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The History of Ancient Egypt

Professor Bob Brier
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Part IV



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The History of Ancient Egypt Part IV

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From 1981–1996 he was Chairman of the Philosophy Department at C.W. Post campus of Long Island University and now primarily teaches Egyptology courses. He was Director of the National Endowment for the Humanities' Egyptology Today Program and has twice been selected as a Fulbright Scholar. He is also the recipient of the David Newton Award for Teaching Excellence.

In 1994, Dr. Brier became the first person in 2,000 years to mummify a human cadaver in the ancient Egyptian style. This research was the subject of a National Geographic television special, *Mr. Mummy*. Dr. Brier is also the host of The Learning Channel's series *The Great Egyptians*.

Professor Brier is the author of *Ancient Egyptian Magic* (Morrow: 1980), *Egyptian Mummies* (Morrow: 1994), *Encyclopedia of Mummies* (Facts on File: 1998), *The Murder of Tutankhamen: A True Story* (Putnam's: 1998), *Daily Life in Ancient Egypt* (Greenwood: 1999), and numerous scholarly articles.

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The History of Ancient Egypt

Scope:

There is something about ancient Egypt that fascinates almost everyone. Egyptian exhibits at museums draw the largest crowds, mummy movies pull in the largest audiences, and Egypt attracts the most tourists. Part of the attraction is undoubtedly the exotic nature of the beast. Treasures hidden in tombs seem always just around the corner; hieroglyphs, while beautiful, seem impossible to read; and the beautiful sculptures and paintings seem from a time incredibly long ago. In a sense, one goal of this course is to demystify ancient Egypt but not to take the fun out of it.

As we learn more and more about Egypt, it will all become familiar. Students will have an idea of how hieroglyphs work and what they say; we will come to know how archaeologists, using scholarship and learning, search for undiscovered tombs; and we will learn the techniques used to create the art of ancient Egypt. But as we learn more and more, the student should become more and more amazed by the culture. What was created on the banks of the Nile was an event unique in human history. No civilization lasted so long, contributed so much, or repeatedly amazed as did ancient Egypt.

Because Egyptian history lasted so long, Egyptologists divide it into three periods called *Kingdoms*: (1) The Old Kingdom saw the beginnings of nationhood for Egypt under one supreme ruler, the pharaoh. During this period, the pyramids were built, and the rules of Egyptian art were established that would govern for 3,000 years. (2) The Middle Kingdom, a period of stabilizing after the Old Kingdom collapsed, saw a nation fighting to regain its greatness. (3) The New Kingdom, the glamour period of ancient Egypt, was when all the stars—Hatshepsut, Tutankhamen, Ramses the Great, and others—appeared.

We will chronologically survey the full 3,000 years of recorded ancient Egyptian history, emphasizing that the ancient Egyptians were people just like ourselves, motivated by the same fears, doubts, and hopes. By the end of the course, students should feel that they know the kings and queens who made Egypt great. As we study the different reigns, we will also discuss various aspects of Egyptian civilization so that you should learn far more than just the rulers of ancient Egypt. You should be able to walk through the Egyptian collection of a museum and tell when a statue was carved, have an idea which pharaoh it is by the way the face is carved, and perhaps even be able to read the hieroglyphs to discern the king's name. In short, I want to turn out "junior Egyptologists," people with a deep understanding of Egypt, for whom ancient artifacts will not all look the same.

To a great extent, the fun of history is in the details. Knowing what kind of wine Tutankhamen preferred makes him come alive. Knowing that Ramses the Great was crippled by arthritis for the last decade of his long life makes us more sympathetic to the boastful monarch who fathered more than one hundred

children. If we understand what it was like to be a miner sent to the turquoise mines in the Sinai in the summer, we will feel a kinship with our long dead counterparts. As we wind our way chronologically through thirty centuries of history, we will pause repeatedly to look at the details that make up the big picture.

The first five lectures will really be a prolegomena. We will see what Egypt was like before writing, and we will learn how Egyptologists piece together the history of ancient Egypt. We will see how we know what we know—how hieroglyphs were deciphered, for example—and we will see that since then, Egyptology has been one ongoing detective story.

In Lectures Six through Ten, we will see the Egyptians rise to a greatness far surpassing any other people in the Near East. We learn of a king who united Egypt by might and of a pharaoh who showed Egypt how to build the pyramids. While we see how the pyramids were built, we will learn just what it was that made Egypt great. At the end of these lectures, we will see Egypt collapse into a dark age about which little is known, and we will try to figure out what happened.

Lectures Eleven through Sixteen discuss Egypt's successful attempt to pull itself together, only to collapse once again. We see heroic kings from the south battle to unite the country and establish a peace that would last for two centuries—as long as the United States has existed. Then we will see Egypt invaded by the mysterious people called the Hyksos, only to watch as the kings of the south battle Egypt back to greatness. We will also look in detail at the Old Testament story of Joseph in Egypt to see what light it might shed on this period.

Lectures Seventeen through Twenty-Five deal with the fabulous Dynasty XVIII, the period of Egypt's greatest wealth and personalities. We will take in-depth looks at the kings and queens of this period. We will see Hatshepsut, the woman who ruled as king; Akhenaten, the first monotheist in history, who changed the religion of Egypt; and Tutankhamen, the son of Akhenaten, who became the most famous of Egypt's kings when his undisturbed tomb was discovered in 1922.

Lectures Twenty-Five through Twenty-Eight are a brief excursion into my specialty, mummies. We will talk about everything you ever wanted to know about mummies, including how to make one. We will also see that mummies are like books—packed with information—if you know how to read them.

Lectures Twenty-Nine through Thirty-Five focus on the end of the New Kingdom, the last great epoch of Egyptian history. Dominated by Ramses the Great, this period also had other important kings, and we will discuss who was the unnamed pharaoh of the Exodus.

In Lectures Thirty-Six through Forty-One, we will see Egypt's greatness slipping away. Egypt will be invaded by a series of conquering peoples, including

Nubians, Libyans, and Persians. It is a sad story, and we will examine the causes of Egypt's decline.

Egypt's last gasp is under the Greek kings, the Ptolemies. This period begins with the conquest of Alexander the Great and ends with Cleopatra. For two hundred years, once mighty Egypt is ruled by kings named Ptolemy, all descended from General Ptolemy who served under Alexander. In Lectures Forty-Two through Forty-Seven, we will trace what life was like for an Egyptian under the oppressive rule of their Greek masters.

It is a long and fascinating history, but the study of Egypt should not end with this course. There will be suggestions of how to continue learning about Egypt—societies to join, events to attend, books to read. The adventure should not end here.

Lecture Thirty-Seven

Dynasty XXII: Egypt United

Scope: Here we will see Egypt united, but by foreigners, the Libyans. Because they ruled from the Delta city of Bubastis, this dynasty is often called the Bubastite Dynasty. For 200 years—as long as the United States has existed—Egypt would be ruled by Libyans fighting to restore Egypt’s greatness. We will see Egypt’s involvement with the Biblical kingdoms of Judah and Israel. In the end, there will be a divided Egypt once more, not fighting internally but ruling independently.

