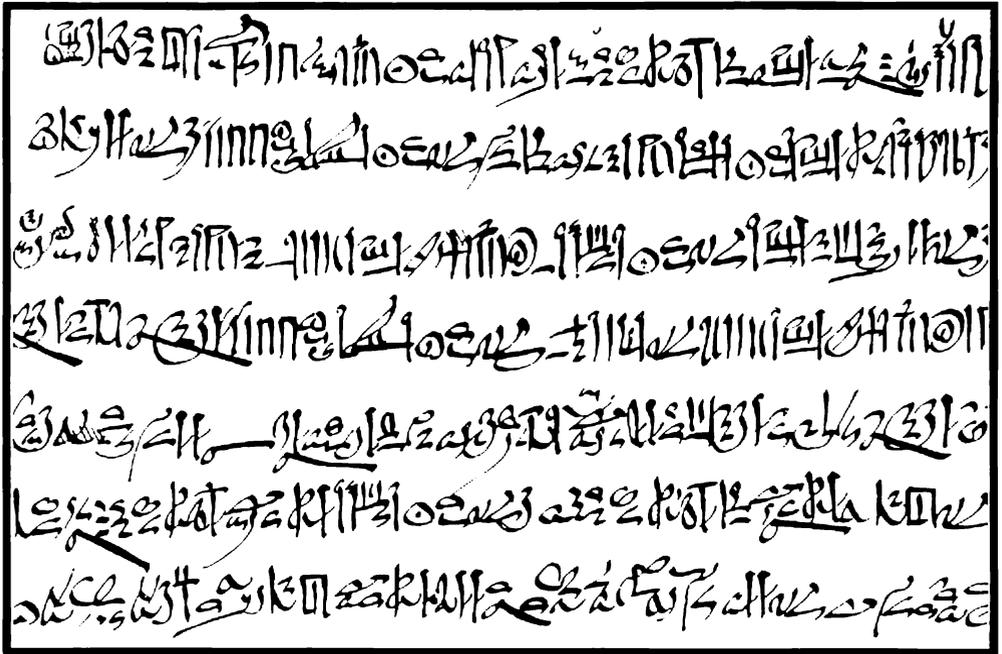


# ANCIENT EGYPTIAN LITERATURE

Volume II: The New Kingdom



MIRIAM LICHTHEIM

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## *Brief Chronology of the New Kingdom*

Dynasties 18-20, ca. 1550-1080 B.C.

<b>Eighteenth Dynasty</b>	ca. 1550-1305
Nebpehtire Ahmose	
Djeserkare Amenhotep I	
Aakheperkare Thutmose I	(1506-1494)
Aakheperenre Thutmose II	
Makare Hatshepsut	
Menkheperre Thutmose III	(1468-1438)
Aakheprure Amenhotep II	
Menkheprure Thutmose IV	
Nebmare Amenhotep III	
Neferkheprure Amenhotep IV Akhenaten	(1365-1349)
Nebkheprure Tutankhamun	
Kheperkheprure Ay	
Djeserkheprure Haremhab	
<b>Nineteenth Dynasty</b>	ca. 1305-1195
Menmare Seti I	
Usermare-sotpenre Ramses II	(1290-1224)
Banere-meramun Merneptah	
<b>Twentieth Dynasty</b>	ca. 1195-1080
Usermare-meramun Ramses III	
Usermare-sekheperenre Ramses V	
Neferkare-sotpenre Ramses IX	
Menmare-sotpenptah Ramses XI	(1110-1080)

Note: Only kings named in the texts or notes of this volume are listed here, and only a few regnal dates are given to serve as guideposts.

