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001. list	Key Officials of the US Mission [Personally Identifiable Information] [partial] (1 page)	09/23/1998	b(7)(C), b(6)

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Egypt

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RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.
PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).
RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
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b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

The **BAB ZUWAYLA**, the southernmost gate of al-Qahira, was named after a Berber tribe in the Fatimid army charged with guarding this entrance of the royal city. The current gate was rebuilt in 1092 by Badr al-Gamali, the Armenian wazir of Caliph al-Mustansir (1036-1094), who also constructed the Bab al-Futuh and the Bab an-Nasr along the northern walls of al-Qahira ~~(see Spare Map One)~~. These three gates are among the finest surviving examples of medieval military architecture in the Middle East. The interior of the Bab Zuwayla may be entered from the Mosque of al-Mu'ayyad ~~(#10 on this map)~~, whose twin minarets rise from its projecting towers.

The **MOSQUE OF SALIH TALA'I** was built just outside the walls of al-Qahira in 1160 by the wazir of Caliph al-Fa'iz (1154-1160). The mosque is constructed over a lower story of shops whose rent once paid for its upkeep. In the 12th century, these shops were at ground level; today they are more than three meters beneath it. The mosque has been extensively restored but most of the arcaded prayer hall and its stucco decoration is original. The entrance portico, overlooking what was once an important medieval market place, is unique in the Muslim architecture of Cairo.

- Al Azhar Mosque
- Egyptian Museum
- Old Cairo Gates

✓ The **MOSQUE-MADRASA OF SULTAN HASAN (1356-1362)** is one of the largest Islamic religious buildings in the world. It was constructed on such a colossal scale that it nearly bankrupted the wealthy Mamluk state. The building functions as a congregational mosque, but also contains four separate *madrasas*, each with its own inner court and four stories of living quarters. The minaret, entrance portal and prayer *liwan* are all of unprecedented size, and the lavish use of inlayed marble decoration is unequalled in Cairo. Sultan Hasan (1347-1361) was dominated throughout most of his reign by overpowering amirs. During a brief period of real independence, he constructed his great mosque, but was murdered before it was completed.

✓ The **MOSQUE OF MUHAMMAD 'ALI (1830-1857)** is an unimaginative copy of the great mosques of Istanbul. The decoration is overwrought and often gaudy, but the mosque's imposing size and spectacular setting makes it one of the most famous monuments in Cairo. Its most impressive feature is the inner prayer hall, which is covered by a 52 meter high central dome. The ornate clock tower in the outer court was given to Muhammad 'Ali by King Louis Philippe of France in exchange for the ancient Egyptian obelisk now in Paris.

✓ The **MOSQUE OF IBN TULUN (876-879)** is a masterpiece of Islamic architecture. It was modeled on the mosques of the 'Abbasid capital, Samarra, where Ibn Tulun was educated in the court of the Caliph. The city of al-Qata'i originally extended to the outer walls, making the building all but invisible from the streets around it. A *ziyada* ('addition') separates the interior of the mosque from the city outside. The great inner court is surrounded by a series of brick arcades, supported by massive piers of Iraqi inspiration. The mosque of Ibn Tulun is the oldest religious building in Cairo to survive in its original form, but it has been restored a number of times. In 1296, the Bahri Mamluk amir (and later sultan) Lagin added the domed fountain in the central court, the fine wooden *minbar* and the decoration of the *mihrab's* inner niche. Lagin also rebuilt the minaret, but retained the exterior spiral staircase, which was a noted feature of Ibn Tulun's original design.

The **GAYER-ANDERSON MUSEUM** occupies two Ottoman houses, Bayt Amina bint Salim al-Gazzar (House of Amina, Daughter of Salim the Butcher) (1540) and Bayt al-Kiridliyya (House of the Cretans) (1631). They were restored and decorated, between 1935 and 1942, by Major Gayer-Anderson, a British member of the Egyptian civil service. The museum contains a charming collection of Islamic art and furniture which manages to recreate the atmosphere of wealth and luxury once enjoyed by prosperous Cairene merchants during the Ottoman period.

BAB ZUWAYLA

Historical Background on Monument # 199, Cairo.

This important historic structure is the monumental southern fortified gateway of the Fatimid City of Cairo. It was constructed in 1087-92 of ashlar masonry. In 1415-20 Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaykh built the adjacent mosque to the west and added the two tall minarets to the two rounded towers of Bab Zuwayla. In the early 20th century, the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe removed later buildings and exposed the original structure of the Gate. Significant masonry repairs were done at that time. Minor local repairs and wall repointing have occurred since then. The structure has long lost its defensive purpose and functions today as a monument.

Condition of the Building Today.

The gate is in a relatively good condition, although it suffers greatly from air pollution and the damaging effects of rising damp and salt efflorescence. Vibrations and emissions from vehicular traffic are a major source of damage. Portions of the surface masonry have completely decayed.

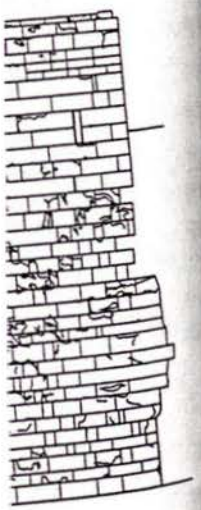
Proposed Conservation Interventions

The walls of the gate are cleaned of accumulated dirt and gypsum decomposition layers. The masonry is repointed, repaired, replaced and grouted as necessary. In order to protect the monument from water penetration the upper and mezzanine paved levels will be renewed, a water-proof membrane will be installed and drainage provided. Cornice stones will be replaced as necessary. The structure will be cleaned and consolidated. Access will be improved.

Rising damp is an extremely important problem here. The great thickness of the walls prohibits the installation of a damp-proof course. Only a long-term area-wide lowering of the water table through installation of new sewer drainage lines and improved water supply lines can protect this monument. As a mitigation measure, the salt is be removed from the exterior areas by poulticing. The damaged stones are repaired or partly replaced only as necessary. A sacrificial plaster is considered for the lower courses. This plaster, designed to absorbed efflorescent salts, would be removed on a regular basis, taking away with it the salt.
A maintenance and use plan for the monument and its environs will be developed to preserve the monument for future generations.

Specialized Conservation Interventions.

A painted stucco ceiling in the small room in the western tower will be cleaned and conserved as necessary. The metal window grilles will be cleaned and consolidated. Subsidiary to the work on the gate itself, the decorative *mashrabiya* wooden window bay and masonry of the facade in the adjacent building have been cleaned, protected and repaired.



Future Use

This structure will continue as a monument and landmark in historic Cairo. Access and the potential for adaptive reuse need to be addressed.

Tentative Schedule

Extensive photographic documentation and architectural drawings were completed in 1995-97. An existing condition study was prepared, with recommendations for conservation. A detailed work plan was prepared. On-site work started in May 1998. The project is scheduled to take four years to complete.

Current Status

The towers are covered with scaffolding. Stone cleaning conservation analysis is complete. Replacement blocks have started to be inserted. One roof terrace is being conserved.



Abbasid coins from the time of Baybars.

EGYPT UNDER THE ARAB GOVERNORS

640–46
Amr Ibn el-As conquers Egypt.

640
Foundation of Fustat.

642
Fall of Alexandria.

660–750
Ommiad caliphate of Damascus.

706
Arabic becomes the official administrative language.

725
First Coptic rebellion.

750–868
Abbasid caliphate of Baghdad.

868–905
Egypt under Tulunid control.

When Amr Ibn el-As (580–664), who had been sent to Egypt by the caliph Omar, seized the Byzantine fortress of Babylon, he became master of the Nile Valley. The siege of Alexandria (and the destruction of the Great Library) brought the Greek chapter of Egypt's history to a close. Egypt became an Arabic colony administered by governors nominated by the caliphs, and although the first elected caliphate was replaced by the Ommiad dynasty, neither this, nor the subsequent accession of the Abbasids of Baghdad, altered the post-Arab-conquest status of Egypt: it remained a province of the caliphate, mainly organized by the Ommiads who were responsible for imposing Arabic as the language of administration. The introduction of the land tax known as the *kharadj* was accompanied by the widespread Islamization of minor officials. It was during this dynasty that the town of Fustat ▲ *324*, originally the encampment of the conquering Arab tribes, became an important center. A new state was born in Egypt, based (as the Copts discovered) on religion, in which the only way to survive was to embrace the language and faith of the new masters. Although the Copts initially enjoyed greater freedom than they had under Byzantine rule, the heavy taxation incurred by their protected status led to large-scale conversions to Islam.



THE GREAT EGYPTIAN DYNASTIES

879
Inauguration of the Ibn Tulun Mosque.

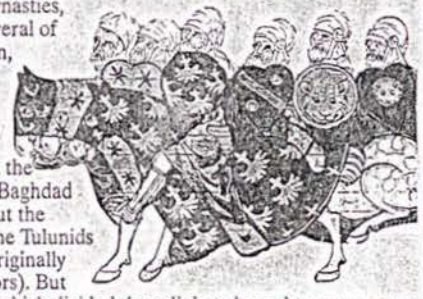
905–36
Baghdad regains direct control of Egypt.

936–69
Egypt under Ikshidid control.

969–1169
Egypt under Fatimid control.

969
Foundation of El-Qahira.

THE TULUNIDS. The political and artistic history of Muslim Egypt really began with Ahmed Ibn Tulun (835–84) ▲ *312*, who seized power in 868. For almost four centuries after this, a series of dynasties, including several of foreign origin, established themselves firmly in Egypt. The struggle with the caliphate of Baghdad brought about the collapse of the Tulunids (who were originally only governors). But the rivalries which divided the caliphate brought new masters to the country. These were the Turkman Mohammed Ibn Tuglij, who was founder of the Ikshidid dynasty, the Fatimids, who were the new masters in North Africa, and the Ayyubids, whose empire extended as far as Syria. The crises associated with the Crusades highlighted changing alliances and the possibilities of autonomy. Fustat, which was Egypt's key town, was later re-founded by the Fatimids.



Salah ad-Din's cavalcade (right and below).



THE FATIMIDS. Royal palaces and mosques were built to the north of Fustat, where the Fatimids founded El-Qahira ("the Triumphant One"). Egypt subsequently became one of the centers of international trade. Warehouses, palaces and



Map of Egypt from the manuscript of El-Idrissi (12th century).

mosques provide evidence of the dynamic exchanges that took place in spite of the internal crises of the Fatimid regime and the despotic reign of the sultan El-Hakim (985–1021) ▲ *291* in particular. The Fatimids also made Cairo the capital of a Shi'ite caliphate, an occupation which led to a complete break with ancient traditions (although it did foster, for a while at least, remarkable intellectual activity). The subsequent return to power of the Sunni Muslims, who were led by Salah ad-Din el-Ayyubi, or Saladin (1138–93), did not destroy these achievements. Salah ad-Din built the imposing Citadel ▲ *304* which stands above Cairo on the boundary between the Tulunid and Fatimid cities. He also encouraged the development of the great medersa ● *112*, which were religious colleges.

1167
Frankish support to prevent the Syrians conquering Egypt.

1169–1250
Ayyubid control.

1169
Restoration of Sunni Islam.

THE MAMELUKE EMPIRE IN EGYPT

Under the Mameluke sultans Egypt experienced another brutal revolution linked to the attacks of the Crusaders that the last of the Ayyubids were unable to repel. Baybars founded a regime which lasted for almost three centuries and presented some very distinctive characteristics: Turkish and Circassian soldiers who maintained a non-hereditary power until the end of the 14th century and who, in spite of their bloody power struggles and famed violence, created the only great modern Egyptian empire. In addition to stability of power the Mamelukes also ensured the prosperity and greatness of Egypt and Cairo, especially during the 14th century. As protectors of the Abbasid caliph and the two holy cities of Arabia, the Mamelukes, a vast foreign legion, became indissolubly linked to the history of Egypt, expressing their influence through the magnificence of their palaces and mosques. Above and beyond their defeat by the Ottomans, they continued to be the true masters of Egypt until the accession of Mohammed Ali in the 19th century. The majority of the indigenous Egyptian population had been of the Muslim faith since the 13th century and eventually seemed more Arabian than their Bahrite and North African masters, who were soldiers from the Black Sea or the outlying parts of the Empire.



1193
Death of Salah ad-Din.

1249
Louis IX of France (St Louis) lands at Damietta (Seventh Crusade).

1251–1382
Bahrite Mamelukes.

1260
Baybars comes to power.

1279
Qala'un becomes sultan.

1291
St John of Acre is captured.

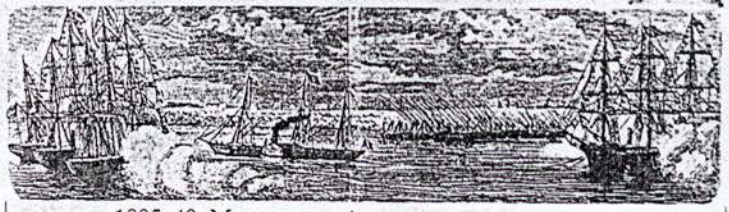
1366
Alexandria is plundered by Pierre de Lusignan.

1382–1517
Circassian Mamelukes.

1382
Sultan Barquq comes to power.

1467
Qaitbay becomes sultan.

1501
Sultanate of Qansu el-Ghuri.



Inauguration of the Suez Canal: arrival of the imperial yacht, *L'Aigle*, at Ismailiya.

1517–1798: Egypt, an Ottoman province

1517
Selim conquers Egypt.

1524
Egypt's new status: administered by a pasha.

1528
Renewal of the capitulations of 1507.

1569
Sinan Pasha's expedition to the Yemen.

1623
First overt rebellions against Istanbul.

Alexandria captured by Napoleon Bonaparte.

1707
Mameluke conflicts in Cairo.

1725
Rebellions and loss of pashas' authority.

1765–98
Mameluke opposition to the Ottomans.

1768
Ali Bey separates Egypt from the Ottoman empire.

When the Mameluke regime fell to the Ottomans Egypt once again became a province, a status which had never before been so clearly defined. The Ottomans mistrusted Egypt's autonomous aspirations and installed a *pasha*, an administrative governor, while the *aga*, or commander, of the Janissaries was responsible for the military. Egypt suffered crises or enjoyed long periods of prosperity according to the particular *pasha* appointed. In real terms the reins of power were held by the *beys* of Cairo, supported by an army that included a large body of Mamelukes who thus recovered much of their former power. During the 18th century the latter were the true masters of Egypt, at a time when Egypt was playing a less prominent role in the history of the eastern Mediterranean, although its continued economic prosperity



was borne out by its architecture as well as the account books of local merchants. Egypt's early commercial links with Europe served as a further indication of this sustained vitality. The accession of Ali Bey, however, in the second half of the 18th century, plunged Egypt into anarchy and left the country teetering on the brink of economic strangulation. The appearance of Bonaparte's fleet on July 1, 1798 came as a complete surprise, and the last Ottoman *pasha* barely had enough time to flee the country.

1798–1805: European interlude

1773
Death of Ali Bey.

1786
An Ottoman fleet is sent to Alexandria.

1788
The beys' return to power is followed by anarchy.

Mohammed Ali.

1798–1803
French occupation.

1803–5
Political vacuum. British presence.

The main advantage of the French presence was that it enabled Egypt to complete the break with Istanbul, even though it nominally remained an Ottoman province until 1914. It also facilitated the establishment of the initial elements of a centralized administration and an awareness of the importance of Egypt's past. The French occupation was too short-lived to make a lasting impression, however. It led, above all, to the installation of mercenaries sent from Istanbul to restore a basic level of order. They included Mehemet-Ali (Mohammed Ali) (1769–1849), the son of a tobacco merchant from Kavala, in Epirus, who seized power after the withdrawal of British troops. Mohammed Ali was the leader of an army of mercenaries who almost became emperor . . . but instead became viceroy.



1805–49: Mohammed Ali

1831
Syrian campaign.

After he had successfully managed to eliminate the last of the Mamelukes, Mohammed Ali played the part of the sultan's faithful servant. He went to Mecca to combat the Wahhabi "heretics", and he restored order in the rest of Egypt and conquered the Sudan. In 1819 he began to form a conquering army, officially to restore the sultan's authority in Greece and Syria, but clearly intended to be used to conquer the entire Ottoman empire. The fundamental reforms carried out in Egypt made the country a model of social and economic development. The Syrian campaign, however, finally provoked an international response. With the support of Great Britain the sultan managed to obtain Mohammed Ali's surrender, in return for which he was offered the hereditary viceroyalty of Egypt. Mohammed Ali's dynasty lasted until 1952.



1840–1922: British control

1862
Cotton boom.

1875
Franco-British financial control.

1881
Orabi Pasha's nationalist movement.

1882
British occupation.

Battle of Tell el-Kebir.

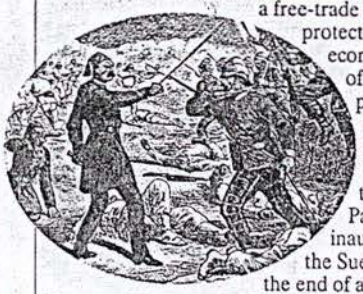
1902
First Aswan Dam.

1907–8
The first Egyptian nationalist parties are founded.

1914
British protectorate.

1919
Saad Zaghlul's national revolution.

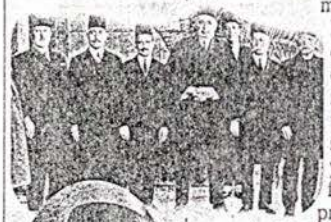
Mohammed Ali's successors were the prisoners of new international relations. Egypt's frontiers had been opened by a free-trade treaty and no longer protected the national economy. The construction of the Suez Canal ▲ *228* pushed the country into an economic dependency which was further aggravated by the cotton boom. Paradoxically the inauguration ceremonies of the Suez Canal in 1869 marked the end of an era and placed the finances of Egypt under Franco-British supervision. The national reaction precipitated the British bombardment of Alexandria and occupation of Cairo. Although Egypt's political and administrative structures remained officially intact, the country was effectively placed under the direct control of Europe. British control assumed two (successive) forms. Until 1914 Egypt remained an Ottoman province, governed by a virtually independent viceroy but under British supervision. In 1914 all links with Istanbul were finally severed but, although Egypt became a monarchy, British control became official and Egypt was declared a protectorate. At the same time this control brought about an unusual political calm. Egypt became a veritable Mediterranean retreat and entered a period of great prosperity and







Banner used in a demonstration by Egyptian women at the opening of the first Parliament in December 1924.



Egyptian ministers in December 1924 and Saad Zaghlul.