Outline

- I. We have several sources of information for this dynasty.
 - A. French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette’s 1851 excavation of the Serapeum provided details of kings’ reigns.
 - B. Delta monuments, now mostly underground because of the high water table in the area, provide fragmentary clues.
 - C. The Bubastite Portal at Karnak tells of conquests by these kings and depicts bound captives with their towns of origin.
- II. Sheshonq I (945–924 BC) married the daughter of Psusennes II.
 - A. As commander-in-chief of all the army, he was called “Great Chief of the Meshwesh.”
 1. During this time, Libyan mercenaries were used in Egypt as a police force. As is often the case, when there’s turmoil, the military steps in.
 2. Sheshonq himself was likely the descendant of captives that Ramses III had brought back to Egypt. The Libyan mercenaries gradually became integrated into Egyptian society.
 - B. Sheshonq appointed sons to key positions to keep power in the family, as Sneferu of the Old Kingdom had done.
 1. Iuput was Sheshonq’s Governor of Upper Egypt, High Priest of Amun, and Commander-in-chief of Armies.
 2. Djedptahaufankh was Third Prophet of Amun.
 3. Nimlot was military commander at Herakleopolis, in middle Egypt.
 - C. Sheshonq launched a military campaign, mentioned in the Bible, after the death of Solomon in 930 BC.
 1. In Palestine, there were the divided kingdoms of Judah (under Solomon’s son, Rehoboam) and Israel (under Jeroboam I).
 2. Sheshonq (the Biblical Shishak) was bought off by Rehoboam (925 BC) and left Judah. One of the things he *wasn’t* given was the Ark of the Covenant.

3. He chased out Jeraboam and marched north to Megiddo, where he erected a stela, just as Tuthmosis III had done, claiming the land for his own.
 - D. He built on a grand scale, erecting the largest pylon at Karnak, on the river. You can still see the ramp used in building it.
 - E. He was buried at Tanis, but his tomb was plundered.
- III. Osorkon I (924–889 BC) was Sheshonq’s son.
- A. He gave 487,000 pounds of silver to the temples.
 - B. He appointed his son (Sheshonq II) as High Priest of Amun at Karnak.
 - C. He took Sheshonq II as coregent, but the son died before the father and was buried at Tanis.
- IV. Much of what we know about this dynasty is due to Pierre Montet, a French Egyptologist who excavated at Tanis.
- A. Montet believed Tanis was the Biblical “Peramses.”
 - B. In 1939 he found the tombs of the kings of Dynasties XXI and XXII. They had been buried in the precinct of the main temple of Amun.
 1. Hieroglyphs in one room revealed it was the tomb of Psusennes I, but the silver coffin with a falcon’s head contained a previously unknown king, Sheshonq II.
 2. In 1940, Montet found another chamber, sealed with a granite block that took six days to chip away. This was the tomb of Psusennes II.
 3. Montet opened another sealed room, on orders of King Farouk himself, to find the intact burial of Psusennes’s son Amenemope.
 - C. In 1946, Montet found another hidden chamber where he discovered the intact burial of Psusennes’s general.
 - D. Had these treasures not been found during World War II and published only in French, public fascination would have been enormous.
- V. Takelot I (889–874 BC) was the son of Osorkon I by a minor wife; little is known about him. He was succeeded by Osorkon II, who ruled from 874–850 BC.
- A. Osorkon’s cousin, Harsiese, High Priest at Karnak, declared himself King of the South (year 4)!
 - B. When Harsiese died, Osorkon II appointed one of his sons, Nimlot, to the office.
 - C. Assyria at this time was growing strong, moving into Syria. Egypt aligned itself with Byblos and Israel to stop Assyria at the Orontes River.

VI. Takelot II (850–825 BC) was the son of Osorkon II.

- A.** The great wealth of Egypt—her agriculture—was almost impossible to kill.
- B.** During Takelot’s reign, there was a stability of wealth that reflected Egypt’s power.
- C.** But his reign was also troubled by civil war. In one case, he killed the leaders of a rebellion and burned their bodies, denying them immortality.
- D.** A competing dynasty, XXIII, arose (year 8) in the central Delta town of Leontopolis and “ruled” in the Delta.

VII. Osorkon IV (730-715 BC) concluded the Bubastite Dynasty XXII. Thus, the unification brought by the Libyans ended in some divisiveness. But Egypt was soon to be reunited—from a surprising place.

Essential Reading:

Aidan Dodson, *Monarchs of the Nile*, Chapter XV.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 182–189.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. How did Libyans become kings of Egypt?
- 2. What connection is there between the Libyans and the Bible?

Lecture Thirty-Eight

Dynasties XXIV and XXV (747–656 BC): The Nubians Have Their Day

Scope: For two centuries, Egypt was ruled by Libyan kings, but now the Nubians had their turn. Nubians had been permitted to grow independent, with their leaders taking the title “pharaoh.” Because they were also devoted to Amun, in a sense Egypt was their spiritual home. We will see a warrior from the south (Kush) battle a confederation of Egyptian “kings” and unify Egypt once again.

Outline

- I. Nubia (Kush) was the source of gold and had been under the thumb of Egypt for a thousand years. But with troubles in Egypt, the Nubians had been allowed to grow independent. Piye (called “Piankhy”) (747–716 BC) ruled at Napata in Nubia.
 - A. With skilled bowmen, Piye marched north and fought a northern confederation (year 21) that included the following: Osorkon IV at Tanis (Dynasty XXII), Iuput at Leontopolis (Dynasty XXIII), Tefnakht at Sais (Dynasty XXIV), and Nimlot at Hermopolis. Piye won!
 - B. He celebrated the traditional Opet Festival at Thebes.
 - C. His victory stela was found at the Temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal (in Nubia), a unique monument.
 1. In the 1980s, Dr. Tim Kendall guessed that a rugged mountain outcropping in the form of a cobra had been sculpted by the Egyptians. He learned mountain-climbing techniques and went for a closer look.
 2. Kendall found the remains of nail holes and scaffolding at a place where a carved metal plaque had been attached.
 - D. Piye was most concerned about horses when he defeated the Egyptians. Finding the animals poorly cared for, he punished their masters.
 - E. He made his sister, Amenirdis I, Divine Adoratrice of Amun at Karnak, keeping power in the family.
 - F. He continued to rule from Napata, which is perhaps why he left regional rulers to control their own territories.
 - G. He was buried at el Kuru, a pyramid cemetery north of Gebel Barkal. These were steep, small pyramids, but still in an Egyptian style suggesting the Old Kingdom.
 1. Egyptian customs such as *ushabtis* and grave goods were continued.

2. Nubian burial customs were also incorporated. Piye was buried on a bed; his chariot and horses were buried in teams standing up.
- II. Shabaka (716–702 BC) succeeded his brother Piye, as was the Nubian custom.
 - A. The “Shabaka Stone,” also called the “Philosophy of a Memphite Priest,” describes the creation of the world in rather abstract terms—a unique document.
 - B. Shabaka built temples at Thebes, Memphis, and Abydos—the traditional centers of Egypt.
 - C. He too was buried at el Kuru in a pyramid.
 - III. Shibtiku (702–690 BC) was the nephew of Shabaka and son of Piye.
 - A. His daughter, Shepenwepet II, was appointed Divine Adoratrice of Amun to replace her mother.
 - B. Meanwhile, Assyria under Sennacherib was growing very strong.
 - IV. A new hero, Taharqa (690–664 BC), was the brother of Shibtiku.
 - A. He built everywhere, but only the Taharqa Pillar at Karnak remains.
 - B. He battled the Assyrians at Judea.
 1. The Bible (Kings) says the Angel of the Lord slew many Assyrians the night before the battle.
 2. Herodotus says that on the night before the battle, mice ate the bowstrings of the Assyrians, forcing them to retreat.
 - C. Sennacherib was assassinated, and his son Esarhaddon replaced him as king of Assyria.
 - D. Taharqa defeated Esarhaddon at Ashkelon (year 17) but lost at Memphis (year 19) and had to flee to Thebes.
 - E. There was rebellion in the north as soon as Ashurbanipal, the new Assyrian king, left Egypt. He returned and executed all nobles except Necho.
 - F. Taharqa fled to Napata, and Ashurbanipal now controlled Thebes.
 - V. Tanuatamun (664–656 BC), Taharqa’s cousin, became coregent and later ruled on his own.
 - A. He entered Egypt to fight Ashurbanipal and got as far as Memphis, but after a defeat, he retreated to Kush.
 - B. Thebes was sacked and its were treasures looted. The Assyrians now controlled all of Egypt.