## Abbreviations and Symbols

- AEO** A. H. Gardiner. *Ancient Egyptian Onomastica*. 3 vols. Oxford, 1947.
- AJSL** *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*.
- ANET** *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. J. B. Pritchard. Princeton, 1950; 2d ed., 1955; 3d ed., 1969.
- ASAE** *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte*.
- BAR** J. H. Breasted. *Ancient Records of Egypt*. 5 vols. Chicago, 1906-1907. Reprint New York, 1962.
- Bibliothèque d'étude** Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire. Bibliothèque d'étude.
- BIFAO** *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*.
- Bonnet, RÂRG** H. Bonnet. *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*. Berlin, 1952.
- Brunner-Traut, Märchen** E. Brunner-Traut. *Altägyptische Märchen*. Dusseldorf and Cologne, 1963. 2d ed., 1965.
- Caminos, LEM** R. A. Caminos. *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*. Brown Egyptological Studies, 1. London, 1954.
- CdE** *Chronique d'Égypte*.
- CRAIBL** *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres*.
- Davies, Amarna** N. de G. Davies. *The Rock Tombs of El Amarna*. 6 parts. Egypt Exploration Society, Archaeological Survey, 13-18. London, 1903-1908.
- Edel, Inschriften** E. Edel. *Zu den Inschriften auf den Jahreszeitenreliefs der "Weltkammer" aus dem Sonnenheiligtum des Niuserre*. Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen. Phil.-hist. Kl., 1961 no. 8 and 1963 nos. 4-5. Göttingen, 1961-1964.
- Erman, Literature** A. Erman. *The Literature of the Ancient Egyptians*, trans. into English by A. M. Blackman. London, 1927. Reprint New York, 1966 as *The Ancient Egyptians; A Sourcebook of Their Writings*.

- Erman,  
*Denksteine* A. Erman. *Denksteine aus der thebanischen Gräberstadt*. Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl., 1911, No. 49, pp. 1086-1110 and pl. 16. Berlin, 1911.
- Fecht,  
*Zeugnisse* C. Fecht, *Literarische Zeugnisse zur "Persönlichen Frömmigkeit" in Ägypten*. Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften. Phil.-hist. Kl., 1965 no. 1. Heidelberg, 1965.
- Galling  
*Festschrift* *Archäologie und Altes Testament: Festschrift für Kurt Galling zum 8. Januar 1970*, ed. A. Kuschke and E. Kutsch. Tübingen, 1970.
- Galling,  
*Textbuch* *Textbuch zur Geschichte Israels*, ed. K. Galling. 2d ed., Tübingen, 1968.
- Gardiner,  
*Chester Beatty I* A. H. Gardiner. *The Library of A. Chester Beatty . . . The Chester Beatty Papyri, No. 1*. London, 1931.
- Gardiner,  
*Egypt* A. H. Gardiner. *Egypt of the Pharaohs*. Oxford, 1961.
- Gardiner,  
*Grammar* A. H. Gardiner. *Egyptian Grammar*. Oxford, 1927; 3d ed., 1957.
- Gardiner,  
*Hieratic Papyri* A. H. Gardiner. *Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum, Third Series: Chester Beatty Gift*. 2 vols. London, 1935.
- Gardiner,  
*LEM* A. H. Gardiner. *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca, 7. Brussels, 1937.
- Gardiner,  
*LES* A. H. Gardiner. *Late-Egyptian Stories*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca, 1. Brussels, 1932.
- Gilbert,  
*Poésie* P. Gilbert. *La Poésie égyptienne*. 2d ed., Brussels, 1949.
- Helck,  
*Übersetzung* W. Helck. *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie: Übersetzungen zu den Heften 17-22*. Berlin, 1961.
- Hieroglyphic Texts* British Museum. *Hieroglyphic Texts from Egyptian Stelae etc.* 2d ed., London, 1961—.
- JARCE *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt.*
- JEA *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.*
- JNES *Journal of Near Eastern Studies.*
- Kitchen,  
*Inscriptions* K. A. Kitchen. *Ramesside Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical*. Oxford, 1969—.
- LD R. Lepsius. *Denkmaeler aus Aegypten und Aethiopien*. 12 vols. Berlin, 1849-1856.
- Lefebvre,  
*Romans* G. Lefebvre. *Romans et contes égyptiens de l'époque pharaonique*. Paris, 1949.
- MDIK *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo.*

