THE OXFORD HISTORY OF

THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

From the Hyksos to the Late Second Millennium BC

VOLUME III

Edited by KAREN RADNER,
NADINE MOELLER *and* D. T. POTTS

The Oxford History of the Ancient Near East

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Preface

THIS IS THE third volume of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East*, which is devoted to Egypt and Nubia, Anatolia, the Levant and the Aegean, and Mesopotamia and Iran during the second half of the second millennium BC, broadly corresponding to the Late Bronze Age. The book's cover depicts a colorless, chalcedony cylinder seal of Middle Assyrian date, together with its modern impression on a strip of clay. Acquired between 1885 and 1908 by Pierpont Morgan, the seal is today housed in the collection of the Morgan Library & Museum, New York (accession number 0595) and shows a griffin-demon, down on one knee, grasping the tail of a bull. The name of the seal's owner, one Aššur-kimuya, appears beneath the demon's wings. This is the third specimen in our collection of five beautiful cylinder seals from different parts of the Near East that grace the individual covers of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East*, highlighting the region's cultural commonalities and differences, its endlessly fascinating iconography, and the high level of craftsmanship found across the region.

In contrast to the essentially regional narratives that characterize the first and second volumes of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East*, the histories of the vast geographical horizon stretching from the Nile to Iran in the period dealt with here were closely connected and often intimately entangled. With the Late Bronze Age, we largely leave behind the problems that impeded correlation and synchronization of local chronologies in the preceding periods, as the absolute chronology of Western Asia at this era is on much more solid, if not yet absolutely certain, ground. If regnal dates are known, the uncertainty margins are

generally relatively narrow, no more than a decade; the individual chapters discuss the available source materials and the resultant possibilities and challenges for establishing relative and absolute chronologies.

The following Time Chart on pp. xiii-xv presents a concise overview of the chronological coverage of this volume; for more details, we refer the reader to the tables provided in Chapters 23 and 24 (for the Egyptian rulers of the Second Intermediate Period), in Chapter 29 (for the rulers of Mittani and the synchronisms with contemporary monarchs), and in Chapter 32 (for the Assyrian royal house and its contemporaries), which underpin and deepen the information given in our chart. Although many Elamite rulers of the Late Bronze Age are known by name, we only include Kidin-Hutran (late thirteenth century BC) and his successors in our chart, as both the sequencing and dating of the earlier kings—including Untaš-Napiriša, the famous founder of Chogha Zanbil—are still very tentative, with little agreement among specialists; the reader is referred to the in-depth discussions in Chapter 34. Absolute dates are given for the New Kingdom rulers of Egypt and for the Assyrian kings, but not for the monarchs of Hatti, Mittani, Babylonia, and Elam, as these regional chronologies are dependent on those of Egypt and especially Assyria. The earlier parts of our chart should be consulted together with the time chart given in the second volume of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East*, as there is some chronological overlap. The dates given for the last rulers of the First Dynasty of Babylon are those of the Middle Chronology (see chapter 11 in volume 2 for details).

The second volume of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East* closed with the decline of the Middle Kingdom in Egypt and the collapse of the kingdom of Babylon in Mesopotamia, and the present volume picks up the regional strands of history in Lower and Upper Egypt, where new regional states arose at Avaris and Thebes, and in Anatolia and northern and southern Mesopotamia, where relatively recently arrived warrior elites established the Hittite state and the kingdoms of Mittani and Karaduniaš (Kassite Babylonia). Eventually reunited under Theban leadership, Egypt under the Eighteenth Dynasty and later the Ramessides was the superpower of the age, whose influence deeply shaped the culture and society of its neighbors, especially Nubia and

the Levant, which were integrated to different degrees into the Egyptian state administration. Egypt's only serious political rival was the Hittite Empire, with its center deep in the mountains of central Anatolia. It was in the coastal cities of the northern Levant, with their hugely important ports of trade, that the political and commercial interests of the two powers first collided, leading to close engagement both on the battlefield and at the negotiating table. Eventually, Hittite ambitions in the Levant stalled not because of Egypt, but because of the growing power of the northern Mesopotamian kingdom of Assyria, first at the expense of its former overlord Mittani and increasingly also of the Hittite state. Compared to the nuanced and detailed reconstructions that are possible for these polities, political developments in Nubia, Iran, and the Aegean, where the available sources are more limited in scope, are far less clear. There is no doubt, however, that states in these regions were integral participants in the long-distance commerce, power politics, and exchange of ideas and cultural practices that defined the ancient Near East in the Late Bronze Age.

Like the two previous volumes of the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East*, this book brings together the expertise, perspectives, and talent of an exciting mix of distinguished scholars from across the globe, each an established expert in their subject area. We are honored that they have agreed to contribute the twelve chapters that constitute the present volume, covering the time "from the Hyksos to the late second millennium BC." Their work showcases a wide range of approaches to history-writing that the very different bodies of available sources enable and necessitate, from the analysis of monumental, domestic, and funerary architecture and the study of diverse expressions of material culture (e.g., pottery, seals, and coffins) to the consideration of the region's geographical and climatic characteristics and the interpretation of a great many different text genres recorded on stone, clay, and papyrus. Draft manuscripts for the chapters were received between November 2018 and September 2020.

Our editorial work on the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East* was supported by the Center for Advanced Studies of LMU Munich (CAS^{LMU}), which awarded fellowships to Nadine Moeller and Dan

Potts in July 2016, 2017, and 2018. In these three weeks spent together in Munich, the groundwork that underpins this volume was laid, while much of the joint editorial work on the chapters of the third volume was accomplished during our 2019 meetings in Chicago, Penjwin (Kurdish Autonomous Region of Iraq), and Pouillon (Chalosse region, France). When the global COVID-19 (Sars-CoV-2) pandemic made it impossible for us to meet in 2020 due to travel restrictions, we were able to continue our close collaboration across continents and time zones. While we certainly missed our time together, our joint GoogleDrive folders ensured that work on the volume progressed relatively smoothly, and our long-established WhatsApp group "OHANE Editors" turned into our most important mode of communication.

In transcribing Egyptian proper nouns, we follow the conventions of *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, edited by Ian Shaw (OUP 2004, rev. ed.). We do not use hyphenation to separate the components of Hittite personal names, or the Indo-European names of the Mittani rulers (e.g., Tudhaliya, Parattarna), but we follow normal practice in marking the individual words within Akkadian proper nouns (e.g., Aššur-uballiṭ, Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta), and also within Elamite, Hurrian, and Kassite names (e.g., Šutruk-Nahhunte, Urhi-Teššub, Burna-Buriaš). In accordance with Hittite phonology, the sibilants in Hittite names are realized as /s/ rather than /š/ (e.g., Hattusa instead of Hattuša; Mursili instead of Muršili). Whenever a person or place is widely known by a conventional spelling, we use that (e.g., Tiglath-pileser instead of Tukulti-apil-Ešarra, Cutha instead of Kutiu). We do not use any long vowels in proper nouns, including modern Arabic and Farsi place names.

We are very grateful that the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, via the International Award for Research in Germany 2015 to Karen Radner, allowed us to engage the help of several individuals whose expertise and attention to detail smoothed the editorial process very considerably. At LMU Munich, we thank Denise Bolton for language-editing several chapters; Thomas Seidler for consolidating and checking the chapter bibliographies, and Dr Andrea Squitieri for creating the individual chapter maps. We are also grateful to Philipp Seyr (Liège) for his diligent efforts in harmonizing the Egyptian names and spellings across

the volume. The index was prepared by Luiza Osorio Guimarães da Silva (Chicago), who was also instrumental in harmonizing proper nouns across chapters and volumes. As ever, we are indebted to our friend and editor at Oxford University Press, Stefan Vranka, who initiated the *Oxford History of the Ancient Near East* and greatly aided our work at every step, on this volume and on all others. To all of these individuals and also and especially to our authors, we owe a debt of gratitude in making the timely publication of this book possible, despite the challenging times many of us experienced in 2020 and 2021.

Time Chart

	Egypt		*Anatolia*	*Mesopotamia*			*Iran*
				Syria	*Iraq*		
1750 BC	**Second Intermediate Period (1750–1550)**					***Babylonia***	
	Fourteenth Dynasty (selected) ***Eastern Nile Delta*** Ya'ammu Yakbim Qareh 'Ammu Sheshi Ya'qub-Her	**Last kings of Thirteenth Dynasty**				**First Dynasty of Babylon** . . . Samsu-iluna (1749–1712) Abi-ešuh (1711–1684) Ammi-ditana (1683–1647)	
1650 BC	**Fifteenth Dynasty** ***"Hyksos"*** Salitis (Skrhr) Bnon Khyan Yanassi	**Sixteenth Dynasty** (selected) ***Thebes*** Djehuty Mentuhotepi (Sankhenra) Nebiryraw I (Sewadjenra) Bebiankh (Seuserenra)	***Hatti*** . . . Hattusili I Mursili I			 Ammi-ṣaduqa (1646–1626) Samsu-ditana (1625–1595)	
1580 BC		**Seventeenth Dynasty** ***Thebes*** Rahotep (Sekhemra Wahkhau) Sobekemsaf I (Sekhemra Wadjkhau) Sobekemsaf II (Sekhemra Shedtawy) Intef V (Sekhemra Wepmaat) Intef VI (Nubkheperra) Intef VII (Sekhemra Heruhermaat) Ahmose I (Senakhtenra) Taa (Seqenenra) Kamose (Wadjkheperra)	. . .			**Kassite Dynasty**	
	Apepi Khamudi						

1550 BC	**New Kingdom (1550–1069)**	Telipinu	***Mittani***	***Assyria***		***Elam***
	Eighteenth Dynasty (1550–1292)				…	
	Ahmose II (1550–1525)					
	Amenhotep I (1525–1504)		…	…	Agum II	…
	Thutmose I (1504–1492)	…	Šuttarna I	Puzur–Aššur III	Burna–Buriaš I	
	Thutmose II (1492–1479)		…	…		
	♀ Hatshepsut (1479–1458) | Thutmose III (1479-1425)					
				Aššur-nadin-ahhe I (?–1431)		
		Tudhaliya I	Sauštatar	Enlil-naṣir II (1430–1425)		
	Amenhotep II (1425–1397)			Aššur-nerari II (1424–1418)		
				Aššur-bel-nišešu (1417–1409)	Kara-indaš	…
		…	…	Aššur-rem-nišešu (1408–1401)	Kadašman-Harbe I	
	Thutmose IV (1397–1388)		Artatama	Aššur-nadin-ahhe I (1400–1391)	Kurigalzu I	
	Amenhotep III (1388–1350)	Suppiluliuma I	Šuttarna II	Eriba-Adad I (1390–1364)	Kadašman-Enlil I	
	Amenhotep IV = Akhenaten (1350–1334)		Tušratta	Aššur-uballiṭ I (1363–1328)	Burna-Buriaš II	
					Kara-hardaš	…
	Smenkhkara/Neferneferuaten (?)				Nazi-Bugaš	
	Tutankhaten = Tutankhamun (1333–1323)		Šattiwaza	Enlil-nerari (1327–1318)	Kurigalzu II	
	Ay (1323–1319)					
	Horemheb (1319–1292)			Arik-den-ili (1317–1306)		
		Arnuwanda II				
		Mursili II	Šattuara I	Adad-nerari I (1305–1274)	Nazi-Maruttaš	…
1295 BC	**Nineteenth Dynasty (1292–1185)**	Muwatalli II				
	Rameses I (1292–1290)		Wasašatta		Kadašman-Turgu	
	Sety I (1290–1279)	Mursili III = Urhi-Teššub				
	Rameses II (1279–1213)		Šattuara II	Shalmaneser I (1273–1244)		
		Hattusili III			Kadašman-Enlil II	…
					Kudur-Enlil	
				Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207)	Šagarakti-Šuriaš	
		Tudhaliya IV			Kaštiliaš IV	
					Enlil-nadin-šumi	Kidin-Hutran

	Merenptah (1213–1203) Amenmessu (1203–1199) Sety II (1199–1193) Saptah/♀ Tausret (1193–1185)			Aššur-nadin-apli (1206–1203) Aššur-nerari III (1202–1197) Enlil-kudurri-uṣur (1196–1192) Ninurta-apil-Ekur (1191–1179)	Kadašman-Harbe II Adad-šuma-iddina Adad-šuma-uṣur	Šutruk-Nahhunte I
	20th Dynasty (1185–1069)				Meli-Šipak	
	Sethnakht (1185–1181) Rameses III (1181–1150)	Suppiluliuma II		Aššur-dan I (1178–1133)	Marduk-apla-iddina I Zababa-šuma-iddina Enlil-nadin-ahi	Kutir-Nahhunte
	Rameses IV Rameses V Rameses VI Rameses VII Rameses VIII Rameses IX Rameses X Rameses XI (1099–1069)			Ninurta-tukulti-Aššur (1133) Mutakkil-Nusku (1132) Aššur-reša-iši (1132–1115) Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076) Ašared-apil-Ekur (1075–1074) Aššur-bel-kala (1073–1056) Eriba-Adad II (1055–1054) …	**Second Dynasty of Isin** … Nebuchadnezzar I …	Šilhak-Inšušinak Hutelutuš-Inšušinak

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Daniel Polz studied Egyptology, prehistory, and linguistics at the University of Heidelberg. After positions as a research associate at the Cairo branch of the German Archaeological Institute (1991–1994) and as assistant and then associate professor at the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at the University of California, Los Angeles (1993–1998), he returned to Cairo in 1999 as the local German Archaeological Institute's Associate Director. Since 1991, he has directed the excavations at Dra Abu el-Naga (Western Thebes/Luxor). His books include *Der Beginn des Neuen Reiches: zur Vorgeschichte einer Zeitenwende* (De Gruyter, 2007).

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Abbreviations

AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
ÄL	*Ägypten & Levante*
AMIT	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan*
AnSt	*Anatolian Studies*
AoF	*Altorientalische Forschungen*
APA	*Acta Praehistorica et Archaeologica*
ArchAnz	*Archäologischer Anzeiger*
ASAE	*Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypt*
BaM	*Baghdader Mitteilungen*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*
BiOr	*Bibliotheca Orientalis*
BMSAES	*British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan*
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*
CdE	*Chronique d'Égypte*
CDLB	*Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin*
CRIPEL	*Cahiers de Recherches de l'Institut de Papyrologie et d'Égyptologie de Lille*
DAFI	*Cahiers de la délégation archéologique française en Iran*
EA	*Egyptian Archaeology*
GM	*Göttinger Miszellen*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
IrAnt	*Iranica Antiqua*
IstMit	*Istanbuler Mitteilungen*

JAEI	*Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections*
JANEH	*Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History*
JANER	*Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JARCE	*Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
JCSMS	*Journal of the Canadian Society for Mesopotamian Studies*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JEH	*Journal of Egyptian History*
JMA	*Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
MDAIK	*Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo*
MDOG	*Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*
MIO	*Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung*
NABU	*Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires*
NEA	*Near Eastern Archaeology*
OJA	*Oxford Journal of Archaeology*
OLZ	*Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*
RA	*Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*
RdE	*Revue d'Égyptologie*
RlA	*Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*
SAAB	*State Archives of Assyria Bulletin*
SAK	*Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur*
SMEA	*Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici*
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
WdO	*Die Welt des Orients*
ZA	*Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*
ZÄS	*Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*
ZOrA	*Zeitschrift für Orient-Archäologie*

23

The Hyksos State

Irene Forstner-Müller

23.1. Introduction

In its most narrow sense, the term "Hyksos" refers to a group of six rulers who ruled the northern part of Egypt as the Fifteenth Dynasty during the Second Intermediate Period.[1] Writing much later in the third century BC during the Ptolemaic period, the priest Manetho (as even later quoted by Flavius Josephus) explains the term as "*Hykussos*: shepherd kings. *Hyk* means in their priests' language 'king,' *usos* 'shepherd' in the people's language, put together it means *Hykussos*."[2] In fact, this expression is derived from the Egyptian term *heka khasut*, "ruler of the foreign lands," which is also attested in original sources from the time of the Fifteenth Dynasty (see section 23.3). Manetho records furthermore:

> . . . unexpectedly, from the regions of the East, invaders of obscure race marched in confidence of victory against our land. By main force they easily seized it without striking a blow and having overpowered the rulers of the land, they then burned our

1. The author is indebted to Pamela Rose for correcting the language and to Astrid Hassler for preparing the illustrations.

2. Flavius Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 1: 82.

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> cities ruthlessly, razed to the ground the temples of the gods, and treated all the natives with a cruel hostility, massacring some and leading into slavery the wives and children of others.[3]

Until relatively recently, researchers have followed uncritically Manetho's statement that the Hyksos were invaders from the Near East. While a more unorthodox view saw a link to the Hurrians of northern Mesopotamia,[4] more commonly their origin was connected with the Israelites.[5] A widely held view sees the ancestors of the "Hyksos" as coming to Egypt from the eastern Mediterranean coast/Syro-Palestine as the result of several waves of immigration.[6] However, none of these assumptions represents an accurate or complete assessment of the reasons for the emergence of the Hyksos state.

