.

In 1966 promising reserves of oil were found in the vicinity, and extraction began in 1968, giving a considerable boost to the economy of the area.

HISTORY. – During the German-Italian offensive in North Africa, which had been ordered by Hitler and Mussolini, a German and Italian armored force commanded by General Erwin Rommel (1891–1944) advanced from Tobruk (Libya) and on June 30, 1942, in the First Battle of El-Alamein, captured Hill 26 and occupied positions at El-Alamein. Their further advance towards Cairo, however, was thwarted by the resistance of British forces, who had established a defensive line between El-Alamein and the Qattara Depression. Then on October 23, 1942 the British Eighth Army commanded by Generals Montgomery and Alexander launched a major offensive and in the Second Battle of El-Alamein compelled Rommel to retreat on November 4, in spite of Hitler's order to hold the position at any cost. British military superiority in North Africa was thus assured, and the way was clear for the advance into Italy.

At km 105 (65 miles) on the road from Alexandria, in an extensive depression below the road on the left, is the **British Military Cemetery**, containing 7500 graves. In the middle of the cemetery stands a huge stone cross. On the opposite side of the road is a *rest-house*



German Memorial, El-Alamein

(accommodation). – Some 550 yds/500 m from the cemetery a *Museum*, established in 1965, contains weapons, documents and displays illustrating the course of the battles. In the courtyard is a collection of armored vehicles, guns and other heavy armament. – Beyond this point in the direction of Mersa Matruh sand-filled trenches, bunkers and other evidence of the battles of 1942 can be seen on both sides of the road.

Some 6 miles/10 km farther W, at km 115 (71 miles), the **German Memorial** stands on a hill near the sea. Erected in 1959, this is an octagonal structure of light-colored stone modelled on the Castel del Monte in Apulia. Here are buried 4280 of the 4500 Germans who died in the fighting. In the central courtyard stands a basalt obelisk 38 ft/11.5 m high.

Some 2½ miles/4 km farther W is the **Italian Memorial**, built of white marble with a high central tower. Beyond this is *Tell el-Eissa* (Hill 33), where the fate of the Afrika Korps was decided. The German-Italian military cemetery which

was laid out on the SE side of the hill after the war had to be abandoned on account of unfavorable climatic and geological conditions, and the remains of the fallen were removed to the new memorials, where they were sheltered from the invading sand.

SURROUNDINGS of El-Alamein. – 14 miles/23 km W is the little resort of **Sidi Abd el-Rahman**, named after a holy man revered by the bedouin as a prophet; the local mosque also bears his name. Here there are an excellent beach in a beautiful setting and a modern luxury hotel. It is planned to lay a pipeline from the El-Alamein oilfield to Sidi Abd el-Rahman, which will be developed into a modern oil terminal. – From Sidi Abd el-Rahman the road continues W via *El-Dabaa*, the ancient Zephirium, to **Mersa Matruh** (80 miles/128 km; see separate entry).

****Alexandria, Qattara Depression and Western Desert:** see separate entries.

Alexandria/ El-Iskandariya

Lower Egypt. – Governorate: Alexandria.
Altitude: sea-level. – Population: 2,500,000.

Tourist Information Office,

Midan Saad Zaghlul,

tel. 80 79 85;

Main Railway Station,

tel. 2 59 85;

Maritime Station,

tel. 80 01 00.

Tourist Police,

in Midan Saad Zaghlul and at Main Railway Station, Maritime Station and Montazah Palace.

Automobile et Touring Club d'Egypte,

Shari' Salah Salem 15;

tel. 96 94 94–95.

Misr Travel,

Shari' Salah Salem 33;

tel. 2 50 25.

CONSULATES. – *United Kingdom:* Shari' Mina 3, Rushdi; tel. 4 71 66 and 4 94 58. – *United States:* Shari'



El-Alamein War Cemetery and Memorial, Commonwealth War Graves Commission

el-Horreya 110; tel. 80 19 11, 2 56 07, 2 28 61 and 2 84 58.

HOTELS. – **Palestine*, in Montazah Palace, L, 450 b.; **Alexandria Sheraton*, near Montazah Palace, L, 650 b., SP, private beach; *San Stefano*, Shari' el-Geish, I, 216 b.; *Windsor*, Sharia el-Shuhada 117, I, 200 b.; *Mamura*, Mamura Palace, I, 193 b.; *Cecil*, Midan Saad Zaghlul, I, 169 b.; *El-Salamlek*, near Montazah Palace, I, 110 b.; *Beau Rivage*, Shari' el-Geish 443, I, 94 b.; *Mecca*, Shari' el-Geish 88, II, 320 b.; *Hanoville*, at Agami Beach, II, 300 b.; *Metropole*, Shari' Saad Zaghlul 52, II, 130 b.; *Qasr el-Agami*, at Agami Beach, II, 106 b.; *San Giovanni*, Shari' el-Geish 30, II, 75 b.; *Cleopatra*, Shari' el-Geish 172, III, 275 b.; *Le Roy*, Shari' Talaat Harb 25, III, 140 b.; *Isis*, Shari' Isis, III, 128 b.; *Admiral*, Shari' Fikry, III, 120 b.; *Menas*, at Agami Beach, III, 120 b.; *Borg el-Taghr*, Shari' Safya Zaghlul/Shari' el-Horreya, III, 69 b.; *Swiss Cottage*, Shari' el-Geish 347, III, 50 b.; *Champs Elysées*, Shari' el-Geish, III, 42 b.; *Abukir*, El-Gaed Gawhar, III, 66 b.; *Costa Blanca*, in Agami-Hanoville, IV, 106 b.; *Gordon*, Midan Saad Zaghlul 19, IV, 100 b. – *At Ikingi Maryut*, 12½ miles/20 km SW of Alexandria: *Desert Home*, I, 28 b.

YOUTH HOSTEL: Shari' Port Said 13. – **CAMP SITES** at *Abuqir*, 18 miles/29 km NE, and *Sidi Krer*, 21 miles/34 km W.

BEACHES: *Chatby*, *Ibrahimiya*, *Sporting*, *Cleopatra*, *Sidi Gabir*, *Stanley*, *San Stefano*, *Sidi Bishr*, *Miami*, *Mandara*, *Montazah*, *Mamura*, *Abuqir*.

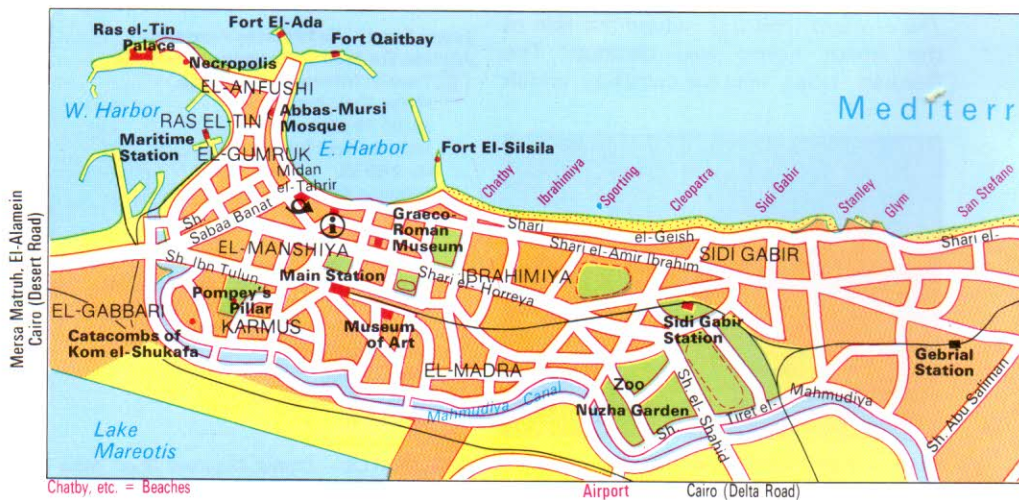
The ancient and famous city of **Alexandria** (Arabic El-Iskandariya), Egypt's second largest city and principal port, lies at the western extremity of the Nile Delta on the sandy strip of land which separates Lake Mareotis (Maryut) from the Mediterranean. It is the most westerly town in Egypt, a city of thoroughly European aspect: only the relatively small old town preserves the atmosphere and the activities of the East.



Mediterranean coast, Alexandria

Alexandria is a great center of the Egyptian cotton trade (Cotton Exchange), and there are many spinning-mills, weaving-mills and other textile-working establishments in and around the city. Other major industrial activities include a thriving foodstuffs industry, cigarette factories, tanneries and an oil-refinery.

Thanks to its economic importance as a center of trade in the Eastern Mediterranean, Alexandria has long had a considerable foreign colony. Most of the Europeans who make up some 4% of the population are Greeks and Italians. – Alexandria is the seat of an Orthodox



Patriarch. The head of the Egyptian Coptic Church, who bears the style of Patriarch of Alexandria, resides in Cairo, as does the Patriarch of the Coptic Catholic Church.

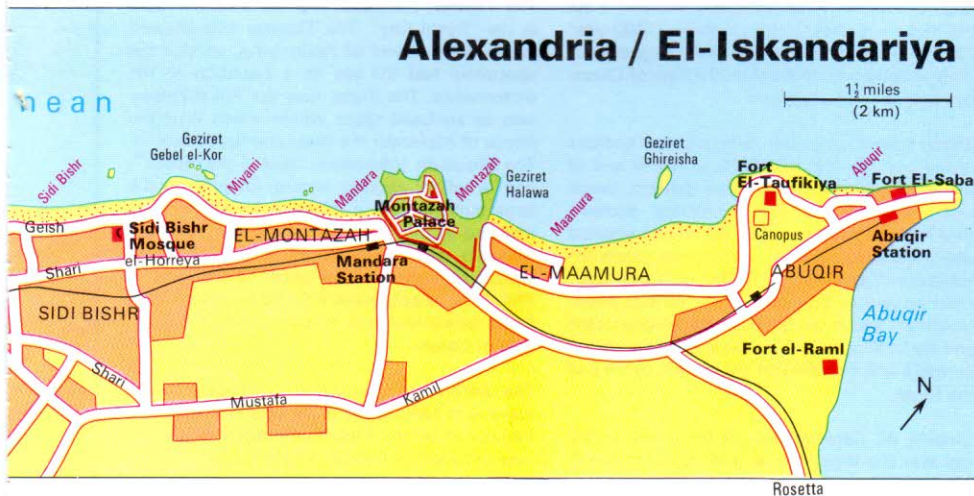
HISTORY. – Alexandria was founded in 331 B.C. by *Alexander the Great*, whose object was to link the land of the Pharaohs, both materially and culturally, with the Greek world empire which it was his great ambition to establish. The site he selected opposite the island of Pharos, near the Egyptian village of Rhakotis, between the Mediterranean and Lake Mareotis, which was connected with the Nile by several navigable channels, was well chosen, for the older harbors to the E were threatened with silting-up by the Nile mud as a result of the current which flowed along the North African coast from the Strait of Gibraltar. The planning and building of the new city was entrusted to the Greek architect Deinocrates. Under Alexander's lieutenant and successor, Ptolemy I Soter (322–285 B.C.), Alexandria became the resort of artists and scholars, among them the philosopher Demetrius of Phaleron, who suggested the foundation of the famous Library, the painters Apelles and Antiphrilos, the celebrated mathematician Euclid and the physicians Erasistratus and Herophilus. Ptolemy also founded the Museum (Mouseion), a splendid complex of buildings dedicated to the pursuit of science and literature in which a whole range of scholars dwelt, studied and taught.

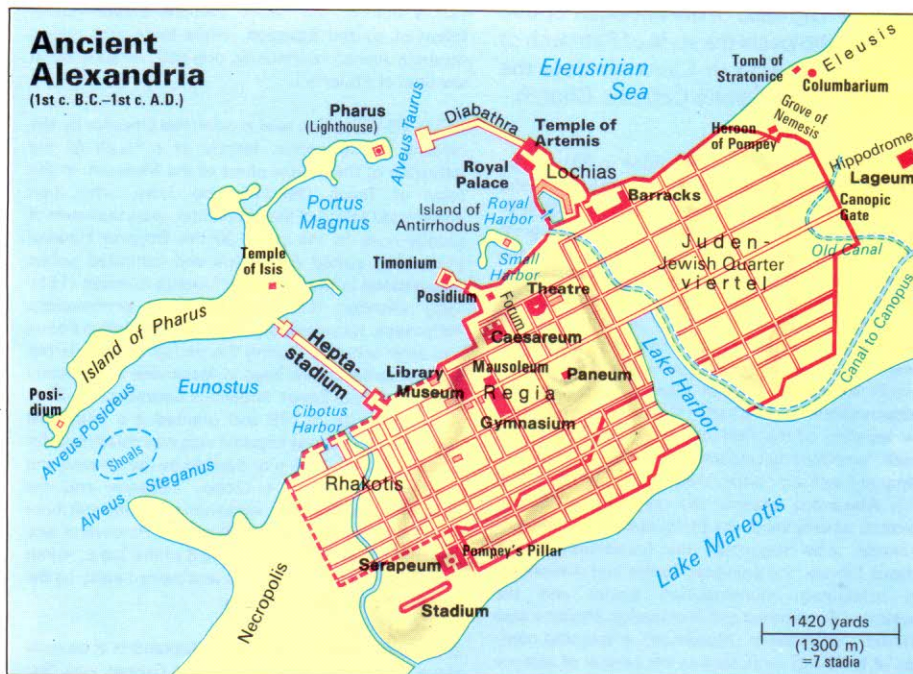
In spite of the continual dissensions among the Ptolemies over succession to the throne Alexandria continued to flourish as the world's greatest commercial center and the principal seat of Greek learning. In 48 B.C., when Rome intervened in the quarrel between Cleopatra and her brother and husband Ptolemy XIV, the city was at the peak of its fame. After the murder of Pompey at Pelusium Caesar entered Alexandria in triumph, but was then attacked by the citizens and Ptolemy XIV's army and had considerable difficulty in maintaining his position in the Regia or "Royal City" (see box on next page). Cleopatra was able to win over by her charms first Caesar and later Antony, who lived with her in Alexandria from 42 to 30 B.C. Augustus enlarged the city by the addition of the suburb of Nicopolis. At this prosperous period Alexandria was said to have a population of more than

half a million; the Greek element predominated, followed by the Egyptian, while there was also a separate Jewish community, originally established in the time of Ptolemy I.

In A.D. 69 Vespasian was proclaimed Emperor by the citizens of Alexandria, largely as a result of the influence of the philosophers of the Museum. In the reign of Trajan (98–117) the Jews, who then constituted a third of the population, were the cause of bloody riots. In the year 130 the Emperor Hadrian (117–138) visited Alexandria and instituted public disputations in the Museum. Marcus Aurelius (161–180) attended the lectures of the grammarians Athenaeus, Harpocration, Hephæstion, Julius Pollux and other scholars. During this period, too, the Greek satirical writer Lucian lived in Alexandria as Secretary to the Prefect of Egypt. Septimius Severus (193–211) visited the city in 199 and granted it a municipal constitution. The next Imperial visit was disastrous, for Caracalla (211–217) was derided by the citizens and revenged himself by a bloody massacre and the closure of the Academy. Alexandria suffered still more cruelly during the fighting between Palmyrene and Imperial forces in the second half of the 3rd c., when a large part of the population was carried away by the sword, famine and pestilence.

Christianity established itself in Alexandria at an early stage. According to tradition the Gospel was first preached here by St Mark (whose remains were carried off to Venice in 828). The first great persecution of the Christians in the reign of Decius (250) hit Alexandria hard. The city had been for many years the seat of a bishop, and had had since 190 a theological school, presided over by Pantaenus and, at the beginning of the 3rd c., by Clement of Alexandria, which sought to combine Christianity with the Neo-Platonism which developed about this period and was taught by Ammonius Saccas, Herennius, Plotinus, Porphyrius, Iamblichus and others. A second persecution took place in 257 during the reign of Valerian, and soon afterwards, in the reign of Gallienus, plague carried off a large part of the population. Nevertheless Alexandria still remained the principal seat of Christian learning and the orthodox faith (Athanasian Creed) until it was compelled to yield this position to the newly founded city of Constantinople. Sanguinary quarrels took place between the Athanasian party and the Arians under their unworthy bishop Georgius. During the reign of





In the 17th book of his "Geographica" the Greek scholar *Strabo* (63 B.C.–A.D. 20) describes Alexandria as it was in the third decade B.C.

On the former island of **Pharus** (*Pharos*), then linked to the mainland by a causeway, the Heptastadion (Heptastadion), stood the famous **Lighthouse**, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Built of white limestone by Sostratus the Cnidian in the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, it was completed in 280–279 B.C. Its original height is said to have been 400 cubits (590 ft/180 m; cf. p. 62); and though even in antiquity it was several times in danger of collapsing, part of the ancient tower still stood erect after the great earthquakes of 1303 and 1326. Sections of the old masonry were incorporated in Fort Qaitbay when it was built in the 15th c.

The **Heptastadion** was also constructed in the reign of Ptolemy II, or perhaps of Ptolemy I. As the name indicates, it was 7 stadia (1400 yds/1300 m) long. It was pierced by two passages, both bridged over, and before the time of Caesar served also as an aqueduct.

Strabo refers to a number of the principal quarters of the city: the **NECROPOLIS**, at the W end of the area, "where there are many gardens, tombs and establishments for embalming bodies"; **RHAKOTIS**, "the quarter of Alexandria situated above the naval arsenal", which was chiefly inhabited by Egyptians; the **REGIA** or "Royal City" (later known as Bruchium), with various public buildings, which lay between the Heptastadion and the Lochias Peninsula and was later enclosed by walls; and the **JEWISH QUARTER**, to the E of the Regia.

Outside the Canopic Gate at the E end of the city was the Hippodrome, and farther to the E,

30 stadia from the city, was the suburb of **NICOPOLIS**, which had an amphitheatre and a racecourse.

The city was laid out on a regular plan, with streets intersecting at right angles. The principal thoroughfare was the long street which ran W from the Canopic Gate.

Only a few scanty remnants of the buildings of ancient Alexandria can now be identified. – The **Caesareum** was a large temple begun by Cleopatra in honor of Antony and completed by Augustus as a center of the Imperial cult. At the entrance stood the two "Cleopatra's Needles" which are now in London and New York. – The **Paneum** was probably the hill now known as Kom el-Dik; the **Gymnasium** may have stood on the E side of the hill.

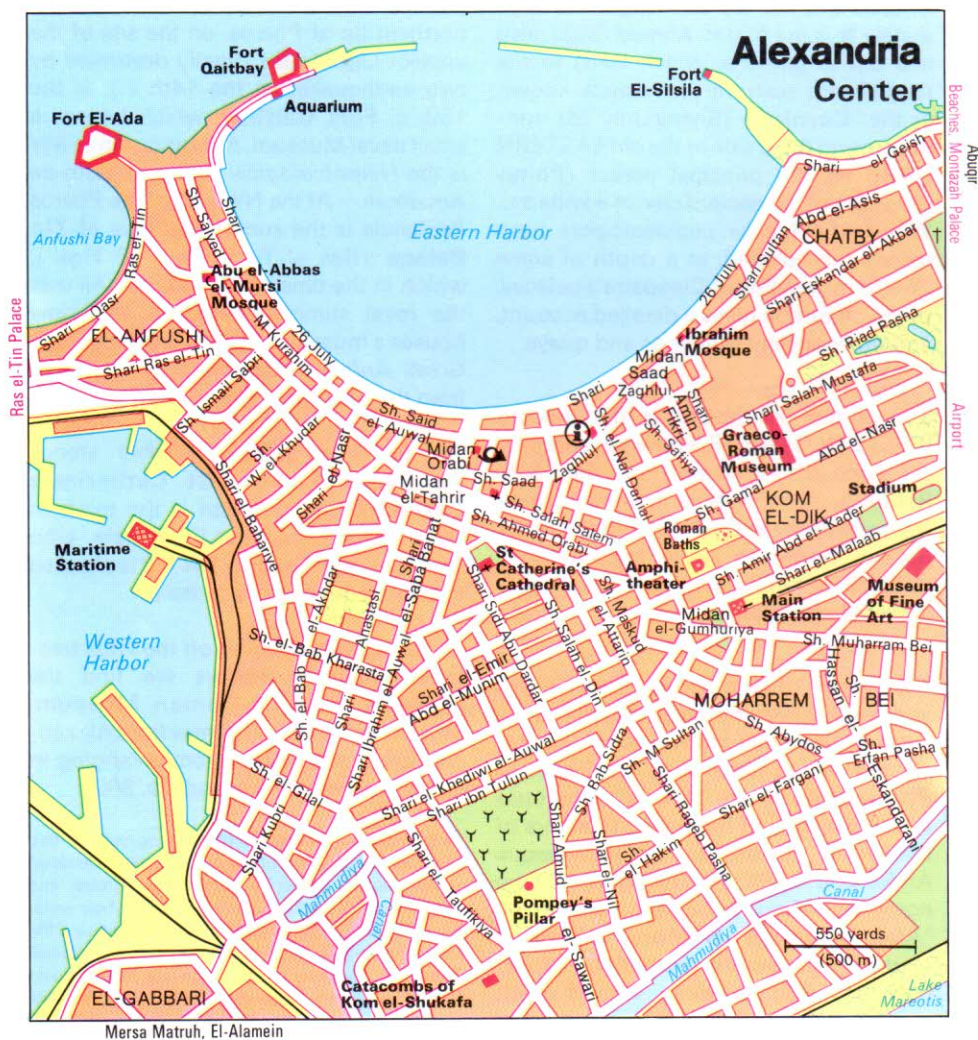
The Theater, the Sema and the Museum were in the "Royal City". The **Theater** was situated opposite the island of Antirrhodus, so that the spectators had the sea as a backdrop to the performance. The **Sema**, near the Royal Palace, was an enclosed space within which were the tombs of Alexander the Great and the Ptolemies. The **Museum** (*Mouseion*, "seat of the Muses") had "a hall for walking, another for sitting and a large building with a refectory for the scholars attached to the Museum". Associated with the Museum was the great Alexandrian **Library**, which as early as the reign of Ptolemy II Philadelphus possessed 400,000 papyrus rolls, a figure which had risen to almost 900,000 in the time of Caesar.

The **Serapeum** (*Serapeion*), dedicated to the worship of Serapis, god of the Underworld – a cult introduced by the Ptolemies – stood on the hill now crowned by Pompey's Pillar.

The decay of Alexandria, which by 1800 had a population of only 5000, was finally arrested by *Mohammed (Mehemet) Ali*, who improved the harbor and constructed a number of canals. His main contribution was the construction of the Mahmudiya Canal (begun in 1819), named after the reigning Sultan Mahmud II, which irrigated the surrounding country and linked Alexandria with the rest of Egypt, whose products had hitherto been shipped from Rosetta and Damietta. Subsequent rulers also sought to improve the position of the town. During Arabi's Rising in 1882 much of the European quarter was burned down. Thereafter, however, Alexandria began to recover its prosperity, and it is now the largest and most important city in Egypt after Cairo.

Sightseeing in Alexandria

The hub of the city's life is the **Midan el-Tahrir** (Freedom Square), in which are an equestrian statue of Mohammed Ali, the





Eastern Harbor and Fort Qaitbay, Alexandria

Law Courts, the Anglican *St Mark's Church* and the old *Exchange*. – Immediately N is the Midan Ahmed Orabi, also laid out in gardens, which leads to the magnificent seafront promenade known as the ***Corniche** (Sharia July 26), running round the S side of the old EASTERN HARBOR, the principal harbor (Portus Magnus) of the ancient city, in a wide arc. Within the harbor archaeologists have recently discovered, at a depth of some 26 ft/8 m, remains of Cleopatra's palaces, of which Strabo gives a detailed account, and other ancient buildings and quays.

SW of the old harbor is the modern WESTERN HARBOR, known in antiquity as *Eunostos* ("Harbor of the Safe Return"). It consists of the small *Inner Harbor* within the Coal Pier and the *Outer Harbor*, protected by a breakwater 2 miles/ 3.25 km long, which can accommodate large vessels.

The tongue of land between the eastern and western harbors developed out of the ancient causeway known as the Heptastadion which led out to the island of **Pharos**, site of the famous Lighthouse which was one of the Seven Wonders of the World. On this are the picturesque ARAB and TURKISH QUARTERS. Two notable buildings to be seen here are the ***Abu el-Abbas el-Mursi Mosque**, built in 1796 over the tomb of the 13th c. holy man Abu el-Abbas, who is much revered in Alexandria, and the *Mosque of*

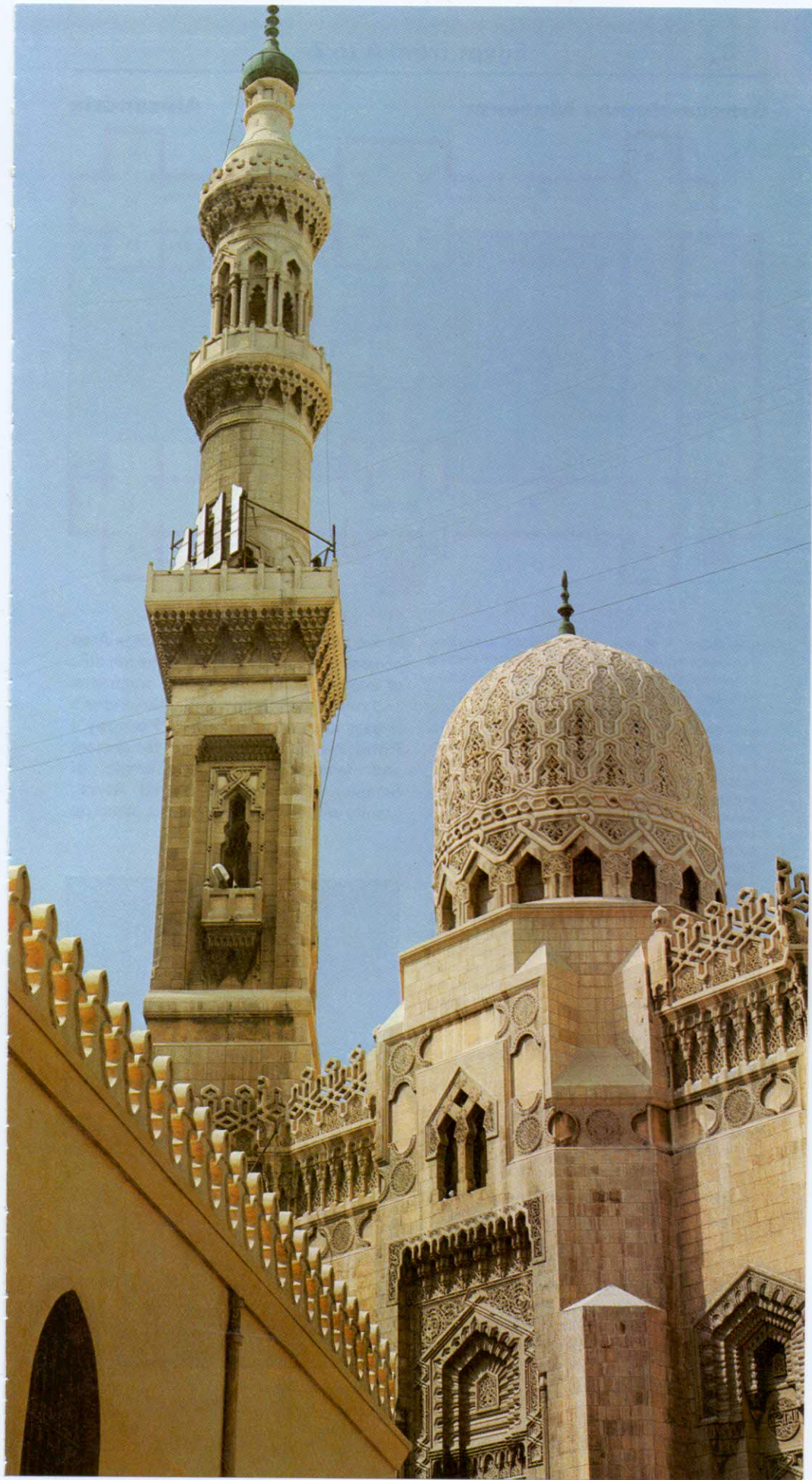
Ibrahim Terbana (1648), which incorporates Graeco-Roman columns. – At the northern tip of Pharos, on the site of the ancient Lighthouse (finally destroyed by two earthquakes in the 14th c.), is the 15th c. **Fort Qaitbay**, which houses a small naval Museum. A short distance SW is the *Hydrobiological Museum*, with an Aquarium. – At the NW end of the Pharos Peninsula is the sumptuous **Ras el-Tin Palace** (Ras el-Tin="Cape of Figs"), which in the time of Mohammed Ali was the royal summer residence and now houses a museum. – E of the palace is the Greek *Anfushi Necropolis*, which dates from the Ptolemaic period (2nd c. B.C.).

To the S of Midan el-Tahrir stands the Roman Catholic **St Catherine's Cathedral**. In the crypt is the tomb of King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy, who died in exile in Egypt in 1947; it is planned to transfer his remains to Italy.

In a side street opening off the wide tree-lined Sharia el-Horreya we find the important ***Graeco-Roman Museum**. Most of its collection comes from Alexandria itself, mainly from tombs ranging in date between 300 B.C. and A.D. 300.

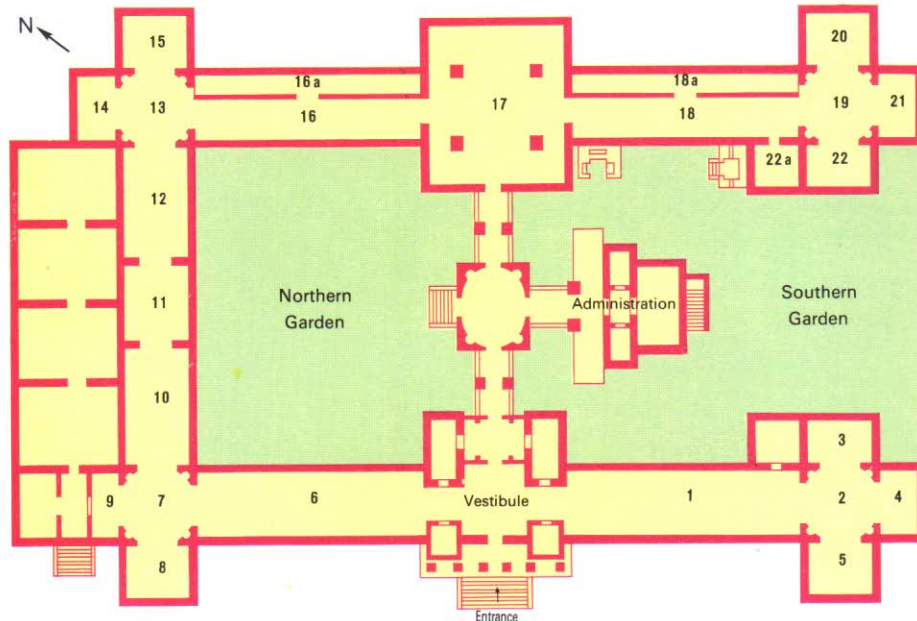
To the right of the *Vestibule* (prehistoric material; two sphinxes from the time of Apries) is *Room 1*: Christian antiquities, in particular tombstones, stelae and numbers of "St Menas flasks" for holding holy water and oil from the Tomb of St Menas (martyred A.D. 296; see under Abu Mena). – *Rooms 2-5*: Early Christian Coptic art and part of the large collection (some 50,000 in all) of Alexandrian coins (300 B.C.-A.D. 500). – *Room 6*: Greek and Latin papyri and

Abu el-Abbas el-Mursi Mosque, Alexandria ►



Graeco-Roman Museum

Alexandria



inscriptions. – *Rooms 7–9*: Egyptian antiquities. Particularly notable are a colossal statue of Ramesses II in reddish granite (Room 7) and a crocodile mummy from the Fayyum which yielded important papyri (Room 9). – *Room 10*: the Antoniades Collection of small Egyptian sculpture, including scarabs, amulets, statuettes, canopic jars, etc. – *Room 11*: Graeco-Egyptian and Roman-Egyptian sculpture, architectural fragments and mosaics. – *Room 12*: portrait busts and small sculpture. – *Rooms 13–15*: Sculpture and architectural fragments of the Hellenistic period; Medusa mosaic from Gabbari (Room 14); Roman fresco depicting a wheel for raising water (*sakiya*: Room 15). – *Room 16*: Greek sculpture and sculptural fragments, including a large eagle in white marble. – *Room 16a*: small sculpture. – *Room 17*: sculpture; mosaic pavement (banquet with musicians); sarcophagi. – *Room 18*: small objects, mosaics, pottery. – *Room 18a*: terracottas and Tanagra figures of the Early Ptolemaic period. – *Room 19*: glass and pottery vessels; mosaics. – *Room 20*: grave-goods and garlands from local cemeteries. – *Room 21*: pottery figures, urns and vases from tombs at Chatby and Ibrahimiya. – *Room 22*: architectural fragments from Canopus and Abuqir. – *Room 22a*: Ptolemaic and Byzantine coins.

Northern Garden: Egyptian sculpture. – *Southern Garden*: two reconstructed tombs (3rd c. B.C., 1st c. A.D.); sarcophagi.

A short distance W of the Graeco-Roman Museum is the excavation site of **Kom el-Dik**, formerly occupied by a fort, where a Roman *Amphitheater* and remains of baths (3rd c.) and an odeon have been brought to light. – SE of the Museum, beyond the railway lines leading to the *Main Railway Station*, is the **Museum of Fine Art** (Egyptian and European painting of the 16th–19th c.).

In the SW of the city, near the large Arab cemetery, is a hill littered with the remains of ancient walls, architectural fragments and rubble on which stands Alexandria's largest ancient monument, ***Pompey's Pillar**, rising from the ruins of the ancient and famous Serapeion (Temple of Serapis). This column of red Aswan granite with a Corinthian capital, standing



Pompey's Pillar, Alexandria

on a badly ruined substructure and rising to a height of almost 90 ft/27 m, is traditionally believed to have been erected by the Emperor Theodosius to commemorate the victory of Christianity over paganism and the destruction of the Serapeion in 391. More probably, however, it was set up in 292 in honor of Diocletian, who supplied food for the starving population after the siege of the city.

SW of Pompey's Pillar, near the small *El-Miri Mosque*, is the entrance to the ***Catacombs of Kom el-Shukafa** ("Hill of Potsherds"), hewn from the rock on the southern slopes of a hill, which probably date from the 2nd c. A.D. and offer an admirable example of the characteristic Alexandrian fusion of the Egyptian and Graeco-Roman styles.

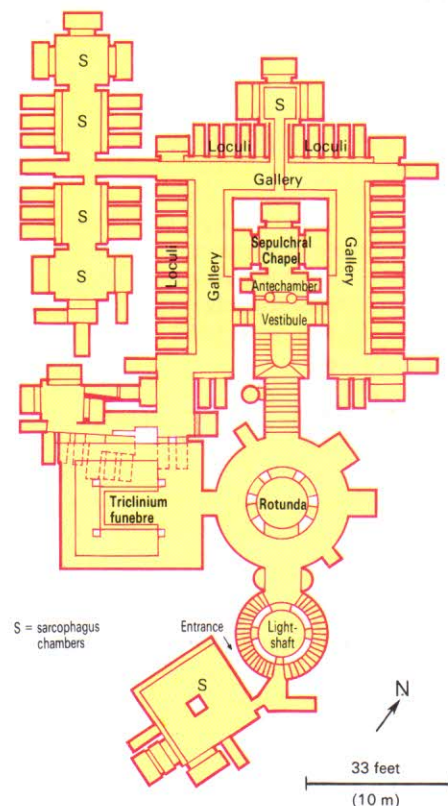
The catacombs, which may have been the burial-place of a particular religious community, were discovered in 1900. Laid out on several levels, they have been made conveniently accessible by the provision of wooden gangways and electric light. A spiral staircase with a large circular *light-shaft* runs down two storeys, the lower of which is generally under water; near the

top of the staircase is a *sarcophagus chamber* of later construction. Off the upper level opens a *rotunda* with a domed roof, to the right of which are two smaller chambers with niches, sarcophagi and loculi (shelf tombs); to the left is a large room, the *Triclinium funebre*, used for banquets in honor of the dead. From the rotunda a staircase continues down and then divides: from this point there is a view of the main burial chambers. At the foot of the stairs is the entrance to the **Sepulchral Chapel*, with three niches containing sarcophagi. In the central niche the mummy lies on a bier, surrounded by the three gods of the Underworld, Horus, Thoth and Anubis. Round the sepulchral chapel runs a gallery, entered from the vestibule to the chapel, containing 91 loculi, each large enough to accommodate at least three or four mummies. – In the vicinity of the Kom el-Shukafa catacombs are other small and less important catacombs of the Graeco-Roman period.



Stanley Beach, Alexandria

Alexandria **Catacombs of Kom el-Shukafa**



In the SE of the city the beautiful ***Nuzha Gardens** incorporate a small Zoo. Immediately S of this are the no less attractive *Antoniadis Gardens*, once the country estate of a wealthy Greek citizen.

From the Eastern Harbor the seafront promenade, the ***Corniche** (Sharia el-Geish), extends E for 10 miles/17 km, past picturesque coves and beautiful sandy beaches, to the ***Park of Montazah Palace**, formerly a royal summer residence and now partly a museum (mementos of the monarchy) and partly the luxury Palestine Hotel.

SURROUNDINGS of Alexandria

7½ miles/12 km NE of the Montazah Palace, on a promontory defended on all sides by old forts, is the fishing village of **Abuqir** (Aboukir). In Abuqir Bay was fought the Battle of the Nile (August 1, 1798), in which Nelson inflicted an annihilating defeat on the French fleet. Here, too, in 1799, Napoleon defeated a numerically much superior Turkish force; and here in 1801 Sir Ralph Abercromby defeated the remnants of



Montazah Palace, Alexandria

the French army and compelled them to evacuate Egypt. – SW of the village is the site of the important ancient port of *Canopus*, of which only scanty remains survive; the site is now in a military area and closed to the public.

Some 28 miles/45 km SW of Alexandria we come to ***Abusir**, with the scanty remains of the ancient city of *Taposiris Magna*, which lay in the plain. On a limestone ridge rising from the seashore, however, are the well-preserved remains of the enclosure wall of an *Egyptian temple*, which the Greek name of the city suggests may have been dedicated to Osiris. The temple, oriented from E to W, was entered by a handsome pylon, which, like the rest of the walls, was built of limestone blocks. In the interior of each of the two towers is a staircase (fine *view from top). Adjoining the pylon is the temple (interior destroyed), which was 295 ft/90 m long and surrounded by high walls. – A little way N of the temple are the remains of a Roman lighthouse. The rocks in the neighborhood contain many old quarries and Roman tombs. Near the temple a bath has been excavated, and rather farther away is an animal cemetery.

See also ***Abu Mena**, **Damanhur**, ***El-Alamein**, **Nile Delta**, **Rosetta**, ***Wadi Natrun** and **Western Desert**.

Amada

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Aswan.

i **Tourist Information Office**,
Tourist Bazaar,
Aswan;
tel. 32 97.

Some 125 miles/200 km S of Aswan, in the most fertile part of Nubia, is the ***Rock Temple of Amada**. Constructed on its original site, on the left bank of the Nile, by Tuthmosis III

and Amenophis II (18th Dynasty), it was dedicated to Amun-Re and Re-Harakhty. Tuthmosis IV later enlarged it by the addition of a Hypostyle Hall. The figures of Amun, defaced by Amenophis IV, were restored by Sethos I. In Christian times the temple became a church, and as a result have preserved their original brilliant coloring.