1922
End of the protectorate. Fuad I becomes king.

1928
Muslim brotherhoods founded.

1936
Anglo-Egyptian treaty.

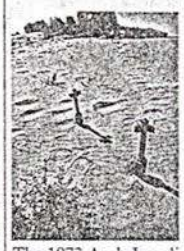
1949
Defeat in the war against Israel.

modernization. The Egyptian social elite grew rich and became aware of their need for independence. In 1907 they formed multicultural, liberal nationalist parties whose members were united in their rejection of the British presence. World War One was scarcely over when their leader, Saad Zaghlul ▲ *281*, declared his intention of demanding full independence for Egypt. The British refusal to receive his delegation (*wafd*) provoked a series of disturbances and strikes. After three years of delays and excuses Great Britain finally decided to declare the end of the protectorate, but the British occupation and control of Egypt continued.

1922–52: Liberal Egypt

The years that followed were known as Egypt's "liberal" era. The Wafd Party made repeated efforts to renegotiate and find an area of common ground with the British, finally succeeding in 1936. The multicultural Egyptian society of the 19th century was gradually disappearing and local elites were clearly Egyptian. However an increasingly corrupt regime condemned the ideology of the liberal model. The voice of Islam was raised in protest and the Muslim brotherhoods were born. Those in power sought legitimacy via the struggle with Israel and the creation of the Arab League, but the contradictions were too obvious and the defeat of 1949 too bitter. Individual acts of violence were followed by riots and, in 1952, the Cairo fire emphasized the powerlessness of the government. Within six months, a few young officers had taken over, abolishing the monarchy before taking up the reins of power. For the first time in its history, the future of Egypt was in the hands of the "sons of Nile *fellaheen*".

1952–70: The Nasser years

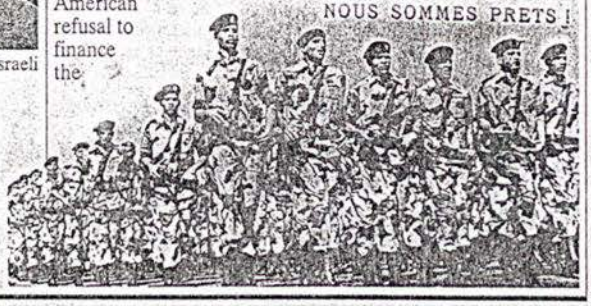


The 1973 Arab-Israeli War.

1952
The Cairo fire and the Free Officers' coup d'état.

1956
Suez Crisis.

The movement away from "liberal" Egypt took place gradually. After offering power to Mohammed Nejib (1901–84), Colonel Gamal Abd el-Nasser (1918–70) assumed total power in 1954 and became the representative of the Third-World countries in Bandung. He declared independence for the Sudan and obtained the departure of the last of the British troops before announcing the nationalization of the Suez Canal, his response to the American refusal to finance the





Gamal Abd el-Nasser.

construction of the Aswan High Dam ▲ *460*. Continued tension led to the military operation of October 1956 which ended with the withdrawal of the combined Israeli, French and British forces and the radicalization of the Egyptian regime, expressed internally by nationalization and the execution of the Muslim brotherhoods, and externally by expulsions and projects for Arab unions. Nasser became the mouthpiece of the Arab world and, in this capacity, prioritized the war with Israel. The Six-Day War in June 1967 ▲ *234* dealt the final blow. Nasser was maintained in power by popular demand but died just as a truce had finally been agreed. However, Arab socialism also brought radical economic changes: there were more big industrial projects, and large towns destroyed the agricultural balance of the Nile Valley. In 1970, in spite of Soviet counsel, Egypt was unable to meet its accumulated deficits and imbalances.



1960
Nationalization.

1961
Agricultural reform.

1967
Six-Day War.

1970
Nasser dies.

1971
Inauguration of the Aswan High Dam.

1972
Expulsion of Soviet advisors.

1973
Fourth Arab-Israeli (October) War.

1974
"Open door" policy.

Camp David Agreements.

1971–81: U-turns

This series of difficulties led Egypt to turn to the West and the new Gulf States. Anwar el-Sadat (1918–81) began to open up the economy to the West (*infitah*). By liberalizing the markets he risked destabilizing the middle classes on whose support Nasser had depended, but he intended to counter this weakness with rapid economic growth. Peace with Israel was a vital part of the process and the fourth Arab-Israeli War in October 1973 ▲ *235*, in which neither side managed to procure victory, provided an opportunity for the necessary negotiations which ended with the Camp David Agreements and the return of Sinai to Egypt. An economic upturn, however, was not forthcoming; or at least not for everyone. Inequalities became more pronounced and gave rise to violent social tensions. The Islamic movements re-emerged and Sadat paid with his life.

At the crossroads. From this point onward Egypt has tried to overcome its contradictions. The peace with Israel did not prevent its reintegration into the Arab-Muslim camp. Its neighbors are intent on avoiding a destabilization which could plunge the region into uncontrollable chaos. Meanwhile the number of Western loans is increasing, accompanied by a policy of liberalization and control. But growing social unrest is matched by the mounting strength of the Islamic groups which represent the only form of structured opposition. Although briefly tempted by reconciliation, the government of Hosni Mubarak has been forced to adopt a confrontational stance since 1990. Today Egypt stands at a crossroads.

1978
Camp David.

1981
President Sadat is assassinated.

1981
The Sharia becomes the primary source of judicial law.



1991
Confrontations between Copts and Muslims.

1992
Demonstration over the cost of living.



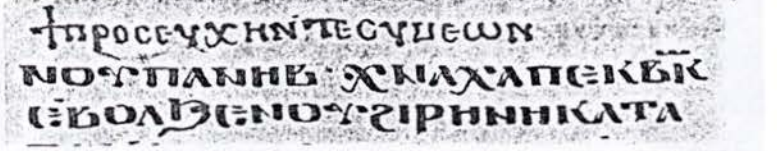
Bilingual Coptic prayer book. The text written in the right-hand column is in Arabic, while the left-hand column is in Coptic.

FROM COPTIC TO ARABIC

The Arab conquest represents a fundamental break in the history of Egypt which is reflected in its language. During the next thousand years Arabic spread throughout Egypt, not only keeping pace with conversions to Islam but also explaining them. In 706 Arabic became the language of official documents. Whereas the early conquerors had Coptic prayers translated to ensure that they were not offensive to Islam, the lessons of the Scriptures, which, during services, were read in Greek and explained in Coptic, were soon read in Coptic and explained in Arabic. Coptic became a devotional language, which saved it from oblivion but did not prevent its irreversible decline. It was only kept alive by the monastic tradition. Place names are the only surviving evidence of the Coptic revenge on the Greeks during the Arab conquest: Akhmim ▲ *383* and Ashmunein, for example, both take their origin from their original Coptic names. The Jewish community was also Arabized, since from the 19th century onward commercial texts were written in Judeo-Arabic, which is Arabic that has been transcribed into Hebrew characters.

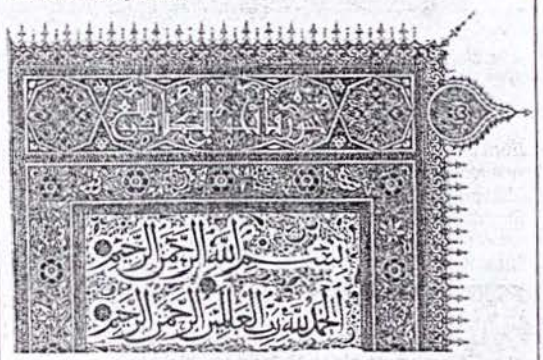


Covers of novels written in Arabic by Naguib Mahfouz ● *160*. Although he makes extensive use of the Cairene dialect, his novels are read throughout the Arab world.



CLASSICAL AND DIALECTICAL ARABIC

As a result, Egypt became one of the main centers of Arabic culture, as evidenced not only by an extremely active academy of the Arabic language but also by the screening of Egyptian films in cinemas throughout the world. The growing importance of the Nile Valley, bordered by Arab countries, has finally relegated the traditional division between classical and dialectical Arabic to a position of secondary importance. But as well as being understood well beyond Egypt's natural borders (a phenomenon largely due to the media), this Arabic dialect also has a written form. The work of Naguib Mahfouz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, is a famous example: his extremely "classical" approach is interspersed with many so-called "Egyptianisms". Opposition to this predominance of dialect is either ideological or political. For example, the language of the Koran must be jealously protected because it alone can strengthen the union of all Arabs, be they Muslim or non-Muslim. It should be pointed out, however, that the debate on the "levels of language" is, generally speaking, inappropriate. On the one hand modern classical Arabic is significantly different from the language of the Koran and, on the other, the dialects have borrowed from the terms and structures of modern Arabic. Apart from that, all that remains are the phonetic and semantic differences which make it possible to distinguish between the dialects of Upper and Lower Egypt, and the relative poverty or richness of vocabulary according to social class and background.



A MULTILINGUAL SOCIETY

In spite of the absolute dominance of Arabic, several European languages are strongly represented. Most well-to-do Egyptian families are bi- or even tri-lingual. The education system and the legacy of liberal Egypt are mainly responsible. In the 19th century French enjoyed second-language status in Egypt and was used in mixed courts and all administration. It was only between 1936 and 1949 that all references to French, English and Italian were excluded from official documents. However, the future of these multilingual skills, which constitute one of the riches of Egyptian culture, is guaranteed by religious teaching establishments and language schools.

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن ه و ي

THE TWENTY-EIGHT LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET. From top to bottom, starting on the left: alif, ba, ta, tha, jim, ha, kha, dal, zal, ra, za, sin, shin, sad, daad, ta, za, aïn, ghaïn, fa, qaf, kaf, lam, min, nun, ha, waw, ya.



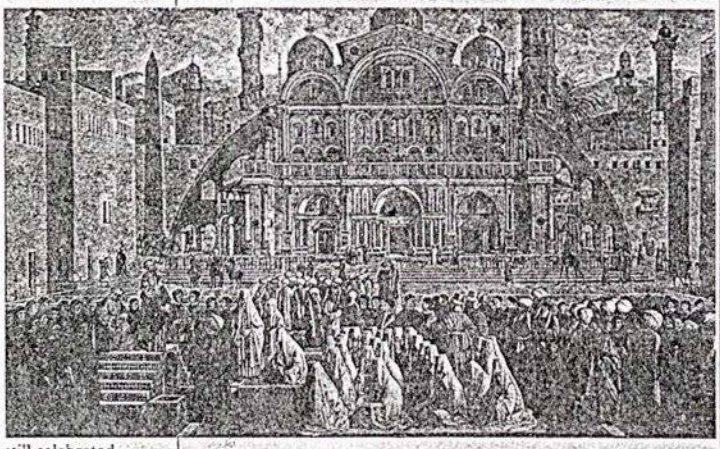


At prayer in the mosque (right) and a prayer mat embroidered with the one hundred names of Allah (below).

The Coptic Church

A few traces of Egypt's ancient religious traditions have survived. Although the "Night of the Tear" has disappeared with the Nile floods, the Festival of Spring is still celebrated throughout Egypt, and in Luxor the Nile boatmen still carry the barque of their saint just as the Ancient Egyptians carried the sacred barque of Amun ▲ *408*. But these surviving remnants are few and far between.

Since the 12th and 13th centuries Egypt has been a predominately Muslim country. As the number of Arab garrisons increased the Coptic Christians gradually converted to Islam, often to escape the financial penalties and social restrictions imposed on non-Muslims. Initially the Coptic Church welcomed the Arabs, who were seen as liberators.



Saint Mark preaching in Alexandria (above).

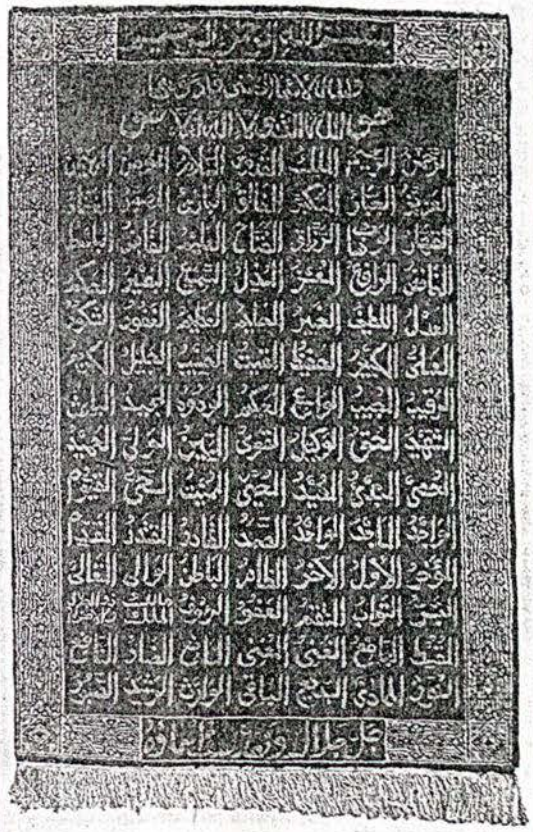
The adoption of the Monophysite doctrine was probably, and primarily, a means of opposing the Byzantines who, by way of reprisal, gradually closed the Coptic churches and monasteries. By marginalizing Alexandria's Hellenized (Jewish and Greek) elite and maintaining local administration, the Arabs enabled the exiled bishops to return to their sees, allowing freedom of worship and authorizing synods. The burden of financial penalties and the increasingly clear affirmation of Muslim sovereignty ruined many monasteries and led to rebellions and conversions. Christians had to wear a distinguishing mark, and the rebuilding of ruined churches was forbidden. There were several mass conversions (in particular in 725, 832 and 1171), which continued throughout the following centuries, with another significant conversion in Upper Egypt in 1750. Since the 13th century the Copts have tended to congregate in Middle and Upper Egypt.



The Coptic abbot Shenute officiating at a Christmas mass in a Coptic church.

Islam in Egypt

The Sunni branch of Islam was subsequently imposed throughout Egypt. In spite of two centuries of Shi'ite domination (969–1169) by the Fatimids, Egyptian Islam was an orthodox form whose principal rite was that of the Shafi'ite school. The only remaining Shi'ites were the Persian traders in Cairo. The El-Azhar ▲ *294* Mosque perpetuated this orthodox form of Islam by educating most of the doctors of Islamic law (*ulama*) destined to become prayer leaders in Egypt. From the Mameluke period onward, the major issues that had troubled Islam in its early stages were resolved. Religious teaching decided on its line of approach and mystical theology was included in the technical and moral teaching disseminated by the intermediaries of the *ulama* class. The Jewish and Christian minorities enjoyed a clearly defined protected status.





The mainstays of Islam

Islam was the religion taught in Mecca by the prophet Mohammed (born c. 570–580, died 632). On July 16, 622 Mohammed and his companions left Mecca for Medina, the date which marks the beginning of the "Hegira" (exile) or Muslim era. Islam preaches obedience to the only God, Allah, his prophet, Mohammed, and the book revealed to him, the Koran. The five religious duties of all Muslims are the *shahada* (profession of faith, that Allah is the only God and that Mohammed is His prophet), *salat* (prayer five times a day), *zakat* (charity), *sawm* (the fast of Ramadan) and, at least once during their life, *hajj* (the pilgrimage to Mecca).

Fractures and divisions

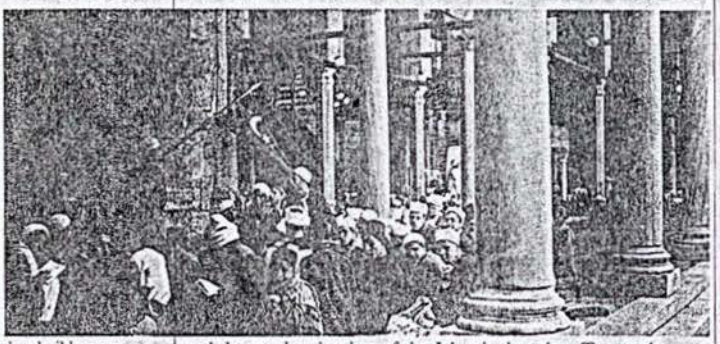
This balance was maintained until the 19th century, which saw the abolition of protected status for Armenian orthodox minorities by Mohammed Ali in an attempt to guarantee their support, and the sudden arrival of the European powers in Egypt, who introduced a number of new and competitive religious communities.



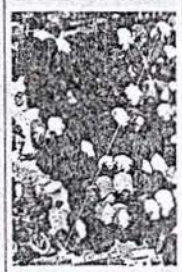


"El-Azhar was gradually waking up, roused from its torpor by the sound of the sheikhs' voices as they taught their lessons, punctuated by the discussions that arose, often acrimoniously, between them and their pupils. The students crowded round, voices were raised, sounds became merged and the sheikhs were obliged to raise their voices even higher in order to make themselves heard. They were sometimes even forced to adopt stentorian tones to pronounce the phrase 'God is all-knowing', which brought the lesson to a close."

Taha Hussein



The Egyptian Copts were caught up in the process and classified as Catholic or orthodox Copts, of the Latin or Oriental rite, either independent or assimilated. In 1900 there was a total of nineteen different Christian and Jewish institutional rites. The Muslims attempted to respond to this new upsurge of minority groups by calling for a reinterpretation of the religious texts and the modernization of the Islamic doctrine. Two main fracture lines were appearing around the constitution of the national movement, however: on the one hand, opposition between Egyptians (Copts and Muslims) and foreigners and, on the other, the less apparent opposition between Muslims and other groups. There seemed to be an initial movement away from a liberal Egypt toward Nasser's Egypt. Religious matters were relegated to a position of secondary importance as successive regimes became increasingly secular in outlook, in spite of a very strong Islamic representation.



FRIDAY PRAYERS AT THE EL-HUSSEIN MOSQUE
Friday is a public holiday in Egypt and the day when Muslims gather at the mosque for their weekly prayer meeting.

DEMANDS OF ISLAM. With the creation of the Muslim brotherhoods in 1928, the religious demands of Islam were very much in evidence, reaching a climax in the early 1980's when Islamic law was declared the primary source of judicial law. A parallel Coptic movement was established, while the expulsions of the Nasser regime considerably reduced the status of other communities. In 1956 the disappearance of the ancient Jewish community, the direct descendant of Alexandrian gnosis, was closely linked to the development of Islam. Against this background the future of the Coptic Church in Egypt and its four million worshippers became the symbol of Islamic-Christian cohabitation. It encountered increasingly bitter antagonism from the Islamic groups, who favored a return to the original hierarchy that recognized the protected status but not the equality of other religious groups. It should, however, be remembered that this exclusive form of Islam is in the minority, while the brotherhoods (*turuq*) and traditional structures of Azharist Islam continue to be the mainstays of religion in Egypt.

