

HOLIDAY HOMEWORK

ANCIENT HISTORY

2022



Teacher/Subject Coordinator Contact:	Mary Gillingham mary.gillingham@sssc.vic.edu.au
Holiday Homework Required	<p>Everybody to complete:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Social features of New Kingdom Egypt <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Read Herodotus, <i>The Histories</i>, Book II, chapters 35-37, 86-90 and complete the table provided 2. Watch the PBS's <i>Egypt's Golden Empire Part 2 – The Pharaohs of the Sun</i> available here or on YouTube and respond to the quiz here <p>If you missed transition, please also complete:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read 'C1 The Land of Egypt' and take the quiz here
Resources Required for Subject	<p>Ancient Egypt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials supplied by the school <p>Ancient Rome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textbook: Jeremy Daly, Michael James, Diana Millar, Denis Mootz, <i>Ancient Rome</i>, 2017, HTAV, Melbourne – order through Campion <p>Units 3 & 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notebook to take notes and folder with plastic sleeves for handouts • Highlighters
Key Links	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For curriculum, see VCE History Study Design here, pages 44-53 • For exam information, see VCE Ancient History here • NOTE: VCE History introduces a new study design and exam structure in 2022. Please ensure you look at the new guidelines.
Other preparation activities (optional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play video games set in ancient Egypt and Rome • Read historical fiction • Watch documentaries on YouTube, Netflix, the SBS and Disney Plus • Watch miniseries, films and dramas about key figures such as Tutankhamun • Check out your local library for books on Ancient Egypt and read the parts about the New Kingdom • If you like op shopping, op shops often have books about Egypt (more so than Rome), so keep your eyes peeled for a coffee table book at a bargain price

HOLIDAY HOMEWORK

ANCIENT HISTORY

2022



Task 1: Social features of New Kingdom Egypt

Instructions

1. Read Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book II, chapters 35-37, 86-90. These are the numbers in the margins.
2. Complete the table below using the information supplied by Herodotus.

Describe the role and status of women, according to Herodotus:

Describe the role and status of priests, according to Herodotus:

Herodotus describes three different types of mummification. Outline them below.

1. The 'most perfect'

2. The 'second quality'

3. The 'third method'

What exceptions were there to usual mummification practice, according to Herodotus? Why?

About Egypt I shall have a great deal more to relate because 35

of the number of remarkable things which the country contains, and because of the fact that more monuments which beggar description are to be found there than anywhere else in the world.²³ That is reason enough for my dwelling on it at greater length. Not only is the Egyptian climate peculiar to that country, and the Nile different in its behaviour from other rivers elsewhere, but the Egyptians themselves in their manners and customs seem to have reversed the ordinary practices of mankind. For instance, women attend market and are employed in trade, while men stay at home and do the weaving. In weaving the normal way is to work the threads of the weft upwards, but the Egyptians work them downwards. Men in Egypt carry loads on their heads, women on their shoulders; women urinate standing up, men sitting down. To ease themselves they go indoors, but eat outside in the streets, on the theory that what is unseemly but necessary should be done in private, and what is not unseemly should be done openly. No woman holds priestly office, either in the service of goddess or god; only men are priests in both cases. Sons are under no compulsion to support their parents if they do not wish to do so, but daughters must, whether they wish it or not. Elsewhere priests grow their hair long; in Egypt they shave their heads. In other nations the relatives of the deceased in time of mourning cut their hair, but the Egyptians, who shave at all other times, mark a death by letting the hair grow both on head and chin. They live with their animals – unlike the rest of the world, who live apart from them. Other men live on wheat and barley, but any Egyptian who does so is blamed for it, their bread being made from spelt, or *Zea* as some call it. Dough they knead with their feet, but clay with their hands – and even handle dung. They practise circumcision, while men of other nations – except those who have learnt from Egypt – leave their private parts as nature made them. Men in Egypt have two garments each, women only one. The ordinary practice at sea is to make sheets fast to ring-bolts fitted outboard; the Egyptians fit them inboard. In writing or calculating, instead

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THE HISTORIES

of going, like the Greeks, from left to right, the Egyptians go from right to left – and obstinately maintain that theirs is the dexterous method, ours being left-handed and awkward.²⁴ They have two sorts of writing, the sacred and the common. They are religious to excess, beyond any other nation in the world, and here are some of the customs which illustrate the fact: they drink from brazen cups which they scour every day – everyone, without exception. They wear linen clothes which they make a special point of continually washing. They circumcise themselves for cleanliness' sake, preferring to be clean rather than comely. The priests shave their bodies all over every other day to guard against the presence of lice, or anything else equally unpleasant, while they are about their religious duties; the priests, too, wear linen only, and shoes made from the papyrus plant – these materials, for dress and shoes, being the only ones allowed them. They bathe in cold water twice a day and twice every night – and observe innumerable other ceremonies besides. Their life, however, is not by any means all hardship, for they enjoy advantages too: for instance, they are free from all personal expense, having bread made for them out of the sacred grain, and a plentiful daily supply of goose-meat and beef, with wine in addition. Fish they are forbidden to touch; and as for beans, they cannot even bear to look at them, because they imagine they are unclean (in point of fact the Egyptians never sow beans, and even if any happen to grow wild, they will not eat them, either raw or boiled). They do not have a single priest for each god, but a number, of which one is chief-priest, and when a chief-priest dies his son is appointed to succeed him.