With the construction of the Aswan High Dam the rising waters of Lake Nasser threatened to engulf this monument along with many others; and in a rescue operation carried out by a French firm the entire temple was sawn out of the solid rock and re-erected on a new site – now known as **New Amada** – $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles/2.6 km farther N and 213 ft/65 m above its original level.

THE TEMPLE. – The ***Temple of Amada**, oriented roughly N and S, is entered through a stone *gateway*, originally flanked by brick pylon towers. On the right-hand side is Tuthmosis III and on the left Amenophis II in the presence of Re-Harakhty. On the inside of the gateway, to the left, is an inscription referring to a campaign by Merneptah against the Ethiopians, and beyond this is the praying figure of Setaw, Governor of Nubia in the reign of Ramesses II.

Beyond the pylon there was originally a court enclosed by brick walls, on the far side of which was

a hall with four Proto-Doric columns. This court was later converted by Tuthmosis IV into a covered **Hypostyle Hall** (32½ ft/9.95 m long, 26–28½ ft/7.90–8.70 m wide, 14½ ft/4.40 m high), still excellently preserved, by the addition of 12 pillars and stone lateral walls. The reliefs on the pillars and the walls show Tuthmosis IV holding converse with the gods. The inscriptions on the architraves are also in his name. The columns bear dedicatory inscriptions by Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II, who are also depicted on the rear wall.

Adjoining the Hypostyle Hall is a **Transverse Chamber** (25 ft/7.50 m long, 7 ft/2.10 m deep, 12 ft/3.65 m high). On the right-hand side of the entrance wall are Tuthmosis III being embraced by Isis and Amenophis II sacrificing to Amun-Re. On the left-hand side the gods Thoth and Horus of Edfu are depicted pouring the consecrating water, in the form of the hieroglyphs for "life", over Amenophis II.

In the rear wall of the Transverse Chamber are three doors. The two side doors each lead into a chamber; the right-hand one has reliefs depicting the ceremonies associated with the foundation of a temple. The central door gives access to the **Sanctuary**, on the rear wall of which is an *inscription* of great historical importance dating from the third year of Amenophis II's reign. It records the completion of the temple and a campaign in Syria during which Amenophis captured seven Syrian princes and hanged six of them on the walls of Thebes and the seventh at Napata. Above the inscription is the solar barque with the gods Re-Harakhty and Amun, to whom the King is making a libation of wine. – At the far end of the sanctuary, to the right and left, are two small rooms, which were connected with the side chambers entered from the Transverse Chamber by doors of later construction (now walled up).

SURROUNDINGS. – Near the Amada Temple stands another temple moved from its original site to save it from being submerged, the **Rock Temple of El-Derr**. Before its removal in 1964 it was the only Nubian temple on the right bank of the river, situated some 7 miles/11 km SW of New Amada near the district capital of El-Derr (now beneath Lake Nasser). This "Temple of Ramesses in the house of Re", dedicated to the sun god Re-Harakhty, is also oriented N and S. The pylon and the court constructed in front of the rock-cut temple have disappeared.

The visitor now enters directly into the much-ruined **Hypostyle Hall**, partly hewn from the rock and partly constructed. The roof was supported by 12 square pillars in three rows, but only those in the back row, against which were statues of Ramesses, still stand to any height. Only the lower parts of the walls, the reliefs on which were of considerable historical importance, are left. On the left-hand side of the entrance wall are traces of chariots and warriors. On the right-hand (W) wall are scenes from Ramesses's Nubian campaign. In the upper row (much damaged) he is shown in his chariot, accompanied by his lion, conducting a group of prisoners to the god; in the adjoining scene he is sacrificing to Amun-Re. In the lower row he is depicted in his chariot shooting arrows at his fleeing foes; the fugitives are seen conveying their wounded

to the mountains, where a herdsman's family, surrounded by their livestock, wait anxiously; to the left Egyptian soldiers are shown bringing in Negro (Kushite) prisoners. On the left-hand (E) wall are the remains of several reliefs: (from left to right) prisoners brought before the King; the King in battle; the King on foot, smiting his enemies; the King leading two files of prisoners to Re-Harakhty to serve as slaves in his temple. Above, the King is depicted in the presence of Amun.

On the rear wall, to the left of the door, the King is shown grasping his enemies by the hair and smiting them with a club, while his lion seizes one of the enemy by the leg and the falcon-headed Re-Harakhty hands the King the sickle-shaped sword. To the right the King presents an image of Maat to the ram-headed Khnum. At the foot of the wall are the royal Princes with their fans. To the right of the door the King is depicted smiting his enemies in the presence of Amun-Re; to the left, above, he makes a libation of wine to Ptah and another god; below, he burns incense before Thoth.

The following **Ceremonial Hall** has six square pillars with reliefs depicting the King before various deities. In a scene on the W wall he is shown burning incense before the sacred barque of Re-Harakhty, which is adorned with falcons' heads and carried by priests. In another scene on the E wall he is seen offering flowers to the barque. – Beyond this hall are three chapels, the central one being the **Sanctuary**, in which the sacred barque was kept. On the rear wall are four seated figures (partly destroyed) of the gods worshiped in the temple: (from left to right) Re-Harakhty, the deified Ramesses II, Amun-Re and Ptah.

Another monument brought to Amada to save it from the rising waters is the **Rock Tomb of Pennut**, Steward of Ramesses VI (20th Dynasty) in the district of Wawat in Lower Nubia. It is of interest for its rich and well-preserved *decoration, with extensive inscriptions. This was the latest tomb in an extensive necropolis of the New Kingdom situated some 25 miles/40 km S on the right bank of the Nile, near the village (now submerged) of Aniba, which occupied the site of the ancient Mem or Miam, capital of Lower Nubia and residence of the Egyptian Viceroy.

The tomb is of the very simplest form. The entrance leads straight into a transverse chamber (21 ft/6.5 m wide by 9 ft/2.8 m deep), in the rear wall of which is a niche. The scenes on the right-hand (E) side depict life in this world, those on the left-hand side the life Beyond. There are two registers on all the walls. – To the left of the entrance are Pennut and his wife in prayer.

Right-hand side. – Entrance wall: a 20-line inscription recording donations in honor of a statue of Ramesses VI; adjoining, above, Ramesses's Governor presents two silver vessels to Pennut, and the Governor and a steward in the presence of the royal family; Pennut robed by two servants; below, Pennut and his wife praying and sacrificing to their ancestors. – Rear wall: Pennut, his wife and his six sons praying before Re-Harakhty and (below) before Osiris.

Left-hand side. – Entrance wall, above: Pennut before the doorway into the Beyond; Pennut and his wife praying in the world Beyond; Anubis weighing Pennut's heart against truth and justice, with Thoth recording the result. – Entrance wall, below: "opening of the mouth" scene; lamentation for Pennut; Har-siesis leads Pennut and his wife to the throne of Osiris; Anubis at Pennut's bier; text from the "Book of the Dead"; Pennut and his wife praying. – Rear wall, above: Pennut praying before the Hathor cow; Pennut and his wife before Re-Khepri. – Rear wall, below: Anubis and Thoth pouring the consecrating water over the dead couple; Pennut and his wife praying before Ptah, Sokar and Osiris. – Around the entrance to the niche are scenes of prayer; above, the sacred barque. In the niche are three unfinished divine statues.


*Wadi el-Sebwa: see separate entry.

Amarna

See Tell el-Amarna

El-Arish

Sinai Peninsula. – Sinai Frontier District.
Population: 30,000.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

ACCESS. – Expressway from Cairo to Ismailia (75 miles/120 km), then 118 miles/190 km on the coast road along the N side of the Sinai Peninsula. – Airfield.

ACCOMMODATION. – None.

El-Arish, chief town of the Sinai Frontier District and the largest place on the peninsula, lies amid beautiful groves of date-palms and fertile oasis gardens on the Mediterranean coast at the mouth of the Wadi el-Arish, Sinai's largest river (dry for part of the year). El-Arish is a fishing port and a bedouin settlement with some recently established industries.

HISTORY. – The town is said to have been founded in Pharaonic times as a place of banishment. In the Ptolemaic period it was known as *Rhinocorura* or *Rhinocolura* ("severed nose"), perhaps because prisoners confined here had their noses cut off to distinguish them as such. – With its abundant springs and ancient groves of date-palms, the town was from an early period an important staging-point on the Via Maris, the military road and trading-route between Palestine and Egypt. – In the Byzantine period the town, then known as *Laris*, was the see of a bishop. – In the 11th c. its population consisted predominantly of Jews, who called it *Hazor*. Baldwin I, King of Jerusalem, died here in 1118. – In 1799 Napoleon

took the town but was compelled to give it up again under the Convention of El-Arish (January 24, 1800).

The Arabic name El-Arish means "hut" – referring to a legend that Jacob stayed here in a hut which he constructed for himself during his journey from Canaan into Egypt. This was one factor which led Theodor Herzl to see the town and the Arish Valley as the nucleus of a new Jewish State: a project which foundered on British resistance. – In 1948 El-Arish was a base for Egyptian bombers. It was briefly occupied by Israel in 1956, and again after the Six Day War of 1967. In 1980, under the Camp David Agreements, it was returned to Egypt. The return to Egypt of further territory in Sinai in 1982 moved the Egyptian-Israeli frontier some 25 miles/40 km E of El-Arish, adjoining the Gaza Strip.

El-Arish possesses no tourist sights and accordingly attracts few visitors. The most notable features of the town are its groves of *date-palms*, which are cultivated by the bedouin in considerable numbers and represent a major source of wealth for their owners. They practice an unusual method of cultivation, found only here, digging down until they find moist soil and planting palm cuttings in the sheltered depressions thus created; the excavated soil is consolidated with stones to provide further protection. After some years – by which time the holes have been filled by drifting sand – the young palms are strong enough to stand up to the harsh desert conditions. The palms supply the bedouin not only with food but also with building material for the light palm huts which are still commonly found in this area. – The magnificent **beach* of El-Arish is at present patronized only by local people; but with a view to the development of tourism a motel is now under construction.

Sinai: see separate entry.

Armant

See under Tod

Ashmunein

See under Mallawi



Aswan – a general view

Aswan

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Aswan.
Population: 200,000.

i **Tourist Information Office,**
Tourist Bazaar;
tel. 32 97.
Tourist Police,
Tourist Bazaar;
tel. 31 63.
Misir Travel,
Tourist Bazaar;
tel. 23 23.

ACCOMMODATION. – **New Cataract Hotel*, L, 280 b., and *Cataract Hotel*, L, 215 b., beautifully situated above the Nile; **Aswan Oberoi*, L, 274 b., on island of Elephantine; *Kalabsha*, I, 120 b., beyond the Cataract Hotel; *Amon*, I, 72 b., on the island of that name; *Nefertari*, II, 32 b.; *Abu Simbel*, II, 132 b.; *Nile City*, II, 108 b.; *Grand Hotel*, III, 325 b.; *Philae*, III, 68 b.; etc. – **YOUTH HOSTEL**, Sharia Abtel el-Tahrir.

ACCESS. – Road from Cairo along E bank of Nile (590 miles/950 km). – By rail from Cairo, 16 hours. – By air from Cairo via Luxor, 2½ hours. – Nile cruise ships run by the Hilton and Sheraton hotel groups, offering a high standard of amenity; smaller boats run by Egyptian companies, with more modest standards of comfort.

The town ***Aswan** (ancient Greek **Syene**) in Upper Egypt, celebrated for its cleanliness, lies in latitude 24° 5' N below the First Cataract. Situated on the E bank of the Nile, partly on low ground and partly on a hill, it is a much-favored winter resort thanks to its equable dry and warm climate and its sand-baths, which are efficacious in the treatment of diseases of the joints. Aswan, the capital of Egypt's most southerly governorate and the terminus of the railway line along the Nile Valley, has a university which is still in course of development. – As a result of the construction of the ***High Dam** farther up the valley

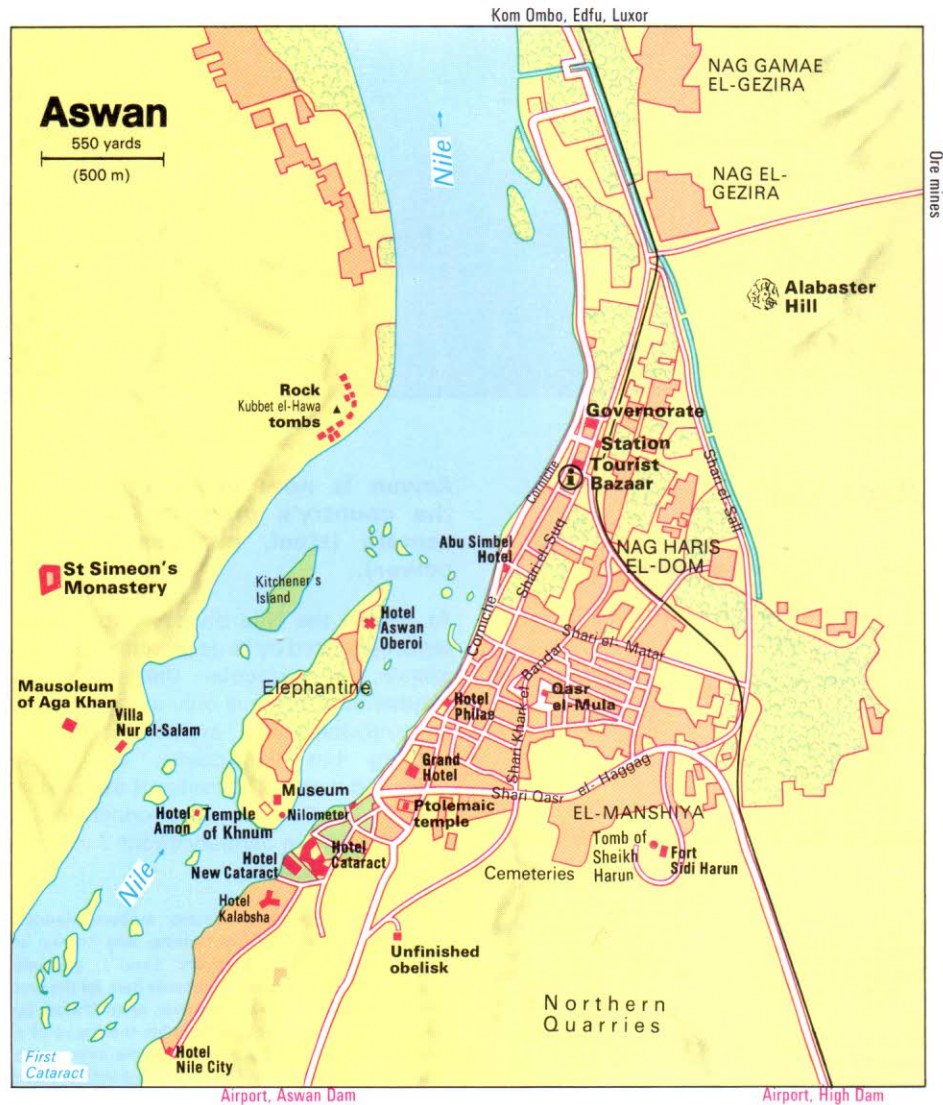
Aswan is now becoming one of the country's principal industrial centers (steel, nitrogen, electric power).

At Aswan the Nile divides into several arms, separated by large granite rocks and islands, in particular the island of Elephantine. There is only a narrow strip of cultivable land, supporting almost nothing but date-palms; the dates produced here are considered the best in Egypt. – The Southern Cross constellation is visible here in January about 3 a.m., in April about 10 p.m.

HISTORY. – The area around modern Aswan, including the island of Elephantine, was known in antiquity as *Yebu* ("Elephant Land"), perhaps because the Egyptians saw elephants here for the first time or because the rocks in the river, worn smooth by the water, were thought to resemble the backs of a herd of elephants. At a later date the name was restricted to the island and town of Elephantine. From the earliest times down to the Roman period the quarries of Yebu, which became known in the Ptolemaic period as *Syene*, supplied the Egyptians with fine colored granite (containing quartz, yellow and brick-red felspar and blackish mica) for their buildings and statues. The term "syenite" applied to this rock by Pliny is now, however, used by geologists to denote a different kind of stone containing a higher proportion of hornblende.

Yebu was also of strategic importance, commanding as it did the Nile cataracts and traffic by water between Egypt and Nubia. It was also the starting-point of the great caravan route to Nubia and the Sudan, along which passed the commercial and military expeditions of the Egyptians. The ancient capital of the province, also called Yebu, lay at the S end of the island. In the 6th and 5th c. B.C. there was a Jewish military colony here, with a Temple of Yahweh, as was shown by Aramaic papyri found here in 1906–08 (now in the Egyptian Museum, West Berlin, and the Bode Museum, East Berlin).

On the E bank of the river was the town of *Swenet*, the Greek **Syene**, which rose to importance only in a later period. In the early 2nd c. A.D. the Roman garrison here was commanded by the satirical poet Juvenal, who had been posted to this remote frontier of the Empire



as a punishment for his biting attacks on the Court. A celebrated curiosity of ancient Syene was a well into which the sun's rays descended perpendicularly at the summer solstice, casting no shadow; and this led the Athenian scholar Eratosthenes (276–196 B.C.), who was attached to the Museum in Alexandria, to devise his method of measuring the size of the earth. – The town suffered greatly at the hands of the Blemmyes, but became the see of a Christian bishop, and seems to have regained its prosperity under the Caliphs. Arab writers record that a plague carried off 20,000 of its inhabitants, which points to a very large total population. From the end of the 12th c. Aswan suffered severely from the incursions of plundering bedouin tribes, which were ended only when the Turkish Sultan Selim stationed a garrison in the town in 1517.

SIGHTS. – There are only scanty remains of the ancient city of **Syene** on the right bank of the Nile – mainly inscriptions on rocks and architectural fragments built into modern houses. In the S of the town

are the ruins of the *Qasr el-Mula*, situated on a hill amid beautiful gardens, and a small Ptolemaic temple (see below).

From the *railway station*, at the N end of the town, a street leads W to the *Corniche*, a riverside promenade on which are the offices of the Governorate, several hotels and the *Tourist Bazaar*, with the Tourist Information Office. On the opposite side of the river can be seen the Kubbet el-Hawa, a sheikh's tomb, crowning a hill which contains rock tombs of the Old and Middle Kingdoms. – From the station *Sharia el-Suq* runs S, parallel to the river, to the center of the town. In this street and the adjoining side streets is the **Bazaar**, a magnet for visitors with its many little shops and stalls and its colorful bustle of activity.



Street in the Bazaar, Aswan

At the S end of the town is a small **Ptolemaic temple** (unfinished and poorly preserved) built by Euergetes I and Philopator and dedicated to Isis of Syene.

The main *doorway* is crowned by a cavetto cornice. On the left-hand door-post, above, Euergetes presents an image of the goddess Maat to Amun; below, Euergetes in the presence of Min-Amun and of Mut and Isis. On the lintel Euergetes (in one case accompanied by his wife Berenice) is depicted before various gods. Within the doorway the King is shown in the presence of Thoth (right) and Harsiesis (left), with an inscription above each scene. – The interior consists of a hall with two pillars in which are several bases for statues and sacred boats, and three *chapels*. On the rear wall of the middle chapel are reliefs depicting Euergetes (accompanied in one scene by Berenice) in the presence of the deities of Syene.

Beyond this, in a magnificent *situation on the banks of the Nile with a view of the island of Elephantine, stands the old **Cataract Hotel**, set in beautiful gardens reaching down to the river, with a spacious shady terrace and a swimming-pool. Adjoining it is the modern *New Cataract Hotel*. – To the E of the Cataract Hotel, on a granite rock below a stone wall of the Roman period, can be seen an *inscription* dating from the reign of

Amenophis IV. On the right is Men, "Superintendent of Works", before an image of Amenophis III; to the left his son Bek, Chief Architect at Tell el-Amarna, before an image (defaced) of Amenophis IV, on which the sun's rays descend.

SURROUNDINGS of Aswan

From the *Tomb of Sheikh Harun*, on a hill in the desert to the SE of the town, there is a fine *view of the town. Farther SE is the little *Fort Sidi Harun*.

In the desert to the S of the town are ancient **Arab cemeteries**. The graves are marked by rectangles of undressed stone and a slab bearing an inscription, those of wealthy people by small domed structures. On higher ground is a sheikh's tomb. – On the surrounding hills large mosque-like *cenotaphs* commemorate celebrated holy men and women such as Sheikh Mahmud, Sheikh Ali and the Lady (Sayyida) Zeinab, whose birthdays (*mulis*) are celebrated here.



Cataract Hotel and New Cataract Hotel, Aswan

To the SE of the town are the ancient **granite quarries** from which the Egyptians obtained the fine reddish Aswan granite for their buildings and statues. In the *Northern Quarries* can be seen an ***unfinished obelisk** (137 ft/41.75 m long, 14 ft/4.20 m across at the broader end), no doubt abandoned because of a crack in the stone. It is estimated that the completed obelisk would have weighed 1168 tons and would



Domed tombs in an Arab cemetery



Unfinished obelisk

have been the largest ever hewn. Round the obelisk has been cut a trench $2\frac{1}{2}$ ft/75 cm wide. On the surrounding rock faces, which are of moderate height, can be seen many traces of the work of ancient stone-cutters. The blocks were detached from the rock by boring holes along a prescribed line, driving wedges into these and then soaking the wedges with water to detach the block. Statues, sarcophagi, obelisks, etc., were usually roughly dressed before removal in order to reduce the weight for transport. From the hill above the obelisk there are extensive **views*; to the W, in a desert valley on the far side of the Nile, can be seen St Simeon's Monastery. – From the quarries a massive causeway (still in use today) ran down to Aswan to facilitate the transport of the huge blocks to the banks of the Nile.

From the quarries the causeway continues S, first passing through the hills and then descending into a picturesque valley, after which it follows a level course and comes in some 45 minutes to the *Southern Quarries*, facing eastward towards the desert. Here, too, there are rough-hewn blocks abandoned by the ancient stone-cutters. On a rock face is carved an inscription in the name of Amenophis III, but the name and figure of the stone-cutter who carved it have been obliterated. Beside it are two trough-shaped sarcophagi of the Ptolemaic or Imperial period on which work has only been begun, and near by are a *colossal statue* of a king (of which all but the feet have been covered with sand) and a large rectangular block, perhaps intended for the shrine of a god. Some 5 minutes' walk farther on, near the top of the cliff above the wide valley through which the railway runs on to Shellal, stands a figure of Osiris (popularly called *Ramesses*), measuring some 20 ft/6 m, with a crown and beard, the arms crossed over the breast. From here there is a fine **view* over the desert to Lake Nasser, with the Temple of Philae (see that entry).

To the N of the town rises the Alabaster Hill, an ancient quarry of quartz from which the Egyptians

obtained the material required for the polishing of hard stones.

The verdant island of **Elephantine* (1650 yds/1500 m long, 550 yds/500 m wide), with its luxuriant growth of palms, known in Arabic as *Geziret Aswan* or *El-Gesira* ("the Island") for short, can be reached by boat (preferably a felucca) in a few minutes. It is one of Aswan's principal tourist attractions, and accordingly is in danger of losing its quiet idyllic charm. On the island are two picturesque *Nubian villages*, the inhabitants of which still speak Nubian and preserve their national traditions.

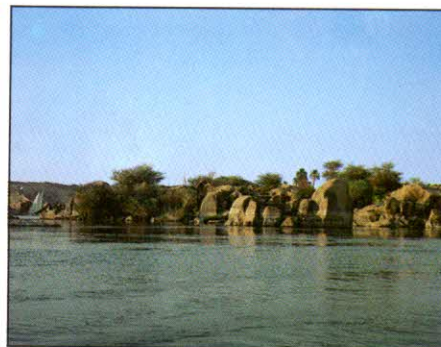
Near the primitive landing-stage on the E side of the island, facing Aswan, is a flight of steps leading to the **Nilometer*, of which Strabo gives a precise description. After more than a thousand years of neglect it was restored to use by Mahmud Bey in 1870 during the reign of Viceroy Ismail, as is recorded in French and Arabic inscriptions; since the construction of the High Dam, however, it no longer functions. The scales date from the Late Empire, the heights (in cubits) being given in both Greek and demotic characters. The new scale is inscribed on marble tablets.

The description of the Nilometer by the Greek geographer *Strabo* (c. 63 B.C.–A.D. 20) is still accurate:

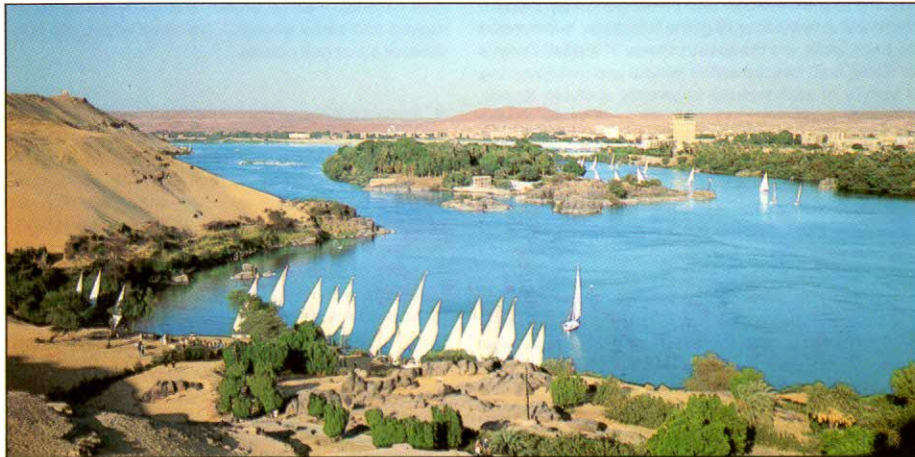
"The Nilometer is a well built of regular hewn stone on the bank of the Nile, in which is recorded the rise of the stream: not only the highest and the lowest rises but also those in between, for the water in the well rises and falls with the stream. On the side of the well are marks, measuring the height sufficient for irrigation and other water-levels. These are observed and made known to all. . . . This is of importance to the peasants for the management of the water, the embankments, the canals and so on, and also to the officials for the purpose of taxation; for the higher the rise of the water the higher are the taxes."

At the head of the steps leading to the Nilometer, set in beautiful gardens, is the **Aswan Museum*, established in 1912 in a villa which belonged to Sir William Willcocks, designer of the first Aswan Dam; it contains a notable collection of antiquities from excavations in Lower Nubia which give an excellent view of the culture of the region.

In the *Colonnade* are statues, stelae and architectural fragments, including the torso of a woman and a



Coastal scenery, Elephantine



Kitchener's Island, seen from the left bank of the Nile

terracotta sarcophagus of the Roman period. – *Entrance Hall*: mummy of a sacred ram in a gilded sarcophagus; Egyptian, Greek and Coptic grave-stones; votive tablets, including one with a Meroitic inscription.

Room 1 (reached from Room 2; prehistoric material, 4000–3200 B.C.): burnished red vessels with a black rim, light-colored jugs with dark red painted decoration (ships, human figures, animals), hand-made stone vessels; cosmetic-palettes, combs, awls and needles made of bone; chains, amulets, cylinder-seals; flint mace-heads, knives and arrowheads. – *Room 2* (Old Kingdom, 3200–2100 B.C.): pottery; copper weapons and implements; pear-shaped mace-heads; a skull with a healed fracture; pottery doll; ostrich eggs with incised figures of animals; porphyry bowl; strings of beads and bracelets. – Now through the entrance hall to *Room 3* (Middle and New Kingdoms, 2100–1500 B.C.): pottery, notably red and black burnished ware with incised patterns lined in white; bracelets of quartz; crude figures of women and cattle; alabaster vessels; cosmetic caskets; small painted plaster masks placed over the wrappings of mummies; faience; Mycenaean stirrup-jar; board game of blue faience; mirrors, daggers and knives of copper and bronze; chains, rings, amulets; a small steatite memorial stone depicting Amun as a ram; scarabs. – *Room 4* (Late Period, after 1500 B.C.): mummies of the Ptolemaic period with cases of painted cartonnage, including those of a priest and priestess of Isis of Philae; bronze vessels and lance-heads; heavy bronze bracelets; Meroitic glass flasks with incised designs; Nubian pottery of the Late Roman period (c. A.D. 400); strings of beads; a pottery censer and a small bronze incense vessel from a Christian church at El-Madiq in Lower Nubia (now submerged by Lake Nasser).

Garden: architectural fragments of the 18th Dynasty (c. 1555–1308 B.C.), incorporated in later buildings erected by Nectanebo II in Elephantine.

A Nubian Museum designed to house material recovered during the rescue operations on the Nubian temples is under construction.

S of the Nilometer, opposite the Cataract Hotel, is a massive *ancient embankment*, many of the stones in which were taken from older buildings and bear inscriptions. There are also many inscriptions on the rocks along the water's edge, including some large inscriptions in the name of Psammetichus.

South of Aswan



The whole of the southern part of the island, part of which is occupied by the more southerly of the two villages, was once covered by the **ancient town of Elephantine**, the remains of which were first explored in the 19th c. and since 1969 have been

undergoing excavation and investigation by modern methods. A few paces W of the Nilometer, surrounded by brick walls, are the substructures of a small *Temple of Satet*, built over an earlier temple and incorporating a variety of architectural fragments (column drums, blocks bearing the name of Tuthmosis III, Ramesses III, etc.). The inscriptions on the solitary stump of column still standing refer to Trajan as the builder, but there was a temple on this site as early as c. 2900 B.C. The temple is being reconstructed, with financial assistance from German industrial firms, to show its successive phases.

Some 50 yards SW a granite doorway originally gave access to a **Temple of Khnum** built by Nectanebo II over an earlier temple. During the Roman period large terraces were built on the river side of both temples. The reliefs show Alexander II, son of Alexander the Great, offering sacrifices to various gods, in particular the ram-headed Khnum. On a section of wall which is still standing the Emperor, followed by Nile gods, is shown sacrificing to Khnum; the faces of both the Emperor and the god have been deliberately defaced. Close to the Temple of Khnum is the cemetery of the sacred rams, with sarcophagi still *in situ* (mummies in the Aswan Museum and the Egyptian Museum in Cairo). – To the N, between the temples of Satet and Khnum, are the remains of a small *temple*, formed out of three earlier chapels, dedicated to Hekaib, Prince of the Nome of Elephantine, whose rock tomb is on the W bank.

Various other buildings described by the French expedition in the early 19th c. were later pulled down, among them two temples built respectively by Amenophis III and Tuthmosis III. The residential area of the ancient town lay to the SW of the temple area. During the Old Kingdom the town was enclosed by a wall on the S side, and a gateway in this wall can still be identified. – SW of the site of the ancient town, at the southern tip of the island, is the so-called *Kalabsha Kiosk*, a structure in the style of a temple of the Ptolemaic period put together from fragments of the Kalabsha Temple left here during the operation for the rescue of the Nubian temples, in the course of which the stones of the Kalabsha Temple were temporarily stored on Elephantine (see under Kalabsha).

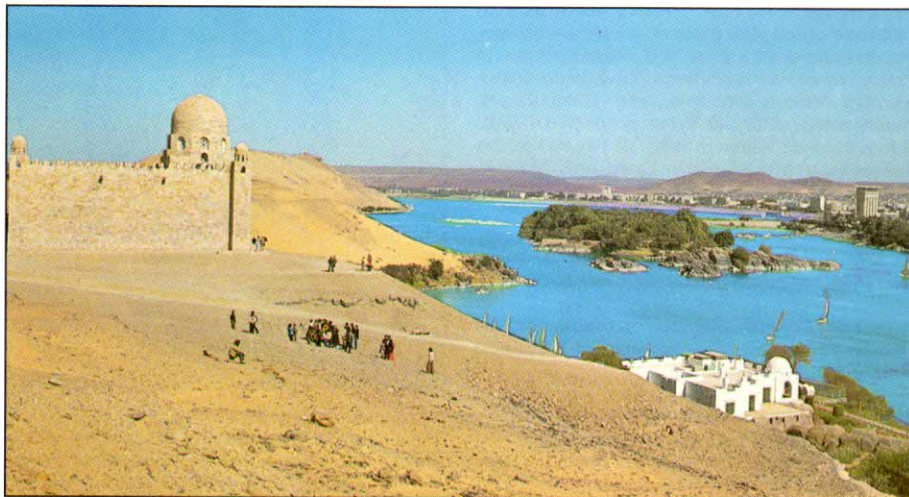
From the higher parts of the island, particularly from the Hill of *Kom*, there are fine* views of the rocks of the

First Cataract – some brown and some black, some rugged and some smooth – between which the Nile pursues a tranquil course.

A* *felucca trip* round the island is full of interest. Some 550 yds/500 m S, near the right bank of the Nile, is a small islet on which can be seen a number of "pot-holes", gouged out of the rock and worn smooth by the Nile flood. – Between Elephantine and the left bank is the island of *El-Atrun* or* **Kitchener's Island**, more recently known as **Botanical Island**. Once the property of Lord Kitchener, it now belongs to the State, and with its luxuriant abundance of plants and flowers is one of the great attractions of Aswan.

On the WEST BANK of the Nile, opposite the S end of Elephantine, is the *Villa Nur el-Salam*, set in carefully tended gardens, which belonged to Aga Khan III (Sultan Mohammed Shah, b. 1887 in Karachi, d. 1957 at Versoix in Switzerland), spiritual head of the Khojas, a branch of the Ismaili sect. The Khojas, who revere him as the 48th Imam, live mainly in India and East Africa. For many years the Aga Khan spent the winter months at Aswan, seeking relief from a rheumatic complaint. – Commandingly situated on a hill above the villa, with magnificent* views, is the **Mausoleum of the Aga Khan**, built here, in accordance with his wishes, by the Begum, his French-born wife and former beauty queen Yvette Labrousse (b. 1906). A stiff climb on a stepped path brings the visitor to a spacious esplanade from which a broad flight of steps leads up to the entrance. The mausoleum is built of ochre-colored calcareous sandstone in a severely restrained style; the interior (in which absolute silence must be observed) is finished in light colors, floored with red carpets and immaculately maintained. On the Begum's instructions a fresh red rose is laid on the sarcophagus (of white marble, with Koranic texts carved in relief) every day.

Farther N, on the hill crowned by the little sheikh's tomb known as *Kubbet el-Hawa*, are the* **rock tombs** of the princes and grandees of Elephantine. The tombs date from the end of the Old Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom – i.e. from the same period as the tombs of Beni Hasan (see that entry), which they resemble both in construction and in decoration. There are fine* views from the hill.



Mausoleum and villa of the Aga Khan, Aswan

From the boat landing-place a sandy path (moderate gradient, but fairly strenuous) climbs up to Tomb 31. Even more testing is the ancient staircase, consisting of two parallel flights of steps separated by a ramp up which the sarcophagi were drawn, which leads up to Tombs 25 and 26.

The tour of the tombs begins at the S end with No. 25, the **tomb of Mekhu** (6th Dynasty), the construction and decoration of which are somewhat crude. In front of the entrance are two small obelisks without inscriptions. The chamber contains 18 roughly worked columns, in three rows. Opposite the entrance, between two columns, stands a three-legged stone table, presumably an altar, and in the rear wall beyond this is a niche approached by steps and closed by a stone screen, within which is a false door. On the walls are various scenes depicting the dead man receiving offerings. To the right of the entrance sacrifices are being made to him; to the left are agricultural scenes (plowing, harvesting; donkeys bringing in the harvest).

Immediately adjoining No. 25 is No. 26, the **Tomb of Sabni I**, Mekhu's son. This has an unusual type of doorway, divided into two parts by a cross-beam; in front of it are two small obelisks and a sacrificial basin. The chamber is divided into three aisles by 14 square pillars. On the rear wall the dead man is depicted with his daughters in a boat, hunting in the marshes: on the left he holds a throwing-stick in one hand and the slain birds in the other; on the right he is catching two fish with his harpoon; in the middle birds are flying over a papyrus thicket.

To the right of this double tomb the path continues up past two tombs buried in sand (Nos. 27 and 29) to **Tomb 30**, belonging to one Hekaib (Middle Kingdom). The chamber, divided into three aisles by six pillars, has a barrel-vaulted roof. In the rear wall is a niche with the figures of two men and a papyrus plant, symbolizing the life-force. – Beyond No. 30 is the **Tomb of Hekaib I** (No. 28), of modest size and decoration, with a figure of the dead man, depicted as a Nubian with a curious curled wig and dark skin.

Farther on we come to the ***Tomb of Prince Sarenput II** (No. 31), son of Satethotep and a contemporary of King Amenemhet II (12th Dynasty). This is one of the largest and best-preserved tombs in the necropolis. The narrow entrance leads into a hall with six pillars, which taper towards the top; it has no decoration, but on the right is a handsome granite offering-table. Beyond this is a corridor with three niches on either side, each containing a rock-cut statue of the dead man in the guise of the Osiris mummy. To the left of the first niche is a figure of the dead man and his son, the colors of which are excellently preserved. The corridor leads into a small chamber with four pillars, on each of which there are figures of the dead man; on some of them can be seen the grid of lines used by the artist in setting out his picture. In the rear wall of this chamber is a niche containing finely executed reliefs: the dead man at table, with his son in front of him carrying flowers (rear); the dead man standing on the right, with his mother at table on the left (right-hand wall); the dead man with his son behind him and his wife in front of him (left-hand wall).

Beyond this are the **Tomb of Aku** (No. 32), with a niche containing a representation of the dead man with his wife and son seated at a meal in an arbor; the **Tomb of Khui** (sanded up); and the **Tomb of Khunes**

(No. 34h; 6th Dynasty), an eight-pillared chamber containing fine representations of various craftsmen (bakers, potters, metalworkers beside a furnace, brewers, leather-workers, etc.). The two last-named tombs were later occupied by Coptic monks, who left a variety of inscriptions. – From the Tomb of Khunes a flight of steps leads to the **Tomb of Setka** (First Intermediate Period), with wall-paintings, badly damaged but with astonishingly vivid colors, which are among the few surviving examples of the decorative art of this period.

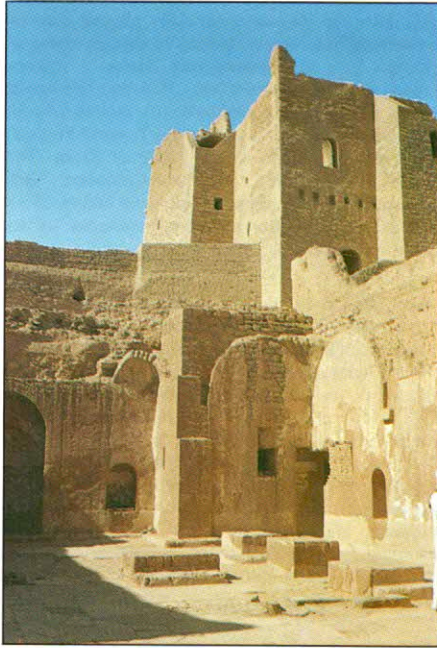
Then follows the **Tomb of Harhuf** (No. 34n). On the outer wall, flanking the entrance, are figures of the dead man (depicted on the left leaning on a staff, with his son holding a censer), with important inscriptions recording four successful trading expeditions in Nubia, three of them during the reign of Merenre and the fourth (on which the goods he brought back included a dwarf) in the reign of Pepi II (6th Dynasty). – Adjoining is the small **Tomb of Pepinakht** (No. 35; sanded up), with inscriptions on either side of the entrance glorifying the dead man's exploits in campaigns against the Nubians and the inhabitants of the Eastern Desert during the reign of Pepi II (6th Dynasty).