The present chapter first surveys the situation at Middle Kingdom–period Tell el-Dabʿa and provides the background for the presence of the "Hyksos" in the eastern Nile delta (figure 23.1). We then turn to the reconstructed sequence of the Fifteenth Dynasty, the Hyksos rulers, before focusing on the territory of the Hyksos state. It then summarizes the relevant results of the excavations at this site, ancient Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos state, followed by a discussion of its administration and its contacts outside Egypt. The chapter closes with an assessment of the end of the Hyksos state and its aftermath.

23.2. "Hyksos prehistory" in Middle Kingdom Tell el-Dabʿa

The settlement of population groups originating from regions in the Near East in the eastern Nile delta of Egypt is a well-known phenomenon

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3. Flavius Josephus, *Contra Apionem* 1: 73. Translation after Waddell 1964: 79.

4. Helck 1971: 102–103.

5. For a recent overview, see Schneider 2018a.

6. So still argued recently in Wilkinson 2010: 184. For the difficulties of understanding the Hyksos as a population group or even "race," see Candelora 2018.

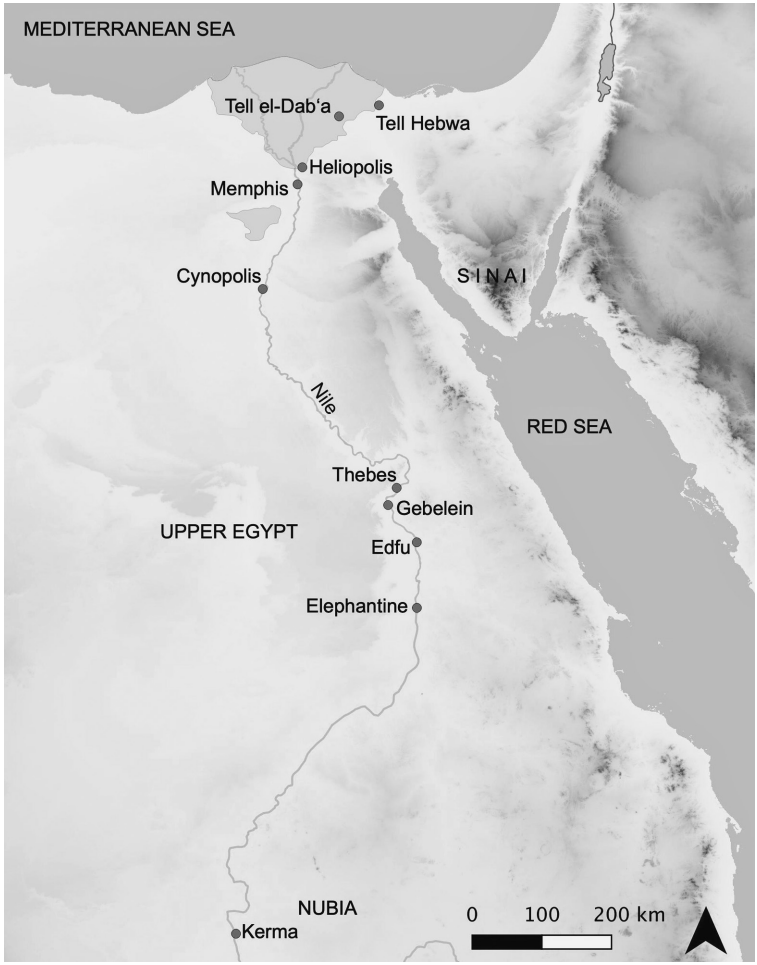

FIGURE 23.1. Map of sites mentioned in this chapter. Prepared by Andrea Squitieri (LMU Munich).

in antiquity. As early as the fourth millennium BC, there is evidence for intensive cultural contact attested by elements of material culture (cf. chapter 2 in volume 1). Therefore, the appearance of "Hyksos culture" is not a unique event occurring suddenly in the Second Intermediate Period, but is the result of a long tradition of cultural contacts between Egypt and its eastern neighbors. Manetho's narrative of a conquest of

Egypt by an enemy from the east—the Hyksos—is therefore likely a mere literary topos.

With the beginning of the Middle Kingdom, the eastern Nile delta, the border region to the Sinai and the eastern Mediterranean coast, became a focus of interest for the rulers of the late Eleventh and early Twelfth Dynasties. The Egyptian kings habitually founded settlements at the fringes of their country in order to urbanize areas that had not been previously settled. A well-known example of this practice was in the Fayum, and another was the establishment of a settlement at modern Tell el-Dabʿa in the eastern Nile delta.

The first traces of habitation at Tell el-Dabʿa go back as far as the beginning of the Middle Kingdom (end of the Eleventh Dynasty or beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty) when a planned settlement was created in Area F/I.[7] This settlement was soon abandoned, and after a hiatus, two consecutive phases of settlement followed during the mid-Twelfth Dynasty, the later of which, attested in the north of the town, most probably dated to the reign of Senusret III.[8] All of these settlements were built with an orthogonal street grid in what one may liken to the much later "Hippodamic system." The material culture found in these settlements provides no evidence for any discernible eastern influence, and thus it seems that an Egyptian population was settled here by the Egyptian state.

The situation changed in the later Middle Kingdom. From the late Twelfth Dynasty onward, traits typical of populations settling along the eastern Mediterranean coast and further east appear in the material culture of Tell el-Dabʿa.[9] If we assume that the carriers of this culture were people with an Asiatic ethnic background, this would form the starting point for a development that later led to the foundation of the Hyksos state in the Fifteenth Dynasty with its capital Avaris.[10] For the time being, the question of whether these new arrivals migrated to the eastern

7. Czerny 1999.

8. Czerny 2015; Forstner-Müller et al. 2005.

9. Bietak 1991; 2010b: 149.

10. For the mixing of Egyptian and "Hyksos" material culture, see the case study by Bader 2013: 276–279.

Nile delta of their own accord or were settled there by the Egyptian state must remain open.

These groups and/or individuals did not arrive as separate waves of immigration, but their presence at Tell el-Dabʿa resulted from a continuous process of interaction and exchange between the delta and the neighboring regions to the east.[11] Due to the highly centralized organization of the Egyptian state in the Middle Kingdom, the first immigrants may have been specialists brought there by state authority in order to take on roles in seafaring, the military, and the expeditionary forces.[12] We may assume that Egypt's wealth and security—as proverbial (albeit at a much later time) in the Bible (e.g., the "flesh pots of Egypt" in Exodus 16:3)—provided incentives to boost immigration.

The population of Avaris was certainly not a closed community in the anthropological sense that could be compared with other populations in the Levant. Terms borrowed from the Bible, such as "Canaanites,"[13] are therefore not appropriate for describing the people of Avaris (and the eastern delta), as this would imply far too close a relationship with eastern Mediterranean population groups.

In Avaris, fully acculturated, partly acculturated, and authentically Egyptian populations lived side by side, and archaeologically, no ethnically defined town quarters can be discerned.[14] The town quarters and cemeteries of Avaris were probably not grouped according to ethnicity but according to the functional relationships between the inhabitants of the houses and those buried in the associated graves.[15]

At the end of the Middle Kingdom, during the Thirteenth Dynasty, the weakness of central state power resulted in the emergence of a

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11. Bietak 2010b: 149.

12. Bietak 2010b: 141–142.

13. This biblical term is also problematic with regard to its relationship to the Hebrews, whom the Bible portrays as coming out of Egypt and conquering Canaan; cf. Assmann 1998.

14. Against Bietak 2016; 2018.

15. For the analysis and interpretation of town quarter R/III in Avaris, see Forstner-Müller, Jeuthe, Michel, and Prell 2015: 21; against Bietak 2016: 269–272.

"Hyksos culture"—or at least a "Hyksos consciousness"—from this mixed population and eventually in the secession of the northern part of Egypt from the rest of the country, under the rule of the Fifteenth Dynasty.

With the exception of King Apepi, the rulers of the Fifteenth Dynasty did not have Egyptian but northwest Semitic names.[16] This of course need not to be seen as an argument in favor of the hypothesis that the Hyksos were invaders from the east. However, the preference for northwest Semitic names certainly indicates that the mixed population group living in Egypt since the Middle Kingdom had managed to retain elements of their original background over time. In any case, the rise to prominence of a population element distinct from the Egyptian majority raises questions about the modalities of settlement and acculturation in Middle Kingdom Egypt[17] and how this group (and others) interacted with the Egyptian state.

Without doubt, the extent of the fusion between Egyptian and foreign elements in the Hyksos culture is without precedent in Egypt's earlier history.[18] The fact that this process of acculturation and assimilation started already in the late Middle Kingdom[19] highlights the fact that historical traditions and the archaeological record are often not congruent.[20] The emergence of the Hyksos state in the eastern Nile delta manifests itself primarily in a material culture[21] that is distinct from that of the rest of contemporary Egypt.[22] Its "foreignness" manifests itself most

16. For these names, see the detailed discussion by Schneider 1998: 34, 39–49.

17. Recently discussed in detail by Bietak 2010b: 159–156.

18. See also Bietak in Hein 1994: 39.

19. For evidence of the phenomenon of a distinctive visualization of a "Hyksos culture" within the material culture in the Egyptian eastern delta on the basis of ceramics, see Bietak et al. 2001; Aston 2004: 53; Kopetzky 2010: 272–273.

20. For this topic and its complicating factors, see Schneider 2003: 339.

21. Bietak et al. 2001.

22. Forstner-Müller and Müller 2006: 99.

clearly in funerary culture, some of whose characteristics are alien to traditional Egyptian practices.[23]

23.3. Sequence and chronology of the Hyksos rulers

The reconstruction of the Fifteenth Dynasty period is difficult due to the paucity and fragmentary state of the available sources. The political landscape therefore remains largely obscure, and even the chronology and sequence of the kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty are debated. Among the few sources on this subject, the most important are the Turin King List and the sequence provided by the Ptolemaic priest Manetho, transmitted by authors such as Josephus.[24] Only two fragmentary lines in the Turin King List can be safely assigned to the Fifteenth Dynasty,[25] and only one royal name, Khamudi, survives, mentioned as the last king of the Fifteenth Dynasty: this is the only attestation of this ruler. If we assume that the comparatively well-attested King Apepi was the only Hyksos king who ruled for a long period of time (at least thirty-three years), we may identify him with the king listed on a third fragment of the Turin King List as Khamudi's immediate predecessor.[26] In addition to the problematic source situation, another difficulty is the identification of the Hyksos names known from the Greek versions given by Manetho with the names rendered in hieroglyphics on the contemporary sources such as the sealings.

Over the course of the Fifteenth Dynasty, the titulary used by the Hyksos rulers underwent changes. The first kings of the dynasty used the epithet "Hyksos," as a royal inscription from a monumental limestone lintel found in Tell el-Dab'a shows. The inscription mentions the otherwise unknown ruler *Skrhr* (generally interpreted as corresponding

23. Summarized in Forstner-Müller 2010a, with further literature.

24. Schneider 2018b: 278.

25. Ryholt 1997: 118.

26. Ryholt 1997: 118.

to Sikru-Haddu) who bears the traditional Nebty and Golden Horus names of the Egyptian royal titulary together with the title "Hyksos," which replaces the "Son of Ra" title in the traditional sequence, followed by his name written in the cartouche.[27]

During the reign of Khyan, a change took place that happened in three steps.[28] In the first phase, "Hyksos Khyan" is used as the only designation, i.e., "Khyan, Ruler of the Foreign Lands" (cf. section 23.1); in the second phase, the titles "Son of Ra" and "Hyksos Khyan" appear together; and in the third and final phase, the Hyksos title is omitted and only "Son of Ra, Khyan" and "Good God, Seuserenra" remain in use. This remarkable development may not only provide information about the position of Khyan in the overall chronological sequence, but also sheds light on the evolving self-conception and representation of the Fifteenth Dynasty rulers.

The titles of any Egyptian king were an important means of contact and communication between the ruler, his subjects, and the gods. They can be interpreted as part of a ruler's official state program.[29] Thus it appears that during the earlier period of the Fifteenth Dynasty, the title Hyksos was part of the royal program and the kings wanted to represent themselves consciously and publicly as "Rulers of the Foreign Lands." During the reign of Khyan, however, the royal titles evolved into a purely Egyptian titulary following the existing tradition, and the Hyksos titles were used side by side in this period of transition.

The best sources available to us for reconstructing the Second Intermediate Period and for establishing the relative chronologies of Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean are seal impressions bearing royal names. King Khyan is currently the only Fifteenth Dynasty ruler to be attested on seal impressions from Avaris. These sealings were found in two parts of the town: in the domestic town quarter of Area R/

27. Bietak 1994: 150–152.

28. Following Ryholt 2018: 268–269.

29. Gundlach 1998: 17–20.

FIGURE 23.2. Seal impression of the Hyksos ruler Khyan from Avaris. Photo by Axel Krause, © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

III and in the palace of Area F/II (figure 23.2).[30] The earliest evidence for a sealing bearing this king's name comes from Area R/III in a context dating to the beginning of the Fifteenth Dynasty.[31] Unlike earlier assumptions, Khyan's reign can therefore not be placed in the later Fifteenth Dynasty but must be slotted into the early Fifteenth Dynasty, as also confirmed by the recently found sealings bearing his name from Edfu.[32] This adjustment in the relative chronology has important

30. Sartori 2009: 285–287, figs. 6–11.

31. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2013: 64; 69–71, figs. 4–9; Forstner-Müller and Reali 2018.

32. Moeller and Forstner-Müller 2018a: 13.

implications not only for Egypt, but also for the chronology of the wider Mediterranean world.[33]

The change in the royal titles under Khyan provides hints that can aid in the reconstruction of the chronological sequence of the Fifteenth Dynasty. As we have already discussed, King Khamudi has to be placed at the very end of the sequence of rulers, according to Manetho and the Turin King List; moreover, there are arguments to see King Apepi as Khamudi's predecessor, while King Khyan certainly is a ruler of the earlier Fifteenth Dynasty.[34] Khyan's successor may have been Yanassi, assuming that this person is the same as the one known from a stele found in Tell el-Dabʿa[35] on which Yanassi is mentioned as the king's (that is, Khyan's) eldest son. Sikru-Haddu, who bears only the title "Hyksos" and not "Son of Ra" in the lintel inscription, and Bnon, who is only known from Manetho's sequence, are likely predecessors of Khyan. Table 23.1 presents, with due caution, a suggested sequence of the kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty.

Converting this tentative relative sequence into absolute chronology is impossible, as the length of the period under the rule of the Fifteenth Dynasty kings is uncertain: the traditional total sum of regnal years of this dynasty is 108, but this has recently been subjected to critical scrutiny.[36] Kim Ryholt[37] reads the total as 140–149 years, and Thomas Schneider[38] suggests either 160–169 years or 180–189 years.

Then there is the issue of the chronological overlap between the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Dynasties at the beginning of the "Hyksos Period," and the overlap between the Fifteenth, Seventeenth, and

33. Moeller and Forstner-Müller 2018a: 9–13; Höflmayer 2018.

34. Forstner-Müller and Reali 2018; Moeller and Marouard 2018.

35. Bietak 1981b: 63–71; Ryholt 2018: 279.

36. For this discussion, see recently Schneider 2018b: 282–284.

37. Kim Ryholt, personal communication (April 2019). Cf. also Schneider 2018b: 282 n. 37.

38. Schneider 2018b: 283.

Table 23.1. The reconstructed sequence of the kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty

Kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty	Copyists of Manetho[a]	Hieroglyphic Evidence[b]
1. Sikru-Haddu	Salitis	Sikru-Haddu (Demotic Saker)
2. ?	Bnon	*Not attested*
3. Khyan	Apakhnan	(ʿApaq-)Ḫayrān
4. Yanassi	Iannas Yannas	Yinaśśiʾ-Ad
5. Apepi	Apophis	Apapi
6. Khamudi	*Not attested*	Ḫālmuʾdi

[a] The writing of the names follows Schneider 2018b: 278.

[b] Following Schneider 2018b: 278.