37

36

86

Mummification is a distinct profession. The embalmers, when a body is brought to them, produce specimen models in wood, painted to resemble nature, and graded in quality; the best and most expensive kind is said to represent a being whose name I shrink from mentioning in this connexion; the next best is somewhat inferior and cheaper, while the third sort is cheapest of all. After pointing out these differences in quality, they ask which of the three is required, and the kinsmen of the dead man, having agreed upon a price, go away and leave the embalmers to their work. The most perfect process is as follows: as much as possible of the brain is extracted through the nostrils with an iron hook, and what the hook cannot reach is rinsed out with drugs; next the flank is laid open with a flint knife and the whole contents of the abdomen removed; the cavity is then thoroughly cleansed and washed out, first with palm wine and again with an infusion of pounded spices. After that it is filled with pure bruised myrrh, cassia, and every other aromatic substance with the exception of frankincense, and sewn up again, after which the body is placed in natrum, covered entirely over, for seventy days — never longer. When this period, which must not be exceeded, is over, the body is washed and then wrapped from head to foot in linen cut into strips and smeared on the under side with gum, which is commonly used by the Egyptians instead of glue. In this condition the body is given back to the family,

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who have a wooden case made, shaped like the human figure, into which it is put. The case is then sealed up and stored in a sepulchral chamber, upright against the wall. When, for reasons of expense, the second quality is called for, the treatment is different: no incision is made and the intestines are not removed, but oil of cedar is injected with a syringe into the body through the anus which is afterwards stopped up to prevent the liquid from escaping. The body is then pickled in natrum for the prescribed number of days, on the last of which the oil is drained off. The effect of it is so powerful that as it leaves the body it brings with it the stomach and intestines in a liquid state, and as the flesh, too, is dissolved by the natrum, nothing of the body is left but the bones and skin. After this treatment it is returned to the family without further fuss.

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The third method, used for embalming the bodies of the poor, is simply to clear out the intestines with a purge and keep the body seventy days in natrum. It is then given back to the family to be taken away.

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When the wife of a distinguished man dies, or any woman who happens to be beautiful or well known, her body is not given to the embalmers immediately, but only after the lapse of three or four days. This is a precautionary measure to prevent the embalmers from violating the corpse, a thing which is said actually to have happened in the case of a woman who had just died. The culprit was given away by one of his fellow workmen.

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If anyone, either an Egyptian or a foreigner, is found drowned in the river or killed by a crocodile, there is the strongest obligation upon the people of the nearest town to have the body embalmed in the most elaborate manner and buried in a consecrated burial-place; no one is allowed to touch it except the priests of the Nile — not even relatives or friends; the priests alone prepare it for burial with their own hands and place it in the tomb, as if it were something more sacred than the body of a man.



THE LAND OF EGYPT

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NILE

The Nile River was the most important physical feature of ancient Egypt. It began south of Egypt from the union of two rivers: the Blue Nile, rising in the mountains of Ethiopia, and the White Nile, flowing from the mountains of Uganda. Altogether it flows 7000 kilometres north to the Mediterranean Sea, meeting it at the Nile Delta.

The Egyptians called their narrow, fertile strip on each side of the Nile the Black Land (*kmt* or *kemet*). This was where they grew their crops. The Red Land was the unproductive desert and rocky cliffs that bordered both sides of the Nile valley (*dsrt* or *Deshret*). The great contrast between the two lands perhaps created the belief of a duality in Egyptian life – between life and death, chaos and order (*maat*). The desert and wild animals often represented chaos in comparison to the civilised farmlands and orderly life by the Nile.

Life in ancient Egypt would not have been possible without the river. Every year the Nile flooded, dumping

a layer of silt on the fields. This annual renewal of fertile soil gave Egypt very rich farming land, which produced three to four crops

maat
divinely established order of truth and justice in the universe



Figure 1.1 Hapy, the god of the Nile



Figure 1.2 The Nile at Luxor today

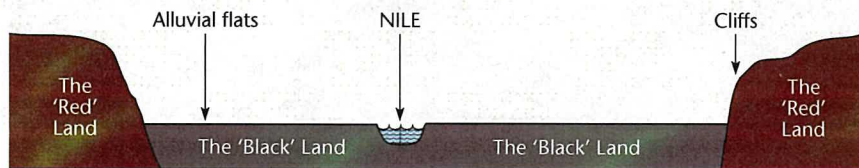


Figure 1.3 Cross-section of the Nile valley

a year. Fields that always flooded were highly prized. The Nile also watered the crops so, unlike many other civilisations, the Egyptians were not dependent on unreliable rainfall. Networks of irrigation canals crisscrossed the farmlands and it was crucial that they were maintained. The Greek historian, Herodotus, writing in the fifth century BC, called Egypt the 'gift of the Nile', as the whole land and its people were so dependent upon it.

The Nile was important in other ways. By its banks the **papyrus** plant grew, providing materials for paper, mats, sandals, basketwork and boats. The river and marshes were teeming with fish and wildlife, hunted both for food and for leisure. Shipping on the Nile was the most important mode of transport for people and goods. At times river traffic must have been hectic. Large cargo boats and barges transported building materials, agricultural supplies and goods for trade. Officials travelled by boat on royal business and workers were ferried across the river daily. Many stories were told about ferrymen overcharging their passengers.