- Mélanges*  
*Maspero I*  
 Möller,  
*Lesestücke*  
 Müller,  
*Liebespoesie*  
 OLZ  
 Pierret,  
*Recueil*  
 PM  
 Posener,  
*Ostr. hiér.*  
 PSBA  
 RdE  
 RT  
 Sagesses  
 Sandman,  
*Akhenaten*  
 Schott  
*Festschrift*  
 Schott,  
*Liebeslieder*  
 Simpson,  
*Literature*  
 Unter-  
 suchungen  
*Urk. IV*  
*Urk. deutsch*  
 Wb.  
 Wilson  
*Festschrift*
- Orient Ancien*. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire. Mémoires, 66. Cairo, 1934-1938.  
 G. Möller. *Hieratische Lesestücke für den akademischen Gebrauch*. 3 fascicles. Berlin, 1927. Reprint, 1961.  
 W. M. Müller. *Die Liebespoesie der alten Ägypter*. Leipzig, 1899.  
*Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*.  
 P. Pierret, *Recueil d'inscriptions inédites du Musée Égyptien du Louvre*. 2 vols. Paris, 1874-1878.  
*Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, by B. Porter and R. L. B. Moss. 7 vols. Oxford, 1927-1951. 2d ed., 1960—.  
 G. Posener. *Catalogue des ostraca hiératiques littéraires de Deir el Médineh*. 2 vols. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire. Documents de fouilles, 1 and 18. Cairo, 1935-1972.  
*Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*.  
*Revue d'Égyptologie*.  
*Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes*.  
*Les Sagesses du proche-orient ancien*. Colloque de Strasbourg 17-19 mai 1962. Paris, 1963.  
 M. Sandman. *Texts from the Time of Akhenaten*. Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca, 8. Brussels, 1938.  
*Festschrift für Siegfried Schott zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, ed. W. Schenkel. Wiesbaden, 1968.  
 S. Schott. *Altägyptische Liebeslieder, mit Märchen und Liebesgeschichten*. Zurich, 1950.  
*The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Instructions, and Poetry*, ed. W. K. Simpson, with translations by R. O. Faulkner, E. F. Wente, Jr., and W. K. Simpson. New Haven, 1972. 2d ed., 1973.  
 Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens.  
*Urkunden des ägyptischen Altertums, Abteilung IV: Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, ed. K. Sethe and W. Helck. Fascicles 1-22. Leipzig and Berlin, 1906-1958.  
*Urkunden der 18. Dynastie, I*, bearbeitet und übersetzt von K. Sethe. Leipzig, 1914.  
*Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*, ed. A. Erman and H. Grapow. 7 vols. Leipzig, 1926-1963.  
*Studies in Honor of John A. Wilson*. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, 35. Chicago, 1969.

ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie.</i>
ZÄS	<i>Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde.</i>
ZDPV	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins.</i>

Half brackets [ ] are used instead of question marks to signify doubt.

Square brackets [] enclose restorations.

Angle brackets < > enclose words omitted by the scribe.

Parentheses ( ) enclose additions in the English translations.

A row of three dots . . . indicates the omission in the English translation of one or two words. A row of six dots . . . . . indicates a longer omission.

A row of three dashes --- indicates a short lacuna in the text. A row of six dashes ----- indicates a lengthy lacuna.

## *Introduction*

## *Continuity and Change*

The military campaigns of King Ahmose drove the Hyksos from the soil of Egypt, reunited the nation under a strong dynasty, and set in motion an expansionist policy of foreign conquests.

With the Hyksos expelled and Lower Nubia reconquered, King Amenhotep I devoted himself to the building of the new capital city, Thebes, and to its westbank where a vast necropolis of splendidly decorated rock-tombs began to rise. His successor, Thutmose I, embarked on far-flung conquests. In the south he passed beyond the strongly fortified border of the second cataract and campaigned in Upper Nubia. In the east he traversed Palestine and Syria and set his stelae on the shore of the Euphrates, thus claiming all of Syria for Egypt. His son, Thutmose II, campaigned in Nubia and Palestine, but his early death put a temporary stop to military activity.