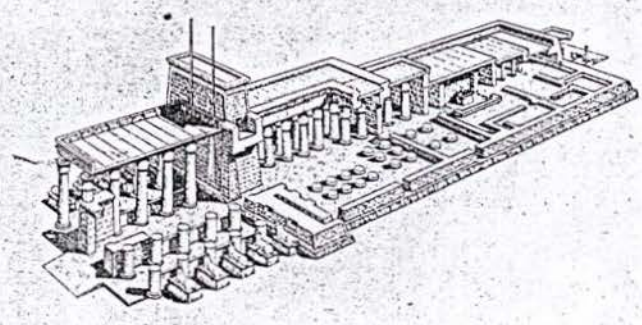
ARCHITECTURE

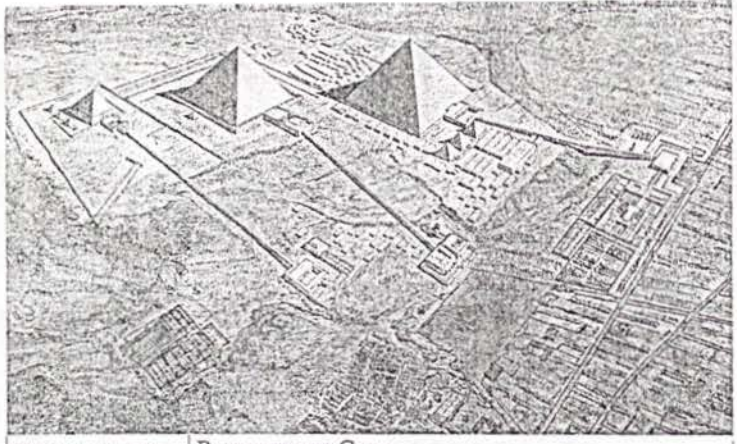


PHARAONIC ARCHITECTURE
CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES, *78*
RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE, *82*
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THE MAGIC OF THE PYRAMIDS
The Great Pyramid, the largest of the three Pyramids of Giza, is the only one of the Seven Wonders of the World (as defined by classical antiquity) to have survived to the present day. With its two neighbors and the Sphinx, ever watchful at the foot of the plateau, the Great Pyramid continues to fire the imagination of all those who see it. It owes its survival to the simplicity and perfection of its design.

PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

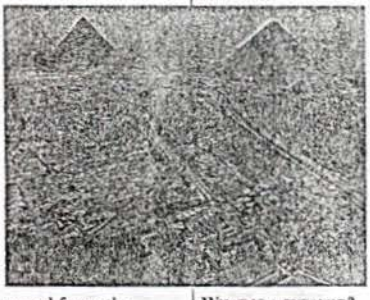
The "Pyramids" are situated on the desert plateau which marks the boundary of the vast urban complex of Giza (pronounced with a hard "g"), which is in fact a suburb of Cairo. Today there is a tendency to refer to the "Pyramids of Giza" even though the Egyptian name for the site is *El-Ahram* ("the Pyramids"), a name which was also used by Western visitors prior to the meteoric rise of the village of Giza. Although the site extends beyond the plateau of Giza and despite the fact that there are many other pyramids in the Libyan Desert (in an area extending from Abu Rawash in the north to Lisht ▲ *356* in the south), the exclusivity of the name is justified by the sheer magnificence of these three pyramids, which have been renowned since classical antiquity and even from the time of the Ancient Egyptians. The pyramids are in fact the tombs of three 4th-Dynasty pharaohs: Khufu (Cheops in Greek), Khafre (Chephren) and Menkaure (Mycerinus).

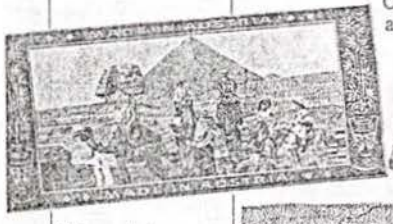
PYRAMIDS. The Egyptian pyramids, from the Pyramid of Khufu (an unrivaled architectural masterpiece) to the more modest pyramids belonging to less powerful or less ambitious pharaohs, were tombs reserved for the pharaohs of the Old Kingdom (3rd–6th Dynasties) and part of the Middle Kingdom (11th–12th Dynasties) and their queens. They are the principal element of a large architectural complex which, in addition to the actual pyramid, consisted of a funerary or "upper" temple, a small pyramid or "annex" (of religious or symbolic significance), and a causeway leading to a valley or "lower" temple which stood at the foot of the plateau, on the edge of the desert, and was linked to the Nile by a dock and a canal. The perfect and to some extent elementary design of the Pyramids of Giza in particular was the product of a long process which took place over several centuries incorporating various stages of development: superposed mastabas and the so-called "step" pyramids ● *84*. The form of the monument also has several levels of symbolic significance. The pyramid was in fact the means by which the dead pharaoh rose to the firmament and joined the sun, far from the shadows of the tomb. It was also seen as an emanation of this heavenly body, the mineral concretization of the sun's rays. These are only two interpretations from an entire spectrum of symbolic images that the Ancient Egyptians associated with the pyramid. In spite of the many remaining obscurities (a situation which is not helped by the lack of any pre-5th Dynasty inscriptions in these sometimes gigantic monuments), there is still sufficient information to identify the occupants of the pyramids, even though most traces of them and their funeral paraphernalia have long since disappeared from the monuments they commissioned.

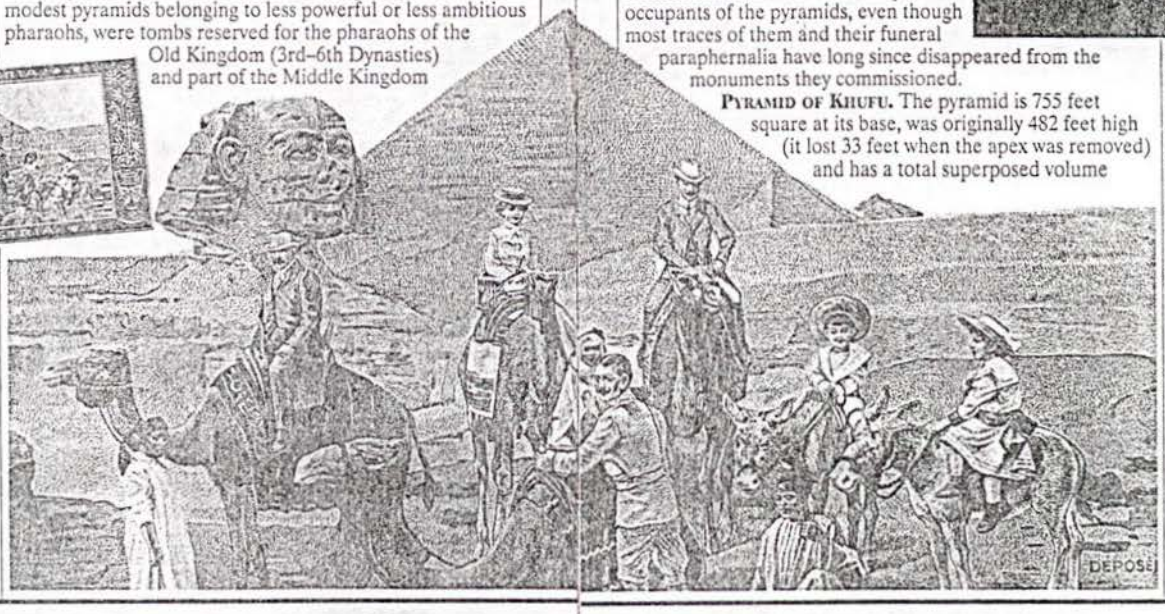
PYRAMID OF KHUFU. The pyramid is 755 feet square at its base, was originally 482 feet high (it lost 33 feet when the apex was removed) and has a total superposed volume



AVENUE OF THE PYRAMIDS
Once a pleasant, tree-lined avenue (left) led to the Pyramids of Giza. Today they are reached via a very ordinary and seemingly endless approach road, which has developed haphazardly and uncontrolledly, with its constant stream of traffic, hotch-potch of apartment blocks and bars interspersed with a few fields, and the gilt grandiloquence of the *Mena House Hotel*, formerly one of the grand palaces which marked the main staging posts on the India and Far East route.





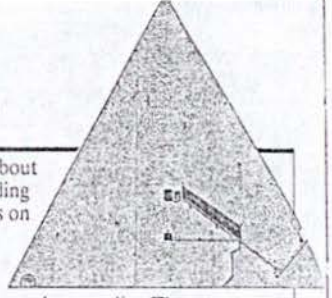


"I know that philosophers may groan or smile at the thought that the greatest monument ever created by mankind is a tomb; but why see the Pyramid of Cheops merely as a pile of stones and a skeleton."
François René de Chateaubriand

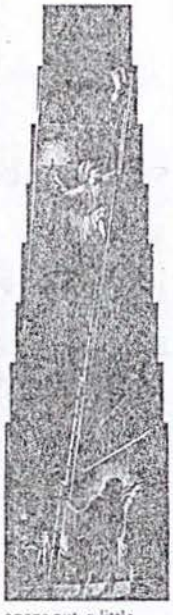
WHAT IS A PYRAMID?
An Egyptian pyramid is nothing more than a tomb, in spite of what may have been or may be said by those lovers of false mysteries, the so-called "pyramidologists" and the adherents of a similar bogus form of Egyptology. But this is neither disheartening nor disappointing if it is considered within the context of Ancient Egyptian culture and its view of life, death and the divine monarchy. Nor does it detract from the often huge merit of those who designed and constructed these monuments.

"TO THE WEST STOOD THE PYRAMIDS, SWATHED IN GOLD DUST AND THE FIRE OF THE SETTING SUN."

AUGUSTE MARIETTE



CORRIDORS AND GALLERIES A descending gallery leads from the entrance of the pyramid to an unfinished underground chamber hewn out of the living rock of the plateau. At one point it intersects an ascending corridor that widens and

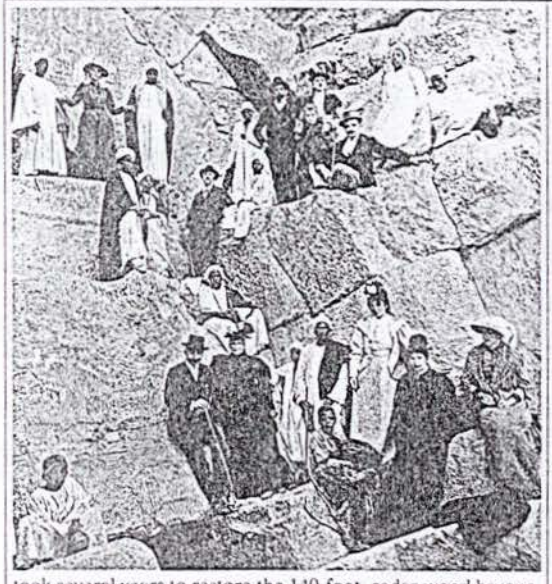


opens out, a little further on, into the 28-foot-high Grand Gallery with its striking corbeled courses.

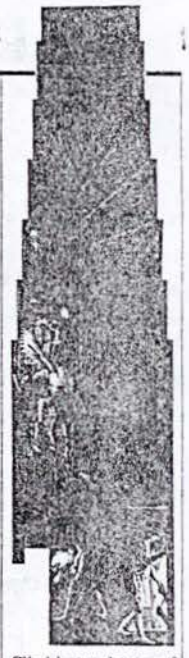
(assuming it were solid) of about 88 million cubic feet. According to tradition the entrance was on the north side and the corridors were aligned with the circumpolar stars ever-present on the horizon to ensure immortality. The present ENTRANCE, lower than the original entrance, is linked by a passageway to the "real" access corridor. There is "nothing to see" in the pyramid apart from the pyramid itself, whose interior construction and remarkable atmosphere (although the stale air can sometimes be tiring) make it a true architectural masterpiece.

INSIDE THE PYRAMID. The layout of the chambers and passageways inside the pyramid has been modified over the years. The descending gallery intersects an ascending corridor that opens out into the Grand Gallery. From the bottom of the gallery a horizontal passage leads into the so-called QUEEN'S CHAMBER (these traditional names have no factual basis). At the top of the Grand Gallery a sort of antechamber with granite portcullises leads into the main chamber, known as the KING'S CHAMBER. The precision and perfection of its construction make the chamber, which is almost 20 feet high, 34 feet long and 17 feet wide, an unrivaled piece of architecture. It is entirely sheathed in granite and the ceiling consists of granite monoliths. Above the chamber five "discharge" compartments were built to relieve the enormous weight above the ceiling. There is no doubt that this was the burial chamber of Khufu himself. The king's lidless granite sarcophagus is still in the chamber, although entirely empty, most probably plundered toward the end of the Old Kingdom. The architectural complex of Khufu is not limited to these underground chambers. The funerary or "UPPER" TEMPLE with its basalt flagging can still be seen on the east side of the pyramid. Recent (1992–3) discoveries have also made it possible to excavate part of the valley or "lower" temple, as well as a so-called "annex" pyramid in the village of Nazlet el-Saman.

SOLAR BARQUE. The so-called "Solar Barque" is preserved in an unprepossessing building, on the south side of the pyramid, above the 100-foot boat pit in which it was discovered, completely dismantled, in 1954. It

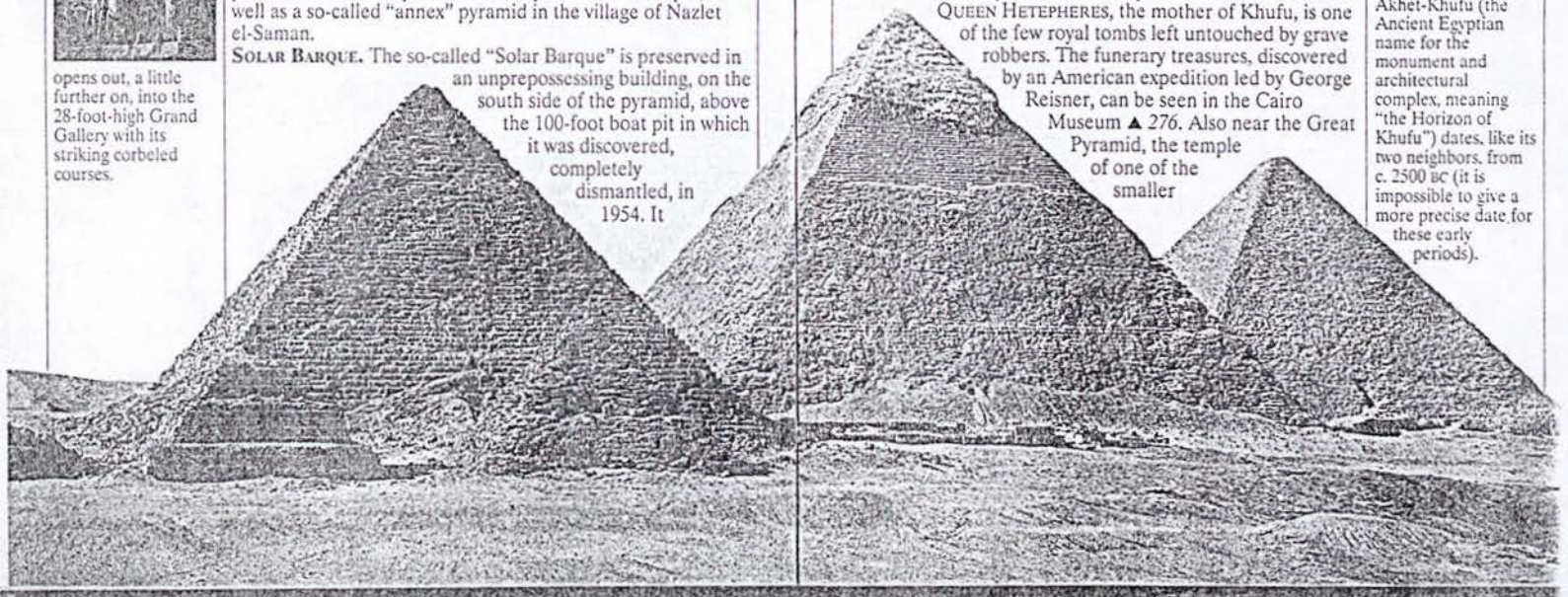


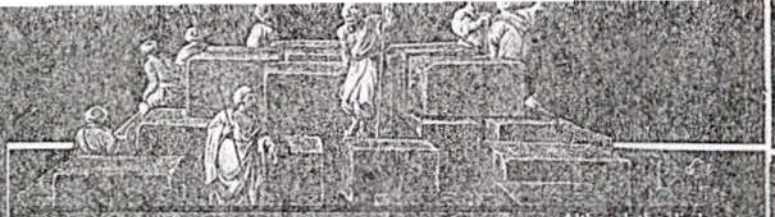
took several years to restore the 140-foot, cedar-wood barque to its original elegance, complete with cabin and long oars. All the elements are joined with ropes and pegs, with not a nail in sight. The significance of such grandiose vessels is still the subject of much discussion. They may have actually been used, in particular for the king's funeral, or they may have been a representation of the Night- and Day-Barques of the Sun: a promise of immortality or at least of resurrection. Near the Pyramid of Khufu are two other monuments which, although they cannot be visited and are relatively unattractive, form part of the history of the site. The TOMB OF QUEEN HETEPHERES, the mother of Khufu, is one of the few royal tombs left untouched by grave robbers. The funerary treasures, discovered by an American expedition led by George Reisner, can be seen in the Cairo Museum ▲ 276. Also near the Great Pyramid, the temple of one of the smaller

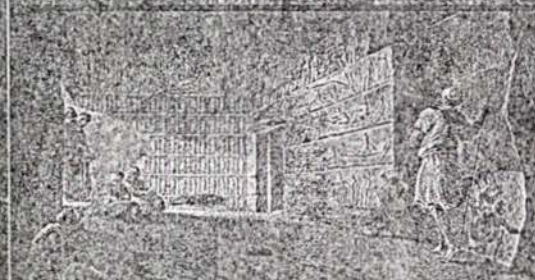


Climbing to the top of the pyramid was for a long time an obligatory if dangerous pastime among (even some of the most illustrious) tourists. This is now strictly forbidden.

