

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

EGYPTIAN ART
AN INTERPRETATION OF THEIR RELIGION

BEING A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE COMMITTEE ON POST GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE

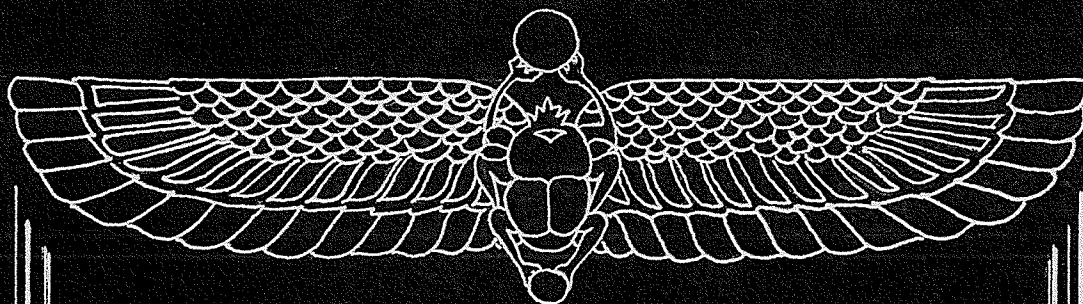
BY

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EGYPTIAN ART

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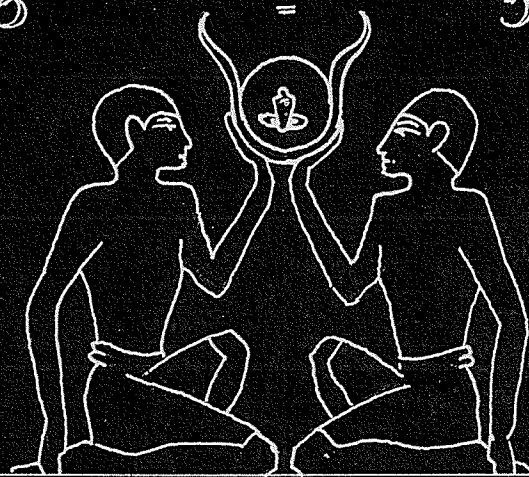
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Chapter I

THE NILE VALLEY

The beginnings of modern civilizations are to be found in the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile Rivers. It is of the latter however, with which we deal primarily as the earliest, for it is of this that we have authentic and basic knowledge as being the valley home of the early Egyptians.

The Nile rises three degrees south of the Equator and flows northward to empty itself into the Mediterranean Sea at thirty-one and a half degrees north latitude. It attains a length of some four thousand miles, thus vying with the greatest rivers in the world in length if not in volume. The upper course of the river, emerging from Africa's equatorial lakes, is known as the White Nile. At north latitude sixteen at Khartum, or thirteen and fifty miles from the sea, it receives the tributary known as the Blue Nile which is a mountain torrent, having its source in the lofty highlands of Abyssinia. The Nile has only one other tributary, the Athara, a freshet, which is joined one hundred and forty miles below the junction of the two Niles. Just below Khartum, the Nile enters the table land of Nubian sandstone, which underlies the Sahara, and from there begins its torturous course, oftentimes returning on itself.

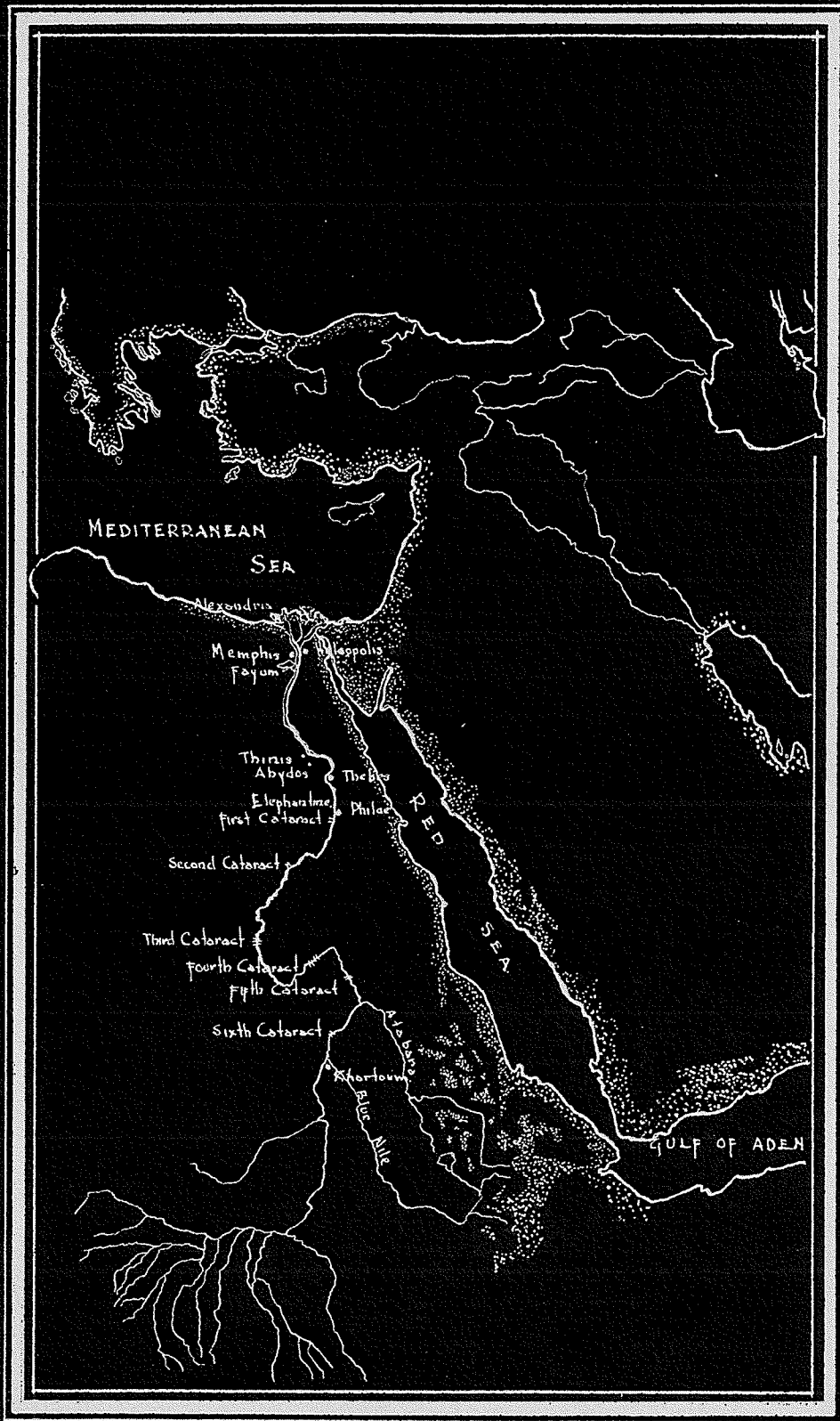
In six different places throughout this region, there are extended interruptions, where the rocks are piled and scattered, and these are known as the cataracts of the Nile. Due to the irregularity and the size of the rocks, navigation is seriously impeded at the first, second and fourth cataracts, otherwise the river is navigable almost throughout its entire course. It is at Elephantine that the river emerges from the granite hinderances, forming the first cataract, and goes upon an unobstructed way to the sea.

The river which changes its course and proceeds free to the north occurs to the disappearance of the

sandstone, sixty-eight miles below the cataract, at Edfu, where the nummulitic limestone which forms the northern desert plateau, and offers the river an easier task in the erosion of its bed. Formed by this river, a large canyon is cut across the eastern end of the Sahara to the Mediterranean. The valley formed, varies in width from ten to thirty-one miles, and the floor is covered with black alluvial deposits. The river cuts a deep trench through the alluvium and flows at the rate of three miles per hour and is no more than eleven hundred yards wide. The Bahr Yusuf, a second minor channel on the west, leaves the main stream and flows into the Fayum. In antiquity it flowed from there into a canal known as the "North", which was north-west of Memphis and reached the sea by way of the site of the later Alexandrian. About one hundred miles from the sea, the river enters that broad triangle with an apex at the south and called by the Greeks, the "Delta". This had at one time seven mouths, but these have been gradually filled up by the river deposits until now there remains but two through which the river straggles, on either side the middle. The western is known as the Rosetta mouth; the eastern that of Damiette. These deposits are very deep and have slowly risen over the sites of many ancient cities which once flourished there.

In the valley above the Delta, the depth of soil varies from thirty-three feet to thirty-eight feet, and reaches a maximum of ten miles in width, thus the cultivable area is less than ten thousand square miles in extent. The cliffs are usually about one hundred feet high, but here and there they attain the height of one thousand feet and are flanked by the desert. On the west we find the Libyan or the Great Sahara, an illimitable desolate series of hills of sand from six hundred and fifty to one thousand feet above the level of the Nile. This desert is only watered here and there by an irregular line of oases or watered depressions, the largest of these being the Fayum, watered by the Bahr Yusuf.

It was chiefly at the two northern corners of the Delta that outside influences and foreign elements gained access to the country. From the eastern corner came the prehistoric Semitic population of Asia, while the Libyan



• THE NILE VALLEY •

rares, of possibly European origin, came in by the western entrance. People came, in spite of the cataracts, from the south, and the lower end of the first cataract became a trading post known as the "Suan" (Assuan) or "market" where the negro traders of the south met those of Egypt. The natural boundaries of Egypt presented sufficiently effective barriers to invaders to enable the natives to slowly assimilate the new comers without being displaced.

Due to the straggling shape of the country--compact at the Delta and extending for about seven hundred and fifty miles in a narrow line--Egypt lacked the compactness necessary to stable political organization thus influencing political development. From this the man of the Delta could hardly understand the man of the first cataract and it was only the navigable Nile--the ease of communication--that neutralized the effect of the country's length.

The wealth of commerce which the river served to carry, was equally instrumental in producing. The rare rains--separated by intervals of years, are totally insufficient to maintain the process of agriculture, thus the productivity of the Egyptian soil is due to the inundation of the Nile, which is caused by the melting snows and the spring rains up at the sources of the Blue Nile. Carrying rich loam from the Abyssinian Highlands, it rushes down in the Nubian valley and is first discernible in the early part of June, and it continues to rise until the end of October or the early part of November. By then the water at the first cataract is nearly fifty feet higher than at low water. By an elaborate system of canals and reservoirs the water is retained and used for irrigation as needed.

As the river sinks below the level of the fields, artificial means must be provided to carry on the constant irrigation of the crops. Thus it was at a very early day that man was compelled to develop a machine by which this work might be carried on, and thereby they attained a surprising command of the complicated problems involved in the utilization of the river. We might thus say that Egypt became the mother of mechanical arts, but this is only due to the river being one of the chief natural forces.

The climate of Egypt is paradisaical and the air is that of the surrounding desert--pure and dry--even an excessive degree of heat causes slight discomfort. In winter the mean temperature is fifty-six degrees Fahrenheit

* Brewster - J.A. "History of Egypt"

and in summer eighty-three degrees; at the Delta even though it attains one hundred and twenty-two degrees, the nights are always cool, due to the vast expanse of vegetation. Regardless of stagnating pools and marshes, the warm breezes soon dry out the land and there is never any malarial infection in upper Egypt. So it is an ideal country just outside the tropics, enjoying a mild climate-- devoid of the harshness of a northern winter and at the same time cool enough to escape those enervating influences of the tropical conditions.

Sharply defined was the Egyptian's world: "a deep and narrow valley of unparalleled fertility, winding between lifeless deserts, furnishing a remarkable environment, not to be found elsewhere in all the world." These surroundings reacted most powerfully on the mind and thought of the Egyptian, conditioning and determining his idea of the world and the mysterious powers ruling it. The river, the dominant feature of his valley, determined the direction for him. "The illimitable solitudes of the desert, which thrust itself thus insistently upon his vision and his whole economy of life, and formed his horizon toward both suns, tinctured with sombreness his views of the great gods who ruled such a world."

Nowhere else in the world have plentiful records of a now extinct civilization been so preserved as along the banks of the Nile. All along the river one will find silent, majestic and colossal memorials of the past-- ruined cities--of enormous blocks of granite, limestone and sandstone, shattered obelisks and massive pylon bases that in all proclaim the power and wealth of forgotten ages and civilization--a civilization whose culture dominated the eastern basin of the Mediterranean in the age when Europe was emerging into the secondary stages of civilization. Nowhere else has a dry atmosphere, with the absence of rain "permitted the survival of such a wealth of the best and highest in the life of an ancient people in so far that life found expression in material form."

12Breasted, J.H. - "History of Egypt"

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"History of Egypt" Breasted, J.H.
"History of Art" Vol. I. Joseph Pijoan

Chapter II

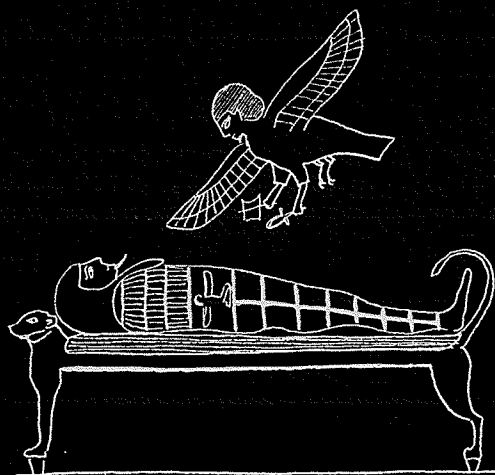
THE RELIGION OF THE EGYPTIANS

It is through its temples and tombs that ancient Egypt has become mainly known. The latter were filled with offerings to the dead and illustrations of the daily life of the living, while on the walls were represented scenes at which the dead had been present, history of his life in the invocations of the gods. The temples, on the other hand, were rich in religious lore, which was sculptured and painted on their ceilings and walls. Thus it is we owe most of our knowledge of ancient Egypt to the gods and to the dead.

The civilization of Egypt goes back to a remote past, and due to recent discoveries, we have been able to trace back, almost to its beginnings. The religion of Egypt is known to be highly composite, the product of different races and different channels of culture and thought--never united completely into a homogeneous whole. To the end, Egyptian religion remained a confederation of separate cults rather than a definite theology. Without the Pharaoh, who gave unity in some measure to both religion and State, by being not only a son but a representative of the sun-god, the Egyptian State and the Egyptian religion would have been dissolved into their original beginnings.

The Pharonic Egyptians, who developed both culture and transformed the desert and marshes into cultivated fields, built temples and tombs, seem to have come from Asia. Up to their arrival, civilization in the Nile Valley seemed to be of an advanced stage of neolithic culture--finest flint tools ever made--skilled in the making of vases of hardest stone--these latter were overcome by the invaders because with their crude weapons they were no match for the copper weapons of the invading tribe.

Whether or not the invaders were of a single race is doubtful. We know they were composed of at least three elements. One, from Babylonia or west Asia and the



· THE "BA" (SOUL) WITH SYMBOLS OF LIFE & BREATH REVISITING ·

· THE MUMMIFIED BODY ·

other two, aboriginal. One of them, Professor Petrie claims to be Libyan (Schweinfurth, "Ueber den Ursprung der Aegypter" in the Verhandlungen der Berliner anthropologischen Gesellschaft, June 1897). Due to these three influences, we have at least three different types of religious belief and practice as the basis of Egyptian religion.

Embalming, we have been accustomed to think, peculiarly characteristic of ancient Egypt, but this was never universal in Egypt as it was unknown to the race in the Nile Valley before the Pharonic invaders arrived--and even among the latter it spread slowly. Mummification was closely bound up with the belief in the resurrection of the dead. It was not until the older races had been absorbed by the conquerors, did mummification become, along with the religious ideas, general. It is from these mummies that we get most of the small amulets and scarabs as well as many of the papyri that have given us insight into the literature of the past.

Of one of the prehistoric races, we find the practice a secondary burial, that is, the bodies having been dismembered, were allowed to "remain unburied until the flesh had been stripped from their bones by birds and beasts of prey, and it was only then that the sun-bleached bones were consigned to the tomb."

No reconciliation is possible between mummification and secondary burial. Their ideas are contradictory to one another. In the former, effort is made to preserve the flesh from decay and keep the body intact; in the other, the body is thrown to beasts and birds and the skeleton is broken up. In this latter, the people could hardly believe in a future existence of the body but rather in that shadowy, vapour-like form--that imperishable part of man. It was this that survived the body while the body returned to the soil. This prehistoric belief left its traces in the official religion of later Egypt. The Ba or "Soul", with the figure of a bird and the head of a man, is its direct descendent.

The Egyptian theory of the nature of man in the historical age of the nation was very complicated. Man was made up of many parts, each of which was capable of

living eternally. There were certain component parts which were clearly defined and which occupied an important part in the religious ideas of Egypt. The most important was the Ka or "double". This corresponded to the shadow of the visible world but to the Egyptian, it did not exist alone as a product of the mind, but was as real and material as the shadow itself. It was the Ka that gave life and form to the object of which it was the image--essence and personality. Until the person was born his Ka had no existence; while on the other hand it was the Ka to which he owed his existence. Once into being however, the Ka was immortal. As soon as it left the body, the body ceased to live and did not live again until reunited with its Ka. In the meantime, the Ka lead an independent existence, conscious and alive.

The Ka needed food and drink, hence offerings were made to the dead as well as to the gods, each of whom had his own Ka dependent also on food. It was the Ka of the food and the Ka of the drink upon which the Ka of man or god was fed. Symbolized food in the form of terra cotta cakes, inscribed with the names and titles of the deceased were substituted for the funerary bread.

These sham offerings led them to place within their tombs life-like statues of the deceased so that, when the mummies shrivelled up beyond recognition, the Kas would find fitting forms in which to clothe themselves. During the Memphite period, small figures of blue and green porcelain with a mattock painted under each arm and a basket on the back, were made and placed in these tombs. These were ushehti-figures and the Sixth Chapter of the Book of the Dead explains these as follows: "O these ushehtis, whatever be the work it is decreed the Osirified one must do in the other world, let all hindrances to it there be smitten down for him, even as he desires! Behold me when ye call! See that ye work diligently every moment there, sowing the fields, filling the canals with water, carrying sand from the West to the East. Behold me when ye call!"

After the tomb was closed it was necessary to find a means of access so the Ka could leave and enter in order to eat and drink. What to us are frauds and pictures were to them concrete realities, hence all that was necessary was to paint a false door on one of the walls and in front of this was deposited the offerings for the Ka.



• USHEBTI • FIGURE • of an UNKNOWN PERSON •

The Ka was conceived of as the living principal which inspired both gods and men. Its separation from the body meant death, and when these two reunited, only then could life be reinstated. This could only happen in the other world, after long years and strange experiences had been undergone by the disembodied Ka. This Ka was oftentimes represented with a symbol of life in his hands.

As Egypt progressed in knowledge and culture, new ideas were adopted and difficulties began to multiply and the theory of the Ka became complicated. Among these was the idea of the Khu or the "luminous" part of man which was, in fact the soul of the human Ka, and was symbolized by the crested ibis. It forms a link now between gods and men and participates in divine nature. "It is the soul regarded as a godlike essence, as coming down from heaven, rather than mounting up toward it." It does not need a body, and is itself disembodied; it belongs to the Ka which still moves and lives and not to the mummified corpse. It waits on the god of the dead, not on the dead. **

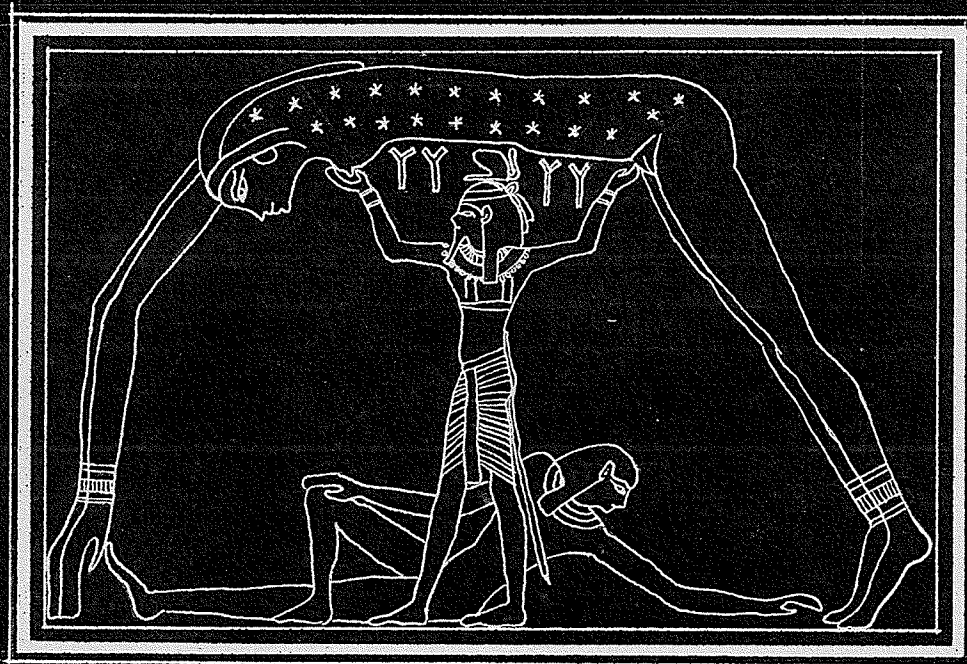
The imperishable part of man, which like the Ka, passed after death into another world, was the Ba or "soul". The Ba was pictured as a bird, as was the Khu, but the bird had usually a human head and sometimes human hands. While the Khu was essentially divine, the Ba was essentially human.