- VI.** The Nubian presence in Egypt has been the source of much controversy of late. “Afrocentrism” is the recent theory that holds that more of Western civilization is derived from Africa (Egypt) than is generally acknowledged.
- A.** The ancient Greek tradition (Herodotus) said Greece learned it all from Egypt.
 - 1. Building in stone began in Egypt.
 - 2. The Greek gods came from Egypt.
 - 3. Greek philosophy is perhaps derived from Egypt.
 - B.** The nineteenth-century classicists said that the ancient Greeks were mistaken about their heritage. Greek mathematicians, for example, didn’t study in Egypt. But there’s no question that much of Greek culture did derive from the land of the pharaohs.
- VII.** The question arises: Were the Egyptians black? One argument is that Africans are black; Egypt is in Africa; therefore, all Egyptians are black. The only part of that argument that is true is that Egypt is part of Africa.
- A.** Politically, we are supposed to see people in black and white. But there are no pure races; people come in all shades.
 - B.** The Egyptians saw themselves as different from sub-Saharan peoples, including Nubians.
 - 1. Tomb walls show Nubians with clearly different features.
 - 2. Maiherpri’s Book of the Dead clearly reveals him to be black.
 - C.** Afrocentrics claim that the “black” noses of Egyptian statues were knocked off by early Egyptologists. There may have been racists among early Egyptologists, but the statues were found that way in the first place.
 - D.** Those interested in black pride should look for inspiration to the Nubian kings, sub-Saharan warriors who conquered all of Egypt.

Essential Reading:

Aidan Dodson, *Monarchs of the Nile*, Chapter XVI.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 190–193.

Questions to Consider:

- 1. How did the Nubians view themselves in relation to the Egyptians?
- 2. What did the Nubian kings hope to achieve in Egypt?

Lecture Thirty-Nine

Dynasty XXVI (664–525 BC): The Saite Period

Scope: At the end of the last dynasty, we saw Egypt dominated by Assyrians. Here we will see three distinct periods: (1) Egypt under Assyrian control, (2) Egypt free of Assyrians, and (3) Egypt threatened by a new menace, Babylon. We will also see a phenomenon unique to this dynasty: *archaizing*. As if they knew it was Egypt's last gasp, the pharaohs of this dynasty looked back to the Old Kingdom for inspiration in art and language. Sculptures created in this period look like statues from 1,500 years earlier; language used archaic phrases. These kings were living in the past.

Outline

- I. Necho I (665–664 BC) was placed on the throne by Ashurbanipal as his vassal.
- II. Psamtik I (664–610 BC) was the son and successor of Necho I. So began a stable period of succession.
 - A. Psamtik was told by the Assyrians to control the Egyptians. He sent Nitocris, his daughter, to Thebes as Divine Adoratrice of Amun.
 - B. He increased the Egyptian army by using mercenaries from the Mediterranean, many of them Greek.
 - C. Naucratis became a great Greek city in the Delta with temples to the Greek gods.
 - D. During this period, many Jews settled in Elephantine at Aswan.
 - E. In the twelfth year of his reign, Psamtik I ousted the Assyrians, who were having internal problems. The Assyrian domination was over.
 - F. *Archaizing*, or living in the past, was an attempt to regain the “good old days” during this period.
- III. Necho II (610–595 BC), the son of Psamtik, looked outward to other nations.
 - A. He recaptured Palestine, as mentioned in the Second Book of Kings.
 - B. He enlisted Greeks to form an Egyptian navy.
 - C. He dug a “Suez Canal” from a branch of the Nile to the Red Sea.
- IV. Psamtik II (595–589 BC) was Necho's son and successor, but not much is known about him.
 - A. He campaigned into Nubia as far as the third cataract.
 - B. His soldiers carved graffito on the leg of the colossal statue of Ramses II at Abu Simbel, telling of foreigners in his campaign.

- C. He campaigned briefly in Palestine to support a revolt of Zedekiah against Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon, which turns out to have been a crucial period for the Jews.
 - 1. Jerusalem was destroyed (587 BC).
 - 2. During the “Babylonian Captivity” (587–539 BC), one-third of the Jewish population was taken to Babylon (“Gate of God”), another third settled on Elephantine Island in Egypt, and another third was left behind.
 - 3. Why, the Jews wondered, was their fate so terrible? The answer: They were being tested by Yaweh, who would give his law to all people by dispersing the Jews.
 - 4. Of the three centers of Judaism, Egypt was probably the most important in terms of preserving the faith. Much of Judaism in Europe and America may be derived from Jews who immigrated to Egypt during this time.

- V. Apries (589–570 BC) was the son and successor of Psamtik II.
 - A. First he battled the Syrians.
 - B. Then he made a mistake: He helped the Libyans against Greek invaders—and lost.
 - C. Civil war erupted. The Egyptian general Amasis, a commoner, defeated Apries and seized the throne.

- VI. Amasis (570–526 BC), seemingly pro-Greek, made peace with foreigners.
 - A. He helped rebuild the Temple of Apollo at Delphi that burned (year 22).
 - B. During his reign, Naucratis became a great city. Excavated by Flinders Petrie in 1884, following a reference from Herodotus, the city had Greek gods and temples.
 - 1. Located ideally for trade, not far from the capital, the city was navigated in flat-bottomed boats during inundation.
 - 2. There was a huge enclosure wall, 850 by 750 feet long, 40 feet high, and 50 feet thick. To maximize security, there was only one entrance.
 - 3. Two buildings were found, one of them a granary in case the inhabitants had to withstand prolonged attack.
 - 4. Petrie also found a Greek scarab factory where amulets were manufactured in molds by the thousands.
 - C. By this time, Babylon, the enemy, was destroyed, only to have the Persians as a new threat.

- VII. Psamtik III (526–525 BC), Amasis’s successor, inherited the Persian problem.
 - A. He was defeated by the Persians at Pelusium, the eastern entrance to Egypt. When he fled to Memphis, he was captured.

- B. He became probably the first Egyptian king captured by foreigners, and he was taken to Susa, the Persian capital.

Essential Reading:

Aidan Dodson, *Monarchs of the Nile*, Chapter XVII.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 194–198.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did the Assyrians view Egyptian culture?
2. Why were the Egyptians interested in archaism?

Lecture Forty

Dynasty XXVII (525–359 BC): The Persians

Scope: Dynasty XXVI at Sais had collapsed. With its last king, Psamtik III, captive in Persia, it was an easy matter for the Persians to enter Egypt. We will trace the Persian Dynasty by two methods. We will look at what the Greek traveler Herodotus said (he gave three different versions of the reason Persia invaded Egypt) and compare his views with Egyptian records. Although Egypt had by now been invaded and ruled by various foreigners, we will see an unbending will to be free on its part.

Outline

- I. Cambyses II (525–522 BC) entered Egypt. Herodotus offered three versions of the invasion.
 - A. Some Egyptologists believe Herodotus was never in Egypt. He never mentioned the Sphinx, for example (periodically covered with sand), and he wrote that the pyramids of Giza were covered with inscriptions about bread, and onions, and beer.
 - B. But Herodotus, it seems, really *was* there. He only reported what he was told, and some of that turned out to be nonsense.
 - C. As for his versions of the Persian invasion:
 1. Cambyses, he wrote in the first version, asked for Amasis's daughter as mistress but was sent another girl instead in an attempted trick. He became enraged by the ruse and invaded Egypt out of anger.
 2. In the second version, it was Cambyses's father, Cyrus, who was sent the beautiful Egyptian girl, and Cambyses's mother was subsequently ignored because her father was so enraptured. The ten-year-old Cambyses promised to turn Egypt upside-down when he finally came of age.
 3. In a third version, Phanes, a Greek mercenary in Egypt, was dissatisfied with his lot. He defected to Cambyses and offered to show him how to invade Egypt, even across the treacherous Syrian desert. A Bedouin king would have camels with water skins waiting for them in Egypt—a pipeline for the Persian army.
- II. Herodotus tells of a great deal more in the Persian invasion.
 - A. He says Phanes's sons were killed in front of him before the battle and their blood was drunk by the Greeks of the Egyptian Army. But Egypt was routed.