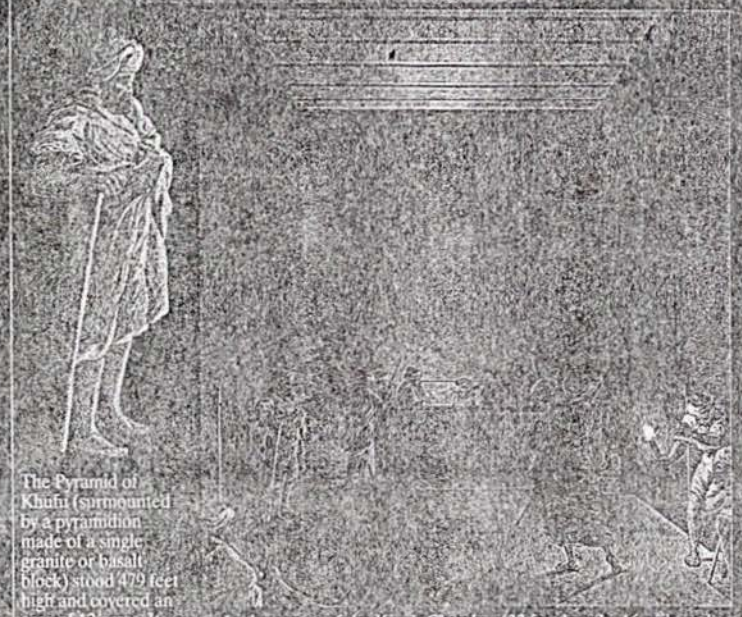
Akhet-Khufu (the Ancient Egyptian name for the monument and architectural complex, meaning "the Horizon of Khufu") dates, like its two neighbors, from c. 2500 BC (it is impossible to give a more precise date for these early periods).





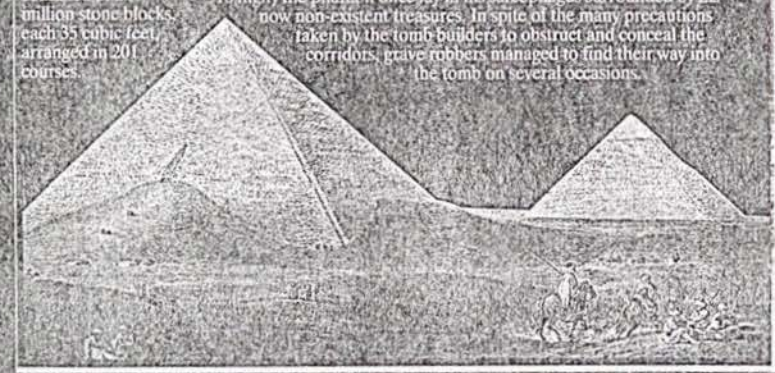


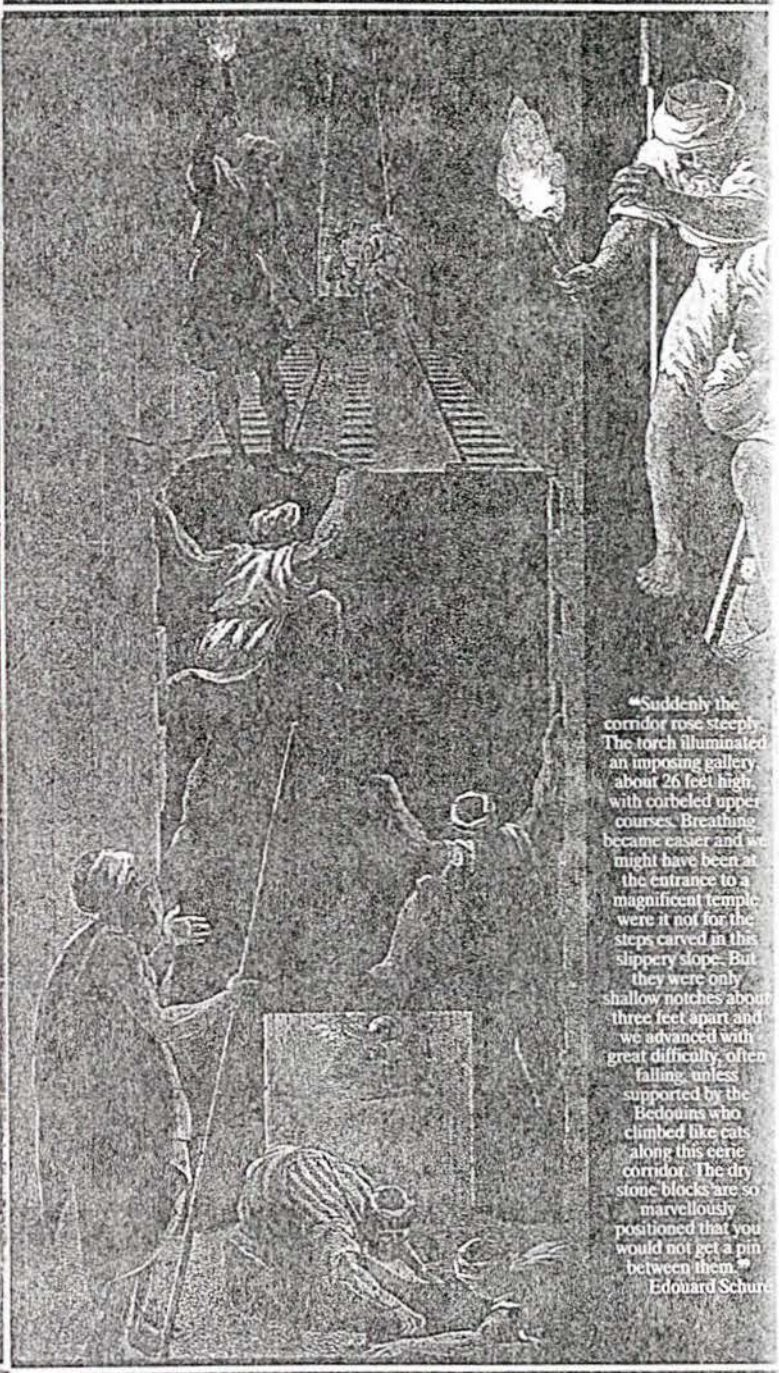
Although the climb to the top of the Pyramid of Khufu (Cheops) was perilous, it still proved a very popular undertaking among travelers and tourists. Each block of stone measured between 2 and 3 feet and the climb was far from easy.



The Pyramid of Khufu (surmounted by a pyramidion made of a single granite or basalt block) stood 479 feet high and covered an area of 12 acres. It consisted of 2½ million stone blocks, each 35 cubic feet, arranged in 201 courses.

In the center of the King's Chamber (33 feet long by 16 wide and 16 high) the pharaoh once lay in his sarcophagus surrounded by his now non-existent treasures. In spite of the many precautions taken by the tomb builders to obstruct and conceal the corridors, grave robbers managed to find their way into the tomb on several occasions.



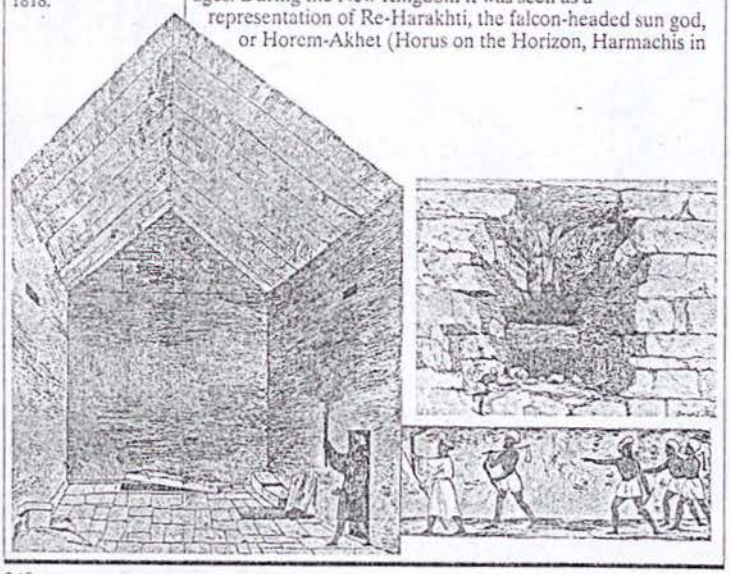


"Suddenly the corridor rose steeply. The torch illuminated an imposing gallery about 26 feet high, with corbeled upper courses. Breathing became easier and we might have been at the entrance to a magnificent temple were it not for the steps carved in this slippery slope. But they were only shallow notches about three feet apart and we advanced with great difficulty, often falling, unless supported by the Bedouins who climbed like cats along this eerie corridor. The dry stone blocks are so marvellously positioned that you would not get a pin between them."
Edouard Schure

"The first block of granite was discovered on February 28; the following day, March 1, we uncovered three blocks of the same stone, one on either side and one above [the first], and all inclined toward the center. My hopes and expectations were raised by this discovery which I felt foretold of immediate success. Indeed, the next day, March 2, at noon, we finally reached the real entrance of the pyramid."

Giovanni Battista Belzoni

Drawings by Belzoni © 95 showing the exposed entrance of the Pyramid of Khafre and the interior of the great burial chamber which he discovered in 1818.



(queens' or princesses') pyramids in the complex of Khufu was later converted into the SHRINE OF ISIS, "Mistress of the Pyramid" and *paredra* of Osiris, "Lord of Su-menu", whose own shrine was situated not far from the Sphinx, on the edge of the desert.

PYRAMID OF KHAFRE. Although the pyramid of Khafre (Chephren) is not quite as big (originally over 470 feet high, today over 446 feet) as his father's, it is nonetheless a striking sight with its white "cap" at the apex, the remains of the dazzling limestone casing which once completely covered the pyramids of both Khufu and Khafre. The interior is less complicated but just as impressive as that of Khufu. The Pyramid of Khafre, however, is renowned not so much just for itself but for the entire pyramidal complex: the partly preserved ascending causeway (descending if you approach it from the pyramid) and, lower down, at the entrance to the valley (where there is now a Sound and Light Auditorium), the impressive and extremely well-preserved valley or "lower" temple. Abu Hol, the Great Sphinx, which has become indissociably linked with the Pyramids, is also a "must" for all visitors to Egypt.

THE SPHINX. The Sphinx of Giza was undoubtedly carved out of a rocky spur which suggested its shape. Although it has long been the victim of erosion, and damage from upsurges of underground water, it has been cleared of sand and restored several times since antiquity, and remains one of the undisputed wonders of a civilization renowned for its architectural achievements. This colossus of Khafre (240 feet long and 65 feet high) is both the guardian and symbol of royalty. Other meanings have been attributed to it over the ages. During the New Kingdom it was seen as a representation of Re-Harakhti, the falcon-headed sun god, or Horem-Akhet (Horus on the Horizon, Harmachis in Greek), whom everyone came to worship and entreat. Young princes raised in Memphis came here either to meditate upon the concept of power or in search of legitimacy. Legend has it that the future Thutmose IV built a stele between the feet of the Sphinx following a dream that he had there in which the god Harmachis asked him to clear away the sand from his feet in return for his royalty. During the New Kingdom the Sphinx was also seen as a representation of the Syro-Canaanite god Hurun: an illustration of the ambient cosmopolitanism and the cultural and religious parallels of the period.

PYRAMID OF MENKAURE. The Pyramid of Menkaure (Mycerinus), which is much smaller than the other two, is beautifully constructed, distinguished by its red granite lower courses and extremely well-preserved underground chambers. An enormous stone sarcophagus that was found inside the pyramid and sent to England in the 19th century was unfortunately lost when the ship transporting it sank off the coast of Spain. Visitors who are leaving Menkaure are reminded of the semi-legendary tradition that the pyramid was built by Nitocris, the queen of the last of the 6th-Dynasty pharaohs (who is sometimes confused with the Saite courtesan Rhodopis). Until the 19th century it was generally believed that the pyramid was haunted and that as it approached noon the ghostly figure of a beautiful, naked woman would appear and cause the downfall of overzealous visitors.

"View of the Sphinx, Abu Hol (Father of Terror). The gray of the sand, the Pyramids and the Sphinx are steeped in a deep rosy hue; in the intensely blue sky eagles glide and circle slowly round the summits."

Gustave Flaubert



". . . NOT A HIDEOUS COMPOUND ANIMAL . . . BUT A SACRED SYMBOL OF THE UNION OF THE STRONGEST PHYSICAL WITH THE HIGHEST INTELLECTUAL POWER ON EARTH."
HARRIET MARTINEAU



Head of the Great Sphinx, by Luigi Mayer (1755–1803).



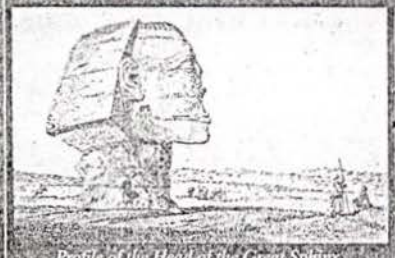
Oedipus, oil on canvas by Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824–1904).



The Sphinx, watercolor by Emile Prisse d'Avenne (1807–79).



Head of the Great Sphinx and the Pyramids of Giza, print by David Roberts (1796–1864).



Profile of the Head of the Great Sphinx, by Frederik Ludvig Norden (1708–42).



View of the Head of the Great Sphinx and the Second Pyramid, by L.F. Cassas (1756–1827).



The Sphinx and the Pyramid of Giza, drawing by Louis-Amable Crapelet (1822–67).



Simoon in the Desert, print by David Roberts (1796–1825).

For a long time the Sphinx (which dates from c. 2500 BC) remained engulfed by sand. In 1853 Auguste Mariette ● 96 began to clear it, a task which was completed over forty years later. *The Sphinx* (right), by David Roberts.

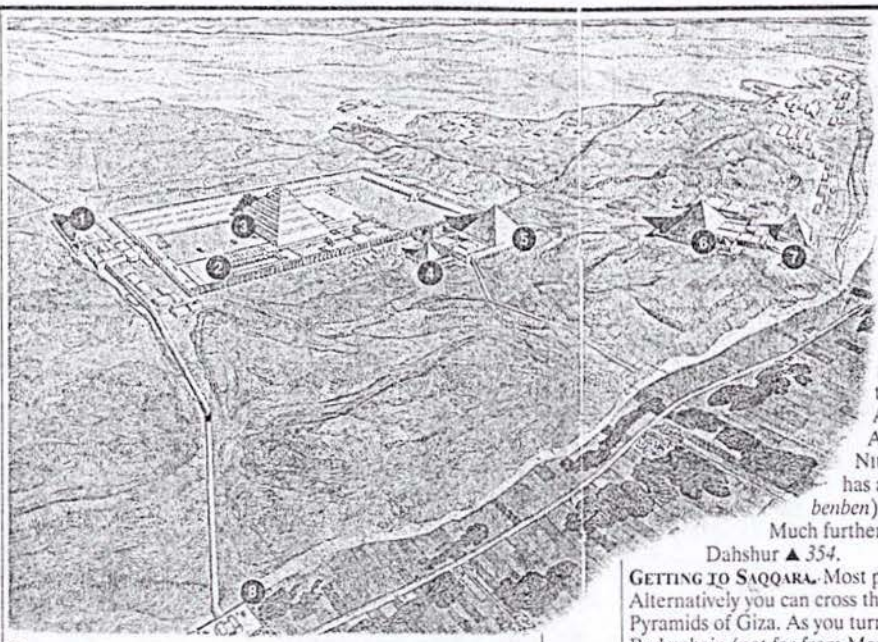


"Its head, neck, shoulders, and breasts are still uncovered; its face, though worn and broken, is mild, amiable, and intelligent, seeming, among the tombs around it, like a divinity guarding the dead."
John Lloyd Stephens



1 Pyramid of Unis
2 Jubilee chapels
3 Step Pyramid
4 Pyramid of Neferirkare
5 Pyramid of Userkaf
6 Tety's Pyramid
7 Pyramid of Merikare
8 Valley Temple

One/two days



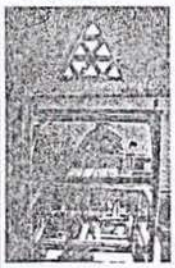
SAQQARA

With Giza ▲ *334*, Saqqara is one of the two main necropolises of Memphis ▲ *332*. Its monuments cover every period of Egyptian history, including the Archaic period (these are now engulfed by sand), the 3rd Dynasty and the Christian era. Stretching across the desert is a string of non-royal pyramids and cemeteries which also depended on Memphis. Although these sites may not feature on many tourist itineraries (some are in any case military zones and therefore out of bounds), they are an important part of understanding Ancient Egypt and especially the Old Kingdom. North of Giza, at the point where the Nile Delta begins to diverge, the remains of the Pyramid of Djededfre, the son of Khufu, can be seen at ABU RAWASH. To the south is the site (out of bounds) of ZAWIYET EL-ARYAN with its unfinished pyramid, which is in fact a vast, preliminary excavation.

ABUSIR. The Abusir cemetery contains the pyramids of the principal 5th-Dynasty pharaohs: (from north to south) Sahure, Niuserre, Neferirkare and Neferefre, all closely associated with the worship of the solar god Re (who forms part of each of their names). The pyramids are of average size and badly preserved although some still have their causeway (access ramp) and part of their funerary temple. The vast TOMB OF PTAHSHEPSES, situated between the Pyramids of Sahure and Niuserre, has been excavated and restored by an expedition from Czechoslovakia, which has worked regularly on the site for many years. The tomb is well worth a visit. A short walk across the desert brings you to the site of the sun temples of ABU GHUROB, to the north of Abusir. The TEMPLE OF NIUSERRE is open to the sky and has a central obelisk (known as a *benben*) symbolizing the light of the sun. Much further south are the Pyramids of Dahshur ▲ *354*.

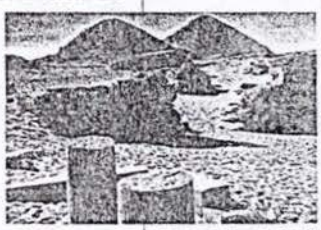
GETTING TO SAQQARA. Most people travel to Saqqara by road. Alternatively you can cross the desert on horseback from the Pyramids of Giza. As you turn west at Bedrashein (not far from Memphis) it soon becomes obvious, whether you are following the road along the canal or the main highway leading toward Upper Egypt, that the region is becoming an albeit distant and partly agricultural suburb of Cairo. The landscape becomes increasingly urban: factories, poultry farms, houses, highways, private villas and "carpet schools" (which are nothing more than workshops and shops centered around the mass tourist industry). The village of HARRANIA, a few miles from the main pyramid route is an interesting place to stop. It is the home of the famous carpet weavers who work in the Wissa Wassef ▲ *282* workshop (which also has a shop). As you leave the road which follows the canal and fork right (toward the west), the plateau will gradually come into view with the summit of the Step Pyramid over to the left. Once through the ticket barrier the road (which soon becomes a track) takes you into the heart of this vast site whose archeological and artistic wealth is truly overwhelming. As there are usually only a few hours allowed for this visit, it is important to be selective and well organized. The many monuments at Saqqara are often some distance apart, but you will find it extremely rewarding if you take your time walking across the plateau.