The bird chosen to represent the Ba was generally the plover, but at times its place was taken by the hawk, the symbol of Horus and the solar gods. The soul lived in the light of day and not in the tombs as did the Ka. The gods provided for the Ba in all things.

Besides the double and the two souls, there was another important element; the heart, the seat both of the feelings and of the mind. It was not the material heart but its immaterial double that passed after death into the other world. Often the heart and the intestines were removed and cast into the Nile; sometimes, removed, and amulets replaced for them. They were sometimes replaced in the mummy but under the protection of four wax images of the four genii of the dead--the four Khu of the book of the Dead. Moreoften however, they were placed into four vases of alabaster and were buried with the dead. These vessels were dedicated to the man-headed Anset (Smet), the jackal-headed Dua-mut-ef, the Ape-headed Hapi, and the hawk-headed Qebh-sonu-f, who are identified with the planets in the

* See Chap. ix.

** "The Religion of Ancient Egypt" Sayce. A H.



THE GODDESS OF THE HEAVENS

Her body is studded with stars, Shu, the god of the air, supports her, while prone, beneath her is the earth-god, Keb.

Pyramid texts (Maspero, "Pyramide du roi Ounos" in the Recueil de Travaux, iii. p. 205). The hieroglyphic symbol of the heart is one of these vases and one name was "hati", "that which belongs to the vase."

The immaterial heart, the Ka of it goes on to the region of the other world to "the Abode of Hearts" and here in the judgment hall of Osiris it meets the dead man to whom it formerly belonged. It here accuses him of all evil things and thoughts that occurred while together, it, itself, being an unwilling witness, was not the cause of them though they acted through it. It was weighed against the balance of Truth and if in favour of the dead man, then it returned to the former body and would live it forever in the islands of the Blest.

The Mummy or Sahu must be extinguished carefully from the Khat or natural body. The latter was a mere dead shell seen by the soul but offering no resting place. The mummy contained, on the other hand, within itself the seeds of growth and resurrection. The Egyptian looked forward to the time when the mummy would once more be reunited with both its heart and soul and thus arise from the dead.

Thus it is one will find through the whole Egyptian civilization how dependent and how much their lives were influenced by their religion.

It was, as among all other early peoples, in his surroundings that the Egyptian saw his gods. Streams, springs, birds and beasts, and hills were all creatures like him or possessed powers of which he was not master. Some of these were friends, willing to aid him and defend him while others were ready to do him harm, and were therefore, his enemies. Such spirits were known only to the dwellers in a given locality and of such there is not much known in the Old Kingdom. The Egyptian peopled not merely the locality about him but also the heavens above and the earth below him. In remote ages of earliest civilization the shepherds and ploughmen saw in the heavens a vast cow with head in the west, with the earth between the fore and hind legs and the belly studied with stars was the arch of heaven. Some saw a woman with feet in the east and bending over the earth till her hands supported her in the west. "The sun was born every morning as a child and sailed across the heavens in a celestial barque to arrive and descend into the west as an old man tottering into the grave. Again it might be a hawk taking its

* "History of Egypt" Brewster: J.A.

daily flight across the sky, and the sun disc with the outspread wings of the hawk became the most common symbol of their religion.

"They believed that the earth was a man lying prone with vegetation growing on his back and where men and beasts moved--their sky was a sea upon which all the heavenly bodies sailed each day returning the following day by means of a subterranean river like the Nile, and was connected to the Nile at the first cataract. In the beginnings of their existence, there is only the ocean and on this there appeared a flower or an egg out of which sprang the sungod. From him there were four children, Shu, Tefnut, Keb and Nut. While the five were lying in chaos on the surface of the sea, Shu and Tefnut who represented the air thrust themselves between Keb and Nut--treading on Keb the earth, and raising up Nut the heavens. These latter two became in turn the parents of Osiris and Isis, Set and Nephthys, and with their primeval father, the sungod, they formed a cycle of nine deities, the "Ennead" of which each temple later possessed a local form. "The co-relation of father, mother and son influenced the theology of later times, so strongly that each temple possessed its own artificially formed triad, of secondary origin upon which, an "ennead" was built up.

Another tale of Egypt's origin is that of Ra, who, ruling the earth, and finally sending Hathor, a goddess, to slay the men for plotting against him, repents and diverts the goddess from total extermination. She in turn raises Ra upon her back so he may dwell in the heaven.

Besides the above mentioned gods, there were those of the nether regions who existed in these subterranean regions of the sun. "Here the dead dwelt of whom Osiris was their king, who in turn was aided by his sister-wife Isis. He was a benefactor of men and a righteous ruler, but was misled and slain by his brother Set. Isis after much trouble in obtaining her lord's body, was preparing it for burial with the assistance of Anubias the jackal-headed god--the god of embalming--and was uttering charms over the dead. So powerful were these, that Osiris gained his animation and passed in triumph as a living king into the nether regions. Isis later gave birth to a son, Horus, who when grown to manhood, avenged his father by defeating and badly mutilating Set, so he took his father's earthly throne. Set entered the god's tribunal and declared Horus not valid, but Horus defended by Thoth, the god of letters, is victorious and is declared "triumphant". " " "

* "History of Egypt": Breasted: J. H.

* "Manual of Egyptian Archaeology": Maspero. G.



• OSIRIS •

Due to the lack of rain, the sun (Ra) is seen so much that it is only natural that in this valley it should have the place of honor. He was almost universally worshipped and it was at On, the Delta city, later called Heliopolis, that was the centre of his cult. He had three names at this centre--Re or Ra, the solar disc itself,--Atum or Aten, the decrepid sun or sinking sun, and Khepri was the sun in the youthful vigor of his rising. He sailed in two barks--one in the morning and the other in the afternoon, and when in the latter, he entered the nether world to rise again in the east, he brought joy and happiness to its disembodied inhabitants. His symbol at Heliopolis was the obelisk while at Edfu he was found as a hawk under the name of Horus.

As the reckoner of time, the moon was the god of reckoning, of letters, of wisdom and whose chief centre was at Shmun or Hermopolis and his symbol was the Ibis. Nut, the sky was worshipped universally and became the type of woman and of woman's love and joy that the people of Egypt came to idolize. At Denderah, she was known as the cow-goddess, Hathor; at Sais, the joyous Neit; Bubastis, as Bast the cat and at Memphis, she became the lioness or goddess of storm and terror. Osiris, however so human in incidents and characteristics, became the chief god, worshipped--with Isis as an ideal wife and mother and Horus an embodiment of the qualities of a good son. The home of the Osiris was originally at Dedu but Abydos obtained special recognition because the head of Osiris had been buried there. There he appears as a closely swathed figure, a Pharaoh, a fetish surviving from his prehistoric worship. Ptah, while not a nature divinity, was a great god and was a patron of the artisan, artificer and artist, and his High Priest was always the chief artist.

The symbols and manifestations of these are of the simplest characters bearing the primitive simplicity in which they originated. The gods bear a staff or the goddesses a reed stem--with diadems of woven reeds or a pair of feathers or the horns of a sheep. The manifestations were often seen in the numerous animals but the animal worship itself as a cult was not introduced till a decline of the nation. Though harboured and fed, these animals and birds were not worshipped or made an object of ritual until later.

Each town had its temple to the sun god with its own particular customs. As commercial and administrative intercourse increased, these became a complex of tangled myth which

was never reduced into a coherent system by the priests--
"a chaos of contradictions".

The Egyptian had in mind when building his temples for the gods, a dwelling place, probably a design of a private house of Predynastic Egypt. This has gradually evolved till he arrived at his most supreme achievement-- a structure of stone, with perhaps the main features primitive but nevertheless, a building to house his gods and survive the ravishes of time. "Behind the forecourt open to the sky, rose a colonnaded hall beyond which was a series of small rooms containing furniture and implements required in the temple duty. The centre of the chambers in the rear was occupied by a small room, the holy of holies, in which stood a shrine hewn from one block of granite. It contained the image of the god, a small figure of wood from one and one half to six feet high, elaborately adorned and splendid with gold, silver and costly stones". As regard the services of the god, they were just to furnish him with the luxuries and necessities of an Egyptian--plenty of food, drink, music and dance. These offerings were the income from an endowment of lands established by the throne, as well as contributions from the royal revenues in wine, grain, oil, honey and the like. These contributions though originally offered without ceremony, gradually became the occasion of elaborate ritual which was more or less alike in all temples. Outside the temple proper, in the forecourt, was a great altar where, on feast days the people gathered to share the food offering which was generally eaten by the priests and servants, after it was presented to the god. These feasts were however on days commemorating some incident in the life of the god and on such a day the statue of the god was brought out before the people in a small shrine like in form, to a small Nile boat.

The exalted position of the Pharaoh as the nation developed, made him the sole official servant or priest of the gods and there arose a state form of religion in which the Pharaoh played the supreme role, whereas in the earlier days the priest was but an incident in the duties of the local nobles. He, alone, it was, in theory, who worshipped the god; he was represented by a high priest in the various temples throughout the country.* Some of these high priest-hoods were of ancient origin and it was their duty not merely to conduct the service and ritual but to administer its endowments of lands, from the income of which he lived. He had a body of priests who assisted him and whose sacerdotal service was merely incidental to their everyday occupation.

* See
"Kings & Gods of Egypt" Alexandre Moret
"Old Egyptian Faith" Edouard Naville
"Religion of Ancient Egypt" A.H. Sayce

They had to serve for a stated period in the temple and were always represented at the service at worship of their gods. The women were commonly priestesses of Neit or Hathor and their sole duty was to dance and jingle a sistrum for the gods on festive days.

Running parallel to the evolution of their religion with its elaborate equipment of temple endowments--priesthood and ritual--^{we find} provision for the burial of the dead. The beliefs, previously mentioned, which finally led him to spend wealth and time, skill and energy in building and furnishing his "eternal house," are of the oldest ideas of a life hereafter that we know.

One will find the views of Osiris written on passages of the Fifth and Sixth Dynasty pyramids, where they have been preserved in large numbers and it is from these one finds where the Egyptian receives his notion of the hereafter and these are usually called the "Pyramid Texts."

Regardless of however persistently the Egyptian transferred the life of the deceased to some distant region, far from the tomb where the body lay, he was never able to detach the future life entirely from the body. As far as he was concerned there was no survival of the dead without it. Developing a more and more pretentious dwelling, we find a vast and massive structure of stone. We find no such colossal tombs as the pyramids in any other part of the world. In the Old Kingdom the nobles had tombs of immense masonry construction such as a king would be proud to own. Pepi I's vizier had such a structure with no less than thirty-one rooms. The superstructure of such a tomb was a massive rectangular oblong of masonry, the side of which sloped in at an angle of seventy-five degrees. This was known as a "mastaba" and was one of the earliest types of tombs which will be described in detail later on. We find that the king always assisted his favorites in the erection of their tombs and he, the king, quite often presents to them the false door. He assisted also in building the sarcophagus and perhaps detailed a body of artificers to assist in the construction.

In the Third Dynasty we find the Pharaoh not satisfied with one tomb and we find him far surpassing those of the nobles in their magnificence. As for his mortuary services he had ^{them} ~~it~~ constructed in a splendid mortuary temple erected always on the east side of the pyramid and a richly endowed priesthood was employed here to maintain its ritual and to provide food and the

such like for the departed king--the whole requiring many out--
buildings with which the pyramids were surrounded by a wall. A
massive causeway of stone lead up to the pyramid and at the
townward end there were set up large stately structures of
granite or limestone with floors of alabaster and through this
portal on feast days processions would move toward the resting
place of the dead. Such elaborate mortuary equipment was
confined to a small class as it would be a matter seriously
affecting the economic conditions of the state. The common
people, however, still continued to use, as their burial ground,
the pit of their prehistoric ancestors on the margin of the
western desert.

Ref.

"Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. Gaston.

"The Religion of Ancient Egypt" A.H. Sayce.

"History of Egypt." Breasted, J.H.

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Chapter III

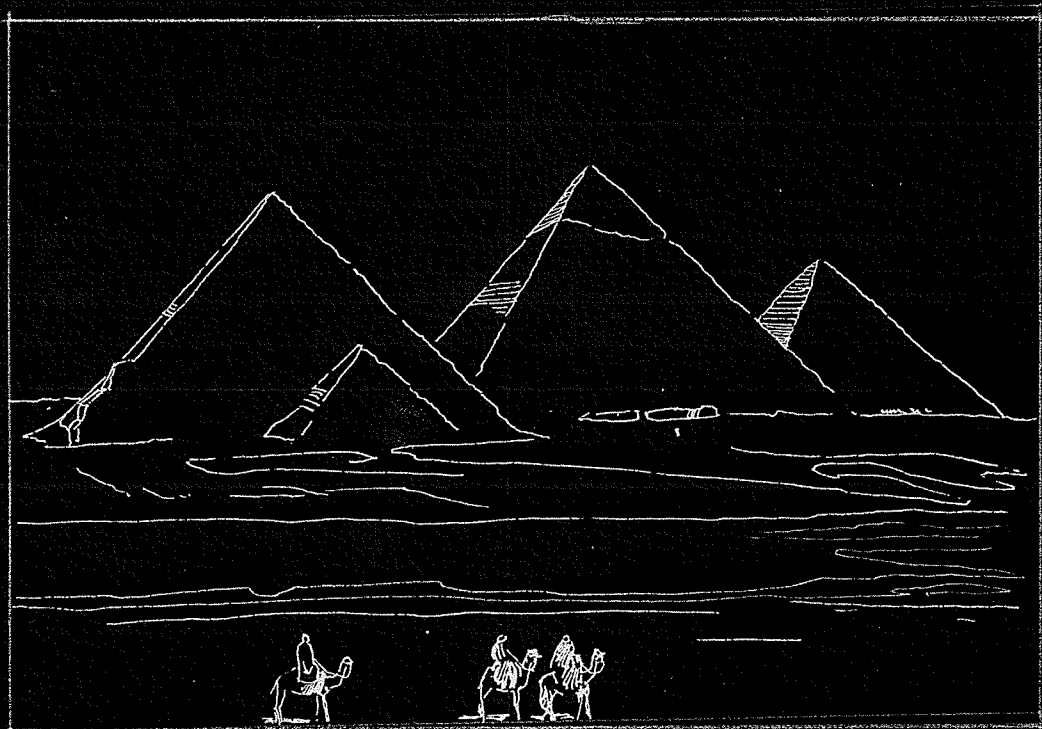
THE ARCHITECTURE OF EGYPT

If one considers the structural features, one will see that the influence of the religious conception upon the plastic art of Egypt has been small in architecture. The inclination of the walls of the houses and also the tombs and the mastabas has been determined by the resistance to be opposed by the inundations of the Nile. The pyramids, those huge funereal monuments owe their forms to the persistent tradition of sloping walls. Hence we find the tomb and temple repeating the plan of the Egyptian house.

In the course of time the religious conception has been impressed upon many of the elements of this architecture, and the first is the general character-- "the impressive grandeur of the pile" which becomes more and more accentuated as time goes on. Due to the few remains of the period of the Ancient and of the Middle Kingdom, one is prevented from following the development of the Egyptian temple, but in the New Kingdom it is found complete in plan and structure and its gigantic size attracts one's wonder and admiration. One might almost say that this passion for the colossal arises from the mental attitude which induced the Egyptian to construct enormous statues of their gods and Pharaohs, or the Egyptian painter to represent the god or prince larger than the other figures in his painting. "As the god is greater than the other figures, by so much is his dominion the greater, and as his temple is greater than others, by so much is his protection the greater for the faithful who assemble there. A latent principle in all religion is this." *

Besides the hugeness of the pile, there is another general characteristic of Egyptian architecture which has been determined by the religious conception. This is a closed-in architecture--an architecture understood from the inside alone and not from the outside. Walls devoid of breaks or ornament surround the building and "from the outside the mastaba appears like a rough bank of masonry; in the pyramid the sepulchral chamber is, as it were,

* "Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. Gaston.



THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZEH

buried in the interior and almost inaccessible; the high surrounding walls of the temples give the idea of a fortress."* "To fully appreciate and understand an Egyptian building whether it be mastaba, pyramid or temple, one must enter the structure and there wonder at the numerous rooms, long corridors, vestibules, halls and porticoes. Not so did the Greek. He built his temple or walls about the cella--there setting up his beautiful columns where all may enjoy and behold them while the Egyptian crowded his within enclosing walls. The Greek built his structures of funerary architecture along the way where the passerby may sympathize, but the Egyptian jealously conceals his beneath the earth and between thick walls. This enclosing faculty of the Egyptians is due to one of the elements of the magic conception--secrecy. If religious functions were to be profitable they must be protected from profane eyes, hence the plans are designed so that only those who have the right of entrance may gaze and see. So we find this in the tombs--a sacred enclosure accessible only to a few or closed entirely. So in the mastaba there was the "serdab" a small chamber for the statue which was to be inhabited by the Ka of the deceased. This was either sealed up or had a small opening a few centimetres in size connecting them. In the same way in the temple, the most sacred part was reached by long corridors, courts and porticoes to a small dark room where, only the chief priest and the king might enter.

The influence of the religious conception, is recognized however, more clearly in the decoration. One finds the walls of the temples and funeral chambers completely covered with figures. Not only the walls, but the architraves, columns, and every available space. To one the architectural elements appear to lose their structural functions. Hence, ^{there is} the lack of complete concordance between the architecture and the decoration which has always been a feature of Egyptian art. One of the reasons for this is that "architecture and decoration did not rise together in Egypt, but the latter was, as it were, leprosy which invaded and corrupted the whole architectural superficies." *

Not only this application of Egyptian architectural decoration to all the available space and also its limitations to the interior, reveals the magic origin of this decoration. Nowhere will one find a sign or figure on the outside of a mastaba or pyramid. Few figures and few statues appear upon the facade of the temples; but the

* "Religion & Art" Alessandro della Seta

interiors are literally swarming with figures and no doubt the secrecy with which the plans were made, influence also this ornamentation.

We must at all times remember that the architecture of Egypt is religious and funerary, and was an architecture of temples and tombs in its more monumental and more permanent manifestations; the dwellings of the gods and the dwellings of the dead. Since, to them, the gods and the dead were eternal they proceeded to build their dwellings as permanent as possible attaining the expression of durability, or, as one might say, of eternity.

Deprimitive modes of building has been really just a matter of conjecture rather than absolute knowledge. Being built of perishable material, they have long since disappeared and we know of them from the derived forms of tombs and temples, and from the representations of houses in the low reliefs of tombs, in sarcophagi and in terra cotta models, rather than from the scant remains of walls and foundations which have been excavated.

Due to the lack of a great quantity of wood, the date palm, cycamore, acacia and tamerisk being the principle trees present, we have the huts of the fellaheen or the peasantry made of mud or sun-dried bricks along the banks of the Nile.

These huts are often consolidated and strengthened by using the reeds which grow along the banks for their walls and roofs and are in the latter resting on poles laid across the walls. Since there is little rain, these huts are built as a protection against the sun and so the roofs are flat. The walls are made stronger by having the base wider and the outer surface of the wall having a marked inward inclination. They usually have a single doorway in the longer side and generally no window at all. Of such buildings, doubtless, these were the earliest houses of the Egyptian.

This structure could scarcely be called architecture but was the only utilitarian building of the most primitive sort and serves as a basis for architecture. It becomes architecture however, only in so far as some pleasantness of proportion and of setting is given to the simple structure and still more if well proportioned and significant forms have the added grace of expression and appropriate ornament.

The walls of the most ancient houses were often formed of a light framework of poles interwoven with reeds, then plastered with mud. The poles and reeds were bound together at the top on the outside by a horizontal pole fastened by thongs to the frame and these were tied in such a way as to form a pattern on the pole. Similar poles were used to strengthen the corners. When the roof-poles were placed on this mud wall with its frame, the ends of the reeds projecting over the cornice pole would be pressed outwards and the roof being allowed to project, we have in all probability the origin, or at least the first remote suggestion of the form and the decoration of the characteristic Egyptian stone cornice.