Eighteenth Dynasties at its end.[39] Such an overlap clearly existed between the last years of the Fifteenth Dynasty, the last years of the Seventeenth Dynasty, and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty. The Seventeenth Dynasty Theban ruler Kamose was a contemporary of the Hyksos ruler Apepi.[40] The reign of the last Hyksos king Khamudi fell entirely into the reign of Ahmose, the first king of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the founder of the New Kingdom, while the final regnal years of Apepi overlap with the beginning of Ahmose's reign, as shown by the relief fragments from Ahmose's pyramid temple in Abydos.[41]A further overlap between the regnal years of the Fifteenth and Eighteenth Dynasties can be deduced from the famous passage on the verso of Papyrus Rhind that mentions that in the eleventh regnal year of the ruling king (most probably Khamudi), the city of Heliopolis was conquered and "he of the

39. For a summary of this problematic topic, see V. Müller 2018: 199–206, with further literature.

40. Gardiner 1916: 95–110; Habachi 1972.

41. Harvey 1994.

South" (most probably Ahmose) captured Tjaru (Greek Sile, modern Tell Hebwa) in the Sinai.[42]

The beginnings of the Fifteenth Dynasty remain equally obscure.[43] The sealings from Avaris seem to indicate an overlap between the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Dynasties,[44] but this cannot be verified as there is no discernible overlap in other aspects of the material culture of the eastern delta region.[45]

23.4. The territory of the Hyksos state

Despite the paucity of sources, much has been written on the nature of the Hyksos state.[46] Oren, who uses the term "Hyksos kingdom," implied that the Hyksos kings ruled over an extensive territory with close allies or vassals in Palestine (kingdom of Sharuhen).[47] Bietak assumed that the Hyksos ruled over a territory that was not limited to the eastern delta but reached as far south as Gebelein in Upper Egypt, controlled in the form of a vassal state.[48]

Most research has focused on the extent of territory, while sidelining the question of the means by which this territory would have been controlled. To what extent did the very elaborate ideas and practices of state and government, as developed and maintained in Egypt during the Middle Kingdom, survive into the Second Intermediate Period,

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42. Peet 1923: col. 2 and 3. For further discussion of this passage, see sections 23.4 and 23.8.

43. Bietak et al. 2001.

44. For the recently discovered seal impressions of Khyan and a king of the Thirteenth Dynasty, see Moeller and Marouard 2011; 2018; Moeller and Forstner-Müller 2018a: 13.

45. Only the material culture of the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Dynasties can be distinguished from each other, while the Fourteenth Dynasty remains obscure.

46. See also Forstner-Müller and Müller 2006.

47. Oren 1997.

48. Bietak 1994: 26. This interpretation was recently challenged by Polz 2006.

and specifically in the Hyksos state? Only a better understanding of the administrative and hierarchical structure of Hyksos rule will allow answers to this question and will elucidate to what extent new concepts were applied by the new rulers.

Due to the scarcity of reliable textual sources, research on this subject must rely largely on archaeological evidence. It has been demonstrated that the Fifteenth Dynasty period saw a significant change in material culture,[49] as attested in the eastern delta as far south as Heliopolis[50] and further eastward into the Sinai.[51] If one accepts the general idea of a congruence of material culture and its carriers, one may therefore assume that the Hyksos (sometimes) ruled over these regions. That the region of the Sinai was at least for some time part of the territory under Hyksos control finds support in the already-discussed Papyrus Rhind, which mentions a Hyksos stronghold in Tjaru (Greek Sile, modern Tell Hebwa) that was besieged for three years and finally conquered by Ahmose.[52] Typically for an "Intermediate Period," multiple parties will have attempted to control as large a part of Egypt as possible, and significant fluctuation in the territory under the control of the different Hyksos kings is therefore likely. As already discussed, the development of the royal titulary from openly using the title Hyksos, "Ruler of the Foreign Lands," to employing only traditional Egyptian titles (see section 23.3) may reflect changing political needs.

According to Manetho, the first king of the Fifteenth Dynasty, Salitis, ruled over both Lower and Upper Egypt,[53] and in his monumental building inscription from Tell el-Dab'a, King *Skrhr* used the traditional Nebty title,[54] which means that he at least was in a position to claim publicly to

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49. Bietak et al. 2001; Aston 2004: 53.

50. Schiestl 2008.

51. Bietak and Kopetzky 2012: 105–128; also M. Abdel Maksoud, personal communication (April 2019).

52. Ryholt 1997: 187.

53. As quoted by Flavius Josephus, *Contra Apionem* I: 77.

54. Bietak 1994.

hold power over Upper Egypt. The question of whether Hyksos control in Egypt ever reached beyond the eastern Nile delta to include Heliopolis and, at least temporarily, Memphis,[55] is hugely significant. Objects showing affinities to the Hyksos material culture were found in Gebelein in Upper Egypt,[56] and the already discussed seal impressions of King Khyan were recently unearthed in Edfu.[57] They are not necessarily evidence of Hyksos occupation or control of these regions, but still point toward the existence of lines of communication and exchange, be it between overlord and client or between trading partners.[58]

However, there is clearly a lack of certain goods from within Egypt at Avaris. On the one hand, the ceramic imports from Upper Egypt, which were never very common in the late Middle Kingdom, now disappeared completely.[59] On the other hand, high-quality raw material for silex tools from Upper Egypt was replaced with inferior local materials.[60] Thus it would seem that the Hyksos state had restricted access to regions in Egypt beyond the eastern delta.

23.5. Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos state

The town of Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos state and later the southern part of Piramesses, the delta residence of the Ramesside kings,[61] is

55. According to Manetho, as quoted by Flavius Josephus, I: 77, the first Hyksos ruler, Salitis, established the capital in Memphis and reigned from there.

56. Polz 2006; 2018: 231.

57. Moeller and Marouard 2011; 2018.

58. According to Manetho, as quoted by Flavius Josephus, I: 77: "He [Salitis] . . . received tributes from both Upper and Lower Egypt."

59. Kopetzky 2009: 275.

60. Tilmann 2007: 85, 91. However, Jeuthe 2015: 69 recently cast doubt on the presumed link between the changes in the use of silex raw material and political events.

61. Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2011: 23 n. 1, with earlier literature.

today partly covered by the modern village of Tell el-Dab'a in the modern province of Sharqeya (figure 23.3). The identification of Avaris with Tell el-Dab'a was first suggested by Labib Habachi[62] and later supported by Manfred Bietak.[63]

In its heyday, Avaris was the capital of the rulers of the Fifteenth Dynasty. With an area of ca. 260 hectares, it was among the most important cities of the second millennium BC in the ancient Near East. Like other major settlements in the Nile delta after the Prehistoric period, Avaris lies on one of the main branches of the Nile. In the case of Avaris, this is the Pelusiac branch, the Nile's easternmost main branch during the second millennium BC. At the time, this was the most important Nile branch, but only insignificant remains of this branch are still visible today west of the village of Khata'na. The long-term excavations of the Austrian Archaeological Institute at Tell el-Dab'a have brought to light a huge amount of information, shedding new light on the history and nature of the site.[64]

From the beginning of the Middle Kingdom to the end of the Second Intermediate Period, the town underwent a significant change in size, demography, and ethnic composition, as well as other sociopolitical patterns such as urban layout.[65]

As already stated, the earliest known settlement located in Area F/I goes back to the end of the Eleventh Dynasty or the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty.[66] After a hiatus in occupation which can be seen throughout the excavated parts of Tell el-Dab'a, the settlement shifted

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62. Habachi 2001.

63. Bietak 1981a.

64. For an overview of the current state of research, see Bietak 2010a: 11; Forstner-Müller 2014. Detailed information about the site and the research conducted there can be found on the webpage of the Austrian Archaeological Institute (www.oeai.at) and on the webpage of the excavation at Tell el-Dab'a (www.auaris.at).

65. For the development of Avaris, see also Bietak 2010a with alternative conclusions.

66. See Bietak in Hein 1994: 39 and Czerny 1999.

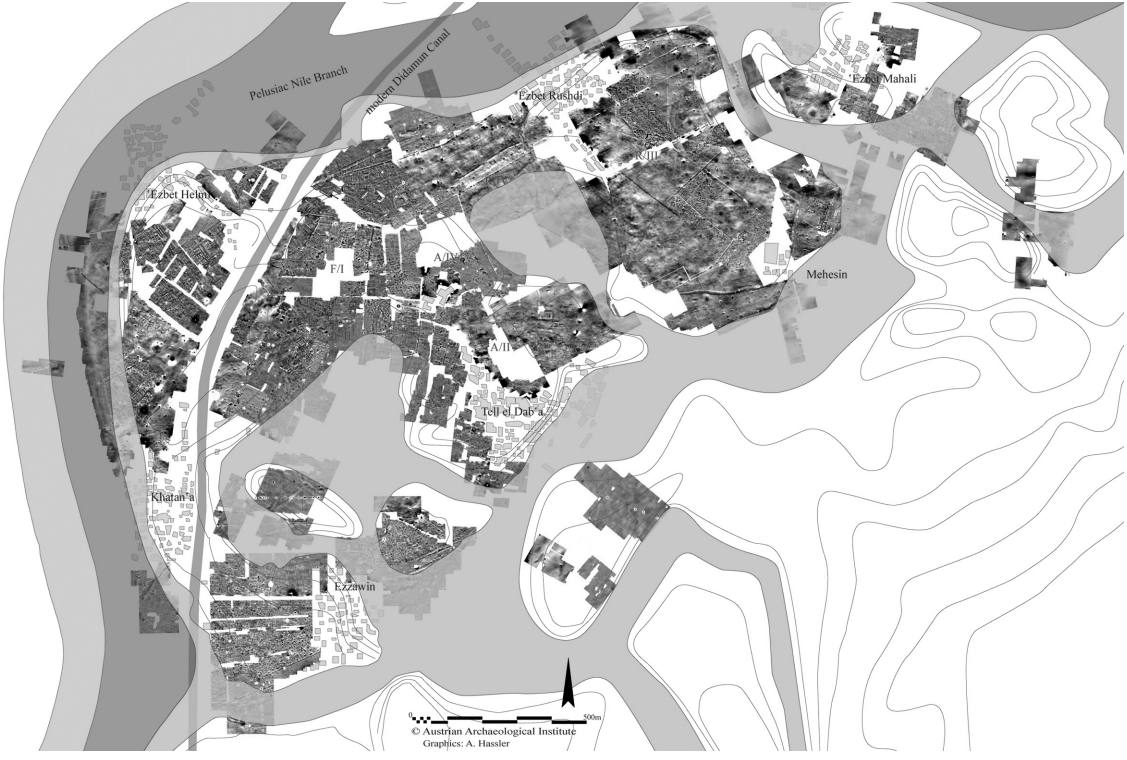

FIGURE 23.3. Map of Tell el-Dab'a, ancient Avaris. Plan by Astrid Hassler, © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

to the north, to Area R/I south of the modern village Ezbet Rushdi el-Sughayar, where a planned settlement[67] and possibly also a temple[68] were built during the mid-Twelfth Dynasty. Later in the Twelfth Dynasty, perhaps during the reign of Senusret III, these structures were partly overbuilt by a new settlement and temple.[69] During the later Twelfth Dynasty, this area formed the nucleus from which the town expanded, mainly to the south,[70] where areas that had not been occupied previously were now settled. The expansion of the settlement is related to the city's growth in population during the late Middle Kingdom, when "Asiatic" immigrants are attested for the first time in Avaris.[71] From this point onward, the characteristic mixture of Egyptian and Near Eastern elements can be found within the material culture of Tell el-Dab'a, eventually culminating in the "Hyksos culture" of the Fifteenth Dynasty, which can be found throughout the eastern delta.[72] At this time, parts of southern Tell el-Dab'a, namely areas A/II[73], A/IV[74] and F/I,[75] were settled.[76] During the Thirteenth Dynasty, new parts of the town were developed to the south of Ezbet Rushdi in Areas R/II[77] and R/IV.[78] The latter is of special interest, as it was part of the late Middle Kingdom harbor district. The southern limit of Area R/IV was defined by a massive wall,

67. For the older planned settlement, see also Czerny 2015: 31–72.

68. Forstner-Müller et al. 2005.

69. Czerny 2015: 73–74, 151–159.

70. Against Bietak 2010a: 18, who sees the "nucleus" of Avaris in Area F/I.

71. Bietak 2010b: 139–140, 153.

72. Aston 2004: 53; Kopetzky 2010: 272–273.

73. Forstner-Müller 2007.

74. See the preliminary discussion by Irmgard Hein on www.auaris.at (last accessed September 20, 2020).

75. Schiestl 2009: 24–25, 31–32, 219–319.

76. In general, see Bietak 2010a: 17, fig. 9a.

77. Sa. Müller 2013: 110–111, fig. 1.

78. Forstner-Müller, Hassler, Matić and Rose 2015: 75, fig. 60; Forstner-Müller 2021.

which most probably constitutes the harbor wall of this period. It is during that period, in the mid-Thirteenth Dynasty, that the name of Avaris (*hut-waret*) is attested for the first time, on a papyrus seal impression bearing the name of a mayor of Avaris called Ameny-Seneb-Nefer.[79] As this seal impression was found in a secondary context,[80] it is possible that the name for the town was already in use before this date.

During the earlier Thirteenth Dynasty, an impressive elite house with an attached garden and cemetery was erected in Area F/I.[81] In the later Thirteenth Dynasty, this building was abandoned and overbuilt by large houses[82] and tombs.[83] During this same period, a sacred precinct with temples,[84] priests' houses, and cemeteries[85] came into existence in Area A/II. The temple of god Seth/Ba'al Zephon, one of the main deities of Avaris, was located here.[86] This area continued to be the religious center of the town until the end of the New Kingdom.[87]

With the collapse of the centralized Egyptian state during the Thirteenth Dynasty, Avaris became one of the provincial capitals of the Fourteenth Dynasty, and eventually, in the Fifteenth Dynasty, it became the capital of the Hyksos realm. By now the town had reached its greatest extent.[88] It expanded in all directions: to the north as far as the modern village of Ezbet Machali, to the south to the now-disappeared southern

79. Czerny 2015: 21–22, 382–383.

80. Czerny 2015: 21–22.

81. Schiestl 2009, with further literature.

82. M. Müller 2015: 339–370.

83. For the tombs of the later phases in Area F/I, see Kopetzky 1993.

84. See Bietak 2010b: 139, 143–144, 154–156, figs. 4, 10.

85. For the cemeteries of the late Middle Kingdom in Area A/II, see Forstner-Müller 2008; 2010a.

86. Forstner-Müller 2010b: 111; for the cult of this god in Avaris, see Bietak 2010b: 157, fig. 14, with further literature.

87. Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2011.

88. Forstner-Müller 2010b: 103–123, 109.

feeder channel of the main harbor at Ezzawin, to the east to the modern village of Sama'na, and to the west it was limited by the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. Precincts of cemeteries, temples, and palaces were spatially separated from the rest of the town by enclosure walls, and this spatial organization remained intact until the beginning of the New Kingdom.[89]

The town thus underwent a change in function from a frontier settlement founded and planned by the centralized Egyptian state at the beginning and middle of the Twelfth Dynasty to a provincial capital during the Fourteenth Dynasty and finally to the political center of a realm that controlled at least northern Egypt under the "Hyksos" rulers of the Fifteenth Dynasty.

In the following, we first survey funerary practices as attested at Avaris during the Fifteenth Dynasty, then detail the relatively limited evidence for temples and religious beliefs, and finally discuss the palace(s) occupied by the Hyksos rulers.

23.5.1. Funerary practices at Avaris

Of the numerous peculiarities of Avaris that distinguish it from a traditional Egyptian settlement, the fusion of funerary and domestic spheres is perhaps the most remarkable. From the late Middle Kingdom onward, houses with associated tombs[90] are attested at Tell el-Dab'a, as well as dedicated cemeteries, such as the cemetery connected to the elite complex of the late Twelfth Dynasty and the Thirteenth Dynasty in Area F/I.[91]

From the beginning, the funerary culture of the inhabitants of Avaris combines Egyptian and Syro-Palestinian elements, providing parallels to typical features of the Middle Bronze Age culture in the Near East, such as weaponry (exclusively in association with male burials), certain types of ceramics, and donkey burials. Metal pins, found usually on the

89. Forstner-Müller 2008: 119–120.

90. Kopetzky 1993.

91. Schiestl 2009.

left shoulder of the deceased, may suggest that the woolen wrap-around garments, popular throughout the Near East, were worn instead of Egyptian linen attire. Whether this is a fashion choice or should be seen as a marker of ethnicity[92] must remain unclear.

Strikingly, Middle Bronze Age elements with parallels in the Near East are more frequent in the funerary culture than Egyptian ones; the opposite is true for the everyday material culture of the living, in which the Egyptian elements clearly dominate. The earliest evidence of Near Eastern characteristics in the funerary culture of Avaris derives from the cemetery in Area F/I and dates to the late Twelfth Dynasty.[93] High officials in the service of the king of Egypt were buried in the richly decorated tombs at this cemetery and expressed their social standing through the Egyptian value system, without denying their links to Syro-Palestinian culture (figure 23.4). The Egyptian-style funerary chapels of their tombs exhibit a high degree of acculturation.