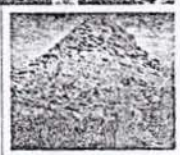
HARRANIA
The architect Ramesses Wissa Wassef ▲ *282* trained young artists (in whom he recognized spontaneity and an innate sense of beauty) who, from early childhood, had revived an extremely ancient tradition and achieved total mastery of design and color in their carpets. His work was continued after his death and the carpets produced in his workshop are unrivaled, in spite of many imitations.



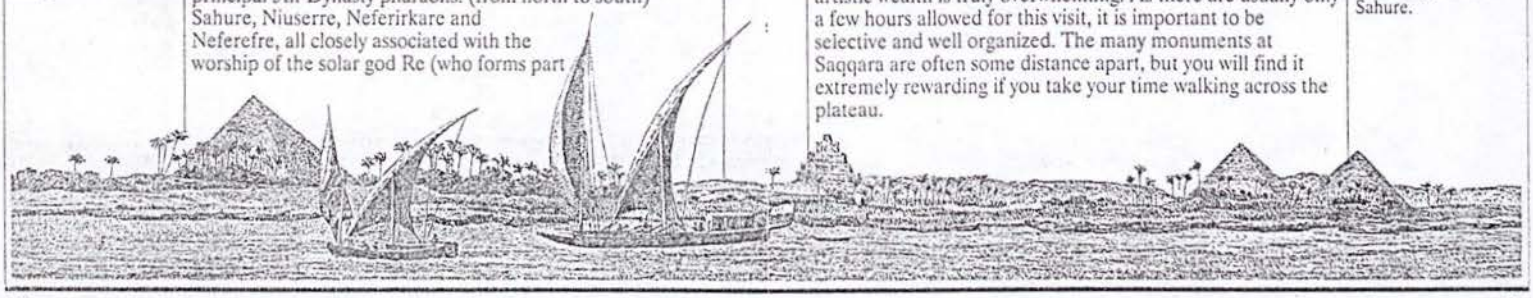


NECROPOLIS OF MEMPHIS
Generally speaking the various branches of the Necropolis of Memphis correspond to a fairly recent (19th-century) breakdown which linked each site to a modern village in the valley, although these subdivisions are not always well founded. For example, north and central Saqqara are more closely linked to Abusir than to South Saqqara. And it should not be forgotten that the site is in the desert "west of Memphis".



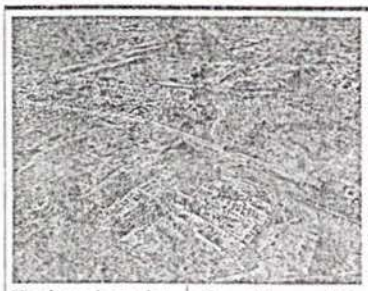


Necropolis of Abusir: the pyramids of Niuserre and Neferirkare (right), and the Pyramid of Sahure.









The funeral complex of Djoser with the remains of the Monastery of St Jeremiah in the foreground.

Jubilee chapels The pavilions and chapels (in fact a series of décors and façades whose stone



doors are permanently open onto passageways suitable for ghostly processions) were built by Imhotep to immortalize Djoser's jubilee celebrations.

Step Pyramid. The visit usually starts with the Step Pyramid and vast funeral complex of Djoser, the 3rd-Dynasty pharaoh. The complex is truly remarkable, if only for its building materials, as this was the first monumental structure to be built entirely of stone. It is also one of the most ancient monuments in Egypt, and even the world, as it dates from c. 2500 BC. Imhotep, the highly talented architect and master of works of Djoser, was also a vizier, doctor of medicine and literary scholar. Over the centuries the figure of Imhotep assumed a superhuman dimension, becoming a sort of demigod of medicine and healing whom the Greeks associated with Asclepius (Aesculapius). The Step Pyramid of Djoser is the culmination of an entire stage of development. Originally the pharaoh's tomb looked like a huge mastaba which was subsequently altered several times until it looked like several superposed mastabas, hence the six "steps" of the pyramid. Small stone blocks replaced the mudbrick used in the construction of previous royal tombs. The pyramid stands above a vast network of underground galleries, with stelae and blue-tiled chambers. Only the so-called Saïte gallery, refurbished for technical reasons at a later date, can be visited.

The funeral complex of Djoser. The funeral complex, the only one of its kind in the world, includes a funerary temple (now in ruins), situated on the north (and not the east) side of the pyramid. This is less interesting, however, than the impressive statue of Djoser (the original is in the Cairo Museum ▲ 276) which can be seen through two holes drilled in the wall of the *serdab* (hiding place). The temple and pyramid stood in a vast, rectangular precinct (1,820 feet long, 100 feet wide and about 33 feet high) whose redans and beautiful, honey-colored limestone can still be seen near the southeast corner. Here, too, is the only entrance into this vast complex. A long, narrow colonnade leads into the courtyard dominated, on the right, by the Step Pyramid and, on the left, by the southern mass of the enclosure wall.

Incorporated into the wall is the access shaft to the South Tomb (reminiscent of the ancient royal burials of Abydos) whose apartments, which are decorated in the same way as those of the pyramid, are unfortunately closed to the public. From the top of the walls there is a magnificent view of south Saqqara with the Pyramids of Dahshur to the south. An inset in the courtyard side of the wall is decorated with a frieze of cobras.

Jubilee chapels. Back across the courtyard is the purely symbolic (and to some extent fictitious) complex built in beautiful bonded stone, a permanent monument to Djoser's royalty and so-called *heb-sed* (jubilee) celebrations. Royal jubilees, which were usually held to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of a monarch's reign, dated back to early Pharaonic times. They were usually held in temporary structures built for the occasion. Djoser wanted to immortalize the occasion with permanent structures, hence the Jubilee Court and chapels and the simulated structures representing buildings associated with the dual monarchy of Upper and Lower Egypt: the House of the South and House of the North, whose capitals are decorated with the heraldic plants of both kingdoms.

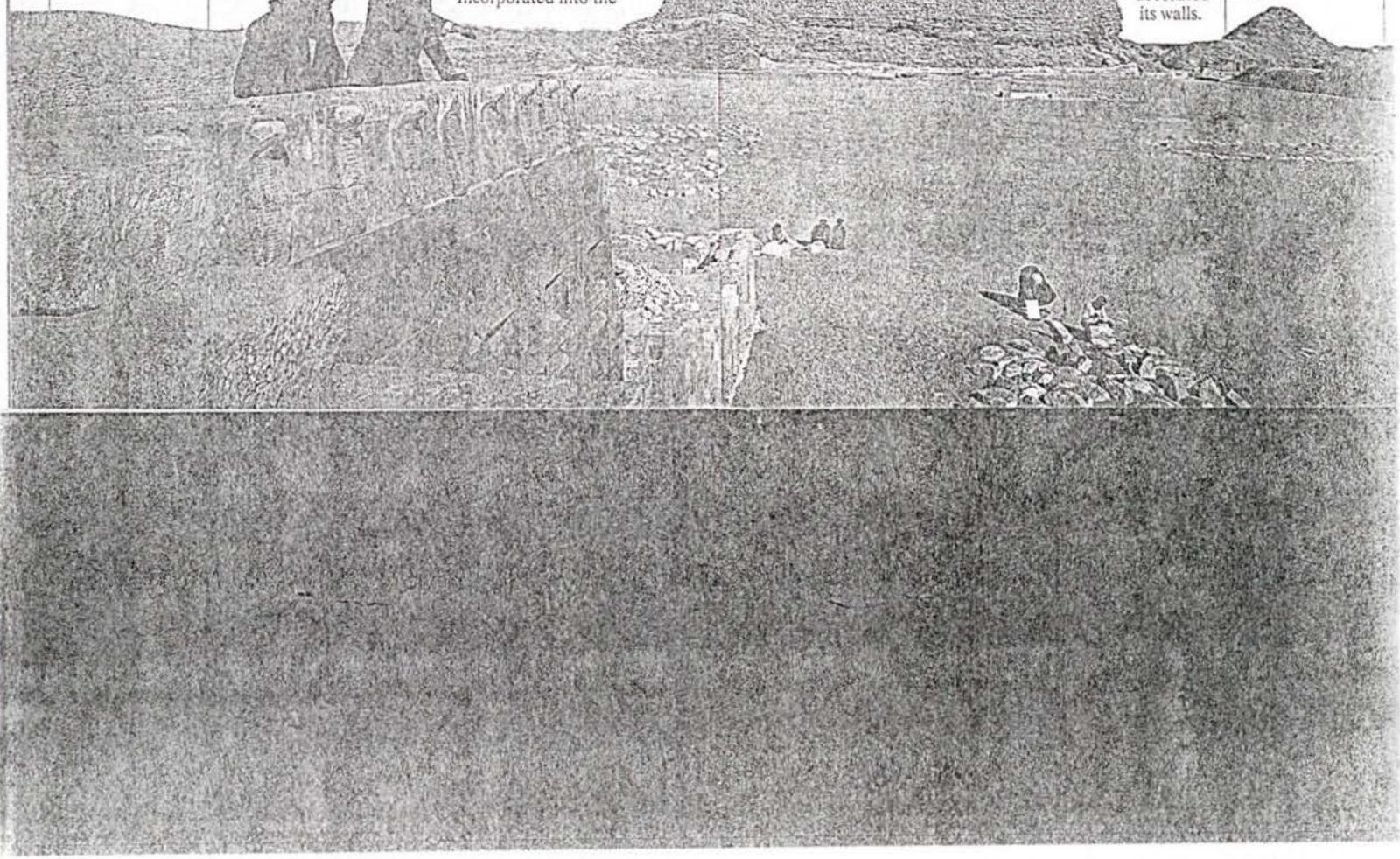
Pyramid of Unis. A flight of steps on the south side of the enclosure wall brings you down into the precinct where you can walk along the "streets" of tombs to the pyramid of the last of the 5th-Dynasty pharaohs. The pyramid, which has lost most of its outer casing, was the first to have its chambers and underground galleries decorated, or rather inscribed. In fact the regular columns of blue-painted hieroglyphics inscribed on the walls are the earliest known version of the so-called Pyramid Texts. The only other pyramids containing these texts (those of Tety, Pepy I, Mernere, Pepy II and the queens of Pepy II) are all at Saqqara and date from the 6th Dynasty.

Only the texts of Unis and Tety are accessible. Follow the ruins of the covered causeway which once linked the pyramid and Upper Temple to the Valley Temple to see the remains of the reliefs which once decorated its walls.

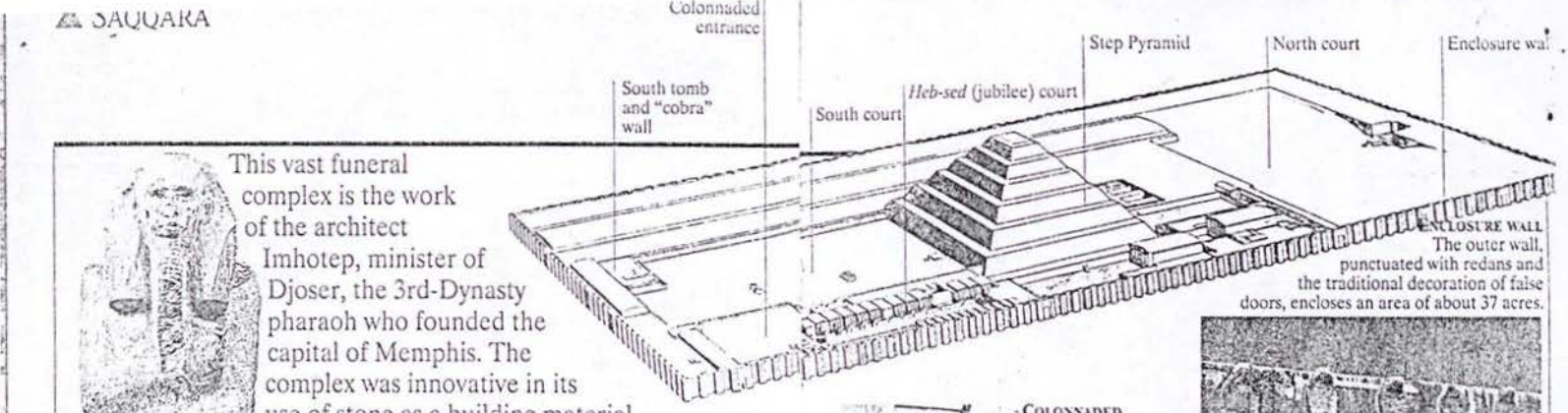


The funeral complex of Djoser (above), workmen on the site of the Saqqara excavations and the reopening of the Step Pyramid in 1987.

The funeral complex of Djoser You will be encouraged to take your time when visiting the vast architectural complex of the Pyramid of Djoser if you spare a thought for the difficult and painstaking task of excavating, studying and partially restoring it. The French architect Jean-Philippe Lauer (left, standing behind the wall), the master of works for almost seventy years and undisputed pyramid expert, returns to work on the site every winter.



SAQQARA

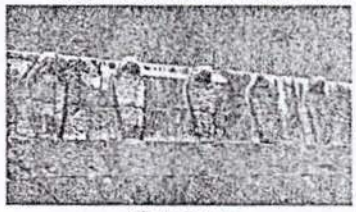


This vast funeral complex is the work of the architect Imhotep, minister of Djoser, the 3rd-Dynasty pharaoh who founded the capital of Memphis. The complex was innovative in its use of stone as a building material and in the form of its pyramid. The systematic excavation of the site was begun in 1927 by the Egyptian Department of Antiquities and continued by Jean-Philippe Lauer, who also instigated a large-scale restoration program.

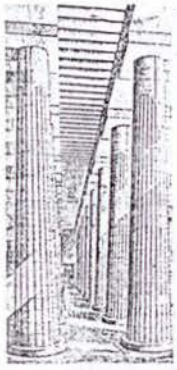


Granite statue of King Djoser, found on the Saqqara site.

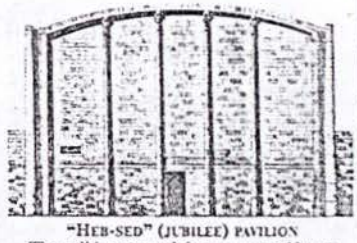
Enclosure wall
The outer wall, punctuated with redans and the traditional decoration of false doors, encloses an area of about 37 acres.



"Cobra" wall
On the interior façade of the enclosure wall is a series of "dummy" doors with their blinds rolled up, surmounted by a frieze of protective cobras.

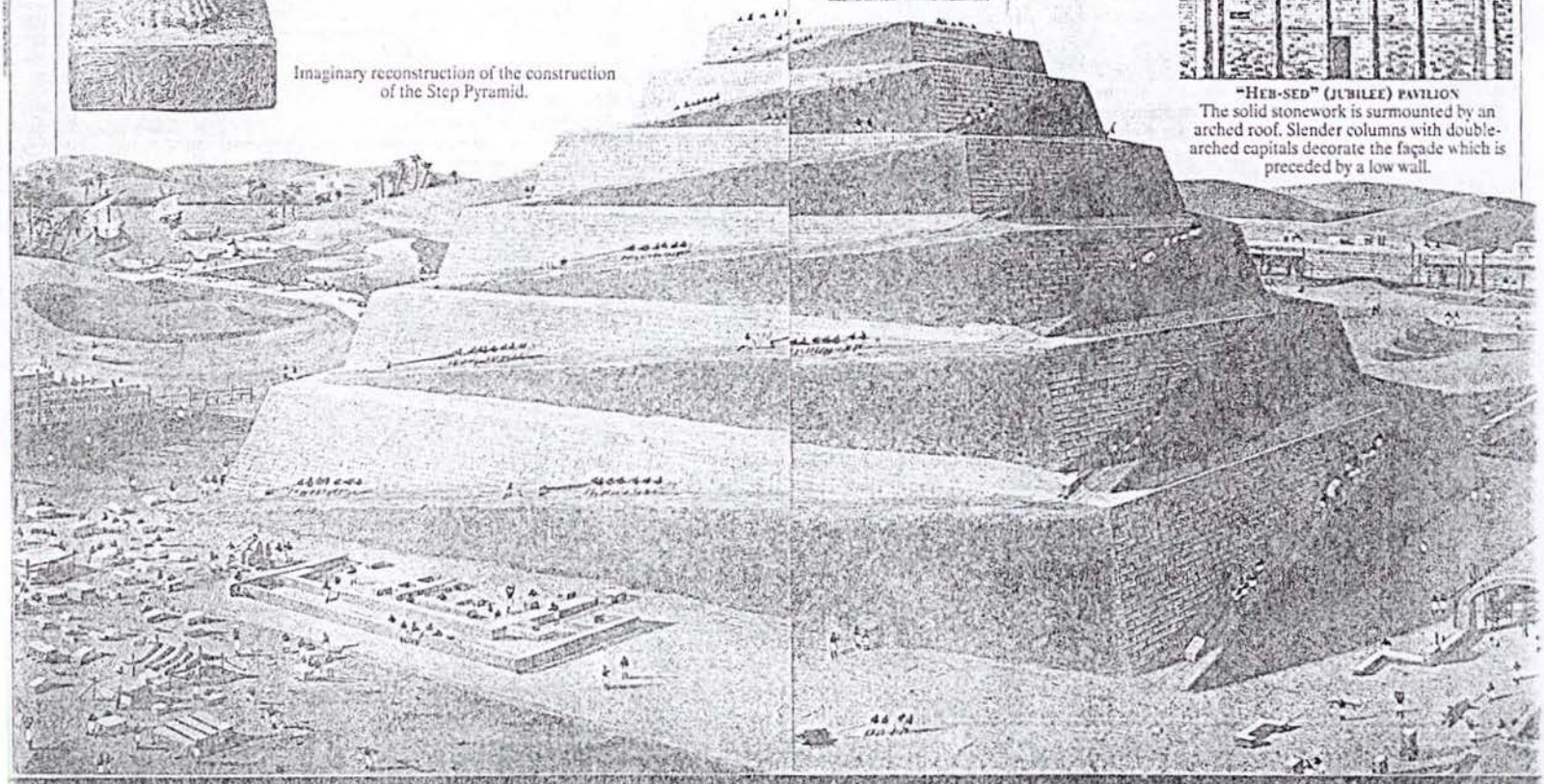


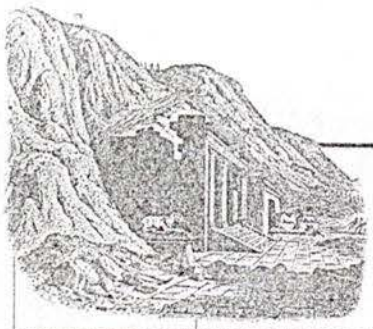
Colonnaded entrance
The first court is reached along a covered gallery supported by engaged semi-columns, sometimes joined in pairs. The so-called "fasciculate" columns represent the stems of plants bound in bundles.