In the more important houses the roof was more solidly constructed by the use of a mud plaster over the reed pole to an even surface. Surmounting the roof would be a parapet wall, the roof being reached by a flight of steep steps from the outside. This roof became the most pleasant part of the house and at one end would be a covered shelter to protect the inhabitants from the strong sun.

Pausing here in the discussion of the dwellings, we will take a brief summary of the history of this country showing the developments of architecture in general.

The varied development of Egyptian art was essentially a native one, resulting from the interaction and successive supremacy of a number of local schools, raised to prominence by the political importance of their centres.

The earliest of these schools to attain a general predominance was that of This, a city situated about two-thirds of the way from the Delta to the first cataract. This became the capital of Menes who, about 3,400 B.C., succeeded in uniting under one rule the kingdoms of the North and the South. The slight remains of architecture there, over a period of four hundred years, indicate a very primitive condition. Sundried brick was the principle material while stone masonry and the arch were introduced. The rudimentary forms of the tomb and of the temple display a similarity to the form of the house, which persists fundamentally even in later times.



• THE • GREAT • SPHINX • OF • GIZEH •

Following this phase of the Thinite period, we have the seat of government changed to Memphis a little south of Cairo and there we find the flowering of Egyptian art. Under the kings of the Third Dynasty, we find that the royal tombs gradually took the form of pyramids and with Khufu, the first of the kings of the Fourth Dynasty, came the culmination of Memphite architecture in the Great Pyramid at Giza. The buildings of this period were of such a magnitude and standard of workmanship that they have never been equalled. The architectural forms, though simple, were of the greatest refinement. The colonnades were now used in the courts and halls of the temples and the "papyrus" or "lotus bud" columns first appeared. The Memphite power declined with the close of the Sixth Dynasty and for a period architecture was at a standstill till about 2160 B.C. when there emerged the powerful rulers of the Theban or "Middle Kingdom" who had their capital at Thebes in Upper Egypt.

The art of the Egyptians of this Theban period so dominated the architecture that even to the end of its history under the Romans, its influence was felt. The Hyksos invasion caused an interim from about 1675 to 1577 B.C. but the empire following picked up the thread where the Middle Kingdom had dropped it. They apparently furnished the prototypes of the temples and other buildings in their later form. After the expulsion of the invaders we find the age of greatest splendour in Egyptian architecture. In the three hundred and fifty years following 1500 B.C. the greatest temples of Der-el-Bahri were built, and likewise were those of Abu Simbel, and of Medinet Habu, the delicate shrine of Elephantine and the superb halls and courts of Karnak, Luxor and the tombs of the valleys behind Thebes. Columnar architecture was magnified to a scale seldom equalled. We find columns sixty feet to seventy feet high with a clear lintel span of twenty-four feet and these were but two of the remarkable structural triumphs of this brief empire. At the close the artistic impulse had spent itself and the buildings of Ramses III, the last of the great imperial monarchs, show signs of heaviness in design and carelessness in execution. In the dynasties that followed--Tanite, Libyan and Nubian--only an isolated monarch now and then had power to attempt a revival of the splendours of a bygone day.

We now have under the Saite period the beginnings of a new artistic fermentation. After the expulsion of the Assyrian conquerors about 666 B.C., art sprang into vigorous activity which had not been known for five hundred years, under the rule of Sais in the Delta. Though they strived to renew the Theban culture the originality of the artists was not to be denied and new and beautiful modifications resulted. Persian domination followed and architecture suffered almost complete destruction. One can trace its innovations in the elaborate and diverse columns of the temples built by the Ptolemies and the Romans.

In the last days of the empire, one will find that the Greeks and the Romans alike brought their own national forms but these did not affect any substantial change outside the Delta. However, under the prestige of Alexandria, Egyptian dispositions, clothed in Greek detail, spread beyond the boundaries of Egypt. The peristyle court and hall, the clerestorey and other characteristic elements, became, henceforth, international.

In returning now to the architecture of Egypt and study the buildings in detail, one first comes to that portion known as the funerary architecture. This deals with the three main types of construction of the "eternal house", the mastaba, the tomb of the noble, the pyramids, the Old Kingdom tomb of the monarch, and the rock-cut tomb--the resting place of the monarch as introduced in the Middle Kingdom.

The term mastaba is an Arabic word meaning "bench" so called in allusion to their shape.* They are rectangular massive structures, in their earliest form of sun-dried brick. Later they are faced with stone and have stone chambers. They vary in size from fifty feet long, twenty to twenty-five feet wide and twelve to fifteen feet high, to ten feet in height and fifteen feet in length. One of the largest near the Great Pyramid measures over one hundred feet in length and some are even longer. The walls have an inward batter of about seventy-five degrees. This batter in the mastaba of Gizeh is a continuous slope while those of Sakkara it is formed by vertical steps of stone. In form, they resemble greatly a primitive house and are so placed to run north and south and at Gizeh a form of an avenue runs between these tombs.

* "Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. G.
"History of Art." Vol I., Joseph Rijsen.

Their solid mass is broken usually only by a single chamber entered by a door placed in the eastern side toward one end. Some of those of the Sixth Dynasty at Sakkara, have numerous halls and chambers like a palace. A false door also on the east, was the symbolic entrance way for the use of the spirit of the dead. The forms of the doors, like the niche behind the table of offerings in the chapel within, were copied from the carpentry work of the doors of more elaborate houses of the time, with their upright posts and horizontal curtain poles. Sometimes there are porches preceding these doors, and these have columns, square in section, carrying lintels. The chamber itself is the chapel of the dead and here one will find opposite the door, a table, where from time to time foods are replenished for the use of the double and where the prayers are uttered for the dead. Slit-like openings may be found communicating with a smaller inaccessible chamber known as the "serdab" in which those statues of the dead, the ushebtis are placed to serve as a physical basis or support for the double in case the mummified body should perish. The mummy and sarcochagus were usually placed in a room formed in the rock below the mastaba and reached by a shaft sunk from the top of the structure through its solid mass into the ground beneath. The supplies for the dead having been placed here, the shaft is filled with earth and sealed so that the tomb chamber may be protected from marauders.

At Abydos there are two royal mastabas that have chambers of stone, and these are the earliest tombs known in which stone is used. In the Third and Fourth Dynasties the Egyptians began to build their tombs in that form of the pyramid or as some claim, mastabas which have their sides inclined till they meet at a point. The earliest form of a pyramid is the stepped pyramid of Sakkara built by King Zoser of the Third Dynasty. It is the first pyramid of stone and rises in six steps to a height of one hundred and ninety-six feet.

In scheme and purpose the pyramids and mastabas are essentially the same. The tomb-chamber and shaft leading to it are cut in the rock foundations as are those in the mastabas. At other times this chamber is built right into the pyramid as we will find in the Great Pyramid at Gizeh, and the greatest cautions are taken to hide this by means of intricate passages carefully blocked and by false rooms to mislead despoilers.

In the Great Pyramid is an unfinished passage and a vestibule chamber hewn in the rock foundations. The chapel is no longer within the pyramid as in the case of the mastaba but is a separate structure--a temple, without the pyramid.

We have next to King Zoser's tomb, one built by Snefru at Medum, the last king of the Third Dynasty. It is built of stone of three receding stages rising from a mound consisting of the debris of the lower stages. Another one attributive to him is the pyramid at Dahshur which is nearly as large as the Great Pyramid at Gizeh.*

We now come to the largest and most famous of those royal tombs--that at Gizeh built by Cheops or Khufu. With this, are two others, by Chephren or Khafra and Myceninus or Menkara. Cheops' pyramid is known as the Great Pyramid, being originally four hundred and eighty-four feet high and seven hundred and sixty-eight feet wide on each side.

Except for the absolute dependence of the peasantry and their subjection to the will of the king, these massive structures of stone--pyramids--would have been impossible. The work could have been carried on with many unskilled workmen under the supervision of a few overseers and an architect.

The pyramid of Cheops is built as are most of Egyptian buildings without the aid of mortar. At no other period in Egypt does the masonry show such high technical perfection. Chephren's pyramid retains very little of its outside covering, but what remains shows that it was at one time faced up for sixteen courses of red granite. Of all the remaining pyramids, there is found little to show that is in anyway equal to that of the earlier ones. They are inferior both in size and character of structure. After the Twelfth Dynasty, they ceased to be the characteristic form of royal tombs.

Under the Theban monarchs of the Middle Kingdom, the tomb cut in the western cliffs, was developed. It was not, however, till the Empire period that this type of tomb was employed to any great extent. We find that every wealthy Theban family had its concealed vault preceded by a small rock-cut chapel. The Pharaohs however, carried passages descending far into the cliffs with a chamber or chambers

* "Egypt & Its Monuments" Amelia B. Edwards.

"History of Art" Pijoan, Joseph.

"History of Egypt" Breasted, J. H.

at the ends of these to contain their body. The funerary chapels were separated from the cliffs themselves and fronting the rivers. The first of such chapels was built by Queen Hatshepsut, about 1490 B.C. in the valley of Der-el-Bahri, and is one of the most original and refined of all Egyptian monuments, rising in three great colonnaded terraces to the sanctuaries in the cliff. It contains the simplest of architectural forms--but the proportions are so excellent and the effect so pure, in the square or sixteen-sided columns set in long ranks, as to suggest Greece in the Periclean Age. *

In the form finally reached under the Ramesside Pharaohs of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties, the mortuary temples closely resembled the temples of the gods and were likewise the product of a long evolution. They were like the dead in requiring food and shelter, and like the dead were housed with solidity and splendour, and served by the provision of food, drink and diversion, presented by the populace.

One will find ^{that} the national centre of Amon-worship was at Karnak in Thebes, and there one will find many temples, the product of growth over many years. The smaller temples each consist of a small sanctuary at the back, flanked by cells for the minor gods of the triad, by chapels and storerooms preceded by a colonnaded hall--the "hypostyle hall" which turned its broad side to a square court surrounded by columns. The facade was composed of a great doorway between two tall quadrangles whose faces sloped back from the perpendicular, and were known as the "Pylons". Before these pylons stood obelisks, colossal statues of the king or the divinity and wooden masts carrying long streamers. Before these, one will oftentimes find a long avenue of approach which would be lined on either side by sculptured rams or sphinxes.

At the more important temples ^{are} the successive monarchs viing with one another in multiplying the elements just mentioned. They would build newer and larger hypostyle halls and courts in front of the previous pylons till in the case of the temple of Amon at Karnak, there was under construction, the seventh pylon. Due to the land formation and the peculiarities of the beliefs in various locations,

* "History of Art" Pigeon, Joseph

"History of Architecture" Fletcher, Sir Banister.

we have not the temples all laid out on the same plan as that mentioned previously. They are all noted however, for their solidity, simplicity, originality and pure composition.

* We may at this point introduce architectural details of Egyptian art without in any way affecting the surface color, painting and descriptive elements. The column, the first of these details, was introduced by the Egyptian with great mechanical skill as well as artistic taste. By the Fourth Dynasty there is in use a square monolithic pier without decoration of any kind--these simplest forms of support and lintel. In the Fifth Dynasty we find now the use of circular columns, with their motives being taken from the palm, papyrus or the lotus. Palm leaves were carved upright about the top of the shaft, bending gracefully under the weight of the abacus, or the shaft itself was made into the form of several lotus or papyrus stems bound together, with the buds swelling at the top to form the capital.

In the Middle Kingdom, the columns were purely geometrical--polygonal in plan or with fluting, but in either case they were crowned by a square abacus. Under the Empire period, all these above types were used, the papyrus or lotus bud form being the favorite. In the hypostyle halls one will find now the inverted bell-capital--imitative of the flower of the lotus. Hathor-headed capitals frequently are used on her shrines, standing colossi in front of square piers were especially frequent under the Great Ramessides. The Saites and Ptolemaics elaborated these, especially the bell-capital by applying to the smooth surfaces motives drawn from the flora--leaves, flowers, buds. They used different varieties in the same colonnade but always in pairs, at equal distance on either side of the axis. Regardless of the column and capital, the same type of cornice is found--a quarter hollow or cavetto, making transitions from the vertical members to the horizontal projecting line of the roof.

The arch as introduced by the Egyptian, is sometimes found in tombs, notably in the sanctuaries of the temple of Seti I at Abydos, but in all such important work, it was merely a corbelled arch, but out of projecting stones in horizontal courses. True arches abound in the subterranean tomb-chambers from the time of the Third Dynasty and in the

* "History of Ornament" Howlin. A.E.D.
"History of Architecture" Fletcher, Sir Bonmister
"History of Art" Pajorn Joseph.

case of the store chambers of the Ramesseum, the mortuary temple of Ramses II at Thebes, present a series of barrel vaults resting on light intermediate walls.

The clerestory which was invented by the early people in the period of the Empire, plays a very important part in the architecture of other countries in the years to follow. To light the wide hypostyle halls, unprovided with windows at the outside, the roof was raised over the three central aisles, admitting light through grated openings over the lower roofs at the side.

The Egyptian roofs were flat, as their rainless climate allowed them to be. Those of the temples were constructed of slabs of stone resting directly on the lintel. Deep foundations were unnecessary as the soil is quite compact. Their piers and columns, originally monolithic, were in the largest examples built up like large towers with rough fillings, all in all, being none too solid. The masonry gradually lost the precision of the earliest monuments in the vast and hasty erections of the later Empire, but the constructive methods remained nearly constant.

The elements of decorative expression remained substantially the same in all the various periods. They were based on natural forms like the palm, the lotus or on conventional geometrics, such as the spiral. In the temples one will find landscapes on the walls, the stars on the ceiling as well as the legends of the gods. The heroics of the kings were scattered over every available space proclaiming the glories of the buildings and their builders and all their works.

"It is to its strength and dignity, above all, that Egyptian architecture owes its effect. Less structural than sculptural, in many of its forms, it nevertheless has breadth and monumental quality. At its best, pure and subtle, it is seldom lacking in magnificence or even in some touch of sublimity, which is universally recognized in its major creations."

Ref.

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|---|-------------------------------------|
| "History of Architecture" Sir Banister Fletcher | "History of Egypt" Breasted J.H. |
| "History of Art" Joseph Pijoan | "History of Ornament" Hamlin A.F.D. |
| "Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. | |
| "Religion & Art" Alessandro Della Seta. | |
| "Egypt - its Monuments" Amelia B. Edwards. | |

Chapter IV

THE RELIGIOUS CONCEPTION OF SCULPTURE

Now that the fundamental features of the Egyptian religion both to ~~as~~ the conception of the gods and the funerary idea has been previously been outlined, one must, in order to make clear the connection between this religion and plastic art, see first how and in what degree art has been placed at the services of that religion, and secondly, what influence religion has had upon the aspect and course of this art.

A religion of the type that Egypt had, which trusted so much in the protection of the gods and had so materialistic an idea of them, comprehended the advantage to be obtained from plastic art. To possess an image of the god was the same as having the god himself, and to be able to ask him directly for that desired. Thus, if one god protected a whole community, that one god would in turn favor more he who possessed him, so if one would do as much for the possessor, why should the possessor not have images of all his favorite gods to grant everything one could possibly wish for? Hence we find reason for the numerous idols which form the patrimony of Egyptian art.

"The widest field of the work of plastic art, is that of the funerary cult." Art supplied the most efficacious means of supplying the dead man with all he might desire in the life beyond the grave. The same services were not required of art in every period and every part of Egypt, and we find that the different social conditions caused, also on account of their cost, a greater or less demand for these images.

This art has a principle share in the preservation of the body. What caused the Egyptians to practise the mummification of the dead was the need of preserving the body in order that it might be reanimated by its Ka in the after-life.

So that this body might appear like the living person and should not be decomposed when in contact with the earth, it was enclosed, after a process of preparation, in some protecting medium--a mummy-case,² which was a life-sized reproduction of the features of the dead man. But because it was in the form of a mummy, this case was not exactly like

¹ *Religion & Art*. "Alessandro della Seta"

² See Chap. XIII 413

the individual when he was alive or exactly like he would be after death. Hence, we have a statue made resembling the Ka of the dead man imagined as a living person rather than the dead man himself. In his fear lest the Ka when it tried to reanimate this statue, should, due to some defect or impurity depart, perhaps never to return, the Egyptian had several of these statues made of the dead, thus being assured of having one suitable for the Ka to take up its residence to reanimate the dead man.

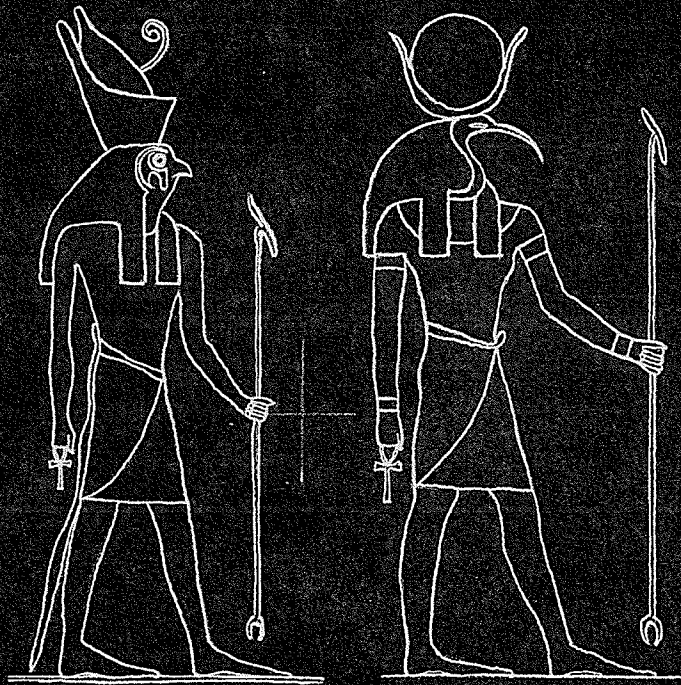
Another fear of the Egyptian in regard to the reanimating of the dead body, was the dread lest he should have no food. Seeing as how the survivors would have difficulty in supplying this food in future times, it was left to the work of the gods to see that the body did not lack the food. To make this easier, however, an image of this food was offered that the gods might transform it into reality, and so the Ka of the dead man was represented on the walls of the tomb, and before him a table heaped with food.

The Egyptian felt another doubt, though he had placed hyperbolic signs due to the animals and vases, food offered thus, might, after many centuries become entirely consumed. So, to ensure the perpetual presence of these offerings, they represented them by not only the sacrifice and offering, but also by the preparation that preceded this final act. For example, if he wished to offer a loaf of bread, he went back to the reaping of the grain. If he intended to sacrifice an ox, he went back to the moment when the animal was being led from the pasture. By returning to the making and the preparation of the thing offered, the constant renewal of the offering was insured through the passing of ages.²

This art of Egypt appears to us to consist of stiff and immovable figures and really does so in many cases, yet in this case it shows itself as the most full of movement of the human arts. These figures had to be represented in movement because the reason of their existence lay in movement. So it is, one may see and understand how the Egyptian had so much real life into its subjects, but they did not arrive at this, however, through a passion for genre subjects.

1. See Chap. II of I

2. "Art & Religion." Alessandro della Seta. -
"History of Egypt." Breasted, ed. H.



- HORVS -
(Amado)

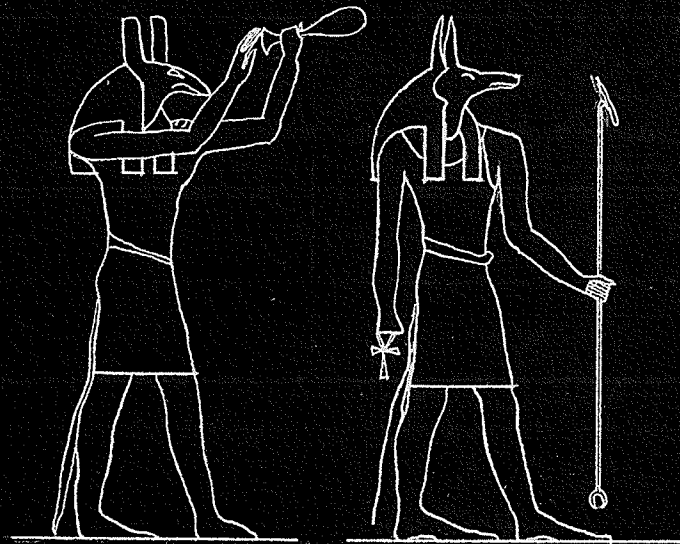
- THOTH -
(Sebô)

What has been said of the figure decoration on the walls of the tomb is applicable to all the statuettes, and all the groups in wood carving or stone which were placed in the interior of the tomb. The soldiers, the boatmen, the woman grinding corn, the woman kneading, all the figures in action or at their trade, all these figures noted for their naturalistic tendency and their feeling for reality--all these figures were created solely for the use of the dead and to be of service to them.