During the Fifteenth Dynasty, we can observe an increasing consolidation and standardization within the funerary material culture of the eastern Nile delta region, especially in relation to burial inventories and architectural details of the tombs.[94] Typically, there is a separation between the above-ground structures, such as the funerary chapels that suggest traditional Egyptian cult activity, and the subterranean burial with pronounced Syro-Palestinian characteristics. The key characteristics of funerary culture here, most importantly the combination of Egyptian-style superstructures and Syro-Palestinian-style underground burials, as well as the basic arrangement of the burial and the offerings within the tombs, continued until the end of Hyksos rule.

Evidence for the conduct of differentiated rituals at the burial places after the funeral points to social stratification among the communities, as well as to the lasting effect of the acculturation process that survived

92. Thus Bietak 2016; 2018.

93. Schiestl 2009: 217–317.

94. Forstner-Müller and Müller 2006: 97–98.

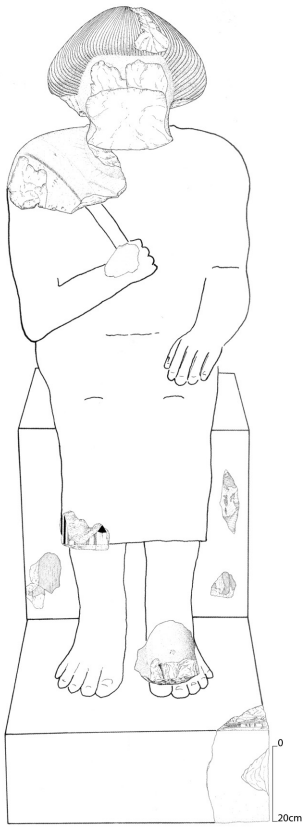

FIGURE 23.4. Reconstruction of the statue of an Asiatic dignitary. From Avaris, cemetery in Area F/I. Drawing by Robert Schiestl, © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

or even increased in subsequent generations.[95] The cemeteries document hierarchies of sacrificial acts and feasts, characterized by varying degrees of intimacy or exclusivity: there are individual offering pits directly at or very near the burial, while less exclusive offerings were deposited all over

95. Forstner-Müller 2008: 113–117; for the offering deposits, see V. Müller 2008.

the cemetery, and further offering pits were found in the vicinity of the mortuary chapels at the center of cemeteries.[96]

We can observe certain changes in funerary culture. At first, whenever there were multiple burials in one tomb, there was a clear tendency toward gender distinction, i.e., men and women were buried separately, and this custom is attested all over Egypt, for example also in the far south at Elephantine.[97] During the later Fifteenth Dynasty, however, large mudbrick tombs with a built shaft were constructed, usually directly integrated into the residential architecture or else located in the courtyard of private houses. These tombs, too, contained multiple burials, but now the genders were mixed, suggesting that the tombs served entire families, regardless of an individual's gender. The emergence of this type of shaft tomb as part of a private house is clearly linked to the expansion of the town and the greater density of its occupation.

In this later period, the evidence for warrior tombs (figure 23.5) and donkey burials ends, too. At Avaris, warrior tombs disappear in the mid-Fifteenth Dynasty,[98] but this is a wider phenomenon because by the beginning of the Late Bronze Age, the custom of burying a man as a warrior with his weapons had fallen out of use throughout Syro-Palestine and the wider Near East.[99]

The abandonment of the practice of warrior burials has been linked to changes in the perception of social hierarchies[100] that preferred to showcase the status of the deceased differently. The elevated social standing formerly expressed through personal weapons was now channeled into the political order and command structure of the late Hyksos state as the individual was absorbed into this larger unit, which quite possibly considered the burial of valuable military equipment a waste. Seen in

96. Forstner-Müller 2008: 115–117; V. Müller 2008: 279–314.

97. Stefan Seidlmayer, personal communication (April 2019).

98. The latest warrior burial at Avaris is dated to the mid-Fifteenth Dynasty; Forstner-Müller 2008: 49.

99. Philip 1995: 153.

100. Philip 1995: 140–154.

FIGURE 23.5. A warrior burial (a) and the scimitar (b) found therein. From Avaris. Photos by Irene Forstner-Müller (tomb) and Niki Gail (scimitar), © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

this light, the disappearance of weapons from funerary contexts may also indicate an increasingly close connection between state administration and the military.[101] In any case, the fact that the custom of warrior burials was abandoned in Avaris while the Fifteenth Dynasty was still in power shows that this change was not related to the emergence of a supposedly more cosmopolitan lifestyle in the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty,[102]

101. Cf. Forstner-Müller and Müller 2005: 200; Forstner-Müller 2008: 49, 124.

102. Philip 1995: 154.

nor to developments in Syro-Palestine during the Late Bronze Age, but was the result of local factors.

23.5.2. The temples of Avaris

Before the later Middle Kingdom, we do not know of any deity connected with the area of Tell el-Dabʿa. The only cult that is possibly attested is an ancestor cult for King Amenemhat I in Ezbet Rushdi.[103]

One of the main deities worshipped in Avaris was the Egyptian god Seth in his syncretic form merged with Baʿal Zephon (Baʿal Ṣapunu). The cult of this northern Syrian storm god was already locally attested in the late Middle Kingdom on a cylinder seal.[104] This god became the "Lord of Avaris" and was still venerated as an ancestor god ("Father of the Fathers") in the Ramesside period (Nineteenth Dynasty).[105] His temple was the main sanctuary of the town and was located in the eastern part of Avaris (figure 23.6). Only small parts of this important structure could be excavated, and only magnetometry surveys have made the reconstruction of its ground plan possible.[106] The earliest architectural remains of the temple that are presently known date to the later Fifteenth Dynasty.[107] However, it is attested as one of the city's most important temples even by the Ramesside period, when it was one of the major landmarks of the cultic topography of the new residence called Piramesses.[108]

The "Syro-Palestinian Temple District" is located in the vicinity of the Seth temple. Founded at the beginning of the Thirteenth Dynasty, it was in use until the early Eighteenth Dynasty.[109] The compound

103. See Arnold 2010: 185–186 and cf. section 23.5.

104. Bietak 2010b: 157–158.

105. Bietak 1990.

106. Forstner-Müller 2010b: 111, fig. 5.

107. Bietak 1990.

108. Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2011: 34, fig. 6.

109. Bietak 2010b: 154–156.

FIGURE 23.6. Temple of Seth at Avaris, combining the results of mapping, geophysical prospecting, and excavation. Image prepared by Irene Forstner-Müller, © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

comprised a group of larger temples with ground plans that are not Egyptian in style, as well as cemeteries that contain smaller shrines. These shrines especially manifest the new political power in Avaris and highlight the city's distinct polycultural and religious traditions during the Second Intermediate Period, where elements of Egyptian and Near Eastern architecture, lifestyles, and belief systems coexisted. Beyond this main sacred district, small temples were encountered in excavation areas throughout the town, in Area F/I[110] and possibly Area R/III.[111]

110. Forstner-Müller 2010b: 111–112, fig. 7.

111. This material is still unpublished.

23.5.3. The palace(s) of Avaris

The main palace of the Fifteenth Dynasty was located in the southern part of Avaris in Area F/II, just to the north of the modern village Khata'na (figure 23.7). It was discovered in the course of a magnetometer survey[112] and subsequently was investigated by archaeological excavation.[113]

This palace was certainly the seat of the government of the kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty, having replaced an earlier palace of the late Middle Kingdom. Both palaces show the same orientation, and this also corresponds to the orientation of the later Eighteenth Dynasty palace district in Ezbet Helmi.[114]

The layout of the Fifteenth Dynasty palace in Area F/II can be almost completely reconstructed by combining the results of the magnetometer survey and the archaeological excavations. It exhibits features belonging to both Egyptian and Near Eastern architectural traditions.[115] The building is a large complex with groups of rooms, courtyards, storage rooms, staircases, and towers. It was accessible from the north via a kind of vestibule. The southern part of the palace was almost completely destroyed by later activities.

Of special interest is a foundation deposit that was discovered at one of the corners of the palace,[116] following the tradition of Egyptian foundation pits. The objects recovered from this deposit include an inscribed faience plaque (its inscription is unfortunately no longer visible) and further faience objects, as well as a piece of copper. Before depositing the objects, pale yellow sand was poured into the pit, which shows that traditional Egyptian ritual practices were known and applied in the construction of the Fifteenth Dynasty palace.

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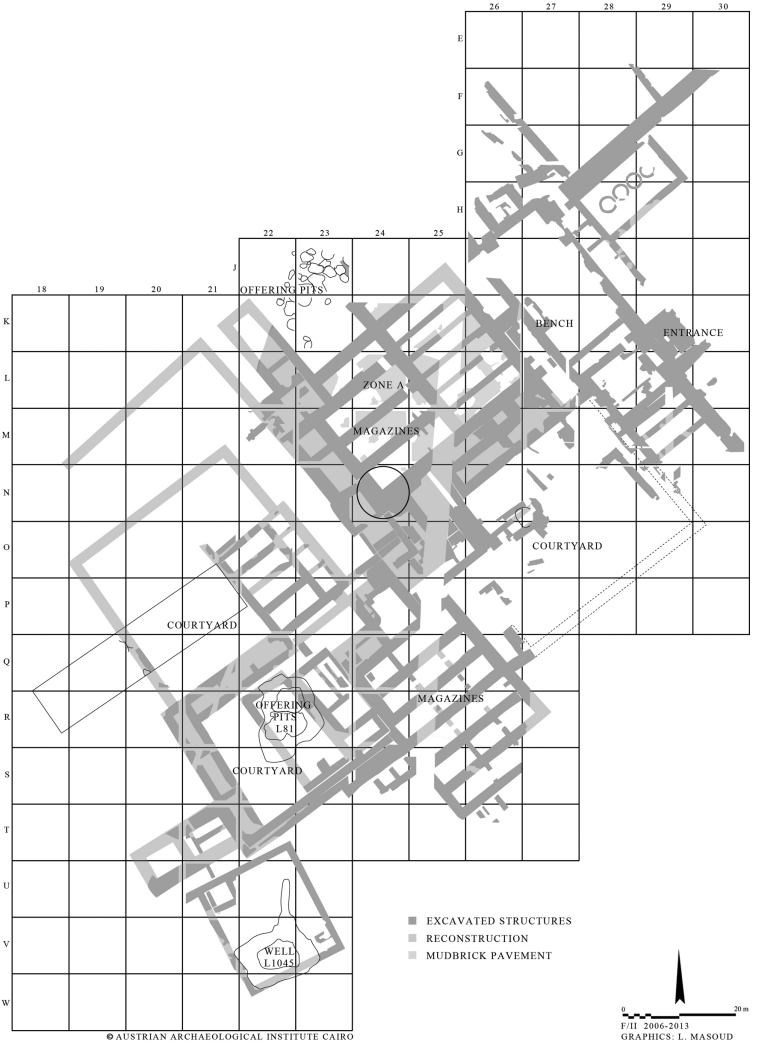
112. Bietak, Forstner-Müller, and Herbich 2006.

113. Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2006; 2009; Bietak et al. 2012–2013.

114. Forstner-Müller 2012: 683.

115. Against Bietak et al. 2012–2013: 19, 26.

116. Forstner-Müller 2011: 2–3; 2015.



THE FIGURE CONFLATES SEVERAL DIFFERENT PHASES

FIGURE 23.7. Plan of the Fifteenth Dynasty palace in Area F/II of Avaris. Plan by Leila Masoud, © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

At least two phases of construction can be identified.[117] The original dating of the early phase to the reign of King Khyan[118] must now be revised.[119] The exact date of its abandonment could also not be determined, but a connection with the expulsion of the last Hyksos ruler from Avaris at the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty is conceivable.[120]

Another possible palace, but with a different orientation, was discovered to the west. The massive building was partly excavated,[121] but it is covered today largely by the modern Didamun Canal and a major road connecting Faqus and Tanis.

23.6. The administration of the Hyksos state

Among the elements of material culture associated with the Hyksos rule, the most significant group of finds consists of the already mentioned seals and sealings with scarab impressions, and these provide some insights into mechanisms of state control and communication, internally and externally.

The traditional view was that the Hyksos state knew no centralized administration and that this consequently led to its collapse. However, the by now over one thousand sealings found at Tell el-Dab'a in recent years clearly demonstrate the existence of a Hyksos administration. This enormous number of seal impressions has resulted in a significant improvement of the understanding of the administrative organization of Avaris during the late Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period (Thirteenth to Fifteenth Dynasties), but our knowledge of the

117. Bietak et al. 2012–2013: 19–32.

118. Bietak et al. 2012–2013: 25.

119. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 184.

120. The dating of this palace is disputed. The present author here follows the dating of Karin Kopetzky, who puts the abandonment of the palace at the end of the Fifteenth Dynasty (Tell el-Dab'a Stratum D/2). Cf. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 184.

121. Forstner-Müller 2010b: 114.

details of the administration under the Fifteenth Dynasty nevertheless remains very limited. It should be noted that in addition to the large number of Egyptian-style stamp sealings, the excavations at Tell el-Dab'a also brought to light several sealings from cylinder seals from Syria and Mesopotamia,[122] as well as a small fragment of a clay tablet inscribed in cuneiform script and the Akkadian language.[123]

Some of the Egyptian-style stamp seal impressions bear the names of Egyptian officials.[124] Although these were found in layers dating to the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Dynasties, due to the characteristic spelling of names and titles they can be dated without exception to the Thirteenth Dynasty and therefore the later Middle Kingdom. This evidence shows that at that time, there was a lively exchange between Avaris and the Egyptian central government at the then capital city of Itj-tawy, and also provides information on specific administrative processes.

During the Fifteenth Dynasty, however, most of the titles of officials that were clearly present in the Thirteenth Dynasty material from Avaris are no longer attested.[125] Since titles such as the previously ubiquitous "vizier" disappear from the material record, we could argue that the elaborate administrative system of the Middle Kingdom was no longer in existence at Avaris, although the practice of sealing was still very popular.

The general absence of officials' names and titles on these sealings is the clearest sign that the administrative system of the Middle Kingdom did not continue at Avaris in all aspects. We can assume that with the separation of the Hyksos state from the rest of Egypt, the administration of the Fifteenth Dynasty would have generally undergone changes. However, as demonstrated by the writing equipment inscribed with

122. Collon and Lehmann 2011; Collon et al. 2011; van Koppen and Lehmann 2012–2013.

123. van Koppen and Radner 2009: 115–118.

124. The seal impressions bearing titles of Egyptian officials are currently being studied by Marcel Marée.

125. Marcel Marée, personal communication (April 2019); and see also Quirke 2004.

the name of Fifteenth Dynasty ruler Apepi[126] and the verso text of the mathematical Papyrus Rhind (the only papyrus attested from this king's reign),[127] certain Egyptian administrative traditions continued to be practiced at least during that reign. Yet despite the clear continuities, most obviously in the practice of sealing for authentication and security (as also conducted all over the contemporary Near East), there is much that is new: even the sealing practices under the Fifteenth Dynasty rulers differed in detail from those used in earlier periods.[128] Sealing objects was—as with the rest of Middle Bronze Age culture—a popular activity. However, the known administrative structure of the Thirteenth Dynasty was no longer in use, as is shown by the lack of officials' names and titles on the sealings.[129]

When and how did the administration of the Fifteenth Dynasty disassociate itself from the residence at Itj-tawy? To what extent, if any, did the seemingly marginalized central administration survive in Lower Egypt in parallel to the newly established state centered on Avaris? What changes (if any) took place in Avaris and in the eastern Nile delta after the foundation of the Hyksos state, both "horizontally" in regard to each individual's function within the workings of the state and "vertically" along the lines of the state hierarchy? Is it even possible to describe the characteristics of the administration of the Hyksos state? There are many open questions and very few certain answers.[130] Fundamentally, this is due to the fact that the chronological relationship between the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Dynasties is not well established. What is clear is that despite Manetho's sequencing, they were not consecutive; as we have discussed earlier (section 23.3), overlaps are not only possible, but even likely: one can assume that the Fifteenth Dynasty

126. Wildung 1994: 152.

127. Peet 1923; discussed by Quirke 1994: 156–158.

128. Marcel Marée, personal communication (April 2019).

129. Marcel Marée, personal communication (April 2019).

130. For an overview of the administrative restructuring processes at the time, see Shirley 2013: 523–570.

was coeval with the late Thirteenth Dynasty and that the Fourteenth Dynasty was coeval at least with the earlier Thirteenth Dynasty.

This lack of clarity makes the overall interpretation of the evidence from the Avaris sealings difficult. The sealings may hint at administrative and commercial exchange between the still-existing government of the Thirteenth Dynasty at Itj-tawy and the rulers of the Fourteenth and early Fifteenth Dynasties at Avaris. Compared to those of the Thirteenth Dynasty, the attested Fourteenth Dynasty sealings show a much reduced range of official titles: only "Treasurer" and "Elder King's Son" are attested,[131] although the number of seal impressions known per official is much larger than before.[132] Finally, the Fifteenth Dynasty sealings show royal, figurative, and pseudo-inscriptional designs and only feature very few titles,[133] and this is largely comparable to the contemporary situation at Thebes[134] and Elephantine[135] in Upper Egypt.