Adjoining the tomb of Pepinakht is the recently cleared **Tomb of Hekaib II** (No. 35d), whose mortuary temple has been found on the island of Elephantine. Constructed on an irregular plan, it has a large forecourt and vestibule. The tomb chamber itself is small and modestly decorated, but was notable for the quantity of grave-goods and votive tablets found in it (now in the Aswan Museum). – To the left of the forecourt are doorways leading to other tombs, including the **Tomb of Sabni II**, son of Hekaib II.

Finally we come to the ***Tomb of Prince Sarenput I** (No. 36), son of Satseni, who lived in the reign of Sesostri I (12th Dynasty). A doorway of fine limestone with figures of the dead man leads into the court, with six pillars, formerly supporting the roof of a colonnade, bearing inscriptions and representations of the dead man. Rear wall, to the left of the door: a large figure of the dead man followed by his sandal-bearer and two dogs; cattle are brought to the dead man (note particularly the enraged bulls); Sarenput in a boat spearing fish. To the right of the door: a large figure of the dead man, followed by his bow-bearer, a dog and his three sons; above, the dead man seated in a colonnade, with four women in front of him holding flowers; below, a woman and two men gaming. The paintings, on stucco, are badly damaged. A vaulted passage, now closed by a modern wall, leads into a second chamber, with four pillars, from which another passage continues into a small chamber with two pillars and a cult-niche. Here, too, there are many scenes of everyday life, much damaged, on the walls and pillars.

To the NE is the **Tomb of Kakemet** (reign of Amenophis III), with fine ***ceiling-paintings** (flying birds, spirals with bulls' heads). On the pillars the dead man is shown before Osiris and the Hathor cow. Excavations still in progress have brought a third row of tombs to light. – Above the necropolis are the remains of a Coptic monastery.

It is worth the effort of climbing to the top of the hill, with the small sheikh's tomb known as the **Kubbet el-Hawa**, for the sake of the fine ***view**. From here a 45-minute camel or donkey ride brings the visitor to St Simeon's Monastery.



St Simeon's Monastery, Aswan

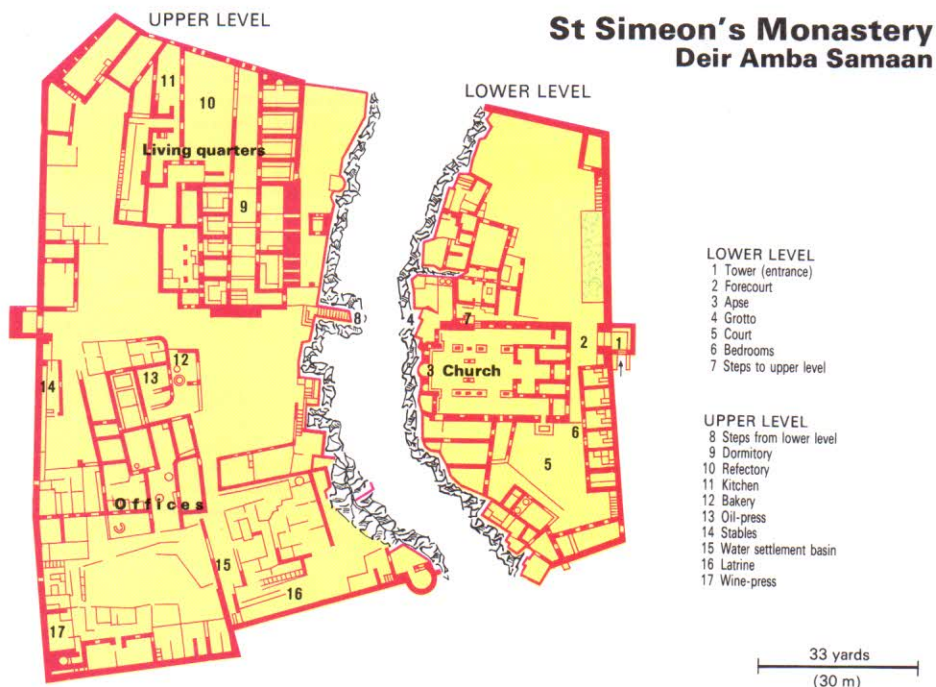
The ruined ***Monastery of St Simeon** (*Deir Amba Samaan* or *Deir Amba Hadra*), situated on a hill in the desert on the W bank of the Nile, can be reached from the river-bank on a footpath running up a desert valley opposite the S end of Elephantine; the climb takes 20 minutes. One of the largest and best-preserved Coptic monasteries, it was founded in the 7th c. and abandoned in the 13th because of water shortage. The buildings, standing on a rock shelf on two levels, are surrounded by a wall 20–23 ft/6–7 m high, the lower part of which is constructed of undressed stone, the upper part of sun-dried bricks; on the W side the lower part is hewn from the rock.

The buildings on the **LOWER LEVEL** (excavated and restored 1925–26) are reached by way of a *tower* on the E side which leads into the *forecourt*. To the left is a porter's lodge, to the right a large bench (*mastaba*) on which pilgrims could sleep. On the S side of the court is the **Church**, an aisled basilica. At the E end of the wide nave, once covered by two domes, is the large *apse*, with three rectangular niches under semi-domes. In the central niche are the remains of a fresco depicting Christ enthroned between angels. To the right and left of the apse are Coptic inscriptions. Adjoining is the *Baptistry*, with a piscina. At the W end of the nave a small apse has remains of frescos. – A small door at the W end of the N aisle leads into a small *rock chapel* with fine decoration (8th c.) on the ceiling and a niche containing six medallions of saints. – To the N and W of the church are various subsidiary buildings and small grottoes. – To the SE of the church is a court, with a tomb built against its S wall. Along the E side of the court are bedrooms, each with three beds, and other barrel-vaulted rooms.



Remains of frescos in the church

To the NW of the church is a flight of stone steps leading to the **UPPER LEVEL**, some 16 ft/5 m higher up. On this level are the large three-storeyed **living-quarters** (*qasr*), the two lower floors of which are well preserved. On each floor is a large vaulted corridor, flanked by the monks' cells with their brick-built



beds. On the walls are Coptic and Arabic inscriptions. To the S of this block are various *offices* (a mill, a bakery, oil- and wine-presses, store-rooms, a bath-house, etc.) and a small domed *chapel*.

Half an hour's walk S of the monastery are two conspicuous high cliffs, one of which is covered with inscriptions. – 10 minutes beyond this is a hill of dark-colored stone from which there is a superb *view* of the cataract area, extending N to the island of Bahrif. – The path down to the bank of the Nile runs past a large *cemetery*. On the river-bank are many *rock tombs*.

An interesting excursion from here (2 hours by camel or donkey) is to the **sandstone quarries** which lie on the banks of the Nile to the N of St Simeon's Monastery. Here can be seen the upper part of an unfinished obelisk with carvings and an inscription in the name of Sethos I.

Some 3 miles/5 km upstream from Aswan is the ***Aswan Dam** (Arabic *El-Sadd*, "the Dam", or *El-Khassan*, "the Reservoir"), constructed between 1898 and 1912. At the time of its construction it was the largest dam in the world, and until the building of the High Dam in 1971 it remained the world's longest. It was designed to put an end to the annual inundation of the Nile by pounding its water and distributing it regularly over the year, thus making it possible to irrigate the cultivated land throughout the year, extending its area and enabling two or three crops to be taken off it every year.

Designed by Sir William Willcocks, the British engineer who was also responsible for the Asyut Dam, and built by the firm of John Aird and Co., it is constructed of blocks of Aswan granite. It originally ran straight across the river for a distance of 2145 yds/1960 m, 130 ft/40 m high, 100 ft/30 m thick at the base and 23 ft/7 m thick at the top. After being enlarged in 1907–12 and again in 1929–34 the dam is now 2340 yds/2140 m long and 165 ft/51 m high. The water-level is regulated by 180 sluice-gates, the 140

lower sluices (each measuring 23 ft/7 m by 6½ ft/2 m) being used for the distribution of the water and the 40 upper sluices (11½ ft/3.5 m by 6½ ft/2 m) for the escape of surplus water.

To the W of the dam is a *navigation canal* 1¼ miles/2 km long which enables boats of some size to move up- and downstream, overcoming the difference in level (75 ft/23 m) by the use of four locks 230 ft/70 m long and 31 ft/9.5 m wide. The two uppermost lock-gates are 62 ft/19 m high, the other five 49 ft/15 m, 39 ft/12 m and 36 ft/11 m.

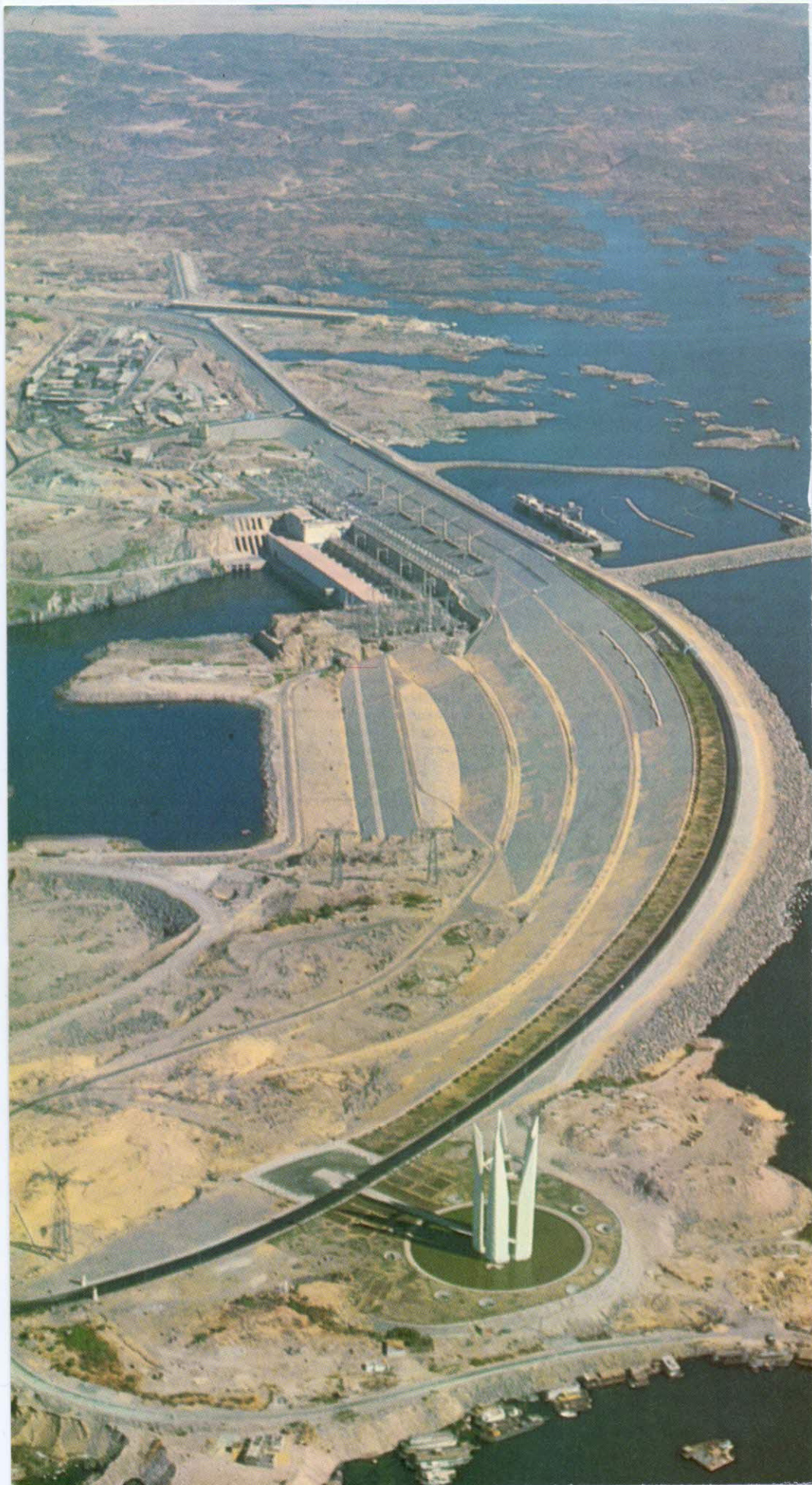
The increase in agricultural output resulting from the construction of the dam was soon overtaken by the rapid increase in the population: in the first half of this century it was doubled, and it has now been multiplied fivefold. Moreover the degree of regulation achieved by the dam turned out to be insufficient. Accordingly after the Second World War, when the country's economic problems were increasingly pressing, it became a matter of urgency to consider the extension and improvement of the arrangements for the regulation of the Nile by the construction of a dam higher up the river.

President Nasser, who came to power in 1952 after a military coup, energetically promoted a project of truly Pharaonic dimensions which should both benefit the nation and redound to his own glory, in the form of a high dam for which plans were first put forward by two German firms (Hochtief of Essen and Union-Brückenbau of Dortmund) in 1955. Financial assistance was offered by Britain, the United States and the World Bank; but when the Western Powers withdrew their offer in 1956 because of Nasser's policy of neutrality, Nasser sought to obtain part of the resources required by nationalizing the Suez Canal. The gap was then filled by the Soviet Union, which contributed by the granting of credits and the provision of some 2000 engineers and technicians to the realization of the project on the basis of the German plans with some modification.

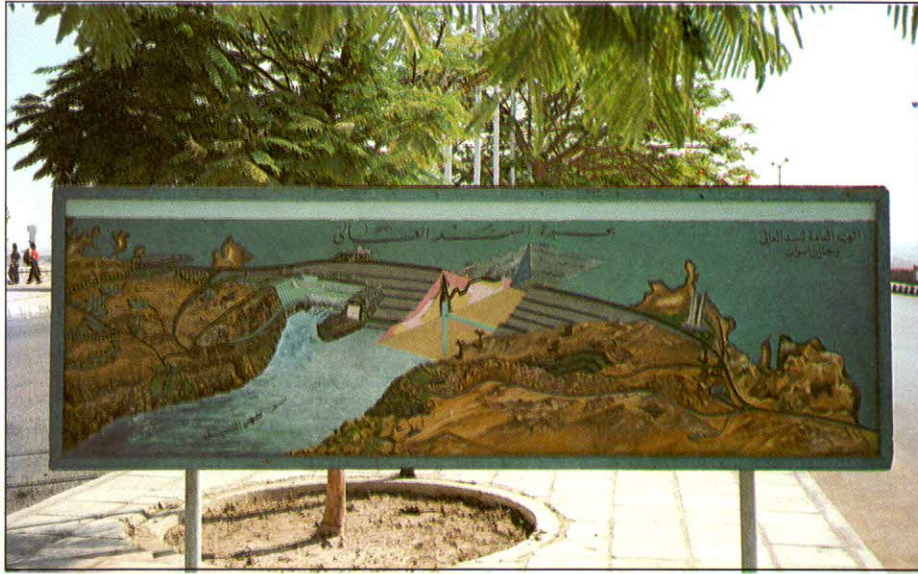


The old Aswan Dam

Overleaf: The Aswan High Dam (el-Sadd el-Ali) and Lake Nasser







Illustrative picture half-way along the High Dam

Work began on January 9, 1960 with the ceremonial laying of the foundation-stone, and on May 14, 1964 the bypass canal on the E bank of the Nile was opened. The solemn inauguration of the High Dam took place on January 15, 1971. Some 35,000 workers and engineers had been employed on its construction, and 451 men had lost their lives. The rising of the water above the dam made it necessary to rehouse almost 60,000 Nubians and Sudanese, and in addition gave rise to an unprecedented international rescue program for saving many historical monuments (temples, tombs, churches, monasteries, etc.) dating from ancient and medieval times by removing them from areas due to be flooded and re-erecting them on new sites.

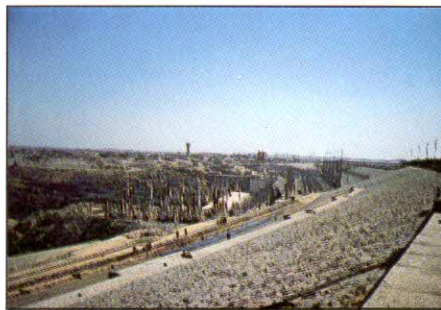


Memorial at west end

The **High Dam**, or **el-Sadd el-Ali**, some 4 miles/7 km above the old Aswan Dam, is a massive accumulation of 55.9 billion cu. yds/42.7 billion cu. m (17 times the volume of the Pyramid of Cheops) of stones and sand with a clay core and a concrete facing. With a total length of 2½ miles/3.6 km, it pounds the waters of the Nile, which was originally 550 yds/500 m wide at this point. It is no less than 1070 yds/980 m thick at the base, reducing to 44 yds/40 m at the top. The top of the dam is 364 ft/111 m above the base and 643 ft/196 m above sea-level. The average capacity of the reservoir (Lake Nasser) formed by the dam is some 177 billion cu. yds/135 billion cu. m, its maximum capacity 205 billion cu. yds/157 billion cu. m. Of this total quantity 110 billion cu. yds/84 billion cu. m – the average annual flow of the Nile – are assigned to irrigation, Egypt receiving 73 billion cu. yds/5.5 billion cu. m and Sudan 24 billion cu. yds/18.5 billion cu. m. It is estimated that over the next 500 years some 39 billion cu. yds/30 billion cu. m of capacity will be lost by the deposition of sediment; and some 8 billion cu. yds/6 billion cu. m of water are lost every year by evaporation. The remaining 48 billion cu. yds/37 billion cu. m of capacity are held in reserve against an unexpectedly high flow of water. – A four-lane road runs across the top of the dam. A *memorial*, a *triumphal arch* and an inscription commemorate the completion of this huge enterprise and the co-operation between Egypt and the Soviet Union in its realization.



Triumphal Arch at highest point



Hydroelectric station at east end

On the E bank of the river is a bypass canal 1750 yds/1600 m long. After passing through six tunnels with a total length of 308 yds/282 m this drives the turbines of a hydroelectric station which produces 10 billion kWh of power annually, making a major contribution to the industrial development of the Nile Valley.

The damming of the Nile by the High Dam has created an immense reservoir, ***LAKE NASSER**, with an area of 2025 sq. miles/5250 sq. km – the largest artificial lake in the world after the one formed by the Kariba Dam on the Zambezi. The lake is 317 miles/510 km long (a third of this length being in Sudanese territory) and 3–22 miles/5–35 km wide. The average altitude of the surface of the lake is about 600 ft/182 m above sea-level. – It is planned to build several towns and villages on the shores of the lake.

It is not yet possible to assess completely the positive and negative effects of the High Dam. One undoubted benefit has been an increase of 20–30% (1,250,000–2,000,000 acres) in cultivated land, together with increased agricultural yields as a result of even and regular irrigation. Other clear gains are the increased output of electricity, the elimination of unpredictable floods and droughts, the possibility of navigation on the Nile throughout the year and the resources of food yielded by the fish of Lake Nasser. One negative result has been the loss of the fertilizing mud formerly deposited by the Nile, which now has to be made good by expensive artificial fertilizers; and consideration is now being given to the possibility of mechanical means of swirling the water in the reservoir in order to prevent it from depositing its alluvium there. Other disadvantageous effects have been the fall in the underground water-table in consequence of the faster and more direct flow of the river and the build-up of salt in the soil, which is no longer washed out by regular flooding with fresh water. In order to obviate these side-effects it will be necessary to construct further dams between Aswan and Cairo. The coastal regions of the Nile Delta have also suffered by the loss of the fertile alluvium formerly carried down by the Nile; and the lack of natural foodstuffs in the water of the river has led to a considerable reduction in the stocks of fish in the south-eastern Mediterranean. – Another potential cause for concern is the possibility of damage to the High Dam by enemy action. The bursting of the dam would devastate the whole of Egypt and wipe out 98% of the population; and even the arrangements already provided for to bring about a rapid fall in the level of Lake Nasser cannot eliminate the danger that would result from a surprise attack.

***Abu Simbel, *Amada, *Kalabsha, *Kom Ombo, *Nile, Nubia, *Philae, Silsila, *Wadi el-Sebwa and Western Desert:** see separate entries.

Asyut

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Asyut.
Population: 250,000.

ACCESS. – By the road along the Nile or by rail.

The lively provincial capital of Asyut, the largest town in Upper Egypt, is one of the centers of Coptic

Christianity, and also has an excellent Islamic university associated with the El-Azhar University in Cairo, a technical college and a number of secondary schools. Situated on the left bank of the Nile, with a small older quarter and extensive modern districts, it has few features of tourist interest.

The town is noted for its craft products – pottery, marquetry-work, ivory-carvings, leather articles, woven fabrics, colored woollen blankets, tulle shawls with gold and silver embroidery. Here as elsewhere, however, locally made articles of considerable artistic quality are gradually being driven out by industrial products in European style. – Asyut has a busy river port handling soda, cotton and grain, and is a market center for the agricultural produce of the very fertile surrounding area.

HISTORY. – Asyut (ancient Egyptian *Syut*) was a place of considerable importance in antiquity thanks to its situation in a large and fertile plain extending between the Libyan and the Arabian mountains – a distance of some 12½ miles/20 km – at the end of the “road of the forty days”, an important caravan route which led to the oases in the Libyan Desert and on to the Darfur Oasis in what is now Sudan. Politically, however, it achieved prominence only occasionally, as during the First Intermediate Period, when it played a considerable part in the conflicts between Thebes and Heracleopolis. Asyut was the capital of the 13th nome of Upper Egypt, the Sycamore nome, and the principal center of the cult of the war god Wepwawet, who was represented as a desert wolf: hence the town’s Greek name of **Lycopolis**, “city of the wolf”. – Asyut was the birthplace of Plotinus (A.D. 205–270), the greatest of the Neo-Platonic philosophers, whose system was influenced to some degree by the priestly doctrines of his native town. – At the beginning of the 4th c. Christianity became dominant in the town, and pious believers moved into the caves of the necropolis to live a life of penitence. Among them was John of Lycopolis (end of 4th c.), who gained the reputation of a saint and a prophet: thus when the Emperor Theodosius sent an envoy to ask about the outcome of his conflict with his rival Eugenius he correctly foretold the Emperor’s victory. – During the medieval period the town enjoyed considerable prosperity thanks to its extensive trading connections and to its slave market, the largest in Egypt. – Soon after the murder of President Sadat in October 1981 there were bloody conflicts in Asyut between Muslim radicals and the police.

SIGHTS. – To the E of the railway station is a shady promenade on the banks of the *Nile*. This leads N to the bridge over the sluice-gates on the *Ibrahimiya Canal* and continues to the Asyut Dam (see below). – The little **OLD TOWN**, with its busy bazaar, lies W of the railway.

Asyut has an interesting little **Museum** containing the collection of antiquities assembled between 1910 and 1914 by a wealthy Asyut citizen, Sayyid Pasha Khashaba, from excavations in the ancient necropolises of Asyut and Meir. The collection includes wooden sarcophagi, including some with fine colored door ornaments and a mummiform sarcophagus of granite; large quantities of grave-goods, in particular domestic and agricultural equipment; a limestone group depicting a princely couple (from Meir; 6th Dynasty); fine reliefs from a 19th Dynasty tomb (the dead man at table, the dead man and his relatives in the presence of the gods of the dead); and a famous over-life-size *statue of an official named Luni holding a chapel with the image of Osiris.

From the square in front of the railway station Sharia el-Mahatta (Station Road) runs W past the old town and then bears SW, crosses the *Sohagiya Canal* and continues to the foot of the desert hills, on the slopes of which are the ***rock tombs** of ancient Asyut. A track zigzags steeply uphill to the large *Tomb of Hapidjefa I* (12th Dynasty), Prince of the nome in the reign of Sesostris I. The tomb is of a size previously found only in royal burials.

From a court in front of the tomb we enter a surprisingly high *longitudinal chamber*, the vaulted ceiling of which was decorated with painted stars. On the right-hand wall is a figure of the dead man, with a long and barely legible inscription. From this chamber a doorway, on each side of which is a figure of the dead man with a long staff, leads into a *transverse chamber*. On the right-hand entrance wall is a long inscription containing the text of ten contracts concluded by the dead man with various priesthoods in his native town in order to secure the proper sacrificial offerings to himself and to provide for the performance of other ceremonies. The corresponding inscription on the left-hand entrance wall contains invocations to visitors to the tomb and a recital of the dead man's merits. The flat ceiling is decorated with a variety of colored spiral, meander and woven patterns. In the rear wall, between two niches, is a door leading into a vaulted passage and beyond this into a *second transverse hall* with three niches. In the middle niche, on the rear wall, was a figure of the dead man, with four women holding lotus flowers in front of him; the side walls show him at table, with three files of priests and servants bringing him gifts or performing sacred ceremonies. The left-hand niche leads to the *mummy-shaft*.

The *view from this tomb is very fine. To the left, lower down, is the Arab cemetery; in the fertile plain is the widely spreading town with its minarets and palms and the Ibharamiya Canal with its busy boat traffic; and in the distance can be seen the edge

of the desert. – A still more extensive and more attractive *view can be enjoyed from the tombs higher up the hill. Here can be seen three adjoining tombs (the most northerly of which is ruined) dating from the Heracleopolitan period (9th and 10th Dynasties) of the Middle Kingdom.

The middle tomb is the *Tomb of Kheti*, Prince of the nome under the 10th Dynasty. On the right-hand wall of the vestibule are the dead man and his wife Tefyeb, with a long text, partly destroyed, referring to King Merikare (10th Dynasty). On the S wall of the main chamber, in which only one pillar is left standing, are depicted several ranks of armed warriors. In the rear wall is a niche for a statue of the dead man. – From this tomb an underground passage leads into the third tomb in the row, which belonged to *Tefyeb*, a Prince of the nome.

Continuing up the hill, passing a small Coptic *rock chapel* and rounding a spur of the hill, we reach a point from which there is a still wider *view of the extensive range of hills along the eastern edge of the Western (Libyan) Desert. – To the N of the ancient necropolis a larger ***Arab cemetery** extends far into the plain, with hundreds of domed tombs set amid palms.

At the foot of the hill is the badly ruined *Tomb of Hapidjefa III*, with harvest scenes painted on stucco and a decorated ceiling.

Some 4 miles/6 km S of the rock tombs we come to the Coptic Monastery of **Deir Rifa** (*El-Deir*), near which are several *rock tombs* of the Middle and New Kingdoms belonging to princes and dignitaries of Shes-hotep (Greek *Hypselis*), capital of the Hypselite nome, in which the ram-headed Khnum was revered. The town lay some 4½ miles/7 km SE of Asyut at the village of Shotb, whose name preserves the ancient Egyptian name of the town.

SURROUNDINGS of Asyut. – To the N of the town, at the village of *El-Walidiya* on the W bank of the Nile, rises the imposing **Asyut Dam**. Built by a British firm to the design of British engineers in 1898–1902, at the same time as the first Aswan Dam, it serves to regulate the flow of water in the Ibrahimiya Canal, which starts here, and to irrigate more than 1,000,000 acres of land in the provinces of Asyut, El-Minya and Beni Suef. The dam, 40 ft/12.5 m high and 911 yds/833 m long, consists of 13 sections, the first of which (at the W end) has three arches and a lock to permit the passage of ships, while the others have nine arches each. The sluices, 111 in all, can be closed by iron gates.

El-Badari
See under Nile

El-Bagawat

See under Kharga Oasis

Bahr el-Ahmar

See Red Sea

Bahr el-Nil

See Nile

Bahriya Oasis

Western Desert. – New Valley Frontier District.

ACCESS. – By road from Cairo, 208 miles/334 km SW; macadamized, but in places covered with sand; cross-country vehicles only. Also accessible on difficult desert tracks from Medinet el-Fayyum, Beni Mazar or Samalut.

The *Bahriya (Northern) Oasis, also known as Wahet el-Bahnasa, the Oasis of Bahnasa, and to the ancients as the Little Oasis (Oasis Parva: in contrast to the Kharga Oasis) lies in latitude 28° 23' N and longitude 28° 19' E in a depression in the Western (Libyan) Desert, here hilly and very picturesque.

The oasis, 11 miles/18 km long by 5½ miles/9 km across, has a population of some 6000, who live by the cultivation and export of high-quality dates, olives, citrus fruits and onions and by the rearing of poultry (mainly turkeys). A much-esteemed alcoholic drink is brewed from dates. It is planned to achieve a considerable increase in agricultural output by the drilling of wells. – A recent development is the opencast mining of iron ore at *El-Gedida*, some 25 miles/40 km NE of the oasis.

The main settlements are the neighboring villages of *El-Qasr* and *Bawiti*, the latter of which is notable for its characteristic whitewashed houses decorated with patterns in blue and red and for a 6th c. Coptic church. In the vicinity are remains of a *Temple of Amasis* with interesting bas-reliefs, a *Temple of Apries* and a *Catacomb of Isis* of the 26th Dynasty, which all remained open for worship into


Christian times but are now largely covered by sand. There are also a *Temple of Alexander the Great*, a Roman *Triumphal Arch* (destroyed) and a necropolis, with only one tomb which can be entered – the *Tomb of Binati* (18th–19th Dynasty), with fine paintings. – Both villages have hot springs (79 °F/26 °C).

S of Bahriya is the small **Oasis of El-Hais**, surrounded by an area of black stones with a high iron content. There is a small Coptic church. Remains of a modest Roman settlement have been found here.

New Valley and **Western Desert**: see separate entries.

Behbeit el-Hagara

Lower Egypt. – Governorate: Daqahliya.

 **Tourist Information Office,**

Misir Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

Misir Travel,
Tourist Center,
Tanta;
tel. 22 12.

ACCESS. – 6½ miles/10 km SW of El-Mansura by road.

The ancient site of Behbeit el-Hagara, the Iseum or Isidis Oppidum of classical times, lies near the provincial capital of El-Mansura in the northern part of the Nile Delta. The modern name derives from the ancient Egyptian Hebet or Per-Ehbet, the "house of the god of Hebet" (i.e. Horus).

Lying within the Saite nome, the place was much revered by the kings of the 30th Dynasty, who stemmed from the neighboring town of Sebennytus, as a center of the cult of Isis, her brother and husband Osiris and their son Horus.

Within a precinct measuring 87 yds/80 m by 60 yds/55 m enclosed by brick walls, still well preserved on two sides, now used as a place of burial, rises a large heap of ruins – the remains of the once-splendid **Temple of Isis**. Built by Nectanebo II (30th Dynasty) and Ptolemy II Philadelphus, probably on the site of an earlier temple, it is now in a state of total collapse, either as the result of an earthquake or by deliberate demolition. It was built mainly of grey granite, with some red

granite, which must have been transported here from a considerable distance. The ruins form a highly picturesque mass of blocks of stone, fragments of columns, broken architraves and other architectural elements, the original function and disposition of which can be established only by an expert.

The ***reliefs**, all dating from the time of Nectanebo I and II (both 30th Dynasty), Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Ptolemy III Euergetes I, are of high quality – far superior to those in the Graeco-Roman temples of Upper Egypt. One of them makes it possible to identify the position of the sanctuary. It depicts the King offering incense before the sacred barque of Isis, in a form otherwise preserved only in bronze. The boat resembles a two-storeyed house; above, the goddess, with the cow's horns and solar disc, seated on a lotus flower and flanked by two winged goddesses. To the W of this, near the original entrance, is a large slab of grey granite veined with red on which the King is depicted offering a gift of land to Osiris and Isis. To the N is an unusually large granite Hathor capital. All round are innumerable fragments of pillars, architraves, friezes with heads of Hathor and waterspouts in the form of crouching lions. Near by a section of staircase built into the walls can be seen.

The temple's sacred lake can still be identified in the village of **Behbeit**, NW of the ruins.

SURROUNDINGS of Behbeit el-Hagara. – Some 7½ miles/12 km SW of Behbeit, to the W of the little town of *Samannud* (pop. 15,000), are the scanty remains of ancient **Sebennytus** (Egyptian *Tyebnut-ye*, Coptic *Djebenuti*), the place of origin of the 30th Dynasty kings and the home of Manetho (3rd c. B.C.), the historian to whom we owe much of our knowledge of the rulers of ancient Egypt. On a hill are some remains of a **temple** dedicated to the local deity Onuris-Shu, probably dating from the time of Nectanebo II to Ptolemy II Philadelphus.

5 miles/8 km farther S, on a by-road, is the village of *Abusir*, occupying the site of the ancient *Djedu*, chief town of a nome, later known as *Per-Usir* ("House of Osiris") and to the Greeks as **Busiris**. This was revered as the place of burial of Osiris, the scene of an annual pilgrimage. Nothing remains of the ancient town nor of the Temple of Osiris which is mentioned by Herodotus.

Nile Delta: see separate entry.

Beit el-Wali

See under Kalabsha

Beni Hasan

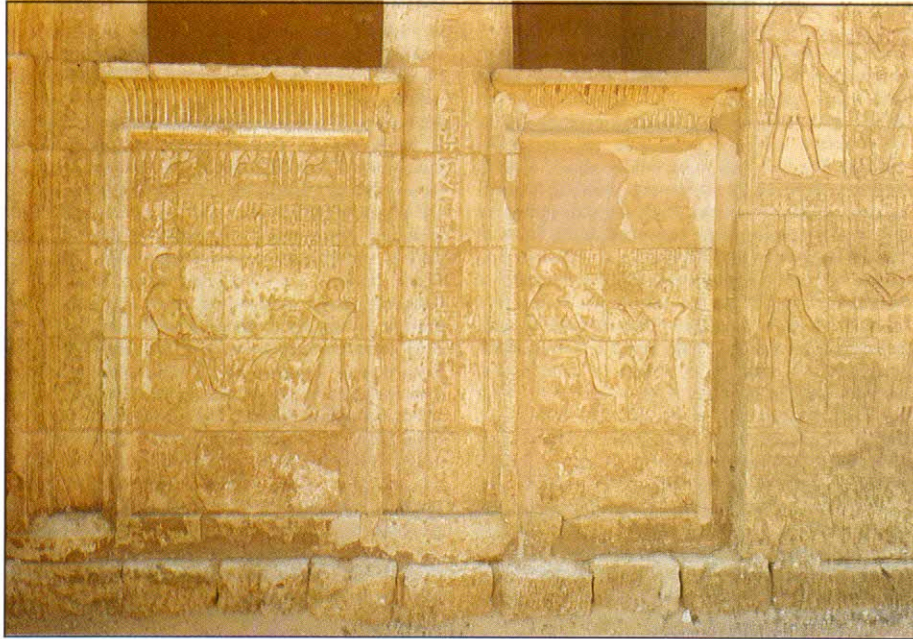
Middle Egypt. – Governorate: El-Minya.

ACCESS. – By boat from El-Minya or Abu Qurqas.

The ***rock tombs** of Beni Hasan lie on the edge of the desert on the E bank of the Nile some 14 miles/23 km S of El-Minya and 22 miles/35 km N of Tell el-Amarna. The site takes its name from an Arab tribe which formerly lived in a number of neighboring settlements now ruined and abandoned and it now occupies the village of Beni Hasan el-Shuruq. The tombs were constructed during the Middle Kingdom (11th and early 12th Dynasties) for princes and dignitaries of the Oryx or Antelope nome, the 16th nome of Upper Egypt. The architectural features of the tombs and the important inscriptions and representations of scenes from everyday life which they contain make this the most important necropolis between Memphis and Asyut.

The quality of the later tombs is distinctly inferior to that of the earlier ones, reflecting a gradual decline in cultural standards during a period when there was no falling off in material prosperity. The mural decorations were painted on stucco in bright colors, but many of the scenes are damaged or, particularly in the later tombs, so faded that they can barely be distinguished. – The tombs, 39 in all, extend in a row along the rock face. Visitors whose time is limited should confine themselves to the four most important tombs (Nos 17, 15, 3 and 2); the others, less well preserved, are of interest only to specialists.

THE TOMBS. – From the valley a path leads up to Tomb 32. Turning left (N) here, we come to No. 17, the **Tomb of Kheti**, Nomarch of the Antelope nome (11th Dynasty). A doorway in the plain façade gives access into the rock-cut chamber, the roof of which was originally supported by six lotus cluster-columns with bud capitals, though only two of these, with their original coloring, are still standing. The wall-paintings are also well preserved. On the left-hand (N) wall are, in the upper rows, a hunt in the desert, in the lower rows male and female dancers, a statue of the dead man being transported to its place, carpenters, etc. On the rear (E) wall, above, are wrestlers in various attitudes; below, military scenes, including an attack on a fortress. On the right-hand (S) wall are, from left to right, the



Reliefs in the Beni Hasan necropolis

dead man and his wife; the dead man accompanied by his fan-bearer, sandal-bearer, two dwarfs and other attendants; and the dead man receiving various offerings (note the granary on the right).

The scenes on the entrance wall are poorly preserved.

Farther N, at the top of an ancient path ascending from the plain, is the ***Tomb of Beket** (No. 15), Kheti's father and also Nomarch of the Antelope nome (11th Dynasty). The two columns which supported the roof of the rectangular chamber are missing. In the SE corner is a small recess. On the left-hand (N) wall are, above, a hunt in the desert and a barber, laundrymen, painters, etc.; below, the dead man and his wife with four rows of women spinning and weaving, dancing-girls and girls playing with a ball; herds-men bringing animals for sacrifice to the dead man; goldsmiths; a fishing scene; and various birds, with their names inscribed beside them. On the rear (E) wall, in the upper rows, are wrestlers; in the lower rows warlike scenes, as in Kheti's tomb. On the right-hand (S) wall is the dead man, in front of whom, in several rows, are men drawing a shrine containing his statue, while in front of this are female dancers and servants carrying ornaments, etc., for the statue; peasants driving in their flocks and herds, some of

them being brought in forcibly to pay their taxes, while scribes record the amounts; potters at their wheels; men carrying wild-fowl they have shot; men gaming.

No. 3 is the **Tomb of Khnumhotep III**, son of Neheri, scion of a princely family with hereditary jurisdiction over the Antelope nome, with its capital at Menat Khufu (now El-Minya), and the Eastern Desert territories. Khnumhotep was invested with these territories by King Amenemhet II, and later married a daughter of the Prince of the Dog (Cynopolitan) nome, which then also passed to his son.

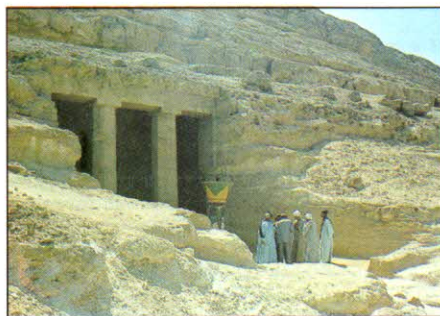
The ***** wall-paintings in this tomb have been cleaned and the colors freshened up by a new process on an experimental basis; if the results are satisfactory other tombs will be given the same treatment.

The *vestibule*, to the rear of an open court, has two 16-sided columns tapering towards the top. The cornice projects over the architrave, ostensibly supported on elegant laths which, like the rest of the structure, are hewn from the living rock, in a manner reminiscent of the mutules (blocks projecting below cornice) of the Doric Order. – The *main chamber* was divided by two pairs of columns into three aisles with flat-vaulted roofs. The scenes and inscriptions are much faded and difficult to distinguish. On the lower part of the walls is a long inscription cut in the rock in vertical lines 30 in/75 cm high, the characters being filled in with green coloring. The royal names were chiseled out of the rock in 1890 by some vandal hand.