Not only did the dead man require food, but he was also required some means of conveying himself to some place in heaven or in the under-world, and for every part of his journey, art could help him. We find in his tomb, objects of art by which means he gains access to heaven, ivories with incised figures to protect him against serpents and scorpions; there was the pyramid from which the dead man would see the sunrise and sunset, and besides these, there were numerous other figures, all of which played an important part in the dead man's future life, and a number of other figures, often of popular gods, such as Bes, Thoueris, Onuris, the "pataikoi"--who had the task of protecting the dead from all danger, for making sure his life beyond this earth, and of making it happy for him.

Due to the dependency the Egyptian had on the use of animals for his well-being and his danger, one will find him taking these animal forms and using them as representations for these gods whether good or bad. They represent not the individual animal but the typical animal--that which is essential in their figure, not that which is peculiar to it. Individuality is more easily perceived in the human countenance and human faces are more varied with the greater degree of civilization and the differentiation is more plainly reflected in the face. It is the more difficult because that which really interests us in the animal, is the type and not the individual, and when primitive people, on account of the necessary conditions of life, turn their attention to animals, they seize on the typical features and not on the individual.

"By representing the gods of Egypt in animal form or as men with beasts' heads, Egyptian art does not show the human countenance in which individuality appears most clearly. The gods tend to individuality; God is individual. Between



- SET -
(Karnak)

- ANUBIS -
(Svartîeb)

this tendency and the obstacle presented by the beast-form the individual character of the figure of the deity has been sacrificed. "

Egypt possesses typical gods, not individual. This religion has not the god Horus, but the hawk-headed god. Of the principle gods, Set is shown with the head of an ass, Anubis is the jackal-god, Khnemu is the ram-god, Sebek is the crocodile-god, Hathor is the cow-goddess, Sekhet is the lion-goddess, Bast is the cat-goddess. Thus we find due to these, that the Egyptian artist portrayed these figures the same at the decline of Egypt as he did in the earlier days. We find the gods typically portrayed with their human forms and human heads, just as they were in the animal-form. So we find this monotonous appearance of the whole Egyptian pantheon.

For the Egyptians, everything could be represented by a figure. Thus one finds that they began to overload their gods with attributes. The sun and the dominion over Upper and Lower Egypt are evident in art by the ureated solar-disc or the high white crown and the low red crown. Abstract ideas are easily rendered by concrete forms and one may read easily the characteristics of their gods and their sentiments with regard to men by these attributes-- the crook, the whip or the ostrich feather.

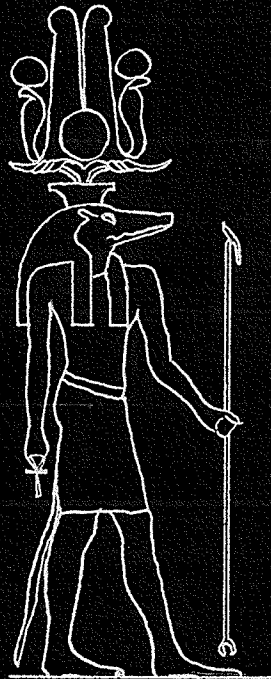
The Egyptian god, except in a few cases, is always represented as immovable and inert. This Egyptian art had in its religious concept no object in disturbing its rigid aspect of its gods. And the immobility of the figures has necessarily in some degree held back the artist from study of the human body, especially in all that is connected with movement, and has had considerable influence upon the form of the figures themselves.

In going from the plastic art used to represent the gods to plastic art used in the service of the funerary conception, we find these same characteristics in the image of the dead, but we have a strong contrast in the statuary groups or painted and carved scenes which were created to assure to the defunct, his life beyond this earth.

Except in scenes in which the dead man has to perform the journey beyond the grave and go to his judgment before the gods of the lower regions where movement is confined to walking or being guided or carried, the dead man is represented



- KHNEMU -
(Tura)



- SEBEK -
(Karnak)

as immovable. His immobility impresses us as the immobility of the gods. Like the gods he has no history.

This contrast of the scenes drawn from life and the immovable figures of the gods of the princes and of the dead, whether in statuary, sculpture relief or painting, have given rise to a distinction between the art of the court and popular art, and art limited by conventional tradition and an art open to all inspiration of nature.

"This distinction however, is not a correct one. In every art there are really two tendencies, that which tends to preserve traditional form and that which pushes forward continually to bring these forms nearer to nature. The difference which separates court art from popular art, is that the latter represents figures in action and the former represents inaction: but the action and the inaction are in both cases inspired by the same religious concept."

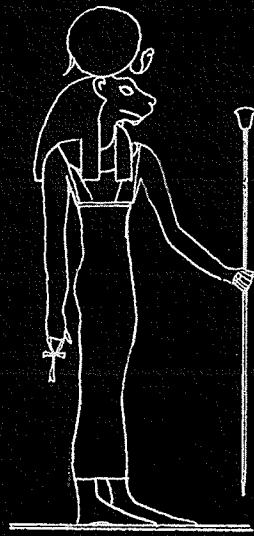
In the funeral groups and the scenes on the walls of the tombs, figures are shown in motion, characteristic of their trade and of their function because their action is to insure benefit to the dead. If these figures ceased working, the magic task assigned them would fail and they would lose the object of their existence.

The gods on the other hand must be represented stationary for the fact that their presence is sufficient to insure their protection. The princes, unless in war or hunting scenes, are shown in the rigid pose characteristic of the gods.

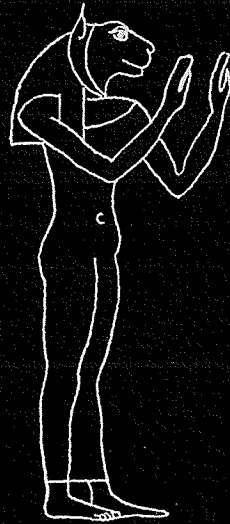
One may assume, from the fact that "in the court style and in the popular style of art, the construction of the figures is the same, that it is not a case of two opposite currents of art having different means of expression, but that they are similar products of one and the same religious concept. The figures are constructed with the juxtaposition of parallel views whether in statuary, relief or painting; these forms of art lack a perfect naturalism and the oblique planes which must have been suggested by a more profound study of nature." *

The attitude of Egyptian figures in motion display the greatest monotony: complete statistics of all the works of this class show a very small number of types. In effect, the artists did not trouble about expressiveness and quickness

* "Religion & Art" Alessandro Della Seta.



- SEKHET -
(Silsilis)



- BAST -
(Edfu)

of movement, but about the effect of these only. Once the essential subjects which sufficed for the magic intentions were fixed, Egyptian art reproduced them in a stereotyped fashion, without seeking to modify them in accordance with nature.

It is an error to think that art can be lead to study and reproduce the human body, simply because it is standing in nudity before it. It is not true that the Greeks were able to fix its forms with such force and grace because they were accustomed to see it every day in the form of the bodies of athletes viing with one another in the palaestra. If any people ought to have had familiar knowledge of the nude, it was the Egyptian, for on account of the climatic conditions, they were obliged to wear only a short garment. Regardless of this, Egyptian art appears awkward or unfinished in its drawing of form, while the Greeks, who saw the human body completely nude on certain occasions during contests of skill, and the Italians of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, who on account of religion and style of dress, had not even these priveleges and had to study the nude from models, have created incomparable masterpieces. "Greece and Italy have humanized their gods" and therefore had to seek out for them the forms which appeared most perfect. "Egypt on the other hand, saw in her gods, not men of noble aspect but protectors in human form," and knew that "their protective power lay in the fact of their existence and in their presence, not in the greater or less degree of their beauty."

But in no branch of Egyptian art is it easier to recognize the essential characteristic--its magical character and in that production which is one of its chief glories, the portrait. The Egyptian portrait is not a portrait which, from being idealistic, becomes realistic in its gradual approach to nature, it is not the product of an internal development of art, of that development of individualization which brings about the slow advance from the type to the individual, but it simply attempts to be a faithful portrait which will leave no doubt as to the identification of the original, but does not lose itself in the reproduction of every detail. This portrait will in the time of the Ancient Kingdom present a certain character and will preserve exactly the same, except for some increase of academical flavour and virtuosity, all through the Saite and

Greek periods. "The Egyptian portrait is not due to the course of artistic evolution but has been superimposed upon art."

First of all it will be seen how Egyptian art is an art which develops around one dominant figure whether this be the god, the prince or the dead man, and is generally larger in proportion with the rest.

In the second place, the great abundance of its monuments depends upon its magic function. This form of art, especially funeral art, is not for the benefit of everyone, it is individual. Every individual requires his supply of images because that which serves for one man cannot serve for another, and every individual must have as many images as possible. Due to this, we find the walls of the temples and the funereal chambers, of the sarcophagi, and of the mummy cases entirely covered with representations of figures. And the objects which form the movable outfit are numbered by hundreds, and in all of this, Egyptian art shows itself protective rather than decorative. Thus one can see why Egyptian art is an art of interior produced only for the possessor while Greek is an external art produced for the spectator.

The magic scope of Egyptian art explains too, while the artist disappears behind it; in Greek art he makes himself known by putting his signature on the most insignificant painting. "The artist here had no reason to sign his work, for when the work of art left his hands, there was no longer any connection between him and the work while there was one between the work of art and its possessor, a protective relation in which the artist would have been an intruder."²

¹ *Manual of Egyptian Archaeology* "Maspero. Gaston

² *Religion & Art* "Seto, Alessandro della:

Ref.

"Religion & Art" Alessandro Della Seto.

"History of Egypt" Breasted, J. H.

"Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. Gaston.

Chapter V

EGYPTIAN SCULPTURE

The preparation of surfaces about to be decorated required much time and care. As there were no absolutely flat surfaces on the temples and pylons, the sculptors were forced to adapt themselves to slight irregularities in places. The blocks which made up the walls, were rarely homogeneous. The lime stone strata in which the tombs were excavated, almost invariably contained nodules of flint, fossils and petrified shells. Thus, when a tomb was to be painted, the walls were washed with a coating of black clay mixed with finely chopped straw, after having been roughly levelled. In sculpture, however, the artist had to arrange his work and subjects to avoid these irregularities. If these occurred in the centre of a figure and were not too hard, they were worked over with a chisel. If this could not be done, they were removed and the whole would be filled with white cement or carefully fitted lime stone. In some tombs one will find as much as a quarter of the wall space made up with inserted slabs of lime stone. Fine plaster mixed with the whites of eggs to give a polished surface and to conceal the inequalities was then applied and the wall was ready for the brush. *

In unfurnished chambers or parts of chambers, and even in the quarries, one constantly finds drawings in red or black ink of the bas-reliefs with which it was intended to cover them. The plan, was first done on a small scale and then was squared and transferred to the wall at the final scale by assistants and pupils. Those with more experience and confidence in their own abilities, drew their subjects at the finish scale and without any sort of guides. One finds this done by the artists in the tomb of Seti I and on the walls of the temple of Abydos. Due to this at Kom Ombo, one comes upon several of the divinities on the roof which were badly placed, for their feet came where their arms should have been; these were effaced and corrected without doing away with the originals. At Karnak, however, on the northern wall of the hypostyle hall and at Medinet Habu, the mistakes were discovered only after the work was completed. The figures of Seti I and Rameses III slope backward and appear to over-balance; these were filled in with cement or stucco and were cut anew. One

* "Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. Garton.

finds that these figures now have two profiles, one barely scratched while the other is in quite high relief, due to the cements having fallen out.

One knows for a fact that the sculptors of the Pharaonic age had not many tools with which to work. The flat chisel was used to a very great extent as will be noticed, for one finds marks of these on many of the pieces of their craftsmanship. They were familiar with the drill, toothed chisel and the gouge, but there has been great controversy as to whether their tools were of bronze or iron. It is certain that they were acquainted with iron, but they as far as one knows, had no real knowledge of steel.

The Egyptians understood three principle forms of bas-relief: simple engraving with a point, cutting away the ground and allowing the figures to stand out or again by leaving the back ground untouched and sinking the figures, modelling them in relief in the hollow. First method was quickly done but was only slightly decorative and was applied generally to stelae and small objects. This had many advantages, however, as there was slight fear of breakage or redressing. The second type is the most in use and one will find it taught in the schools in preference to the others. The depths of the cuts vary according to the use of the sculpture and varies from one-fifth of an inch in shade to two and a half inches in sunlight.

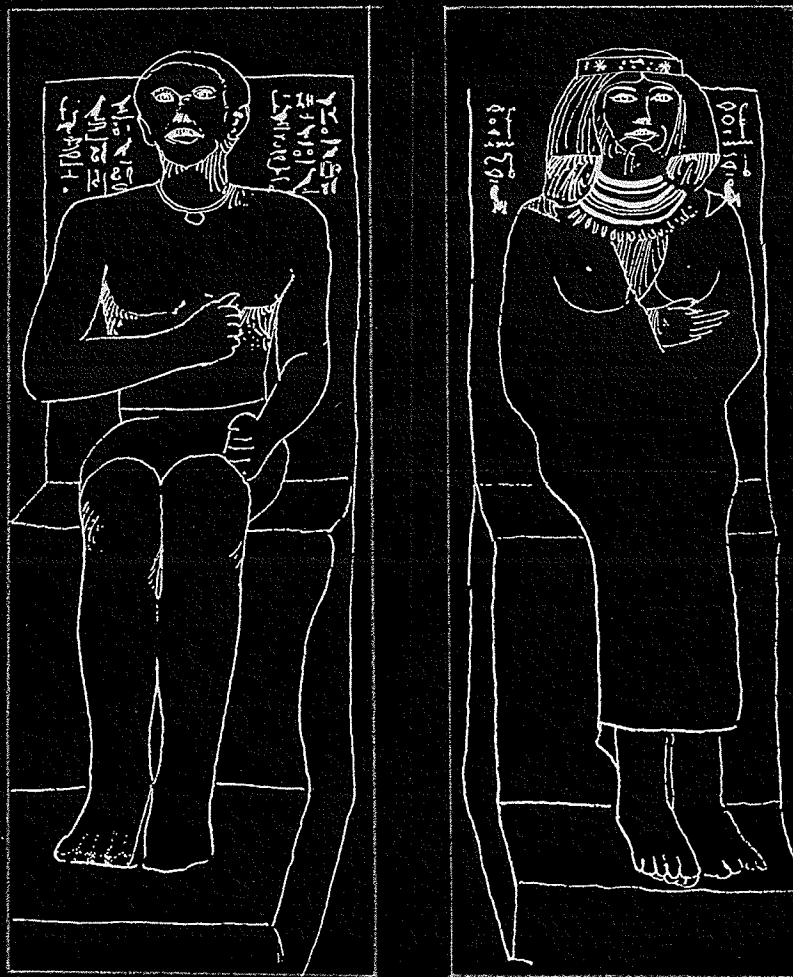
When the sculptor had finished with his work, it passed into the hands of the painter, for sculptures were not considered complete until they had paint from top to bottom. In the bas-reliefs, the backgrounds were left unpainted, but the figures themselves were colored. The Egyptians palette was well equipped and there is on them yellow, red, blue, brown, white and black and green. These colors varied with the dynasties, for in some cases there are many variations in these colors. These were all obtained in various manners and were from materials common to this country. Black was obtained from the burning of bones of animals; white was made with gypsum mixed with honey; the yellows are ochre; or sulphuret of arsenic; the reds are ochres cinnabar or vermillion; the blues are lapis lazuli or sulphate of copper. The colors were kept in small bags and were doled out when needed and were slightly

moistened with water containing a little gum tragacanth. This was applied by means of a reed-pen or a hair-brush of which only two were used, one a fine point for outlines and delicate work and a broad one for large surfaces. When well prepared, these pigments were solid and in the course of time have scarcely changed. Where the colors have changed, it is however, only on the surface and they still retain the same brilliancy underneath.

The Egyptians used flat uniform washes of color; they did not paint in our sense of the word, they illuminated." Just as in drawing, they rendered the outlined and suppressed the internal modelling, so in painting they simplified the coloring and merged all variety of tones and play of light and shade in one uniform tint. The Egyptian was never entirely true nor yet entirely false in his painting; he follows nature as closely as possible but does not attempt to imitate it faithfully, sometimes understating, sometimes exaggerating and substituting ideal conventional renderings for the visible reality. Water is always blue, either plain or spaced with black zig-zag lines. The buff and bluish hues of the vulture are rendered by vivid red and bright blue; the flesh tints of the men are brown, those of the women yellow. These colors did not vary from one generation to the other but remained as they were taught in the schools.

Every wall is treated as a whole, and a harmony of color is preserved throughout a superposed register. In some cases the colors are distributed rhythmically or symmetrically from stage to stage, and balance one another, in others one color predominates and determines the general tone to which the others are subordinated. The vividness of the whole is always proportioned to the amount of light that will play on the wall. Where the walls are completely dark, the colors are as brilliant as possible, as otherwise it would scarcely be observable by the flickering light of torches or lamps. On the outside walls and pylons, the coloring is as vivid as it is in the remotest depths of the rock-tombs. However powerful it might be, the glaring effect is neutralized by the sun. In places where twilight reigned, such as beneath the temple porticoes and in the antechambers of tombs, the coloring is soft and subdued. Painting in Egypt was only

¹ Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. Gaston.



• STATUES OF REHOTED & NEFERT •
(Cairo Museum)

"the humble handmaid of architecture and sculpture" and is excelled for large decorative schemes.

It is now possible for one to trace to some extent the development of sculpture in Egypt from the rude attempts of the earliest Thinite period. In Oxford, at the Ashmolean Museum, are two statues found at Koptos, representing the local deity. The modelling is exceedingly rough; the arms project but slightly from the body, and the legs are merely indicated by a groove in front and behind. Round the body of each figure is wound a girdle. The same museum possesses a statue found at Hieraconpolis even more slightly worked. All three represent standing figures, and are more than life-size.

In marked contrast to these figures are the finely carved limestone maceheads and the great palettes of schist or slate. On some of these the human figure is shown in correct perspective, but on the palette of King Narmer, one finds the strange conventional method of representing the human figure that remained throughout the history of Egypt. Executed in very low relief, these carvings show the mastery of line and composition which the sculptors of their day were to hand down to posterity. Some small ivory figures carved in the round are known of this period, which are rendered with much spirit. The earliest named royal statue dates from the early part of the Third Dynasty. There is a seated figure of King Khasekhemui in the Cairo Museum carved in schist, and another in limestone is to be seen in Oxford. The figures are similar in attitude and costume. The pose is somewhat awkward, but the conventional attitude of later Egyptian art is already adopted. The face shows calm power and alert expression. The excellence of the work, notwithstanding some roughness of execution, proves that the Pharaoh of that period could command the services of an experienced sculptor, trained in a school that was rapidly gaining power and certainty of treatment.

Of the close of the Third Dynasty, we have two remarkable works from Medum. Rahotep, notwithstanding his high title of General, is of humble birth. Well made and powerfully built as he is, there is a rustic element of surprise and subserviency in his expression. His wife Nefert, on the contrary, being a princess of royalty, has both dignity and resolution, skilfully rendered in the pose of the statue.