23.7. Contacts with the regions beyond Egypt: Near East, Cyprus, and Nubia

With the beginning of the Fifteenth Dynasty, contacts between Avaris and Egypt's traditional partners of the Middle Kingdom declined significantly.[136] However, finds from southern Palestine, the Aegean, Anatolia, and even southern Mesopotamia bear the name of King Khyan,[137] and this seems to indicate that the Hyksos state was still integrated into a far-reaching network of exchange during his reign. Based on the testimony

131. Ryholt 2018: 238, 260–263.

132. Marcel Marée, personal communication (April 2019).

133. Marcel Marée, personal communication (April 2019); see also Ben-Tor 2007: 185–186.

134. Polz 2007: 13–14.

135. von Pilgrim 1996: 253.

136. See also Kopetzky 2009: 275; 2015: 157.

137. Höflmayer 2018: 145–146.

of material culture, the contacts between Avaris and the Near East reached their peak during the late Middle Kingdom. It seems surprising that the rise to power of the Hyksos and the establishment of their capital at Avaris did not result in an increase in trade and importation; instead, the town lost its previous role as a major node in the interregional trade networks.[138]

If one considers the ancient world as a market economy with complex networks governing supply and demand, it becomes evident that the dissolution of the Egyptian territorial state had marked consequences for the wider region. The emergence of the new political structure in Lower Egypt destroyed the established mechanisms of distribution inside Egypt, and the significance of the Egyptian market as a partner in long-distance trade shrank dramatically to a fraction of the size it had been during the Middle Kingdom. As a result, trade between the Hyksos-ruled area and outside is likely to have been gradually reduced.

Imported pottery and cylinder sealings are crucial for our understanding of the nature of relations between Avaris and the Near East. With regard to ceramic imports, in particular storage jars from Syro-Palestine, the Fifteenth Dynasty certainly saw changes, as both the amount and range of this pottery decreased significantly.[139] It took until the late Second Intermediate Period for the trading volume with the Near East to increase again.[140]

So far, the impressions of cylinder seals from Syro-Palestine and Mesopotamia that provide evidence for goods imported to the town are usually found in Thirteenth Dynasty contexts.[141] A fragment of a clay tablet inscribed in cuneiform script using the Akkadian language (figure 23.8) was found in a secondary archaeological context in the infill of a Ramesside well near the Hyksos-period palace in Area F/II at Avaris.[142] It can be identified as a letter and perhaps provides evidence for a direct

138. Kopetzky 2009: 275; 2015.

139. Kopetzky 2009: 275; 2015: 157.

140. Kopetzky 2009: 275.

141. Collon and Lehmann 2011; Collon et al. 2013; van Koppen and Lehmann 2012–2013; Forstner-Müller, Hassler, Matić, and Rose 2015.

142. Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2009: 96.

FIGURE 23.8. Cuneiform tablet from Avaris. Photo by Axel Krause, © ÖAI/ÖAW, with kind permission.

correspondence between a ruler of Avaris and a king of Babylon.[143] It is equally possible, though, that the letter was written in the late Middle Kingdom[144] during the time of the most intensive contact between Avaris and the Near East. In any case, this isolated find is not sufficient to enable us to form an understanding of the nature, frequency, and intensity of these communications.

The reduced contacts with the Near East are perhaps most clearly noticeable in the composition of the metal of the Middle Bronze Age

143. van Koppen and Radner 2009.

144. The earlier hypothesis that the dating of this find is linked to the Hyksos palace (Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2009: 106–108, figs. 19–20) can no longer be upheld.

weapons at Avaris. During the Middle Kingdom, weapons were made of bronze, that is, an alloy of copper and tin; the predominant material used during the Fifteenth Dynasty was copper alone, which points to the fact that access to tin was limited or blocked as a result of the interruption of the traditional trade routes from the Near East into Egypt. The copper was most likely imported from Cyprus, together with the Cypriot pottery that is now attested, for the first time and in large quantities, in the corresponding archaeological record.[145] With the beginning of the Fifteenth Dynasty, Cyprus clearly emerged as a new partner in trade for Avaris.

In contrast to the reduced links with the Near East, contacts with Nubia were intensified during the Fifteenth Dynasty. In the later Second Intermediate Period, contacts between the Nubian kingdom of Kush and the Hyksos rulers seem to have been frequent and intensive.[146] That Nubians played an important role in southern Egypt and even invaded the region is well known.[147] At some point, the ruler of Kush probably had control over the southernmost part of Egypt, including Elephantine.[148] At least sometimes, the rulers in the south and the Hyksos rulers were allies,[149] and as the Kamose Stele emphasizes,[150] an important route linked Avaris to the southern regions through the oases

145. For the Cypriot pottery from Tell el-Dabʿa and its distribution, see Bietak and Maguire 2009; for Cyprus as a new trading partner, see Bietak 1994: 48–49; for Cypriot pottery in funerary contexts, see Forstner-Müller 2008: 58, 82.

146. For the "Kamose Steles," see Gardiner 1916: 95–110; Habachi 1972. For the implications on the archaeology of this period, see Bourriau 1999: 43–48; also Gratien 1978; 2004; Polz 1998: 225, 229.

147. For the complex situation, see also the autobiography of Sobeknakht: Davies 2003: 52–54.

148. Polz 2018. It is presumably not a coincidence that a seal bearing the title "Ruler of Kush" was found in Elephantine in contemporaneous layers: von Pilgrim 2015.

149. The extension to the south is not clear; cf. Polz 2006; 2018: 231.

150. Gardiner 1916: 95–110; Habachi 1972.

of the Western Desert.[151] This route was especially important when the traditional Nile route was blocked, as may have been done by the rulers of Thebes on occasion during the Second Intermediate Period.

The Nubian component within the material culture of Avaris mostly consists of pottery, with Nubian ceramics appearing at the beginning of the Fifteenth Dynasty.[152] Even outside the socially and religiously highly charged funerary contexts, ceramics that were not used for transport can be much valued as precious, "fashionable" commodities, such as the high-quality, visually distinctive Nubian bowls found in domestic contexts at Avaris. Less obviously conspicuous commodities such as Nubian cooking pots may have been highly valued, resulting in import and imitation.[153] However, it is unclear whether the pottery was made in Nubia and brought to Avaris through trade or gift exchange, or whether it was made by Nubians who lived in Avaris.[154]

Whether the Nubian pottery found in Avaris is evidence for Nubian populations living there cannot be answered conclusively.[155] While we have seen that various elements of material culture at Avaris clearly demonstrate that actual "Asiatics" lived there, it is equally clear because of its fabric that the Cypriot pottery found at Avaris was imported to the town, and not produced by Cypriots settled there. The situation is more complex for Nubian pottery which is made of Nile clay: it is not currently possible to differentiate between Nile clay pottery produced in different parts of Egypt and Nubia.

It is worth pointing out that no Nubian burials or funerary elements have ever been identified at Avaris. If we want to entertain the idea that Nubians actually lived at the town, then the question arises as

151. Colin 2005: 35–47; D. Darnell 2002: 147; J.C. Darnell 2002: 170, fig. 9.

152. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 181.

153. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 200.

154. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 200. On the topic of the Nubian pottery and Egypt, see also De Souza 2020.

155. Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 200; Matić 2016.

to what their role within the general population of Avaris would have been;[156] most likely, we would expect them among specialist groups such as military personnel, which typically have high proportions of foreigners.[157]

23.8. The end of the Hyksos state

The decline and end of Hyksos rule is closely connected with the rise of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties. At the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty, the political reality of a more or less peaceful coexistence between Upper and Lower Egypt changed when the Theban ruler Seqenenra Taa started military operations against the Hyksos.[158] He was probably killed in battle: his mummy features a mortal head wound, which was very likely caused by a Middle Bronze Age weapon type as we can easily imagine the Hyksos troops to have used.[159]

His successor and son Kamose continued the incursions against the Hyksos king Apepi and started a campaign to expel the Hyksos in order to reunify Egypt under Theban rule.[160] We can only speculate to what extent the account of the events that led to his eventual success, as described in the Kamose Steles, was based on fact. Kamose probably never came farther north than the nome of Cynopolis in Middle Egypt, and thus would not have reached Memphis or the Nile delta, nor would he have attacked Avaris.[161] The detail in the first Kamose Stele that the

156. Cf. also Forstner-Müller and Rose 2012: 200; Matić 2016.

157. Schneider 2003: 339.

158. Whether the tale in Papyrus Sallier I, in which the Hyksos king Apepi demands that the Theban ruler silence his hippopotami as he was not able to sleep in faraway Avaris, reflects actual contact between Apepi and Seqenenra Taa is disputed: Schneider 1998: 76–98, 163. It remains possible that both reigned at the same time.

159. Bietak 1994: 28, fig. 10.

160. Gardiner 1916: 95–110; Habachi 1972.

161. Ryholt 1997: 172–175.

Theban king managed to intercept a message from Apepi to his ally, the ruler of Kush, shows that the Hyksos state and the kingdom of Kush were political allies.

Ahmose, the brother of Kamose, the first king of the Eighteenth Dynasty and the founder of the New Kingdom, was able to reunify Egypt by conquering the area ruled by the Hyksos. However, the circumstances surrounding the capture of Avaris are obscure. An entry in a diary copied on the back of Papyrus Rhind reads:

> Regnal Year 11, second month of Shemu, Heliopolis was entered. First month of Akhet, day 23, he of the South broke into Tjaru [Greek Sile, modern Tell Hebwa].[162]

There is little doubt that the regnal year referred to here is that of the Hyksos king Khamudi, whereas "he of the South" is Ahmose.[163]

Further information on Ahmose's war against the Hyksos is provided by the royal navy officer Ahmose, son of Ibana, in his tomb at Elkab.[164] According to his autobiography, the Theban forces conducted four attacks on Avaris. The fourth (and last) was successful and resulted in the expulsion of the Hyksos. In the final campaign, Ahmose conquered Tjaru (Greek Sile), the last Hyksos stronghold, after a siege of three years.[165] The victory over the Hyksos is also shown on limestone relief fragments found in Ahmose's mortuary temple at Abydos that depict battle scenes between the Thebans and the Hyksos.[166]

However, the archaeological record unearthed at Avaris does not reflect Ahmose's conquest, as no signs of destruction have been

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162. Peet 1923: Papyrus Rhind, col. 2 and 3.

163. Schneider 2006: 195.

164. Sethe 1914: 1–6.

165. Sethe 1914: 3–5.

166. Harvey 1994.

found that could be associated with this event.[167] The material culture in Avaris shows a slow, almost invisible transition from the pottery types characterizing the very late Fifteenth Dynasty into those of the early Eighteenth Dynasty.[168] Perhaps this indicates that while the Hyksos rulers were expelled, the population of Avaris was allowed to stay.

In the Eighteenth Dynasty, however, settlement activity was restricted to certain parts of the town.[169] This shrinking of the town's size[170] does not necessarily mean that its inhabitants were evicted. Rather, Avaris, no longer a capital city and administrative center, may have been less attractive to potential settlers. At the temple of Seth/Baʿal Zephon, the cult continued and even rose to new prominence as the ancestral cult of the Ramesside Nineteenth Dynasty, which probably originated in this part of Egypt.[171]

23.9. Aftermath

The kings of the Ramesside Nineteenth Dynasty who originated from the eastern Nile delta founded a new residence at the site of ancient Avaris, Piramesses, the glorious "City of Rameses," and emphasized their

167. Bietak 2010b: 164. Some bodies unearthed at Ezbet Helmi, exhibiting injuries that can be interpreted as combat wounds, may provide evidence for the war between the Hyksos and the Theban state at Avaris. The excavator of these bodies originally associated them with the conquest of Avaris, but they were later dated to the early Eighteenth Dynasty. The ongoing re-evaluation of the dating of the archaeological phases of Ezbet Helmi now dates the bodies to the period of transition between the very late Second Intermediate Period and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty (David Aston and Irmgard Hein, personal communication, April 2019), and this again makes a connection with the conquest of Avaris possible.

168. Bietak 2010b: 169–170.

169. Bietak 2010b: 164.

170. Bietak 2010b: 165.

171. Bietak 2010b: 164; Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2011: 36, fig. 7 (Four Hundred Years Stele).

close link to Seth/Ba'al Zephon, their dynastic god and traditionally Avaris's main deity.

However, the Hyksos period under the Fifteenth Dynasty was considered a dark epoch of illegitimate foreign rule in Egyptian history.[172] Already the Eighteenth Dynasty queen Hatshepsut passed a negative judgment on it when she claimed in her famous Speos Artemidos inscription that she

> . . . raised up what was dismembered beginning when the Asiatics were in the midst of the delta, (in) Avaris, with vagrants in their midst, toppling what had been made. They ruled without the Sun.[173]

Nevertheless, it is evident that essential aspects of the New Kingdom state had their roots in the Hyksos state and the Second Intermediate Period more generally. Apart from the transfer of technological innovations in weaponry and chariotry, the new performance-related concept of kingship of the Eighteenth Dynasty, with its war-specific profile, may be traced back to Near Eastern ideals.[174] The expansionism of the New Kingdom, which is closely linked to its much-admired "cosmopolitanism," can be seen as a direct legacy of the connections already present in the Second Intermediate Period.

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172. For a recent summary, with further literature, see Schneider 2018a.

173. Allen 2002.

174. Forstner-Müller and Müller 2006: 99.

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24

Upper Egypt before the New Kingdom

Daniel Polz

24.1. Introduction and sources

In accordance with ancient Egyptian tradition and sources, the classical mainland of Egypt (figure 24.1), extending from the First Nile Cataract in the south to the Mediterranean Sea, is generally divided into two main parts: Lower and Upper Egypt.[1] Each of these parts is itself subdivided into major administrative units that vary in number over time and are referred to as "nomes" (provinces). Upper Egypt extends from the First Cataract (the 1st Upper Egyptian nome) to the area south of Memphis (the 22nd Upper Egyptian nome). Lower Egypt stretches from Memphis to the Mediterranean coast (the 1st–16th Lower Egyptian nomes).[2] Thus, theoretically, the geographical area examined in this chapter covers the larger part of the country, the region spanning from south of Memphis to slightly beyond modern-day Aswan. Practically, however,

1. The author is indebted to Cara K. Smith for correcting the English of this chapter.

2. These numbers refer to the Twelfth Dynasty list of nomes in the Karnak kiosk of Senusret I, the so-called *Chapelle Blanche* (Lacau and Chevrier 1969: pl. 3; 42); on the historical development of the nomes, see Helck 1974; cf. Gomaà 1986; 1987.

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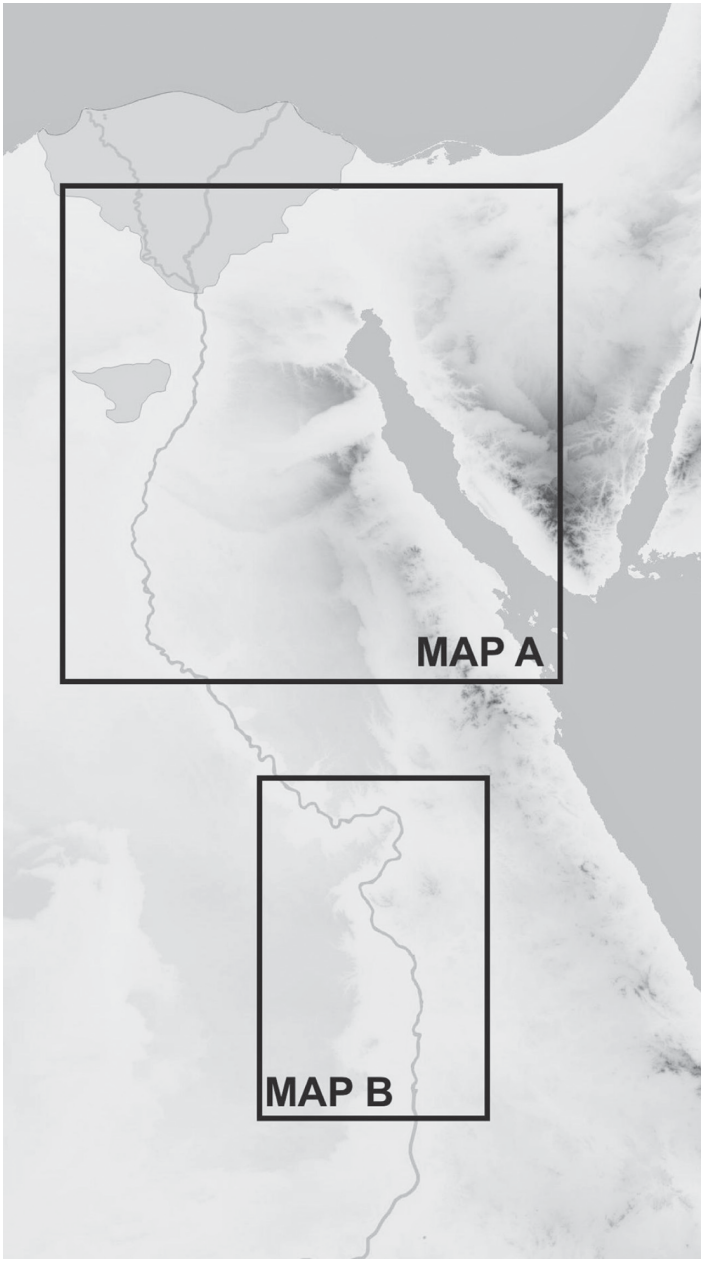

FIGURE 24.1A. Maps of sites mentioned in this chapter. Prepared by Andrea Squitieri (LMU Munich).