- B. Cambyses sent a herald to work out terms after the battle, but the Egyptians at Memphis tore him to bits and destroyed his ship. Cambyses took Memphis and leveled it in reprisal.
 - C. Herodotus also tells of how the Egyptian and Persian skeletons were separated after the battle and that the Egyptian skulls were “thicker” than the Persian ones because of their adaptation to the sun. Because this was an eyewitness account, perhaps Herodotus was shown a cemetery that he was told was a battlefield and was told a fantastic story.
 - D. Cambyses, testing Psamtik’s will, had his son and other captives paraded with bridles in their mouths, being led to execution. Psamtik didn’t weep for his son, only crying when he saw a captured friend reduced to begging. When asked why he hadn’t cried for his son also, he responded that his suffering was too great for tears.
 - 1. Cambyses was reportedly moved by this and took Psamtek into his palace.
 - 2. But Psamtik plotted against the Persians and was killed.
 - E. Herodotus tells another fantastic story about Cambyses and Ethiopia. Cambyses sent spies disguised as gift-bearers to the king of Ethiopia, who dismissed the gifts as false. The adventure finally led to a botched invasion of Ethiopia by Cambyses and ended with subsequent cannibalism in the ranks. One in ten was killed to be eaten by the others.
 - F. Cambyses returned to Memphis and killed the Apis bull because he thought the Egyptians were rejoicing over his lost army.
- III. Darius I (521–486 BC), the successor of Cambyses II, took greater interest in Egypt and built temples.
- IV. Xerxes (485–465 BC), however, had twenty years of problems.
- A. He put down the Egyptian rebellion, but it did not end the unrest.
 - B. The Egyptians revolted again (465 BC) because the Satrap (governor) Achaemenes (Xerxes’s son) was so brutal.
 - C. Xerxes was assassinated.
- V. The next several kings presided over a decline in Persian influence.
- A. Artaxerxes I (465–424 BC) had a long reign, but it was not without its problems. The son of Psamtik III, Inaros of Heliopolis, led a major revolt. The Egyptians were defeated and Inaros was executed (454 BC).
 - B. Darius II (423–405 BC) was plagued by Egyptian discontent, and the Egyptians finally became independent of Persian rule.
 - C. Artaxerxes II (405–359 BC), the last Persian to rule, didn’t even write his name in a cartouche. Persian rule of Egypt was over.

Essential Reading:

Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, pp. 363–372.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 198–200.

Questions to Consider:

1. How much can we trust Herodotus's account of the Persian invasion of Egypt?
2. How do you think the Egyptians viewed the Persians?

Lecture Forty-One

Dynasties XXVIII–XXXI: The Beginning of the End

Scope: Here we will see four very brief dynasties—Egypt’s last gasp at expelling foreigners ruling their country. This was the Third Intermediate Period. In the end Egypt’s last native ruler, Nectanebo II, was forced to flee into Nubia. Egypt’s glory was over.

Outline

- I. Dynasty XXVIII had only one king, and he wasn’t much. Amyrtaeus (404–399 BC) was a prince at Sais who declared himself king, but little is known of him.
- II. Dynasty XXIX (399–380 BC) moved the capital from Sais to Mendes, also in the Delta. There were only two kings.
 - A. Nephertites I ruled for six years (399–393 BC).
 - B. Achoris (393–380 BC) was the second and last ruler of the dynasty.
- III. Dynasty XXX (380–343 BC) contained the last native rulers of Egypt.
 - A. Nectanebo I (380–362 BC) ousted Achoris’s son and declared himself king.
 1. Combined Greek and Persian forces entered Egypt during the Nile’s inundation, and Nectanebo repelled them. But the Greeks and Persians, it turned out, didn’t trust each other very much.
 2. Nectanebo reconstructed several temples.
 3. He built his own kiosk, or small temple, on Philae.
 - B. Djedhor (Teos) (362–360 BC) was the son and successor of Nectanebo.
 1. While he was out of the country, his son declared his own son (Djedhor’s grandson) pharaoh.
 2. Djedhor fled the country.
 - C. Nectanebo II (360–343 BC) was the grandson of Djedhor. He hired 20,000 Greek mercenaries to fight the Persians at Pelusium—but lost.
 - D. Nectanebo erected a shrine to the Dog Star, which rose in July when the Nile did. The Egyptian calendar was important; in fact, our own calendar derives from it.
 1. There were three seasons: inundation, emergence, and the dry season.
 2. Each season had four months, and each month had three weeks of ten days each, yielding 360 days. To synchronize the calendar with the solar year, the Egyptians added five days, dedicated to feasting and the gods.

- E. Nectanebo's basalt sarcophagus, now in the British Museum, was found in Alexandria.
 - F. Nectanebo fled to Nubia and disappeared from history. A medieval "Alexander Romance" says Nectanebo fled to the Macedonian court as an Egyptian magician, bedded Olympias (Philip II's wife), and thus was the father of Alexander the Great. (Alexander was Egyptian!)
- IV. Dynasty XXXI (343–332 BC) was the second Persian period.
- A. Artaxerxes III (343–338 BC) took command.
 1. Temples were sacked, sacred bulls slain, treasures robbed.
 2. An absentee king, he was poisoned in Susa.
 - B. Arses (338–336 BC) was another absentee king. He too was murdered, as seems to have been the tradition in Persia.
 - C. Darius III (336–332 BC) was the last of the dynasty. His satrap, Mazaeus, opened the gates of the kingdom to Alexander the Great (323 BC).
- V. The death of Nectanebo II, the last native ruler of Egypt, was, in a sense, the end of the greatest civilization the world has ever known.
- A. The pharaoh, the military, and religion were supposed to be maintained in balance. After the intermediate periods of confusion, the people always returned to the pharaohs for stability.
 - B. Egypt's history is defined by the pharaohs. We can trace their "book of the dead" over 3,000 years of history.
 1. Pyramid texts were the first form of this "book." After the First Intermediate Period, the pyramids were robbed and left open for all to see.
 2. The coffin texts were the commoners' version of the pyramid texts, literally written on their own coffins. By the Middle Kingdom, commoners had adopted the same texts as the pharaohs.
 3. When all the spells wouldn't fit on the coffins, they wrote them on papyrus and placed them inside. This is what we know as the Book of the Dead, the culmination of the pyramid and coffin texts.
 - C. The gods of this culture were constant, worshipped for thousands of years.
 - D. The priests, the largest bureaucracy in the world, would soon give way to the Greeks, determined to run Egypt like a business. As Greek became the language of business, the ancient language and the hieroglyphs slowly died.

Essential Reading:

Aidan Dodson, *Monarchs of the Nile*, Chapter XVIII.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 201, 205.

Questions to Consider:

1. Who is the last native ruler of Egypt?
2. What were some of the factors that contributed to Egypt's final decline?

Lecture Forty-Two

Alexander the Great (332–323 BC)

Scope: Alexander the Great began 300 years of Greek control of Egypt. We will trace his career so that we can better understand these final 300 years of Egyptian civilization. We examine three major stages in Alexander's career: (1) Alexander as a young general, (2) Alexander as pharaoh, and (3) Alexander the Great, the legend.