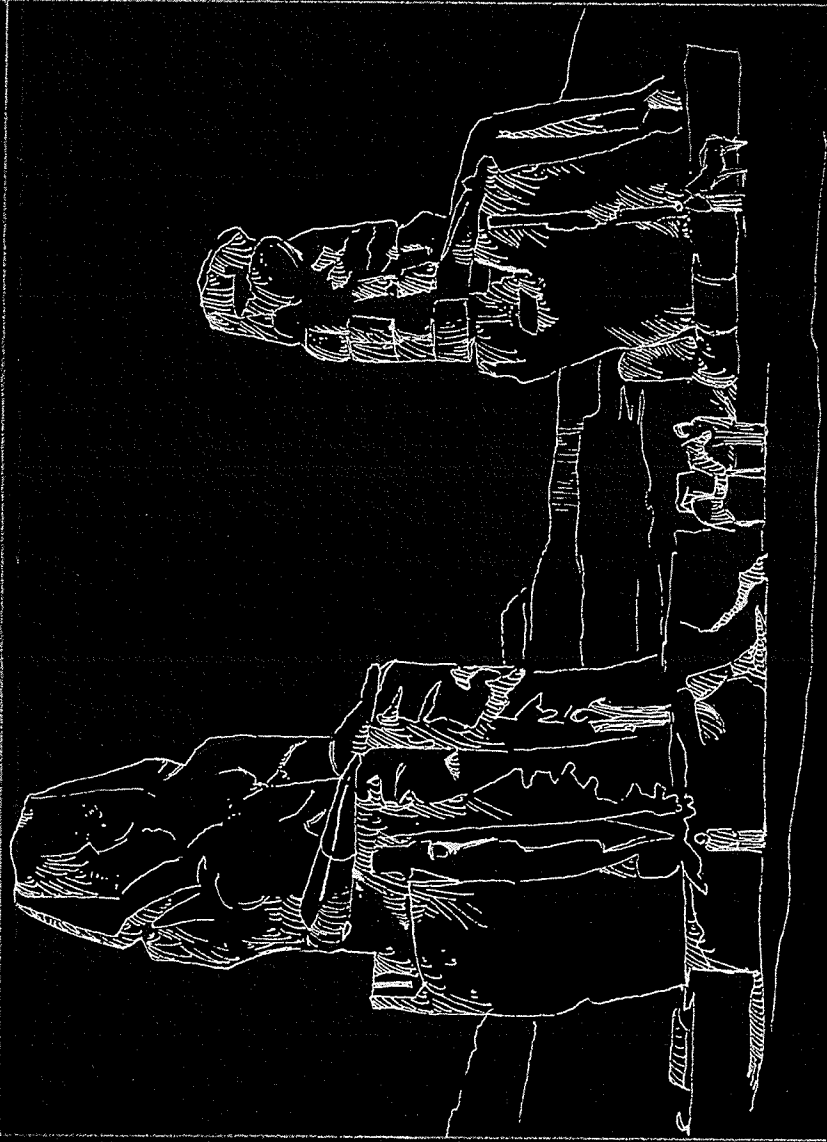
1. "Manual of Egyptian Archaeology" Maspero. Goston.

She wears a close-fitting garment with a V-neck and beneath the material, the shoulders, bosom, the body and thighs, are modelled with a grace and purity of outline which is impossible to praise too highly. Her plump face is surrounded by a ponderous wig confined by a richly ornamental bandeau. Here one will note in Old Kingdom statues of women, their natural hair may be seen on the forehead beneath this wig. It will be noticed that both the man and the woman are done in limestone and are painted, the man being of a reddish-brown, while his wife is of a light buff.

In the Cairo Museum, there are six wooden panels of the tomb of Hesi which are important, due to the fact that there is no grouping. In each of these one will find that Hesi is either standing or sitting, while above his head were hieroglyphics, but the purity of line-rendering of the human frame and the fineness of execution are admirable. Never does one meet with wood carved by a more skillful hand or a more delicate chisel.

Of Egyptian statuary, one of the oldest and most remarkable is that colossus--the sphinx of Gizeh. Its date has caused endless discussion but it has been credited to the work of Khafra, it being a head of a Pharaoh, with the body of a lion guarding his temples and pyramid from evil by the magic power that the sphinx is presumed to possess. However, others differ with this and claim it is a relic of a much earlier date.

Carved out of solid rock at the extreme edge of the desert, the sphinx stands with kingly head protruding above the sands, facing the East as if conscious of divine descent awaiting the rising of his father, the sun. Regardless of the fact that it was buried in the sands, to almost its full height, did not preserve it from ruin and we find the battered body, though repaired in the later dynasties by the Ptolemies and the Caesars, only a portion of the stone facing with which it is covered remains. The lower part of the head has fallen away, and the neck seems inadequate to support the weight of the head. The nose and the beard have been broken by fanatics and the red color to which it owed life to its features is almost entirely effaced. Nevertheless, the art that conceived and carved this prodigious statue out of a solid rock is a complete art, master of itself, certain of its results, for now, as then, the eyes gaze into the distance with an intensity of profound thought, the mouth still smiles, and the mutilated face breathes power and repose.



Colossal Gritstone Statues of AMENHOTEP III (MEMNON COLLEGE)

The artists of Memphis excelled in the use of the brush and chisels as their works bear witness. The relief is low, the colour sober and the composition good. Buildings, trees, vegetation, and the incidents of country life are summarily introduced only when absolutely necessary to give explanation to the scene desired. Men and animals are treated, on the contrary, with an abundance of detail and with a fidelity and facility of rendering such as are rarely found rivalled in the schools of later date.

In the statues we do not find the same variety of attitude that we observe in the pictured scenes. A professional mourner, a woman grinding corn, the baker kneading bread, are as rare in the round as they are numerous in the bas-reliefs. In the greater number of statues the figure is either walking with one leg advanced or seated on a chair or a block of stone; sometimes kneeling, more often seated crossed-legged; the body upright and the legs flat on the ground in the squatting attitude of modern fellahin. The monotony of these statues is explained by the purpose for which they were made. They were representations of the person or inhabitants for whom the temples and tombs were erected. The master is always seated or standing and the tomb which was his eternal house was pictured with scenes of his daily life as well as the life in the hereafter. As he superintends all works that are done for the dwelling place of eternity he is depicted as a standing figure with arms either hanging down or holding a staff or baton. Where he is provided with a succession of dishes of offerings, he is found to be seated at ease in a chair of state. He retains both of these bas-relief positions in his statues. Standing, he receives homage from his servants; seated he shares the family's repast. The household adopts the attitude of their positions or rank--the wife stands at his side; sits on the same seat or one beside him, or she crouches at his feet as she did in life. The son is dressed like a child if his statue was made in his infancy--if not, he is represented with the equipment necessary to his position as a man. The slaves all do whatever is common to their own life--his social position was the same in death to his master as it was in life and he follows to his tomb. The Pharaoh still remains the monarch of his throne, protected by the sacred serpent, the uræus or overshadowed by the guardian hawk. Whether, like Menkaura, he is standing in company with the gods or with his

wife in the affectionate attitude adopted by sovereign and subjects alike, he is unmistakably Pharaoh, conscious of supreme power, of divine descent, and actual divinity.

The influence exerted on the sculptor by this conception of the other world, did not end here. As soon as the "ka" statue was regarded as posthumous support of the "double", it became absolutely necessary that the new body of stone should be a copy of the body of flesh in order that the "double" might adopt itself with ease to its new support. The head is therefore a faithful portrait, while the body, on the contrary, is that of a person in the highest state of development in order that he may fully enjoy his physical powers in the company of the gods. The men are always in the prime of their life, and their women have the slender proportions of girlhood. This ideal was only abandoned when the anomaly was too obvious.

This continued repetition of pose and subject produces a feeling of monotony, an impression which is increased by the peculiar appearance of the columns or shafts which are placed behind the statues. These are sometimes rectangular and end at the base of the skull, or they narrow near the top and are lost in the hair, or the top is rounded and appears above the head. The arms are often separated from the body, they are in one piece with the sides and hips. When the leg is advanced for walking, the figure is often united up the entire length to the pediment at the back by a narrow band of stone.

Among the most perfect found in the Pyramid areas, we have the statues of Menkaura and the wonderful series of slate triads from his valley temple; the alabaster statuette that sometimes represents Khufu (Kheops) and the statue of Ne-user-ra in rose granite.

Khafra, a king, is seen sitting on the Pharonic throne with hands on knees, head raised and his gaze assured. Every trait shows the man accustomed from infancy to feel himself invested with supreme authority. His statue is of diorite. The slate triad from the valley temple of Menkaura have an extraordinary finish of texture. In the triad at Boston, the king is standing by the side of the goddess Hathor, and wears the crown of Upper Egypt and the false beard. In the centre is the seated figure of the goddess, her left arm around the king, and her right hand on his arm. On her other side is the



• MYKERINVS (MENKAURA) & TWO GODDESSES •

goddess of the nome. A fine group is that of Menkaura and his wife carved in a fine dark slate. The portraits are life-like and from a comparison of the numerous statues, we learn that they are of two periods; some represent Menkaura early in his reign, others as an older man.

The original of the crossed-legged scribe of the Louvre was not a handsome man but the fidelity and the vigor of his portrait compensate in great measure for what it lacks in ideal beauty. With his legs crossed in an attitude familiar to the Orientals, the upright bust well balanced from the hips, his head raised, his hand holding the reed-pen, and placed ready on the outstretched papyrus, he still waits, as he has for six hundred years, for his master to resume the interrupted dictation. The face is almost square, the strongly marked features indicate a man of mature age, the broad thin-lipped mouth is slightly raised at the corners, which are almost lost in the projection of the surrounding muscle, the cheeks are hard and bony, the thick heavy ears stand out from the head and the hair is coarse and closely cropped over the low forehead. The large well-opened eyes owe their peculiar vivacity to an ingenious contrivance of the ancient artist. The stone orbit that forms the setting has been hollowed out and filled with a black and white enamel; a bronze setting defines the edge of the eyelids while a small spangle of ebony inserted behind the iris arrests and reflects the light and gives an appearance of actual sight. The flesh is slightly flaccid, as it should be with a man of middle age, whose occupations does not admit of active exercise. The back and arms stand out well, the hands are hard and bony, the fingers are unusually long, the detail of the knees are carefully modelled. The whole body appears to be governed by a sense of waiting, which is also portrayed in the facial expression and all the muscles whether of arms, back, bust or shoulders, are in semi-repose ready for instant action again.

The Sheikh el Beled, was probably one of the chiefs of the corvee who built the Great Pyramids. His whole bearing denotes one of contentment and official assurance, for he was of all likelihood by birth, one of the middle class. He is seen with his acacia-wood staff in his hand and his body is stout and heavy and his neck thick and his head despite his vulgarity, is not wanting in energy. It is all carved in wood with the exception of its eyes which are inlaid.



Head of the Wooden Statue
of the Shekb-el-Beled.
(Cairo Museum)

The statues of the scribes are in painted limestone, but whatever the material, diorite, alabaster, slate, wood, or limestone, the chiselling is everywhere free, subtle and delicate.

We have in the Cairo Museum a statue of a dwarf-- a very small statue scarcely a foot in height--Khnoumhotep, or as sometimes called Nemhotep of the Fifth or Sixth Dynasty. This was in all probability one half of his original height. It reproduces, without exaggeration, the characteristics proper to dwarfs. The head is long-shaped and flanked by two large ears. The expression of the face is heavy and stupid, the eyes narrow and raised at the temples, and the mouth wide and ill-formed. The chest is strong and well developed, but the sculptor has employed his ingenuity in vain in order to dissimulate the hind-quarters by covering them with a large white skirt. We feel, however, that the torso is not in proportion to the arms and legs. The stomach forms a round projection and the hips recede in order to counterbalance the stomach. The thighs only exist in a rudimentary state and the whole, mounted on little deformed feet, seems about to fall face downwards. It would be difficult anywhere to find a work of art where such deformities are represented in so lifelike a manner, free from exaggeration.

Theban art is closely related to that of Memphis. Its methods, materials, composition and designs are those of the Memphite school, but there are also points of divergence. By the beginning of the Eleventh Dynasty, the legs became longer and slighter, the hips less powerful, the body and neck more slender. The works of this period of the Middle Kingdom are not to be compared with the best productions of the earlier centuries. The wall-paintings of Siut, of Bersheh, of Beni Hasan, and of Assuan, are not equal to those of Sakkara and Gizeh; nor are the most carefully executed statues of that time worthy to rank with the Sheikh el Beled or the cross-legged scribe. Nevertheless, the seated statue of Mentuhotep I, discovered at Deir el Bahari in 1900, is a very vigorous and effective piece of work.

In the black granite sphinxes discovered by Mariette at Tanis, the body of the lion is powerful and compact and is shorter than in the sphinxes of the usual type. Instead of a head-dress of folded linen, the head is covered with an ample mane that frames the face and encloses the lion's ears. Small



The Dwarf Nemhotep (Khroumhotep)
- Old Kingdom.

eyes, an aquiline nose rounded at the base, high cheek bones, the lower lip slightly protruding, a countenance so little in accord with that which one is accustomed to find in Egypt that they were at one time supposed to be of Asiatic origin.

The cow found at Dein el Bahani, is a fine piece of work; it reproduces all the characteristics of that kindly animal with marvelous fidelity, and also succeeds in imparting, to the sacred symbol of the goddess Hathor, a feeling of remoteness and mystery which is the result of real genius. Hathor is standing among the marsh plants and on her head between her two horns is the solar disc, and under her protection are figures of Amenhotep II in two positions, suckled by the sacred mother, and also leaning against her chest.

The taste for the colossal, somewhat modified since the construction of the Great Sphinx, now revived in this period of the New Kingdom, and we find that Amenhotep III, not satisfied with statues twenty or thirty feet in height, had some built at Thebes on the west bank of the Nile, one of which is the Memnon of the Greeks, fifty feet in height. These are monoliths carved in sandstone and are as carefully worked as though they were of ordinary size.

Among the subjects treated on the bas-reliefs of Tel-el-Amarna, are military reviews, chariot driving, festivals of the fellahin, state receptions, the distribution of honours and rewards by the king, representations of palaces, villas and gardens, and other subjects which differed from the traditional mode of treatment in so many points that the artists could follow their own ideas and natural genius without restraint. They did so with admirable results. The perspective of some of their bas-reliefs is almost entirely correct, and all of them express the movements of large numbers of people with astonishing success.

Admirable statues of the king and of members of his family have been found, many of them shattered and the others left unfinished in the sculptors' workshops. A very charming statuette of Akhenate in painted limestone was discovered at Tel-el-Amarna. The monotheistic king is holding a table of offerings. The delicate features are like those one is well acquainted with in other portraits of him, both in the round and in the bas-reliefs; the sensitive expression of the face



The Crossed-legged Scribe - Louvre
(Old Kingdom.)

is well rendered. The conventions are the same as in other royal statues; the pediment is there and the full-faced pose is unaltered.

The political and religious reaction that followed this reign, arrested this development of art, and the Theban school was once more triumphant. The school of Tel-el-Amarna continued, however, as late as the Twenty-second Dynasty, and although it returned to the ancient religious conventions, the style of the school persisted to the end. Its influence made itself felt under Horemheb, under Seti I, and even under Rameses II. If during more than a century Theban art remained free, graceful and refined, that improvement was due to this school of Tel-el-Amarna. It would be difficult to find anything finer than the bas-reliefs of the temple of Abydos, or those of the tomb of Seti I. The head of the Pharaoh which must necessarily be always very favorably presented, is a model of reserved and dignified beauty. Rameses II, represented as a warrior in the speos of Abu Simbel, is almost as admirable as Seti I, though very differently rendered. The action of his arm which brandishes his lance is somewhat angular, but the expression of courage and triumphant vigour that prevades the whole body, and despairing and yet resigned attitude of the vanquished foe, completely atone for that defect. The group of Horemheb and the god Ammon in the Turin Museum, is slightly heavy and ill-balanced. The fine colossi in red granite which Horemheb placed against the uprights of the inner door of his first pylon at Karnak, the statue of Khonsu which he placed in the sanctuary of the god, and the bas-reliefs on the walls of his speos at Gebel Silsileh, his own portrait and that of one of the ladies of his family now at Cairo, may be said to be faultless. The queen's face is animated and intelligent; the eyes are large and somewhat prominent, and the mouth, though rather large, is well shaped. The head is carved in hard limestone, the creamy tint of which, softens the satirical expression of her glance and smile. Horemheb is in black granite and the sombre color is unpleasing and depressing to the spectator. The face which is a young one, is pervaded by a morbid air which one will find in other royal statues of the period. The nose is straight and delicate, the eyes are long, the lips are large and full, slightly contracted at the corners, and strongly defined at the edges, the chin is barely covered by the false beard. Every detail is treated with as much skill as if the artist had to deal with a soft stone instead of with one that offers such resistance to the chisel.



· GODDESS · TAURT · or · THOURIS ·
(Cairo)

Decadence began after the reign of Merenptah. When civil war and foreign invasion had brought Egypt to the verge of ruin, art also suffered and declined rapidly. It is melancholy to watch the downward progress under the later Ramessides, in the wall-scenes of the royal tombs, in the reliefs in the temples of Khonsu, or on the columns of the hypostyle hall of Karnak. Carving in wood maintained its level for some time longer. The charming figurines of priests and children in the Turin Museum date from the Twentieth Dynasty. The advent of Sheshonk and internal dissensions at length completed the ruin of Thebes, and of the school which had produced so many masterpieces. Towards the end of the Ethiopian Dynasty, Theban art revived after an interval of three hundred years. The statue of Queen Ameniritis manifests some noteworthy qualities. The limbs are slender and rounded, the lines are delicate and pure, but the head overweighted with head-dress usually worn by goddesses, is dull and lifeless. Psammetichus I, when on the throne victoriously, devoted himself to the restoration of the temples. Under his influence, the whole of the Nile valley became a mass of painting and sculpture which owed their inspiration to the Delta artists. The carving of hieroglyphics attained remarkable precision and the fine statues of bas-reliefs were produced in large numbers. The Saite school is characterized by a somewhat stiff elegance, by attention to detail and by an incomparable facility in working of stone. The Memphites preferred limestone, the Thebans red or grey granite, but the Saites worked preferably in basalt, breccia or serpentine, and with these fine grained and almost homogeneous materials, they had surprising results. They counted difficulty for the pleasure of overcoming it and we find that some artists spent years and years chiselling laboriously in the hard and stubborn materials, to model sarcophagi and statues.

The statue of Taurt, the Greek Thueris, was of the Thirtieth Dynasty and was the goddess who protected pregnant women and presided over childbirth. This figure was found standing in a chapel of white limestone dedicated to her by the priest Fabesa in the name of Queen Nitocris. The statue is in the form of a charming hippopotamus carved in green serpentine, with her disproportioned snout, ample smile, rounded belly, pendant breasts and shortened paws. The Psammetichus group has the Hathor cow with Psammetichus leaning against her. The cow is admirable and she is shown as stretching her head over the man to give him her protection.



• PORTRAIT HEAD SAITE PERIOD •
(Berlin Museum)

The Saite style is easily recognizable as it does not show the broad scholarly treatment of the Memphite period nor the grand and rude manner of the Theban. The proportions of the body are more slender and the limbs, what they gain in elegance, lose in vigour. A change in attitude is also noticeable, for the Oriental assumes attitudes which to us are fatiguing--seated cross-legged, squat like frogs with knees bent, seated with knees drawn up and arms crossed on knees. The second last posture was neglected by the Theban sculptors and about the Eighteenth Dynasty, we find the last attitude coming into general use. The Saite sculptors contrived, however, to arrange the limbs with some grace, while they rendered the heads in a fashion that redeemed any defect of posture. That of Pedishashi has an expression of youthfulness and intelligent kindness, such as is rarely found in the Egyptian works.

The Saite school was divided into two parties, one attempting to model itself on the remote past, and endeavoured to revive the enfeebled art of their own times by adopting the method of the old Memphite school. The other, without departing too much from tradition, studied from life, and approached more closely to nature than had been done before.

Influenced now by the Greeks, we can scarcely however, distinguish the sculptures of the early Ptolemies from those of the good Saite period. We soon find that the Greek masterpieces of Alexandria and Memphis were from the school that was established and combined certain elements of the indigenous art with others borrowed from the foreign art. The Alexandrian Isis wears the attire of the Pharaonic Isis, but she has lost the slender form and stilted unnatural bearing. The statue of a personage with the name Horus at Alexandria is the most powerful example of this hybrid school--Graeco-Egyptian. The head is a good piece of work, though dry in style. The thin, straight nose, the eyes placed close together, the straight mouth pinched in at the corners, and the square chin all conduce to give an expression of hardness and obstinacy to the face. The hair is short, but is in natural wavy locks. The body clothed in chlamys, is clumsy and is not in accord with the head. One arm is hanging down while the other is bent and rests on the body, and the feet are gone.

All the native schools outside the Delta, left to their own resources, gradually perished. We find, nevertheless, that Egyptian art survived somewhat longer under the aegis of the Roman domination. The Romans realized that they strengthened their hold over this Nile valley by the humoring of the religious feelings of the Egyptians. They rebuilt and restored temples of the national gods on the plans of the past. Thebes had been destroyed by earthquake in 22 B.C., and it was now no more than a place where pilgrims came to listen to the voice of Memnon, but at Denderah and Ombos the decoration of the temples was completed by Tiberius and Claudius; Caligula worked at Koptos, and the Antonines at Philae and Esnah. The work done by the workmen is feeble, ungraceful and absurd, inspired by routine, but is founded on ancient tradition, enfeebled and degenerate, but still living and capable of being invigorated with new life. The changes that occurred in the middle of the Third Century, the incursions of the barbarians, and the progress and triumph of Christianity, led to the abandonment of the work and the dispersion of the workmen. "With them died all that yet survived of the national art."

Chapter VI

PAINTING

We find that the greater number of statues and bas-reliefs found in the tombs and temples of ancient Egypt, were painted. The colored stones oftimes were not, but invariably the sandstones, limestones and wood were painted.