FIGURE 24.1B. Detail map A.

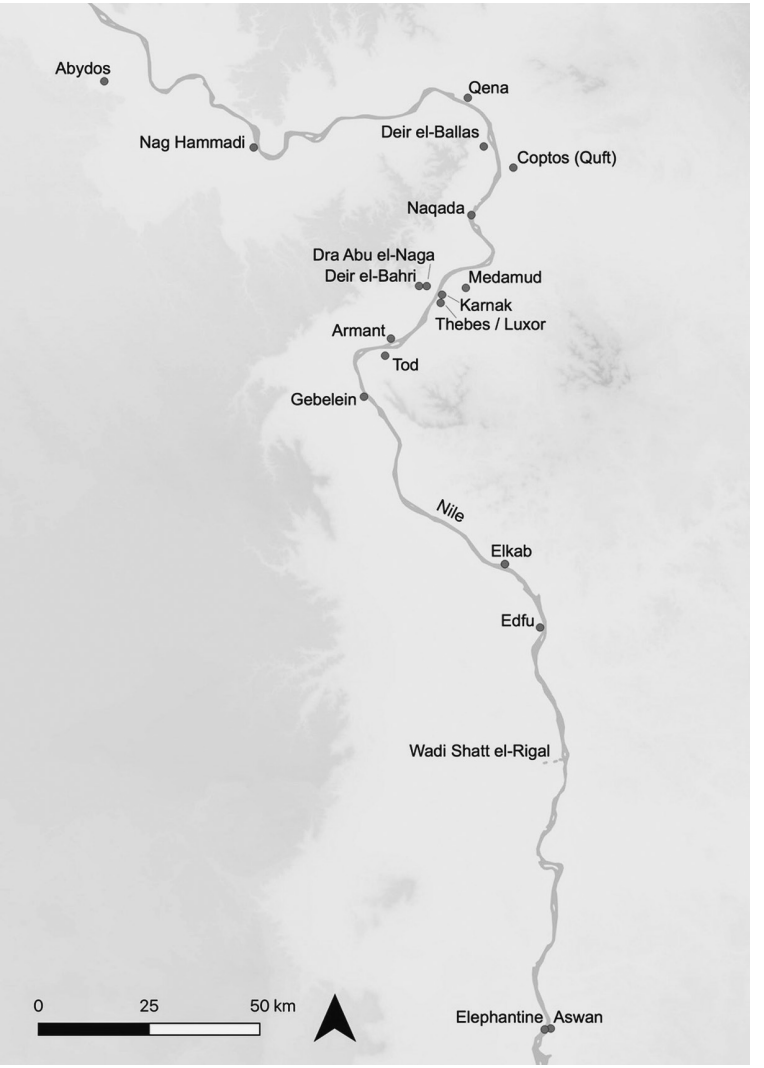

FIGURE 24.1C. Detail map B.

the geographical focus will be on the southern part of Upper Egypt, i.e., from Aswan to Abydos, covering a distance of ca. 383 km along the Nile[3] and encompassing the 1st to 8th Upper Egyptian nomes.[4]

The present chapter deals with a period of pharaonic Egypt that has occasionally been labeled one of Egypt's "dark ages,"[5] the Second Intermediate Period (SIP), which spans the time between the Middle and the New Kingdoms (cf. chapter 12). In terms of dynastic history, the Middle Kingdom can be defined as the period beginning with the country's reunification after the First Intermediate Period in the mid-Eleventh Dynasty under King Mentuhotep II (ca. 2055–2004 BC) and continuing until the decline of the powerful centralized state of the Twelfth and early to mid-Thirteenth Dynasties after ca. 1700 BC. According to ancient sources and common scholarly definition, the beginning of the New Kingdom is marked by a military event, the so-called expulsion of the Hyksos by the first rulers of the Eighteenth Dynasty, which was again followed by a reunification of Upper and Lower Egypt around 1550 BC (cf. chapter 26 in this volume). For internal historical reasons specified in section 24.2, the main focus of this chapter will be the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties. From both the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom, a vast corpus of source material and data has survived which enables us to reconstruct the different spheres of the respective contemporary society to an advanced level. For the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties, the situation is not so straightforward; given the time span's overall length of approximately 100 years (1650–1550 BC), the collection of preserved sources and available data is startlingly small.

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3. Based on a summation of the figures given in Baedeker's travel guidebooks (Baedeker 1891: 78–295) for the journey up the Nile on a steamboat.

4. The occasionally applied term "Middle Egypt" does not follow an ancient geographical perception but is the modern Egyptological definition of the larger region of Minya and Asyut.

5. Cf. Shaw 2003: 11–13; on the inherent although unjustified negative connotation of the term "intermediate period" as opposed to the "kingdoms" of earlier and later times, see Franke 1988: 245–248. Cf., however, Ryholt 1997: 311–312, who sees a justification in the usage of the term "intermediate."

The main body of SIP sources consists of (a) contemporary monuments, burials, objects, and texts, such as the usually short inscriptions on funerary and (rarely) historical steles, or in decorated tombs; and (b) non-contemporary textual references to the period that can be found in documents such as the Turin King List, the king list in the temple of Karnak, an administrative text on a papyrus of late Ramesside times,[6] and in the decoration of a few non-royal tombs in the Theban necropolis.[7] In addition, Manetho's seminal (though lost) historical work *Aegyptiaca* of third century BC Ptolemaic times, and still later excerpts thereof, refer to certain aspects of the SIP.[8]

The overall small number of contemporary sources are not evenly spread over the entire period. A large portion of them consist almost exclusively of short inscriptions on scarabs or scarab-shaped seals that mention the names of royal and non-royal individuals and sometimes one or two titles of the latter group. Due to the absence of other sources, these small objects have frequently been utilized for the reconstruction of historical and chronological aspects of the period.[9]

Given the existing source material, our picture of the cultural history of the SIP is rather fragmentary. Therefore, new archaeological data can substantially alter our reconstruction of this epoch. During the past decade, the monuments of two kings who seem to have ruled over a certain part of Upper Egypt during this period have newly come to light. The first, a hitherto unknown ruler, the "King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Useribra, Son of Ra, Senebkay," had a small, decorated tomb

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6. The Abbott Papyrus (British Museum, BM EA 10221), one of the so-called Tomb Robbery Papyri; Peet 1930: 28–45; cf. Winlock 1924; Polz and Seiler 2003: 5–10.

7. Cf. Redford 1986: 45–55.

8. Helck 1956; for Manetho's work in general and the Greek and Latin texts of its excerpts, see Waddell 1948. For a thorough contribution on Manetho and his works, see Gundaker 2018.

9. Stock 1942; von Beckerath 1964; Ryholt 1997: 34–65; Bietak and Czerny 2004. For the most recent discussion of the possible historical impact of seals and seal impressions, see the studies of Ben-Tor 2018; Forstner-Müller and Reali 2018; Moeller and Marouard 2018; Ryholt 2018: 235 (where two forthcoming contributions on the topic were announced).

erected in one of the necropolises of Abydos. According to the excavator Josef Wegner, Senebkay (and seven more unnamed royal individuals who had their tombs nearby) may be dated to the Sixteenth Dynasty or to a separate local and contemporaneous one known as the "Abydos Dynasty."[10]

The second newly identified king is, historiographically, an equally interesting case: within the precinct of the temple of Ptah at Karnak, two inscribed blocks of a monumental limestone gate were uncovered (figure 24.2) that once formed the entrance to a temple-owned granary (*shenut*).[11] The blocks show the prenomen and nomen of a Theban ruler of whom until now—with one exception[12]—only the prenomen, Senakhtenra, was known.[13] His newly discovered nomen, Ahmose (now Ahmose I), and its hieroglyphic spelling leave little doubt that he was the grandfather of the two presumed brother-kings[14] Wadjkheperra Kamose and Nebpehtyra Ahmose (now Ahmose II), whose subsequent reigns mark the classical end of the Seventeenth Dynasty and the beginning of the Eighteenth.

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10. Wegner 2015: 71–73; 2018: 301–302. This dynasty was originally introduced into scholarly discussion by Ryholt on the basis of three royal funerary steles from Abydos (Ryholt 1997: 163–166, 264–265, 392; cf. Franke 2013: 10–11). It is under dispute whether or not this "Abydos Dynasty" really existed. The assumption would presuppose the existence of an independent local or regional center of power in the Abydos area. Given the fact that the cemeteries at Abydos have always been one of ancient Egypt's most important religious and funerary cult places (the mythical tomb of the god Osiris was located here), local rulers of the Sixteenth Dynasty with no cemetery tradition of their own may well have chosen the place for their royal interments. Recently, Wegner 2018 put forward new arguments in favor of a regional "Abydos Dynasty" that had only limited access to resources.

11. Biston-Moulin 2012; Biston-Moulin, Thiers, and Zignani 2012.

12. His name appears on a small stamp seal allegedly found in the necropolis of Dra Abu el-Naga in Western Thebes: Mariette 1872: pl. 52c; Mariette and Maspero 1889: 17.

13. Ryholt 1997: 278–280; 396–397.

14. It is still uncertain if the two kings were in fact brothers. They may have had a different family relation; see Ryholt 1997: 272–280.

FIGURE 24.2. Left door jamb of a limestone gate built by Senakhtenra Ahmose I in the precinct of the Ptah temple at Karnak (CFEETK 136053). © CNRS-CFEETK/Sébastien Biston-Moulin; photo by L. Moulié.

Clearly, these new results from archaeological enterprises do not merely add two more kings to the existing lists, but are also enlarging our historical picture of the time. They broaden our knowledge of temple-building and hence cult activities (through evidence of Ahmose I installing or reinstalling a granary for the temple of Ptah at Karnak), as well as funerary architecture and burial customs (such as Senebkay and further contemporary kings founding a local cemetery at Abydos with tombs of an unusual architectural layout).

24.2. Chronology and dynastic history

In light of the aforementioned scarcity of sources, the chronological scope of this chapter covers the period from the end of the Thirteenth Dynasty to the end of the Seventeenth Dynasty, with the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Dynasties being omitted here, as they refer to local rulers and the so-called Hyksos in the northern part of Egypt, respectively (cf. chapter 23 in this volume). Following Kim Ryholt's and Detlef Franke's subdivision of the long-lasting Thirteenth Dynasty into four periods of uneven length,[15] the mid-Thirteenth Dynasty marks a time when the well-organized state of the Middle Kingdom had finally collapsed. It appears that until that point, the administrative and political structure of the centralized state of the Twelfth Dynasty had not essentially changed, even in the distant Twelfth Dynasty fortresses in Nubia,[16] although a shift in the organization may be observable for some.[17] By the middle of the Thirteenth Dynasty, however, the court was no longer able to govern the entire country. Over the next 100 years or so, the Egyptian territory became parceled into smaller, partially contemporaneous entities, which were governed by regional or even local rulers. Many of these petty rulers still assumed full royal names and titles,

15. Franke 1988: 272–273; slightly modified in Franke 2008: 270–275, following Ryholt 1997: 296–299.

16. E.g., Raue 2019: 574–580.

17. Knoblauch 2019: 380–383.

even though their area of influence and political power may have been rather limited.

The internal dynastic chronology of the Second Intermediate Period in Upper Egypt used here largely follows Ryholt's approach.[18] Older scholarly approaches define a long Seventeenth Dynasty immediately following the Thirteenth Dynasty, the Sixteenth Dynasty completely omitted as being purely Lower Egyptian, or "Asian vassals" of the Hyksos,[19] or left unspecified.[20] In Ryholt's scheme, a first Upper Egyptian Theban Sixteenth Dynasty (with its beginning perhaps partially overlapping with the late Thirteenth Dynasty) was followed by a short second Theban Seventeenth Dynasty, more or less contemporaneous with the Fifteenth Hyksos Dynasty in Lower Egypt (cf. chapter 23).

The following paragraphs outline the key historical data on the Thirteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Dynasties. It must be emphasized that the basis for almost all considerations of the rulers of these dynasties is the (in places extremely fragmented) papyrus containing the Turin King List—a once-comprehensive list of the rulers of ancient Egypt created during the New Kingdom. It is also important to note that all recent historical interpretations of the papyrus rely on Ryholt's reassembly of certain fragments and the resulting reconstruction of the list.[21]

24.2.1. The Thirteenth Dynasty

According to Ryholt and Franke,[22] the first part of the Thirteenth Dynasty lasted from approximately 1795 to 1750 BC, with the court

18. Ryholt 1997.

19. von Beckerath 1997: 136.

20. E.g., von Beckerath 1964: 165–203; Hayes 1973; Franke 1988: 262–272; Dodson 1991; Helck 1992; von Beckerath 1999.

21. Cf. Ryholt 2004.

22. Ryholt 1997: 296–299; Franke 2008: 270–275; 285–287 (chronological table of the Eleventh to early Eighteenth Dynasties).

still residing at Memphis or at Itj-tawy (modern Lisht, ca. 35 km south of Memphis), and the major burial grounds being located at Saqqara and Dahshur. The second part of the dynasty (ca. 1750–1720 BC) includes some major royal players, such as the kings Sobekhotep III and IV and Neferhotep I. Interestingly, some of the more important rulers of the period emphasized their non-royal descent in short texts inscribed on scarabs. Already at this stage, the Upper Egyptian city of Elkab began to play a major political role through the family of the royal wife and queen Nubkhaes. The court still seems to have been situated in the northern part of the country, and at least some of the royals were buried there. The third part of the dynasty (ca. 1720–1680 BC) shows a strong decline in building activities and textual sources. At least one ruler was buried in the Saqqara necropolis during this time. However, this does not necessarily mean that the court still resided in the north. In Franke's opinion, "king Aya's reign . . . introduced the finale of this period and, perhaps, the beginning of the 'so-called Second Intermediate Period.' "[23]

Lastly, the fourth part of the Thirteenth Dynasty (ca. 1680–1645 BC) may have partially overlapped with the Sixteenth Dynasty in Upper Egypt. It is by no means clear where the rulers of this last part of the Thirteenth Dynasty had their main residence (if they had one at all), which part of the country they controlled, and where they were buried. The prevailing scholarly assessment of the political and cultural-historical situation at this point in time is again best illustrated in a statement by Franke:

> The Dynasty ended in obscurity and with the conquest of Memphis by the Hyksos army. At least from now on, Egyptian kingship was restricted to Upper Egypt.[24]

23. Franke 2008: 272; cf. Davies 2010: 225 with n. 16 (with extensive bibliography).

24. Franke 2008: 273.

24.2.2. The Sixteenth Dynasty

In Upper Egypt, the Thirteenth Dynasty is followed by the first Theban, that is, the Sixteenth Dynasty (ca. 1650–1580 BC[25]), perhaps with a short overlap of unknown length. Based on Ryholt's reconstruction of column 11 of the Turin King List,[26] the dynasty comprised at least fifteen rulers who may have governed a southern Upper Egyptian rump state from the Theban area.[27] The evidence for Thebes playing a central role during this dynasty is twofold:[28]

(1) In contrast to the kings of the late Thirteenth Dynasty after Sobekhotep VII, some of the Sixteenth Dynasty rulers or contemporary non-royal persons have left monuments at Karnak (Sobekhotep VIII, Neferhotep III, Mentuhotepi, and Nebiryraw I).
(2) A number of the rulers of the Sixteenth Dynasty are listed in the Karnak King List (Djehuty, Sobekhotep VIII, Mentuhotepi, Nebiryraw I, and Bebiankh), while none of the kings of the Thirteenth Dynasty after Sobekhotep VII are listed therein.

However, contrary to their successors in the following Seventeenth Dynasty, no tombs of these Sixteenth Dynasty rulers have been found in the Theban necropolis,[29] and it seems possible that they were buried elsewhere, perhaps in their respective families' hometowns.[30] The list of

25. The absolute dates for the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties here and in the following are based on Shaw 2003: 484.