A new method for irrigating the fields was introduced in New Kingdom times. A **shadouf** effortlessly lifted water from the Nile to the fields.

Seasons

The level of the Nile determined the season of the year. The calculation of the yearly flood was crucial and measurement of the water level was conducted at *nilometers* at Aswan and Memphis. There were three seasons in ancient Egypt.

Inundation (*Akhet*)

Akhet was the **inundation**, the time of flood, from approximately June to September. During this time, workers were not needed in the fields and may have provided labour for the pharaohs' building programs.

Emergence of the fields (*Peret*)

From October to February, the water receded and the soil was still moist. Dykes and boundary markers were put in order and crops were planted in the mud.

Drought (*Shemu*)

The final stage of the annual cycle took place between March and June, when crops were harvested, and grains threshed and stored in granaries.

papyrus

an aquatic plant whose dark green stems provided a pithy substance from which a material like paper was made

shadouf

simple device for lifting water, consisting of a large bucket attached to a long horizontal pole on a stand; the bucket could be raised or lowered due to a weight attached to the other end of the pole

inundation

the annual flooding of the Nile River

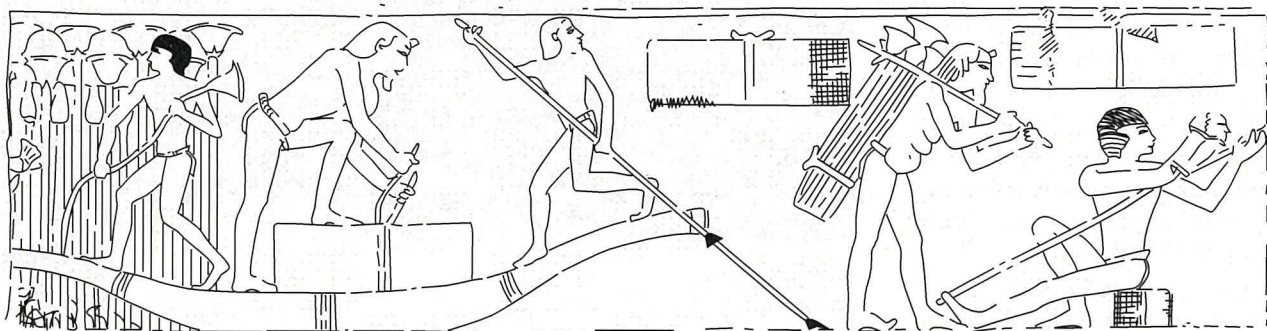


Figure 1.4 Gathering papyrus



NATURAL RESOURCES

Egypt was self-sufficient in most natural resources. The main crops of wheat and barley provided the staples of the Egyptian diet: bread and beer. Farmers grew a range of vegetables, including leeks, onions, cucumbers, melons, lettuces and beans. Castor oil was produced, but superior olive oil was most probably imported from the northern Mediterranean countries. Locally grown fruits included figs, dates and grapes. Herbs provided medicines, perfumes and flavourings. Bees were kept to produce a supply of honey. Certain trees were regarded as sacred, such as the *persea* (a fruit tree), the sycamore (fig) and the *ished* tree of Heliopolis.

Domesticated animals included pigs, sheep, goats, cattle and asses. Geese and ducks were common, and a variety of wild birds were hunted and trapped. Hares and antelope were hunted by the nobles. Fish from the Nile were eaten, but generally only by workers.

Flax was grown and provided excellent linen. Ramie was grown for its flax-like fibres, as was hemp. Woollen fabrics were also produced but little evidence of them remains.

The main building material for houses and palaces alike was mud bricks. Mud bricks used readily available materials – mud and straw – and were durable in the dry climate. The cliffs along the river also provided limestone,

granite and sandstone for building. Wooden structures were rare, as good timber for buildings, ships and furniture had to be obtained through trade, principally with Lebanon. Unfortunately for archaeologists, mud bricks disintegrate over time and it is mainly the grander buildings such as **temples** and tombs made of stone that have survived to be studied.

In the desert in the east were mines for metals such as copper and gold. The desert also provided semiprecious stones, such as agate, amethyst, jasper and turquoise, and a variety of salts, including **natron**, which was used extensively in the mummification process.

temple
house of a god;
place of worship

natron
a mineral form of
hydrated sodium
salts found in lake
beds, used for
mummification