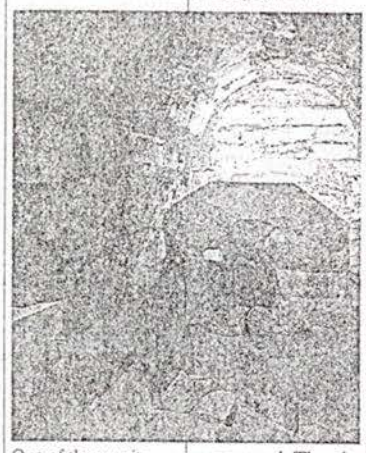


"Heb-sed" (jubilee) pavilion
The solid stonework is surmounted by an arched roof. Slender columns with double-arched capitals decorate the façade which is preceded by a low wall.

Imaginary reconstruction of the construction of the Step Pyramid.







One of the granite sarcophagi (above), which contained the mummified bulls. Mariette recorded twenty-four, placed in chambers dug on either side of an underground corridor.

Auguste Mariette
Auguste Mariette or "Mariette Pasha" (1821–81) was one of the pioneers of Egyptian archeology and founder of the Egyptian Department of Antiquities and the first Cairo Museum. His many discoveries at Saqqara included the famous Serapeum, the catacombs of the Apis Bulls, which he excavated in 1850 and of which he made several drawings (right and top left).

Although the causeway no longer extends as far as the Valley Temple (whose few remains can be seen near the barrier closing off the site), it is still flanked, about midway along, by mastabas: the rock-cut TOMB OF NEFER with its fresh-looking, colored scenes (limited access: ask for information) and the impressive, constructed tombs of NYANKH-KHNUM and KHNUMHOTEP with their perfect colors. The MONASTERY OF ST JEREMIAH (Apa Jeremias) lies to the southeast, beyond the "boundary" represented by the causeway of Unis. Many of the architectural elements of the building have been taken from Pharaonic monuments.

CEMETERY OF THE NEW KINGDOM. Excavations begun by an Anglo-Dutch mission about twenty years ago, in a vast area to the west, revealed a cemetery of the New Kingdom (late 18th and 19th Dynasties). Some impressive and often superbly decorated tombs, which have lain forgotten beneath the sand since they were plundered by 19th-century grave robbers, are being gradually uncovered. They include the TOMB OF HOREMHEB, the general who became king. He was one of the successors of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) who, after becoming pharaoh, had a tomb constructed in the Valley of the Kings ▲ *417* where he was buried. However, his Memphite tomb remained an important monument for funeral worship. The surviving reliefs are remarkable for their blend of idealization and "realistic" observation of scenes of mourning, tributes and prisoners of war. It is also possible to visit the so-called Persian Tombs, more than 65 feet deep, which date from the 26th (Saïte period) and 27th Dynasties. On the way back to the Pyramid of Djoser are the TOMBS OF PRINCESS IDUT (6th Dynasty) and the VIZIER MEHU, both decorated with beautiful scenes in relief. In an area to the northwest, where MARIETTE'S HOUSE once stood (it has since been destroyed), a tent serves as a makeshift cafeteria.

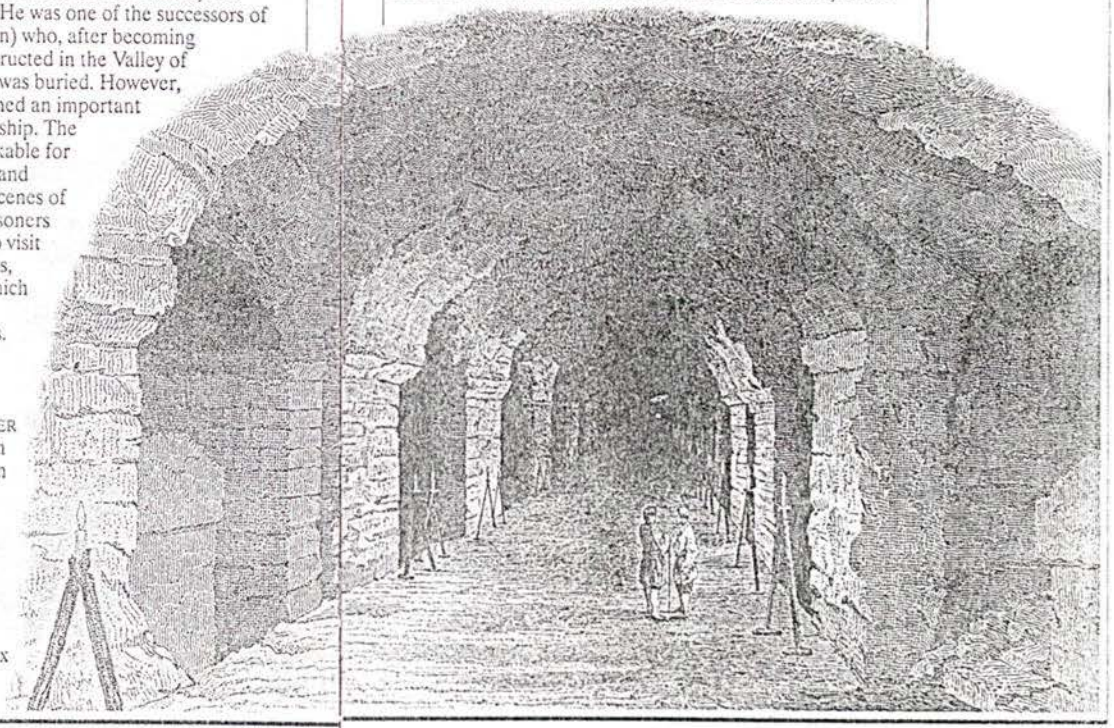
SERAPEUM. The Serapeum was a vast religious complex which extended from the eastern edge of the site to the tombs of the Apis Bulls, via a long avenue of sphinxes. To a certain extent it also represented the religious, intellectual and cultural convergence of two civilizations: Egypt and Greece. The Serapeum (the Latin form of the Greek "Serapeion") is dedicated to Serapis, a hybrid or "synthesized" divinity created by the early Ptolemies in an attempt to bring Egyptians and Greeks closer together. Serapis is, as it were, a compound of Osiris and Apis, the sacred animal of Ptah; hence the association between the Serapeum and the tombs of the Apis Bulls. A very badly damaged HEMICYCLE (a semicircle of Greek statues),which includes such illustrious figures as Plato, Heraclitus, Homer, Hesiod and Pindar, stands near the entrance to the catacombs. It is a fine example of the Graeco-Egyptian relationship, which was more than just a close association.

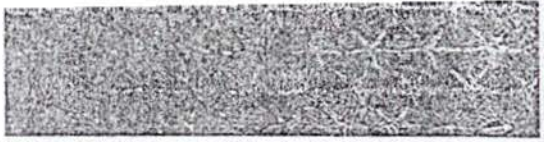
MASTABA OF TI. Near the tombs of the Apis Bulls is the remarkable 5th-Dynasty mastaba of Ti, the largest in the necropolis. The decorations in the courtyard, vestibule and chapels depict the activities of a high-ranking figure of the Old Kingdom. Other mastabas which are well worth a visit include the TOMBS OF PTAHHOTEP and AKHETHOTEP, to the



Scene from the tomb of Nefer and Qa'a-Hay depicting the making and baking of bread.

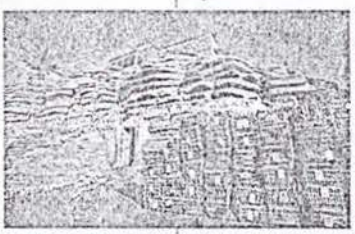
SERAPEUM
This is one of the most incredible sites in Egypt: mummified bulls were buried in monolithic sarcophagi in vast underground chambers. The practice went on for centuries and, in the tombs open to the public, until the early Christian era.

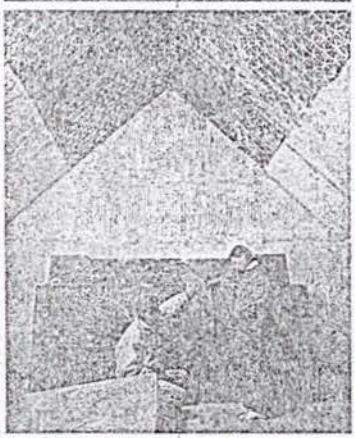




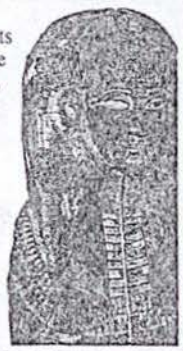
NEW DISCOVERIES
The recently discovered tomb of the vizier Aper-El (below). The domed interior of the Pyramid of Mernere, discovered by the Archeological Mission at Saqqara, is decorated with stars (below, bottom).

northwest of the Pyramid of Djoser. Further south is the "Street of Tombs", which lies beyond the PYRAMID OF USERKAF (5th Dynasty) and PYRAMID OF TETY (6th Dynasty) where the walls of the burial chambers are inscribed with Pyramid Texts. Then there are the MASTABAS OF MERERUKA (sometimes known as Mera), which has reliefs and a magnificent statue set within a niche, KAGEMNI (or Memi) and ANKHMAHOR. The latter is also known as the "Doctors' Tomb" because some of its images represent surgical operations. This is the end of the "standard" tour of the site. But Saqqara is not just a cemetery of the Old Kingdom (although monuments from this period tend to be in the majority) and the later Egyptian and Greek periods are well represented. There are also the cliff tombs, which include, for example, the tomb of the vizier Bakenrenef (Bocchoris) excavated by the Pisa Mission, and the many animal necropolises (for the cows that bore the Apis Bulls, dogs, cats, ibis, baboons and falcons) associated with shrines which flourished here in the later centuries BC. The New Kingdom is also represented on the site. For example, the cliff just north of the road, dominated by an official rest house, contains a series of New-Kingdom rock tombs dating mainly from the 18th Dynasty. For ten or so years the French Bubasteion Mission (named after the shrine of the goddess Bastet, which stood on the site at the time of the Serapeum) has been excavating the tombs of such important figures as the CHANCELLOR MERY-RE and the VIZIER APER-EL (the jewelry from the tomb is on display in the Cairo Museum) from the reigns of Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten). Finally it should be remembered that the site of Saqqara extends much further south. Two groups of monuments are well worth a visit, even though they are not on most tourist itineraries. On the edge of the desert are the PYRAMIDS OF DJEDKARE-ISESI and PEPY I and, further west, the PYRAMID OF MERNERE. The chambers of the last two (6th-Dynasty) pyramids are inscribed with Pyramid Texts and are being studied and restored by the French Mission at Saqqara. The mission, which is also excavating the religious complex of Pepy I, has made a recent discovery of pyramids belonging to the king's wives to south of the complex. Much further south the site of the MASTABA EL-FARA'UN (Pharaoh's Bench) can be found, as well as the unusual sarcophagus-shaped funerary monument of the 4th-Dynasty pharaoh Shepseskaf, and the PYRAMIDS OF PEPY II and his queens.

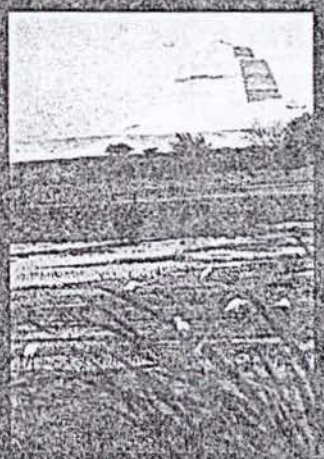




TOMB OF APER-EL
The burial chamber of Aper-El was discovered, at a great depth, by the Bubasteion Mission. In spite of the plundering of the monuments of antiquity, the tomb contained the remains of the vizier Aper-El (his statue is seen on the right), his wife and son (General Huy) and much of their remarkable funeral paraphernalia.



MEMPHIS TO THE FAIYUM



DAHSHUR, 354
LISHT, 356
MEIDUM, 357
ILLAHUN, 359
IHNASIYA EL-MEDINA, 360

1 Ashrafiya Méders... 2 Sheikh Mutahir M... 3 Gamal ad-Din Wak... 4 Gawhara Mosque 5 Taghri Bardi Mosq... 6 Qala'un Mosque-M... 7 An-Nasir Mohamm... Mosque 8 Baroud Medersa 9 Baybars Medersa 10 Ismail Pasha Sabil... 11 Kaitbiya Medersa 12 Uthman Katkhuda... 13 Besiftak Palace 14 Katkhuda Sabil-K... 15 Sheikh Sinan Mau... 16 El-Aqmar Mosque 17 El-Silahdar Mosq... 18 Mithqal Mosque 19 El-Higaziya Mosq... 20 Bazara'a Wakala 21 Beit as-Suhaymi 22 Said el-Sadda Mosq... 23 El-Ustadar Mosque 24 Bab el-Futuh 25 Qitasbay Sabil-Kut... 26 Oda Basili Sabil-K... 27 Qara Sunqur Medes... 28 Sulleyman Aga Sa... 29 El-Jashankir Mosq... 30 El-Hakim Mosque 31 Bab an-Nasr 32 Musafirkhana Mo... 33 Oda Basili Wakal... 34 Muhaibram Mosq... 35 El-Ahmedi Mosque 36 El-Hussein Mosque 37 Ahmed Pasha Sabil 38 Bab el-Badistan 39 El-Silahdar Wakal... 40 Ayyub Medersa

El-Hussein and Khan el-Khalili



One day

The El-Hussein and Khan el-Khalili districts are as popular with tourists as they are with the Egyptians, particularly during Ramadan and the *muled* ● *126* of El-Hussein (629–80), the grandson of the Prophet and holy martyr of the Shi'ites who was killed by the Ommiads at the Battle of Karbala.

The El-Hussein Mosque. The mosque, entirely rebuilt under the khedive Ismail, was erected on the site of the cemetery of the Fatimid caliphs. Remains of the cemetery were discovered during work carried out on the mosque's foundations earlier this century. Inside are forty-four white marble columns, the wood ceiling is supported by arches and pierced by three lanterns. To one side of the mosque is the MAUSOLEUM, the oldest part of the complex (built in 1154 and modified in 1236), containing the remains of El-Hussein. It is surmounted by a cupola whose ceiling is decorated and inlaid with gold. The complex has two minarets, one to the southwest dating from the same period as the mosque, and the other built in a different style which is contemporary with the mausoleum.

Ahmed Pasha "Sabil-kuttab". Built in 1864, the *sabil* ● *113* has a rounded façade surmounted by a wooden canopy.

Khan el-Khalili. The Khan el-Khalili was named after the great *khan* (caravanserai) ● *118* built in 1380 by the Emir Djaharks el-Khalili. It can be reached via the Shari' Sikka el-Badistan opposite the minaret of the El-Hussein Mosque. A series of early 20th-century housing blocks have replaced two great *wakala* ● *118*, one of which was the famous carpet *wakala*. The first narrow street on the left leads to the *El-Fishawi Café*, or *Café of Mirrors*, which, at the turn of the century, was the meeting place for Cairene artists, writers and intellectuals, and is the favorite haunt of the writer Naguib Mahfouz (pictured opposite). Half the café was demolished in 1968 when the Midan El-Hussein was extended.

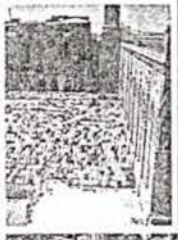
Shari' el-Badistan. The long, narrow Shari' el-Badistan and the Shari' Khan el-Khalili are the district's two main thoroughfares. Once two gates controlled access to the streets, but now only the west gate remains.

El-Ghuri gate. In 1511 the sultan El-Ghuri replaced the Khan el-Khalili with a larger *khan* whose gate and wide, vaulted entrance can still be seen today.

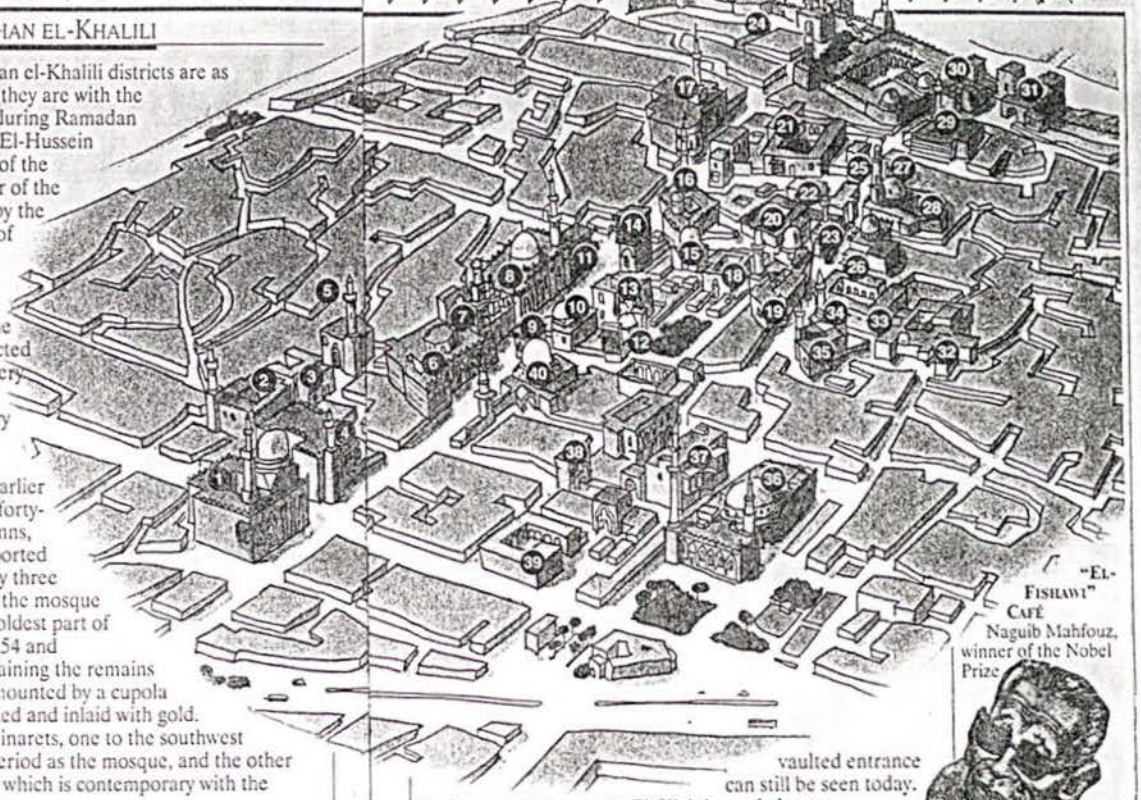


Cover of *El-Suqariya*, a novel by Naguib Mahfouz.