26. Ryholt 1997: 152–156, fig. 14 (illustration of the reconstructed column 11).

27. However, only in Eusebius's version of the Manethonian epitome, the Sixteenth Dynasty is called "Theban"; see Waddell 1948: 93; Ryholt 1997: 151.

28. Ryholt 1997: 159–162; 332–410 ("Catalogue of Attestations").

29. With one possible exception: A canopic chest inscribed with King Djehuty's name was found with the burial of his royal wife, Queen Mentuhotep, at Dra Abu el-Naga; see Ryholt 1997: 259–260; 388 (with further references).

30. E.g., in the Edfu/Elkab area or at Abydos. This may explain why in the Turin King List the Sixteenth Dynasty is separated from the Seventeenth Dynasty by one line in which a summation of regnal years is given (col. 11,15, cf. Ryholt

the rulers of the Sixteenth Dynasty includes kings with longer reigns, such as Nebiryraw I (ca. twenty-six years) and Seuserenra Bebiankh (ca. twelve years). Some rulers from outside the Theban area are also attested at Coptos, Gebelein, Elkab, and Edfu, but also as far as Gebel Zeit on the Red Sea shore.[31] This fact may indicate that their scope of political power or influence was not restricted to a mere local level. However, at a certain point after the reign of King Nebiryraw, some allied Nubian forces seem to have attempted a conquest or at least conducted a raid into southern Upper Egypt as far north as the Elkab/Edfu area.[32]

24.2.3. The Seventeenth Dynasty

According to Ryholt's reconstruction of column 11 of the Turin King List, only two lines of the kings of the Seventeenth Dynasty are preserved after the summation of the regnal years of the Sixteenth Dynasty (11,16–11,17).[33] Both lines are in a highly fragmentary state, and it seems difficult to assign specific names to the few existent hieratic signs. Since the rest of column 11 is lost, none of the rulers of the Seventeenth Dynasty are known from the Turin King List. Most of them appear, however, in the Karnak King List (see table 24.1). The dynasty lasted from ca. 1580 until 1550 BC and comprised at least nine rulers, whose relative positions have been a matter of discussion.[34]

1997: 153, fig. 14). The *Vorlage* for the Turin King List may have listed the two dynasties according to different royal capitals, with the Seventeenth Dynasty perhaps marked as "Theban." Ryholt assumes that a "*Fifteenth Dynasty conquest of Thebes*" marks the turning point between the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties (Ryholt 1997: 5, n. 8; cf. 304–309). Since there is no evidence of a Hyksos conquest of Upper Egypt (see Schneider 2006: 183; Polz 2007: 8–11; Franke 2008: 279; Allen 2010: 5), the reason for a differentiation of the two dynasties must be sought elsewhere.

31. Ryholt 1997: 159–162 with fig. 15.

32. Davies 2003a: 6; 2003b; Franke 2008: 276; cf. Polz 2018: 231 with n. 66.

33. Ryholt 1997: 153, fig. 14.

34. For an overview of the different scholarly views regarding the position of the rulers of the dynasty over the past fifty years, see Polz 2007: 7, Table 1; cf. Schneider 2006: 181–192.

Table 24.1. Sequence of rulers of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Dynasties and their attestations in the Turin King List and Karnak King List

Turin King List (column, line; after Ryholt 1997; 2004)	Karnak King List (numbers after Lepsius 1842)	Royal Prenomen and **Nomen**	Approximate Dates BC (after Shaw 2003: 484)
Sixteenth Dynasty			
[10, last line(s)]		[perhaps one or more names lost]	
11,1	1	Sekhemra Sementawy **Djehuty**	1650–
11,2	44	Sekhemra Seusertawy **Sobekhotep** VIII	
11,3	—	Sekhemra Seankhtawy **Neferhotep** III	
11,4	—	Sankhenra **Mentuhotepi**	
11,5	59[a]	Sewadjenra **Nebiryraw** I	
11,6	—	— **Nebiryraw** II	
11,7	—	Semenenra —	
11,8	28	Seuserenra **Bebiankh**	
11,9	—	Sekhemra **Shedwaset —**	
11,10	—	—ra— (?)	
[11,11–14]		[four names lost]	–1580
[11,15]		[summation: 15(?) kings]	
Seventeenth Dynasty			
11,16		—userra (?)	
11,17		—user— (?)	
[rest of the column lost]	54	Sekhemra Wahkhau **Rahotep**	1580–

(*continued*)

Table 24.1. Continued

Turin King List (column, line; after Ryholt 1997; 2004)	Karnak King List (numbers after Lepsius 1842)	Royal Prenomen and **Nomen**	Approximate Dates BC (after Shaw 2003: 484)
—	58	Sekhemra Wadjkhau **Sobekemsaf** I	
—	48	Sekhemra Shedtawy **Sobekemsaf** II	
—	17 (?)[b]	Sekhemra Wepmaat **Intef** V	
—	27	Nubkheperra **Intef** VI	
—	—	Sekhemra Heruhermaat **Intef** VII	
—	29	Senakhtenra **Ahmose** I	
—	30	Seqenenra **Taa**	
—	—	Wadjkheperra **Kamose**	–1550
Eighteenth Dynasty			
	—	Nebpehtyra **Ahmose** II	1550–1525
	—	Djeserkara **Amenhotep** I	1525–1504

[a] Since there are two entries in the Karnak list naming the prenomen of a King Sewadjenra (nos. 33 and 59), Ryholt (1997: 389) was uncertain which one referred to Nebiryraw I. A recently published stele from Gebel Zeit (Régen and Soukiassian 2008: 56–58) leaves no doubt that no. 33 must be assigned to King Sehetepibra of the Thirteenth Dynasty, while no. 59 should pertain to Nebiryraw I (Marée 2009: col. 151–155).

[b] A King Intef at this position in the Karnak List is remarkable. In the positions 14, 15, and possibly 16, three more kings with this name are mentioned, Intef II–IV; no. 12 is a "count" Intef (= Intef I) and no. 13 a King Mentuhotep (I). All these names certainly refer to the Intef kings of the Eleventh Dynasty and their ancestors. King Intef VI of the Seventeenth Dynasty shows up under no. 27 with his name Nubkheperra. Since the third Intef king of the Seventeenth Dynasty, Intef VII, was only ephemeral and unlikely to show up in any list, the Intef of no. 17 may well refer to either Intef V of the Seventeenth Dynasty or to yet another, earlier king with the name Intef of the Thirteenth Dynasty (Ryholt 1997: 342).

The lengths of the reigns of single rulers, a subject that is heavily debated in the attempt to arrive at absolute chronological dates for the period immediately preceding the Eighteenth Dynasty, will not be dealt with here. The reconstruction of the sequence of the SIP rulers appears to be more beneficial to the historical study of this time because it is a necessary prerequisite for any further consideration of the political and historical developments. For example, it is of little relevance whether the three regnal years of King Nubkheperra Intef attested by his own monuments were indeed sufficient time to realize a somewhat extended building program, or whether one should, on the basis of his building activities, consider his reign to span additional years. A much more essential question is his exact position within the dynastic scheme of the SIP: Did he reign at the beginning of the "long" Seventeenth Dynasty, as has been proposed by a number of scholars,[35] or should he rather be placed some eighty or ninety years later, at the end of this dynasty, as suggested by others?[36]

Over the past decades, several attempts have been put forward to reconstruct the sequence of SIP rulers in Upper Egypt. The present author created a reconstruction in 2007[37] based on Ryholt's conclusions and other available data, which is, with several adaptations, reproduced here (table 24.1).[38]

Naturally, the aforementioned scarceness of sources leads to a number of uncertainties, especially regarding the dynastic relations between the group of Intef kings (Intef V–VII) and the "Ahmosides" (Ahmose I, Taa, Kamose, and Ahmose II). Before this time, no direct family ties can be established between these two groups. A number of observations,

35. von Beckerath 1964; Franke 1988; von Beckerath 1999.

36. Hayes 1973; Dodson 1991: 37; Helck 1992; Ryholt 1997: 265–272; for a synopsis of the quoted differing views, see Polz 2007: 5–11 with Table 1; for a comparison of the views of Franke 1988 and Ryholt 1997, see Schneider 2006: 185, fig II.7.2.

37. Polz 2007: 7, Table 1. The sequence of kings of the Sixteenth Dynasty follows mostly the reconstruction of Ryholt 1997: 151–159; 259–264.

38. The table is a compilation of the respective lists of Ryholt 1997: 153, 410; Polz 2007: 7, Table 1; and Franke 2008: 287.

however, seem to suggest rather close ties, though not necessarily through family. The four or five decades during which these Theban rulers reigned over a larger part of southern Upper Egypt also mark a period of transition from the regional kingdom of the Seventeenth Dynasty to the centralized state of the Eighteenth Dynasty. During this half century or so, all major foundations were laid for one of ancient Egypt's most dynamic and innovative eras, the New Kingdom. Therefore, a closer look at the known sources of information on the protagonists of this transitional phase and their relations to each other seems appropriate.

First, the two gilded wooden coffins of Intef V and Intef VI are so similar in style, workmanship, and decoration that one has to assume that they were manufactured at the same time and by the same workshop.[39] In addition, a short inscription on Intef V's coffin explicitly notes that his coffin was given to him by his brother Intef (that is, Intef VI). The same striking similarity can be observed in the two *pyramidia* (top stones) of the two brothers' pyramids in the necropolis of Dra Abu el-Naga in Western Thebes.[40]

The two royal coffins in turn are very similar to the coffins of Seqenenra Taa and his presumed mother and wife of Ahmose I, Queen Ahhotep (I)[41]—a fact that has been noticed previously.[42] Thus the four coffins cannot be chronologically separated from each other, all the more so considering that this group of coffins is distinctly different in style and decoration from those of the succeeding royals Ahmose II, Ahhotep II, and Ahmose Nefertari.[43]

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39. Polz 2007: 22–34 with pls. 2–4 and 6–7; cf. Miniaci 2011b: 118–119.

40. Polz 2007: 133–138; 2010: 345–350.

41. Daressy 1909: 1–2, pls. I–II; Winlock 1924: pl. XVI.

42. Steindorff 1895: 91–95; Winlock 1924: 274–275; Hayes 1973: 70. The non-gilded wooden coffins of Heruhermaat Intef VII and Kamose are not considered here since both were originally prefabricated coffins for non-royal individuals; on the development of coffins of the time, see Miniaci 2011b: 115–127.

43. Daressy 1909: 3–4, pls. III–IV; 8–9, pls. VIII–IX.

Another somewhat oblique form of evidence may also point to the close ties between the last rulers of the Seventeenth Dynasty and those of the early Eighteenth Dynasty. At a certain point during the Seventeenth Dynasty, a change occurred in the orientation of a single hieroglyphic sign, the crescent, which was throughout pharaonic history almost invariably written in this form:  . For only a short time at the end of the SIP, the sign was reversed, with the points facing up:  .[44] The orientation of the sign was reverted again between the eighteenth and the twenty-second year of Ahmose II's reign.[45] The sign is part of the name of the moon god *Iah* ("Ah"), and as such it is one component of both royal and non-royal Egyptian personal names of the period (e.g., Ahmose, Ahhotep, Ahnefer, etc.). The earliest currently known attestation of the up-pointing form can be found on a stele of the high military official Ahnefer from the Osiris temple area at Abydos. Ahnefer is depicted together with his king, Intef VI. The aforementioned recently discovered door frame from the Ptah temple area at Karnak is inscribed with the cartouches of Senakhtenra Ahmose I, the latter name also written with the up-pointing crescent (figure 24.2). Furthermore, the same form of the *iah*-sign also occurs on a stele of King Seqenenra Taa and a stele fragment from Karnak.[46] In short, although later sporadic examples of the reverted form are known,[47] it seems highly significant that this form occurred consistently only throughout the subsequent reigns

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44. In Gardiner's list of the hieroglyphic signs, the former variant of the sign is labeled "crescent moon," with the latter as an "alternative form" used during the Eighteenth Dynasty; see Gardiner 1973: 486.

45. The obscure reversion of the *iah*-sign at the end of the Second Intermediate Period was already noticed by Vandersleyen 1971: 205–228, who did not have access to all of the material that is available today. With new material at hand, the time span of the reverted sign can be defined more precisely; see Polz 2007: 14–20.

46. Jacquet-Gordon 1999: 179–184 with figs. 17.2–3.

47. Seidlmayer 1991: 325–327. Almost one millennium after the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty, during the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, King Ahmose III (570–526 BC) had his name spelled in both forms; see von Beckerath 1999: 218–219.

of the last four rulers[48] of the Seventeenth Dynasty and the first ruler of the Eighteenth Dynasty.

Finally, a funerary stele of a non-royal individual named Iuf from a cemetery at Edfu[49] may also indicate the closer dynastic, if not genealogical relations, of the Intef and Ahmoside families at the end of the Seventeenth and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasties: from the inscriptions on this stele, it is obvious that the wife of King Intef VI, Queen Sobekemsaf, had her royal tomb in a cemetery at Edfu. The priest Iuf was ordered by Queen Ahhotep, the mother of King Ahmose II, to restore this tomb after it had begun to decay. Both queens are depicted sitting on a stool, with Queen Sobekemsaf embracing Queen Ahhotep beside her, indicating a close relation of the two royal women.[50]

Returning to the first part of the Seventeenth Dynasty, through a number of more recent discoveries and new interpretations of long known objects, it seems possible to establish with a fair amount of plausibility genealogical ties between the group of Intef kings and their predecessors Sobekemsaf I and II.[51] A pivotal point was the discovery in 1992 of several decorated and inscribed sandstone blocks in the mountainous region west of the Theban necropolis.[52] These blocks seem to

48. Heruhermaat Intef VII must be disregarded in this discussion since the only known object that can be ascribed to him is his coffin, in whose short inscription the word *iah* does not appear.

49. Cairo Museum, CG 34009: Lacau 1909: 16–17, pl. VI (right).

50. Polz 2007: 38–42. Queen Sobekemsaf is also named and depicted on another stele fragment from Edfu (Polz 2018: 229–230 with figs. 14–15). The masculine instead of the feminine form of the queen's name (Sobekemsa*f* instead of Sobekemsa*s*) may also be indicative of her relation to the two Sobekemsaf kings, with one of them supposedly being her father; in the stele's inscriptions, Queen Sobekemsaf bears the titles of "king's wife, king's sister, and king's daughter"; see Lacau 1909: 16–17.

51. Polz 2007: 45–50.

52. Darnell and Darnell 1993: 49–52, fig. 4 (left door jamb); Polz 2018: 226, fig. 11 (left and right door jambs).

have been part of a small sanctuary which was constructed by Intef VI. Two of them are fragments of this building's door frame. The inscription on the left door jamb mentions King [Nubkheperra] Intef, son of a King Sobekem[saf]. The much destroyed text on the right door jamb can be read as "born of the king's mother and [king's] wife." Without doubt, Intef VI is of royal descent, and son of one of the two known kings of the dynasty with the name Sobekemsaf. For a number of reasons detailed elsewhere, this king can only be Sobekemsaf II.[53] Since he himself is most likely the son of Sobekemsaf I, a close genealogical relation of the two Sobekemsaf kings and the two Intef kings can be established; as mentioned earlier, Intef V's coffin was prepared for him by his brother, Intef VI.

On the basis of these reconstructed genealogical ties and with regard to the question of dynastic continuity or discontinuity, it is obvious that there are clear indications for an uninterrupted sequence of rulers belonging to one family spanning from the time of Ahmose I to Amenhotep I (table 24.2). Therefore, the dynastic break between the Seventeenth and the Eighteenth Dynasties, as indicated in the Manethonian epitome, is not caused by an interrupted family line. This hiatus owes its existence to a new political situation: the aforementioned expulsion of the Hyksos and the subsequent reunification of the country, which is discussed in more detail in section 24.6.