Figure 1.5 Sunset on the Nile at Luxor today

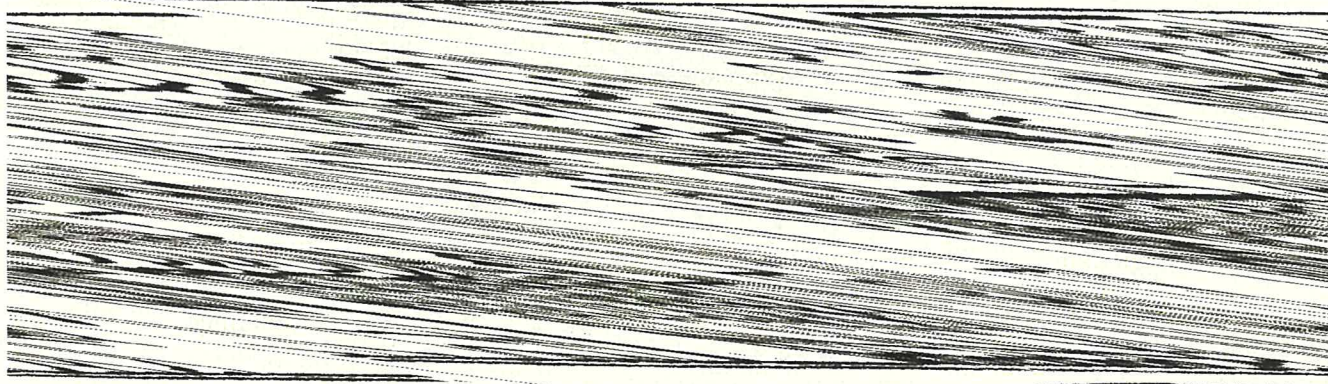


Figure 1.6 Trapping wild birds with a clap net



Trade with the southern and northern lands supplied timber, gold, ivory, fine scented woods, oils and

other luxury goods such as incense, feathers, animals and animal skins.

My own observation bears out the statement made to me by the priests that the greater part of the country I have described has been built up by the silt from the Nile ... as things are at present these people get their harvests with less labour than anyone else in the world ... they have no need to work with plough or hoe, or to use another of the ordinary methods of cultivating their land; they merely wait for the river of its own accord to flood their fields; then, when the water has receded, each farmer sows his plot, turns pigs into it to tread in the seed, and then waits for the harvest.

Herodotus, *Histories*, Book 2

Review the evidence



- 1 Explain the statement by Herodotus that Egypt was 'the gift of the Nile'.
- 2 What natural resources were scarce in Egypt and how were they obtained?
- 3 How did the Nile affect work patterns in Egypt?
- 4 Explain why the north is called Lower Egypt and the south is called Upper Egypt.
- 5 As an Egyptian official, explain to a visiting foreigner how rich and self-sufficient Egypt is in comparison to other civilisations.
- 6 Reread the text and examine the map on page 5. Draw up a table like the one shown:

The Red Land	The Black Land	Imported

Now place the following resources under the appropriate headings in the table to indicate their origin:

gold, wheat, superior olive oil, melons, turquoise, cedar timber, papyrus, copper, limestone, mud bricks, barley, granite, grapes, onions, wild birds, flax, natron, ivory, cucumbers, incense, panther skins.

TWO REGIONS

Egypt divided naturally into two geographical regions :

- **Upper Egypt:** the Nile valley, stretching from Aswan in the south to Memphis in the north

- **Lower Egypt:** the fertile but marshy delta, north of Memphis.

The southern border was marked by the First **Cataract** – a series of rapids in the Nile, near the modern town of Aswan.

cataract
rocky rapids
in a river

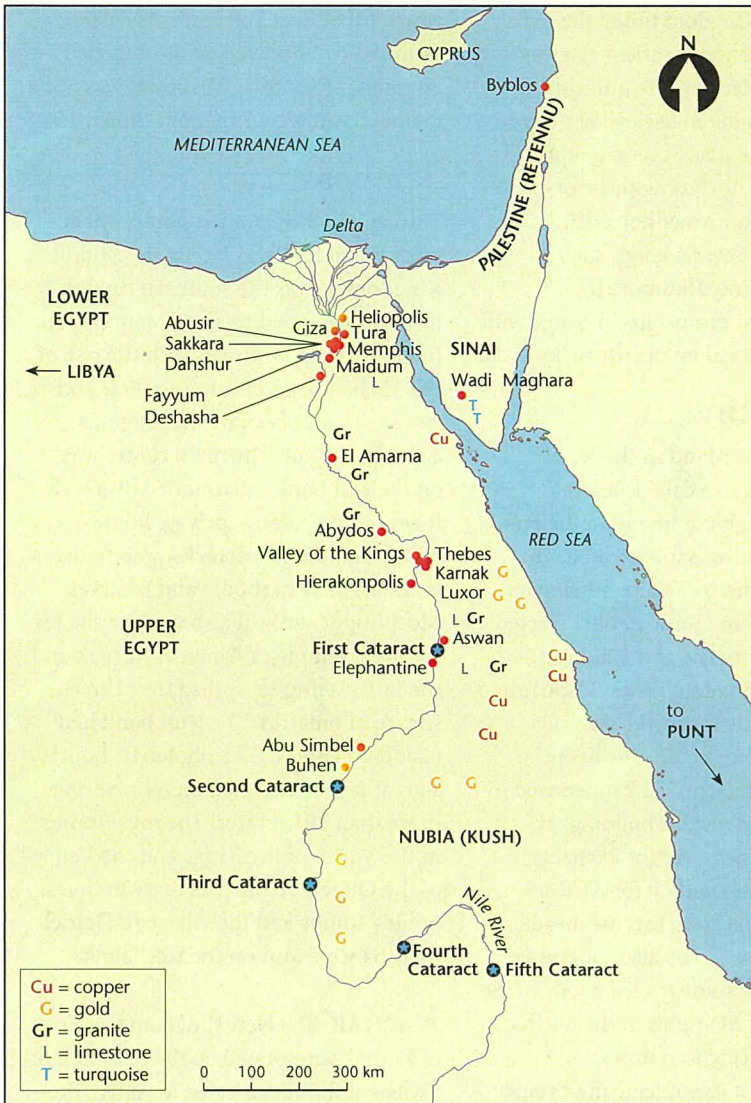
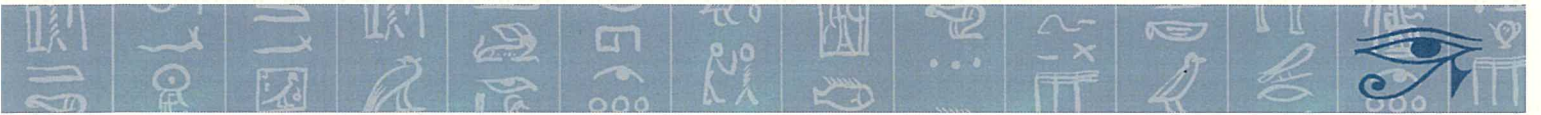