Outline

- I. Myth has it that Nectanebo II, the last native-born ruler of Egypt, may have been Alexander's father. But Alexander was clearly Macedonian—a Greek. Alexander began his legacy as a general.
 - A. Philip II, Alexander's father, was assassinated (336 BC), and Alexander took control of the Macedonian army. He was loved by the soldiers, who would follow him anywhere.
 - B. Twenty-year-old Alexander continued his father's fight against the Persians and defeated Darius III at Issus (333 BC).
 - C. With the Persians defeated, Alexander entered Egypt as a liberator. Napoleon would later follow in his footsteps.
- II. Alexander, who admired Egyptian culture, as did all Greeks, entered the country with different motives than most foreigners. He wanted to become the pharaoh, a "god."
 - A. He undertook the dangerous journey to the distant Siwa Oasis, near the Libyan border, to consult the oracle of the temple of Amun.
 1. Oracles in the ancient world were taken very seriously, and Alexander needed the oracle's approval to become king. The priest of the temple was said to be clairvoyant.
 2. Alexander asked the oracle one question: "Who was my father?" The answer: "The sun." Thus, the oracle obligingly told Alexander that he was the "son of the sun."
 3. According to tradition, Alexander and his men became lost in the desert on the way to Siwa. Legend has it that the dying men were led to the oasis by crows.
 4. The temple of the oracle was high on a hill. We don't know what he saw there when he posed his question, but he probably wasn't permitted to enter the holy inner sanctum.
 - B. Alexander was crowned as pharaoh at Memphis and built a temple at Luxor.

- C. He founded Alexandria with Dinocrates as the architect. Tradition says that they laid out the city streets on a grid to take advantage of Mediterranean breezes.
- III. Alexander became Alexander the Great when he left Egypt soon thereafter, bent on further conquest.
- A. The logistics of the Macedonian army were incredible.
 - 1. Supplying food and water for 50,000 men dictated where and when they went.
 - 2. When one left with Alexander, it was for a ten-year campaign!
 - B. Alexander went from Babylon to Susa to India and was never defeated. After his men refused to go on in India, the army began the long return. He sent back various specimens from his travels to his teacher, Aristotle.
- IV. The death of Alexander (323 BC) led to turmoil.
- A. He died of fever in Babylon while returning from India.
 - B. “To whom does the empire go?” was the question his men had asked of Alexander. His reply: “To the fittest.”
 - C. The kingdom was divided among generals; Ptolemy, later Ptolemy I, got Egypt.
 - D. Alexander’s body was preserved in spices for a year in Babylon while a gold catafalque was prepared.
 - E. The procession to Macedonia was led by mules with gold bells pulling the body, which had been preserved in white honey.
 - F. The body was hijacked in Syria by Ptolemy and brought to Egypt, where it remained in Memphis for years while the *soma* (tomb) was being prepared. For years, the body lay in state.
 - G. Finally Alexander was buried in Alexandria—and the search for his tomb goes on.

Essential Reading:

Robin Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great*.

Supplementary Reading:

Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander the Great*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How was Alexander viewed by the Egyptians?
2. Why did Alexander go to the Siwa Oasis?

Lecture Forty-Three

The First Ptolemies

Scope: Here we see the beginning of the end for ancient Egyptian civilization. Under the rule of the first Ptolemies, Egypt was reorganized and run like a business. Taxation was heavy and administration oppressive. The Greeks viewed the Egyptians as existing only to enrich their coffers. The great achievements of the first Ptolemies were purely Greek conceptions: the Pharos Lighthouse and the famous library of Alexandria.

Outline

- I. Ptolemy I first ruled Egypt as governor (323–305 BC) and later as king (305–282 BC).
 - A. Ptolemy ruled first as governor of Egypt in deference to the memory of Alexander. Alexander's retarded half-brother (Philip III Arrhidaeus) and Alexander's son by Roxanne (Alexander IV) were still alive and were possible rulers.
 - B. Alexander's mother, Olympia, had her stepson, Philip III (323–317 BC), king of Egypt, assassinated so her grandson, Alexander IV, could rule.
 - C. When Alexander IV (317–305 BC) and Roxanne were assassinated, Alexander's line came to an end.
 - D. Ptolemy married the daughter of Nectanebo II and became king. He was called "Soter" (Savior) after he repelled an attack on Rhodes by one of Alexander's other generals.
 - E. Ptolemy was clearly one of the "good" Ptolemies, although the dynasty, as we shall see, would rapidly decline over time.
- II. Ptolemy Soter was committed to public works.
 - A. The library of Alexandria was his creation, though no traces remain.
 1. It contained perhaps 700,000 "books," or papyrus scrolls.
 2. A Greek idea far removed from the secrecy of Egyptian religion, the library was a public place.
 3. A museum ("the place of the muses") was part of the library complex, the first think tank in history, supported by the state.
 4. At the museum, the tradition of working in teams began. Euclid wrote his *Elements of Geometry* (300 BC); Eratosthenes calculated the circumference of the earth; Hippias determined that the brain, not the heart, was the seat of intelligence.
 5. Still, we don't know where the library was located or why it disappeared.
 - B. The Pharos Lighthouse was another of Ptolemy's projects.

1. Four hundred and twenty-three feet high, it was one of the few Seven Wonders of the Ancient World that was secular. It was on Pharos Island across the port from Alexandria.
 2. The lighthouse had three tiers: a square base with an octagonal and then a circular level. It could be seen thirty miles away.
 3. A permanent fire was kept burning on the upper level, and its light was reflected by a huge mirror of bronze.
 4. Earthquakes damaged and finally destroyed the lighthouse in 1303. Sultan Qait Bay used the remaining blocks to build a fort on Pharos Island at the base of where the lighthouse stood in Alexandria Harbor.
- III. The Ptolemies ran Egypt like a business.**
- A. Egyptian temples were also built for Ptolemy's glory. The Ptolemies supported the priests as an educated class to administer the realm.
 - B. There was heavy taxation—ten percent on all sales of land, for example—and the Ptolemies had monopolies on such items as papyrus.
 - C. Emeralds and gold, heavily taxed, were mined by prisoners.
 - D. The port of Alexandria exported excess grain, the main source of Egypt's wealth.
 - E. The Ptolemies controlled banking and the flow of money. The Greeks simplified business in Egypt by introducing coins.
 - F. Manetho's *History of Egypt (Aegyptiaka)* was written for the Ptolemies in Greek, the language of commerce.
 - G. There were about 300,000 Greeks in Alexandria and seven million Egyptians throughout the country. Alexandria was called "the City"; the rest was Egypt.
 - H. The Ptolemies remained in Alexandria. Thus was Egypt divided and ruled by an elite class.
- IV. Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246 BC) continued the Greek trend.**
- A. He reclaimed land by draining part of Fayoum Lake to increase grain production.
 - B. He continued the Alexandria Library and commissioned the Septuagint—the Old Testament translated into Greek by seventy rabbis.
 - C. He married his sister, a tradition going back to Isis and Osiris and followed by subsequent Ptolemies.

Essential Reading:

Michael Grant, *From Alexander to Cleopatra*.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 208–212.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the major achievements of the early Ptolemies?
2. What did the Ptolemies want from Egypt?

* **Erratum:** On the tape, the professor states that the Pharos Lighthouse was the only one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World that was secular; in fact, it was one of the *few* Wonders that was secular, as shown in the outline.

Lecture Forty-Four

The Middle Ptolemies: The Decline

Scope: The Middle Ptolemies were a family that today would be classified as dysfunctional. They were excessive in their lifestyles, often killed each other, and never seemed to have time to oversee the country they ruled. The Egyptians hated them and frequently rebelled, forcing some to flee for their lives. With each Ptolemy, we will see Egypt sinking deeper and deeper into the mire, so that when a Ptolemy finally comes to the throne who wants to restore Egypt to its former greatness, it is almost impossible.