The widow of Thutmose II, Queen Hatshepsut, after first ruling as regent for her young nephew, the future Thutmose III, took the crown in her own name; and for two decades this energetic woman, who legitimized her rule by claiming the god Amun as her father, reigned peacefully and splendidly. The architecture and art of her time are unexcelled in their elegance and good taste.

At her death, Thutmose III, so long held back from the throne, took his revenge by defacing and overturning her monuments and by usurping the twenty-one years of her reign in the dating of his records. When he came to the throne, Egypt's Asiatic possessions were threatened by an alliance between the rising kingdom of Mitanni and the princes of Palestinian and Syrian city-states led by the prince of Kadesh. Thus, in the very first year of his rule, he mounted a rapid campaign in Palestine which resulted in the defeat of the hostile coalition and the capture of the fortified city of Megiddo. Thereafter, over the next twenty years, Thutmose III conducted sixteen Syrian campaigns in which he twice sacked the city of Kadesh and even crossed the Euphrates, thus reaching into the heartland of Mitanni. In the south he extended Egypt's border to the town of Napata on the fourth cataract. The conquests were secured by an effective administration. Foreign princes were brought to Egypt for their education. Asiatic rulers who proved loyal were allowed to retain their terri-

tories. Egyptian garrisons held the strategically important towns, and Egyptian clerks turned the wheels of government abroad. Building activities at Thebes and elsewhere reached an unprecedented scale. Nubian gold, and goods imported from the empire, combined with the sheer inexhaustible output of Egypt's workshops, created a golden age of wealth and luxury.

The splendid reign of the great empire builder was followed by the strong rule of his son, Amenhotep II, who effectively defended the empire his father had created. In the reign of his son, Thutmose IV, the long struggle against Mitanni was resolved by peace, alliance, and the entrance of a Mitannian princess into the harem of the pharaoh, the alliance being designed to stem the forward march of the Hittites.

Luxurious living in a setting of peace reached its climax in the reign of Amenhotep III. This king never set foot in his Asiatic empire. Instead he acquired Mitannian, Babylonian, and other Asiatic princesses for his harem and lavished gold on his allies. Furthermore, he strove to surpass his predecessors in the number, size, and splendor of his buildings.

The age of empire meant more than power, wealth, and refined luxury. It fostered a broadening of the intellectual horizon. The sense of superiority over foreigners, while not abandoned, was mitigated by curiosity and tolerance. The scribes who ran the administration prided themselves on their knowledge of foreign places and peoples; and foreigners who had settled in Egypt could rise to high office. The royal archive found in the ruins of El Amarna revealed that Kings Amenhotep III and IV corresponded in Akkadian with Asiatic rulers. Hence many Egyptian scribes had to be bilingual; and it was fashionable to show off one's knowledge of foreign languages. Thus, in due course, numerous Semitic loanwords entered the Egyptian vocabulary.

Religious thinking was especially affected by the new internationalism. The great gods of Egypt became gods for all mankind. And this universalism allied itself to the growing tendency of viewing all gods as manifestations of the sun-god.

Amenhotep IV thought the consequences of religious universalism through to their ultimate conclusion: the sun-god who ruled the universe and all mankind was not only supreme; he was the sole god. There were no other gods beside him. This revolutionary conclusion threw the nation into turmoil; and as soon as the king had died, the offensive doctrine was swept away. But though monotheism had been defeated the universalist tendency remained alive.

The second half of the New Kingdom, the age of the Ramesside kings, brought a renewed struggle for the control of Palestine and Syria, where Egypt's hegemony was threatened by Hittite expansion

and the ambitions of local rulers. Seti I and Ramses II campaigned vigorously and preserved the empire; and eventually the Hittite enemy became an ally. In his sixty-six years of reign, Ramses II broke all records in the quantity and size of his monuments. The taste for the colossal, already manifest under Amenhotep III, reached its climax. In literature too the Ramesside age was enormously prolific.