El-Hussein Mosque In principle the mosque is out-of-bounds to non-Muslims. It is the main focal point for religious gatherings, especially Friday prayer meetings and the major Islamic festivals.

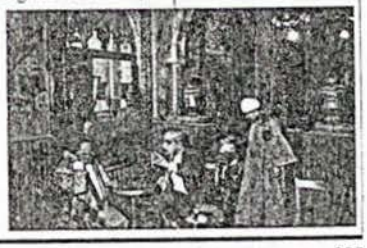






El-Silahdar "wakala". El-Silahdar *wakala* was constructed in 1837 on the site of an older *wakala* and restored in 1985. The second floor of the *wakala* houses numerous workshops reached along an external gallery. Most of the items sold in the streets below are made on the upper floors of the district's *wakala*. The Shari' el-Badistan becomes the Shari' el-Muizz, which is bordered from end to end by *wakala*, including the former slave market, the El-Gallaba Wakala. The Shari' el-Muizz crosses the Shari' el-Muski, built in 1845 to link El-Ezbekiya ▲ *274* with the El-Hussein district. On the corner of the two streets stands the Sheikh Mutahar Mosque, built by Abd el-Rahman Katkhuda in 1744. It still has its original entrance, minaret and *sabil-kuttab*.

Ashrafiya Medersa. The complex was constructed in 1425 by the sultan El-Ashraf Barsbey, and comprises a mosque-medersa, a mausoleum and *sabil-kuttab*. Inside the complex, the *iwan* of the *qibla* has a remarkable marble-covered floor, while the west *iwan* has a wood ceiling inset with ivory and an inlaid *minbar*.



"El-Fishawi" Café Naguib Mahfouz, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, is one of the "regulars" at the *El-Fishawi Café*.



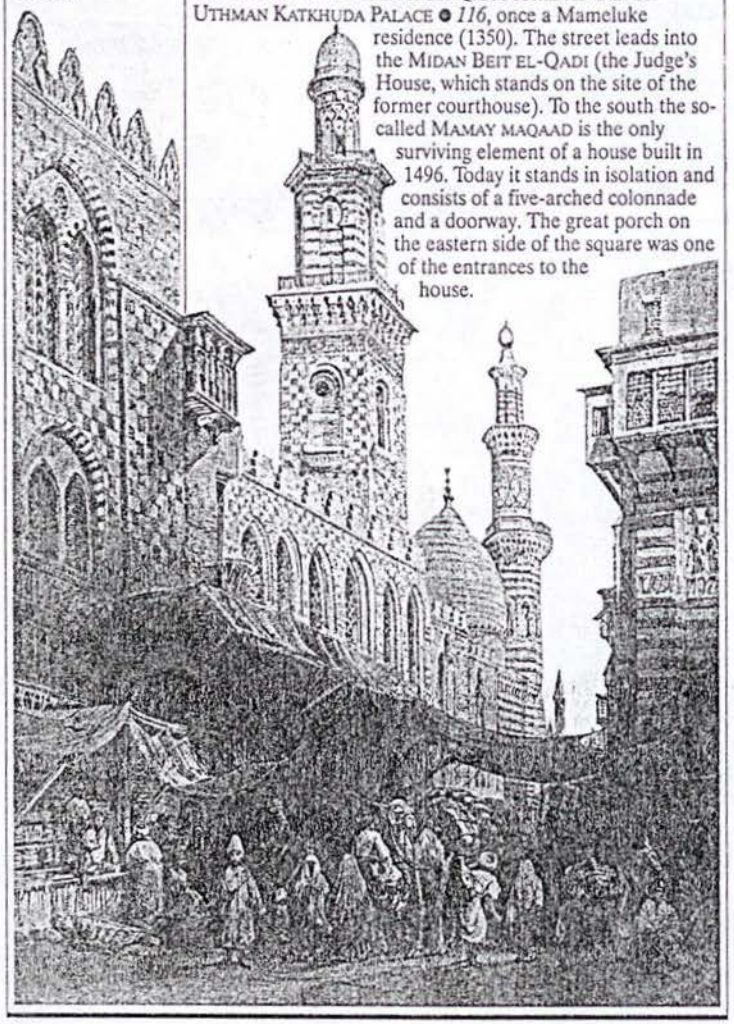
Detail (above) of the minaret of the An-Nasir Mohammed Medersa.

SHARI' EL-MUIZZ

This three-mile-long street forms the kasbah, the backbone of the city. During the time of the pharaohs it linked Heliopolis ▲ *285* and Memphis ▲ *332*. In the 10th century it was incorporated into the city founded by the Caliph el-Muizz (931–75) after whom it was named.

AS-SALIH NAGM AD-DIN AYYUB MEDERSA. Built between 1242 and 1250 this is one of the first Ayyubid medersat and one of the few to have survived from this period. All that remains is a wall surmounted by a minaret. To the north of the medersa is the nearby KHUSRU PASHA SABIL-KUTTAB (1535).

SHARI' BEIT EL-QADI. This 19th-century street was built on the site of the Zahiriya Medersa (1263). On the left as you leave the Shari' el-Muizz is the QAA MUHIB AD-DIN or UTHMAN KATKHUDA PALACE ● *116*, once a Mameluke residence (1350). The street leads into the MIDAN BEIT EL-QADI (the Judge's House, which stands on the site of the former courthouse). To the south the so-called MAMAY MAQAAD is the only surviving element of a house built in 1496. Today it stands in isolation and consists of a five-arched colonnade and a doorway. The great porch on the eastern side of the square was one of the entrances to the house.





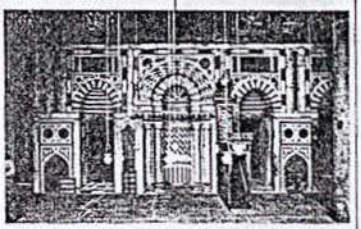
THE COMPLEX OF SULTAN QALA'UN. The complex, built along the Shari' el-Muizz in 1284 by Sultan el-Mansur Qala'un comprises a mosque-medersa, a mausoleum and a *mauristan* (hospital), which was replaced by a modern hospital in the1920's. The main entrance, surrounded by Gothic columns and surmounted by an inscribed lintel, opens onto a long corridor. To the left the mosque-medersa comprises a rectangular courtyard with four *iwan*. The mausoleum stands opposite the medersa and consists of a partially covered entrance hall and a funeral chamber. The entrance to the *mauristan* was at the end of the corridor.

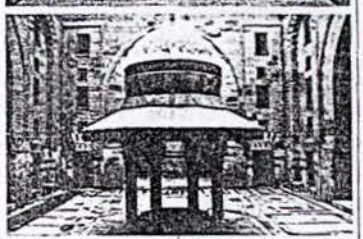


QALA'UN MAUSOLEUM The funeral chamber is in the shape of a square enclosing an octagon described by eight monolithic granite pillars and columns (four of each), all richly decorated (left). The mihrab is surrounded by columns and has a revetment of marble and mother-of-pearl mosaic panels (above).

THE COMPLEX OF SULTAN AN-NASIR MOHAMMED. To the right of the Qala'un minaret are the medersa and tomb of An-Nasir Mohammed, the son of Qala'un, who died in 1340. The Gothic-style entrance came from the 13th-century Christian Church of St John of Acre, destroyed by Sultan El-Ashraf Khalil, brother of An-Nasir. Built in 1295, it was the first cruciform medersa in Cairo.

THE COMPLEX OF SULTAN BARQUQ. Built in 1384 by Sultan Barquq, who ruled from 1382 to 1399, the complex comprises a medersa, a *khanqa* ● *112* and a tomb. The façade has a distinctive stone entrance, a plain cupola and a minaret with three balconies. The bronze-plated entrance door with its polygonal decorations opens onto a square chamber. A corridor links the chamber with an extremely regularly designed courtyard where a central fountain is surrounded by four *iwan* with almost symmetrical façades. A door next to the north *iwan* leads to the tomb of the sultan's daughter. The sultan is buried in the Eastern Cemetery ▲ *327*.



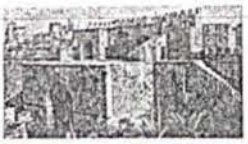


The fountain of the Barquq Medersa is virtually identical to that of the Sultan Hassan Medersa ▲ *309*.

KAMILIYA MEDERSA. The medersa of Sultan el-Kamil (1180–1238), built in 1225, is the second largest medersa in the world after that of Zinki in Damascus. During the Mameluke period, it became the prototype for the development of some of the most beautiful examples of Cairene urban architecture. All that remains of the original edifice is the monumental entrance and the west *iwan*, the rest having been replaced by more modern buildings.

ABD EL-RAHMAN KATKHUDA "SABIL-KUTTAB". The street forks just beyond this series of monuments. The Shari' an-Nahassin, on the left, leads to the Bab el-Futuh ▲ *291* and the Shari' Tombukshiya to the Bab an-Nasr ▲ *292*. In the angle of the fork the Katkhuda *Sabil-kuttab* (1744) can be found, a blend of Mameluke and Ottoman architecture and one of the most spectacular *sabil-kuttab* ● *113* in Cairo. One of the square, faïence plaques decorating the first-floor chamber represents a view of Mecca (right), while the second-floor chamber has a carved wood loggia overlooking the street, whose decorated wood roof is supported by fine wooden pillars.

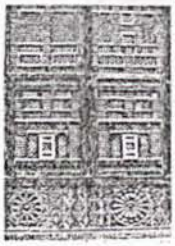


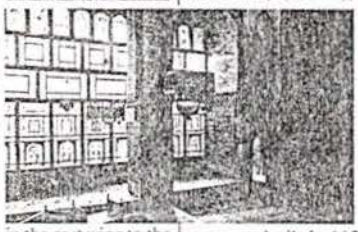


Bab el-Futuh (right), the Gate of Conquest.

Beit as-Suhaymi
The *qaa* (chambers) of this 17th-century house ● *116* are in two different styles: the more or less enclosed, classic style of the great *mandara*







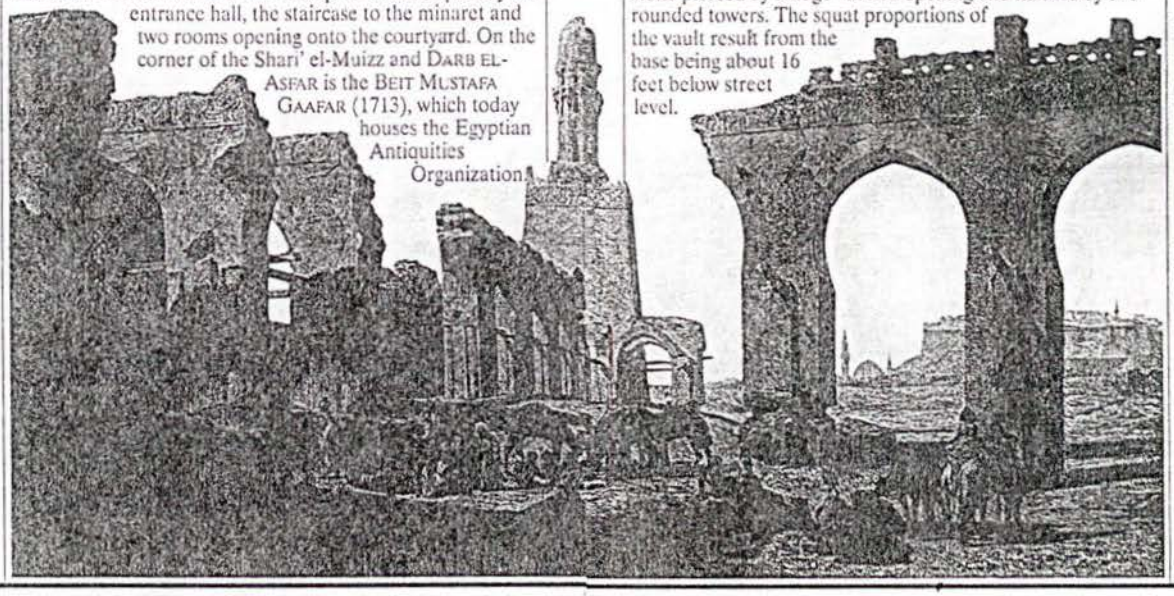
in the east wing to the right of the entrance, where the lantern is the only source of light, and the more open style of the *salamlik* (reception suite) ● *116* in the west wing, whose wide, turned-wood bays overlook the courtyard. The *tahtabuch* on the first floor and the *maqaad* on the second floor (rooms reserved for the menfolk and their guests) both look onto the courtyard. The *maqaad* faces north to take advantage of the cooler air, while the south-facing *tahtabuch* is ideal for receiving guests or relaxing in winter. Opposite the *maqaad* the harem chamber, with its Turkish faïence, *mashrabiya* and wood paneling, is a true museum piece.

Shari' Darb el-Qirmiz. In 1973 the German Archeological Institute in Cairo undertook the restoration of the Islamic monuments in the Shari' Darb el-Qirmiz. In the space of 165 yards, there are five buildings dating from the 14th and 18th centuries: the Katkhuda *Sabil-kuttab*, the Beshtak Palace, the Sheikh Sinan Mausoleum (1585–6) and the Sabiqiya Medersa. The restoration of the street won the 1983 Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

Beshtak Palace. Built by Emir Beshtak in 1334, the palace has distinctive projecting windows covered with *mashrabiya*. The proportions of the main *qaa* (chamber) on the second floor, its pointed arches, stained-glass windows and gilt and painted wood paneling make it one of the most beautiful chambers of its period. The palace houses a museum which traces the history of the city of Cairo. A small, outer door leads to the 13th-century Beshtak or El-Fiil Mosque on the first floor of the palace.

Sabiqiya Medersa. The Sabiqiya Medersa, otherwise known as the Mithqal Medersa, was built in 1368. A vaulted passage runs beneath the medersa and into a narrow street leading to the Midan Beit el-Qadi.

El-Aqmar or Gray Mosque. The mosque, built in 1125 on the site of a Coptic monastery, is one of the few surviving examples of Fatimid architecture. Its design is extremely interesting, with the thickness of the outer wall compensating for the constraints imposed by the direction of *qibla*, the geometry of the layout and the direction of the street. The residual space was occupied by the entrance hall, the staircase to the minaret and two rooms opening onto the courtyard. On the corner of the Shari' el-Muizz and Darb el-Asfar is the Beit Mustafa Gaafar (1713), which today houses the Egyptian Antiquities Organization.





Detail of the porch of the Bab el-Futuh.

Beit as-Suhaymi. Beit-as-Suhaymi, the most impressive of what was once a large group of houses reached via a network of narrow streets and culs-de-sac, was built in 1648. It was bought in 1796 by Sheikh Ahmed as-Suhaymi who extended it by converting several of the adjacent houses. The various parts of the building have separate staircases and in the region of thirty *qaa*.

Suleyman Aga el-Silahdar Mosque and "sabil". The complex (1839), which comprises a *sabil*, medersa and mosque, has a single façade overlooking the street. The distinctive, rounded façade of the *sabil*, which conforms to no particular school, is in inscribed marble. The complex is surmounted by a Turkish-style canopy decorated in relief.

El-Hakim Mosque. The second largest Fatimid mosque after El-Azhar ▲ *294* was begun in 990 by the Caliph El-Aziz and completed in 1013 by his son El-Hakim (who reigned from 996 to 1021), founder of the Egyptian Druze sect. It was abandoned, converted into a market, then into an Islamic museum and finally restored in 1981 by the Indian Bahai sect, which completed the modification of the small remaining section of the original edifice. An interior staircase leads to the remains of the city's 12th-century ramparts and a well-preserved rampart walk.

Bab el-Futuh (Gate of Conquest). In 1087 Badr ad-Din el-Gamali (1010–94), the vizier of El-Mustansir, sent for three Syrian architect-brothers from Edessa to build the three main gates of the city: the Bab el-Futuh, Bab an-Nasr and Bab Zuwaila ▲ *298*. The Bab el-Futuh consists of a huge block of stone pierced by a huge vaulted opening and flanked by two rounded towers. The squat proportions of the vault result from the base being about 16 feet below street level.



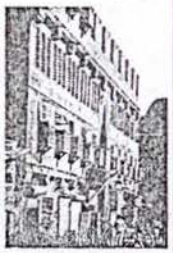
El-Aqmar Mosque
This was the first mosque in Cairo to have a decorated stone façade and a shell-like sculpted pediment.



El-Hakim Mosque
The architectural features of this huge mosque (395 x 370 feet) are similar to those of the Ibn Tulun Mosque ▲ *312*: a large courtyard surrounded by porticos in two or three naves and a hypostyle prayer hall. The El-Hakim Mosque in the 19th century (left) and after it was restored in 1981 (above).



Entrance to the Baybars el-Jashankir *khanqa* (above).





QAITBAY "WAKALA" Each first-floor bay of the *wakala* is occupied by a stall which backs onto a shop opening onto the interior. The windows of the second and third floors each represent separate apartments. The entrance (above and right), in the center of the façade, has maintained its monumental aspect in spite of the fact that the ground level has risen.

SHARI' EL-GAMALIYA

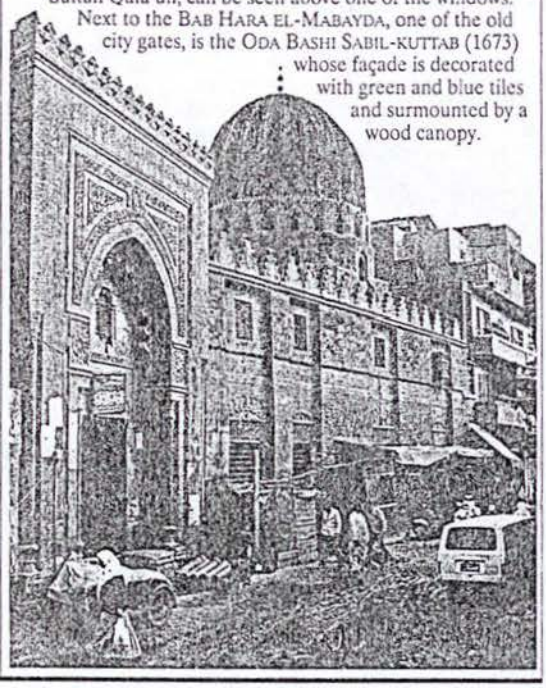
BAB AN-NASR (VICTORY GATE). The two square towers flanking the gate, built at the same time as the Bab el-Futuh, have an upper story with barbicans and machicolations.