Figure 1.7 Egypt's resources

It was a border easily defended from Nubia to the south. Large tracts of desert protected the north from the peoples of Palestine and Syria.

Upper Egypt

Aswan

Aswan is on the First Cataract of the southern border of Upper Egypt. The Egyptian name was *Swenet*, which means *making business* or *trade*. Aswan was the southern border market between Egypt and Nubia and the starting point for caravan routes to both the north and the south.

Aswan was also the site of the hard-stone quarries of Egypt, which were rich in fine and coarse granite, used as building materials. Quartz, used for polishing stone, came from a quarry north of Aswan and also from the western desert. The eastern desert contained iron mines and was a source of red ochre for paint. A sandstone quarry was further north at Silsilla.

Aswan reached its greatest political importance in the 6th Dynasty, and the tombs of many Old Kingdom nobles were located at nearby Kubbet el Hawa. A nilometer, to measure the rise of the Nile, was also located opposite Aswan.



obelisk

a tall sacred stone block erected in a temple

ebony

a hard black wood from southern Africa

Predynastic

period in Egyptian history before about 3200 BC

nome

an administrative district of Egypt

mace

round-headed weapon like a club, a symbol of power

Amen

god of Thebes, associated with the sun-god Re

sanctuary

a holy place or room dedicated to a god or king

pylons

huge tower-like gateways, as entrances to temples

hypostyle

a columned hall

In New Kingdom times, the red granite quarries were worked extensively. It is here that Hatshepsut's unfinished **obelisk** lies, rendered useless by a large crack along one side. Several temples were built here, including those of Thutmose III and Amenhotep III, now vanished. Several kings, such as Thutmose I and Thutmose II, commemorated campaigns in Nubia with inscriptions carved on nearby rocky cliffs.

Elephantine

Elephantine, an island in the Nile near Aswan, is also called *Abu* or *Elephant Land*. It commanded the First Nile Cataract. It was inhabited from prehistoric times by a tribe bearing an elephant emblem. These people erected the first shrine to the god Khnum.

In Old Kingdom times, Elephantine became a heavily fortified base, and the nobles here held the title 'Keepers of the Southern Gate'. They supervised quarrying of granite for buildings at Giza, and watched over the exchange of Egyptian grain and oil for African minerals, **ebony**, gum, incense, beads and animal skins. They also supervised the shipment of these traded goods to the royal capital of Memphis in the north.

In New Kingdom times, Elephantine lost its strategic importance as control of Nubia further south meant that the First Cataract was no longer an important border. The Temple of Khnum was added to by various kings, including Ramesses II. Nearby on the island of Konosso, officials and pharaohs including Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III, recorded inscriptions commemorating military campaigns in Nubia.

Hierakonpolis

This was the later Greek name for the **Predynastic** city of Ninsu, capital of the 20th **nome**. Predynastic archaeological finds include the Narmer Palette and the head of the limestone **mace** belonging to King Scorpion. The town reached its greatest political power during the First Intermediate Period

when, for almost 100 years, its rulers assumed royal powers and controlled Egypt as far south as Thebes. It was not a major city in New Kingdom times.

Thebes

The capital of the fourth nome, Thebes was known firstly as Iat. By the Middle Kingdom, it was the southern capital, further developed by King Mentuhotep. In New Kingdom times, with the rise of the Theban royal family and their god **Amen**, Thebes became the religious capital of Egypt. The main centre was on the east bank, surrounded by a wall. It contained palaces, private houses, official buildings, barracks, warehouses, markets, busy harbours and wharves. Most importantly, it also was the site for the great temple of Amen at Karnak and the Luxor temples, spread over three square kilometres. The west bank had residential areas. Amenhotep III built a great palace complex there, covering more than 30 hectares. The royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings and the Valley of the Queens, royal mortuary temples, nobles' tombs and the village of Deir el Medina were also on the west bank.