Outline

- I. Ptolemy III Eugertes was the last “good” Ptolemy (246–222 BC).
 - A. He began the Horus Temple at Edfu, the best preserved temple in all of Egypt.
 1. The temple has written on its walls the oldest drama in the world: “The Contendings of Horus and Seth.”
 2. For eighty years, according to the ancient myth, the two gods did battle, until Horus was finally given Egypt to rule.
 3. Each year, the pharaoh would have the play enacted to ensure that divine order prevailed.
 4. The temple also has on its walls the ceremony of “the stretching of the cord,” the foundation ritual for all temples.
 - B. The Decree of Canopus (March 6, 237 BC) tells of Ptolemy III’s good deeds. Like the Rosetta stone, it is written in hieroglyphs, demotic, and Greek.
 1. There were three copies of the decree.
 2. When the Nile didn’t rise, the decree related, Ptolemy saved the people by buying corn at high prices.
 3. He recaptured Egyptian statues of the gods seized by the Persians.
 4. The priests vowed to worship his daughter, Berenice, who died young: “Berenice, Lady of Virgins.”
 - C. Ptolemy III also built the Serapeum at Alexandria, which was dedicated to Serapis, a bearded fertility god.
 1. The temple had two fireplaces with pipes going through the walls to channel hot, dry air to various rooms. This may have been the “daughter library” of Ptolemy I’s great library, the warm air keeping the papyri dry in Alexandria’s moist air.
 2. Incoming ships were searched for books, which were copied and then returned to their owners.
 3. Ten foundation deposit plaques in the temple were discovered in 1943, inscribed in Greek and hieroglyphs.

4. In 1945, more plaques were found at the corner of a shrine to Ptolemy IV.
- II. Ptolemy IV Philopater (222–205 BC) started the decline.
 - A. He had his mother poisoned and his brother, Magus, scalded to death.
 - B. He died of excess living at the age 41. His sister-wife Arsinoe was poisoned soon after.
 - III. The next several pharaohs were inconsequential.
 - A. Ptolemy V Epiphanes (205–180 BC) took the throne as a child. The Decree of Memphis in 196 BC (the Rosetta stone) was a thank-you note from the priests to Ptolemy.
 - B. Ptolemy VI Philopater (180–145 BC) fought a civil war with his brother.
 - C. Ptolemy VII Philopater (145 BC) was murdered after one year as king.
 - IV. Ptolemy VIII Eugertes II (145–116 BC) had a more interesting reign.
 - A. He married the wife of Ptolemy VI but also had a liaison with his niece. Both were Cleopatras, and the relations were so confusing that the people called the women “the sister” (Cleopatra II) and “the wife” (Cleopatra III).
 - B. The people called Ptolemy VIII “Physicon” (“fatty”) because he was so obese. When the Egyptians revolted, he fled to Cyprus. Cleopatra II, his sister, ruled in his absence.
 - C. He murdered Memphites, his son by Cleopatra II, and sent the dismembered body to her on her birthday.
 - D. He eventually returned to Egypt and died, leaving two young sons (Ptolemy IX and X.)
 - E. During his reign, a double temple dedicated to Sobek (the crocodile god) and Haroeris (a form of Horus) was built. It had sacred pools where crocodiles were kept.
 - V. Ptolemy IX Soter II had two reigns (116–110 BC) and (88–80 BC).
 - A. He began the Temple of Hathor at Dendera.
 - B. Accused of plotting to kill his mother, he fled to Cyprus.
 - VI. Ptolemy X Alexander I (110–88 BC) followed. He was so obese he couldn’t walk without help.
 - VII. Ptolemy XI Alexander II. (80 BC) was the end of a line.
 - A. He disliked his older aunt, who was popular with the people, and murdered her a couple of weeks after their wedding.
 - B. Ptolemy was lynched after a nineteen-day reign. There was now no legitimate descendant of Ptolemy I—they’d killed each other off!

Essential Reading:

Edwyn R. Bevan, *The House of Ptolemy*.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter A. Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, pp. 213–216.

Questions to Consider:

1. What does the Decree of Canopus tell us about Ptolemy III's attitude toward Egypt?
2. What were the signs of decay in the Ptolemaic line?

Lecture Forty-Five

Animal Mummies

Scope: The Ptolemies had a fascination with mummies, especially animal ones. We will take an in-depth look at a major industry during the Ptolemaic period—animal mummification. In addition to how animals were raised to be sacrificed and mummified, we will also see four distinct reasons why animals were mummified: (1) as preservation of a god, (2) as pets for eternity, (3) as offerings to the gods, and (4) as food for the dead.

Outline

- I. The Ptolemies had a continuing fascination with animal mummies, a major industry in ancient Egypt.
- II. There was only one animal the Egyptians worshipped as a god.
 - A. Most Egyptians didn't worship animals, even if some were often associated with gods. Bastet was the cat goddess, for example, but that didn't mean every cat was a god.
 - B. The Apis bull, however, *was* clearly worshipped and had the most elaborate of all animal burials.
 1. Lightning came down from heaven, struck a cow, and conceived the Apis. It had a diamond on its forehead and wings on its back.
 2. The Apis was believed to reincarnate in a different form, unlike the usual Egyptian belief in resurrection.
 3. The Apis was mummified like a god. A lone surviving papyrus tells us how it was done, although no such instructions exist for human mummification. Perhaps because there was only one Apis at one time—dying at about 30-year intervals—it was necessary to pass the knowledge down in writing rather than by word of mouth.
 4. The Serapeum, burial place of sacred bulls, disappeared for thousands of years until Auguste Mariette discovered it. The bulls were bejeweled and placed in huge sarcophagi, all of which were robbed.
- III. Other animals were mummified to become pets for eternity—one could take "Fido" to the next world.
 - A. Cats and gazelles were among those preserved.
 - B. In one case, an x-ray revealed that a mummy thought to be a princess turned out to be a pet baboon.
 - C. Theodore Davis, in one of his excavations, had a strange encounter with the mummies of a baboon and a dog, placed nose to nose.

- IV. Most animal mummies were sacrificed as offerings to the gods.
- A. If you wanted to be healed of an affliction, you would make a pilgrimage and buy a mummified animal.
 - 1. At the tomb of Imhotep, the healer, mummified animals were sold, whereupon the priests placed them in niches in tomb walls.
 - 2. Walter B. Emery's excavation of the ibis galleries uncovered millions of mummified birds.
 - B. The archive of Hor describes the industry of raising, mummifying, and burying these offerings.
 - C. In Bubastis, there was a cemetery for cats. In the nineteenth century, the excavating British took a boatload of thousands and had them ground into fertilizer.
 - D. The sacred fish of Esneh were a bit of a mystery. Why were they mummified? They recalled the fish that had consumed Osiris's phallus in the ancient myth.
- V. Finally, animals were also preserved as food for the dead. Some mummified naturally in the tomb. Ducks in Tutankhamen's tomb were intended as food—call it an “order to go.”

Essential Reading:

Bob Brier, *Egyptian Mummies*, Chapter 8.

Supplementary Reading:

Salima Ikram and Aidan Dodson, *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt*, pp. 131–136.

Questions to Consider:

1. What were the reasons for mummifying animals?
2. What was special about the mummification of the Apis bull?

Lecture Forty-Six

Cleopatra's Family

Scope: With the power vacuum left by the death of Ptolemy XI (he had no legitimate heirs), we see Ptolemaic politics at their worst. Staying alive was the most difficult part of ruling, and we will see how Cleopatra's father managed this task. We will also examine the growing interaction of Rome with Egypt, a relationship that will ultimately doom Egyptian civilization.