On the *entrance wall* (to W) the statue of the dead man is being transported to the temple, with women dancing in front of it; below, the dead man watching carpenters at work. To the left (N) of the door is the dead man's estate office, with servants weighing silver, measuring grain and storing it in the granaries, while scribes seated in a pillared hall record the amounts. The next two rows, below, depict work in the fields (breaking up the ground, plowing, harvesting and threshing by cattle). The fourth row shows the dead man's mummy being conveyed to the Tomb of Osiris in Abydos. In the fifth row are scenes depicting the harvesting of grapes and figs and the cultivation of vegetables. The bottom row shows life by the river (cattle in the water, fishing). – The *left-hand* (N) *wall*, above, depicts the dead man hunting in the desert. Below, to the right, he is shown (a large figure) watching various activities in his nome. In the third row from the top two of his officials introduce a caravan of Asians – men, women and children – with their ibexes and donkeys, clad in gaily colored garments, their sharp features, hooked noses and pointed beards clearly identifying them as Semitic; the inscription describes them as 37 Amus (Semitic bedouin) bringing eye-paint to the Prince of the nome. The scribe is shown giving Khnumhotep a list of the strangers. The lower rows depict the dead man's cattle and poultry. – On the *rear* (E) *wall* the dead man is seen with his wife in a boat, hunting waterfowl with a throwing-stick; in the papyrus thicket are all manner of birds, flying about and nesting; in the water are fish, a hippopotamus and a crocodile; below is a fishing scene. To the right the dead man is shown catching two fish with his spear. In the middle is a niche which originally held a seated figure of the dead man. Above the door he is seen catching birds with a net. – On the *right-hand* (S) *wall*, to the left, he is depicted at table, with all kinds of sacrificial offerings heaped up in front of him; to the right servants and priests bring offerings; in the two lowest rows herdsmen bring cattle, gazelles, antelopes and poultry for sacrifice; slaughtering and cutting up of sacrificial animals. *Right-hand entrance wall* (to S of door): top row, laundrymen; second row, potters; men felling a palm; the dead man, in a litter, watching carpenters at work on a boat; third row, two boats carrying the dead man's family to the funeral ceremony at Abydos; fourth row, women spinning and weaving, bakers at work; bottom row, men building a shrine, a sculptor polishing a statue, etc.

No. 2 is the **Tomb of Amenemhet** or *Ameni*, Nomarch of the Antelope nome in the reign of Sesostri I.

In the *vestibule* are two octagonal columns supporting the flat-vaulted roof. On the uprights and lintel of the entrance door are prayers for the dead and the



Entrance to the Tomb of Amenemhet

titles of the dead man. On either side of the doorway is a long inscription of the 15th day of the second month of the inundation in the 43rd year of Sesostri I's reign glorifying Amenemhet's exploits in several military campaigns and the benefits he conferred on his nome. – The roof of the three-aisled *main chamber* is supported on four 16-sided, delicately fluted columns of Proto-Doric type. The wall-paintings are very similar to those in the Tomb of Khnumhotep. On the left-hand (N) entrance wall are various craftsmen, including shoemakers, carpenters, goldsmiths and potters, and agricultural scenes. On the left-hand wall, in the top row, is a hunt in the desert; second row, transport of the dead man's statue and ceremonial dances; below, right, the dead man receiving tribute from his estate; two lowest rows, his estate office. On the rear wall wrestlers and warlike scenes; bottom row, the dead man's mummy being conveyed to the Tomb of Osiris at Abydos. The niche in this wall contains badly damaged statues of the dead man, his mother and his wife. On the right-hand (S) wall, to the left, the dead man is seated at table with sacrificial offerings heaped in front of him, while priests and servants bring food and other offerings; below, slaughtering and cutting up of sacrificial animals; to the right, the dead man's wife Hetpet seated at table receiving sacrificial gifts.

Other tombs which can be visited if time permits: *Tomb 4*, belonging to Khnumhotep, son of the Khnumhotep III buried in Tomb 3. The vestibule has a Proto-Doric column; the main chamber is unfinished. – *Tomb 5*, with two pillars, unfinished. – *Tomb 13*, belonging to Khnumhotep II, predecessor of Khnumhotep III. – *Tomb 14*, belonging to Khnumhotep I, Prince of the nome in the reign of Amenemhet I. The main chamber had two plant columns, now broken off; the wall-paintings are badly faded. On the rear wall are warriors and a caravan of Libyans entering the dead man's nome along with their wives and children and their herds of livestock, the men with ostrich feathers in their hair, the women carrying their children in baskets on their backs. – *Tomb 18*, left unfinished, is of interest as showing the method of hewing the chambers from the rock; the floor in the front part of the chamber has not been completely excavated. To the rear are ten cluster-columns with bud capitals, five of them unfinished. – *Tomb 21*, belonging to Nakht, a Prince of the Antelope nome (12th Dynasty), is similar in layout to No. 15. – *Tomb 23*, belonging to Netermakht, Governor of the eastern districts, has wall-paintings of no particular interest; on the E wall is a Coptic inscription. – *Tomb 27*, belonging to Remushenti, a Prince of the Antelope nome. – *Tomb 28*, with two lotus columns, was converted into a church in Christian times. – *Tomb 29* belonged to *Beket*, a Nomarch of the Antelope nome. The doors opening into

the adjoining Tombs 28 and 30 were made by the Copts. The wall-paintings are comparatively well preserved, but offer no new points of interest; note, in the western half of the S wall, the dwarfs following the dead man, and the wrestlers on the N wall. – *Tomb 33* belonged to Beket, a Prince of the Antelope nome, son of the Beket buried in No. 29; it has a number of wall-paintings. – Tombs 34–39 were left unfinished.

On the slopes below the tombs of these dignitaries are many smaller tombs belonging to less important officials and citizens of the Middle Kingdom.

Some 1½ miles/2 km S of the Beni Hasan necropolis is the *rock temple of the cat-headed goddess Pakhet*, constructed during the joint reign of Queen Hatshepsut and King Tuthmosis III (18th Dynasty), known to the Greeks as the **Speos Artemidos** ("Cave of Artemis") and to the Arabs as *Istabl Antar* ("Antar's Stable"), after an ancient hero. The names and representations of Hatshepsut were erased by Tuthmosis, and Sethos I (19th Dynasty) later replaced them by his own.

From the landing-place the road to the temple begins by running upstream, and then strikes off to the right towards the desert on an embankment running through fields. In the vicinity is the *Cats' Cemetery* in which the cats sacred to Pakhet, protective goddess of this region, were buried. Continuing SE, we come to a dry desert valley, from the mouth of which a *cemetery* of the 22nd–25th Dynasties extends towards the plain. In the valley itself are many ancient quarries. On the right-hand (S) side of the ravine, some 660 yds/600 m from its mouth, stands the rock temple.

The TEMPLE consists of a vestibule and an inner chamber connected with it by a short corridor. – Above the *entrance* is a long inscription glorifying the reign of Hatshepsut and inveighing against the misdeeds of the Hyksos. – The *vestibule* originally had eight pillars, of which three remain, bearing on their sides the names of Tuthmosis III and Sethos I; the fronts were to be decorated with sistras, but these were left unfinished. On the rear wall, to the left of the door, is Sethos I between Amun-Re (enthroned) and the cat-headed Pakhet, with Thoth addressing the nine great gods of Karnak and the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt. To the right of the door are three reliefs: Sethos sacrificing to Pakhet, Sethos receiving from Pakhet the hieroglyphs for "life", hanging from two scepters, and Sethos being blessed by Thoth. – In the *corridor*, on the left, is a long inscription in the name of Sethos I and a representation of the King offering

wine to Pakhet; on the right, the King presenting a baboon to Pakhet. In the rear wall of the *inner chamber* is a niche for the goddess's statue.


To the W (right) of the Speos Artemidos is another *cave*, on the outside of which, at the entrance, are the names of Alexander II, son of Alexander the Great and Roxana; below are six small scenes depicting the King in the presence of various gods. The interior, which was supported by pillars, was never completed and is now in a state of ruin. – Near by are several rock tombs of the New Kingdom (rectangular chambers with deep shafts).

Some 1 mile/1.5 km E, at the end of the wadi (N side), is a *cult-niche* dedicated to Pakhet, also dating from the reign of Hatshepsut, with rich relief and painted decoration.

Kom el-Ahmar, *Mallawi, Roda and *Tell el-Amarna: see separate entries.

Beni Suef

Middle Egypt. – Governorate: Beni Suef.
Population: 150,000.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

ACCESS. – 80 miles/130 km S of Cairo by road or rail.

The provincial capital of Beni Suef, famed in the Middle Ages for its linen, lies on the W bank of the Nile, at the point where the valley is at its widest and a road goes off into the Fayyum. It is the economic center of the fertile surrounding region, with various processing industries (particularly cotton) and a large bazaar.

St Antony lived as a hermit in an abandoned fort in the hills opposite Beni Suef before withdrawing to the solitude of the Arabian Desert near the Red Sea, and a desert track still runs from the E bank of the Nile opposite the town to St Antony's Monastery (see that entry) and is used by the monks for obtaining the supplies they require; it is not suitable for cars. – On the edge of the desert are several ancient *alabaster quarries*.

SURROUNDINGS of Beni Suef. – Some 9 miles/15 km W, on the right bank of the Bahr Yusuf near the village of *Ahnasiya el-Medina*, popularly known as *Ahnasiya Umm el-Kiman* ("Hill of Potsherds"), is the

huge accumulation of rubble, covering an area of $\frac{1}{2}$ sq. mile/1.5 sq. km, which marks the site of the ancient **Heracleopolis Magna**, capital of the 20th nome of Upper Egypt. Under the Old Kingdom the town was known as *Hatnen-nesut*, from which were derived the Coptic *Hnes* and the Arabic *Ahnas*. During the First Intermediate Period it was ruled by the Heracleopolitan princes, who succeeded in extending their power as far as Abydos. In Graeco-Roman times it was the capital of the Heracleopolitan nome and the chief center of the cult of the ram-headed god Herishef, whom the Greeks equated with Heracles. The ichneumon ("Pharaoh's rat", *Herpestes ichneumon*), a species of mongoose, was also worshiped here.

Nothing remains of the city's great temples, one dating from the Middle Kingdom and a new temple erected by Ramesses II. Four columns to be seen on the site probably belonged to a Byzantine church.

The necropolis of the ancient city is at *Sedment el-Gebel*, on the left bank of the Bahr Yusuf.

****Fayyum and *El-Lahun:** see separate entries.

Berenice

Eastern Desert. – Red Sea Frontier District.

ACCESS. – At the S end of the modernized road down the Red Sea coast.

The remains of the once-important port of Berenice lie in the same latitude as Aswan in a spacious bay in the Red Sea, the Halig Umm el-Ketef (the "unsafe bay"), which is enclosed on the N by the Ras Banas Peninsula and forms an excellent sheltered harbor.

HISTORY. – The town was founded by Ptolemy II Philadelphus in 275 B.C. with the object of reviving trade in the Red Sea and was given the name of his mother. Situated at the end of the great caravan routes from Coptos (Qift) and Edfu in the Nile Valley to the Red Sea, it was for four or five centuries one of the most important ports on the Red Sea coast, carrying on trade with India, Arabia and the E coast of Africa.

In the middle of the ancient site, now almost entirely covered by wind-blown sand, are the remains, discovered in 1873, of a **temple**. Facing ENE, it is preceded by a forecourt measuring 29 ft/8.75 m across and 12 ft/3.66 m from front to rear. The temple itself, 31 ft/9.50 m long, had two rows of chambers set behind one another. On the outer wall, to the left, is the figure of a Roman Emperor in the presence of a goddess, described in the accompanying inscription as the goddess of the "Green Mountain" (emerald-mine: see below).

Some $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles/2 km N of the site are the harbor, now of no importance, and the little fishing village of *Bender el-Kebir*. Linked with the project for the construction of a new road between Aswan and the Red Sea is a plan to build a modern port to the S of Ras Banas for the freight and pilgrim traffic to and from Jedda in Saudi Arabia.

Offshore lies the small island of *Topazos*, which has given its name to topaz and topazolite, a yellowish-green variant of andradite garnet. Both these minerals were found in abundance here, as was chrysolite, a type of olivine which was prized from ancient times as a gemstone.

SURROUNDINGS of Berenice. – The once-famous emerald-mines in the *Wadi Sakeit* (75 miles/120 km NW) and on *Gebel Zubara* (95 miles/150 km NW; 4465 ft/1361 m), the ancient Mons Smaragdus, were worked by the Arabs until 1370. In the 19th c. Mohammed (Mehmet) Ali attempted unsuccessfully to reopen the mines.

Red Sea: see separate entry.

Biban el-Harim (Valley of Queens)

See under Thebes

Biban el-Muluk (Valley of Kings)

See under Thebes

Bir el-Hammamat

See under Eastern Desert

Birket Qarun

See under Fayyum

Bubastis (Tell Basta)

See under El-Zagazig

Bur Safaga

See under Red Sea

Busiris (Abusir)

See under Behbeit el-Hagara

Cairo/Misr el-Qahira/El-Qahira

Lower Egypt. – Governorate: Cairo.

Altitude: 66 ft/20 m

Population: about 10 million; with surrounding built-up area over 13 million.

Tourist Information Office,
Misr Travel Tower,

Abbasia;

tel. 82 20 16, 82 54 47 and 82 39 36;

Heliopolis Airport,

tel. 96 64 75.

Tourist Police,

Shari' Adly 5,

tel. 91 26 44 and 91 20 98;

Central Station,

tel. 75 35 55;

Heliopolis Airport,

tel. 62 25 84.

Automobile et Touring Club d'Egypte,

Shari' Qasr el-Nil 10,

tel. 74 33 55.

Misr Travel,

Shari' Talaat Harb 1,

tel. 75 00 10 and 75 01 68;

Shari' Qasr el-Nil 43,

tel. 91 41 88, 91 49 72 and 91 26 13.

American Express of Egypt,

Shari' Qasr el-Nil 15,

tel. 75 04 44;

Heliopolis Airport,

tel. (02) 67 08 95;

Marriott Hotel,

tel. 4 11 01 36;

Méridien Hotel,

tel. 84 40 17;

Nile Hilton Hotel,

tel. 74 33 83;

Ramses Hilton Hotel,

Corniche el-Nil 1115,

tel. 77 36 90;

Residence Hilton Hotel,

tel. 3 50 78 17.

Rail Information,

tel. 72 36 29.

EMBASSIES. – United Kingdom: Shari' Ahmed Raghab, Garden City; tel. 2 08 52 and 2 08 50. – United States: Shari' Latin America 5; tel. 2 82 19. – Canada: Shari' Mohamed Fahmi el-Sayed, Garden City; tel. 2 31 10, 2 31 19, 2 31 58 and 2 64 15.

HOTELS. – *Nile Hilton, Corniche el-Nil/Midan el-Tahrir, L, 800 b.; *Ramses Hilton, Corniche el-Nil, L, 1700 b.; *Sheraton, Midan el-Gala 2 (left bank of Nile), L, 800 b.; *Shepherd's, Corniche el-Nil, L, 544 b.; *Méridien, Corniche el-Nil, L, 534 b.; *Cairo Marriott, Gezira, L, 2500 b.; *El-Nil, Shari' Ragheb 4, I, 464 b.; *Manyal Palace, Roda, I, 361 b.; *Atlas, Shari' Mohamed Rushdy/Midan Opera, I, 220 b.; *Etap Safir, Shari' el-Misaha (near Botanic Gardens), I, 550 b.; *Atlas Zamalek, Shari' Gama Arabia, I, 164 b.; *Cleopatra, Shari' Abdel Salam Aref/Midan Tahrir, I, 156 b.; *El-Borg, Shari' Sarai Gezira, I, 140 b.; *Windsor, Shari' Alfi 3, II, 475 b.; *Continental, Midan Opera, II, 363 b.; *Misr Tower, Midan Abbasia, II, 320 b.; *Khan el-Khalily, Midan el-Ataba, II, 240 b.; *Indiana, Shari' el-Saraya 16, II, 224 b.; *Victoria, Shari' el-Gumhuriya 1, II, 200 b.; *Admiral, Shari' el-Bustan, II, 169 b.; *Rehab, el-Mohandisin, Dokki, II, 168 b.; *El-Pharana, Shari' Lofti Hassona 12, II, 168 b.; *Scheherazade, Shari' el-Nil 182, II, 160 b.; *Cosmopolitan, Shari' Ibn Talab 1, II, 150 b.; *President, Shari' Dr Taha Hussein 22, II, 150 b.; *Fontana, Midan Ramses, II, 140 b.; *Dreamers, Shari' Jeda 5, II, 120 b.; *Carlton, Shari' 26 July 21, II, 120 b.; *Concord, Shari' el-Tahrir 146, II, 120 b.; *Crillon Cairo, Shari' el-Monaster, II, 96 b.; *Horus House, Shari' Ismail Mohamed 21, II, 68 b.; *Horus, Shari' 26 July, II, 86 b.; *Spring, Shari' Wagih 5, II, 80 b.; *Tosny, Shari' el-Tahrir 143, II, 73 b.; *Cairo



The Egyptian Museum, against a backdrop of modern tower blocks

Inn, Shari' Shiryā, II, 50 b.; *Arabia*, Shari' Abdel Aziz el-Seoud 13, II, 50 b.; *Longchamps*, Shari' Ismail Mohamed 21, II, 48 b.; *Raja*, Shari' Abuelezz, Dokki, II, 36 b.; *Sweet*, 36 Shari' 13, Maadi, II, 24 b.; *Mayflower*, Corniche el-Nil 83, II, 14 b.; *Grand*, Shari' 26 July 17, III, 179 b.; *New*, Shari' Adly 21, III, 164 b.; *Ambassador*, Shari' 26 July 31, III, 148 b.; *Hamburg*, Shari' el-Bursa 18, III, 140 b.; *Everest*, Midan Ramses, III, 135 b.; *Kasr el-Nil*, Shari' Qasr el-Nil 33, III, 124 b.; *Luna Park*, Shari' el-Gumhuriya 6, III, 120 b.; *Omajjal*, Shari' 26 July 22, III, 120 b.; *Scarabée*, Shari' 26 July 16, III, 117 b.; *Capsis Palace*, Shari' Ramses 17, III, 114 b.; *El-Hussein*, Midan Al-Azhar, III, 110 b.; *Lotus*, Shari' Talaat Harb 12, III, 86 b.; *Garden Palace*, Garden City, III, 86 b.; *Mena Palace*, Shari' el-Gumhuriya 5, III, 80 b.; *Montana*, Shari' Sherif 25, III, 67 b.; *Viennoise*, Shari' Mahmud Bassiuny 11, III, 57 b.; *Green Valley*, Shari' Abdel Khalek Sarwat 33, III, 46 b.; *Tulip*, Midan Talaat Harb, III, 42 b.; *Champs Elysées*, Shari' Osman Ben Affan 19, III, 36 b.; *Central*, Midan el-Ataba, IV, 111 b.; *Nitocrisse*, Shari' 26 July, IV, 110 b.; *Minerva*, Shari' Talaat Harb 39, IV, 104 b.; *Gresham House*, Shari' Talaat Harb 20, IV, 80 b.; *Garden City*, Shari' Kamal el-Din Salah 33, IV, 75 b.; *Venus*, Shari' Ramses 38, IV, 67 b.; *Des Roses*, Shari' Talaat Harb 33, IV, 51 b.; *Golden*, Shari' Talaat Harb 13, IV, 26 b.

IN HELIOPOLIS: *Heliopolis Sheraton*, Shari' el-Uruba, L, 1290 b.; *El-Salam*, Shari' el-Uruba, L, 664 b.; *Ramada Heliopolis*, I, 250 b.; *Hyatt Prince*, I, 440 b.; *Helio Park*, Shari' el-Hegaz 100, II, 192 b.; *Egyptel*, Shari' el-Mirghani, III, 154 b.; *Helio Cairo*, Shari' Ahmed Badawy 95, III, 112 b.; *Riviera*, Shari' Mohamed Yussif 23, III, 66 b.; *Aviation*, Shari' Ahmed Fuad, III, 58 b.; *Abeer House*, Shari' Gisir el-Suez, IV, 100 b. – AT AIRPORT: *Cairo International Airport*, I, 98 b.; *Novotel*, I, 400 b.

AT PYRAMIDS: see under Giza.

YOUTH HOSTELS. – *Garden City*, Shari' el-Ibrahimi; *El-Manyal*, Shari' Abdel Aziz 135, Roda. – CAMP SITE (with chalets) at Pyramids of Giza: see under Giza.

RESTAURANTS with international cuisine in the hotels listed. – EGYPTIAN CUISINE: *El-Dahan*, Khan el-Khalili 4; *Ali Hasan el-Hati*, Midan Halim 8; *Filfila*,

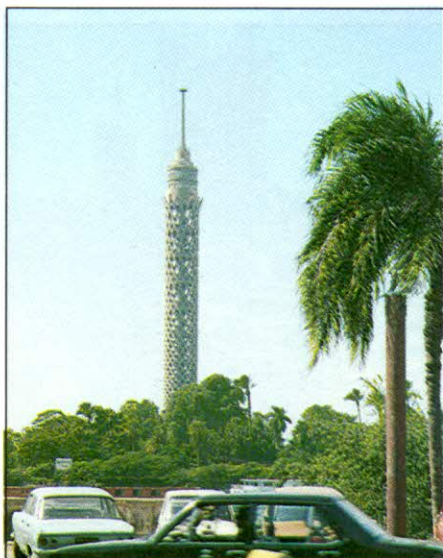
Shari' Hoda Shaarawi 15; *Arabesque*, Qasr el-Nil; *El-Leil*, Shari' el-Haram (Pyramid Road); *Sofar*, Shari' Adly 21; *Cairo Tower*, on 14th floor of Cairo Tower (view). – FAR EASTERN CUISINE: *Paxy's Korean Restaurant*, Midan 26 July.

The Egyptian capital of ** Cairo (Arabic El-Qahira or Misr el-Qahira), the largest city on the African continent and in the Islamic world, long known as the "Gateway to the East" and a mediator between Christianity and Islam, lies in latitude 30° 4' N and longitude 34° 17' E with the main part of the city on the right bank of the Nile, some 12½ miles/20 km S of the point where the river divides into the Rosetta and Damietta arms.

On the E side of the city rise the barren reddish rock walls of the Moqattam Hills, beyond which extends the Eastern (Arabian) Desert. To the S the city reaches out by way of Old Cairo to the suburb of Maadi; to the W the newer districts spread beyond the Nile into the Western (Libyan) Desert. Cairo is the seat of government, of the Egyptian Parliament and the various Government departments and the residence of the heads of the Islamic, Coptic and Catholic Coptic religious communities. It has several universities and colleges of high academic standing.

HISTORY. – From a very early period there was a town on the E bank of the Nile, opposite the Pyramids, which bore the name of **Khere-ohé**, or "place of combat", because Horus and Seth were believed to have fought here. The Greeks called it **Babylon**, and the Romans preserved this name when they built up the settlement into a fortress. – After the Arab Conquest in A.D. 641 the Caliphs built a new capital in the plain to the N of the Roman stronghold, naming it *Fustat*; and the name of Misr el-Fustat, or Misr for short, was thereafter applied both to the city and the land of Egypt.

After the fall of the Omayyads in 750 the entire town, with the exception of the Great Mosque, was destroyed by fire. A new capital was then established by the Abbasid governors in the *El-Askar* district, and at the end of the 9th c. the *El-Qatai* quarter, with the Ibn Tulun Mosque, was built. When Gohar, the general of the Fatimid Caliph Muizz, conquered Egypt in 969 he built a military settlement to the N of El-Qatai, naming it **Misr el-Qahira** (the "Victorious", after the Arabic name of the planet Mars, which was then at the meridian), and thus in effect founding the city of Cairo. In the 12th c. Saladin enclosed the two settlements of Fustat and El-Qahira within a single wall (never completed) and began to build the Citadel. Under the luxury-loving Fatimids the city was greatly enlarged and embellished, reaching its zenith in the 14th c. During this period, however, it was several times ravaged by plague, which carried off large numbers of people, and was frequently thrown into a turmoil by revolts, risings and bloody persecutions of Christians. – In 1517, after the Battle of Heliopolis, the Ottoman Sultan Selim entered the



The Cairo Tower on the island of Gezira



Gold mask of Tutankhamun, Egyptian Museum

city. Although Cairo suffered from plundering and oppression under Turkish rule, it still remained a busy provincial capital with an active cultural life.

During his Egyptian expedition of 1798–99 Napoleon established his headquarters in Cairo. In 1805 Mohammed (Mehemet) Ali, as Pasha of Egypt, took possession of the Citadel, where in 1811 he treacherously massacred 480 leading Mamelukes whom he had invited to Cairo. Later in the 19th c., particularly after the opening of the Suez Canal, the city enjoyed a period of rapid economic development and grew considerably in size. Present-day Cairo is now an imposing modern city with streets and squares laid out on the European pattern and a sprinkling of high-rise blocks, in striking contrast to the overpopulated Arab quarters and the bazaars, still retaining their medieval aspect. – In 1981 work began on the construction of a subway (underground railway) system (Metro).

Museum Opening Hours

Agricultural Museum,
with *Cotton Museum*,
Shari Wazaret el-Ziraa,
Dokki;

in summer Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–2.30 p.m. Fri.
9–11 a.m. and 1–2.30 p.m.;
in winter Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Fri.
9–11.30 a.m. and 1–4 p.m.

Center for Art and Life,
Manisterli Palace,
Roda;
Sat.–Thu. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

Coptic Museum,
Old Cairo;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Fri. 9–11 a.m. and
1–4 p.m.

Egyptian Museum,
Midan el-Tahrir;
daily 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Ethnological Museum,
Shari' Qasr el-Aini;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–1 p.m.;
closed Fri. and public holidays.

Gayer-Anderson Museum,
adjoining Ibn Tulun Mosque;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–3.30 p.m., Fri. 9–11 a.m. and
1.30–3.30 p.m.

Geological Museum,
Shari' el-Sheikh Rihan;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–1.30 p.m.
closed Fri. and public holidays.

Gezira Museum,
with *Museum of Egyptian Civilization* and
Museum of Transport,
Gezira Exhibition Grounds;
daily 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Khalil Museum,
Shari' el-Sheikh Marsafy;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–1.30 p.m., Fri. 9–11.30 a.m.

Manyal Palace,
Shari' Sayyala;
daily 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Military Museum,
Citadel;
Wed.–Mon. 9 a.m.–2 p.m.

Mukhtar Museum,
Tahrir Gardens,
Gezira;
Tue.–Sun. 9 a.m.–1.30 p.m.

Museum of Islamic Art,
Midan Ahmed Maher;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Fri. 9–11 a.m. and
1.30–4 p.m.

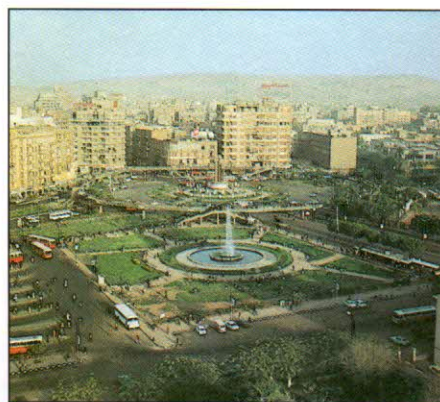
Museum of Modern Art,
Shari' Ismail Abdul Fetuh,
Dokki;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–1.30 p.m., Fri. 9–11.30 a.m.

Musaferkhana Palace,
Darb el-Tablawi;
daily 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

Palace of Art
(*Mogamaa el-Fenun*),
Shari' el-Maahad el-Swissry,
Zamalik;
Sat.–Thu. 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 5–8 p.m., Fri.
9–11 a.m. and 5–8 p.m.

Postal Museum,
Head Post Office,
Midan el-Ataba;
daily 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Railway Museum,
Central Station,
Midan Ramses;
Tue.–Sun. 8.30 a.m.–1.30 p.m.



Midan el-Tahrir (Liberation Square)

world's largest and finest collection of Egyptian and Graeco-Roman antiquities, founded in 1857 by the French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette (1821–81). – To do full justice to the Museum, which can display only a fraction of its total holdings, several days would be required. Visitors who are pressed for time will do well to confine themselves to the celebrated treasures of Tutankhamun and a selection of the Old Kingdom material.

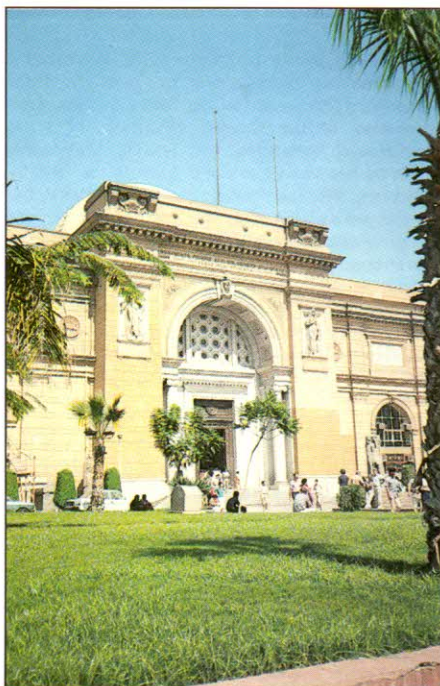
Ground floor (major monuments ranging from the early Egyptian to the Graeco-Roman period). – **Rotunda:** recent acquisitions, special exhibitions. – **Grand Gallery:** stone sarcophagi of the Old Kingdom. – **PYRAMID PERIOD OF THE OLD KINGDOM** (3rd–6th Dynasties). – **Room 42:** diorite statue of

Sightseeing in Cairo

The Modern City

The hub of the modern city of Cairo is the spacious **Midan el-Tahrir** (Liberation Square), with the Liberation Monument (originally begun as a monument to King Fuad). Here all the city's main traffic arteries meet. – To the SW of the square are the *Ministry of Foreign Affairs* and the *Government Buildings*, to the SE the *American University* and the *National Assembly*.

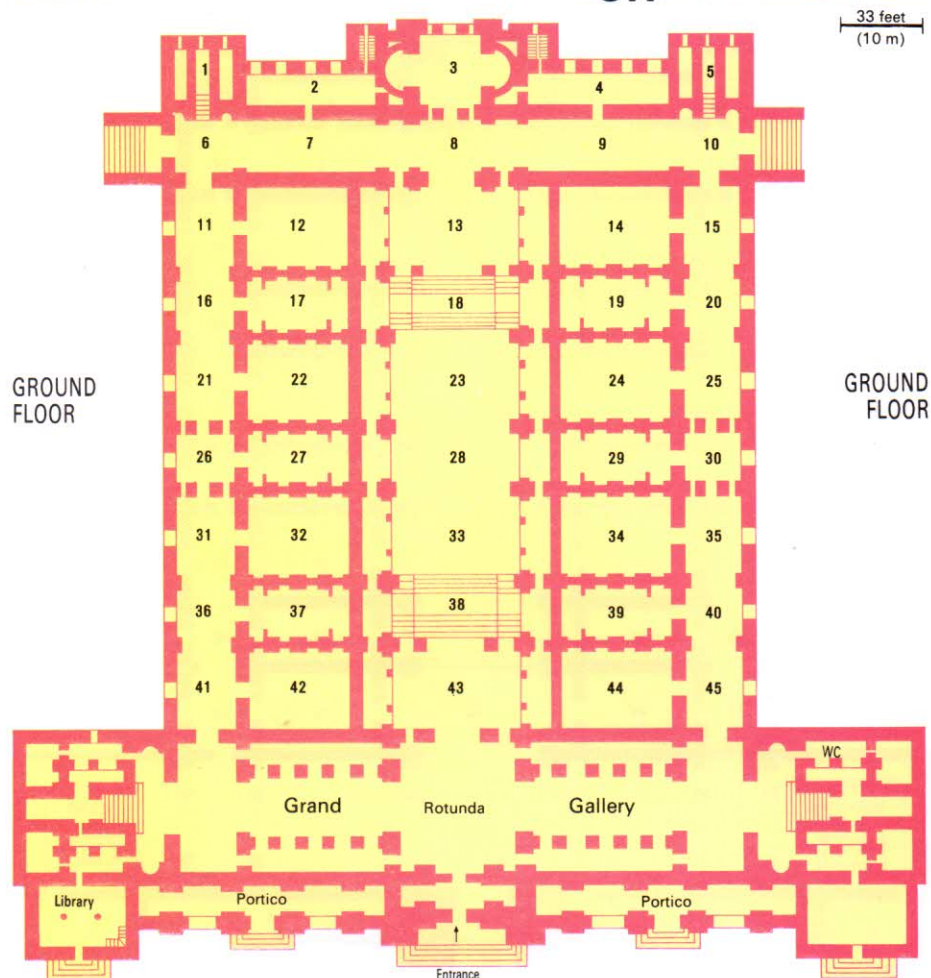
To the NW of the square is the large range of buildings (1897–1902) occupied by the ***Egyptian Museum**, which has the



Entrance to the Egyptian Museum

Cairo

Egyptian Museum



Chephren (No. 138); wooden statue known as the Village Headman (No. 140); seated figure of King Djoser (No. 6008). – *Room 32*: limestone statue of Prince Rahotep and his wife Nofret (No. 223); limestone statue of the priest Ranufer (Nos. 224–225); painting on stucco of six geese (No. 136E); embossed copper statue of Phiops I (No. 230).

MIDDLE KINGDOM AND HYKSOS PERIOD (11th–17th Dynasties). – *Room 26*: limestone statue of Amenemhet III (No. 284). – *Room 22* (middle): tomb chamber of Harhotep, with pictures of the dead man's household goods (No. 300); ten over-life-size limestone statues of Sesostri I (Nos 301 ff.).

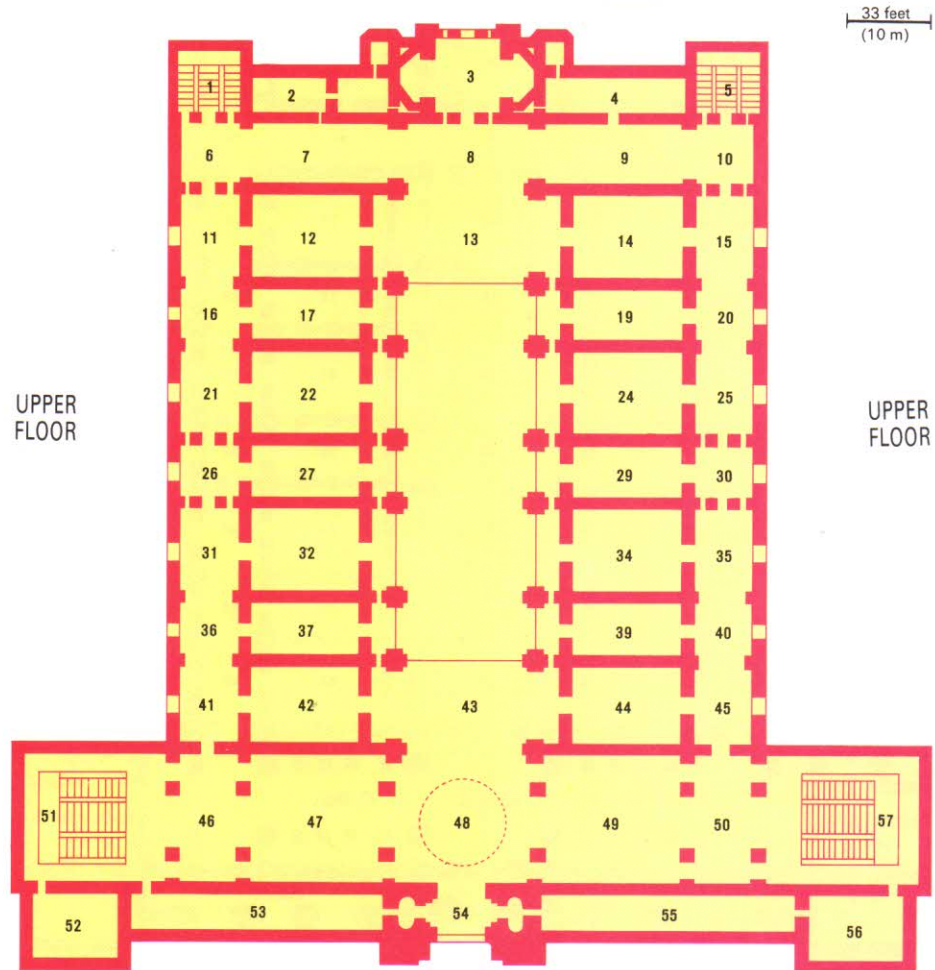
NEW KINGDOM (18th–24th Dynasties). – *Room 12*: Tuthmosis III as a young man, wearing the crown of Upper Egypt (No. 400); inscription recording Tuthmosis III's victories (No. 420); statue of Eset (Isis), mother of Tuthmosis III (Case B, No. 424); Chapel of the goddess Hathor and statue of the Hathor cow dedicated by Tuthmosis III (Nos 445–446); relief of the Queen of Punt (No. 452); statues of Amenophis (Nos 459, 465, 476); statue of the god Khons (No. 462). – *Room 3* (Amarna period): colossal statues of Amenophis IV (Akhenaten) from his temple at Karnak (Nos 6015, 6016, 6182). – *Room 7*: sphinx with name



Tutankhamun's gold canopic shrine

Cairo

Egyptian Museum



of Queen Hatshepsut (No. 6139). – *Room 13* (N portico): stela of Amenophis III (Memnon) and Merneptah (No. 599). – *Atrium* (Rooms 18, 23, 28 and 33): colossal group of Amenophis III with his wife and three daughters (No. 610); painted pavement from palace at Tell el-Amarna (No. 627); bier of Osiris (No. 621). – *Room 20*: granite head of Ramesses II (No. 675).

LATE PERIOD. – *Room 24*: head of a high official (No. 1184); head of King Taharqa (the Tirhakah of the Old Testament; No. 1185); the "Pithom Stela" of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (No. 851). – *Room 30*: alabaster statue of princess Amenirdis (No. 930). – **GRAECO-ROMAN AND COPTIC PERIODS.** – *Room 34*: the trilingual Decree of Canopus (238 B.C.), in hieroglyphic, demotic and Greek scripts.

Upper floor. – *Rooms 4, 7–10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45*: the *treasures found in the tomb of **Tutankhamun**, son-in-law and successor of Amenophis IV (Akhenaten), who died at the age of 18. The tomb, discovered by Howard Carter in the Valley of the Kings (Thebes) in 1922, contained the largest and richest assemblage of grave-goods ever found intact in an Egyptian tomb, including some of the finest achievements of Egyptian artists and craftsmen. Particularly fine are the King's innermost mummiform *coffin, of solid gold, with the royal

insignia of the vulture and uraeus on the forehead (Case 29; No. 219), and the gold *portrait mask which lay within the gold coffin on the head of the mummy (Case 32; No. 220).