24.3. Territory

Any attempt to establish the geographical sphere of influence, that is, the territorial claim of a ruler or a group of rulers during the SIP, meets with a number of obstacles, and the scarcity of available data may lead to an overinterpretation of the data that is available. For example, one ruler of the Sixteenth Dynasty, Seuserenra Bebiankh, seems to be mentioned in the Karnak King List (no. 28) and in the Turin King List (11,8), both

53. Polz 2007: 34–38.

Table 24.2. Reconstructed genealogical relations of the kings of the Seventeenth Dynasty

King	Genealogical Relation to Predecessor	Genealogical Relation to Successor
Seventeenth Dynasty		
—userra (?)	—	—
—user— (?)	—	—
Sekhemra Wahkhau Rahotep	unknown	father?
Sekhemra Wadjkhau Sobekemsaf I	son?	father
Sekhemra Shedtawy Sobekemsaf II	son	father
Sekhemra Wepmaat Intef V	son	brother
Nubkheperra Intef VI	brother	unknown
Sekhemra Heruhermaat Intef VII	unknown	unknown
Senakhtenra Ahmose I	unknown	father
Seqenenra Taa	son	father
Wadjkheperra Kamose	son	brother?
Eighteenth Dynasty		
Nebpehtyra Ahmose II *	brother?	father
Djeserkara Amenhotep I	son	—

* Ahmose II was either the brother or nephew of Kamose; his grandmother, Tetisheri, was the wife of either Senakhtenra or Seqenenra.

being non-contemporaneous sources. Currently, Bebiankh is known from only two contemporaneous objects: a stele found in the galena mines at Gebel Zeit on the Red Sea,[54] and an inscribed bronze dagger,

54. Polz 2007: 93–94; Régen and Soukiassian 2008: 18–20, 57, 62; Marée 2009: 157–159 with fig. 6.

allegedly from a tomb at Naqada.[55] The stele, being per se an immobile or stationary object tied to a certain place, provides evidence for activities at Gebel Zeit during his reign. The dagger, being a mobile and valuable object meant to be carried and perhaps passed on over generations, could have arrived at Naqada at a later date; therefore, it must be disregarded as a means to define the scope of Bebiankh's sphere of influence. The range of the king's activities and influence as attested so far is thus limited to Thebes and the Red Sea shore, including, of course, the caravan routes to and from Gebel Zeit through the Wadi Qena and/or the Wadi Hammamat.

Our archaeological knowledge of ancient Egypt does not evenly encompass all periods and regions. While certain parts of the country have experienced thorough and long-lasting archaeological examinations (e.g., the larger Giza and Saqqara areas, Minya, Amarna, Abydos, Luxor, etc.), other parts have been investigated only randomly or even neglected (e.g., parts of the delta, the Western and Eastern Deserts, larger areas of Middle and Upper Egypt outside the central temples, settlements, cemeteries, etc.). This uneven pattern of examination has led to a large number of archaeological white spots dispersed over the country for which insufficient data are available. With respect to the SIP, this situation is illustrated by the results of two extended systematic surveys conducted during the mid-1970s to early 1980s, when a larger portion of Middle Egypt was investigated by a team from Tübingen University.[56] The aim of this historical-topographical investigation was the location of larger settlements on the basis of ancient Egyptian lists of toponyms (the onomasticon of Amenemope and the Wilbour Papyrus).[57] The overall survey area stretches approximately 170 km along the Nile between the (modern) towns of Mallawi and Samalut in the south and between Samalut and Gebel Abusir (at the entrance to the Fayum) in the north. The surveyed area comprises the sites of major ancient settlements and

55. British Museum, BM EA 66062: Budge 1892: 93; Ryholt 1997: 390.

56. Kessler 1981.

57. Gardiner 1947; Gardiner and Faulkner 1941–1952.

necropolises such as Deir el-Bersha, Tuna el-Gebel, Beni Hasan, Zawyet Sultan, Minya, Tihna el-Gebel, etc.

According to its published results,[58] the Tübingen survey yielded material from practically every period of pharaonic Egypt from the late Old Kingdom through Ptolemaic times except for the SIP, which appears to be almost nonexistent in the region's material culture. During the survey, no substantial objects or installations were identified which could be ascribed with certainty to the time of a SIP ruler known from the king lists or from the monuments of other sites in Egypt. This remarkable absence of finds persists in the regions to the south and the north of the Tübingen survey's coverage area. As Ryholt's meticulous catalogue of the attestations of SIP rulers shows, only very few kings of the Thirteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Dynasties are known to have left monuments in the area spanning from south of Lisht in the north to Abydos in the south,[59] covering approximately 521 km of length along the Nile.[60]

The impression given by this absence of SIP monuments, of course, can hardly be correct, as it is not conceivable that a region of this size was unsettled for such a long period of time. It can be presumed that in many settlement sites, heavy strata of New Kingdom and later occupation times superimpose those dating to the SIP, making the latter almost untraceable by surface survey. Only through extended settlement excavations would it be possible to gain a clearer picture of both the occupational situation in Middle Egypt during the SIP and the respective areas of influence of its local or regional potentates. Until such excavations are carried out, however, one has to live with the notion that the SIP rulers of the Thirteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Dynasties were not

58. Kessler 1981; Gomaá 1986; 1987; Gomaá et al. 1991. Note also the maps B II 1–4 of the *Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients* (*TAVO*); for the Second Intermediate Period, see especially map B II 4.

59. E.g., Sobekhotep IV in Atfih (22nd, northernmost Upper Egyptian nome): Ryholt 1997: 349, 352 ("it is notable that his reign is the best attested of the entire SIP"—perhaps not a surprise).

60. Calculated from the distances on a steamboat or a sailing boat (*dahabiyya*) given by Baedeker 1891: 17, 51.

actively engaged in the region to the extent that would have resulted in attributable sacral, funerary, or administrative buildings.

24.4. Official building work and other activities

In general, the presence or absence of official building activities during the time under review here is regarded as indicative of the court's access to manpower, resources, and means of transportation and logistics; hence, it is an indicator for the availability of economic resources in the broadest sense. These building activities comprise sacral constructions (temples, chapels, sanctuaries, but also the endowment of steles and statues, etc.) and profane constructions (palaces, fortifications, storehouses, granaries, food-producing facilities, etc.). Throughout ancient Egypt, the former are predominantly built with stone,[61] whereas the latter are constructed with unfired mudbricks. Since stone-built structures are likely to be decorated and/or inscribed, their remains in the archaeological record are often easier to attribute to a certain period or ruler than mudbrick buildings.

Admittedly, the interpretation of the remains of official building activities is strongly dependent on archaeological chance. This may be exemplified by the following case. On the basis of the number and quality of the objects and built legacy of the Seventeenth Dynasty ruler Sobekemsaf II, one would conclude that he did not have sufficient means or opportunity to carry out substantial building activities. However, an administrative document of much later times, the already mentioned Abbott Papyrus, relates that Sobekemsaf II had left "*ten important works/monuments* (*weput denesut/menu*)" in the temple of Karnak that were still present some 450 years after the king had commissioned them.[62]

In spite of the uncertainty of the archaeological record, a closer look at the known architectural elements and other remains seems to indicate

61. Arnold 1991: 3–5.

62. Peet 1930: 41 with n. 19; pl. III, 6, line 4.

only very modest building activities during the Sixteenth Dynasty. A number of rulers are known to have erected steles in Karnak (Djehuty, Sobekhotep VIII, Neferhotep III, Mentuhotepi, and a non-royal person contemporary with Nebiryraw I), but these were presumably set up within the long-existing temple complex of the Middle Kingdom. Architectural blocks attested to this dynasty are found at various places in southern Upper Egypt (at Deir el-Ballas,[63] Edfu, Elkab).[64] They are mostly of unknown context and purpose, although some may have been parts of stone gates.[65]

During the course of the following (Seventeenth) Dynasty, the picture becomes clearer.[66] At the beginning of the dynasty, King Rahotep ordered restorations to be made in the Osiris temple at Abydos ("renewal work on the enclosure wall"[67]) and the temple of Min at Coptos. At this point, it must be emphasized that this and all other "restorations" of sacred buildings in ancient Egypt were not carried out with the modern sense of "historic monument preservation" in mind. Instead, they primarily aimed at reinstalling the technical, architectural, and economic basis for the cult of the gods and goddesses in the temples, shrines, and sanctuaries.[68]

Rahotep's successor, Sobekemsaf I, endowed an almost life-size granite statue to the Osiris temple at Abydos, and restored and enlarged the temples of the god Montu at Medamud and Tod. Presumably, he erected a small building at Karnak to which he also endowed a statue and a pair

63. A small limestone block with the prenomen and nomen of King Djehuty seems to have originally come from this site and may point to an occupation of Deir el-Ballas as early as the early Sixteenth Dynasty (cf. Eder 2002: 139; Polz 2007: 76).

64. Ryholt 1997: 388–391.

65. The blocks of Djehuty in Edfu could have belonged to a small chapel, see Falk et al. 1985: 15–23; Dodson 1994: 32 (photograph).

66. For specific evidence of the activities of the Seventeenth Dynasty rulers listed in the following, see Ryholt 1997: 392–400; Polz 2007: 61–95 (both with further references).

67. Polz 2007: 62–63, 315, fig. 88.

68. On pharaonic dedication and restoration texts in general, see Grallert 2001.

of miniature obelisks. He also appears to have been active in the temple of the Eleventh Dynasty ruler Mentuhotep II at Deir el-Bahri. In addition, he commissioned an expedition to the quarries in the Wadi Hammamat to procure stone, along with perhaps another expedition to the region of Wadi Shatt el-Rigal, where a graffito of the royal name Sobekemsaf is preserved.[69] Moreover, a small shrine or *naos* found at Gebelein, as well as the lower part of a double statue on the island of Elephantine (with doubtful provenience), are inscribed with his name. The case of his presumed son and successor Sobekemsaf II has already been mentioned. His successor Intef V is known only from objects connected with his pyramid and burial at Dra Abu el-Naga on the Theban West Bank.

During the reign of Intef V's brother and successor Intef VI, a distinct increase in building and other activities is observable.[70] Small stone-built and decorated chapels were erected in the old Osiris temple at Abydos and the Min temple at Coptos (figure 24.3); a small sanctuary was built on the Theban end of the Farshut Road, a montane track on the plateau of the Western Desert leading from Luxor to the Nag Hammadi area and cutting short the Nile bend between Armant and Nag Hammadi. Intef VI endowed several steles to the temple of Karnak and a statue to the Mentuhotep temple at Deir el-Bahri. Additionally, he had an elaborate burial for himself constructed in the necropolis of Dra Abu el-Naga in Western Thebes, including a small mudbrick pyramid with an inscribed limestone capstone (*pyramidion*) and two mid-size obelisks. A pyramidion of the same size and executed in the same style bearing the names of Intef V housed at the British Museum in London indicates that Intef VI had also organized a similarly shaped burial for his elder brother and predecessor. A number of contemporary high officials are known to have erected steles in the Osiris temple at Abydos (Ahnefer and Nakht) and in Edfu (Hornakht), as well as at a small funerary chapel close to the king's pyramid at Dra Abu el-Naga (Teti). All of these monuments display

69. Since the graffito only gives the nomen of a King Sobekemsaf and no prenomen, the inscription could theoretically also refer to his successor, Sobekemsaf II; see Polz 2007: 91–92.

70. The following is based on the more detailed discussion in Polz 2018.

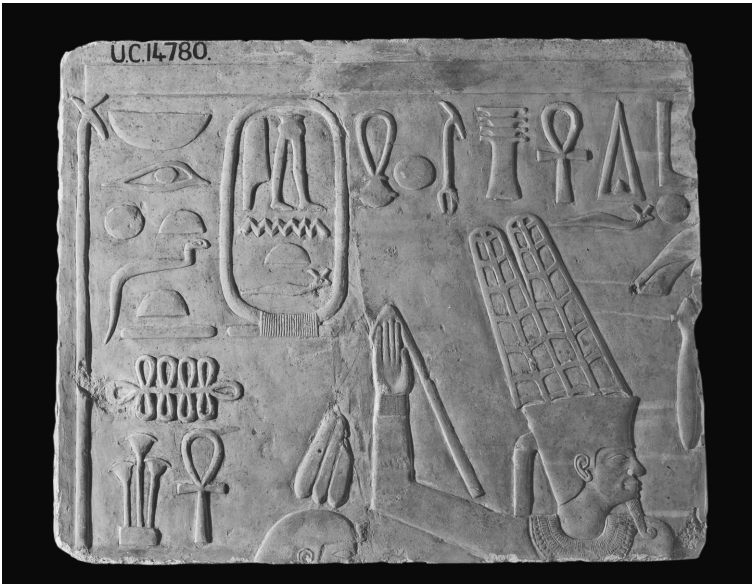

FIGURE 24.3. Limestone block showing the god Min with King Intef VI behind him; from Intef VI's sanctuary in the temple of Min at Coptos (UC 14780). Courtesy of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College London; photo by Mary Hinkley.

the king's name. From the aforementioned chapel on the Farshut Road, from a royal decree on a wall of the Middle Kingdom temple of Min at Coptos, and from a stele found in the galena mines at Gebel Zeit on the Red Sea shore, one can infer that the routes leading through the Western and Eastern Deserts in Upper Egypt had once again come under the control of the Theban court during the reign of Intef VI.

For the first time during the SIP, the name of a temple or chapel connected with a contemporaneous ruler seems to be preserved. On the stele of Nakht from the Osiris temple at Abydos mentioned earlier, the high official is depicted together with his king, Intef VI.[71] In the stele's

71. Polz 2018: 225–226, fig. 10.

inscriptions, a "temple of Intef in Abydos" (*hut Ini-itef em abedju*) is mentioned, presumably referring to the chapel that Intef VI had erected there and in whose vicinity the stele was found. This chapel may also be mentioned in a literary text (the so-called harper's song), probably dating to the same period.[72] In addition, another mention of the same building with a slightly different name might occur on a hitherto unpublished stele of an individual called Iuy, whose father held the position of a "great funerary priest in the House of Intef" (*hem-ka aa en per Ini-itef*; figure 24.4).

Intef VI's successor, Intef VII, seems to have been an ephemeral ruler of whom only his wooden, non-royal coffin is known. The next king in line, Ahmose I, is now known from two architectural blocks, which were discovered recently in the area of the Ptah temple at Karnak.[73] These limestone blocks are parts of a gate, newly erected by the king for the granary of Karnak's main god, Amun-Ra (figure 24.2). Ahmose's successor, Seqenenra Taa, endowed a number of steles to the Karnak temple, and he may have erected or decorated a limestone gate at the Northern Palace at Deir el-Ballas (cf. section 24.5).[74]

The last king of the Seventeenth Dynasty, Kamose, set up his famous three steles, known as the "Kamose Steles," at Karnak (one of them being a reused limestone pillar of a chapel of the Twelfth Dynasty King Senusret I[75]) and endowed a *naos* to the temple. Two rock inscriptions at the Nubian sites of Toshka East and Arminna East that mention his name together with the name of his successor Ahmose II have been interpreted as proof of military activities in the region by the time of Kamose, but the historicity of this campaign has been questioned.[76]

At an undetermined point in time during the SIP, two large-scale non-sacral mudbrick buildings were erected near the modern site of Deir

72. Polz 2003: 84–86.

73. Biston-Moulin 2012.

74. Lacovara 1997: 14–15; Eder 2002: 139; Polz 2007: 76–77, 347–348.

75. Habachi 1972: 28–30.

76. Krauss 1993: 19–25.

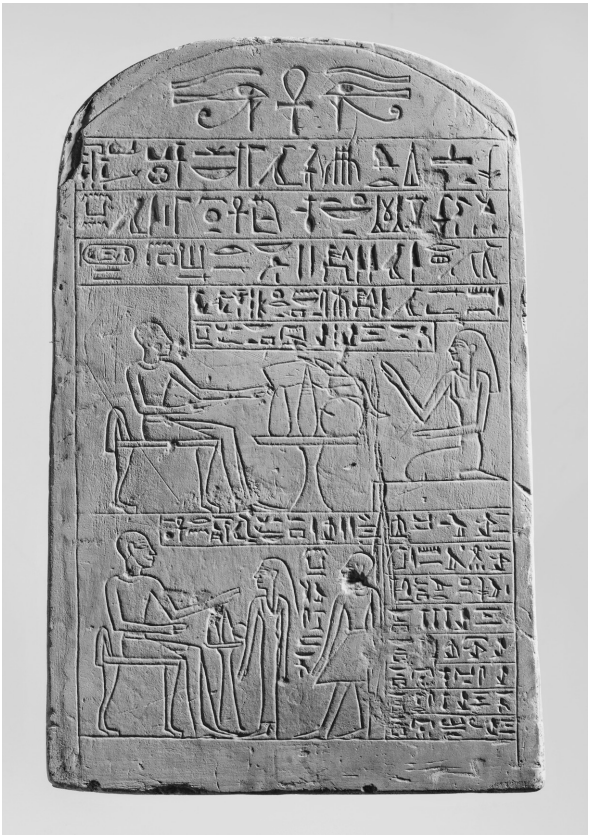

FIGURE 24.4. Stele of the official Iuy mentioning his father Amunaa, a priest in the temple of King Intef (VI?). Modern cast of the now lost stele, formerly in the Museum of Tallinn (Helsinki NM 14560:26). © The Finnish Heritage Agency, Archaeological Collections; photo by Ilari Järvinen.

el-Ballas (on the West Bank of the Nile, ca. 6 km northwest of Coptos, i.e., modern Quft, on the East Bank). Both were called "palaces" by the original excavator George Reisner, but only the Northern Palace displays the architecture of a royal building of this type.[77] The Southern Palace

77. Lacovara 1997: 2–3.