In the reign of Merneptah, the Indo-European "sea peoples" swept into the Near East and, allied with the Libyans, made a vigorous attempt to invade the Nile valley. They were beaten back, reappeared several decades later, and were again prevented from entering Egypt, this time by Pharaoh Ramses III, the last great king of the New Kingdom. But though they failed to gain Egypt, their sweep through the Near East broke the strength of the Hittites and contributed to the rise of new powers. Thus, after the death of Ramses III, Egypt lost its foreign possessions and was, moreover, weakened by internal conflicts and maladministration.

In the second half of the Twentieth Dynasty an economic decline became manifest. Workmen who had not obtained their rations went on strike. Royal tombs were looted and their valuables sold for bread. A succession of kings appeared unable to rule effectively. In the end, Ramses XI, the last of the Ramesside line, had to share the rule of Upper Egypt with Herihor, the high priest of Amun, and in the Delta with the regent Smendes. When the Theban official Wenamun undertook his journey to Byblos to buy timber on behalf of his master Herihor, the prince of Byblos, no longer a vassal of Egypt, received him with scorn. The age of empire was over.

The texts included in this volume illustrate the principal themes of the age. *The Autobiography of Ahmose Son of Abana* continues the ancient genre autobiography and is also the most important surviving source for the war against the Hyksos. It depicts the well-lived life, the life of service and material rewards. The *Prayers of Pakeri*, on the other hand, sum up the expectations for a blessed afterlife. The text known as the *Installation of the Vizier* sets out the obligations and honors of the highest official in the land.

The royal monumental inscriptions enlarge upon such early prototypes as the building inscription and the annalistic historical account. Annalistic historiography reaches its full flowering in the *Annals of Thutmose III*. The hymn of victory on the *Poetical Stela of Thutmose III* proclaims imperial dominion in a poem of beautiful craftsmanship. The *Sphinx Stela of Amenhotep II* manifests the king's pride in his physical prowess. The *Building Inscriptions of Amenhotep III* reflect that king's love of architectural magnificence. In his *Boundary Stelae* at El Amarna Amenhotep IV consecrates his new city to the worship of the sole god, while the *Dedication Inscriptions of Seti I* breathe traditional

piety and the spirit of restoration. Thus the basic types of royal inscriptions appear enlarged and diversified, and the themes are characteristic of the imperial age.

The *Kadesh Battle Inscriptions of Ramses II* break new ground in literary form; for the long section of the inscriptions known as *The Poem* is a *narrative poem*, an epic, and the first of its kind in Egypt. Heretofore poetry had served to celebrate and to instruct; it had not aimed at narration. The *Poetical Stela of Merneptah* is a second example of this new form of poetry.

The *hymns to the gods* are another genre in which the New Kingdom built on foundations of the Middle Kingdom and went beyond them. The hymns are found in great quantity both in the monumental context and on papyrus, and they mirror the trends of New Kingdom religiosity, in particular the evolution from an immanent view of the gods to a transcendent one. Transcendence and universalism go hand in hand: the transcendent god is truly the god of all. And though remote, he is accessible to the pious individual. Thus the elaborate hymns that come from the cultic context stand side by side with the short hymns and prayers of humble individuals.

It seems that the death of Osiris at the hands of Seth was viewed as a mystery too awesome and sacred to be narrated in detail. It could only be alluded to; and the most elaborate allusions to the fate of Osiris occur in the *Great Hymn to Osiris*, recorded on the stela of the official Amenmose.

The largest number of hymns are addressed to the sun-god in his several manifestations. The two long *Hymns to the Sun-God* of the brothers Suti and Hor show the widened universalist conception of sun worship and also the inclusion of the sun disk, the Aten, among the manifestations of the sun-god. This was the point that the worship of the Aten as a distinct deity had reached in the time of Amenhotep III.