Under this topic of painting, one must consider primarily the drawing of the subject to be painted. They learned from experience, to determine the general proportions of the body, and to establish certain fixed relations but they never bother to reduce these to a system. Their methods were rather of routine than theory. That they studied by nature will be seen in the facility with which they seized the human likeness and rendered the characteristics and movements of various animals. They possessed neither pencil nor stylus, so used reeds, with split ends thus forming a rude brush. With this was a small palette with a vertical groove for holding the brush and with one or two depressions for containing the paints, of which red and black were the most prevalent.

These early drawings done for practice have been found on small pieces of limestone and for the most part in very bad condition. The subjects vary and include sketches of birds, animals and hieroglyphic characters. These were not all of the serious type that we expect from the Egyptian, but due to his gaiety and sarcasm, we find many humorous and laughable incidents of his daily life admirably rendered.

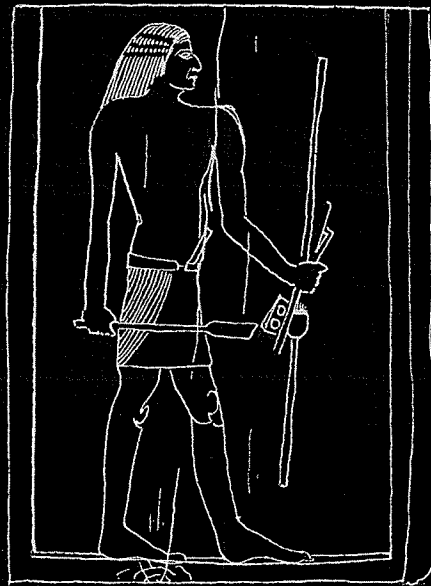
Of the pen drawings of religious works possessed by the various museums, they will be noted to be copies of the "Book of the Dead" and the "Book of knowing that which is in the Underworld." The workmanship in most cases is bad and the figures are little more than summary scrawls hurriedly drawn and badly proportioned. Copies of the "Book of the Dead" are numerous and of a better quality and date as early as the Eighteenth Dynasty. Each chapter has a vignette representing a divinity in either animal or human form or the deceased in adoration before his family.

These small designs are in some instances ranged in a single line above the text; in others they are scattered; or at intervals large pictures occupy the entire height of the papyrus. We find at the beginning of this the burial scene--then towards the middle, the judging of the soul and at the end, the arrival of the soul in the fields of Aalu.

In regard to these paintings, one will find up to the Twenty-first Dynasty, that the good traditions were maintained but they rapidly declined under the succeeding dynasties, and for centuries one finds nothing but rude and valueless drawings. After the downfall of the Persian domination, a rival came about; the tombs of the Greek period have yielded papyri with vignettes executed in a dry conventional style which is greatly in contrast with the style of earlier work. There is now fine-pointed pen work that supercedes the broad-tipped brush. These, however, do not do justice to the full powers and technical methods of the Egyptian artists; it is to the walls of the temples and tombs one looks to for an understanding of their methods of composition.

The earliest funerary example of Egyptian decorative art known is on the walls of the predynastic tomb of Hierasompolis. Here, the smoothed and plastered brick wall was covered with a wash of pale yellow ochre. The figures were outlined in red and painted in black, bright green, a dirty white, with red and yellow ochre. In the foreground one will see humans and animals while in the background there will be seen hunting and herding scenes. The animals are well drawn but the men are grotesque, and there has been no attempt at defining the river bank, and many of the figures appear to have been inserted haphazardly.

The conventions of the drawings differed greatly from ours. Man and beast to them, being only drawn in outline against a background, therefore we have only introduced subjects which have an outline suitable for distinct profile. Animals could easily be rendered by means of simple strokes of a pen or brush, and these are lifelike with the gait, action and flexion of the limbs peculiar to it. When they go from domestic to wild life, their portrayal was just as correct and life-like. Their real difficulty came in projecting the whole of the human



WOODEN PANEL OF HESIRE
(CAIRO MUSEUM)

figure in the same way. To draw the human in profile is to lose many of its important features--hence in order that these may not be lost, the Egyptian had no scruple in combining contradictory points of view in the same figure, part in profile, part full face. The head, with the eye invariably in full face, is in profile on a full-faced bust; the bust surmounts a trunk in three-quarter view, while the legs are in profile once more. This was all accepted as early as the Thinite period and prevailed throughout Pharonic times.

Now and again one will find figures drawn more in accordance with our rules of perspective. In some cases, the effects are not pleasing but then again they are truly naturalistic with much freedom.

These, however, are exceptional and we find the Egyptian artist continuing to the end to deform the human figure. Their men and women portrayals are actually monsters and grotesques from the anatomical point of view. The line of drawing is firm and even, and in most cases is drawn to the end with one long resolute sweep of the brush. Ten or twelve of these strokes are sufficient to draw a life-sized figure. The details of clothing and jewellery were at first indicated, but later were worked out into much detail--detail in which one can almost count the tresses of hair, the folds of the garments and the stones and gems of the girdle or bracelet. This mixture of intentional awkwardness and natural ability does not leave out elegance of form, the grace and truth of the attitudes or the precision of the movements. The figures though peculiar, seem yet alive and if seen without prejudice, one might notice in them, a charm not to be found in the later works which conformed to more severe truths.

In looking at their subject matter, one might ask: were the Egyptians ignorant of the art of composition? In studying these, one would quite well see that they weren't, for picking anyone at random, an artist of today might even so much as reproduce with alterations, one for a modern canvass, except for the clumsiness of the Egyptian's portrayal of his human figures. Due to this, the Egyptian has difficulty in arranging his scenes in proper sequence. Again, when drawing a number of persons in the same action, it was usual to separate them as much as possible in order

to prevent the outlines from overlapping. It was either that or flatly superposing them as though they were two dimensions having no breadth. In these pictures we find the herdsman walking amidst his cattle and treading on the same ground-line as his cattle, whose body partly conceals his body. Where they use figures of archers or warriors, they make the farthest figure of the greatest height, gradually reducing this height as they approach the foreground. Regardless of this varying height and the superposing of the bodies, each in turn overlapping so that most of the bodies are concealed, we find that the feet are placed on the same parallel line and do not follow the other lines as they should.

We find this very common throughout the Theban period, that is the representations of armies and vast herds. With the exception of the first row of figures which were wholly seen, the others, the back rows were merely indicated in outline, the amount of their body exposed, being regulated by the number of rows desired and the amount of space available. Each group of these represented an incident and these varied in number according to the number of scenes required. However, with a certain area allotted, and a limited number of rows required, that space was in turn divided up into even number of spaces, each being taken by the row of figures assigned. The secondary scenes were generally separated by a line which was not indispensable. In all the scenes done by the Egyptians, we find that they did the work similar to those of their people in their portrayals of houses, landscapes, trees and water, these latter being even more strangely treated. In indicating water, they use wavy lines on the top of which a boat may rest and there is no doubt in the spectator's mind that in the water are fish and crocodiles. Each of the rock-cut tombs of the Ramesside period can furnish more than one instance of such original contrivance, (placing palm trees on four sides of a rectangular pool while on the water boats are dragged by slaves) and one scarcely knows which is the most marvellous, the obstinacy of the Egyptian who would not adopt the natural laws of perspective, or the wealth of imagination that could invent such a variety of false relations between such various objects.

When, instead of small surfaces to be covered, large ones are to be done, then there is more difficulty for one subject can not be used to any great extent. Then it is one will find the use of more than one incident in the life of the king, for of such were the reliefs. There one will find, instead of a dominant episode, successive events of his campaign. The scenes are placed on the walls without any definite separating lines, and there is the same difficulty in dividing the groups, distinguishing the various personages that we experience with the bas reliefs on the columns of Trajan.

This method is used for on the outside of the temples. In the interior and in the tombs, the different parts of a picture are divided into registers and these in turn are placed one above the other. This gives a jumbled series of pictures which look individual but are in reality disjointed parts of a single composition.

Like the Roman artist, the Egyptian placed himself on the bank of the Nile and reproduced all he saw between himself and the horizon. One finds that the artist, instead of employing perspective, just placed his scenes in planes and superimposed them. Often there will be noticed that in these scenes, seen on the many walls, that the inundation of civil life is generally found at the lower portion of the wall while above are the hills and hunting scenes.

Sometimes the artist inserted between these two registers, another containing pastoral scenes, laborers and artisans working at their trades, and occasionally the intermediate scenes are entirely omitted and the Nile and the desert are placed next to one another. Like the mosaic, the wall-painting represents not a series of isolated scenes, but a regular composition which may be interpreted with ease by those who can read the artistic language of the period.

The Egyptian painter seldom or never sought to blend his different shades into each other, he seldom or never dealt in gradations; instead he painted in large patches, each patch clearly demarked from its neighbor. But with this system, he achieved some of the grandest color-harmonies, as will be seen in the papyrus of Ani, wherein the prominent

notes are brown and yellow, green, white and black. The papyrus of Queen Mat-ka-re, is even more beautiful, being dominated by an exquisite reddish yellow; while, turning to poly chromatic sculpture, the statue of Princess Neferet is a marvelous work of color with its rich greens and reds, its browns and whites. Scarcely inferior to this, is the coffin of Khnumu-Hotep, painted with gold, black and brown, and with stripes of peacock-blue decorated with patterns in gold.

The Egyptian was a divine colorist, but was more than that, for he was a master of composition. He took for his works only a few figures and not a great quantity, and on his piece of papyrus or his plaque of stone, they would be placed in a perfect aesthetic relationship to each other so that the whole space would appear to be decorated. His draftsmanship is of high excellence and he gives a bold impression rather than a detailed drawing, yet so expressive are his lines that the work possesses abundantly, the illusion of life.

Chapter VII

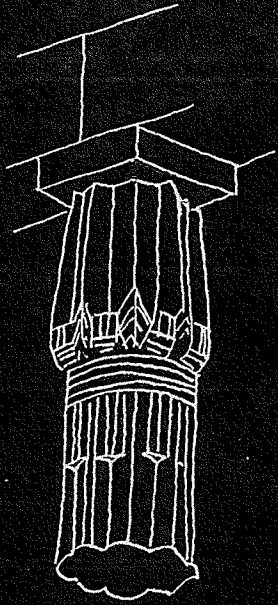
EGYPTIAN ORNAMENT

Within the valley of the Nile, the Egyptians were long untouched by foreign influences, and the apparent changelessness of Egyptian art is one of its most striking characteristics. Throughout the whole of this empire, primitive fetish-conceptions, never wholly disappeared; Maspers declared that "every Egyptian ornament was a talisman," and symbolism characterized every detail of decorative art.

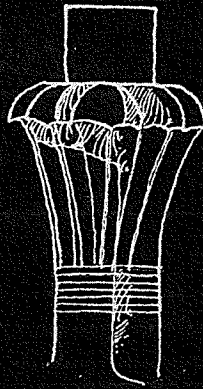
Due to the brilliant sunlight and black shadows, every delicate relief and subtle modulations would be lost. Hence, strong and bold relief are necessary out of doors; while both there and in the dim interiors, color is essential for decorative effectiveness. Egyptian ornament is preeminently an ornament of color.

It is only within recent years that the pre-Pharaonic art of Egypt has become sufficiently known to assign any date or sequence of style. Of those products of long before the First Dynasty unearthed at Koptos, Nagada, and Abydos, we find included crude painted statuettes of earthenware, ivory pins and combs, spoons and rings, flint knives with ivory gold plated handles, vases of pottery and slate palettes. Nowhere in these will one find evidence of a developed decorative style. There is a considerable imitation of nature, though more and more realistic and correct as time advances will be noticed. Their religion and magic account for much of this naturalism.

The historic ornament of Egypt is taken to be from 3500 B.C. down to the Christian era. Of the old empire, there is mostly sepulchral and industrial art--scarabs, mummy cases, jewellery, furniture and tomb decorations. Of the Middle Kingdom, there are a few examples of its architecture, though it is only in the new empire that we have the great architectural age. Many examples of sepulchral art of these two latter periods have been left also. The entire body of decorative art covering four thousand years approximately, shows extraordinary continuity and uniformity of spirit. Egyptian art is marked by a highly



• Lotus Bud Capital •



• Palm Leaf Capital •



• Hathor Head Capital •



• Band Ornament •



• Band Ornament •

developed decorative sense which rarely fails to employ both form and color in the most effective and appropriate manner. Everywhere is the influence of symbolism and surviving traditions of magic observable.

The Egyptians used both geometric and natural forms, the latter being always conventionalized. No doubt, the geometric forms were chiefly of technic origin, whereas the natural were more or less magical and symbolical. In ornament, there is rarely any attempt to picture natural objects realistically, thus we find conventionalizing used to a great extent. We find all objects depicted very simply with combinations possibly of the plan and elevation of the object itself. Human figures are drawn as have previously been described in that grotesque impossible yet pleasing manner.

Besides these above classes of ornament, there is that important category of architectural ornament. This consists of conventionalized nature-forms with a comparatively limited list of structural motives. All Egyptian ornament is characterized by a certain rigidity and formality of character which permitted of a very slow and gradual evolution. Previous to the Ptolemaic age, there was no marked change of style. But there is an extraordinary variety of detail in the treatment in the somewhat limited stock of the fundamental motives. It is predominantly an art of surface decoration by color; the range of architectural and structural forms being very narrow. Color was largely depended upon for the decoration of buildings as well as movable objects, and color was used with admirable judgment for decorative effects. The colors chiefly used were red, yellow, blue and green, with black and white as foils; these colors are seldom the pure colors of the spectrum, but "reduced" tones or shades, the red verging toward the red-brown; the yellow a warm tone such as is produced by tinging yellow ochre with burnt sienna; the blue, commonly a dark shade, the green ranging from a sap green to a dark olive. Exceptions of course are found especially in enamels and glass. Gold was used very sparingly in decorative work.

In Egyptian ornament, we find both the animal and plant forms used and in the former--chiefly the vulture or

hawk, the uraeus or cobra, together with wings and feathers-- which were invariably religious or symbolic. The flowers and plants on the other hand, lotus and papyrus, being vegetable forms and used for the same purpose as the animals-- are used only for decorative purposes.

The lotus has been called the sacred flower of Egypt and was the largest and most beautiful of flowers known to them, and was used a great deal in both royal and religious ceremonies. As a product of the life-giving, wealth-bestowing Nile, it was symbolic both of that river and of the solar gods. It is shown in the hands of kings and gods; laid as an offering on altars and tied to the tops of posts and columns. It figures in the capitals of columns and is made the basis of endlessly varied borders and all-over patterns.

The papyrus is another common type of plant form, and is also used in columns as well as painted decoration on walls and on bell-capitals, often alternating with conventional lotuses. The convolvulus, daisy, grapes and thistle occur also in ornament; also other plant forms not always recognizable. Many rosettes and leaf-forms are not actual plants but are conventionalized to serve the purpose. As well as all these, one will find the palm leaf used in capitals during the Eighteenth Dynasty, and is frequent in Ptolemaic and Roman work.

The vulture, with outspread wings, symbolizing protection and maternal care, is a frequent and splendid decoration for temple ceilings. Wings almost with the sun-disc significant of Ra are very frequent, especially over door and gateways leading to temples. The uraeus or cobra is a symbol of death, hence of the royal power of life and death, hence of royalty itself. It is used in conjunction with the winged disc, the royal head-dress and building cornices. The scarabaeus or beetle is purely of ornamental motive and appears isolated on mummy cases and elsewhere as a symbol creation of life, and was the most common of amulets. The head of Hathor was used as a symbolic decoration on columns, especially during the time of Ptolemies. The sphinx, a combination of a lion's body with a human head, or a sculptured ram, was used to line the avenues of approach to temples and occasionally found in small form worked in the harder materials and used as amulets, but was of the class of sculpture rather than ornament. Feathers were used to a great extent in the representations of great fans or royal insignia.

Conventional and geometric motives are of the greatest variety and are used with consummate skill, sometimes alone but mostly in combination with flower forms, especially the lotus. One will find the zigzag and the chevron in great frequency. Opposed zigzags produce lozenges or diamonds and occur in all-over patterns. The circle was the basis of a great number of patterns, and from it one finds rosettes in an unlimited variety. The spiral though not as important in Egyptian ornament as it later became in the Greek, was much used in linear and all-over patterns. Quarries are formed by four lines winding spirally about each of a series of dots arranged in diagonally intersecting rows. Fret patterns are rarely met with as a border pattern. The Palmette, a name given to an ornament which occurs in Egyptian, Assyrian, Phoenician, Cypriote and Greek art, consists of a group of diverging leaves or petals springing from between two spirals and is predominantly used as an isolated or terminal motive in Egyptian art.

The architectural forms of Egyptian ornament were comparatively few and simple. They had no uniform system as did the Greeks and Romans, but one type of cornice, the cavetto cornice, was universal. This was ornamented with vertical flutings and with a torus at its base, this latter being carried down the corners of pylons and other enclosing walls. The winged disc invariably adorned the central part of the cornice over all temple doorways.

The columns in Egyptian works had shafts of three types; the circular or cylindrical, the clustered, and polygonal or proto-doric. The first two, tapered upward in those cases and had at times a slight swelling or convexity at the base. The clustered shafts consisted of four or eight members, sometimes cylindrical, sometimes formed with an arris or edge. The last named type of column had from eight to thirty-two sides, flat or slightly concaved and were found mostly in the rock-cut tombs.

On the other hand, the capitals of these columns, were of the greatest variety, though able to be divided into a few main groups: the bud capital, single or clustered; the bell-shaped or campaniform, single or compound, the palmiform; and the Hathoric. Of these, the bud capital was the most common; the campaniform is found mostly in the central isles of the hypostyle halls; the compound campaniform, the palmiform and the Hathoric were used in the period of Ptolemies. The bell capital was adorned with painted petals around its lower



Portraits of Kings

part, and with rows of flowers on erect green stalks. Every shaft, even when cylindrical, is bound by five or more bands at the top, a detail evidently derived from the binding of clustered supports, such as bundles of papyrus stalks; the swelling at the base and the upward taper, the whole being covered with leaf forms, is an indication also of the well known papyrus; the bell-shaped capital, striped with green vertical lines, rising out of a calyx of leaves and with its red lip, is an architectural interpretation in stone of the spreading papyrus-head of green filaments rising from a pseud-calyx of leaves and bearing small reddish tops. The shafts of simple cylindrical columns were covered generally with bands of incised or painted hieroglyphics or pictures, giving scale to their simple masses and at the same time ornamenting them. In conclusion to the ornate work of Egypt, mention might be made that in several small temples are to be found, square or rectangular piers, fronted by a figure of Osiris, holding a scourge and a "Nile key" or the "key of life". These are known as Osirid columns, but are not commonly known.

Ancient traditions assert that the earliest Egyptian temples contained no sculptured figures, no inscriptions, no material symbols. By the Middle Kingdom, the walls were covered with scenes and inscriptions, although the columns as yet, bore little more than the royal cartouche. During the great Theban period, all the plain surfaces, pylons, wall facings, and shafts of columns were covered with scenes and texts. Under the Ptolemies and the Caesars, these inscriptions were so crowded that the masonry was lost sight of under the mass of ornamentation with which it was covered. These were all arranged with much care and were arranged in sequence where the official relation between gods and men were set forth for those capable of understanding them. These inscriptions were in hieroglyphics which was the picture writing of the Egyptians and were cut into the walls by means of chisels and later filled in with beautiful colors.

These hieroglyphics may be divided into two classes, those representing ideas and those representing sounds. For example, the picture of an obelisque, expressed that object; a vulture expressed that bird. Sometimes, however, the cause was put for the effect, and the reverse: thus a palette and reed represented "writing" and a "scribe." It will be readily understood that the ideographic part of the writing is much older than the phonetic, for the former will be found in greater use in earlier times than the latter.

The pictorial method of representation is exceedingly useful, for it frequently suggests the right meaning of a word; and where new words are found phonetically spelled, but without ideographs, it is often difficult to find out what they mean. The ideographs were often written two or three times in order to signify the plural. Every hieroglyph could be used to express the sound of the object which it represented. Certain hieroglyphs were used as Determinatives by which is meant a sign which represents the idea, either directly or indirectly of the word written, and might be placed either before or after the word.

The arrangement of the hieroglyphics, of which there are about two thousand, in inscriptions varies considerably and they are read for the most part from right to left as are the Hebrew, Syriac and Semetic. Again they are to be found placed in vertical rows, which are read from the bottom upward and each row is separated by a carefully drawn straight line.