Karnak The New Kingdom temple of Karnak was located on the east bank of Thebes and was dedicated to Amen, the local Theban god. The temple began as a Middle Kingdom shrine to Amen and as the power of the 18th-dynasty Theban kings developed, so did the prominence and importance of their god Amen. Each successive New Kingdom king added to the Karnak temple to show his devotion to the god. The temple's inner **sanctuary** housed the statue of Amen; only priests could enter the inner sanctum. The temple was made up of enormous **pylons** or gateways, a series of open courts and a columned **hypostyle** hall. Kings added additional pylons and courts and often demolished or altered the structures of previous kings. Karnak featured in the most important religious festivals of the New Kingdom such as the Feast of Opet.

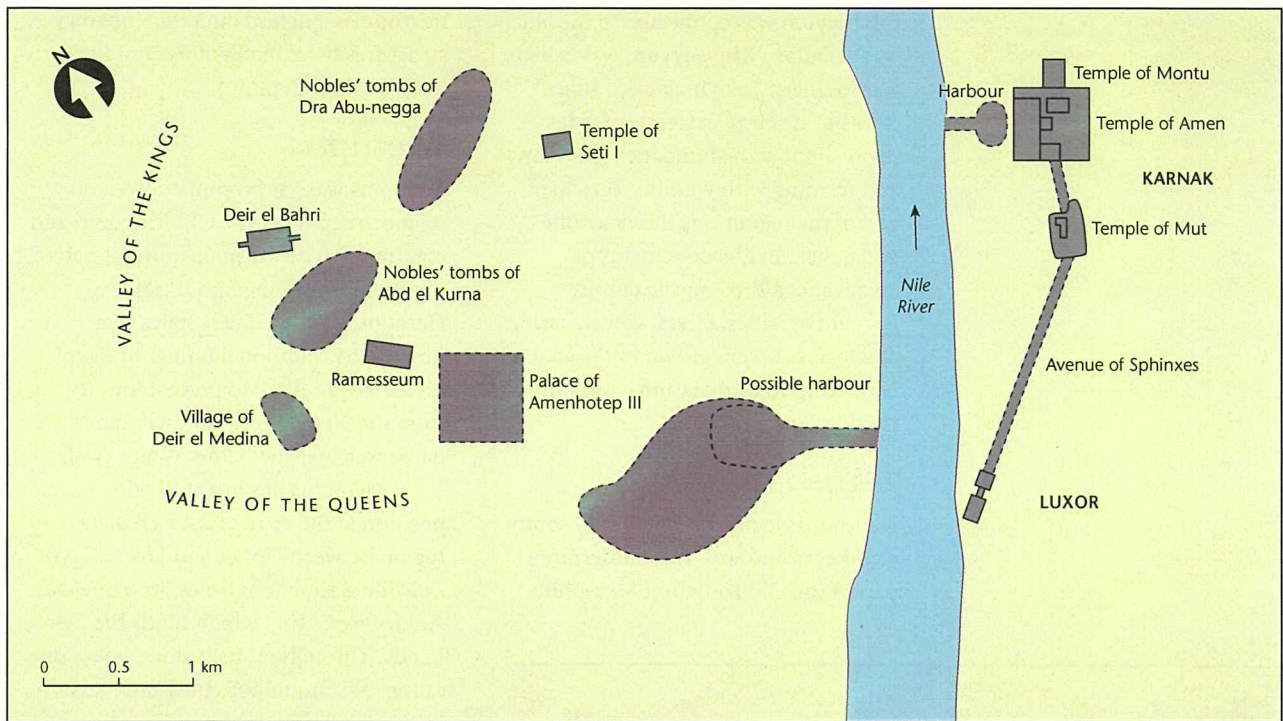


Figure 1.8 Thebes in New Kingdom times

Abydos

This holy city was located on the west bank of the Nile. It was an important religious site even in Predynastic times, as the burial site of **Osiris**. Pharaohs made ritual journeys to Abydos. A tiny statuette of Khufu, builder of the Great Pyramid, was found here – his only surviving portrait. Royal cenotaphs or second tombs from the First Dynasty onwards were also built. In New Kingdom times, several great monuments were erected. King Ahmose built a shrine to his grandmother Tetisheri; Seti I began a huge temple, completed by Ramesses II, and also built the so-called Osireion. Ramesses II set up a King List within his temple.

Lower Egypt

Maidum

Maidum was the site of the first true pyramid and the earliest known pyramid complex (together with the Bent pyramid at Dahshur). **Mastabas** of

the 4th Dynasty lie to the south and east of the pyramid. It was the home of the crocodile god Sobek, and Ramesses II restored and enlarged a temple there.

The Faggum

An oasis, 65 kilometres from east to west with Lake Moeris in its north-west,

Osiris
god of the underworld

mastabas
tombs built of stone or cut into rock



Figure 1.9 Women carrying water in the traditional manner



necropolis
a cemetery or
burial place

the Fayyum was connected to the Nile by a tributary. The Fayyum was called the Southern Lake in ancient times. It was a large and extremely fertile depression, with abundant vegetation and teeming with wildlife. The chief god of the region was the crocodile god Sobek. Evidence remains of an advanced Predynastic culture: Fayyum A. Vines, olives, wheat, barley and legumes were grown in the area into **New Kingdom** times and several royal residences were located there.

Dahshur

Dahshur is located immediately south of Sakkara and was the southernmost part of the Old Kingdom Memphite

necropolis. Sneferu built two funerary structures here: the Bent Pyramid and the Northern Pyramid.