The *Great Hymn to the Aten* recorded in the tomb of the courtier Ay presents in pure form the doctrine of the sole god worked out by Amenhotep IV Akhenaten. The king had taught it to his followers, and it is only through their hymns and prayers, carved in their tombs at El Amarna, that his monotheistic teaching has reached us. The Great Hymn and the shorter hymns and prayers in the Amarna tombs show how completely the doctrine of the one god had been enforced at Amarna. In recording their hopes for a blessed afterlife, the courtiers could no longer turn to Osiris and related comforting beliefs. Only the king, the son of the Aten, remained as guarantor of their survival.

From the workmen's village of Deir el-Medina come the *Penitential Hymns*, which express the personal piety so characteristic of the New

Kingdom. The same piety informs the short hymns and prayers, written on papyrus, which were transmitted as models to be used in schools. Individualism, inwardness, and humility characterize this piety which had evolved from the more social and cultic religiosity of the earlier periods.

The same inwardness underlies the *Instruction of Amenemope*. Here too the old values have undergone subtle changes. Life is still governed by *Maat*, the divine order; and as ever success depends on living in accord with *Maat*. But success is no longer described in terms of material rewards. The ideal man now is modest in status, and he is humble toward gods and men.

Continuity and change also characterize the *Mortuary Literature* of the New Kingdom. The *Book of the Dead* is a reworking and expansion of the Middle Kingdom *Coffin Texts*. Instead of being inscribed on coffins, the spells are now written on papyrus scrolls, grouped into chapters, and accompanied by vignettes. In addition, the scribes of the New Kingdom composed new works that were designed as "guides to the beyond." These works are only marginally "literature" and, moreover, they do not lend themselves to presentation in excerpts. Hence only the Book of the Dead is included here in a small sampling. Its most famous part, chapter 125, the judgment of the dead, mixes ancient and honorable moral values with the sorcerer's magic. Morality and magic, seemingly incompatible, were often linked in Egyptian thought and are here closely joined.

In the New Kingdom the education and training of scribes was much expanded and systematized, and the genre known as *School Texts* has no counterpart in the earlier periods. Since a large variety of compositions were used as models for instruction, the term "school texts" embraces a miscellany of works, including documents taken from archives. Within this variety, certain compositions are school texts in the specific sense of coming from the milieu of the schools and reflecting the student-teacher relationship. When such texts were strung together to make a book, we have a regular "school book," of which *Papyrus Lansing* is an example. More commonly, a papyrus roll contains a variety of compositions that are independent of each other. In one such medley, *Papyrus Chester Beatty IV*, there appears a short text in which a scribe lists some famous authors of the past and draws the astonishingly skeptical conclusion that the only immortality a man can expect is the immortality of the written word.

Lyric poetry was well developed in the Middle Kingdom; but *Love Lyrics* seem to be a creation of the New Kingdom. At least, no love poems older than the New Kingdom have come to light. The love poems are misunderstood if they are thought to be naïve and artless. For they are rich in elaborate wordplays, metaphors, and rare words

and thereby indicate that they are crafted with deliberation and literate skill. The actual situations of life from which the poems may have arisen are concealed from our view. We do not know enough about the position of women, especially of young unmarried girls, to know how to interpret the free relations of the lovers that are depicted in so many of the poems.

The genre *Tales* was of course well developed in the Middle Kingdom. The New Kingdom adds new motifs, greater length and complexity, and broader horizons. The *Report of Wenamun*, though included among the tales, stands apart, since it is probably based on an actual report. Even if it is a work of fiction, the incidents are all in the realm of the possible, and the historical background is real.

We have seen continuity with the earlier periods in terms of the principal literary categories: private autobiographies, royal historical inscriptions, hymns and prayers, instructions, mortuary spells, and tales. The New Kingdom broadened the genres and added new themes, attitudes, and motifs. It also created two new genres: school texts and love lyrics.

As before, my translations are based on the conviction that the Egyptian authors worked in three styles: prose, poetry, and an intermediate style which I have termed symmetrically structured speech, or, orational style. The New Kingdom adds a new variety: the narrative poem. Thus, Egyptian poetry as a whole might be subdivided into hymnic, lyric, didactic, and narrative. It goes without saying that all our literary categorization is tentative. For after a century and a half of study, the contemporary scholar's understanding of the language and literature of ancient Egypt remains imperfect, incomplete, and subject to diverging views.