Outline

- I. Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos (80–58 BC) and (55–51 BC) was the illegitimate son of Ptolemy IX. He was called “the bastard” and also “Auletes” (flute player) because he spent more time playing than ruling.
- II. Rome, not Egypt, was now the superpower.
 - A. Rome's army was the most powerful and disciplined in the world. (We get the word “decimate” from the Roman army.)
 - B. Although we think of Rome as a seat of culture, compared to Alexandria it was a backward city. The Greeks looked down on the Romans, even if they needed their help.
 - C. The weak Ptolemies bribed Rome to keep themselves on the throne.
 - D. Rome went along to keep a supply of wheat flowing into Rome. Egypt became the breadbasket of Rome.
 - E. Soon, Alexandria was divided into three sections: Jewish, Egyptian, and Greek.
- III. Ptolemy XII's early reign is revealed from a stela inscription.
 - A. His family, including Berenice, Cleopatra VI, Cleopatra VII, Arsinoe, and two sons, journeyed to Memphis.
 - B. What did they see?
 1. The Serapeum, probably the burial place of the Apis bull, for one.
 2. Cleopatra VII was no doubt taken by this trip into the Egyptian past; this young girl would become the only Ptolemy to speak Egyptian.
- IV. The Second Triumvirate came to power in the Roman republic: Crassus, Pompey, and Caesar. The consequences for Egypt were great.
 - A. Ptolemy XII made a deal with them: He bribed the Romans to keep him on the throne.
 - B. As a result, he taxed so excessively that all Egyptians hated him.

- C. He was run out of the country, leaving his daughter Berenice to rule. Such a succession couldn't have happened in Greece, where women had little power.
 - D. Berenice was insecure, given the Ptolemies' history of family treachery. She was married to her cousin, but had him strangled a week after the wedding.
 - E. She then took a friend as husband and they ruled while her father was exiled in Rome.
 - F. Cleopatra, meanwhile, was a teenager, growing up in luxury. She spent time in the Alexandria Library. It may be that here she read Herodotus and learned much about the history of Egypt.
 - G. Ptolemy XII bribed Julius Caesar and others and returned to Alexandria with Roman troops, led by Marc Antony. Berenice's husband was killed in battle.
 1. Ptolemy wanted to let the body rot.
 2. Antony wouldn't permit it and had the body buried.
 - H. Ptolemy was back on the throne and had his daughter Berenice murdered. There were now Roman troops stationed in Alexandria, the greatest city in the world.
- V. Ptolemy XII proved to be a builder of renown; his legacy was substantial.
- A. Philae Island, near Aswan, where Nectanebo I, one of the last native rulers, had built a kiosk, became a favorite place to build. Philae became the Karnak Temple of Ptolemaic Egypt.
 - B. Philae Temple, although built piecemeal, is a beautiful piece of work. It is dedicated primarily to Isis, who had become the most important goddess in Egypt, considered the wife of Serapis.
 - C. Philae's temples were all moved when the Aswan Dam was built. Different countries adopted different temples and sponsored their relocation. The entire temple complex was numbered, stone by stone; dismantled; and moved to higher ground.
 - D. Ptolemy left a will for the administration of Egypt. The document provided that there would be two rulers of Egypt. His eldest daughter (Cleopatra VII) was to rule with her younger brother, who would become Ptolemy XIII.

Essential Reading:

Laura Foreman, *Cleopatra's Palace*.

Supplementary Reading:

Ernie Bradford, *Cleopatra*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did Rome influence Cleopatra's father?
2. What were the relations like in Cleopatra's family?

Lecture Forty-Seven

Cleopatra: The Last Ptolemy

Scope: Although Cleopatra is probably the most famous woman in the world, she remains something of an enigma—we don't even know who her mother was. Part of the problem is that history is written by the victors—and Cleopatra lost. We will reconstruct her history from ancient records and present three different stages of Cleopatra's career: (1) before Caesar, (2) with Caesar, and (3) with Antony.

Outline

- I. Cleopatra, even before she met Caesar, exhibited signs of greatness.
 - A. She was very bright and active from an early age. She was taken with her father to see the Apis bull, and when she was queen she attended the installation of the new Buchis bull at Hermonthis.
 - B. She realized that her future was with Rome—and intended to use the Roman army.
 - C. She was the first Ptolemy to speak Egyptian.
 - D. There are no real portraits of her, just coins showing a long nose. (So much for her being a beauty!) According to Plutarch, she was said to have reddish hair.
 - E. Pothinus, one of the ruling Egyptian triumvirate, turned the people against her. They rebelled against her, and she fled to Syria, where she raised an army.
 - F. Pothinus murdered Pompey, who had fled to Egypt from Rome. When Caesar, also in Egypt, learned of the execution, he was appalled.
 - G. Cleopatra decided to come back from exile. Her return to Egypt was dramatic.
 1. She returned to Alexandria secretly wrapped in a rug.
 2. There, she sought to convince the visiting Caesar that she, not her brother, should rule the country. Caesar had never seen a Hellenistic (liberated) woman like Cleopatra, because Roman women were uneducated.
 3. During the Alexandrine Wars, she had Caesar execute Pothinus. Then her brother, Ptolemy XIII, drowned trying to escape, which eliminated her competition for the throne.
 4. She then married her next youngest brother, Ptolemy XIV, who disappears soon after.
- II. Cleopatra's time with Caesar is now legendary.
 - A. She took Caesar on a Nile cruise on the "Thalamegos" ("the big boat") to impress him—they saw the Pyramids, Thebes, and all kinds of

mummies. (Not like Rome at all!) She became pregnant, and Caesar was treated as her consort—a god.

- B. Cleopatra gave birth to a boy, Caesarion, and built a *mammisi* (birth house) at Hermonthis. She was regarded as a goddess; her son, as a god.
- C. Caesar brought Cleopatra and Caesarion to Rome.
 - 1. His wife, Calpurnia, and all of Rome were outraged, but they had never seen anything like Cleopatra and her entourage.
 - 2. Caesar established her in his country villa, giving her legitimacy and suggesting Caesarion as his heir.
 - 3. He held an Egyptian triumph that featured a “cameleopard” (giraffe) and Cleopatra’s sister, Arsinoe, paraded in chains.
 - 4. In Rome, Caesar also erected a statue of Cleopatra as Isis, suggesting her divinity.
 - 5. Obsessed with dreams of grandeur, Caesar was assassinated, leaving Cleopatra in a difficult situation.
 - 6. With the death of Caesar, Cleopatra became like Isis, the grieving widow with the divine infant (Horus) to protect. She depicted herself and Caesarion on the wall at Dendera temple as gods.

III. The last phase of Cleopatra’s life was with Antony.

- A. Octavian, the heir of Caesar, sent Antony with a shipment of grain to Egypt.
- B. At the famous banquet with Antony, Cleopatra gave the guests furniture and gold dinnerware as party favors and drank the pearl from her earring! It was a legendary performance. Antony, impressed, agreed to kill Arsinoe.
- C. Antony and Cleopatra in Alexandria formed a small club, the “Inimitable Livers.” Cleopatra partied with the lusty Antony and became pregnant with twins: Alexander Helios (“the sun”) and Cleopatra Selene (“the moon”).
- D. Meanwhile, Antony returned to Rome, where he married Octavia (Octavian’s sister), and Cleopatra was abandoned for three years.
- E. Cleopatra agreed to meet Antony in Syria, and a kind of pre-nuptial agreement was worked out:
 - 1. Antony agreed to marry Cleopatra.
 - 2. In return for financing his war, Cleopatra would get Sinai, Judea, Cyprus, and Arabia.
 - 3. Caesarion would be pharaoh, not Antony or his son.
- F. Ptolemy Philadelphus (Cleopatra’s third child by Antony) was born. (And wasn’t named after Antony.)
- G. Antony’s wars went poorly, and Cleopatra brought relief to the troops. Octavia, Antony’s wife, tried to help also but was sent back to Rome.