Hieroglyphics were most particularly useful for the purpose of ornament and when each hieroglyphic was painted in the colors which most nearly represented the object which it was supposed to resemble, the effect was very pleasing. Quite often the artist sacrificed these characters in his inscriptions in order to produce these effects. At times they were turned around or again were omitted, thus making it difficult for one to grasp exactly what was meant by them. It was only in the use of this picture writing on papyrus that the words were fully written and in their right order. Letters were often needed in various parts of the register in order to get symmetrical results. These hieroglyphics were used for inscriptions on public buildings, but there are two other types to be found, the hieratic and the demotic or enchorial, the latter coming into use in the later part of the empire, while the former is known as the cursive hand and was used mostly by the priests in writing out reports for governmental documents and for literary manuscripts.

In order to try to explain the reasons that the Egyptians used certain types of ornament for their portrayal of the relations between their gods and men, a subject must be taken and seen as they saw it. To them, the temple was built as an image of the world, and the earth was a shallow flat plane, oblong in form. The sky stretched over it, and in order to support it, four gigantic pillars were used, one at each corner. Their temples were such--ceiling represented

the heavens; the four corners the pillars, and the floor the earth. All that touched the ground was covered with the vegetation; the columns represented the plants or trees. The base of the walls was decorated with long stems of papyrus or lotus, among which the cattle were occasionally depicted. In some cases a dado had a charming design of groups of river plants emerging from the water or the emblematic plants that symbolize the union of the two Egypts, the north and south under one Pharaoh, or birds with human arms, seated in adoration over the sign used to denote solemn festivals. On the ground level, Niles, both male and females, either kneel or advance majestically in procession, their hands full of fruit and flowers. These are the nomes, the lakes and districts of Egypt, that are bringing their produce to the god. The temple ceilings were painted dark blue and sprinkled with five-pointed stars painted yellow, occasionally interspersed with the cartouches of the royal founder. Bands of hieroglyphics at intervals broke the monotony of this ceiling. The vultures of Nekheb and Nazit, goddess of the north and south, armed with emblems of universal domination, hover over the central aisle of the hypostyle hall and on the soffits of the doors, above the head of the king as he passed to the sanctuary.

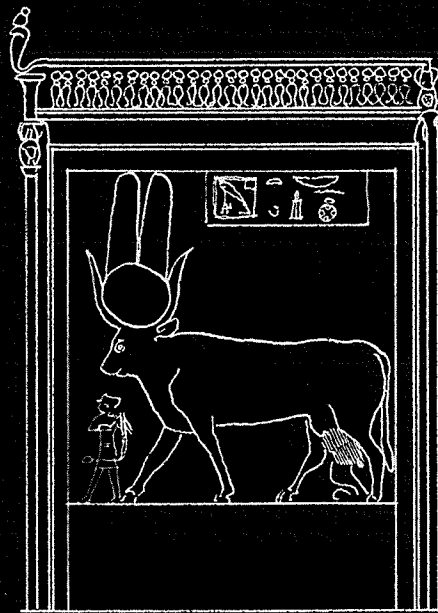
At the Ramesseum, Edfu, Philae, Denderah the very depth of the earth appeared to open and reveal their inhabitants to the faithful. There the celestial ocean displayed its waters, over which sailed the sun and moon, escorted by the planets, the constellations and decani, while the genii of months and days marched in an endless procession. During the Ptolemaic period, zodiacal signs are copied from the Greeks and found among astronomical figures of purely Egyptian origin. The decoration of the architraves is quite independent of the roof and one will find on them legends inscribed in immense hieroglyphic characters, setting down the beauties of the temple, the names of the royalties who built it, and the name of the deity to whom it was dedicated. The ornamentation of the base of the walls is always the same, being confined to a small number of subjects; while the most varied and the most interesting scenes may be said to be placed on the walls of the rooms and the pylons.

In order that the poor people might communicate with their gods, they had to have a mediator, who of both human and divine nature might equally have access to the thoughts and wills of both. The king, the son of the Sun, was alone of sufficient descent to perform this duty, hence we have him depicted in all the inscriptions and art everywhere in the temple,

standing, sitting, kneeling, slaying the victim and presenting part of it, pouring wine, milk, oil and burning incense. In other words, the whole of mankind is acting through him, and performing through its duty to the immortals. As far as possible, only the relatives of the king assisted in these religious ceremonies, and were portrayed at their various tasks, while no other human being has any but a subordinate part. As the kings were portrayed, so were the gods, for the king himself was a god, having privileges of the gods as well as the knowledge.

As the sun journeys from East to West, thereby cutting the universe into two parts, so does one find that the Egyptian temple is divided into two parts by an imaginary line, the temple of the south, on the right and the temple of the north, on the left. As the temple is divided, so are the rooms, and one will find each room a double temple. In order to fully appease the gods and do homage to them, offerings and prayers must be made in both temples. Due to this, the scenes are depicted in duplicate. At times for lack of space, this could not be done, so we find a single scene in which the products of the south and north were presented at the same table.

During the Pharaonic times, the scenes were not much crowded and the surface to be covered, was defined below by a line drawn above a decoration of the dado, and is bounded above by the usual cornice, or a frieze of uraei, of bundles of papyrus arranged side by side of royal cartouches, or of emblems connected with the local cult--Hathor--heads in a temple of Hathor--or of a horizontal line of dedicatory inscription deeply carved in fine hieroglyphic. The space thus enclosed sometimes formed one single register and sometimes two, but never more unless it was in a very lofty room. Figures and texts were widely spaced and scenes following one another without definite divisions, and it was left to the spectator to discover the beginning and end. The heads of the kings were actual portraits and the gods were duplicates of these. The secondary figures were drawn with equal care, but where there were too many of these, they were superimposed in rows of two, and three, the total height never exceeding the height of the principle personages. All the details such as sceptres, vestments, jewellery, offerings, head-dresses, were placed with minute regard for elegance and accuracy. The colors were so combined as to produce a dominant tone and harmonious effect, thereby the rooms might be described the



HATHOR
(Dendera)



HATHOR
(Dendera)



HATHOR
(Karnak)

blue hall, the red hall, the green hall, and the golden hall.

As one approaches the later times, the more crowded the scenes become. Under the Greeks and Romans, they are so crowded that it is possible only to arrange them in five, six, or even eight registers. The principle figures seemed to be compressed while all available space about them was filled in with explanatory hieroglyphs. The gods and kings are no longer portraits now but are rather conventionalized types without life or vigor, while the secondary figures are crowded together as closely as possible. This was not all owing to lack of taste, but rather due to the prevalence of a religious idea, the sole object of the decoration was not merely to please the eye--it possessed a magical virtue when applied to objects or buildings, and determined the power and character. These scenes were therefore amulets as well as decoration. During the Eighteenth Dynasty it was supposed that one or two amulets of this sort would be sufficient, but in the later period, this was changed, however, and the more of these the better things would be, and so there are to be found individual rooms of this later day which contain more scenes than the whole temple wall surfaces.

All the subjects portrayed on the wall surfaces are, regardless of the confusing appearance they give, subsequent one to another. The battle scenes on the face of the pylons at Luxor and the Ramesseum give one a minute detailed account of the battle day by day. Without any means of transition they would immediately change this story scene to one of peace and tranquility.

Each part of the temple had its individual decoration and furniture. The walls of the pylons were not only furnished with the masts and streamers, but also with obelisks, and statues. The statues, four to six in number, were of limestone, granite or sandstone, and represented the royal founder and were oftentimes of colossal size varying from twenty to seventy feet in height. The obelisks stood in front of the colossi, on either side of the entrance. They are always in pairs but are often of unequal height, and are supposed to represent the fingers of or a ray of light of the god Amon--Generator. They were placed before the pylon gates where they were to ward off the attacks of the evil spirits and mortal enemies. Made of granite, for the most part, these shafts were of considerable dimension, some being from sixty-

eight to one hundred and nine feet in height. Invariably, these obelisks were square in plan with the faces slightly convex and the whole sloping gently from top to bottom. They had inscribed on them, texts or bas-reliefs, and the point carved into a pyramidion was usually covered with bronze or copper-gilt. Scenes of offerings to Ra-Harmachis, Horus, Atum, and Amon were carved on the sides of the pyramidion and on the upper part of the shaft. Below, on the four vertical faces, there were parallel lines of hieroglyphs setting forth the praises of the king, and sometimes a scene of offering at the bottom. This was the usual type of obelisk and there are however ones contrary to this to be found.

The inner courts and hypostyle halls of the temples had also colossi of their own. Some of these backed on to the front faces of the columns or walls, were only half disengaged from the wall, and were even built up in the courses along with the masonry of the building itself. As a rule, they represented the Pharaoh standing, mummified, and bearing the insignia of Osiris. The right to dedicate a statue in a temple, other than the king's statue, was a rare privilege, and they always bore an inscription "by the king's grace." However, as time went on, this soon came to be an accumulation of votive statues placed about the courts and passages of the temples.

Attached to each statue as it stood in the sanctuary, was a rectangular table of offerings formed of a block of stone with a projection on one side to form a spout, and the upper part hollowed more or less deeply. On this was carved loaves, joints of beef, libation vases, and other objects usually presented to the deceased or to the gods. There was a cult connected with these statues, and the tables were altars upon which sacrificial offerings of meat, cakes, fruits, vegetables and the like were placed during the performance of the ritual which ensured the offerings reaching the deceased.

The sanctuary and the surrounding chambers contained the objects required for the cult. The bases of the altars varied in shape, some square and massive, other polygonal or cylindrical.

The naos was a small shrine of wood or stone in which the spirit of the deity was at all times expected to dwell, and which on certain festivals contained his actual image.

The sacred barques were built after the model of a boat in which the sun pursued his daily course around the world. In the centre was the naos screened from the eyes of the spectator by a veil. The crew was complete with each god in his appointed place and the king on his knees before the naos. Statues of the gods used at these ceremonies have not as yet been found. They were animated though, and in addition to their bodies of stone, metal or wood, they possessed a soul procured by magic from the divinity they represent. The Pharaohs undertook nothing without their counsel. "Interminable avenues of sphinxes, gigantic obelisks, massive pylons, halls of a hundred columns, mysterious chambers where the daylight never penetrated--the entire Egyptian temple was built to serve as an abode for an articulated puppet in whose name a priest spoke and of which he pulled the wires."

Chapter VIII

MINOR ARTS

Due to the Egyptians' love of luxury and beauty, these minor arts invaded all classes of society, and we find whether living or dead, that the Egyptian was loaded down with jewels, costly amulets and was surrounded by furniture and artistic household utensils. His idea was that every object desired and used by him, must satisfy this taste by beauty of form if not by richness of material.

The Egyptian of the predynastic and earliest dynastic periods, was laid in his grave surrounded by pottery filled with scented foods and fat and slate palettes which were used to color his eyes and face. Beads of every description and materials such as agate carnelien, steatite, calaite, turquoise, amethyst, lapislazuli, serpentine, haematite, obsidien, porphyry, silver, gold or iron are to be found in great quantities, all down through the dynasties. However, flint-working is that in which the man of the Nile excelled and which he brought to the highest perfection. Copper was early introduced into Egypt and superceded the use of the flint, which gradually deteriorated in the dynastic period.

The workmanship of the working people was of the highest order and was of the most delicate execution. In whatever materials they worked, they worked with ease and assurance employing their instruments with great dexterity. One finds as examples of their work in the earliest days of this empire, many stone objects. Of these, the greatest quantity are amulets, such as hearts, fingers, cartouches, serpents, animals and even their gods. Theirs was of a supernatural symbol rather than a thing of beauty. So it is we find in these, that they were solely for religious purposes in warning off evil spirits as well as favouring their gods. One of the most common of these amulets and most popular is that of the sacred beetle or "kheper" which is their symbol of their terrestrial existence.

One finds among their symbolic charms one that is known as a scarab and this is their token of the present or future duration of life. These are in various forms such



• Girdle-tie of Isis •



• Frog Amulet •



• Scarab •



• Kohl-jar •



• Flower Vase •



• Tile-Inlay •



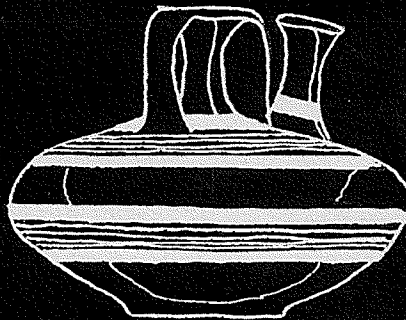
• Perfume Vase •
• alabaster •



• Tile-Inlay •



• Ivory Spoon •



• False-necked Vase •
• of Mykenean Type •



• Ivory Spoon •

as the sparrow-hawk head, a ram, a man or even a bull's head, and are found carved both above and below with either ornament of simple form or again with signs relating to that for which they were made. The majority of these scarabs are pierced lengthwise so that a wood sliver or a fine gold or silver wire may be passed through from which they are suspended about the neck or from the arm or even in a room. We find them placed on the breasts of mummies, again for the purpose of warding off evil.

The small scarabs that were first used, were absolutely meaningless from the religious point of view, and were used as seals, pendants, or earrings or the bezel of a ring or threaded for a bracelet. They bore titles, signatures, and told of the parentage of the individual, if on royal cartouches, and now and again have magic formula. During the Sixth Dynasty, these scarabs were mostly of crystal and obsidian as well as in later times around the beginning of the first Theban empire, amethyst, emerald and garnet. From the Eighteenth Dynasty on, amulets are to be found by the hundreds of every description as well as sacred and profane objects of art.

Of Egyptian sculpture in miniature, there are many headrests and girdleties made of carnelian, haematite and red jasper, all of these being carved in minute detail. There are to be found small statuettes of their gods--Isis, Nephthys, Neit, Sekhet, done in lapis lazuli most delicately carved. In this soft material, the detail is of a microscopic character. Usually however, the treatment is broad in these figurines and the head loses its character, with a thick neck and the bust has on it, irregular bumps, while the feet and legs are insufficiently solid to support the weight of the figure itself. In all of these figures it will be noticed that the principle lines are lost in the secondary ones. This makes the figures very uninteresting for the fact that one will find a confusion of lines, markings and cuttings.

Vases are to be found in great numbers in the graves of the predynastic and early dynastic periods. All down through the ages of this kingdom vases and urns play an important part in the funerary deposits, temples and household equipment. These being worked and turned until they were more or less translucent. If these vases were meant to be suspended, handles were cut on the sides and pierced. Now and again rosettes or buds or even female heads were used in place of these pierced hands.

These were very common only in the early dynasties. From the Fifth to the Twelfth Dynasty, canopic jars are to be found in limestone and alabaster. On these are to be found covers of painted wood with very fine carving. Of the perfume vases, they are to be found in the spindle shape or round form, turned out of alabaster and highly polished. There is on these, very little ornament and the handles of the same are generally of lotus buds. The smallest of this shape of vase was not used for perfume but for palmades, salves and chemicals for the use of preparing their face. Kohl jars are small and round with a short cylindrical neck with a flat rim. These were used to contain charcoal and antimony which were also used for makeup. Great ingenuity was displayed in the design and execution of all Egyptian vases.

Pottery found in the prehistoric dynasties is all very heavy and rounded and of red and black color work. These are found as well in the tombs of the Old Kingdom, and are of red and yellow. The clay used in this pottery is likened to that used in the pottery of today, for it had straw introduced into it. The surfaces to these vessels were seldom smooth and glazing was used to very little extent, while the majority of these vessels were painted white. Theban pottery on the other hand, though numerous in quantity, was very uninteresting in both the shapes and design as well as the color. After the Eighteenth Dynasty, pottery becomes distinctly Mysenean in every respect, and there will be found the lenticular ampulse and the false-necked vases which are used to contain Nile water and flowers. Canopic jars become very numerous during this period, and as the power and wealth of Thebes decrease, the heads which cover these jars, become well carved. They are hollowed out carefully with great precision and are well baked, each in its turn being painted with a color peculiar to the genius represented. Pottery was also used in their coffins which in turn were oblong boxes with a saddle-back lid, and not all of these were of that type but few were of the human form, crudely executed. Only the roughest of this pottery which was used in the tombs, was left in its natural color, for having learned the art of glazing, these people being very fond of brilliant color, desired to use as much as possible wherever possible.

Glass was known very early to these people, and is found to be of a similar composition to that of the



· A · Bracelet · of · Prince · Tsar ·

present day, having in it the same materials. However, due to the fact that they did not understand the method of removing the impurities from the materials necessary for the making of glass, they were unable to obtain consistent or uniform results. Their glass was never pure and white as is now known, but was slightly colored--being a light green or yellow. They were unable to manufacture large pieces, for due to the crude methods, they had not the where withal to do it. On account of their inconsistent glass preparation, much of their glass has completely disappeared, some even now, at the touch, crumbles into fine powder. All their glass was colored, for it was more favourable that way, being easier for them to make it so. All their colors were mostly chance, for they could not produce color at will, just as they could not produce the glass in large pieces.

They had many uses for this glass, but their most important was the imitation of precious stones, such as the emerald, the jasper, the lapis lazuli and the carnelian, and jewellery of all sorts. Even the eyes and eyebrows of statuary came to be made of glass, and it was used also for hieroglyphic inlays, glass filagree, cut and engraved glass, soldered and the imitation of wood, straw and cord were also produced. Glass objects became very very numerous, and were mostly animal subjects such as hippopotami, monkeys, bulls and even people at times. Manufacture of glass was in full activity as early as the great Theban dynasties.

Enamels have been used greatly since prehistoric times, but never at that time were they really used to perfection. Scarabs, cylinders and amulets, being mostly made from the softer stones such as limestone and schist, were mostly covered with a colored glaze. Green was the most predominant color under the early dynasties, even though white, red, yellow, brown and violet and blue were used, and as early as the time of Menes, the two-color glaze was used. Blue was the common color in the Theban works from the early years of the Old Kingdom--a soft brilliant blue like lapis lazuli or turquoise. Green reappeared again in the Saite period, but it was of a paler hue and predominated in Lower Egypt at Memphis, Bubastis and Sais. The other colors were only common during the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties from the time of Aahmes I, to the time of the Ramessides. At that later time, the ushebti figures were done in a white or red glaze and rosettes or lotus flowers

in yellow, red and violet, and all the while in all periods the kohl box was a common article for the glazer. The polychrome glazes reached their highest development under Akhenaten, for their colors never were confused and contrasted vividly with one another. At this time, glazed tile came into use, and use was made of it in many rooms of royal tombs, especially during the Thinite period. These tiles were in red, white and greens, the last being the most common, and as the tile and brick which was glazed, is very easily injured, not much of this art remains.

Ivory, bone and horn, were three materials most likely very common to the people of the Nile at a very early date. Bone and horn were not substances to remain in existence for any great length of time, as they both decay or become eaten by insects. Of the first of these three, there are some examples to this day, for to these people, the elephant was known, ivory being imported from the Upper Nile by the natives of that district in exchange for merchandise to the larger cities throughout the empire. These tusks of the elephant were used for combs and hair-pins on which are to be found decorations of men, birds and animals. Spoons were in great demand by the populace, not only for daily use at the table, but to handle their palmades and lotions for their toilettes. This ivory was left in its natural color in most cases, and if stained, either a green or red was used. It was also used as an inlay for furniture, dice, kohl bottles and incense burners. Statuettes were very delicately wrought in this material which the seated figure of Khufu found at Abydos, portrays.