"Le temps conserve de préférence ce qui est un peu sec." This remark by Jacques Chardonne, quoted in the preface of Iris Origo's anthology *The Vagabond Path*, seems eminently applicable to the literature of ancient Egypt. Having been physically preserved by the dry sands of the desert, these ancient works endure by virtue of their sober strength. Even at their most lyrical, as in the love poems, the writings are never cloying or sentimental. Up to the end of the New Kingdom, the literature mirrors a society whose members lived in harmony with themselves and with nature. The cares of life could be met with confidence, for the gods ruled the world firmly and justly. Life was both hard and good.

PART ONE

*Monumental Inscriptions*

## I. *Inscriptions from Private Tombs*

The three tomb inscriptions in this section are major representatives of their kind. The *Autobiography of Ahmose son of Abana* continues the traditional genre of tomb autobiography. Its special interest is historical, for it furnishes the principal account of the expulsion of the Hyksos. It is a wholly martial autobiography that describes the actions and career of a soldier. As such it is a rarity among Egyptian autobiographies, for most of them came from members of the civilian bureaucracy.

Ahmose began his career as a soldier on board a ship, stepping into the position that his father had held. Having come to the attention of King Ahmose, he was transferred to the north, where he saw action in the decisive battles against the Hyksos, first at Avaris and subsequently at Sharuhén in Palestine. Then he participated in the Nubian campaigns of Kings Amenhotep I and Thutmose I, where he so distinguished himself that he was promoted to the rank of commander of a crew and given substantial landholdings in his home town Nekheb, modern El-Kab. Finally he took part in the Syrian campaign of Thutmose I in which the king reached the Euphrates. Thus risen from the ranks, he was able to bequeath wealth to his descendants and to found a family which reached the upper echelons of the civil service. His son Iturri and his grandson Paheri became tutors of the king's sons, and Paheri attained the post of mayor of Nekheb and Iunyt. The style of the autobiography is simple, straightforward, and unadorned.

The grandson *Paheri*, whose career probably began under Thutmose I, built for himself the handsomest of the known tombs of El-Kab. In addition to being mayor of two towns, he was "scribe of the grain accounts" for an area extending north as far as Dendera. The fine reliefs in his tomb show him overseeing the various agricultural activities that were in his charge. His tomb does not contain an autobiographical prose narration. Instead he had the rear wall of the main hall inscribed with elaborate prayers and a recital of his virtues, the whole composition designed to help attain a blessed afterlife envisaged in considerable detail. This vision contains many of the features that were incorporated in the spells of the Book of the Dead.

The highest official of the state was the vizier. His duties were so important and so numerous that he was installed by the king in person, in a public ceremony in which the king gave him a formal charge. The text of this charge was inscribed on a wall of the sumptuous tomb of the *Vizier Rekhmire*, who served King Thutmose III. The same text with variants appears in two other Theban tombs of viziers of the Eighteenth Dynasty. The king's speech is composed in the orational style.

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AHMOSE SON OF ABANA

In his Tomb at El-Kab

The inscription is carved in two parts: lines 1-31 on the right-hand wall of the hall of the rock-tomb (east wall), and lines 32-40 on the left side of the door wall (south wall). Also on the right-hand wall is the standing relief figure of Ahmose accompanied by the small figure of his grandson Paheri.

A list of Ahmose's landholdings and slaves, not translated here, is inscribed on the right side of the door wall.

Publication: LD III, 12, b-d. V. Loret, *L'inscription d'Ahmès fils d'Abana*, Bibliothèque d'étude, 3 (Cairo, 1910). *Urk. IV*, 1-11.

Translation: BAR, II, §§ 1-16, 38-39, 78-82. *Urk. deutsch*, pp. 1-6. B. Gunn and A. H. Gardiner, *JEA*, 5 (1918), 48-54. J. A. Wilson in *ANET*, pp. 233-234 (excerpts).