Ushabtis from Tutankhamun's tomb



Tutankhamun's gold throne

Room 2: furnishings of the Tomb of Queen Hetepheres, mother of Cheops. – *Room 3:* a magnificent collection of **jewelry, illustrating the development of the goldsmith's art from the earliest period (c. 3200 B.C.) to Byzantine times (A.D. 395–650). Of particular interest are four bracelets from the tomb of King Djer (1st Dynasty; Case 2), demonstrating the high degree of skill achieved even at this early period; a gold falcon's head (6th Dynasty; Case 3, No. 4010); the *Treasure of Dahshur, with outstanding examples of the work of the Middle Kingdom (12th Dynasty); the *jewelry of Queen Ahhotep, mother of King Amosis, who drove out the Hyksos (1580 B.C.; Case 10); a hoard of gold objects from Bubastis (19th Dynasty; Case 11); and the gold jewelry of Queens Tiye (18th Dynasty) and Tewosret (19th Dynasty). –

Room 13: sarcophagi and grave-goods from the Tomb of Yuya and Tuya, parents-in-law of Amenophis III. – *Room 12:* material from royal tombs at Thebes. – *Room 17:* material from the tomb of the fan-bearer Maherpra (18th Dynasty). – *Rooms 22, 27, 32 and 37:* sarcophagi and grave-goods of the Middle Kingdom. – *Room 14:* Roman coffins and mummy portraits. – *Room 19:* figures of gods and sacred animals. – *Rooms 24 and 29:* funerary papyri, drawings on limestone fragments, sculptors' models.

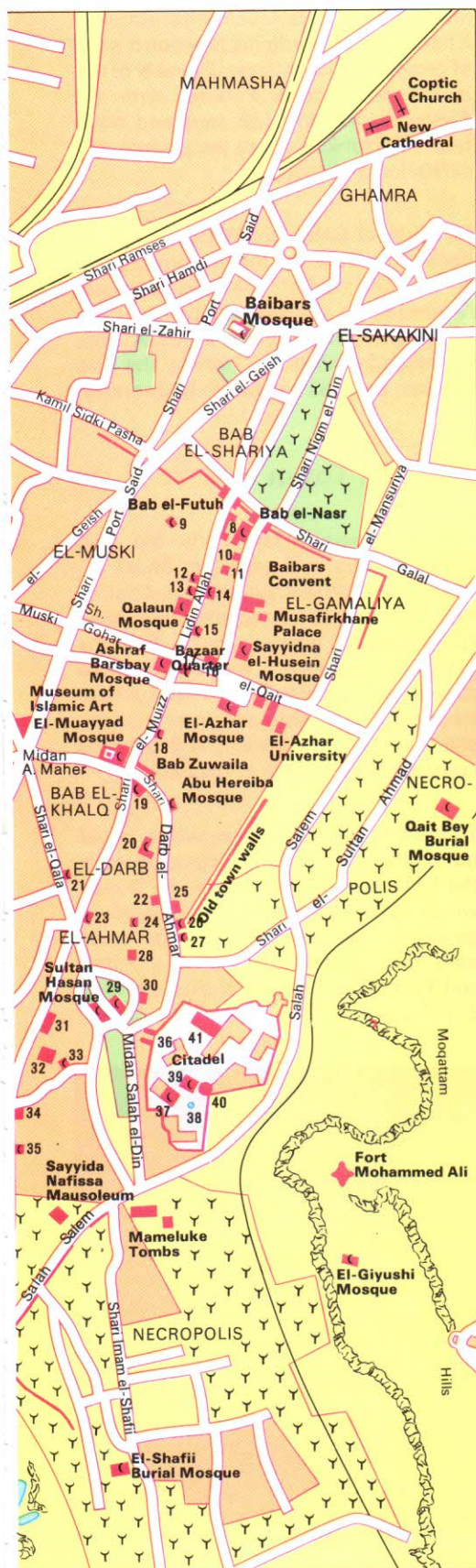
Room 52 (closed for renovation): **mummies, particularly mummies of Pharaohs, arranged in chronological order, followed by mummies of Queens. The X-ray photographs shown alongside the mummies have yielded information about their age, state of health and cause of death.

Just beyond the Egyptian Museum the ***Corniche el-Nil** along the bank of the Nile is lined by large modern hotels and prestige buildings. In Shari Qasr el-Aini, which runs S from the Midan el-Tahrir, is the *Ethnological Museum*, and in Shari el-Sheikh Riham the *Geological Museum*. – To the NE of the Midan el-Tahrir are the main commercial and shopping districts of the modern city, which are entirely European in character. The goods sold in the shops here are marked with fixed prices, which cannot be reduced by bargaining like prices in the bazaars.

Another focal point of the city's life, now superseded by the Midan el-Tahrir, was the beautiful ***Ezbekiya Gardens** (formerly a lake) on the edge of the old Arab town, which are now traversed by Sharia 26 July. The gardens, laid out in 1870 under the direction of M. Barillet, a landscape-gardener from Paris, contain a



Statue of Ramesses II in Midan Ramses (Ramesses Square)



profusion of exotic bushes and plants, including an Indian banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*) whose aerial roots constantly form new trunks. – To the S of the gardens is Midan Opera (Opera Square), with the Opera House (burned down in 1971; rebuilding in progress), in which Verdi's "Aida" was performed for the first time in 1871, and an equestrian statue of Ibrahim Pasha (by Cordier). Near by is the **Head Post Office**, with the *Postal Museum*.

Shari el-Gumhuriya, on the W side of the Ezbekiya Gardens, runs N and comes in about 1100 yds/1000 m to **Midan Ramses** (Ramesses Square), with a 33 ft/10 m high **statue of Ramesses II* from Memphis, set up here in 1955. On the N side of the square is the **Central Station**, with the *Railway Museum*. – Some 1100 yds/1000 m S of the Ezbekiya Gardens on Shari el-Gumhuriya stands the 19th c. **Abdin Palace**, now the residence of the Egyptian President. The former private apartments of the King are open to the public as a museum (pictures, tapestries).



Abdin Palace

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 United Kingdom Embassy | 21 Rusun Mosque |
| 2 United States Embassy | 22 Sultan Shapurat Medrese |
| 3 Foreign Ministry | 23 Sulaimaniya Mosque |
| 4 Supreme Court | 24 Surdun Mosque |
| 5 Gumhuria Theater | 25 Ibrahim Aga House |
| 6 Emir Balar and Sanjar Mausoleum | 26 Ag Surgun Mosque |
| 7 Gatt Bey Mosque | 27 Emir Khairabek Mosque |
| 8 El-Hakim Mosque | 28 El-Gei el-Yusufi Medrese |
| 9 Abu Bakr ibn Muzhir Mosque | 29 El-Rifai Mosque |
| 10 Sabit Kuttab Wakala | 30 Qani Bey Medrese |
| 11 Beit el-Suheimi | 31 Emir Taz Palace |
| 12 Mohammed el-Nasir Mosque | 32 Emir Sheikhu Convent |
| 13 Barquqiya Mosque | 33 Khushqadam el-Ahmedi Mosque |
| 14 El-Aqmar Mosque | 34 Beit el-Kirdiyya |
| 15 Salih Ayyub Mausoleum | 35 Shaghat el-Durr Mausoleum |
| 16 Khan el-Khalili | 36 Mohammed Ali Mosque |
| 17 El-Ghuri Medrese and Mausoleum | 37 Bir Yusuf (Joseph's Well) |
| 18 Fakahani Mosque | 38 El-Nasir Mosque |
| 19 Salih Talai Mosque | 40 Moqattam Tower |
| 20 El-Mardani Mosque | 41 Military Museum |

From the Ezbekiya Gardens the modern Shari 26 July, lined with shops and offices, runs W and then NW and crosses the Nile on *26 July Bridge* to reach the island of **Gezira** (*Gezira Bulaq*), 3 miles/5 km long and just under 1100 yds/1000 m across. In the northern half of the island are the select residential district of ZAMALIK, with the Palace of Art (near the Zamalik Bridge, on the W side of the island), and an interesting *Aquarium* (fishes from the Nile) in the southern half are extensive sports grounds and public gardens (Gezira Sporting Club; golf-course; Khalil Museum of Art; Exhibition Grounds; El-Tahrir Gardens; Andalusian Garden). Also in the southern half of Gezira is the great landmark and emblem of the modern city, the 614 ft/187 m high **Cairo Tower** (*El-Borg*), with observation platforms and a restaurant from which there are panoramic *views of the city. – S of the tower is the **Gezira Museum**, with a *Transport Museum* and the *Museum of Egyptian Civilization*. off the southern tip of the island, in the middle of the Nile, a *fountain* forms a prominent feature in the landscape. – The S end of Gezira can be reached direct from the Midan el-Tahrir by way of the *El-Tahrir Bridge*.

Farther upstream is the smaller island of **Roda**, another residential area. Near the N end is the **Manyal Palace**, built in 1805–18 in the time of Mohammed (Mehemet) Ali, and which is now a museum. At the southern tip of the island is the *Nilometer*, constructed about 715 to measure the water-level of the Nile and

much restored in later centuries; although it has now lost its original function it is still of great historical interest. To the N of this is the **Manisterli Palace**, with the *Center for Art and Life* (arts and crafts from Pharaonic times to the present day; exhibition and shop).

To the W of Gezira and Roda, on the left bank of the Nile, are the modern districts of DOKKI, with the **Agricultural Museum**, set in a beautiful park, and the *Museum of Modern Art*, and GIZA, with the extensive *Botanic Gardens*, the **Zoo** (African animals) and **Cairo University**.

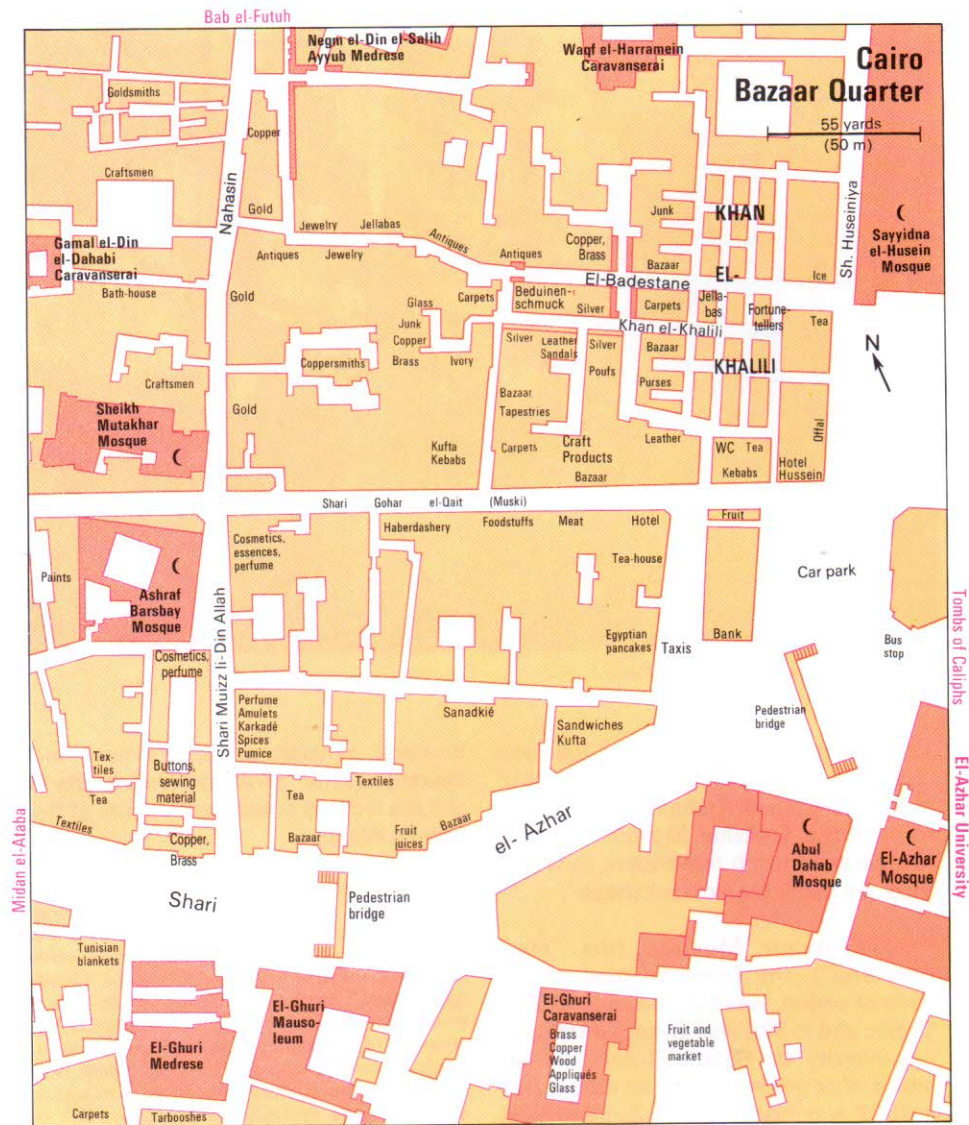
The Old Town

The main thoroughfare of the old Arab town of Cairo is formed by ***Shari el-Muski**, a street laid out in the first half of the 19th c., and its continuation Shari Gohar el-Qaid, which leads SE from the Ezbekiya Gardens. Externally these streets, with their European-style shops, have lost their Oriental character, but they still present all the noise and bustle, the constant lively activity of the East.

To the E of Shari Port Said, which is laid out on the line of a former canal, extends the FATIMID TOWN founded by Gohar, which has preserved three of the old town gates in the second circuit of walls built from 1074 onwards (Bab el-Futuh and Bab el-Nasr on the N side and Bab Zuwaila on the S).



Illuminations on the Nile – the island of Gezira, with the Cairo Tower



At the intersection of Sharia Gohan el-Qaid and the line of streets between Bab el-Futuh and Bab Zuwaila stands the **Ashraf Barsbay Mosque** (1425). Here we are already in the ***Bazaar Quarter**, which with its large bazaars (Arabic *suq*) and teeming mass of humanity has an abundance of novelty and interest to offer the visitor.

Turning left at the intersection, we come to the *gold and silver bazaar* (filigree-work). – To the E of this is the large ***Khan el-Khalili Bazaar**, established about 1400 on the site of a Fatimid castle, which has preserved its old-world character, although the shops now cater for the tourist trade (carpets, jewelry, antiques, perfume, etc.). – In a square in the bazaar quarter is the Neo-Gothic **Sayyidna el-**

Before you go **shopping in the bazaar** it is well to have some idea in advance of the level of prices for the goods you are interested in. It is normal to haggle, for the seller will always set his first price high enough to leave room for a substantial reduction. But though you may enjoy bargaining it should be remembered that with the low wage levels current in Egypt prices are likely in any event to be cheaper than at home, and that it becomes a visitor from a wealthier country not to press the bargaining too far.

Husein Mosque (1792), built in honor of the Prophet's grandson on the site of an earlier mosque. It claims to possess the skull of Husein, who was killed in the Battle of Kerbela (Mesopotamia) in 680. The mosque is richly decorated during the Ramadan feast.



Street scene in the bazaar quarter, Cairo

Turning right at the intersection, we soon come into Shari el-Azhar, which runs E from the Midan el-Ataba to the square in front of the El-Azhar Mosque. Turning left, we soon reach that square, in which there are many Arabic bookshops.

The ***El-Azhar Mosque** (the "most blooming"), the finest building of the Fatimid period, was completed in 972 by Gohar, and in 988 was given the status of a university by Caliph El-Aziz. It was rebuilt after destruction by an earthquake in 1303, and thereafter the rulers and great ones of Egypt – including the wealthy Abd el-Rahman Kihya in the 18th c. and Said Pasha, Taufiq and Abbas II in more recent times – emulated one another in maintaining and enlarging this venerable building. The rectangular ground-plan of the original building is easily recognizable,

however, in spite of later additions and alterations. The ***El-Azhar University** is still the leading educational center of the Islamic World.

The main entrance is the *Bab el-Muzayyini* or "Gate of the Barbers", on the NW side of the building, adjoining the neo-Arab façade built by Abbas II. This leads into a small forecourt, on the right of which is the **El-Taibarsiya Medrese**, with a fine **mihrab* (prayer-niche) of 1309, and on the left the 14th c. **El-Aqbughawiyah Medrese**, now a library (60,000 volumes, 15,000 manuscripts). – Then through a handsome doorway into the *Main Court (Sahn)*, with five minarets rearing above it. Round the court runs an arcade (restored by Taufiq) with keeled arches of Persian type, decorated with shallow niches and medallions and crowned by crenellations. The *liwans* on the NE and SW sides of the court are used as sleeping and working apartments for students (*riwak*), distributed according to the countries or provinces from which they come. Adjoining the N liwan is the *Court of Ablutions*. – The **Main Liwan** or Sanctuary on the SE side of the court, with 140 marble columns (100 of them antique) and an area of almost 3600 sq. yds/3000 sq. m, is the principal lecture-hall. The lower front half, with four much-restored rows of arcading, is part of the original building; the higher rear part, with two prayer-niches, was added by Abd el-Rahman.

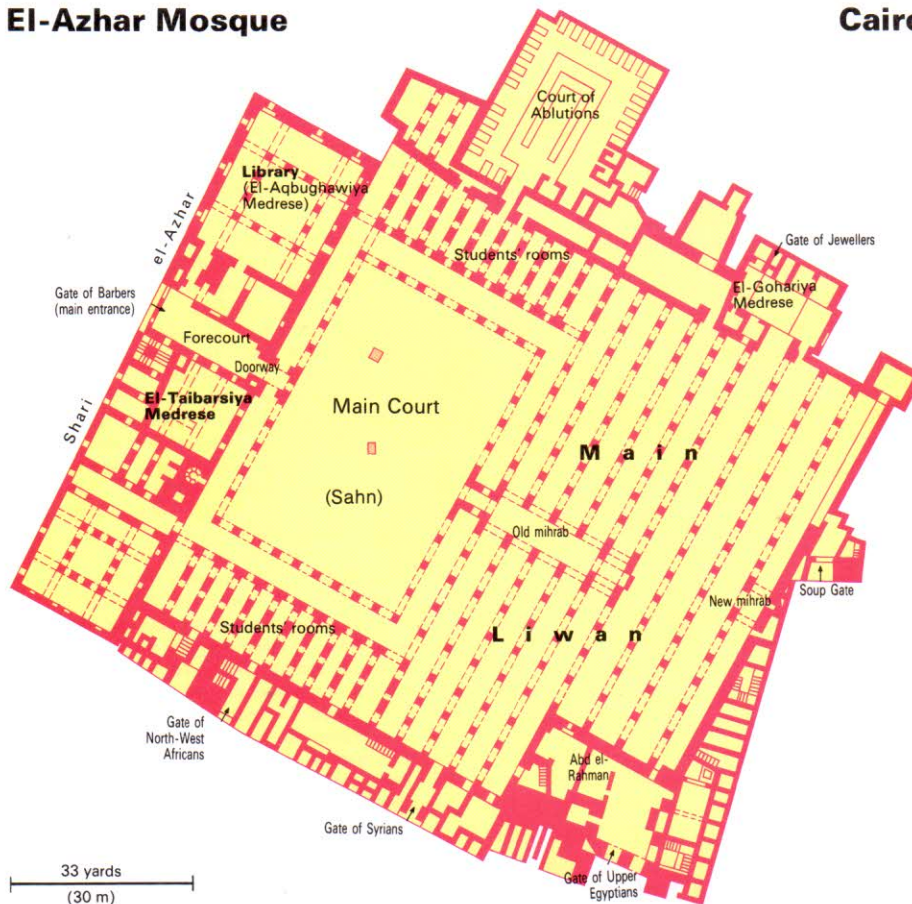


El-Azhar Mosque

In the northern part of the Fatimid town are a number of notable examples of Mameluke architecture. NW of the Great Bazaar stands the little **Mosque of Sultan Barquq Qalaun**, its façade projecting into the street. This was part of a large hospital, now ruined, begun in 1284 by the Mameluke Sultan El-Mansur Qalaun; in the prayer-niche is a fine

El-Azhar Mosque

Cairo



Byzantine mosaic. On the right of the long corridor is the ***Mausoleum of Qalaun**, one of the finest Arab buildings in Cairo, completed in 1293 by Qalaun's son Mohammed el-Nasir; it has a richly ornamented prayer-niche and fine marble and mother-of-pearl mosaics. – On the N side of the Qalaun Mosque we come to the ***Mosque of Mohammed el-Nasir** (1304), one of the great masterpieces of Islamic architecture in Egypt. It is entered by a Gothic doorway from a church at Akka (Acre) in Syria. The beautiful minaret, the sanctuary (to the left) and the founder's tomb (right) preserve some of their original delicate plaster ornament. – The **Barquqiya Mosque**, a medrese built in 1386 by the Mameluke Sultan Barquq, is now a branch of the El-Azhar University. The ***E wall** of the sanctuary is strikingly beautiful.

Farther up the street which runs N through the old town to Bab el-Futuh, on the right, is the **El-Aqmar Mosque**, the "Grey Mosque", built in 1125 by the Grand Vizier of the Fatimid El-Amir. The hand-

some façade, with tall pointed arches in rectangular frames, is the oldest mosque façade in Cairo. – Near by, in a side street to the right, can be seen the patrician house of Beit el-Siheimi (1648). – Almost at the end of the street, on the right, is the entrance to the ***El-Hakim Mosque**, begun in 990 by El-Aziz on a site outside the oldest town walls, on the model of the Ibn Tulun Mosque, and completed in 1012 by his son El-Hakim. The two minarets, standing on the *second town wall*, which at this point is well preserved, were originally round; their present square casing and the domed top section resembling an Arab incense-burner date from the rebuilding of the mosque after the 1303 earthquake. The **Bab el-Futuh** ("Gate of Conquests") at the end of the street and the **Bab el-Nasr** ("Gate of Victory"), with which it is connected by the old town walls, are similar in form to ancient Roman town gates. It is well worth while to climb up at the gates and walk along the walls, from which there are fine ***views** of the city and surrounding area.

On the S side of the Fatimid town is the **Bab Zuwaila** (1091), a relic of the *first town wall*. On its two massive towers are the minarets of the dilapidated ***Muayyad Mosque**, also known as *El-Ahmar*, the "Red Mosque", which was begun in 1405 by Sheikh El-Mahmudi Muayyad and completed a year after his death (1410). The bronze gate at the entrance, the finest in Cairo, came from the Sultan Hasan Mosque. The magnificent three-aisled sanctuary has a beautiful painted wooden ceiling.

Outside the Bab Zuwaila Shari Darb el-Ahmar (to the left) and its continuation Shari Bab el-Wazir run SE and then S to the Citadel. – At the near end of the street, on the right, stands the *Salih Talai Mosque*, built in 1160 under the last Fatimid Sultan, with delicate plaster ornament on the arches of the sanctuary. – Farther down, also on the right, the ***El-Mardani Mosque**, one of the largest in Cairo, was built in 1340 by the Cup-bearer of Sultan Mohammed el-Nasir. The prayer-niche beyond the modern concrete dome, borne on ancient Egyptian granite columns, is covered with costly mosaics. – Some distance beyond this, on the left, is the picturesque *Aq-Sunqur Mosque*, or Ibrahim Aga Mosque, built in 1346 and richly decorated in 1653 with blue wall-tiles which have earned it the name of the Blue Mosque.

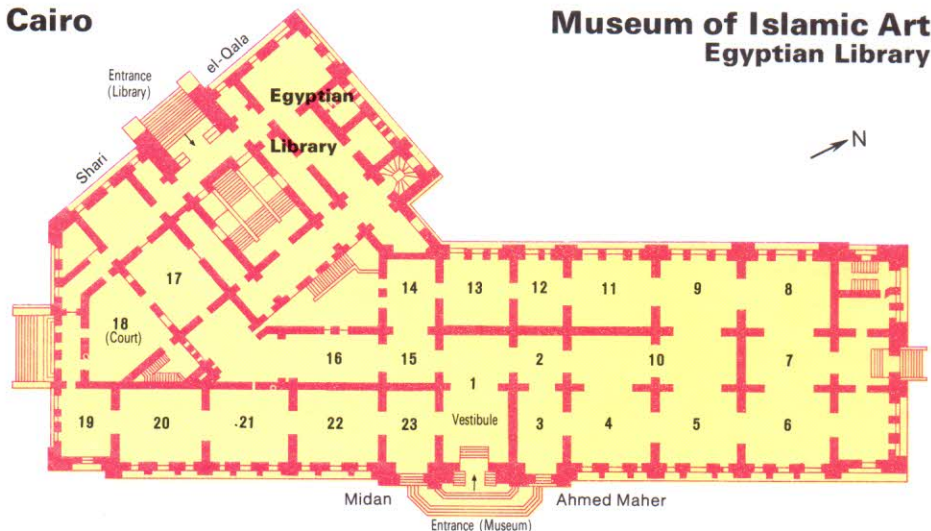
From the Midan el-Ataba, immediately SE of the Ezbekiya Gardens, the wide Shari el-Qala runs SE in a dead straight line to the foot of the Citadel. – About a quarter of

the way there it comes to the Midan Ahmed Maher, on the N side of which is the ***Museum of Islamic Art**, founded by the German architect and scholar Franz Pasha (d. 1915), the finest collection of its kind in the world, with masterpieces from every Islamic country.

Vestibule and Room 1: chronology of the Islamic dynasties of Egypt; glass and pottery. – *Room 2*: applied art of the Omayyad period (661–750), including a richly decorated bronze vessel (8th c.) from Abusir. – *Room 3*: Abbasid (750–867) and Tulunid (668–905) periods: glazed pottery with stylized decoration; stucco-work from dwelling-houses; Late Sassanid metalwork; gravestones with Kufic inscriptions. – *Room 4*: utensils, textiles and jewelry in the vigorous style of the Fatimid period (969–1171); ceiling-paintings from a bath-house in Fustat, in Ayyubid style (1171–1250). – *Room 5*: Mameluke style (1250–1517): architectural elements and elaborate damascene-work from Cairo's artistic heyday. – *Room 6*: woodwork of the Fatimid and Ayyubid periods, including a door from the El-Azhar Mosque (1010). – *Rooms 7 and 8*: wood-carving, intarsia and inlay work of the Ayyubid and Mameluke periods. – *Room 9*: inlaid furniture and metalwork of the Mameluke period. – *Room 10*: 18th c. room with a fountain and a beautiful carved wooden stalactitic ceiling. – *Room 11*: metalwork of the Mameluke period. – *Room 12*: arms and armor. – *Room 13*: Egyptian faience, mainly of the Fatimid period; 18th and 19th c. tapestries. – *Rooms 14–16*: faience and porcelain from other countries. – *Room 17*: textiles (7th–17th c.). – *Court (No. 18)*: inscriptions on stone in Kufic and Neshi script; stone-carving. – *Room 19*: Arabic books and manuscripts (book illumination). – *Room 20*: glass, pottery, metalwork and carpets from Asia Minor. – *Room 21*: glass; collection of glass lamps from mosques. – *Room 22*: a large collection of Persian pottery from the 8th to the 16th c.; Persian carpets (17–19th c.), metalwork, books and manuscripts, etc. – *Room 23*: temporary exhibitions of material from the Museum's reserves.

On the upper floor of the building is the ***Egyptian Library** (entrance from Shari el-Qala), founded in 1869 by the amalgamation of a number of smaller

Cairo



Museum of Islamic Art Egyptian Library

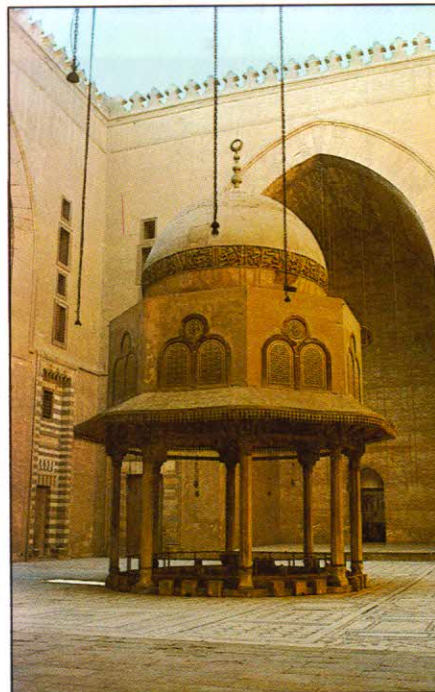


Cairo Citadel from Midan Salah el-Din (Saladin Square)

libraries. It contains over 750,000 volumes, half in Oriental and the rest in European languages, including 2700 manuscripts of the Koran, papyri, Persian manuscripts and other written material from the 7th c. to modern times. In the exhibition rooms are displayed a selection of Arab coins from the Library's very extensive collection of some 5000 items.

Shari el-Qala ends in the spacious Midan Mohammed Ali, on the E side of which is the **El-Rifai Mosque**, built in 1912, on the model of the Sultan Hasan Mosque, to house the tomb of Khedive Ismail. The ex-Shah of Iran, Mohammed Reza Pahlevi (1919–80), is buried here. – On the W side of the square is the **Sultan Hasan Mosque**, built in 1356–63, perhaps by a Syrian architect, for the Mameluke Sultan Hasan el-Nasir. Situated on a shelving rock below the Citadel, it is perhaps the finest example of Arab-Egyptian architecture. The exterior, with its large areas of stone, is reminiscent of an ancient Egyptian temple. The façades are crowned by a boldly projecting stalactitic cornice, the pinnacles of which have been restored. The wide wall surfaces are relieved by blind niches and twin round-arched windows. The mausoleum which projects from the SE front is roofed with 180 ft/55 m high dome of Arab-Turkish type (re-built in 18th c.). The massive **main doorway** at the N corner is almost 85 ft/26 m high; and the **minaret** at the S corner is the tallest in Cairo (267 ft/81.5 m). The ground-plan is in the form of an irregular pentagon covering an area of 9450 sq. yds/7900 sq. m, into which the cruciform shape of the original medrese has been very skilfully incorporated.

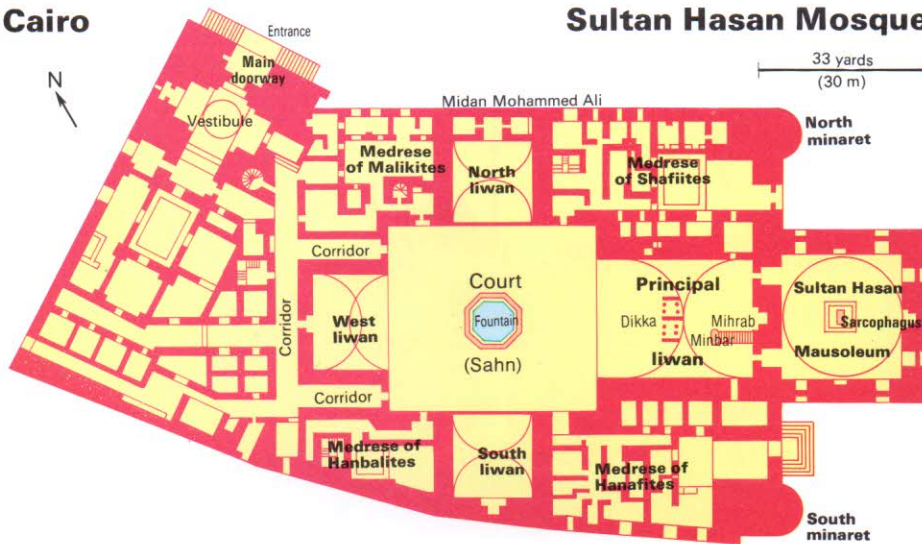
INTERIOR. – The **main doorway** (the bronze door from which is now in the Muayyad Mosque) leads into a domed vestibule, beyond which are a small antechamber and a corridor leading into the open **Court (Sahn; 115 ft/35 m by 105 ft/32 m)**, with a **fountain** for ablutions (*hanafiya*). The four **liwans**, with lofty barrel roofs, are all used as prayer-rooms; the teaching rooms are in the four small medreses. – The **principal liwan** has a carved stucco **frieze** in Kufic lettering on a background of intricate arabesques. The rear wall with the **prayer-niche** is richly ornamented with marble. Of the once-sumptuous furnishings there remain only the *dikka* (a podium for the assistant officiants), the pulpit and the chains for the many



Fountain in the court of the Sultan Hasan Mosque

Cairo

Sultan Hasan Mosque



hanging lamps; the lamps themselves are now in the Museum of Islamic Art. To the right of the pulpit is a *bronze door* with gold and silver inlays – The iron door to the left of the pulpit leads into the Sultan's **Mausoleum**, a square domed chamber measuring 69 ft/21 m each way and 92 ft/28 m in height. The stalactitic pendentives of the original dome still survive. In the center of the chamber is the simple sarcophagus.

To the S of the Sultan Hasan Mosque is a large elongated square, the *Midan Salah ed-Din* (Saladin Square), where the caravans for Mecca used to assemble. On its E side is the Citadel, with a massive gate-tower, the **Bab el-Azab**, formerly

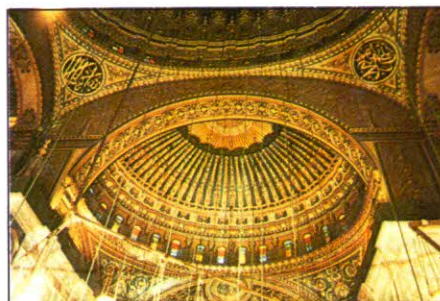
the main entrance. In the lane behind it the leaders of the Mamelukes were massacred on Mohammed Ali's orders in 1811.

Commandingly situated at the foot of the Moqattam Hills, the **Citadel** was begun in 1176 by Saladin, who is said to have used stone from the small pyramids at Giza. Of the original structure nothing now remains but the outer walls on the E side and a few towers in the interior; and the two palaces of the Ayyubid period, which were already half destroyed at the time of Selim's entry into the city, have disappeared almost without trace. Long in military occupation and closed to visitors, the Citadel is now to be restored and opened to the public.

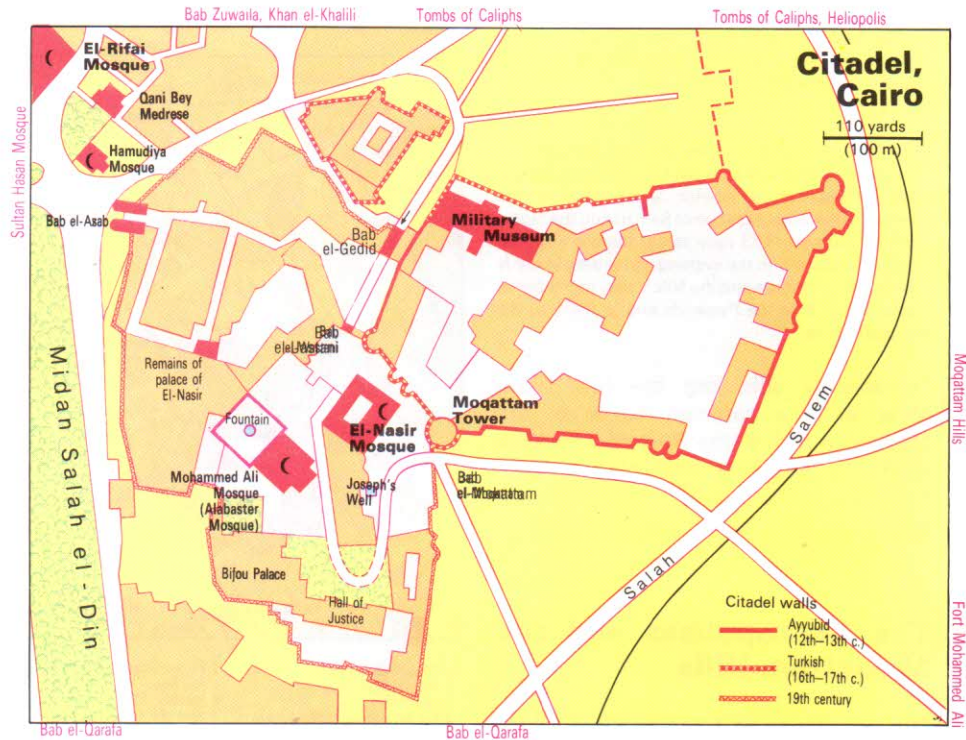
The Citadel is entered by the *Bab el-Gedid*, which leads into a courtyard and then through the *Bab el-Wastani* into the main courtyard. On the S side of this is the **Mohammed Ali Mosque**, often called the *Alabaster Mosque*, one of the city's great landmarks with its tall and disproportionately slender minarets. It was begun in 1824 by Mohammed (MeheMET) Ali but completed only in 1857, under his successor Said. The architect was a Greek named Yusuf Boshna from Istanbul, who took as his model the Nuruosmaniye



Mohammed Ali Mosque at night



Dome, Mohammed Ali Mosque



Mosque in that city, itself modelled on the Hagia Sophia.

The *forecourt* of the Alabaster Mosque, with a *fountain* for ablutions, is surrounded by vaulted galleries. Adjoining this on the E is the *prayer-hall*, with Byzantine-style domes resting on four square piers, impressive both for its size and for the manner in which it is lit. To the right of the entrance is the *Tomb of Mohammed Ali* (d. 1849).

From the W corner of the mosque there is a magnificent *view of the grey city with its innumerable minarets and domes and, now, its high-rise blocks; in the distance can be seen the Pyramids of Giza.

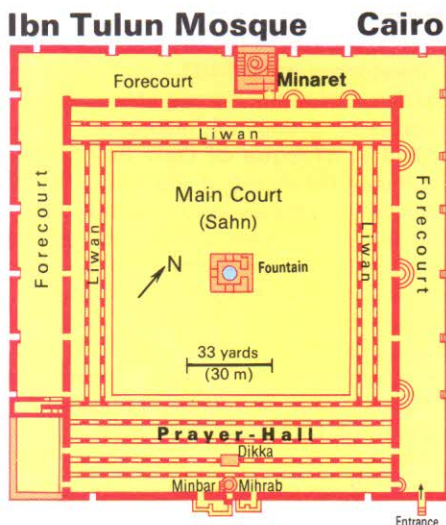
Facing the Mohammed Ali Mosque, to the NE, is the **El-Nasir Mosque**, built in 1318–35 by Mohammed el-Nasir and incorporating various ancient architectural elements (columns, capitals, etc.). The two unusual minarets are crowned by bulbous domes with brightly colored faience decoration in the Persian style.

Just to the S of the El-Nasir Mosque can be seen *Joseph's Well* (Bir Yusuf), a square shaft 290 ft/88 m deep which probably dates from the time of Saladin, and has a spiral staircase running down the sides. Half-way down is a platform on which oxen formerly worked a wheel to bring up water. – NE of the well is the *Bab el-Moqattam*, the main S gate of the Citadel, from which a road runs SE to Fort Mohammed Ali in the Moqattam Hills.

From the Midan Salah el-Din Shari el-Saliba leads SW to the ***Ibn Tulun Mosque**, the second oldest in Cairo. Built in 876 – 879 by Ahmed ibn Tulun on the 65 ft/20 m high rocky plateau of *Gebel Yashkur* and modelled on the Kaaba in

Mecca, it was then the largest mosque in existence. The outer walls, almost without decoration, are topped by crenelations.

From the main entrance we enter the E forecourt and turn left through the sanctuary to reach the **Main Court (*Sahn*)**, 295 ft/90 m square, with a fountain in the middle. This is surrounded by *liwans* with two rows of columns – five rows in the main liwan on the S side, the prayer-hall or sanctuary. The façades have pointed relieving arches above the columns and a frieze of rosettes along the top. The oldest parts of the decoration of the interior, in carved (not moulded) stucco and wood, are without the intricate interlace



patterns of the later Byzantino-Arab style. – In the **prayer-hall** is a *prayer-recess (mihrab)* with elegant capitals and remains of gold mosaic decoration. Above the *dikka* are remains of the original wooden ceiling.

The 130 ft/40 m high ***minaret** in the N forecourt, with a fine horseshoe arch over the entrance and a spiral staircase in the interior, is modelled on the minarets of the Great Mosque of Samarra on the Tigris. From its platform (173 easy steps) there are superb ***views**, particularly in the evening, extending in the N over the sea of houses and the Nile Valley to the Delta, in the W and S to the Pyramids and in the E to the Moqattam Hills.