Memphis

Memphis was the administrative and religious capital of the Old Kingdom and continued to be the main administrative capital in New Kingdom times. Herodotus (Book II, 99) states that Menes, the traditional unifier of Egypt, raised a dyke there to protect the city from the Nile floods. The city's oldest name was Ineb-hedj, the 'White Wall'.

Memphis lies in a strategic position at the edge of the rich delta region between Upper and Lower Egypt. In Middle Kingdom times, its name was Ankh-tawy: 'That which Binds the Two Lands'. Throughout its history, it was one of the most populous cities and had a busy commercial harbour. Foreign trade and workshops were found there, and Nubians and western Asiatics lived there from earliest times.

The main god was Ptah, god of Memphis and artisans, and creator of world order. A great temple to Ptah was built in Memphis; evidence has also been found of worship of the Apis bull from the 2nd Dynasty. Ramesses II added greatly to the Ptah temple and remnants of huge statues of Ramesses have been excavated. The great cemetery of Memphis – the Memphite Necropolis – was 30 kilometres long and lay opposite on the western bank. It included the sites of Giza and Sakkara. Excavations in northern Sakkara have exposed New Kingdom tombs of important officials, including Horemheb when he was still an army commander.

Giza

Part of the necropolis of Memphis, Giza is the site of Old Kingdom pyramids and private mastaba tombs. Tombs from as early as the 1st Dynasty have been found, such as that of King Wadj. Local limestone was used for building. The famous three pyramids of the 4th Dynasty are located here, built on a

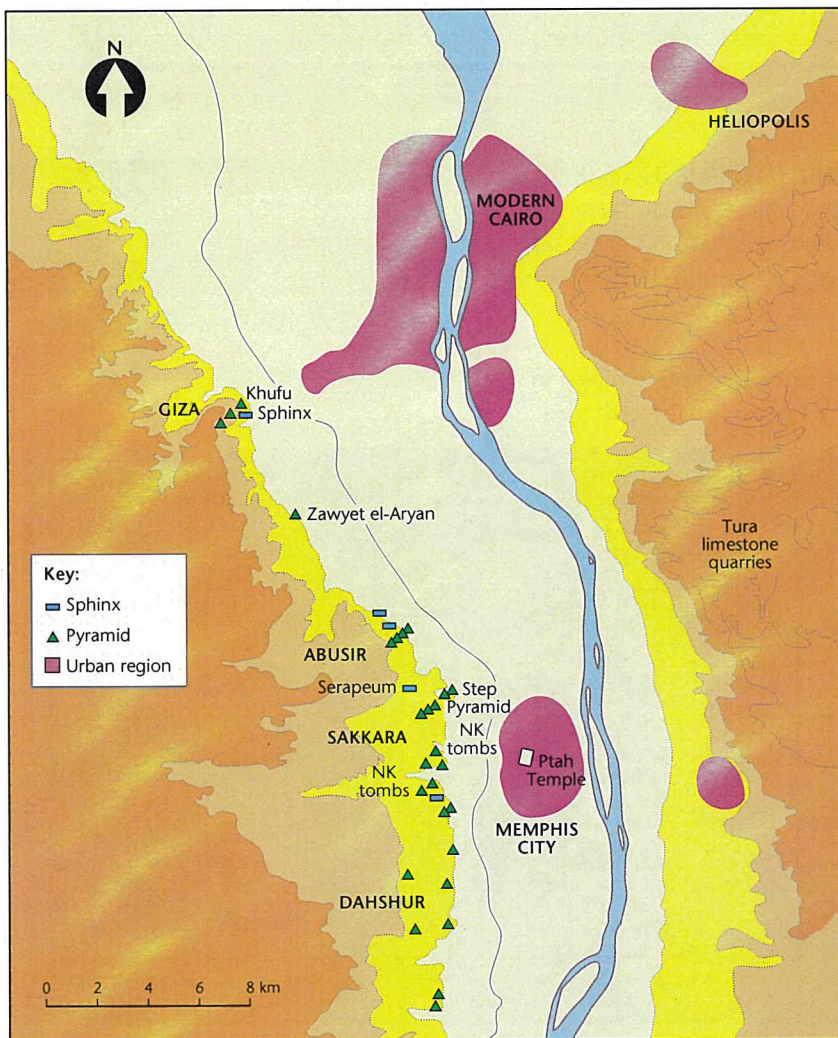


Figure 1.10 The Memphis area today

limestone plateau elevated above the Nile valley. Private mastaba tombs for officials and priests are nearby. Many tombs were presented by the king himself. The most extensive are set in neat, regular rows near the pyramid of Khufu, and are the earliest private stone-built tombs in Egypt. Chief royal wives were buried in smaller pyramids nearby. The tomb of Queen Hetepheres is also in Giza.

Sakkara

Like Giza, Sakkara is part of the necropolis of Memphis. It is named after Sokkar, the Memphite god of the dead. Mud-brick tombs date from the 1st Dynasty and some are probably royal. Djoser's Step Pyramid is located at Sakkara, as are the pyramids of Unas and Userkaf and the tombs of the 3rd-dynasty nobles Mereruka, Ankmahor and Ptahhotep.