Historical study: C. Vandersleyen, *Les Guerres d'Amosis, fondateur de la XVIIIe dynastie*, Monographies Reine Élisabeth, I (Brussels, 1971), pp. 17-87. For additional references see PM V, 182 and Vandersleyen, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-21.

(1) The Crew Commander Ahmose son of Abana,<sup>1</sup> the justified; he says. I speak to you, all people. I let you know what favors came to me. I have been rewarded with gold seven times in the sight of the whole land, with male and female slaves as well. I have been endowed with very many fields. The name of the brave man is in that which he has done; it will not perish in the land forever.<sup>2</sup>

He speaks as follows. I grew up in the town of Nekheb,<sup>3</sup> my father being a soldier of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Seqenenre,<sup>4</sup> the justified. Baba (5) son of Reonet was his name. I became a soldier in his stead on the ship "The Wild Bull" in the time of the Lord of the Two Lands, Nebpehtire,<sup>5</sup> the justified. I was a youth who had not married; I slept in . . .<sup>6</sup>

*Expulsion of the Hyksos*

Now when I had established a household,<sup>7</sup> I was taken to the ship "Northern," because I was brave. I followed the sovereign on foot when he rode about on his chariot. When the town of Avaris was besieged, I fought bravely on foot in his majesty's presence.<sup>8</sup> Thereupon I was appointed to the ship "Rising in Memphis." Then there was fighting on the water in "Pjedku" of Avaris. I made a seizure (10) and carried off a hand.<sup>9</sup> When it was reported to the royal herald the gold of valor was given to me.

Then they fought again in this place; I again made a seizure there and carried off a hand. Then I was given the gold of valor once again.

Then there was fighting in Egypt to the south of this town, and I carried off a man as a living captive. I went down into the water—for he was captured on the city side—and crossed the water carrying him.

When it was reported to the royal herald I was rewarded with gold once more. Then Avaris was despoiled, and I brought spoil from there: one man, three women: total, four persons.<sup>10</sup> His majesty gave them to me as slaves.

(15) Then Sharuhén was besieged for three years. His majesty despoiled it and I brought spoil from it: two women and a hand. Then the gold of valor was given me, and my captives were given to me as slaves.

*Nubian campaign of King Ahmose*

Now when his majesty had slain the nomads of Asia, he sailed south to Khent-hen-nefer,<sup>11</sup> to destroy the Nubian Bowmen. His majesty made a great slaughter among them, and I brought spoil from there: two living men and three hands. Then I was rewarded with gold once again, and two female slaves were given to me.<sup>12</sup> His majesty journeyed north, his heart rejoicing in valor and victory. He had conquered southerners, northerners.

*Destruction of the rebels Aata and Tetian*

Then Aata came to the South.<sup>13</sup> (20) His fate brought on his doom. The gods of Upper Egypt grasped him. He was found by his majesty at Tent-taa.<sup>14</sup> His majesty carried him off as a living captive, and all his people as booty. I brought two young warriors<sup>15</sup> as captives from the ship of Aata. Then I was given five persons and portions of land amounting to five arurae in my town. The same was done for the whole crew.

Then came that foe named Tetian.<sup>16</sup> He had gathered the malcontents to himself. His majesty slew him; his troop was wiped out. Then I was given three persons and five arurae of land in my town.

*Nubian campaign of King Amenhotep I*

Then I conveyed King Djeserkare,<sup>17</sup> the justified, when he sailed north to Kush, to enlarge (25) the borders of Egypt. His majesty wrote that Nubian Bowman in the midst of his army. They were carried off in fetters, none missing, the fleeing destroyed as if they had never been. Now I was in the van of our troops and I fought really well. His majesty saw my valor. I carried off two hands and presented them to his majesty. Then his people and his cattle were pursued, and I carried off a living captive and presented him to his majesty.

I brought his majesty back to Egypt in two days from "Upper Well," and was rewarded with gold. I brought back two female slaves as