What woods were to be found in this valley of the Nile river, were very few and useless from the viewpoint of sculpture. There were however, a scarcity of the acacia and sycamore, which were used for cheap and rapid use. These could only be had in small blocks and were used in the making of Ka statues. All the figures were reduced in size in order to try to get one figure out of a block. Where this was not possible, the blocks were united by means of wooden pegs. Regardless of this, art lost nothing in its workmanship and the best of these figures were produced in the Twentieth Dynasty. These people had a powerful knowledge of composition and the dexterity of manipulation shows the strong influence exercised by the school of sculpture at Thebes. Toilette articles were of the most beautiful work and of the ingenious fancy of the workman. Wooden spoons



• Vignette from the Book of the Dead •

were used greatly but these for the most part, were inlaid with ivory, gold or silver as was their furniture in the homes and palaces of the nobility and royalty. The cabinet makers during these periods, did very fine intricate work. The making of wooden sarcophagi became a serious business, and many men were employed. They varied greatly throughout the Memphite and Theban period, but for the most part they were large and rectangular, and built out of sycamore; elegantly decorated with hieroglyphics which were placed on every side boldly and harmoniously. In use, there were two types of coffins, and in the first one, the feet and legs were found joined throughout their entire length, a slight projection of the knees, rounding of the calf and the outline of the thighs and trunk could be seen in slight relief. The head was entirely disengaged, and the man was practically imprisoned in a statue of himself. The second type was in reality a statue carved in the round, forming a cover for the body. The head of this coffin has on it, a large curled wig while the breast is scarcely concealed by an almost transparent white material, and the legs were covered by a petticoat, in their hands are to be found an ankh, the girdle tie or even wreathes of ivory. Under the Memphite rulers, this latter type of coffin was rare, but during the Eleventh Dynasty, they were more common, having roughly hewn faces, painted brilliantly in yellow, red and green. The hair and the head-dress were painted in black and blue stripes, while about the neck was a necklace. Around the sides one will find scanty decoration of figures and bands of hieroglyphs all done in blue or black. During the Eighteenth Dynasty, all the work had an excellent finish, and the reproduction of the human features were most remarkable and extraordinary. In the Nineteenth Dynasty, however, one coffin was not sufficient for their purpose. Several were used, being in number three or four, set inside one another, each in its turn profusely decorated with figures and writing characters. The outer box consisted of square posts or handles with a white lid, and on it were figures and scenes of the deceased before the gods of the Osirian group. The coffins with the human form, had now the bareness of decoration that was common in the early coffin of that type. The face was colored while around the neck was a necklace and a band of hieroglyphics ran from the waist to the feet. As for the rest of the box, it was painted in black, brown or a dull yellow. The inner boxes were more extravagant and lavish in their ornamentation and color design, for there the face and hands were painted red,

rose-colored, or gilded. Jewellery was painted on or was enamelled in these with scenes, texts and titles, and multi-colored intarsia, the whole possibly at times being painted with a yellow varnish. The reason for these elaborate coffins is not as one might suppose to be due to the wealth and power of the country, but was just the contrary. At the time of the decadence of the empire, the people were drained of their resources by the many invasions and various rulers of the country. The people became poor and could not afford the elaborate tombs that they were previously inclined to build erect, hence their time and what little money they had, was spent on the preparation of these coffins. These elaborate and ornate affairs was not a proof of their strength, but rather a proof of their weakness and their poverty.

During the Saite period, stone sarcophagi came into use again, and the wood coffin returned to its former simplicity in design. This did not last for any great length of time, for after the downfall of the Ramessides, the double or treble coffins came into use again, but this time with an excess of paint while crude gilding was again revived.

Chests were required for all their household necessities as well as for their tombs, more so in the latter. These chests were exquisitely carved in minute detail, and were the work of proficient cabinet makers. The majority of these beautiful pieces of woodwork were used for the viscera "respondents" ushebti figures, hence one can see the importance of these, and for this reason they are elaborately ordained. Tables, chairs, stools and beds were also made of this material for the use of the mummy. They even enclosed within his tomb, in miniature of course, hearses to carry him to his burial ground or the home of the gods and chariots which were solely for his pleasure and others for war. The majority of these were inlaid with precious stones, gold leaf, gold, silver, electrum and ivories, all in all being of beautiful workmanship. Beds were not uncommon during these periods, and especially around the Thirteenth Dynasty, and the Graeco-Roman time. These were very costly and extravagant in all their decorations, designs and ornamentation. They were of various types, some with lions' heads, chests and forefeet, at one end and the hind quarters at the head of the bed, while their bodies formed the rods of the bed. The tails of these animals were used as an ornamental feature running

up the head of the bed. The chairs were introduced and known from the Eleventh Dynasty downwards, and were of a brilliant red usually inlaid with ivory to form patterns, floral and geometric with chevrons and the like. These chairs were of finely executed woodwork with the legs of very fanciful designs generally representing the feet and legs of animals. They were laced with thongs and cords for the seat and were sometimes of wood slats. Now and again, stuffed seats were used to obviate this hardness. These were of a linen or leather covering, filled with stuffing. The linens were of such that could be compared with those of any country producing fine linens, while the linen work was not so good, but yet it was stamped with a nicety and fineness in their own quaint way.

Cut and stamped leather was used and known from the time of the Bubastite period. With it they did many interesting things, employing it in their relief work, models and furniture. In their relief work they would cut out figures and hieroglyphics of various colored leathers and would mingle these with one another, and placing them on a sheet of leather of a very light color, they would produce charming results. In all their leather work they produced bright and harmonious color effects in these odd ways of doing things.

Embroidery was done with rare skill, and was used for border work in which were incorporated palmettos discs, points, leaves, coils, curves, and even figures of men, gods and animals. Egyptians were very very fond of their clothes in plain colors, but white was the most favourite, for it was used for their everyday garments as well as cloths for tables and bandages in which the mummies were swathed. Tapestries did not come into use to be used commonly until the close of the Persian domination and the beginning of the Grecian period. The Alexandrians introduced into Egypt, brocades which were woven with much variety of threads of many colors. On the borders, discovered in the Fayum, there are most elaborate patterns and are in the Coptic burials, and they belong rather to Byzantine rather than Egyptian art.

Metals were divided by the Egyptians into two groups: the noble metals and the base metals. The former were gold, electrum and silver, while the latter were copper, iron and lead to which tin was later added.



• BUST OF KHONSU • 18th & 19th DY •
(Cairo Museum)

Iron was known as early as the predynastic period, for beads of wrought iron have been found. It was very rarely found in the early dynasties, and in the later it was reserved for weapons of war and tools. Lead was rarely used, but when it was, as an inlay for the doors of temples, coffers and other furniture, and was even used for casting small divinities. Copper implements were at first used very little, but were almost universal up to the Sixth Dynasty, at which time it was superceded by bronze. Rivets were used to fasten pieces of vessels made of this material and casting was also more freely employed.

These people had succeeded in tempering bronze to such a quality so that they could vary the degree to extreme hardness or to a very soft and pliable metal. The constituencies of this metal were practically the same as is today. Some produced, was likened to gold while others were of a very white and corresponded to silver in appearance. Ordinary bronze was used for weapons and for the common amulets; alloys, similar to brass, was used for household utensils, the gold or silver bronzes for mirrors, valuable weapons and fine statuettes. This metal was worked up into intricate designs for smallware, and the designs used, were of those common to the locality and taken from nature as a rule. Among these, we find fish, birds, animal life, such as the gazelle, jackal, and at the same time their grotesque deities.

Copper and bronze were used very early for statuettes. One of the most famous statues found of these materials was that of the lady Takushet, who is standing with her left foot advanced, the right arm pendent and the left arm folded below her breast. She wears a short robe, embroidered with religious subjects, and she has bracelets on her arm and wrists. Her head is covered with a wig of short curls arranged in regular rows. The details of the dress and jewels were engraved in outline on the bronze inlaid with a line of silver wire. The face is a portrait and indicates a woman of mature age, while the body, following the tradition of the Egyptian school, is that of a girl, upright, firm and supple. There was a large admixture of gold in the copper, and the soft lustre harmonizes in the happiest manner with the rich ornamentation of the embroidery.

The figures of people as a rule in these numberless statuettes, are very feeble and commonplace, and lose all

their attractiveness. On the contrary, figures of animals, rams, sphinxes and more especially of lions, maintained their individuality. The Egyptian had a special predilection for the feline tribe; they represented the lion in all possible attitudes, and no nation had a more intimate knowledge of his habits nor portrayed him with such intensity of life. Several of the divinities, such as Shu, Anhuri, Bast, Sekhet, and Tefnut were of the cat or lion form, and their cult was very popular around the Delta.

The idea of overlaying stone or wood with gold was familiar in Egypt before the time of Menes. Many vases and beads are overlaid with gold leaf. The gold is often mixed with silver. When the content of silver is to the extent of twenty percent, it changes its name to electrum which is of a fine pale yellow color, and it becomes paler as the content of silver is increased. The Egyptians struck neither coins nor medals from this metal, and with this exception, they made use of it as is done today. Gold leaf was very important to these people, and they made use of it for gilding doors, bas reliefs and even obelisks.

But bronze or gilded wood did not satisfy the extravagance of the Egyptian, for they demanded solid gold. The kings of the ancient and middle kingdoms dedicated statues, cast or worked in the precious metals, while those of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties, who drew on the treasures of Asia, surpassed all that had been done in this respect by their predecessors. The amount of precious metals devoted to the service of the supreme god, must have been considerable. Small figures are to be found in great number, being made entirely of gold or silver or partly gold or partly silver; others again are of gold combined with carved ivory, ebony and precious stones. A few small figures in guise of amulets concealed in the mummies, a few statues and some exvotos lost in obscure corners of a temple, are all the figures of divinities that have come down to us. An electrum statue of a youth of the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty was found in a private tomb close to the valley temple of Hatshebsut at Dier el Bahari. The figure is nude, and in one hand a lotus bud with a long stem is clasped. The work is not highly finished, but the modelling is delicate and subtle. This piece is not religious and is attributed to the new kingdom, and of the Saitic and Ptolemaic periods, their works can only be distinguished by the perfection of workmanship. The Pharaohs

had no commercial resource and could not circulate the gold and silver extorted from the conquered nations in the form of coin. After deducting the share devoted to the gods, they melted the remainder into ingots or into vessels of gold and silver or into jewellery. This was also done by private persons and from the time of Aahmes I, during at least six or eight centuries, the taste for worked silver was indulged to an extravagant extent. All houses of consequence contained not only what was required for the service of the table, dishes, ewers, cups, goblets and baskets on which fantastic animals and figures were engraved and embossed, but they also had large vases for the use of flowers and displayed on gala days. The designs of these vases were of carefully studied richness and effectiveness rather than of grace and beauty of design. It mattered little to them that the whole effect was heavy or in bad taste if only they could display their skill and the amount of precious metal they had at their disposal. Vases for ordinary use were of a very simple form, and were less loaded with unnecessary ornament. The passion for precious metals went so far under the Ramessides, that they were not content to employ them for the service of the table. Both Rameses II and Rameses III, had thrones of gold and incrustated with precious stones. They were too costly to last and soon disappeared, but their artistic importance did not equal their intrinsic value.

All orientals, whether they be men or women, are great lovers of jewellery, and the Egyptians were no exception to this rule. Not content with wearing it in profusion during their life time, they loaded the arms, fingers, neck, ears, forehead and ankles of their dead with ornament. Much of the jewellery used for this purpose was made for show on the day of the funeral, as may be seen by their workmanship. In many cases, their favourite jewellery was buried with them, and the workmanship of this has no need to be questioned. The ring was not merely an ornament, but was an object of primary necessity as it was used for official sealing, and the seal was held good by law. Thus it was that every Egyptian had a ring, which was on his person at all times. The ring of the poor man was merely of copper or silver, while that of the wealthy was elaborately ornamented with reliefs. The movable bezel turned on a pivot and was set with an engraved stone bearing a device or emblem. To the women the chain was of as great importance as the ring was to the man. They were made in

every variety of pattern, in double or treble rows with large or small links, solid and heavy or very light and flexible. Even the poorest peasant could afford one, and she must be indeed poor who had not in her dowery something more. Some of the bracelets found were made of pure soft gold, turquoise, dark purple lazuli, amethyst and a kind of glaze of vitreous paste.

The jewellery of the Old Kingdom is still very rare. There are necklaces formed of gold links copied from a shell, the cypraea; a minute gold lion, and a fine wasp used as pendants and some repouse figures of animals in thin gold-leaf. Of the treasure of Dahshur, there were a mass of pectorals, rings, bracelets, chains, pendants and diadems belonging to the wives of the three Pharaohs of the Twelfth Dynasty. The pectorals of gold Cloisonne work inlaid with vitreous paste or precious stones, which bear the cartouches of Senusert II and Senusert III, and Amenemhat III, exhibit marvelous precision of taste, lightness of touch and dexterity of fine workmanship.

Some of the bracelets of the Seventeenth Dynasty were intended for anklets or to be placed on the upper part of the arm. These were plain gold circles either solid or hollow, edged with a circle of filigree made of plated gold wire. Others were intended for the wrists, and they were made of beads in gold, lapis lazuli, carnelian or in green felspar threaded in strips of gold and arranged in squares, each divided diagonally in halves of different colors. A very beautiful hinged bracelet belonging to Aahmes I suggests to some extent the methods employed in the manufacture of cloisonne enamels. Aahmes is kneeling before the god Geb, and his acolytes, the geni of Sopsu and Khonu. The figures and hieroglyphics were delicately worked with the burin on a gold plaque. The background is filled in with blue paste and lapis lazuli artistically carved.

The decorations laid on the breast of the mummy were completed by a large necklace of the kind known as the usekh. The fastening was formed as a rule by two falcons' heads in gold, the details worked out in blue enamel. The rows of the necklace are composed of scrolls, of four-petalled flowers, of antelopes pursued by tigers, of crouching jackals, winged uraei, falcons and vultures.

All of these are in gold repousse work, and were attached to the winding sheet by a ring fixed to the back of each object. The pectoral, a square plaque as a rule, was hung on the breast. In one of these plaques, Aahmes is to be seen standing between Amon and Ra, who are pouring over his head and body, the water intended for his purification. The figures are outlined in gold cloisons, once filled with small stones and enamels, many of which have since fallen out. In order to understand how these were worn, one must recall the clothing worn by Egyptian women. As a rule, they wore a sort of tight dress that ended just above the waist, leaving the upper part of the body bare except for the narrow pair of braces that held up the garment. This bare space was covered with jewellery by the rich. The necklace half concealed the shoulders and neck, and the pectoral filled in the space between the breasts, and the breasts themselves were frequently covered with two gold caps either painted or enamelled.

In addition to the jewellery, weapons and amulets were heaped up in confusion. Weapons played an important part in the funerary equipment, for there were many evil spirits and many hazards with which to cope in the underworld--the Typhonian genii, serpents, gigantic scorpions, tortoises and monsters of every description. The daggers deposited with the mummy, helped the soul to protect itself, and, as they could only be used at close quarters, projectiles were added, bows and arrows, boomerangs of hard wood and battle axes. The handle of these axes were oftentimes of wood overlaid with gold-leaf and would have on it, characters of lapis lazuli, carnelian, turquoise and green felspar. The head is inserted in a notch in the wood and held in place by strips of gold bound around it. Two boats in gold and silver represent the barge on which the mummy will cross the river to reach its last resting place. The hull was long and narrow and the prow and stern end in tufts of papyrus gracefully curved inwards. There are two raised platforms surrounded by a solid balustrade at either end of the boat. All this provision was made for one single mummy, and as a rule the technique was found irreproachable, and the good taste of the craftsman was as assured as the dexterity of his work. Profession was not maintained for long though, as fashions changed and the jewellery became heavier. This decadence, noticeable in the Nineteenth Dynasty, becomes more marked as the

Christian era is approached. The settlement of Greeks in Egypt only very gradually modified the style of Egyptian gold work, although eventually Greek types were substituted for native art.

Chapter IX

THE MUMMY

The Egyptian people are the only race who are known to have perfected the art of embalming and mummifying. Their belief that the soul would revisit the body after a number of years, absolutely necessitated that the body be preserved if it be the wish of the deceased to dwell with the gods. Allusions have been made of this belief in the Book of the Dead. The soul was an emanation from the god of the universe, and after it left the body, it was doomed to undergo a series of existences, until it arrived at a fit state of purity to be absorbed into its original counterpart, hence the body had to be in perfect shape for the reincarnation.

"The Greek historians mentioned three ways in which mummies were made. In the first, the brain was extracted through the nose, and the intestines were removed. The body was then filled with myrrh, cassia and spices, after which it was steeped in natron for seventy days." At the end of seventy days the body was washed and swathed in linen bandages, gummed on the inside until every part of it was covered. In the second, a material, called oil of cedar, was introduced, which dissolved the intestines so that they could be removed without mutilating the body. It was then laid in natron, which dissolved the greater part of the flesh and left only the skin and bones. In the third, the body was merely salted for seventy days and then given back to the friends of the deceased.

Many different processes of embalming were in use at different periods in Egypt, and from these the facts that the Egyptians had a knowledge of the use of medicines and anatomy, are obtained. "The intestines that were taken out of the body, were dedicated to the four genii of the Amenti or Hades, whose names were Anset, Hapi, Tuamutef, and Kebhsenuf. To the first were dedicated the larger intestines, to the second, the smaller intestines, to the third the heart, and to the fourth the liver. These were placed in four jars, which had covers made in the shape of a man, an ape, a jackal, and hawk respectively. These jars were then placed in the tomb with the sarcophagus, and in the pictures which are painted on the outside of the mummies, these are often seen standing beneath the bier." "When the

12. "The dwellers on the Nile" Budge. E.A. Wallis; M.A.



• Mask of coffin of Rameses II.
• Twenty-first Dynasty •

friends of the poor person wished his intestines to be under the protection of these genii and could not afford to go to the expense of alabaster or wooden jars, he had four waxen figures of these gods made and placed them in the body along with their respective parts.

When the body had been mummified, and wrapped up in linen bandages, it was common to enclose it in what is called a cartonnage, providing the deceased was a person of rank or a priest. The cartonnage was a thin casing made of plaster and linen and it covered the whole body, fitting it closely. In the earlier days the face was painted only, but in the time of the Ptolemies, the face and ears were often gilded, and the eyes, eyebrows and lid made of glass or porcelain. On the top of the head, a scarabaeus or beetle was painted holding the sun between its antennae, while at the foot was painted the figure of Nut or heaven overshadowing the mummy, and Isis and Nephthys, the wife and sister of Osiris or mummy, stand one on each side of it, with wings stretched out to protect the deceased. At one time the mummy of the deceased was represented as being visited by his soul, or with the sun shining upon him, and at another the judgment scene from the one hundred and twenty-fifth chapter of the Book of the Dead, is shown with the soul of the deceased being weighed in the balance before Osiris, the great god of the dead, while the four genii of the dead look on. Very few of the scenes depicted on these cartonnages are alike. On some mummies, scarabaei, necklaces, rows of beads, breast-plates, and figures were found, and at times objects which were used by the deceased in life, were buried with him. In the last days of the Egyptian empire, a portrait of the deceased was painted and laid upon the face of the mummy; the hair was mummified also and wrapped in bandages and laid at the foot of the mummy.

The mummy being arranged in its gaudily painted cartonnage, was then placed in a coffin or a case of sycamore wood, which was usually made to represent the form of a man. As a mummy, so the coffin was made, according to the amount of money the friends of the deceased could afford to pay. The rich had the most lavish and beautiful coffins, covered inside and outside with scenes and chapters from the Book of the Dead and allegorical representations. The



◦ DUA-MUT-EF ◦ AMSET(SMET) ◦



◦ QEBH-SONU-F ◦ HAPI ◦
◦ CANOPIC ◦ (KHU) ◦ JARS ◦

outer cases of all were made of stone and were sometimes entirely covered with hieroglyphs. The scarabaei which were deposited with the mummy, were made of various substances and were usually inscribed with the thirtieth chapter of the Book of the Dead, which has for its vignette, the deceased adoring a scarabaeus. The ushebtu figures that were placed with the dead, were inscribed with the names of the deceased and the sixth chapter of the Book of the Dead. "They were supposed to do for the deceased in Hades, all the work that would otherwise fall to his lot."* Besides the mummifying of human beings, the Egyptians preserved cats, crocodiles, snakes, birds, such as the ibis, the hawk, and many other creatures.

*"The Dwellers on the Nile" Budge. E. A. Wallis. M. A.

Ref.

"The Dwellers on the Nile" Budge. E. A. Wallis, M. A.

"The Religion of Ancient Egypt" Sayce. A. H.

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EPILOGUE

Egyptian works of art have been spoken of as subtle, delicate, and refined; but these are not characteristic examples. "Subtlety, an exquisite quality, one of the ultimate qualities, is nevertheless closely allied to weakness, and the sustained effort to express it is apt to prove injurious to the artist."¹ In the characteristic work of the Egyptians, however, one never detects a hint of the failing of some of the American and Japanese painters, the former striving after the delicate, the refined and subtle, often approximated effeminacy, while the latter "preoccupied with half-tints and febrile lines, came dangerously near producing the merely pretty."² The Egyptian work is before all else, a powerful, bold, simple art, often reflecting a grand ruthless brutality, like that in the great English dramatists. Simplicity is the loftiest factor discernible in Egyptian art, and they achieved this merit with a triumph almost unrivalled by other races. One might say that simplicity is the noblest of all artistic qualities, for by this, the great painters and sculptors of Egypt attained the maximum of expression with the minimum of means. "But simplicity, like subtlety, has its concomitant danger, for what is very simple is apt to be deficient in mystery, so essential an item in a vital work of art. Yet here again, the Egyptian is victorious; he has adroitly evaded the peril of baldness. The Egyptian sculptors, in producing a portrait, always adumbrates the character of his sitter, itself a mysterious quality, and there is in a host of Egyptian works of art, a curious sense of infinity, a suggestion of the eternal riddle of the universe. They are the most mysterious works ever wrought by man, some seeming verily eloquent of silence and a strange mood of awe."³

^{1, 2, 3} "Myths & Legends of Ancient Egypt" Spence Lewis

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