Heliopolis

Capital of the 13th nome of Lower Egypt, Heliopolis was one of the most important and influential religious centres in the land. In New Kingdom times, it was the largest city, covering 23 square kilometres. Imhotep, the architect of the Step Pyramid, supposedly trained there and the city developed a reputation as a learning centre, particularly for the sun cult and astronomy. Temples to the sun-gods Re, Re-Atum and Re-Harakhte were found in the city. The ben-ben stone, a pyramidal stone of great significance to the sun-cult of Re, played a major role in the cult. The first three kings of the 5th Dynasty built sun-temples based on the sanctuary at Heliopolis.

Abusir

Abusir is the site of the sun-temple of Userkaf, founder of the 5th Dynasty. Four of the next five kings of the 5th Dynasty built pyramids there. Private tombs were also nearby, the most important being the family mastaba of Ptahshepses, vizier and son-in-law of

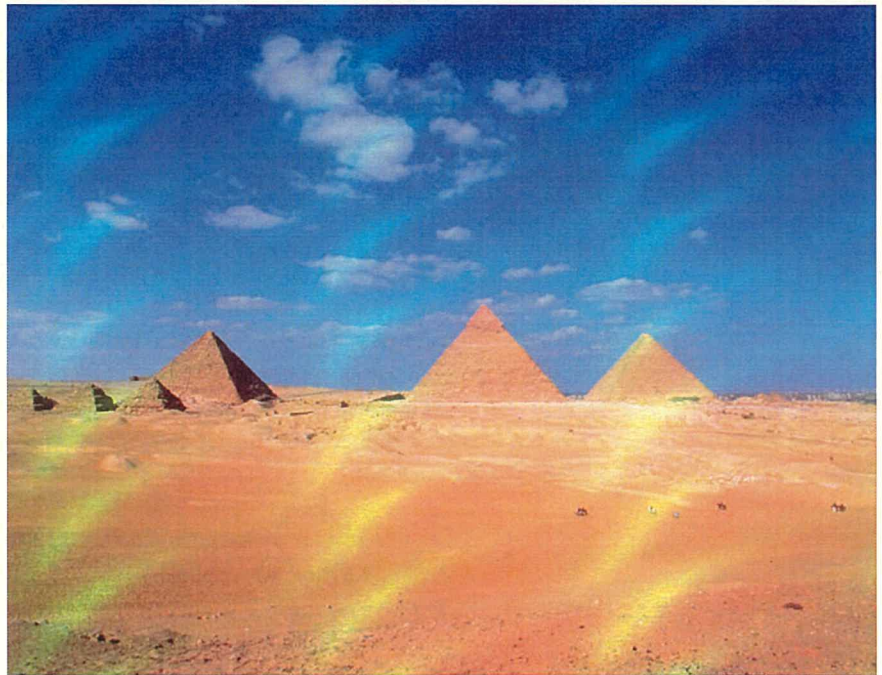


Figure 1.11 The Pyramids at Giza

Nyuserre. It was one of largest private tombs of the Old Kingdom.

Per-Ramesses

Ramesses II built a new capital in the northern delta in New Kingdom times, referring to it as Per-Ramesses or 'House of Ramesses, Great of Victories'. It was highly praised in several inscriptions and was renowned for its beauty, as a commercial port and a military centre. Its location facilitated communications between Egypt and the lands to the north. (For further details, see Chapter 6, page 336.)

Abu Simbel

Abu Simbel in Nubia was the site chosen by Ramesses II for two temples, cut into the cliffs. The main temple was dedicated to him and the gods Ptah, Amen-Re and Re-Harakhte. Four colossal seated statues of Ramesses, each 20 metres high, form the facade of the main temple. The smaller temple is dedicated to Ramesses' Great Wife, Queen Nefertari, and the goddess Hathor. The two temples were relocated higher up the cliff in a massive project to make way for the construction of the Aswan Dam in the 1960s.



Malkata

Malkata is the site of the palace of Amenhotep III, located on the west bank of the Nile, opposite Thebes, the New Kingdom capital city. The palace was a vast complex, called the 'House of Nebmaatre – the Dazzling Sun Disc'. It consisted of royal palaces, administration buildings, a small temple of Amen, parade grounds, courtyards and gardens. Little is left of the complex as it was mainly built of sun-dried bricks and timber. (For further details, see page 264.)

Deir el Medina

Deir el Medina was the village of workers responsible for cutting and decorating the royal Theban tombs in New Kingdom Egypt. It was located in the hills on the west bank of the Nile, opposite the capital city, Thebes. The workers there referred to themselves as

'servants in the Place of Truth'. The site is one of the most studied villages of the ancient world, providing a wealth of evidence about the lives of these specialised workers. (For further details, see pages 406–7.)

El Amarna (Akhetaten)

The new capital city founded by pharaoh Akhenaten in the New Kingdom was known as Akhetaten, 'the horizon of Aten'. It is now known as El Amarna. It lay approximately 350 kilometres north of Thebes and the site had not been built upon previously. It remained Akhenaten's capital for most of his reign but was abandoned after his death. The site was approximately 9 kilometres long and 4.5 kilometres wide. It housed palaces, nobles' estates, temples to the god Aten, a workers' village and rock-cut tombs. (For further details, see pages 292–4.)

Further reading

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