Immediately adjoining the Ibn Tulun Mosque, in a patrician house of the Mameluke period, the **Beit el-Kiridliya** (1631), is the *Gayer-Anderson Museum*, furnished in the style of an Arab house, with a variety of Islamic *objets d'art*.

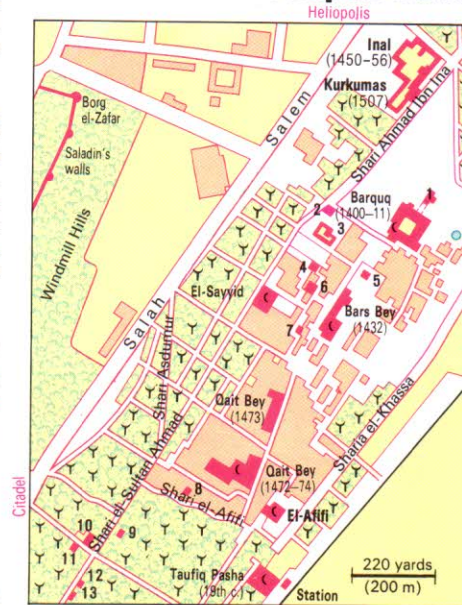
The Necropolises and the Moqattam Hills

The cemeteries and necropolises which lay outside the old Fatimid town, to the E, have now been incorporated in the expanding city. Some of them are still in use; some, indeed, provide dwellings for the poorest of the living as well as for the dead.

Of particular interest are the so-called ***Tombs of the Caliphs** (reached from Bab el-Nasr or from the Citadel), most of which date from the time of the second, or Circassian, Mameluke dynasty (1382–1517). Of the various tombs in the northern group is the ***Convent-Mosque of Sultan Barquq**, a square structure measuring 240 ft/73 m each way with two minarets and two splendid domes (1400–05 and 1410). In the sanctuary is a fine stone pulpit of 1483. – Some 660 yds/600 m SW of the Barquq Mosque, in the southern group of mausolea, is the ***Burial Mosque of Qait Bey** (1474), perhaps the finest of them all. Notable features are the decoration of the walls in bands of different colors, the delicate reticulation of the dome and the elegant form of the 130 ft/40 m high minaret. The prayer-hall is floored with marble mosaic. Adjoining the splendidly colorful mausoleum, with a richly ornamented reading-desk, is a hall containing the tombs of the Sultan's four wives.

The **Tombs of the Mamelukes**, to the S of the Citadel, largely in a state of ruin. In

Tombs of the Caliphs Cairo



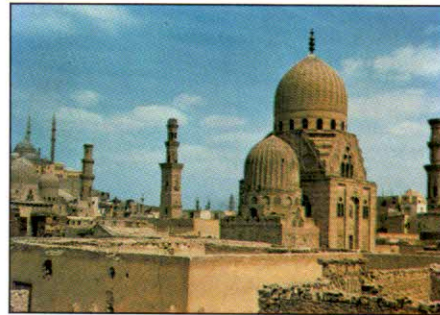
OTHER NOTABLE TOMBS

- 1 Anas (Barquq's father)
- 2 Asfur (1507)
- 3 Bars Bey el-Bagasi (1456) and Amir Suleiman (1544)
- 4 Seven Virgins (c. 1450)
- 5 Gani Bek el-Ashrafi (1427)
- 6 Rifai (mid 16th c.)

- 7 Khadiga Umm el-Ashrat (mother of Bars Bey)
- 8 Tashtimur (1334)
- 9 Guzal (Sidi Karkar: early 15th c.)
- 10 Umm Anuk (Princess Toghey: 1348)
- 11 Princess Tolbey (1363)
- 12 Nasrallah (1441)
- 13 Azrumuk (1503)

the southern part of this necropolis is the magnificent **Burial Mosque of Imam el-Shafii** (founder of the Shafiite school of Islam), built in 1211, with a massive dome.

An attractive trip (half-day) may be made from Cairo to the **Moqattam Hills**, or *Gebel Giyushi*, to the E of the city. From this 650 ft/200 m high range of hills of nummulitic limestone (fossils, including fossil trees) there are superb ***views**; a particularly good viewpoint is the rocky spur to the S of the conspicuous *Giyushi Mosque* (1085). The area is sometimes closed to the public as a military zone;



Burial mosque in the Southern Necropolis, Cairo

care should be taken not to photograph military features. – A short distance NW of the mosque, picturesquely situated on the slopes of the hills, is the *Bektashi Convent*, belonging to a Turkish Order of Dervishes.

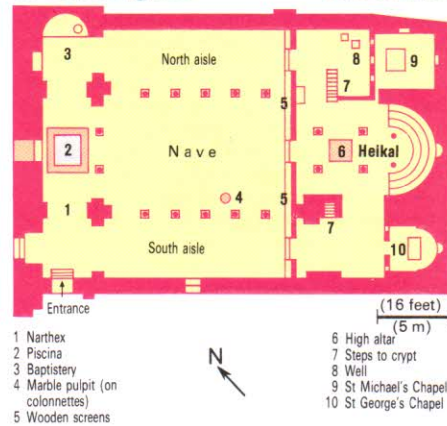
New Heliopolis and Nasser City

To the NE of Cairo is the modern suburb of NEW HELIOPOLIS (Arabic *Misr el-Gedida*, "New Cairo": for Old Heliopolis see separate entry). Built in 1905–06 on the initiative of a Belgian businessman, it occupies a site reclaimed from the desert under the name of the "Oasis of Heliopolis" which has a more agreeable climate than Cairo, lying as it does some 130 ft/40 m higher. It is laid out on a spacious plan, with hotels, sports grounds and places of entertainment, and is connected with Cairo by the suburban railway. – Farther NE, on the edge of the desert, is **Cairo International Airport**.

SW of New Heliopolis is the still newer suburb of NASSER CITY (Arabic *Medinet Nasr*), with the *Cairo Stadium*, extensive sports grounds and recreational facilities, the Exhibition Grounds, the offices of the

Coptic Church of St Sergius

Abu Sarga, Old Cairo



Department of Antiquities and a massive *War Memorial*; here, too, is the Tomb of President Sadat (assassinated October 6, 1981).

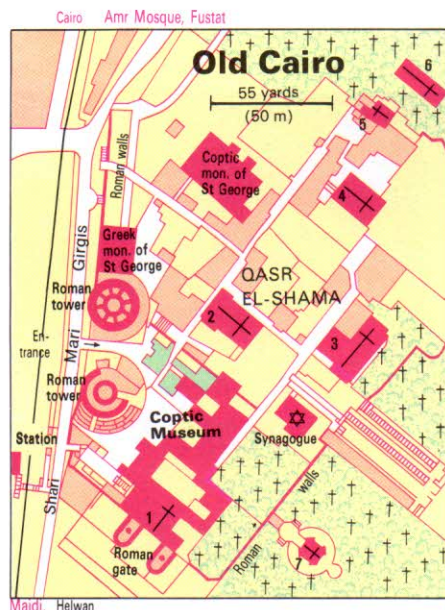
Old Cairo, Fustat and Maadi

There is much of interest to see in the southern district of ***Old Cairo** (*Misr el-Qadima*), on the right bank of the Nile opposite the S end of the island of Roda. In the southern part of this district is the QASR EL-SHAMA quarter, mainly inhabited by Christians, which lies within the walls (still partly preserved) of the Roman fortress of Babylon.

The area of the fort is entered between two massive *Roman towers*. In a closely packed huddle of houses is the Church of ***Abu Sarga** (*St Sergius*), founded in the 4th–5th c. and rebuilt in the 10th–11th c. According to tradition the Virgin and Child found refuge here for a month during their flight into Egypt.

The church represents the basic type of the Egyptian-Byzantine basilica of the early period, still favored by the Copts. It has a nave and aisles, with exposed roof beams over the nave, a raised transept (choir) and galleries in the flat-roofed aisles. The side walls of the nave consist of two rows of columns, one above the other, with keeled arches between the columns; the galleries are supported on alternate groups of two columns and a masonry pier. The marble columns, taken from ancient buildings, are used without regard to their diameter or architectural form.

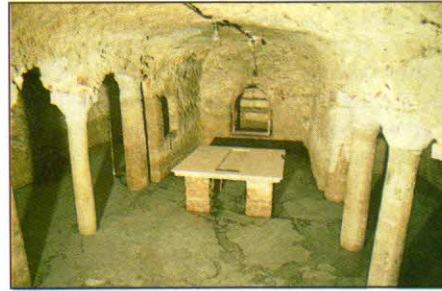
The church is entered by a doorway at the SW corner. The three original doorways in the W front, now walled up, led into the *narthex*, which was occupied during services by catechumens (converts under instruction) awaiting baptism. The narthex is divided into three parts by wooden screens. In the middle section is an old *piscina*, used by the priest for washing the feet of male worshipers on the Feast of the



CHURCHES

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 El-Moallaga (Coptic) | 4 Mari Girgis (St George: Coptic) |
| 2 Abu Sarga (St Sergius: Coptic) | 5 El-Adra (Church of the Virgin: Coptic) |
| 3 Sitt Barbara (St Barbara: Coptic) | 6 Greek Orthodox church |
| | 7 St Elias (Greek Catholic) |

Epiphany; the N section, with a recess, is the *Baptistery*. The narthex is separated from the nave by another wooden screen. – The *nave*, with an acute-angled timber roof, is traditionally reserved for men, while the women sit in the aisles. Steps lead up to the sanctuary and two side chapels, which are shut off by *wooden screens*, paneled and richly adorned with carvings in wood and ivory. In the sanctuary (*heikal*) are the canopied *high altar* and an apse with steps on which the priests used to sit. – Two flights of steps lead down from the side chapels into the oldest part of the church, the 5th c. **Crypt**, a small vaulted chapel with ancient marble columns separating the nave from the aisles. At the end of the nave is an altar in the form of an Early Christian tomb recess, said to mark the spot where Mary rested with the infant Jesus.



Crypt of Abue Sarga Church

Within the area of the Roman citadel are a number of other old Coptic churches. A few houses away from Abu Sarga is the Church of **Sitt Barbara** (*St Barbara*), founded in the 5th c. and rebuilt in the 10th–11th c. To the N are the churches of **Mari Girgis** (*St George*), founded in the 7th c., with a richly decorated nave, and **El-Adra** (*Church of the Virgin*), founded in the 9th c. and rebuilt in the 18th. In the **Synagogue** (*Keniset Eliahu*; until the 8th c. a Christian church), the largest in Egypt, Elijah is said to have appeared and Moses to have prayed.

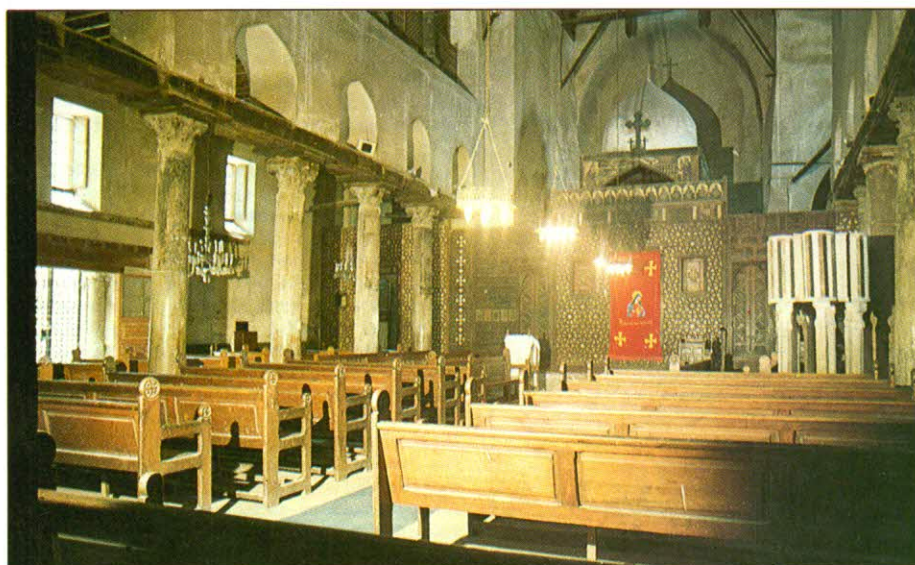
At the SE corner of the citadel, on the E tower of the S gate, is the Metropolitan Church of **Sitt Miriam** (*St Mary*), known as **El-Moallaqa**, the “Hanging Church”, which was founded in the 4th c. and rebuilt in the 9th c. and on a number of later occasions. It was originally much larger, probably built over both gate-towers. The narthex leads into the nave (divided into four aisles, but originally with at least five), with the pulpit. There are three chapels shut off by old carved screens; the central one (the *heikal* or sanctuary) is dedicated to Christ, the one on the N to St George, the one on the S to John the Baptist.

Attached to El-Moallaqa is the **Coptic Museum**, founded in 1910 by Morkos Pasha Simaika, the largest and finest collection of Coptic material. The museum was erected at the beginning of the 20th c., using

architectural elements from old Coptic buildings, and later extended. In addition to works of religious art it contains Coptic arts and crafts and everyday objects from the 3rd to the 18th c., particularly items of the early medieval period.

NE of the Coptic Museum is the **Mosque of Amr** (*Amr ibn el-As Mosque*), believed to be the oldest in Cairo; the present rather dilapidated building, however, dates mainly from the 18th c. On this site Amr ibn el-As, Caliph Omar’s General, built the first mosque in Fustat in the year 642; it was soon considerably enlarged, but was destroyed during the Crusades. – Farther to the NW is the picturesque old Coptic Monastery of **Abu Seifein** (*St Stephen*).

To the NE of Old Cairo are the remains of **Fustat**. Numerous finds from the site are now in the Museum of Islamic Art and the Coptic Museum. – Between the Mosque



Interior of the Coptic Church of Abu Sarga, Old Cairo



Cairo – a panoramic view

of Amr and Fustat is the **POTTERS' QUARTER**, in which the popular big-bellied water-jars known as *kulla* are made.

4 miles/6 km S of Old Cairo in the direction of Helwan lies the residential suburb of **MAADI** (*El-Maadi*), with modern houses and villas set in gardens (many the residences of foreigners) and a yacht club. Near Maadi a *prehistoric settlement* (probably of the 6th millennium B.C.), first discovered in 1930, has recently been excavated.

SURROUNDINGS of Cairo

The village of **Harrania**, a short distance SW of the city, is noted for its woven carpets and rugs in naive designs.

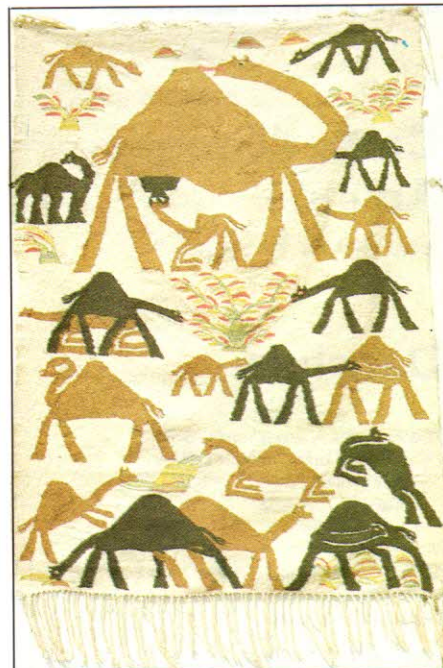
Some 8 miles/13 km NW of Cairo, at **Ausim**, is the site of ancient *Letopolis* (Egyptian *Khem*), capital of the 2nd nome of Lower Egypt, which is referred to in 4th Dynasty texts. The only remains so far discovered, however, date from the Late Period and Graeco-Roman times.

15 miles/25 km NW of Cairo, at the point where the Nile divides into two arms, is the **Nile Dam**, which at the end of the 19th c. ranked among the largest dams in the world. It was designed to keep the water-level in the Delta uniform throughout the year, so as to obviate the old methods of obtaining water for irrigation and to remove the difficulties of navigation during the three months when the water was at its lowest.

A plan for regulating the water-supply in the Delta had been put forward by Napoleon, but work on the construction of the dam began only in 1835, in the time of Mohammed Ali. Two competing proposals were put forward by two French engineers, Linant and Mougél. Linant's plan for constructing a dam farther N, where ground conditions seemed more favorable, was rejected as too costly, and Mougél's plan was

preferred. The cost of establishing foundations in the poor soil at the S end of the Delta, however, far exceeded the original estimate, and after more than 131,000 cu. yds/100,000 cu. m of building materials had been consumed the structure was found to be insufficiently secure, and in 1867 the project was abandoned. Finally it was successfully completed by Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff in 1885–90 at the cost of a further huge expenditure of money. After a burst in the winter of 1909–10 extensive strengthening and rebuilding was required.

There are in fact two dams, one over the eastern (Damietta) arm of the Nile, the other over the western (Rosetta) arm. The eastern dam is 571 yds/522 m long and has 71 sluices; the western one is 494 yds/ 452 m



Rug from Harrania

long, with 61 sluices. The Taufiquay and Mahmudiya Canals are spanned by bridges with sluice-gates, at the end of which are spacious basins and passages for shipping, with swing bridges. A further dam, with a lock in the middle for traffic on the Menufiya Canal, runs between the bridges over these canals. The superstructures are in a medieval castellated style. – Some 240 yds/220 m downstream is the **Mohammed Ali Dam**, built in 1936–39 to improve irrigation of the land in this area.

Between the two arms of the Nile, in an area formerly occupied by fortifications, lies a beautiful landscaped garden laid out by an Englishman named Draper.

Some 22 miles/35 km N of Cairo, 2 miles/3 km SE of Shibin el-Kanatir, is **Tell el-Yahudiya** ("Hill of the Jews"), the site of ancient *Leontopolis*. Here Ramesses III built a temple faced with glazed mosaic tiles (most of which are now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo). The technique of manufacture of the tiles is interesting, the coloring being produced partly by glazing and partly by inlaid pieces of glass. Later (170 B.C.) a Jewish High Priest named Onias, with assistance from Ptolemy VI Philometor, built a temple, modelled on Solomon's Temple, for the Jews who had been expelled from Jerusalem. There is little left to see on the site.

A further 12½ miles/20 km NE, just N of the provincial capital of **Benha** (pop. 38,000; production of attar of roses), on the right bank of the Damietta arm of the Nile, is *Kom el-Atrib*, a shapeless mound of rubble with the remains of ancient *Athribis*, capital of the 10th nome of Lower Egypt. The area has not yet been systematically investigated, but peasants digging for *sebbakh* (the rich soil found on ancient sites) have frequently made valuable finds, including a hoard of silver weighing almost 110 lb/50 kg.

Abu Gurab, Abu Roash, *Abusir, Beni Suef, *Dahshur, Eastern Desert, **Fayyum, **Giza, Heliopolis (Old Heliopolis), **Helwan, Ismailia Canal, **El-Lahun, Lisht, Meidum, *Memphis, *Nile, Nile Delta, **Saqqara, Tanta, *Wadi Natrun, Western Desert, El-Zagazig** and **Zawiyet el-Aryan**: see separate entries.

Crocodilopolis-Arsinoe

See under Fayyum

Dahshur

Middle Egypt. – Governorate: Giza.

Tourist Information Office,
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

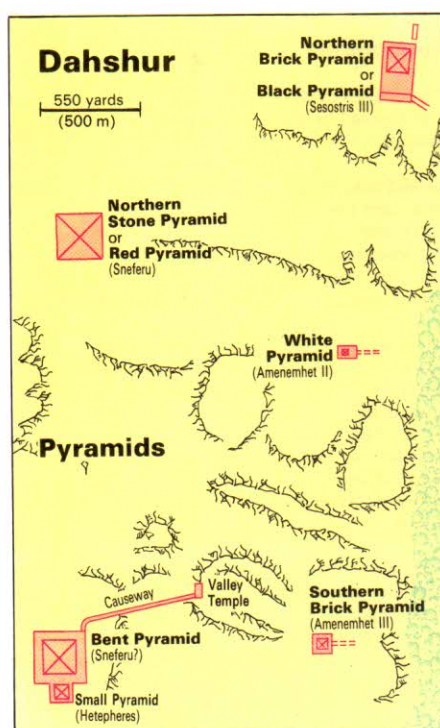
ACCESS. – By road (1½ miles/2 km S of Saqqara). – Military installations in area: photography and use of binoculars prohibited.

The *Pyramids of Dahshur lie about 1½ miles/2 km from the S side of the

Saqqara necropolis and the Mastaba el-Faraun. Scattered over an area some 2 miles/3 km long by 1 mile/1.5 km across on the edge of the desert are five pyramids and the remains of subsidiary tombs and temples.

Two large and prominently situated pyramids built of limestone rear up on the desert plateau at some distance from the Nile Valley, and near the edge of the desert stand two pyramids built of black bricks made from Nile mud (El-Ahram el-Sud, the "Black Pyramids") and a smaller stone-built pyramid with a brick core, now much weathered. The two large stone pyramids are believed to have been built by Snerferu (Snofru; 4th Dynasty), the other three by various kings of the 12th Dynasty (c. 1991–c. 1786).

THE SITE. – The **Northern Brick Pyramid (Black Pyramid)** is believed to be the tomb of Sesostriis III (12th Dynasty). Its base length is 344 ft/104.9 m, its present height only 90 ft/27.5 m. It originally stood fully 215 ft/65 m high and was faced with marble slabs, none of which now remain. In the tomb chamber was found the Pharaoh's empty granite sarcophagus. – To the N of the pyramid, but still within the enclosure wall which originally surrounded it, were found two



underground galleries containing tomb chambers belonging to female members of the royal family, with costly grave furnishings which can now be seen in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

SW of the Black Pyramid stands the imposing bulk of the ***Northern Stone Pyramid** or *Red Pyramid*, so called from the reddish tint of the horizontally coursed limestone blocks of which it is constructed; it is possible to climb to the top. With a base measurement of 700 ft/213 m and a height of 332 ft/101.15 m (angle of incline $43^{\circ} 40'$), it is of approximately the same size as the Pyramid of Cheops at Giza. It is thought to have been built by Sneferu, founder of the 4th Dynasty and father of Cheops, who reigned gloriously for 24 years and conducted victorious wars in Libya and Nubia. The Red Pyramid is the oldest royal tomb in pure pyramid form, providing a model followed in later royal burials. From the entrance to the pyramid, at a height of 92 ft/28 m on the N side, a shaft leads down to three chambers in the heart of the structure, the third of which (30 ft/9.30 m long, 15 ft/4.50 m wide, 50 ft/15 m high) was the tomb chamber, although Sneferu was not in fact buried here.

To the SE of the Red Pyramid and S of the Pyramid of Sesostri is the much-ruined **White Pyramid** of Amenemhet II (12th Dynasty; c. 1929–c. 1895). The outer casing was filled with an unstable core of sand and bricks. The royal sarcophagus was found in the tomb chamber, and the female tombs on the W side of the pyramid contained valuable jewelry, now in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Three female mummies were discovered here in 1982.

Farther S is the imposing and enigmatic ***Bent Pyramid**. Like the Red Pyramid, this was built in the reign of Sneferu, probably before that pyramid, and apparently planned as a normal pyramid with straight sides and with the usual valley temple, causeway, subsidiary pyramid and enclosure wall. It has a base measurement of 619 ft/188.56 m and a height of 319 ft/97.26 m. The excellently preserved casing, constructed of slabs of Tura limestone slightly inclined downwards, gives a good idea of the original external appearance of other pyramids. The reason for the change of angle half-way up the pyramid, from $54^{\circ} 31'$ in the lower part to $43^{\circ} 21'$, is unknown. Two theories have

been put forward: either some unforeseen event may have made it necessary to complete the pyramid quickly, or – as plaster-filled cracks in the interior and traces of timber supports suggests – there were fears for the stability of the pyramid during its construction and the upper part was given a less steep angle to reduce the weight of stone.

The Bent Pyramid was first entered by an English traveler, M. Melton, as early as the mid 17th c. In 1860 Le Brun found a small chamber in the interior. This pyramid differs from the normal pattern in having an entrance on the W side as well as on the N. The N entrance (difficult to negotiate) runs down from a height of 36 ft/11 m to an underground chamber from which a passage leads to another chamber on a higher level. The W entrance descends from a height of 111 ft/33.9 m to a third chamber on the level of the pyramid's base, from which a shaft runs down to the two lower chambers. This shaft could be closed by monolithic slabs of limestone (portcullises). All three chambers have corbeled roofs formed of overlapping courses of stone which are well calculated to support the enormous superincumbent mass. Apart from some scanty remains of animal mummies in the passages, all the rooms were found empty. It may be that there are other chambers not yet discovered. The name of the builder of the pyramid is indicated only by two painted inscriptions dating from the time of construction and two stelae bearing cartouches.

On the S side of the Bent Pyramid is the so-called **Small Pyramid**, which has a base measurement of 180 ft/55 m and originally stood 105 ft/32 m high. Presumably built as the tomb of Hetepheres, Sneferu's wife and mother of Cheops, it has an entrance, with a small cult-niche, on the N side and an offering-table on the E side.

The **Valley Temple** of the Bent Pyramid, the only such temple surviving at Dahshur, is well preserved. Situated, unusually, in the desert some 765 yds/700 m NE, it is connected with the pyramid by an open causeway. It has an entrance hall flanked by two smaller chambers on each side, leading into a court lined by double colonnades, on the far side of which are six chapels. The remains of the temple's rich decoration of paintings and reliefs were detached and are now in Cairo. – Traces of another causeway running up from the Nile to the temple were also discovered here.

To the E of the Bent Pyramid and some $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles/2.5 km S of the Black Pyramid, on the edge of the desert plateau near the village of *Minshat Dahshur*, is the **Southern Brick Pyramid**, which, like the Black Pyramid, was originally faced with slabs of Tura limestone. It is believed to have been built as the tomb of Amenemhet III (12th Dynasty; c. 1844–c. 1797), who irrigated and settled the Fayyum; but Amenemhet later built

another pyramid at Hawara in the Fayyum and was buried there. – Practically nothing is left of the valley temple of this pyramid, which seems to have been systematically demolished in the Ramessid period.

3 miles/5 km S of the Dahshur necropolis, near the village of *Mazghuna*, are the remains of two other pyramids, perhaps belonging to Amenemhet IV (12th Dynasty; c. 1798–c. 1790) and Queen Nefrusobek.

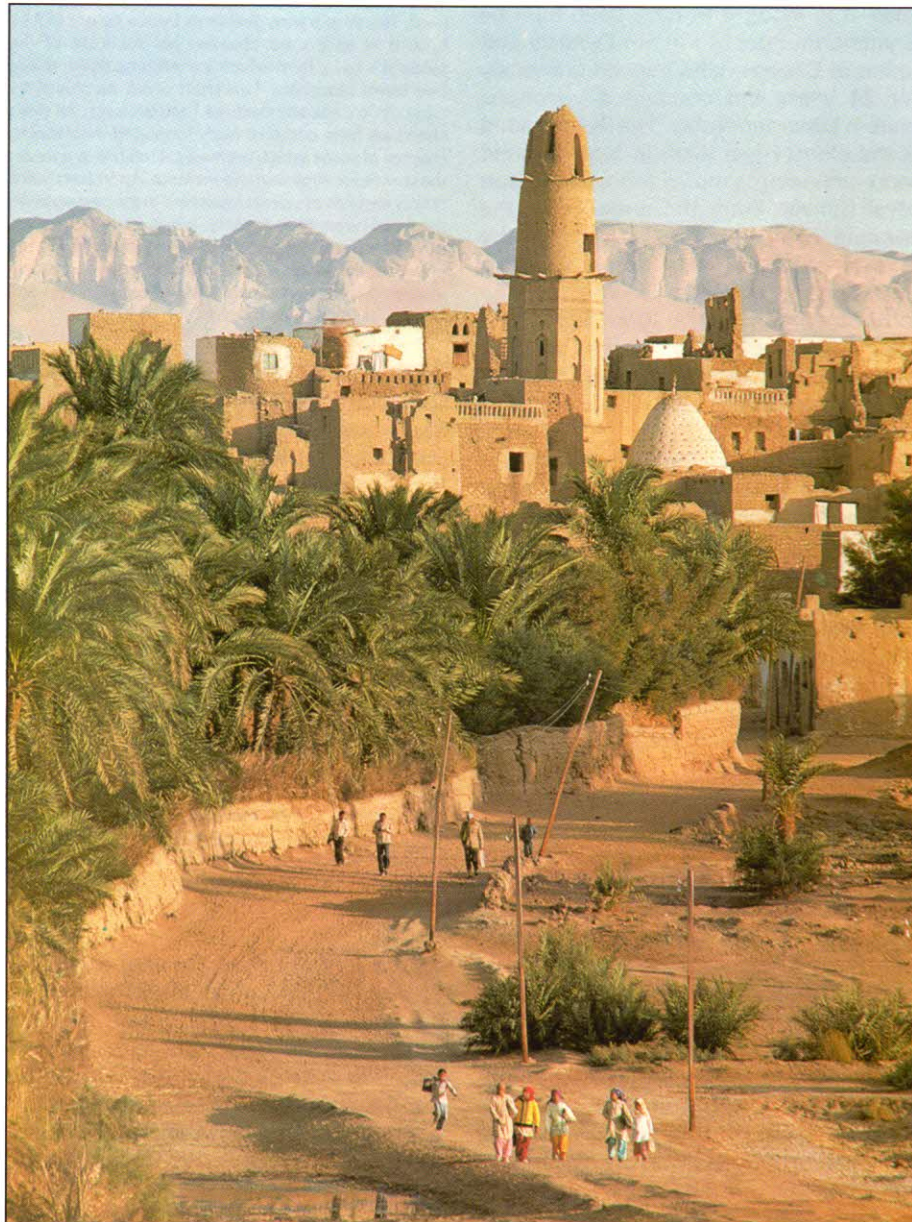
* *Saqqara*: see separate entry.

Dakhla Oasis

Western Desert. – New Valley Frontier District.

ACCESS. – 106 miles/170 km W of Kharga on a good road, occasionally blocked by dunes; cross-country vehicles only.

The *Dakhla Oasis (El-Dakhla, the Inner Oasis) lies in the Western Desert some 465 miles/750 km SW of Cairo, in latitude 25° 24' N and longitude 28° 54' E. Its lush green date groves and gardens are an attractive



El-Qasr, in the Dakhla Oasis

sight, contrasting strikingly with the ochre and pink rocks of the desert.

Dakhla is, after the Fayyum, the largest and most populous of the Egyptian oases, with some 20,000 inhabitants. It has large reserves of water, with more than 700 natural springs, lakes and ponds; but since the water of the springs is brackish it must be pounded and stored in a network of cisterns to allow the salt to settle. Like the other large oases in the Western (Libyan) Desert, Dakhla is being developed and enlarged under the New Valley land reclamation project. Deep bores have tapped underground water for use in irrigation and have made it possible to win new land for cultivation. The inhabitants of the oasis cultivate and export dates, citrus fruits, mangoes, apricots and vegetables, and also rear a certain amount of livestock (mainly poultry). In recent years increasing quantities of phosphate have been mined.

Excavations here have shown that Dakhla was inhabited at a very early stage. In antiquity there were many more springs and lakes than there are today, providing excellent conditions for the growing of vines and the rearing of livestock. The inhabitants of the oasis carried on an active trade with the people of the Nile Valley, but have preserved down to the present day their Berber inheritance.

The chief place in the NW part of the oasis is **El-Qasr**, with a picturesque old town, now abandoned, and a ruined castle. In the vicinity are the remains of a *Temple of Thoth* and a *cemetery* of the Graeco-Roman period. – To the SW, at *Amhada*, are tombs of the First Intermediate Period, and to the W, at *Qaret el-Muzawaqa*, a cemetery of the Roman period with well-preserved painted tombs.

Some 6 miles/10 km SW of El-Qasr is the **Deir el-Hagar** ("Monastery of the Stone"), the sand-covered remains of a large Egyptian temple of the Roman Imperial period (1st c. A.D.) dedicated to Amun, Mut and Khons which was later occupied by Coptic monks. Surrounded by a strong brick wall (77 yds/70 m by 43 yds/39 m), it followed the classic pattern, with a pylon followed by a pillared court and a hypostyle hall with a vestibule and

sanctuary. The Roman Emperors Vespasian, Titus, Domitian and Nero are mentioned in inscriptions. There are fine reliefs of religious rituals and sacrifices. Near the remains are hot sulphur springs (108 °F/42 °C), with structures which appear to be of Roman date. In the surrounding area are numerous other ancient remains buried under the sand.

On the S side of the oasis, at **Mut el-Kharab**, are remains of temples and other buildings dating from the Third Intermediate Period. – NE of Mut, at *Smant el-Kharab*, are remains of a settlement and a temple of the Roman period.

The chief place in the eastern part of the oasis is the little town of **Balat**, which has the remains of a Temple of Mut dating from the New Kingdom, mastabas of the 6th Dynasty and the First Intermediate Period and tombs of the Graeco-Roman period. In this area, too, traces of Neolithic settlement have been found. – Some 9 miles/14 km SE of Balat lies the picturesque village of *Ezbet-Bashendi*, many of the houses in which are built with stones from ancient buildings.

New Valley and Western Desert: see separate entries.

Dakka

See under Wadi el-Sebwa

Damanhur

Lower Egypt. – Governorate: Buhayra.
Population: 150,000.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Midan Saad Zaghlul,
Alexandria;
tel. 80 79 85.
Misr Travel,
Shari Salah Salem,
Alexandria;
tel. 2. 50 25.

ACCESS. – By road or rail, 37 miles/60 km SE of Alexandria.

Damanhur, chief town of the Governorate of Buhayra, which extends from the Rosetta arm of the Nile to the Western (Libyan) Desert, lies on the Mahmudiya Canal at the W

end of the Delta. It was the ancient Egyptian Behdet, later known as Time-en-Hor ("City of Horus"), from which its present name derives. In Roman times it was named Hermopolis Parva and was capital of the 15th nome of Lower Egypt.

Damanhur is now an important railway junction, with several cotton-ginning plants. It is also the market town of the very fertile surrounding area and a major center of the rice trade. There are no remains of the ancient city.

SURROUNDINGS of Damanhur. – Some 13 miles/21 km SE, near the village of *El-Nebira* on the left bank of the old Canopic arm of the Nile, are two mounds, the *Kom el-Gief* and the *Kom el-Nikrash*, with the scanty remains of the old Greek trading town of **Naucratis**. Founded in the time of the 26th Dynasty by Greek settlers from Miletus, it was granted the monopoly of trade with Greece in the reign of Amasis and became capital of the 5th (Saite) nome of Lower Egypt. Until the foundation of Alexandria it was the center of trade between Greece and Egypt, and was also noted for the manufacture of faience. Its temples were mostly dedicated to Greek divinities, but it also had shrines of Amun and Thoth.

14 miles/22 km farther S, near the village of *Tod*, is the **Kom el-Hisn**, a mound of rubble which marks the site of *Imu*, the "House of the Mistress of the Trees", which under the New Kingdom displaced *Hutihit* (the site of which has not yet been located) as capital of the 3rd nome of Lower Egypt. Excavations here have brought to light the enclosure wall of a temple complex measuring 125 yds/115 m by 70 yds/64 m, probably dedicated to Sakhmet-Hathor, and several tombs of the Middle and New Kingdoms, notable for the number of weapons included in the grave-goods. – Some 550 yds/500 m S is the *Kom el-Dubbia*, with a large necropolis ranging in date from the Middle Kingdom to the Ptolemaic period. – A few miles NE the *Kom el-Firin* has remains of a temple built by Ramesses II.

****Alexandria, Nile Delta, Sais and Tell el-Faraun:** see separate entries.

Damietta/Dumyat

Lower Egypt. – Governorate: Damietta.
Population: 100,000.

 **Misr Travel**,
Corniche el-Nil;
tel. 28 84.

ACCOMMODATION. – IN GAMASA: *Hotel Amun*, II, 116 b.; etc.

ACCESS. – By road or rail from Alexandria (152 miles/245 km E) or Cairo (130 miles/210 km NE); by road from Port Said (28 miles/45 km SE).

Damietta (Coptic Tamiati, Greek Tamiathis, Arabic Dumyat), once a port of considerable importance,

lies in the north-eastern part of the Delta some 9 miles/15 km S of the mouth of the Damietta arm (known in antiquity as the Phatnitic arm) of the Nile, on a narrow strip of land between the river and Lake Manzala.

Formerly a place of some consequence which rose to prosperity through its maritime trade and its craft industries, Damietta is now the chief town of a governorate, with silk-spinning mills and textile factories (cotton) and a lake harbor for small vessels. It has an Islamic university associated with the El-Azhar University in Cairo.

HISTORY. – The town, originally situated rather farther N, gained renown during the Crusades through its resistance to a siege by the forces of King John of Jerusalem in 1218. With the aid of an ingenious fortified double boat, designed by an engineer from Cologne named Oliverius, Frisian and German troops succeeded, after fierce fighting, in taking the tower from which a chain stretched across the river; and in spite of the intervention of the Papal Legate Pelagius Galvani and the vigilance of the Egyptian Sultan Malik el-Kamil the town itself finally fell. The victors gained much booty, sold the surviving inhabitants as slaves and converted the mosques into churches; but only three years later, in 1221, they were compelled to evacuate the town. In 1249 Louis IX of France occupied Damietta without striking a blow, the terrified defenders having hastily abandoned the place; but in the following year it was restored to the Muslims as part of the ransom for the King, following his capture at Mansura. The emirs then resolved to destroy the town and rebuild it on its present site on the E bank of the river. Thereafter Damietta rose to prosperity through its trade and its manufactures, becoming widely known for its leather goods and sesame oil, while its harbor was frequented by the ships of many nations. The construction of the Mahmudiya Canal deprived the town of much of its trade, and its decline was hastened by the rise of the ports on the Suez Canal.

Damietta has many handsome old houses, now rather down at heel, to bear witness to its former prosperity. Many of the houses have carved wooden oriel windows and lattice screens, usually very old, differing considerably in style from the mushrabiyyas of Cairo. – Near the river is the *El-Madbuliya Mosque*, built by Qait Bey in 1475 together with its associated school, the Ashrafiya.

NE of the town, in the cemetery district of **El-Gabbana**, is the badly dilapidated *Abul Maata Mosque* (or Amr ibn el-As Mosque), which may date from the time of the old town. In the vestibule are Kufic inscriptions. Many of the columns in the interior are antique. In the SW corner are twin columns, set close together; and

anyone accused of a crime who could squeeze between them was held to be innocent. In the same row is a column which is licked by sufferers from jaundice in the hope of a cure. On the minaret are the remains of early Arab ornamentation.

SURROUNDINGS of Damietta. – Some 7½ miles/12 km N of the town, on a peninsula on the W side of the Nile, is the modest resort of **Ras el-Bahr** (hotels: El-Shatte, IV, 189 b.; Cecil, IV, 172 b.; Marine Fuad el-Nil, IV, 157 b.; Marine Fuad el-Bahr, IV, 141 b.; El-Home, IV, 111 b.; etc.), with a beautiful beach of fine sand. – Farther W (reached by way of Kafr Saad; 28 miles/45 km) is another unpretentious resort, **Gamasa**, which also has a beautiful beach.