- H. The Armenian Triumph was a great spectacle held in Alexandria to celebrate a minor victory.
1. On a silver platform, Cleopatra, dressed as Isis, was declared queen of the territories that Antony had promised her. Caesarion was made coregent and King of Kings.
 2. Alexander Helios was given Armenia and Pontia; Cleopatra Selene got Libya; and little Ptolemy received Phoenicia and northern Syria.
- I. Rome feared Cleopatra because Antony was giving Egypt what should have been Rome's. (Antony's will said that he should be buried at Alexandria.)
- J. Octavian declared war on Cleopatra, leading to a tragic turn of events.
1. At the battle of Actium, Cleopatra's fleet was blockaded and suffered a major defeat.
 2. She sailed to Egypt with her treasury.
 3. Antony sulked at the "Timoneum."
 4. In the end, Octavian marched on Alexandria, and Cleopatra refused to give Antony to him, beginning to test poisons for her suicide.
 5. Intending to kill herself, Cleopatra sent word to Antony of her death. He ran himself on his sword and was brought to her, dying in her arms.
 6. Cleopatra, captured by Octavian, was permitted to bury Antony.
 7. She died in the company of Iras and Charmian (her handmaidens) from the bite of the asp. But Octavian had been cheated of parading her as a captive. Thus does the last great ruler of Egypt come to an end.

Essential Reading:

Lucy Hughes-Hallett, *Cleopatra*.

Supplementary Reading:

Robert Bianchi, *Cleopatra's Egypt*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How did Cleopatra differ from her family?
2. Was Cleopatra really a *femme fatale*?

Lecture Forty-Eight

The Grand Finale

Scope: In this last lecture, I try to do four things: (1) summarize 3,000 years of Egyptian civilization in five minutes, (2) discuss the legacy of Egypt, (3) survey the lighter side of Egyptology—in film and literature, and (4) suggest how students can continue their interest in Egypt. It doesn't have to stop here!

Outline












- I. After Cleopatra and the end of a long tradition, Egypt suffered a slow death.
 - A. Cleopatra's children had quite different fates.
 1. Caesarion (age seventeen) had been sent to the Red Sea to sail for India but was betrayed by his tutor and convinced to return to Egypt. He was killed by Octavian.
 2. The twins (age ten) and little Ptolemy (age six) were sent to Rome to be raised by Octavia, Antony's widow. Alexander Helios and Ptolemy disappeared from history.
 3. Cleopatra Selene was married at age fourteen to the King of Mauritania, Juba II, who was kind and scholarly. Their son, Ptolemy, was killed by his cousin Caligula in Rome. Their daughter, Drusilla, married Antonius Felix, Procurator of Judea. Cleopatra may have descendants via her children.
 - B. Egypt under the Romans saw the end of her civilization.
 1. The priests were not supported, and the Egyptian language died out, but this decay was a slow process.
 2. The great library also disappeared from history.
- II. Egypt's legacy to us is considerable.
 - A. Our 365-day calendar is an Egyptian creation.
 - B. Paper is an Egyptian invention that changed the world.
 - C. Egypt's religion is central to ours, although this is not generally acknowledged.
 1. Monotheism first appeared under Akhenaten.
 2. Many Christian rituals and concepts—the trinity, madonna and child, archbishop's crook, pope's miter, incense, resurrection—may come from Egypt.
- III. Egyptology has a legacy in film and literature.
 - A. Some of the earliest (and worst) films are Egyptian in theme.
 1. *Eyes of the Mummy Ma*, a silent starring Pola Negri, is so bad you can't tell who the mummy is!

2. The classic *The Mummy* (1933), with Boris Karloff, established a tradition and is the best of the lot. Some of the props are replicas from Tutankhamen's tomb.
 3. Without Karloff, Universal Studio's sequels didn't develop the mummy's personality, and they suffer because of it.
 4. From *Indiana Jones* to *Stargate*, we see the Egyptian tradition again.
 5. *The Mummy* (1999) is not a true mummy film in the Egyptian tradition, but it did have some Egyptomania, with canopic jars (five instead of four) and the presence of the scarab, seen as a destroyer instead of a creator.
 6. Elizabeth Taylor's *Cleopatra* was a financial disaster—partly because it took such pains to be accurate.
- B.** Literature also has an Egyptological tradition.
1. Theophile Gautier's novella *Romance of a Mummy* presents a mummy as a romantic figure.
 2. Arthur Conan Doyle's *Ring of Thoth* continues the mummy as romantic figure.
 3. Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars* gives us a killing mummy, but it's a female!
 4. The Amelia Peabody novels, written by Elizabeth Peters, a Ph.D. in Egyptology, are on the lighter side, but contain a lot of the history of Egyptology, especially Flinders Petrie's excavations.
 5. Anne Rice's *The Mummy* returns to a romantic mummy and brings us full circle back to the beginning of media images.
 6. The nonfiction literature on Egypt is enormous, with primary and secondary sources readily available.













IV. What next? If possible, go to Egypt yourself and walk the land: Cairo, Thebes, Aswan. There are also historical societies to join.

- A.** The Egypt Exploration Society in England is not just for the British. The Society publishes *The Journal of Egyptian Archeology*.
- B.** The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago offers a correspondence course in hieroglyphs, various publications, and plenty more.
- C.** The American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) is based in the United States (!) and publishes the *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* and holds an annual conference for international Egyptologists.
- D.** *KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt* is a popular Egyptology magazine that everyone seems to love.

Classical Egyptian Alphabet

Hieroglyph	Description	Sound
	vulture	a
	foot	b
	placenta	ch
	hand	d
	arm	e
	horned viper	f
	jar stand	g
	twisted flax	h
	reed leaf	i
	snake	j(dj)
	basket	k

Classical Egyptian Alphabet

Hieroglyph	Description	Sound
	owl	m
	water	n
	mat	p
	hill	q
	mouth	r
	folded cloth	s
	pool of water	sh
	loaf of bread	t
	tethering ring	tch
	quail chick	u / w
	two reed leaves	y
	door bolt	z

Timeline

500,000–3200 BC	Prehistoric Period
3100 BC	Narmer and Unification of Egypt
3050–2686 BC	First Two Dynasties
2686–2647 BC	Zoser Builds Step Pyramid
2613–2589 BC	Sneferu Builds First True Pyramid
2589–2566 BC	The Great Pyramid Constructed
2181–2049 BC	First Intermediate Period
2134–1782 BC	The Middle Kingdom
1782–1650 BC	Second Intermediate Period
c. 1570 BC	Hyksos Expelled
1498–1483 BC	Hatshepsut Rules Egypt
1386–1349 BC	Amenhotep III; New Kingdom at Peak
1350–1334 BC	Akhenaten and Amarna Revolution
1334–1325 BC	Tutankhamen's Reign
1279–1212 BC	Ramses the Great
1080–945 BC	Dynasty XXI—Priest Kings
945–715 BC	Libyans Rule Egypt
747–664 BC	Nubians Rule Egypt
664–525 BC	Assyrians Rule Egypt
525–359 BC	Persians Rule Egypt
360–343 BC	Nectanebo II, Last Egyptian Ruler
343–332 BC	Second Persian Period
332 BC	Alexander the Great Conquers Egypt
323–30 BC	Greeks Rule Egypt
30 BC	Death of Cleopatra

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The History of Ancient Egypt

Part IV

- Lecture 37: Dynasty XXII—Egypt United
- Lecture 38: Dynasty XXV—The Nubians Have Their Day
- Lecture 39: Dynasty XXVI—The Saite Period
- Lecture 40: Dynasty XXVII—The Persians
- Lecture 41: Dynasties XXVIII to XXXI—The Beginning of the End
- Lecture 42: Alexander the Great
- Lecture 43: The First Ptolemies
- Lecture 44: The Middle Ptolemies—The Decline
- Lecture 45: Animal Mummies
- Lecture 46: Cleopatra's Family
- Lecture 47: Cleopatra—The Last Ptolemy
- Lecture 48: The Grand Finale



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