To the E of Damietta lies **Lake Manzala**, the largest of the lagoons along the N of the Delta (area 700 sq. miles/1800 sq. km). Here in ancient times the Mendesian and Tanitic arms of the Nile flowed into the Mediterranean, the former at El-Diba and the latter at the Eshtum el-Gamel Channel. Their courses can still be traced by the fluvial deposits and by the mounds of rubble which mark the sites of settlements built on their banks. – Between the lake and the sea is a very narrow spit of land along which a poor road (improvement planned) runs to Port Said. Two narrow passages, the Eshtum Hadawi and the Eshtum el-Gamel, link the lake with the sea. Lake Manzala – the area of which has been reduced by a third during the last 50 years by drainage and reclamation – is the haunt of great hosts of pelicans, great white egrets, storks, flamingos and other waterfowl. Only the northern part of the lake is navigable to any extent by flat-bottomed boats; the southern part consists of shallow brackish water and marshland. The lake yields sufficient fish only for the needs of the local people, the main center of the fisheries being the large village of **El-Matariya**, situated on a tongue of land some 37 miles/60 km SE of Damietta, which is linked with Damietta and Port Said by channels cut through the shallow marshy lake. – The lake offers scope for attractive boat trips.

Nile Delta: see separate entry.

Deir el-Bahri

See under Thebes

Deir el-Medina

See under Thebes

Deir Mar Antonios

See St Antony's Monastery

Deir Mar Bolos

See St Paul's Monastery

Deir Sant Katerin


See St Catherine's Monastery

Delta

See Nile Delta

Dendera

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Qena.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Tourist Bazaar,
Luxor;
tel. 22 15.

ACCESS. – By taxi or horse-carriage from Qena.

The remains of ancient **Dendera** (Greek Tentyris, Coptic Tentore) are prominently situated on the W bank of the Nile opposite the town of Qena, at a wide bend in the river. This was one of the most ancient and most famous of Egyptian cities, capital of the 6th nome of Upper Egypt. The Greek and modern Arabic names of the site are derived from its ancient designation of Yunet or Yunet Tantere ('Yunet of the Goddess', i.e. Hathor).

When, in ancient times, the economic center of the area and the bulk of the population moved from the W bank of the Nile to Qena on the E bank Yunet Tantere remained the principal center of the cult of Hathor, goddess of love and joy, who was equated with the Greek Aphrodite. The splendid temple in which she was worshiped together with her husband, the falcon-headed Horus of Edfu, and her youthful son Ihi (or Harsomtus), god of music, is one of the best preserved in Egypt. The principal ceremonies in her honor coincided with the great New Year festival.

THE SITE. – From the rest-house on the left bank of the river a road, once flanked by columns, leads to the N entrance to the temple precinct (315 yds/290 m by 305 yds/280 m), which is enclosed by a wall of bricks made from Nile mud, 33–39 ft/10–12 m thick at the base and well preserved to a height of some 33 ft/10 m.



The Temple of Hathor, Dendera

Within the enclosure are a number of other shrines in addition to the main temple. The monumental **gateway** dates from the reign of the Emperor Domitian (1st c. A.D.), who is named in an inscription with the style Germanicus. In inscriptions on the inner side the Emperors Nerva (also with the style Germanicus) and Trajan (who is given the epithet Dacicus as well as Germanicus) are also mentioned. Outside the gateway, to the right and left, are two Late Roman *wells*. There is a similar gateway on the E side of the precinct and a third, dating from the Imperial period, outside the walls to the E.

Ignoring for the moment the smaller buildings to the right of the entrance, we proceed straight ahead to the ***Temple of Hathor**, oriented approximately N and S. This was built during the reigns of the last Ptolemies and the Emperor Augustus (1st c. B.C.) on the site of an earlier temple traditionally believed to date from the Old Kingdom (at least 6th Dynasty) which was altered or added to principally by the kings of the 12th Dynasty and by the great rulers of the New Kingdom (in particular Tuthmosis III and Ramesses II and III). Some of the mural reliefs were executed at still later dates. The normal colonnaded forecourt and pylons at the N entrance were never constructed. The Dendera Temple lacks the magnificence of earlier temples like those of Abydos and Karnak, but it impresses the beholder with its fine proportions and dignified adaptation to its

purpose. Although the profusion of reliefs and inscriptions on the walls cannot be compared with the master-works of the Old Kingdom or the reigns of Tuthmosis III and Sethos I they are, nevertheless, excellent examples of the Egyptian decorative art of the Late Period.

We come first into the large **Vestibule** or **Pronaos**, which has 24 sistrum columns with heads of Hathor. The façade is crowned by a massive cavetto cornice, in the middle of which is a winged solar disc. On the upper edge of the cornice is a three-line Greek inscription: "For the Emperor Tiberius Caesar, the new Augustus, son of the divine Augustus, under the prefect Aulus Avillius Flaccus, the governor Aulus Fulvius Crispus and the district governor Sarapion son of Trychambus, the people of the city and the nome dedicated the pronaos to Aphrodite, the great goddess, and her fellow gods in the ... year of the Emperor Tiberius."

The interior of the vestibule is shut off by six **screens** between the columns in the first row. On the interior walls are four rows of scenes depicting the Emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero as Pharaohs presenting votive offerings to Hathor and other deities. The reliefs on the screens between the columns, which related to the ceremonial entrance of the Pharaoh into the temple, have been chiseled out.

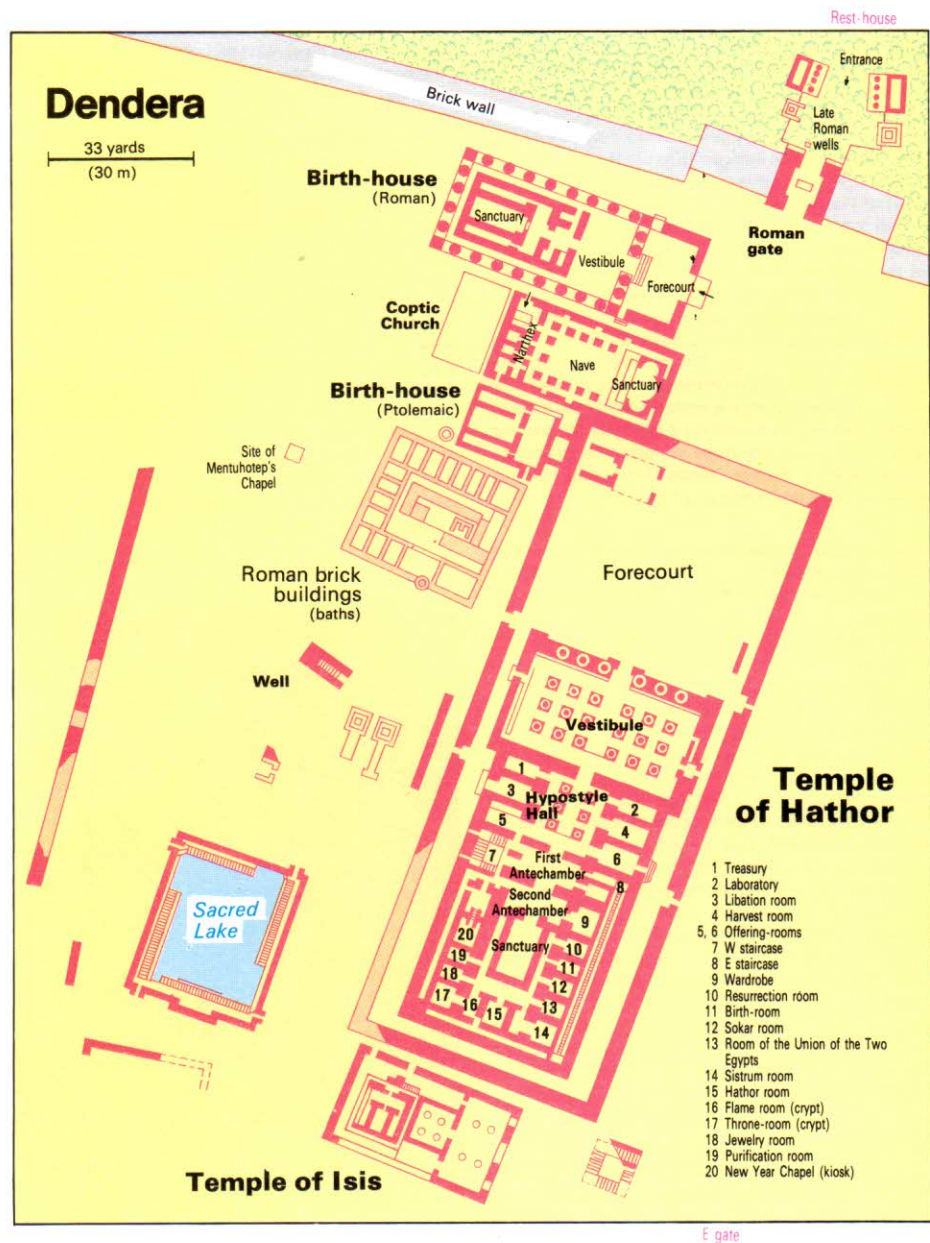
The reliefs on the screens to the right of the entrance depict the King, with the crown of Lower Egypt, leaving the palace, with his guardian spirit behind him and a priest with a censer in front of him; the falcon-headed Horus and the ibis-headed Thoth pouring the sanctifying water over the King, the water being represented by the hieroglyphs for "life"; and the protective goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt blessing the King. On the screens to the left of the entrance are similar scenes with the King wearing the crown of Upper Egypt. On the left-hand (W) wall is a relief depicting the King being conducted into the presence of Hathor by Month and Atum, the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt.

The *ceiling* of the hall is divided by the architraves into seven bands, in which are depicted the following scenes (from left to right): 1. the sky goddess Nut, below her the signs of the zodiac and boats with personifications of the stars, and the sun shining on the temple, here represented by the head of Hathor; 2. deities of the stars and the hours of the day and night; 3. phases of the moon and the course of the sun during the 12 hours of the day; 4. flying vultures and suns; 5–7. scenes corresponding to 1–3.

The rear wall of the vestibule forms the façade of the temple proper; it is surmounted by a cavetto cornice and a round moulding. In the center is a door leading into the **Hypostyle Hall** ("Hall of Appearances"), the roof of which is supported by six columns with elaborate foliage capitals and Hathor heads. The base and the two lowest drums of the columns are of granite, the rest of sandstone. Light is admitted by

eight square apertures in the roof. On the walls are four rows of reliefs depicting the King in presence of the deities of Dendera. Here, as in some other rooms in the temple, the King's name is missing, no doubt because the priests were uncertain, in the unsettled times when the temple was being built, which ruler should be selected for the honor.

Of particular interest are a number of reliefs in the bottom row depicting the ceremonies connected with the foundation of the temple. To the right of the entrance the King emerges from the palace wearing the Lower Egyptian crown, preceded by a priest offering incense; and to the left of this scene he is seen breaking up the soil with a hoe, with the goddess Hathor in front of him. To the left of the entrance are similar scenes in which the King is wearing the crown of Upper Egypt (on right he presents bricks to Hathor, representing the building material of the temple).



On each side of the hall are three *chambers*, some dark and some lit by apertures in the roof, which may have served as a laboratory, treasure-rooms and store-rooms for votive offerings. The inscriptions and reliefs on the walls show the King in the presence of Hathor and other deities, including Horus of Dendera.

From the hypostyle hall we enter the **First Antechamber** or Hall of Offerings, which is lit by apertures in the roof and walls. The walls have four rows of reliefs depicting the King making offerings to Hathor and other deities. – To the right and left are passages leading to staircases up to the roof of the temple. Also on the left is a chamber used for sacrificial offerings.

The **Second Antechamber**, which is lit by openings in the side walls, also has four rows of reliefs. To the left is a small chamber used for storing unguents and the garments in which the divine images were dressed on festival occasions. – The door on the right leads into three chambers. The first, linked with the W staircase by a corridor, was a store-room. Beyond this, after crossing an open court and going up a (modern) flight of steps, we come to a charming *kiosk*, the roof of which is supported by two sistrum columns linked with the walls by screens rising to half the height of the columns. Here the priests assembled for the celebrations of Hathor's birthday and the New Year festival which followed. In the court were made the votive offerings which are depicted on the walls. On the walls of the kiosk are three rows of scenes depicting the King and various deities in the presence of the gods of Dendera; below is a procession of local gods (Upper Egyptian on the left, Lower Egyptian on the right) bearing votive offerings. On the ceiling is the sky goddess Nut bringing forth the Sun, whose rays shine on the Temple of Dendera, represented by the head of Hathor between two trees on a mountain. In the rear wall of the court are three windows separated by pillars bearing Hathor heads. From the court a staircase leads down to a *crypt*.

From the second antechamber we pass into the inmost part of the temple, described in an inscription as the "hidden secret chambers". – The central door leads into the dark **Sanctuary**, the "great seat", in which stood the sacred boats with the images of the gods. Only the King or a priest representing him was permitted to enter this chamber and hold converse with the deity, and even he might enter only during the New Year festival. The *reliefs* on the walls depict the ceremonies which had to be performed on entering the sanctuary and the presentation of offerings. The scenes are so arranged that each scene on the left-hand wall is followed by the corresponding scene on the right-hand wall, thus: the King ascends the steps leading up to the shrine (left); he removes the ribbon fastening the door (right); he removes the seal from the door (left) and opens it (right); he gazes upon the goddess (left) and prays to her with his arms hanging by his sides (right); he offers incense before the sacred barques of Hathor and Horus of Edfu (left) and of Hathor and her son Ihi (right). – On the rear wall, to the left, the King presents an image of the goddess Maat to Hathor and Horus of Edfu; in front of him is Hathor's young son with a sistrum and a rattle. On the right he performs the same action before Hathor and Ihi.

The sanctuary is surrounded by a *corridor* lit by apertures in the roof and walls and entered through two doors from the Second Antechamber. Along this corridor are 11 small chambers, used as chapels for various deities, as store-rooms or for other religious

purposes. The last of these chambers, with reliefs similar to those in the sanctuary, was a shrine dedicated to Hathor. – From here a modern iron staircase leads up to a niche in the wall containing a relief of Hathor.

The subterranean chambers or crypts, which may have been used for storing cult vessels and divine images which were no longer required, are of interest both for their construction and for the fresh coloring of the paintings. There are altogether 12 such chambers, constructed at different levels in the thickness of the temple walls. The elaborate mural reliefs date from the reign of Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos, and are thus the oldest as well as the best executed in the whole temple. – In the *crypt* reached through a square opening in the floor of Room 16 are a number of narrow chambers with representations on the walls of the objects which were kept in them. On the right-hand wall of the second chamber on the right is a fine relief depicting King Ptolemy (6th Dynasty) kneeling and offering a statuette of the god Ihi to four images of Hathor. – In the *crypt* reached from Room 17 Ptolemy XII is shown presenting jewelry and other offerings to the gods.

From the First Antechamber two *staircases* lead up to the roof. The E staircase, which is very dark, runs straight up to the roof, with easy steps; the one on the W is a kind of spiral staircase with ten right-angled bends, lit by windows with representations of the sun shining in. The *mural reliefs* in both staircases depict the solemn procession of the King and priests, some of whom wear the masks of lesser deities, during the New Year festival; on the left-hand side they are shown ascending to the roof of the temple with images of Hathor and the other gods of the temple, "so that the goddess might be united with the beams of her father Re", on the right-hand side they are seen descending after the ceremony. – The W staircase passes a small chamber (situated above the store-room adjoining the Second Antechamber) with three windows looking into the court. Higher up is a small (closed) court, adjoining which are two rooms



Reliefs on the outer wall of the Temple of Hathor

dedicated, like the chapel on the E side of the terrace, to the cult of Osiris; the reliefs in the second room depict the resurrection of Sokar-Osiris.

The *temple roof* is on several levels, the highest being over the pronaos. At the SW corner of the first (lowest) terrace is a small open *kiosk* with 12 Hathor columns. Adjoining the terrace on the N, above the chambers to the left of the hypostyle hall, is a small *Shrine of Osiris* dedicated to the cult of the slain and resurrected Isis, as is shown by the numerous inscriptions and scenes on the walls. On the ceiling of the second chamber, which is separated from the first (an open court) by pillars, is a cast of the famous "Zodiac of Dendera", the only circular representation of the heavens found in Egypt; the original was carried off to France in 1820 and is now in the Louvre. In the last room is a window with representations of Osiris lying dead on his bier and returning to life. – At the NW corner of the terrace a flight of steps leads up to the roof of the first antechamber, beyond which is the still higher roof of the hypostyle hall. From this a modern iron staircase continues up to the roof of the pronaos, from which there are superb panoramic *views of the Nile Valley and the hills of the desert.

Finally it is worth walking round the **outside walls* of the temple to see the inscriptions and reliefs with which they are covered. Those on the E and W sides date from the reigns of various Roman Emperors, in particular Nero. The large reliefs on the rear (S) wall depict Ptolemy XV Caesar (Caesarion), son of Julius Caesar and Cleopatra (VII Philopator), before the gods of Dendera, with the image of Hathor in the center. The faces are purely conventional and in no sense portraits. The projecting lions' heads on the sides of the building were designed to carry off rainwater.

To the right (SW) of the entrance to the temple precinct is the so-called **birth-house** (*mammisi*), a small temple dedicated to the cult of the son of the two deities worshiped in the main temple, of a type found in all the larger temple complexes of the Ptolemaic period (e.g. Edfu and Philae). In this case the birth-house, built in the reign of Augustus and decorated with further reliefs in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, was dedicated to Harsomtus, son of Isis and Horus of Edfu. Along the two sides and the rear end runs a colonnade of flower columns, on the abaci of which are figures of Bes, the patron god of women in labor.

A ramp leads up to a spacious *forecourt*, with the ground-plan of a Late Roman building with three apses inscribed on the ground. From this we enter a *vestibule*, in the right-hand wall of which is the lower part of a staircase leading up to the roof; to the left are two doors, one leading into the colonnade, the other

into a small side chamber. The central door opens into a wide *transverse chamber*, beyond which is the long *sanctuary*, the birth-chamber proper, with reliefs depicting the birth and nursing of the divine infant; in the rear wall is a shallow door-recess. To right and left are small side chambers.

Immediately S of the birth-house we come to a large **Coptic church** of the late 5th c., an excellent example of the layout of an early Egyptian church. The entrance, at the NW corner, leads into a vestibule (with a round-headed recess) and beyond this into the narthex, which occupies the whole breadth of the church and has semicircular recesses at the N and S ends. To the W are a number of small chambers and a staircase. From the narthex three doorways lead into the nave, in the walls of which are rectangular recesses. At the far end is the trilobate sanctuary, with small rooms on either side.



The god Bes, Dendera

To the S of the church is an older *birth-house*, begun by Nectanebo I and completed in the Ptolemaic period. When the Temple of Hathor was built the wall of its forecourt (which was left unfinished) cut across the end of this birth-house and it was then abandoned and replaced by the later one to the N. From its E end a colonnade, with screens between the columns (here cut by the wall of the Temple of Hathor), leads through a Ptolemaic doorway into a transverse chamber with a door on the left leading out of the birth-house and three other doors in the rear wall. The middle door is the entrance to the sanctuary, with mural reliefs dating from the reign of Nectanebo and depicting the birth of the divine infant Ihi. The side doors lead into two rooms without decoration; from the left-hand one a staircase leads up to the roof. – The *brick*

buildings to the W and S of this birth-house date from the Roman period and were probably baths and well-houses.

At the SW corner of the Temple of Hathor is the *Sacred Lake*, a deep basin enclosed by walls of dressed stone, with flights of steps leading down into it at the four corners. Doorways on the N and S sides give access to staircases within the masonry of the walls leading down to water at a lower level.

On a high terrace at the S end of the Temple of Hathor is the **Temple of Isis** or "Birth-House of Isis", built in the reign of Augustus, using fragments of masonry from an earlier temple of the Ptolemaic period. It has the curious feature that while the main temple is oriented to the E its western half (destroyed), in which was the representation of the birth of Isis, is oriented to the N; the entrance is on the N side. – To the E of the Temple of Isis was another temple of some size, only the foundations of which are preserved, consisting of a forecourt, a hall with four columns and various subsidiary chambers.

Near this Sanctuary of Hathor were found remains of another temple complex, perhaps dedicated to Horus of Edfu, together with several tombs and mastabas (some of them of considerable size) belonging to high officials of the Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period. To the W of the ancient city, of which practically no trace remains, were animal cemeteries containing the mummies of dogs, birds and cows. – A small chapel of King Nebhepetre Mentuhotep II (11th Dynasty) which formerly stood to the W of the Temple of Hathor, within the temple precinct, is now reconstructed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

****Karnak, **Luxor, Qena and **Thebes (West):** see separate entries.

El-Derr

See under Amada

Dimeï

See under Fayyum

Djanet

See Tanis

Dra Abu el-Naga

See under Thebes

Dumyat

See Damietta

Eastern Desert/ Arabian Desert

The Eastern (Arabian) Desert is the great expanse of desert country which extends eastward from the Nile Valley to the Red Sea Rift, rising in the E to a formidable range of mountains (3300–6600 ft/1000–2000 m; Gebel el-Shayib, 7176 ft/2187 m) which descend in stages to the Red Sea. The hilly desert terrain is broken up by numerous wadis (dry valleys); and when rain falls in these valleys, and in the few small oases in the desert, an astonishingly luxuriant vegetation springs into life.

A trip through the Eastern Desert, particularly the southern part, is something of an adventure, but a very rewarding one, taking those who undertake it through magnificent scenery and offering an interesting change from the antiquities and museums they will have seen elsewhere in Egypt.

There were already a number of caravan routes across the desert between the Nile Valley and the Red Sea in ancient times, for the most part following the course of the wadis, with watering-points at regular intervals. These routes were used for trade with Sinai, Arabia, India and the E coast of Africa (Punt), and after the coming of Islam they were also followed by Egyptian pilgrims to Mecca. – There are now five asphalted roads connecting the Nile Valley with the main Red Sea ports.

Across the Eastern Desert

Warning

A trip across the desert by car always holds certain dangers. Before setting out it is essential to make sure that you have sufficient supplies of water and gasoline (petrol), as well as spare parts for the car. The sensible plan is to drive in convoy. If you want to branch off the road, make sure that you have good maps, or preferably a knowledgeable local guide.

Cairo to Ismailia (75 miles/120 km on a good asphalt road). – The road runs in a dead straight line across the flat northern fringe of the desert, offering a rapid but featureless route to the central part of the Suez Canal Zone.

Cairo to Suez (84 miles/135 km on an excellent asphalt road; bus service). – This route across the northern part of the desert – the most direct connection between Cairo and Suez – is easy and convenient, but without any features of tourist interest. It was the old caravan route and pilgrim route to Mecca, an important highway which was guarded by 16 watch-towers and in the 19th c. was developed by the British authorities into a modern post road. The pipeline from Suez to Cairo now runs along the N side of the road. – Half-way (37 miles/60 km) along the road, on a hill to the left, are the ruins of a *castle* built by Abbas II Hilmi (1892–94). – 3 miles/5 km farther on is a rest-house with a gasoline (petrol) station, near which is the Tomb of Sheikh el-Dakuri.

Qena to Bur Safaga (100 miles/161 km on a very good asphalt road; bus service; no petrol, water or food available anywhere on the route). – The road runs NE from Qena and then turns into the *Wadi Qena*, which it follows for a short distance. – 7½ miles/12 km: the ancient "*Porphyry Road*" (almost impassable in places) goes off on the left, at first following the *Wadi Qena*, then turning into the *Wadi el-Atrash* and continuing along the S side of **Gebel el-Dukhan** ("Smoke Mountain"; 4446 ft/1360 m), the ancient *Mons Porphyrites*, to reach the Red Sea. At the old Roman porphyry quarries on Gebel el-Dukhan are the ruins of an unfinished Ionic *temple* of the time of Hadrian, remains of an irregularly laid out settlement and two large cisterns. – 28 miles/45 km: **Bir el-Kreyya**, from which a track (barely passable) runs NE to the *Wadi Fatira*, below the S side of **Gebel Fatira** (4446 ft/1355 m), the ancient *Mons Claudianus*. ¾ mile/1 km S of the wadi are the granite quarries known as the *Umm Diqal* ("Mother of Columns"), which from the time of Nero, but principally in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian, were worked by prisoners and condemned criminals to provide the much-esteemed Claudian granite for the buildings of Imperial Rome. Here can be seen the work-faces and roads for the transport of the stone, a number of unfinished columns and partly dressed stones, as well as Greek inscriptions. Near the quarries are the remains of the Roman settlement of *Hydreuma Traiani*, including a fort some 245 ft/75 m square surrounded by granite walls and towers and, outside the walls, stabling for some 300 animals, silos for storing fodder,

cisterns and other structures. Above the settlement are the ruins of a 2nd c. temple.

Farther along the track, before **Bir Abd el-Wahab**, a side track goes off and runs SE to rejoin the main road in the *Wadi Umm Taghir*.

Beyond **Bir el-Kreyya** the road ascends the *Wadi el-Markh* and after crossing the watershed descends the *Wadi Umm Taghir*. – 90 miles/143 km: the road enters the *Wadi Barud*. – 99 miles/160 km: **Bur Safaga** (see under Red Sea).

The old Roman roads and caravan routes from Qena and Qift (via Laqeita) and from Edfu to Berenice on the Red Sea, running through the territory of the Ababda bedouin, are not passable by car for the whole of their length and are now little used. Along both roads are the remains of ancient watering-points, listed as follows in the "Antonine Itinerary" (3rd c. A.D.), starting from Coptos (Qift), with the number of Roman miles between successive posts: Phienicon 24, Didyme 24, Afrodito 20, Kompasi 22, Jovis 23, Aristonis 25, Phalacro 25, Apollonos 23, Kabalsi 27, Kaenon Hydreuma 27, Berenice 18 – making a total of 258 Roman miles. – A third road, built in the reign of Hadrian, ran from Antinoupolis (between El-Minya and Mallawi) to the port of Myos Hormos on the Red Sea, continuing S along the coast to Berenice.

Qift to Quseir (the *Wadi Hammamat* road; 121 miles/194 km of asphalt road). – This well-built trunk road, running from ancient Coptos (Qift) to the port of Leukos Limen (Quseir), follows with only minor deviations the very ancient trade and caravan route through the *Wadi Hammamat*, with some very picturesque stretches of scenery. – The road branches off the road along the Nile ¾ mile/1 km S of Qift and heads straight into the desert. – 24 miles/39 km: *Laqeita*, a modest little village in a small oasis which in ancient times was an important caravan staging-point, located at the intersection of the desert tracks from Qena to Berenice and from Qus (Apollinopolis Parva) to Quseir. Near the principal well in Laqeita are the remains of a Greek inscription referring to the Emperor Tiberius. The village is inhabited by members of the Ababda tribe, many of whom still lead a nomadic life in the desert. Here they practice agriculture and stock-rearing. Their language is a curious mixture of Egyptian Arabic and East African (Hamitic) tongues. – 35 miles/56 km: *Qasr el-Benat* ("Castle of the Maidens"), an old Roman *hydreuma* (watering-station), now dry – one of the eight staging-points built by the Romans on this road, no doubt on the sites of earlier fortified Egyptian posts. The building, on a rectangular plan (125 ft/38 m by 102 ft/31 m), had an enclosure wall 6½ ft/2 m high constructed of sandstone blocks laid without mortar. Round an inner courtyard entered from the N are 20 small rooms. Near by is a picturesque sandstone rock, swept free of sand by the desert winds and covered with graffiti in Greek, Coptic, Arabic, Himyaritic and Sinaitic characters left by passing caravans. – Soon after *Qasr el-Benat* the road enters a winding defile, the *Mutraq el-Salam*. On a rock at the entrance, the **Gebel Abu Ku** ("Father of the Elbow"), are ancient inscriptions, one of which mentions the name of Amenophis IV.

Beyond the defile the road approaches the beautiful mountain region through which the second half of the Hammamat road runs. In the distance, to the right, can be seen the southern foothills of the scenically magnificent Hammamat Mountains, rising in terraces to a height of 4265 ft/1300 m; straight ahead, closer at hand, are the south-western spurs of the range. They consist of yellowish sandstones of the Upper

Cretaceous, followed by the reddish "Nubian" sandstone, which belongs to the same system.

In the middle of the ranges of hills flanking the route, on the N side of the road, is another Roman station with a well which is now blocked by sand. – 48 miles/77 km: *Gerf el-Igul*, where the ancient Palaeozoic rocks of the Hammamat Mountains proper begin. The character of the scenery suddenly changes: the hard dark-coloured greywacke rears up in perpendicular walls, and the mountains take on a rugged Alpine aspect. – 56 miles/90 km: the *Wadi el-Hammamat*, known to the ancient Egyptians as the *Rehenu Valley*, which yielded the hard dark stone known as *lapis niger* or *thebaicus* (a greywacke with veins of more recent granites) used for statues and sarcophagi. – 59 miles/95 km: **Bir el-Hammamat**, an old well, now dry, which gave its name to the whole area. In the vicinity are remains of a Roman wall and five unfinished and now broken sarcophagi. There are numerous Greek inscriptions in the quarries around here.

The earliest known expedition to Hammamat took place in the reign of King Iseki (5th Dynasty). Ramesses IV sent an army of 8368 workmen and soldiers to procure stone for the Temple of Amun at Thebes; and the quarries were still being worked in the time of Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes.

Just beyond the quarries the road turns sharply S and runs past ancient mine-workings. – 63 miles/102 km: *Bir Umm el-Fawakhir* (*fawakhir*="potsherds"). Remains of opencast workings and of deep underground shafts, now difficult of access, can be readily identified; and the foundations of hundreds of workers' houses, together with numerous Greek inscriptions, bear witness to the former importance of the settlement.

Edfu to Mersa Alam (143 miles/230 km on a moderately good asphalt road; no gasoline (petrol), no food). – The road begins at Edfu railway station, on the right bank of the Nile. The first half traverses a monotonous desert landscape, but the second half makes up for this by the beauty and variety of its mountain scenery.


12½ miles/20 km: *Bir Abbad*, in the *Wadi Miah*. At the point where the *Wadi Ammerikba* runs into the *Wadi Miah* are the remains of an ancient desert post with masons' marks.

31 miles/50 km: At an old watering-station is the *Temple*, discovered by Cailliaud in 1816, of *Redesiya* or *El-Kanayis*, built by Sethos I and dedicated to Amun-Re. The vestibule of the temple, made of sandstone blocks, has four columns with papyrus capitals and contains reliefs of the King depicted as victorious over Negroes (Kushites) and Asiatic warriors. The following chamber, hewn from the rock, has four square pillars, reliefs of the King offering sacrifices and long inscriptions recording the sinking of the well and the building of the temple. In the rear wall are three niches with statues of the King and the gods Amun-Re and Re-Harakhty. A small building adjoining the temple probably marks the position of the well. On a rock to the E are three inscriptions. One of these depicts an Asiatic goddess on horseback, with shield and spear; the second is by the official responsible for digging the well; and the third shows the Viceroy of Kush, Eni, kneeling before Sethos. Higher up on the rock are rude figures of gazelles, Greek graffiti and an inscription in the name of a certain Prince Mermes (reign of Amenophis III).

37 miles/60 km: *Bir el-Kanayis*: desert track on right to the emerald-mines in the Wadi Sakeit and Gebel Zubara (see under Berenice). – 68 miles/110 km: *Wadi Baramiya*, a mining settlement in a magnificent mountain setting. Here a track goes off on the right to the ancient gold-mines of Umm Rus and Sukkari (see under Red Sea), continuing to the Red Sea coast. – 75 miles/120 km: The road descends into the *Wadi Beiza*, with its beautiful acacias. On the rock faces are crude engravings and graffiti. – 130 miles/210 km: mountain track on right to the *Sukkari* gold-mines. – 143 miles/230 km: **Mersa Alam**, a small fishing village on the Red Sea (see under Red Sea).

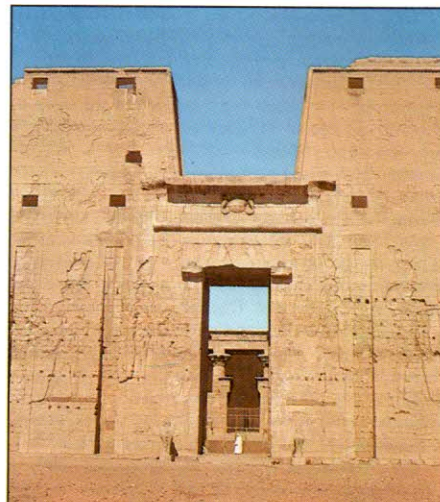
Edfu/Idfu

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Aswan.
Population: 35,000.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Tourist Bazaar,
Aswan;
tel. 32 97.

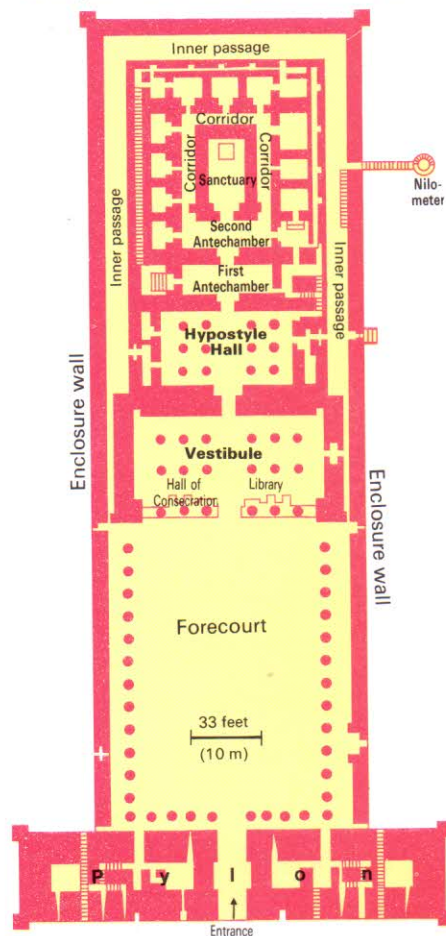
ACCESS. – By car on the road along the Nile; by rail (station on the Nile Valley line).

The town of Edfu or Idfu, a market center with sugar factories and an old-established pottery industry, lies on a slightly raised site some 65 miles/100 km S of Luxor on the W bank of the Nile (now spanned by a bridge opened in 1969), at the point where the valley begins to open out. It was the ancient Egyptian Tbot, Coptic Atbo, from which the modern name is derived. The Greeks called it Apollinopolis Magna after the sun god Horus-Apollo, who was particularly revered here, and made



Pylon of the Temple of Horus, Edfu

Temple of Horus Edfu



it the capital of the 2nd (Apollinopolite) nome of Upper Egypt.

Horus, who according to the myth fought one of his great combats with Seth here, was known as "he of Behdet" (Behdet being probably a district of ancient Edfu). He was represented as a flying falcon, in human form with a falcon's head or as the winged sun.

The 2000-year-old **Temple of Horus**, almost perfectly preserved, creates an overwhelming impression. Built on the site of an earlier temple, it was dedicated to the sun god Horus, Hathor of Dendera and their son the youthful Harsomtus (Hersemtawi), "Uniter of the Two Lands". The history of its construction and a description of the whole structure are set forth in long inscriptions on the outside of the enclosure wall, particularly at the N end of the E and W sides. The rear part of the complex, the temple proper,

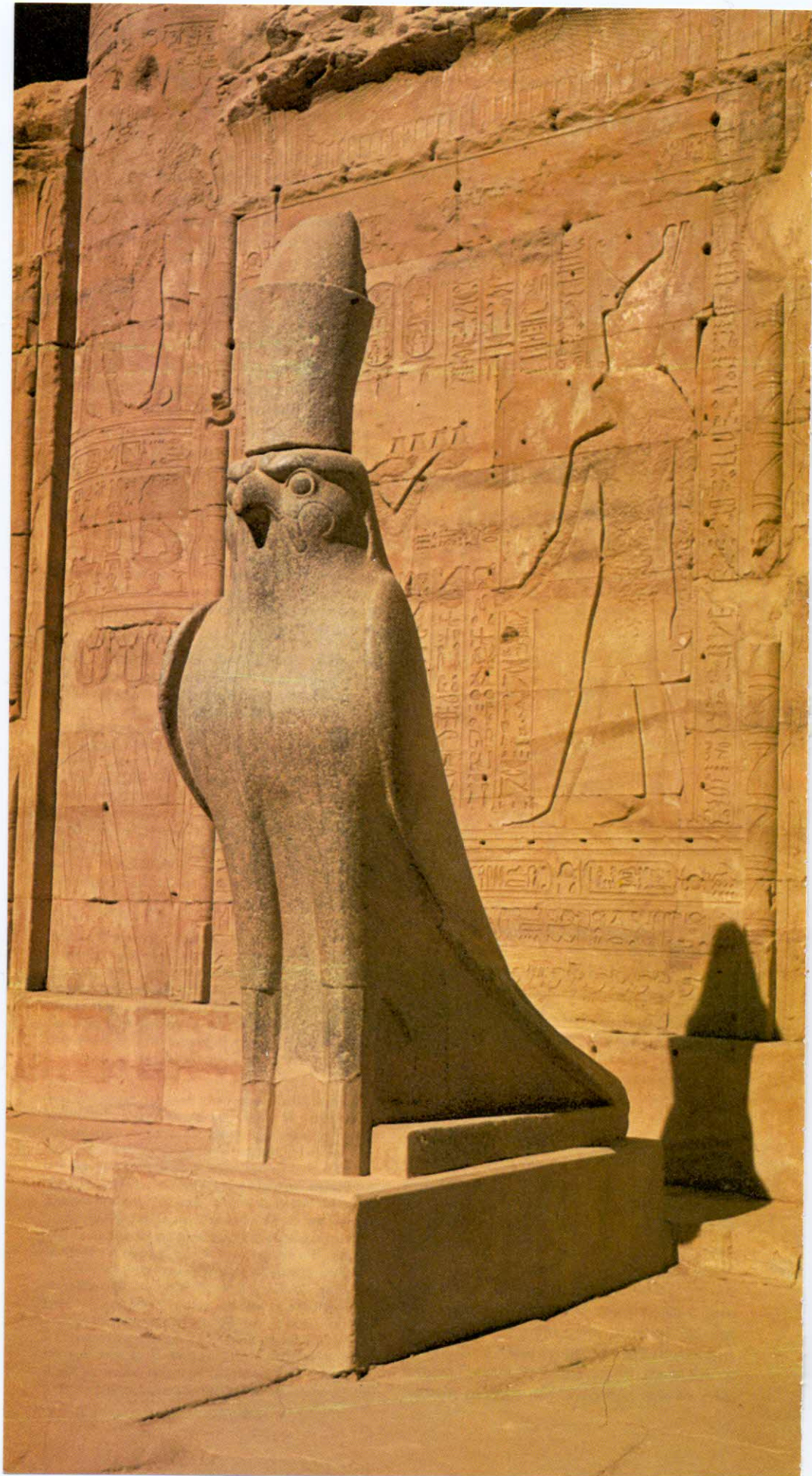
was begun in 237 B.C., in the reign of Ptolemy II Euergetes I and completed in 212 under his successor, Philopator. The decoration of the walls with reliefs and inscriptions, interrupted during the troubled reign of Epiphanes, was resumed by 176 by Philometor and finished in 147, during the reign of Euergetes II – i.e. exactly 90 years after the laying of the foundation-stone. Euergetes II also added the large vestibule (completed in 122) and decorated it with reliefs. During the reigns of Ptolemy IX Soter II and Ptolemy X Alexander I the forecourt with its colonnades, the enclosure walls and the pylon were built, but the pylon was decorated with reliefs only in the reign of Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos. The building was finally completed in 57 B.C. The building material was sandstone. Some of the relief decoration was defaced in Christian times.

The temple was surrounded by a high brick wall, part of which survives. The main gateway was on the S, in the central axis of the temple, and there was a smaller gateway to the W.

The great **Pylon** originally stood within an inner enclosure wall of brick, and the entrance was closed by a double door. It is covered on all sides with reliefs and inscriptions. Particularly notable are the reliefs on the front: below, King Neos Dionysos smiting his enemies, whom he holds by the hair, with the falcon-headed Horus and Hathor looking on; in the top two rooms the King making offerings to Horus, to Hathor and Horus, "Uniter of the Two Lands", and to other divinities. On each side of the main entrance are two perpendicular recesses for flagstaves, which were secured in position by clamps fastened to the holes still to be seen in the masonry directly above. The other small rectangular apertures are windows designed to admit light and air to the interior of the temple.

In each tower a passage leads to the outside of the enclosure wall, which is decorated with religious reliefs (Ptolemy X Alexander I before the gods of Edfu) and inscriptions, as well as the inscriptions relating to the temple itself which have already been referred to. In front of the pylon are two colossal falcons of black granite; in front of the left-hand one is the figure of a priest in Roman dress.

The colonnaded **Forecourt** between the pylon and the vestibule of the temple is paved with stone slabs and surrounded on three sides by a total of 32 columns. In the middle there once stood the great altar upon which offerings were made to the gods of Edfu in the presence of the assembled people. The *columns* have rich flower and palm capitals, and the incised reliefs show the King (whose name has been left blank in the inscriptions) before Horus and the other deities of Edfu. The rear walls of the colonnade are covered with three rows of large **reliefs** depicting the Pharaoh (Ptolemy IX Soter II or Ptolemy X Alexander I) holding converse with the gods or in the person of the victorious god Horus. Similar representations are repeated all over the temple. On the sides of the pylon the King is shown, with the Lower Egyptian crown on the W side and the Upper Egyptian crown on the E side, proceeding to the temple and being sprinkled



with the water of consecration by Horus and Thoth. – The doors to right and left of these reliefs lead to the staircases inside the pylon; the E and W exits are walled up. Outside the E exit are the remains of a building dating from the reign of Ramesses III.

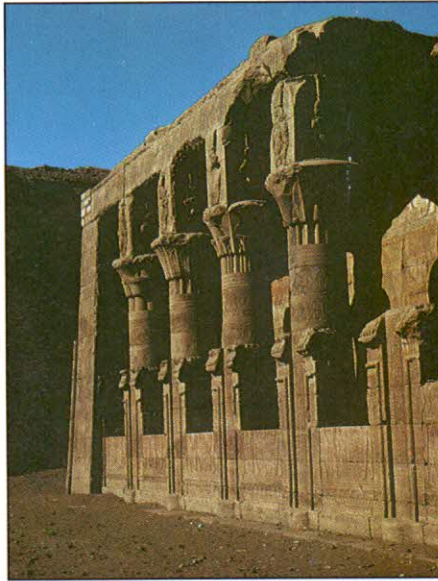
At the far end of the forecourt is the handsome *façade of the vestibule*, topped by a cavetto cornice. Between the columns on either side of the large central doorway are low stone screens, on which King Euergetes II is depicted in the presence of the falcon-headed Horus (on the four outermost screens) and of Hathor (on the two middle screens) making offerings or standing with his arms hanging by his sides. To the left of the entrance is a colossal * **Horus falcon** wearing the double crown; the corresponding figure on the right lies on the ground.

The **Vestibule** has 12 columns with elaborate floral capitals. The ceiling is covered with astronomical representations, now blackened beyond recognition. On the walls are four rows of incised reliefs showing Euergetes making offerings to the gods or performing ritual acts (e.g. laying the foundation-stone of the temple, in the bottom row on the left-hand wall). Above are a band of astronomical representations and an ornamental frieze consisting of the names of the King guarded by two falcons. Below, just above the floor, are Euergetes, his wife Cleopatra and a long file of local gods bringing offerings to the three principal divinities of Edfu. The door in the E wall leads into the inner passage round the temple. – On each side of the entrance is a chapel. The one on the left (W) is the *Hall of Consecration*, as the reliefs on the rear wall (Horus and Thoth pouring the sacred water on the King) suggest; the one on the right was a *Library*, with a list of books it contained inscribed on the wall and, to the left, a figure of Seshat, goddess of writing. – On the architrave of the door leading into the Hypostyle Hall is an interesting relief of the solar barque, guided by two falcon-headed Horus figures, with the sun worshiped by Thoth and Neith. At the sides, in the attitude of prayer, are Ptolemy IV Philopator (left) and the Four Senses – to the right sight and hearing, to the left taste (symbolized by the tongue) and reason.

The **Hypostyle Hall**, the roof of which is supported by 12 columns with elaborate floral capitals, is lit by apertures in the walls and roof and has reliefs similar to those in the vestibule. There are two small chambers on each side. The nearer one on each side leads into the inner passage round the temple; the second on the left served as a laboratory; and the second on the right gave access to the E staircase up to the temple roof.

Beyond the hypostyle hall is the **First Antechamber**, with staircases on either side leading to the roof. As at Dendera, the mural reliefs depict the procession of priests, headed by the King, ascending (E side) and descending (W side). The rooms on the E side of the roof, probably serving the cult of Osiris, are of little interest. – On the E side of the **Second Antechamber** is a small Court of Offerings, and to the left of this an elegant little Kiosk, the roof of which is supported on two columns with floral capitals; on the ceiling is the sky goddess Nut, with the various figures of the sun in boats beneath her. On the other side of the Second Antechamber is a small room dedicated to the cult of the god Min.

In the **Sanctuary**, which is lit by three small square apertures in the roof, the most interesting reliefs are those in the bottom row on the right-hand wall. The King (Philopator) is depicted removing the lock from



In the Temple of Horus, Edfu

Horus's chapel; opening the door of the chapel; standing before the god in a reverential attitude with his arms hanging by his sides; offering incense to his deified parents, Euergetes I and Berenice; and offering incense before the sacred barque of Hathor. On the rear wall is a relic of the Pre-Ptolemaic temple, a granite shrine with a pointed roof dedicated to Horus by Nectanebo II. In front of this is a base of black granite (found elsewhere in the temple) intended to support the sacred barque, with an inscription indicating that it was presented by a private citizen.

Round the sanctuary runs a *corridor*, off which open ten small and poorly lit chambers decorated with reliefs (some with well-preserved colors) which served either as store-rooms for ritual utensils or for some cult purpose. In the two corner rooms are openings in the floor (formerly closed by stone slabs) leading down to the crypt.

Round the temple as a whole runs an *inner passage*, entered from the Hypostyle Hall, which is also decorated with reliefs and inscriptions. On the outside of the temple wall are lions' heads as waterspouts and four rows of religious reliefs. At the foot of the wall are the King, Queen and priests proceeding in procession into the presence of the three chief divinities of Edfu. On the inner side of the enclosure wall are (E wall) the King before the divinities of Edfu; (N wall) similar scenes and long hymns to the god of Edfu; and (W wall) striking reliefs depicting Horus's contests with his enemies, who are represented as crocodiles and hippopotamuses.

Particularly notable among the reliefs on the *W wall* are the following: (1st scene, below, right) the King tries to spear a hippopotamus, which turns aside; Horus does the same, holding a chain in his left hand and a spear in his right, with his mother Isis beside him and a small Horus at the helm of the boat to the rear; (2nd scene) the King stands on land, on the left, with two ships in front of him, in which are Horus and an attendant; Horus holds the hippopotamus with a chain and plunges his spear into its head; (5th scene) the hippopotamus lies on its back with its hind legs chained; (7th scene) Horus, in a sailing-boat, aims his spear at a hippopotamus, whose hind leg is tied in a



Relief in the Temple of Horus, Edfu

cord held by Horus and its head in a cord held by Isis, kneeling in the bow of the boat; the King, standing on the shore with two attendants, aims his spear at the animal's head; (farther left, opposite the pylon) the King, the ram-headed god Khnum, the falcon-headed Horus and the ibis-headed Thoth haul in a net in which are caught not only marsh birds, fish and a stag but also two Asiatics and a number of Negroes, Egypt's hereditary foes.

A subterranean staircase leads from the E side of the inner passage to an ancient **Nilometer**, a shaft outside the temple encircled by a spiral staircase which could formerly also be reached from outside. The scale on the wall of the shaft gives the depths in demotic characters. The Nilometer is no longer connected with the Nile.

An ***ascent** to the top of the pylon is very well worth the trouble. A staircase on the S side of the forecourt has 242 easy steps in 14 flights. The staircase and the small chambers which open off the landings are lit by windows. The staircases in the two towers are connected with one another by a passage running above the central doorway, and in each tower is a door giving access to the roof of the colonnades round the forecourt. On the roof of the W colonnade are workmen's drawings of the cavetto cornice on the pylon. From the platform there are extensive ***views** of the temple complex itself, the Nile Plain with its green fields and its villages fringed by palms and mimosas, framed by the desert hills in the distance.

To the W of the entrance to the temple is the **birth-house** (*mammisi*), built by Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II and decorated with reliefs by Ptolemy IX Soter II. It is surrounded by a colonnade of cluster-columns with floral capitals and figures of

the god Bes and consists of a vestibule flanked by two small chambers and the main chamber.

In the *main chamber*, on the right-hand wall (from left to right), are reliefs depicting Hathor of Dendera suckling Horus, with seven other Hathors playing musical instruments in front of her and her young son Ihi with a sistrum behind her; to the right Hathor giving birth, to the left the King with two sistra before seven Hathors suckling the infant; and the King before various deities and (left) before the sacred barque of Hathor. On the left-hand walls are reliefs relating to the birth of Harsomtut (Khnum shaping the child on the potter's wheel, etc.). – In front of the birth-house is a forecourt, originally enclosed by columns and stone screens. On the shafts of the columns are reliefs of goddesses playing musical instruments and Hathor suckling the infant Horus.

To the W of the Temple of Horus high mounds of rubble mark the site of the *ancient city*. A number of excavations have been carried out here in recent years. Under the houses of the Arab and Coptic periods are remains of the Graeco-Roman period. In the houses were papyrus as well as a variety of domestic equipment.

***Aswan, *Esna, *El-Kab, Kom el-Ahmar and *Kom Ombo:** see separate entries.

El ...

See under the main element in the name

Elephantine

See under Aswan

Esna

Upper Egypt. – Governorate: Qena. Population: 30,000.

i Tourist Information Office,
Tourist Bazaar,
Luxor;
tel. 22 15.

ACCESS. – 34 miles/54 km S of Luxor on the Nile Valley road; 30 miles/49 km NW of Edfu on an asphalted road. – By rail (station on E bank of Nile).

The little country town of ***Esna** straggles along the left bank of the Nile. It is connected with the main road on the E bank of the river by a road running over a large dam built by British engineers at the beginning of the 20th century.

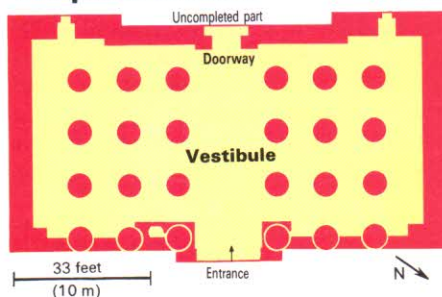


Temple of Khnum, Esna

HISTORY. – In ancient times Esna, with the adjoining town of Enit or Yunit, was one of the most important places in Upper Egypt. Its Egyptian name was *Tesnet*, from which the Coptic *Sne* and Arabic *Esna* are derived. The Greeks called the town *Latopolis*, after the Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*), a fish here revered as sacred and buried in extensive cemeteries. – During the medieval period the town regained importance and a modest degree of prosperity as a caravan station and as a market for the agricultural produce of the area. – Esna is one of the main centers of the Coptic faith in Egypt.

SIGHTS. – In the center of the town, freed from the rubble of later centuries and now 30 ft/9 m below the present street-level, is the ***Temple of Khnum**, the ram-headed local god, and his associate goddesses Neith (equated by the Greeks with Athena) and Satet. Also associated with Khnum were the lion-headed goddess Menheyet and Nebtu, who corresponded to Isis. The temple was begun in the Ptolemaic period and extended and decorated with reliefs and inscriptions by various Roman Emperors.

Temple of Khnum Esna



The *façade* of the temple, facing E, is 121 ft/37 m long and 49 ft/15 m high and is topped by a cavetto cornice bearing the names of Claudius and Vespasian on either side of a winged sun. On the architrave are inscriptions in the name of these Emperors, Vespasian being referred to as "ruler of the capital, Rome". On the stone screens between the front row of columns are reliefs depicting the Pharaoh being conducted into the temple by various deities; on the screen at the left-hand end Harsiesis and Thoth are shown pouring the consecrating water over the King, with the lion-headed goddess Menheyet standing on the right.

The seven-aisled **Vestibule**, the only part of the temple which was completed, dates almost entirely from the Roman Imperial period. Similar in layout to the vestibule of the Temple of Hathor at Dendera, it is 108 ft/33 m long by 54 ft/16.5 m deep. The roof is supported by 24 *columns*, in four rows, with elaborate floral capitals. The columns, 37 ft/11.3 m high and 18 ft/5.4 m in girth, are covered with reliefs and inscriptions. Over the broad central aisle the roof is decorated with two rows of flying vultures; over the lateral aisles are astronomical representations. – On the *walls* are four rows of reliefs depicting the Emperors, wearing the costume of a Pharaoh, making offerings to the various deities of Esna or performing other ritual acts relating to the building of the temple. In the middle of the rear (W) wall is a pylon-like *doorway* topped by a cavetto cornice, which would have led into the sanctuary (never built); it bears reliefs and inscriptions in the name of Ptolemy VI Philometor. At each end of the rear wall are smaller doors, now built up; to the right of the left-hand door Decius is depicted making an offering to the ram-headed Khnum. At the foot of the N wall the falcon-headed Horus, the Emperor Commodus and Khnum are shown drawing in a net full of waterfowl and fish; to the left stands the ibis-headed Thoth, to the right the goddess Sakhet. On the E wall, behind the screen immediately left of the entrance, is a small chapel.

The *outer walls* also bear reliefs and inscriptions by Roman Emperors. On the S side Domitian is depicted

smiting his enemies in the presence of Khnum and Menheyt, and on the N side Khnum, with the goddess Nebtu standing behind him, presents Trajan, also shown smiting his enemies, with the sickle-sword.

Other relics of the Roman period in Esna are an ancient *quay* with fragments of inscriptions (cartouches of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius) and the remains of a *Nilometer*, also dating from Imperial times. Nothing remains of four other temples known to have existed here, including one in ancient Contra-Latopolis, on the E bank of the Nile at the village of el-Hilla.

SURROUNDINGS of Esna. – Around the town are the ruins of a number of Coptic monasteries and churches. $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles/5.5 km S is the *Monastery of SS. Manaoos and Sanutios*, said to have been founded by the Empress Helena, which has, in addition to its modern church, an ancient church decorated with frescos, now covered with whitewash. – 6 miles/10 km N is *Deir Amba Matteos*, the Monastery of St Matthias. – $\frac{1}{2}$ mile/1 km W is a rock-cut church with frescos.

On the E bank of the Nile, some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles/4 km SW of the railway station, lies the village of *Sarnikh*, where there are two important rock-cut stelae dating from the beginning of Amenophis IV's reign.

A temple of the Roman Imperial period has recently been excavated at *Kom Meir*, $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles/12 km SE of Esna.

****Edfu, Gebelein, *El-Kab and Kom el-Ahmar:** see separate entries.

Farafra Oasis

Western Desert. – New Valley Frontier District.

ACCESS. – Reached from Bahriya Oasis (106 miles/170 km NE) or Dakhla Oasis (130 miles/210 km SE) on desert tracks obstructed in places by sand-drifts; cross-country vehicle and adequate equipment and supplies essential. No accommodation, food or gasoline (petrol) available either at Farafra or on the road there.

The little Oasis of Farafra lies in latitude 27° N and longitude 28° E. Unlike the other Egyptian oases, it is not in a depression but on an apparently endless plain, surrounded by a sea of light-colored limestone rocks.


The 1000 or so inhabitants live by cultivating dates, olives and citrus fruits. Although Farafra was frequented by nomadic tribes as early as the Palaeolithic period and was settled in Early Dynastic times, developing into a place of some importance as a staging-point between Bahriya and Dakhla, it has practically no

ancient remains. The chief place, and indeed the only regular settlement, is **Qasr el-Farafra**, with old town walls and picturesque winding lanes.

New Valley and Western Desert: see separate entries.

Fayyum

Middle Egypt. – Governorate: El-Fayyum.
Population: 1,300,000. – Area: 692 sq. miles/1792 sq. km.

 **Tourist Information Office,**
Misr Travel Tower,
Cairo – Abbasia;
tel. 82 60 16.

HOTELS. – *Panorama*, in Medinet el-Fayyum, II, 26 b.; *Ein Elsellin*, in Fidimin, III, 48 b.; *Auberge du Lac*, IV, 156 b., *Pavillon de Chasse*, IV, 16 b., both on Lake Qarun.

ACCESS. – By road: 56 miles/90 km SW of Cairo (leave on road to Pyramids) and 22 miles/35 km NW of Beni Suef; bus services. – By rail: Cairo to Medinet el-Fayyum via El-Wasta.

The **Fayyum (from Coptic Phiom, "the Lake"), the largest and economically the most important of the Egyptian oases, lies some 56 miles/90 km SW of Cairo in latitude 29° 29' N and longitude 30° 40' E. Lying in a large depression in the great plateau of the Western Desert, at up to 150 ft/45 m below sea-level, it has long been famed for its extraordinary fertility, and holds out great attractions to visitors in the tranquil beauty of its scenery and its remains of the past.

The Fayyum Oasis is in the form of a triangle with rounded corners and its point to the S, extending 40 miles/65 km from E to W at its widest part and 30 miles/50 km from N to S. Enclosed by low ranges of hills, it falls gradually from S to N. It is watered by the *Bahr Yusuf* ("Joseph's Canal"), which leaves the Ibrahimiya Canal (originally the Nile) at Deirut, cuts through the hills enclosing the Fayyum in a narrow passage at El-Lahun, spreads out over the oasis in many arms and ramifications and finally flows into the **Birket Qarun** (Lake Qarun), on the NW edge of the depression. – The Fayyum is noted for its agreeable climate.

HISTORY. – In prehistoric times the Fayyum Depression was probably still covered by the waters of an arm of the Nile dating from the Pliocene era which here formed an extensive lake and swamp area with



Oasis landscape in the Fayyum

luxuriant vegetation and abundant animal life. There must have been large numbers of crocodiles, which were worshiped as divinities from earliest historical times (Sobek, later known as Suchos; Crocodilopolis). The oldest traces of settlement date from the Neolithic and show affinities with the early cultures of the Nile Valley. By the beginning of the historical period the lake had shrunk in size and may have extended in the N as far as the little desert Temple of Qasr el-Sagha, in the S to Biahmu and the area between Abshawai and Agamiyin. It was known in ancient Egyptian as *Sha-resi* (the "Southern Lake") and later as *Mer-wer* ("Great Lake"), known to Greek travelers and geographers as *Lake Moeris*. According to Herodotus it had a circumference of 3600 stadia (445 miles) and covered an area of some 770 sq. miles – i.e. about three-fifths of the present area of the oasis. It has been estimated that in ancient times the surface of the lake lay 74 ft/22.5m above the level of the Mediterranean (now 150 ft/45 m below). To the S of the lake was a narrow strip of cultivable land known as *Ta-she* ("Lake-Land"), with the chief town, *Shedet* (Crocodilopolis), which was protected against flood-

ing by embankments. Several rulers of the 12th Dynasty established settlements at the E end of this area, and Amenemhet III in particular seems to have taken a special interest in it, undertaking large-scale reclamation of the swamps. Under the 18th Dynasty Amenophis III's wife Tiy had her residence at El-Lahun.

The Ptolemies, particularly Ptolemy II Philadelphus, reduced the size of the lake still further by the construction of dikes until it was about the dimensions of the present-day Lake Qarun. The draining of the swamps yielded new land on which Greek and Macedonian settlers were established; and the success of this program of land reclamation is demonstrated by the fertile fields and flourishing villages which have occupied the site of Lake Moeris over the past 2000 years. According to Strabo "Lake Moeris is capable, thanks to its size and depth, of taking in the surplus water during the inundation without flooding the inhabited and cultivated area, and later, when the water subsides, of returning the excess through the same canal (i.e. the Bahr Yusuf), while retaining sufficient to irrigate the land. At both ends of the canal there are lock-gates which enable the engineers to regulate the inflow and outflow of the water." It is not known how the distribution of the excess water was achieved. At present-day El-Lahun there is still a lock-gate. – Herodotus's statement that Lake Moeris had been artificially created was an error and is contradicted by Strabo's account.

In Ptolemaic times the Fayyum formed the Arsinoite nome, about which the Greek geographer Strabo (c. 63 B.C.–A.D. 20) has this to say:

"This nome is the most remarkable of all, on account both of its scenery and its fertility and cultivation; for it alone is planted with large and excellent olive trees which bear fine fruit, and the oil is good when the olives are carefully gathered. Those who fail in this respect may indeed obtain oil in abundance, but it has a bad smell. Elsewhere in Egypt the olive tree is never seen except in the gardens of Alexandria, where under favorable circumstances it yields olives but no oil. In this region, too, vines, corn and pulses, together with many other plants, flourish in no small abundance."

The Fayyum is now a governorate with an area of 692 sq. miles/1792 sq. km and a population of 1,300,000. Olives are still grown here, together with cotton, sugarcane, wheat, maize, rice, excellent fruit, wine, bananas and citrus fruits. Small livestock and poultry (dovecots) are also reared. Characteristic features of the landscape are the large undershot water-



Water-wheel in the Fayyum

wheels. Further land-reclamation projects are under way on the shores of Lake Qarun. – Among the urgent problems connected with the development of the Fayyum is the control of bilharzia, a troublesome disease transmitted by flukes parasitic on water-snails.

Sights of the Fayyum

The provincial capital of **Medinet el-Fayyum** (*El-Fayyum* or *El-Medina* for short; pop. 350,000) lies in the SE of the oasis on the Bahr Yusuf, which here divides into numerous arms. The town is the commercial and economic center of the oasis and the seat of the local government authorities. It has a number of mosques, including the Mosque of Qait Bey, which has an old doorway with bronze-mounted doors, and a large Coptic church.

To the N of the town rises the *Kiman Faris* ("Horseman's Hill"), with the remains of ancient **Crocodilopolis-Arsinoe**, one of the largest ancient sites in Egypt, with an area of 560 acres. Much of the mound has been removed by brick-makers or peasants digging for the fertile soil (*sebbakh*) found on ancient sites.

The ancient Egyptian name of the town was *Shedet*. It was the center of the cult of the crocodile-headed water god Sobek (Suchos), the protective deity of the whole of the lake area. His sacred animal was the crocodile, and the Greeks, therefore, called the town *Crocodilopolis*. Politically it never seems to have been a place of any consequence. By extending the town, building Greek temples and schools and introducing the Greek language Ptolemy II Philadelphus turned it into an essentially Hellenic city, of which he made his wife Arsinoe the protective goddess. Thereafter the

district became known as the Arsinoite nome and the capital as the "city of the dwellers in the Arsinoite nome", or more briefly as *Arsinoe*. In its heyday Arsinoe had a population of more than 100,000.

The principal temple, dedicated to the cult of Sobek (Suchos), was at the N end of the site. It was already in existence in the time of the 12th Dynasty, and was later rebuilt by Ramesses II. Beside the temple was a sacred lake in which was kept a crocodile sacred to the god.

Some $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles/7 km N of Medinet el-Fayyum is the village of **Biahmu**, just N of which are two large structures of dressed stone, with the appearance of ruined pyramids, which are known to the local people as the *Kursi Faraun* ("Pharaoh's Chair") and *El-Sanam*, "The Idol". These were the bases of two colossal sandstone statues of Amenemhet III. The learned Father Vansleb of Erfurt saw the lower part of one of the figures in 1672, and Lepsius and Petrie found a few remaining fragments. Petrie estimated their original height at 40 ft/12 m. The bases were once washed by the waters of Lake Moeris, and there is little doubt that they are the two pyramids described by Herodotus as standing in the lake, each crowned by a colossal seated human figure.

From Medinet el-Fayyum a charming road runs 9 miles/15 km N via the villages of *Beni Salih* and *El-Seliyin* and past *Fidimin*, picturesquely situated on a crag to the left of the road, to *Sanhur*, on the site of a considerable ancient town.

A road runs SW from Medinet el-Fayyum via *Ista* ($5\frac{1}{2}$ miles/9 km) to *Abu Gandir* (14 miles/23 km), from which it continues S on an unsurfaced and sometimes difficult road, crosses the *El-Nasala Canal* and reaches the ancient site of **Medinet Madi**, on the SW edge of the oasis. The remains to be seen here are those of the Graeco-Roman settlement of **Narmouthis**, with a temple founded by Amenemhet III and completed by his son Amenemhet IV in honor of the crocodile god Sobek, his consort the snake goddess Renenutet (Thermouthis) and Horus. The temple, oriented from N to S, was extended under the Ptolemies by the addition of large halls and courts, and some smaller extensions were added in the Roman Imperial period.

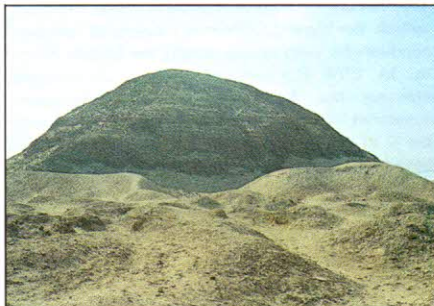
The ***Temple of Sobek** lies in a large hollow in the hills on the edge of the desert, approached from the plain by a paved processional way flanked by lions and sphinxes. The core of the whole complex is the little *Temple of Amenemhet III* (12th Dynasty), which is of

interest as one of the few surviving examples of Middle Kingdom religious architecture. It consists of a pronaos with two papyrus columns and the sanctuary, which has three niches, high up on the wall, for statues of the deities worshiped here. The walls are entirely covered with hieroglyphs and reliefs, unfortunately much damaged but sufficiently preserved to show their high technical and artistic quality. – A small Temple of Anubis was built on the rear of the main temple in Roman times.

The Ptolemaic extension at the S end of the temple has a number of remarkable inscriptions, the originals of which are in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria. The two pillars at the entrance to the vestibule of the first of the temple's three courts bear two dedicatory inscriptions in similar terms and four hymns, each of 40 lines, written in imperfect Greek and signed by their author, one Isidorus. The fourth hymn refers to the marvelous exploits of the Pharaoh Ptolemaios (i.e. Amenemhet III). All these texts reflect the variety of cultural influences to which Egypt was exposed during the Graeco-Egyptian period.

Some 9 miles/15 km SE of Medinet el-Fayyum, on the banks of the Bahr el-Gharaq at the village of *Umm el-Baragat*, are the remains of ancient **Tebtynis**, in the necropolis of which many papyrus rolls were found on crocodile mummies. The city, which may have originated in the Ramessid period and became a place of some consequence in the reign of Ptolemy I Soter, had a temple dedicated to the crocodile god Sobek, similar to the one at Medinet Madi, of which only scanty remains survive. Within the temple precincts were found many hieratic, demotic and Greek papyri, some of them with very informative texts, particularly in the fields of medicine and religion. – 2 miles/3 km SW of the site of Tebtynis, on the edge of the desert, are the rock tombs of *Kom Ruqayya*, probably dating from the 12th Dynasty.

Some 6 miles/10 km SE of Medinet el-Fayyum and 1 mile/1.5 km N of the village of *Hawaret el-Maqta*, on a plateau at the edge of the desert, stands the ***Pyramid of Hawara**, the Tomb of Amenemhet III, who did so much to develop the Fayyum – his second pyramid, for he had already built one at Dahshur (see that entry). The Pyramid of Hawara is constructed of sun-dried bricks made from Nile mud with an admixture of straw, and with its original limestone casing (which had already disappeared by Roman times) had a base measurement of 350 ft/106 m. At the core of the pyramid was an outcrop of natural rock 40 ft/12 m high. The entrance (now blocked) was on the S side and gave access to a complicated network of passages leading to the burial chamber.



Pyramid of Hawara, Fayyum

Adjoining the S side of the pyramid was Amenemhet's large mortuary temple, of which nothing is left but a large area covered with splinters of stone and fragments of fine granite and limestone columns, following its use as a quarry of building stone from Roman times onwards. Occasional fragments of walls can be seen in the sloping banks of the canal which traverses this area, the *Bahr Seila el-Gedid*. This structure was probably the famous **Labyrinth**, of which ancient travelers spoke with unbounded admiration.

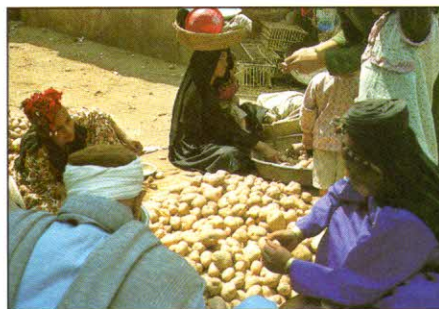
Strabo, who had visited the Labyrinth, describes it in these terms:

"At the locks is the Labyrinth, a structure which vies in importance with the pyramids, and beside it is the tomb of the King who built it. After entering the canal and proceeding some 30 to 40 stadia [3½–4½ miles/5.5–7.5 km] along it you come to a table-like area in which are a small town and a large palace, consisting of as many separate palaces as there formerly were nomes. For there are that number of courts surrounded by colonnades, one adjoining another in a long row, so that all the courts seem to be built against a single wall. The entrances to the courts lie opposite this wall; but in front of the entrances are many long covered passages, which intersect with one another and form such a complicated path that a stranger cannot find his way into or out of the various courts without a guide. The remarkable thing is that the roof of each building consists of a single stone and that each group of passages is roofed with a single slab of extraordinary size. No wood or other building material is employed. When you climb to the roof, which is not of any great height since the building has only a single storey, you can see the great expanse covered by these huge slabs. On emerging from the passage you have a view of them extending in a long line, each of the 27 having a monolithic column to support the roof. At the end of the whole structure, more than a stadium [200 yds/180 m] in length, is the tomb, a square pyramid each side of which is 4 plethra [400 ft/120 m] in length, with a height also of 4 plethra. The dead man who is buried here is called Imandes. It is said that so many courts were built because it was the custom for the great dignitaries of each nome to assemble here, together with priests and priestesses, to make offerings to the gods and deliberate on matters of particular importance. Each nome then occupied the court assigned to it."

To the N of the Pyramid of Hawara is a large *cemetery* in which the more prosperous citizens of Shedet-Crocodilopolis were buried during the Middle Kingdom. In 1956 the remains of a small *pyramid* containing the Body of Princess Neferuptah, Amenemhet III's daughter, were discovered 1½ miles/2 km S of the Hawara Pyramid. It was previously believed that she had been buried in a small sarcophagus found in her father's tomb chamber. – To the E of the temple precinct are the remains of brick buildings belonging to a Roman village.

The NE part of the Fayyum Oasis is occupied by the **Birket Qarun**, the Lake of Qarun (the Korah of Numbers 16: 1), which is the surviving part of the much larger Lake Moeris of ancient times. It is almost 30 miles/50 km long from E to W, with a maximum width of 6 miles/10 m; the average depth is 13–16 ft/4–5 m, but in places the depth reaches 50–60 ft/15–18 m. The N side of the lake is barren and enclosed by hills rising to a considerable height; the S side is flat, and in many places intensively cultivated right up to the water's edge. The greenish water is slightly brackish and unsuitable for drinking. Bathing in the lake is not possible because of the thick layer of ooze on the bottom. There is a remarkable variety of bird-life around the shores of the lake, and it is well stocked with fish. Accordingly the local people gain much of their subsistence from wildfowling and fishing.

The boat trip across the lake from the *Auberge du Lac* or the fishing village of *Shaqshuq* – both on the lakeside road which branches off the main road to Cairo – takes about 2 hours. From the landing-stage on the N side a steep track climbs 2 miles/3 km to the top of the hill, on which are ruins of **Dimeï**, the ancient *Soknopaiou Nesos* ("Island of Soknopaios"), a fortified caravan station and a place of some consequence. The ruins cover an area of about 125 acres/0.5 sq. km. A street 400 yds/370 m long, formerly flanked by figures of crouching lions, passes the well-preserved remains of houses to a platform on which are the ruins of a large *temple* of the Ptolemaic period dedicated to Soknopaios, a local form of the Fayyum deity Sobek or Suchos, and the "finely throned Isis". The temple, surrounded by a high enclosure wall of sun-dried brick, consisted of a number of chambers, the rooms to the rear being built of carefully laid limestone blocks, those in the front part of roughly hewn stone faced with stucco. Only a few reliefs survive; one of them depicts one of the Ptolemies



Market scene in the Fayyum

(without cartouche) praying before a ram-headed god (probably Amun).

Some 5 miles/8 km N of Dimeï, at the foot of a steep desert escarpment, is the small Temple of *Qasr el-Sagha*, probably dating from the Old Kingdom, which was discovered by Schweinfurth in 1884. Built of limestone blocks, it contains seven recesses and several other chambers, but no reliefs or inscriptions. Near by are the remains of an ancient quay.

At the SW end of the Birket Qarun is the site of **Qasr Qarun**, most conveniently reached on a moderately good road (22 miles/36 km) from Medinet el-Fayyum via *Ibshawai* and *El-Shawashna*.

Qasr Qarun is a reasonably well-preserved temple of the Late Ptolemaic period, surrounded by the remains of an ancient city, probably *Dionysias*, on the extreme western verge of the Roman province. From here there was a caravan route to Bahriya, then known as the Oasis Minor. A circular foundation wall marks the position of an ancient cistern. The **Temple**, 63 ft/19.20 m wide across the façade and 89 ft/27 m long, is built of carefully dressed blocks of extremely hard sandstone. Like almost all the temples in the oases, it was dedicated to the ram-headed Amun-Khnum, of whom there are two representations at the top of the rear wall of the open top storey. Above every doorway of the temple is a winged sun. There are no ancient inscriptions.

The entrance, facing E, is reached by way of the *forecourt*, a high and well-built platform 43 ft/13 m from front to rear. On the façade of the temple, to the right (N) of the doorway, stands a huge half-column, a relic of the colonnade which once flanked the court. On the lower floor are the chambers dedicated to cult purposes: first three *antechambers*, the floors of which slope down towards the sanctuary, and the *sanctuary* itself, divided into three small rooms at the back. On either side of the sanctuary is a narrow corridor with three chambers opening off it. Over the doorways of the two antechambers and the sanctuary the usual cavetto cornice is replaced by a row of royal cobras. Flanking the antechambers are side rooms from which

it is possible either to go down into the cellars or to climb two flights of stairs to the upper floor, on which there are various other chambers, and from there to the roof. From the roof there are extensive views of the sand-covered remains of the ancient city, the lake and the desert.

To the E of the main temple can be found two *smaller temples*, reasonably well preserved. One, on the same axis as the main temple, is a kiosk, similar in ground-plan to the Philae Kiosk. The other, 220 yds/200 m from the first, is larger, with walls of well-fired brick on stone foundations. At the far end of the sanctuary is an apse-like recess, and on the two side walls are two engaged half-columns, which the fragments lying around show to have been of the Ionic Order.

NW of the Qasr Qarun site are the remains of a Roman *fort* of the time of Diocletian. Defended by nine towers, it was constructed of kiln-fired brick with limestone blocks built in at certain points.

Some 9 miles/14 km SE of Qasr Qarun is **Qasr el-Banat**, with the remains of ancient *Euhemeria*, including a temple dedicated to Suchos and Isis. $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles/7 km W of Qasr el-Banat is *Watfa*, with the remains of ancient *Philoteris*; and 2 miles/3 km SE of this, at the village of *Harit* (*Batn Harit*), is the site of ancient *Theadelphia*, known as **Kharabet Ihrith**, with a temple dedicated to the crocodile god Pnepheros and a necropolis.

In the desert to the E of the Birket Qarun and NW of Tamiya is the hill of **Kom Aushim**, with the remains of the Greek city of *Karanis* which is frequently mentioned in the records, including a temple dedicated to Pnepheros and Petesuchos. – 7 miles/11 km E of Karanis is the hill of *Umm el-Qatl*, the ancient *Bacchias*.

On the E side of the Fayyum, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles/4 km NE of **El-Roda**, are the remains of ancient *Philadelphia*, a Greek garrison town founded by Ptolemy II Philadelphus about 250 B.C.. Large numbers of mummy portraits were found in the necropolis here.

4 miles/6 km NW of El-Roda lies the well-fortified village of **Tamiya**, on the *Bahr Tamiya*, an arm of the Bahr Yusuf, also known as the *Bahr el-Wadi* or *Bahr el-Bats*, which is dammed at this point.

At the extreme eastern end of the Fayyum, on the railway line from Medinet el-Fayyum to El-Wasta in the Nile Valley, is **Seila**, with a small step pyramid which is thought to date from the 3rd Dynasty.

Beni Suef, ***El-Lahun**, **Lisht**, ***Meidum** and the **Western Desert**: see separate entries.


Feiran Oasis

See under Sinai

Gaza

Under Israeli military administration

Population: 120,000.

 **Israel Government Tourist Office,**

Rehov Hamelekh George 24,

Jerusalem:

tel. 23 73 11.

ACCESS. – By road (50 miles/80 km NE of El-Arish); Egyptian-Israeli frontier crossing.

The ancient and historic town of **Gaza** (Hebrew *Azza*, "strength, power"), surrounded by fertile arable land and fruit orchards, lies just off the Mediterranean coast some 50 miles/80 km NE of El-Arish, in the "Gaza Strip", a stretch of coastal plain well supplied with water from its many springs. Gaza is the headquarters of the Israeli military administration in the Gaza Strip. The population is almost exclusively Arab and Muslim.

HISTORY. – Gaza, one of the most ancient cities known to history, is referred to in Egyptian texts as early as about 2000 B.C. Tuthmosis III made it an Egyptian garrison town, a stronghold designed to guard against raids by Semitic and Asiatic peoples but also a base for Egyptian campaigns of conquest in the regions to the NE. – In the middle of the 17th c. B.C. Gaza was overwhelmed by the Hyksos, who then thrust into the Nile Valley, where they ruled for a hundred years.

In the 1st millennium B.C. Gaza was the most southerly and the largest city in the Pentapolis, a league of five towns (Gaza, Ashdod, Ascalon, Gath and Ekron) of the Philistines (Hebrew *pelishtim*), a Semitic people who established themselves from the 12th c. B.C. onwards in the low-lying country between Mount Carmel and the Egyptian border (Deuteronomy 2: 23). According to Amos 9: 7 they came from Caphtor (Crete?). The Philistines appear to have established a stable and well-organized State at an early date, and all accounts indicate that in cultural achievement they were far ahead of the Jews. They had the advantage over the Jews of possessing chariots and cavalry (1 Samuel 13: 5). Their heavily armed troops wore a round copper helmet, chain-mail and iron greaves, and were armed with a javelin and a long lance; and each man, like Homer's Greeks, had a servant to carry his weapons and his shield. Their light troops were archers. The Philistines established permanent camps, surrounded their cities with high walls and stationed garrisons to hold conquered territory. They carried on an active and far-flung trade both by sea and more particularly on land; and their wars with the Israelites stemmed partly from their need to keep the caravan routes, particularly the route to Damascus, open for their trade. – The principal deity of the Philistines was Dagon (Marnas), who, like the female divinity Dérketo (Atargatis), had the form of a fish. Baalzebub