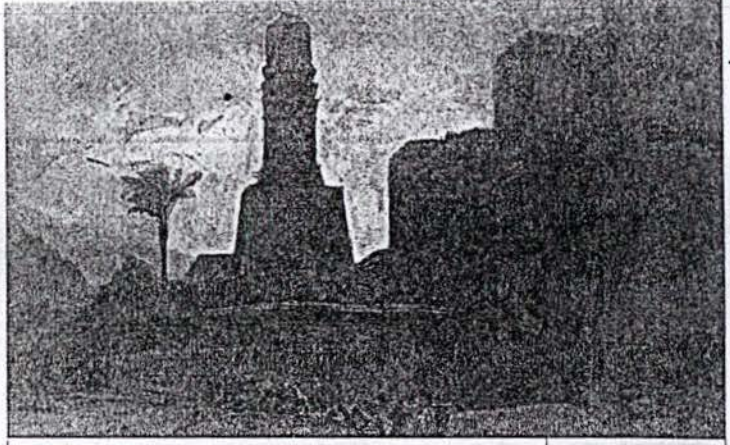
QAITBAY "WAKALA". Built in 1480 by Sultan Qaitbay, the *wakala* ▲ *118* is one of the most interesting examples of Circassian civil architecture. The extremely regular external façade of the edifice is created by the repetition of the identical, vertical bays consisting of a first-floor opening, a *mashrabiya* panel surmounted by a lattice window on the second floor and a group of three windows on the third floor. Inside the four main sections of the building surround a fairly large courtyard. The first floor (whose openings have slightly pointed arches) is in stone, while the upper floors are brick.

BAYBARS EL-JASHANKIR "KHANQA". Baybars el-Jashankir only ruled for one year. He was executed by An-Nasir Mohammed whose power he had usurped and his name was removed from the façade of the *khanqa* (1306–10), one of the oldest in Cairo. As well as a funeral chamber it also contains a *ribat* (monastery) designed to house soldiers. The minaret is one of the few to have a revetment of turquoise faïence. The QITASBAY SABIL-KUTTAB opposite dates from 1630.

QARA SUNQUR MAUSOLEUM. The mausoleum was part of a medersa built in 1300. A section of the façade still exists today and the coat of arms of Emir Qara Sunqur, master of polo to Sultan Qala'un, can be seen above one of the windows.

Next to the BAB HARA EL-MABAYDA, one of the old city gates, is the ODA BASHI SABIL-KUTTAB (1673) whose façade is decorated with green and blue tiles and surmounted by a wood canopy.





Bab an-Nasr and, in the background, the minaret of the El-Hakim Mosque.

ZULFIQAR "WAKALA". The separate accommodation for traveling merchants above this impressive *wakala* (1673) is reached through an entrance next to the *sabil-kuttab*. During the 17th century coffee was sold in the *wakala*. Today the first floor, which used to be a storage and wholesale warehouse, contains workshops which make furniture from recycled wood. The upper floors comprise over sixty apartments. The windows of the interior and exterior façades have been modified and the *mashrabiya* work replaced by simple windows.

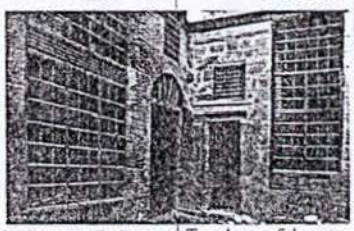
THE GAMAL AD-DIN EL-USTADAR MEDERSA. Reached via the Shari' Wakala el-Tuffah, the medersa was built in 1408 on the site of one of the gates (Gate of the Wind) of the great Fatimid Palace. This probably explains its unusual design, with the dimensions of the *qibla* chamber reduced to a minimum and the building extended in the opposite direction. Beyond the medersa is the *mashrabiya* façade of the 17th-century BAZARAA WAKALA, the sole survivor of the street's several cloth and tobacco *wakala*, which still existed at the turn of the century.

TATAR EL-HIGAZIYA MEDERSA. South of the Ustadar Medersa in Atfa el-Qaffasin, the Tatar el-Higaziya Medersa was built between 1348 and 1360 by Qunad Tatar el-Higaziya, daughter of the sultan An-Nasir Mohammed, near the so-called "Palace of the Emeralds". Its plain façades and interior design, however, make it look more like a private residence. On the corner of Atfa el-Qaffasin and the Shari' el-Gamaliya the MAHMUD MUHARRAM MOSQUE (1539) can be found, and on the corner of the Shari' Darb el-Tabalawi is the MARZUQ EL-AHMEDI MOSQUE, built in the 7th century.

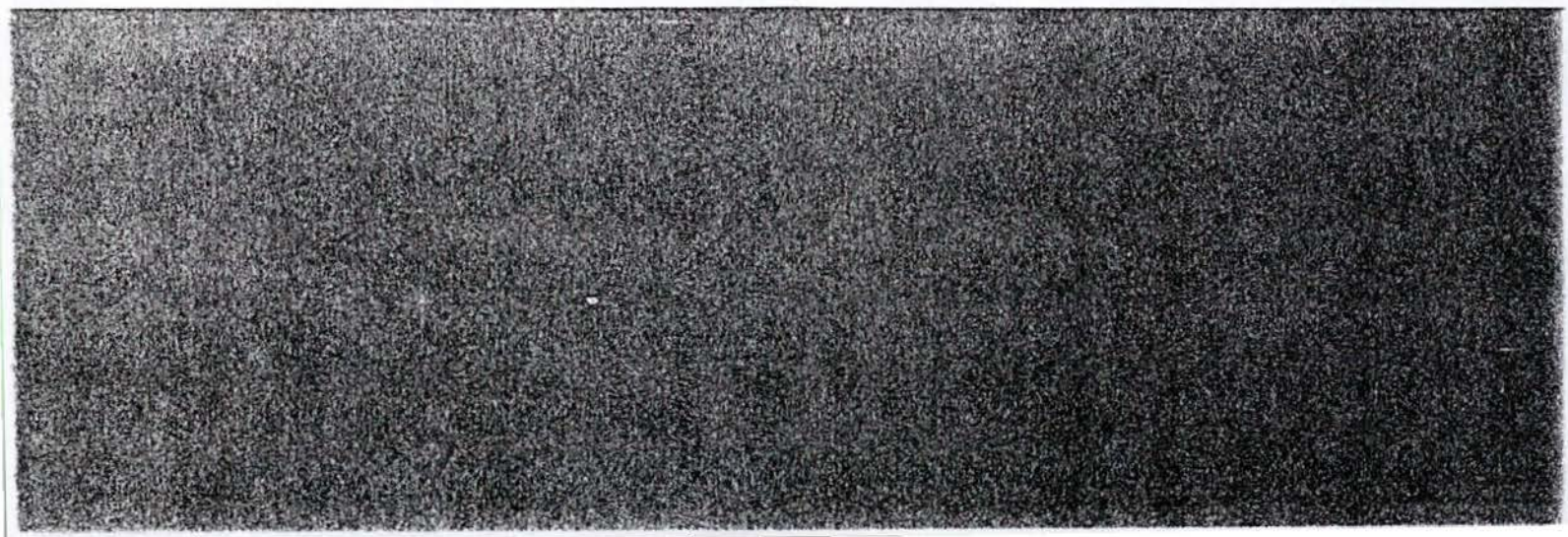
MUSAFIRKHANA PALACE. The palace stands in the Shari' Darb el-Tabalawi and has a second entrance in the Shari' Darb el-Masmat. Built between 1779 and 1788, this fine example of an Ottoman residence was the birthplace of the khedive Ismaïl in 1830. It was bought by Mohammed Ali at the turn of the century and used for receiving important guests, hence the name "Musafirkhana" ("House of Guests"). Today it houses artists' and sculptors' studios. It has several rooms decorated with various types of intricately carved *mashrabiya* panels, while the interiors of the rooms, especially the second-floor harem chamber, are full of richly decorated and painted wood paneling.

"In the maze of narrow, winding streets, beneath the endless, overhanging balconies in finely carved wood lattice-work, we are forced to slow our pace as we join the tightly packed throng of people and animals . . . An occasional encounter with the more delightful face of the Orient as, above the tiny houses decorated with *mashrabiya* and arabesques, you catch a sudden glimpse of tall minarets soaring skyward in the dusk."

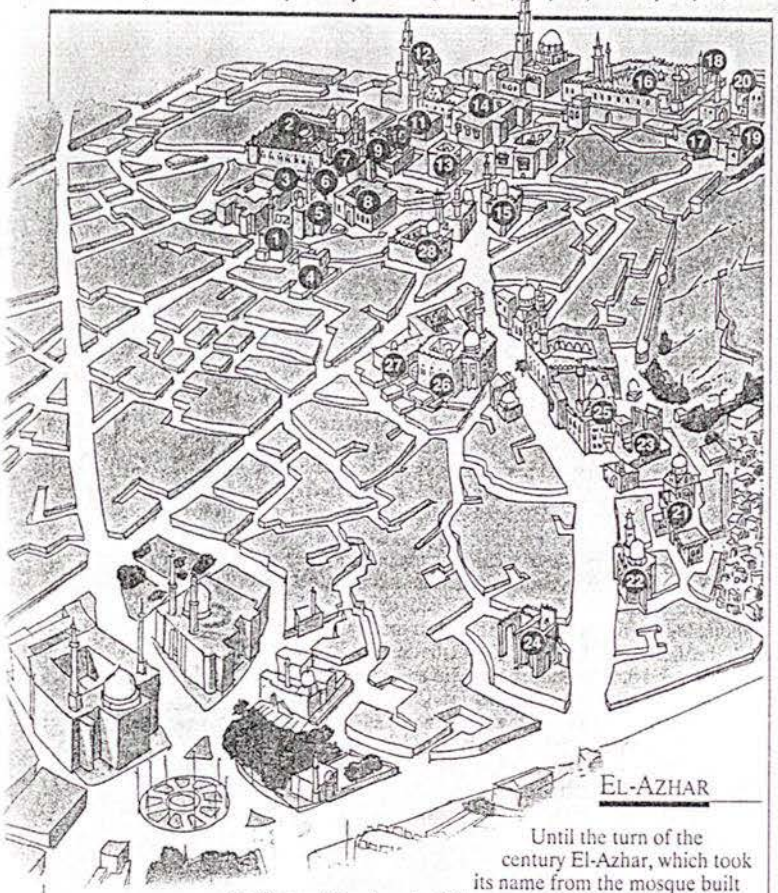
Pierre Loti



Two doors of the Musafirkhana Palace open onto the courtyard; the windows are closed with wood lattice (above). The palace is situated in the Qasr el-Shawq district, which existed before the city was built.



1 Inal el-Yusufi Mosque
2 El-Mu'ayyad Mosque
3 Radwan Bey Kasba
4 Qaitbay Palace
5 Mahmud el-Kurdi Mosque
6 Farag Ibn Baroud Zawia
7 Bab Zuwaila
8 As-Salih Talai Mos.
9 Nafisa el-Beida W.
10 Mohammed Ali Sa.
11 El-Fakahani Mosq.
12 El-Ghuri Medersa
13 Beit Shabshiri
14 El-Ghuri Mausoleum
15 El-Ishaqi Mosque
16 El-Azhar Mosque
17 Beit Sitt Wassila
18 El-Ayni Mosque
19 Beit el-Hirawi
20 Beit Zeinab Khatu.
21 Tarabay as-Sharifi Mosque
22 Aytimish Mosque
23 Alin Aq Palace
24 El-Mu'ayyad Mauristan
25 Khayrbay Mosque
26 Umm el-Sultan Sha'ban Medersa
27 Beit er-Razzaz
28 El-Maridani Mosque



EL-AZHAR

Until the turn of the century El-Azhar, which took its name from the mosque built by General Gawhara in 971, was one of the most famous districts in Cairo. Since then it has undergone many changes, particularly with the construction of the SHARI' EL-AZHAR in the 1920's, which divided the city in two. Almost from the outset the El-Azhar Mosque served a dual purpose as a place of worship and learning. The desire of successive rulers to make their mark has meant that the present building, which is very different from the original porticoed mosque, is a mixture of architectural styles from different periods. The mosque has six entrances and five minarets. The main entrance, the 18th-century BAB EL-MUZAYINI (Barbers' Gate), so called because students used to be shaved beneath its porch, opens onto a tiny courtyard which leads into the AQBUGHAWIYA MEDERSA (built in 1340 and now a library) on the left and into the TAYIBARSIYA



One/two days

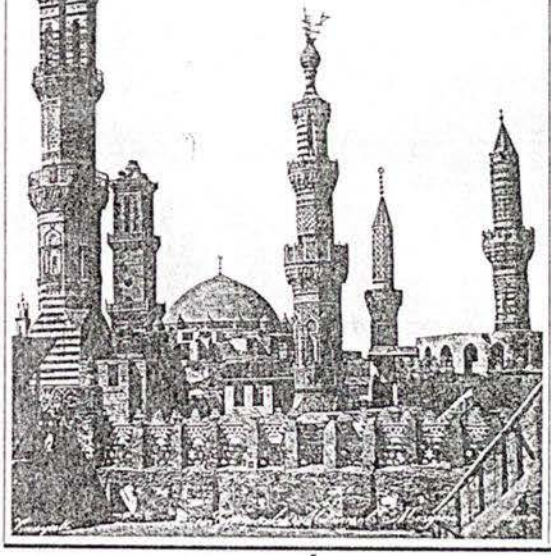


THE UNIVERSITY OF THE ARAB WORLD
The El-Azhar Mosque-University used to house around ten thousand students. Today students are taught in faculties and the mosque is reserved strictly for prayer.

MEDERSA (1310) on the right. The QAITBAY ENTRANCE (1469), surmounted by a minaret, opens onto a vast central courtyard (275 x 112 feet) surrounded by porticos supported by more than three hundred marble columns which have come mainly from ancient monuments. The prayer hall, to the east, is larger than the courtyard (262 x 164 feet) and consists of several rows of columns whose arrangement conceals the various alterations. Although the mihrab has been modified several times, the Kufic inscription decorating the interior is original. The section of the hall behind the mihrab was added by Abd el-Rahman Katkhuda in 1753. At the northern end is the tomb-medersa of Gawhara Qunqubay (1440).

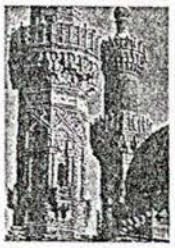
ABU EL-DAHAB MOSQUE. The mosque (1774), built in typical Ottoman style with a central cupola ● *108*, consisted of a mausoleum and a *takiya*. Today it provides living accommodation for the students of the El-Azhar University.

QAITBAY "WAKALA" AND "SABIL-KUTTAB". Built in 1447, four years before the identical *wakala* built by the same sultan near the Bab an-Nasr ▲ *291*, the Qaitbay *wakala* and *sabil-kuttab* is in a sorry state today. Only the wing overlooking the street and *sabil-kuttab* are used. The ABLUTIONS FOUNTAIN on the corner is part of the complex. The BEIT ZEINAB KHATUN ● *116* at the far end of the Shari' Atfa el-Azhari, which runs along the side of the El-Azhar Mosque, was built in 1468 and refurbished in 1713. The characteristics of the two periods are illustrated by the difference in style between the first-floor rooms, which reflect the severity of Mameluke architecture, and the more extravagant style of the Ottoman period in the second-floor rooms. Opposite the Beit Zeinab Khatun and beyond the El-Ayni Mosque, two old houses stand at the far end of the Shari' Atfa el-Ayni: the BEIT SITT WASSILA, probably built before 1637 and now in ruins, and the BEIT EL-HIRAWI (1731), which was recently restored by the French mission set up in 1983 to help preserve Islamic Cairo.











The five minarets of the El-Azhar Mosque (left and above).

"[Their minarets] have small balconies and columns which are so intricately carved that you can see through them: some are a long way off and some quite close pointing skyward above your head."

Pierre Loti

"STREETS OF PRIVATE HOUSES ARE LIKE TUNNELS FROM MEETING OVERHEAD OF PROJECTING WINDOWS . . . SOMETIMES HIGH BLANK WALLS – MYSTERIOUS PASSAGES – DIM PEEPS AT COURTS AND WELLS IN SHADOW."
HERMAN MELVILLE

EL-GHURI COMPLEX

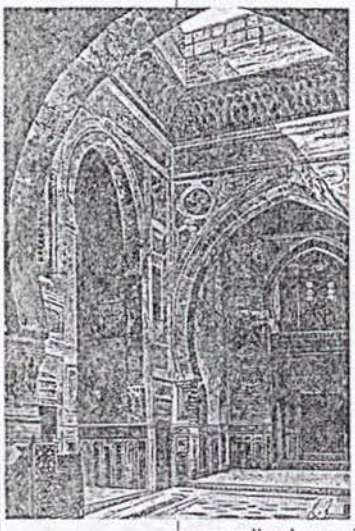
The complex, built by the sultan El-Ghuri (1501–16), the last great Mameluke sultan, comprises five buildings: a medersa and mausoleum, which stand opposite each other in the Shari' el-Muizz, a *sabil-kuttab* ● *113*, a *maqaad 116* and a *wakala* ● *118*.

The central courtyard of the El-Ghuri *wakala*, the interior of the mosque and the entrance (below).

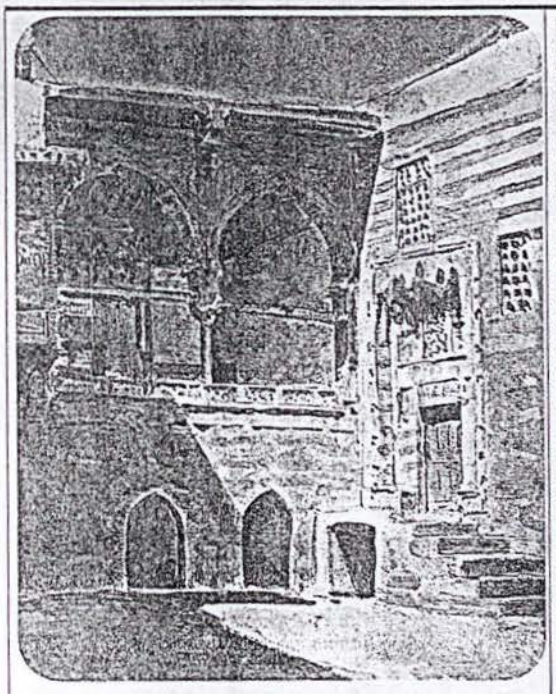


EL-GHURI "WAKALA". Built in 1504–5, this is the most complete and best-preserved *wakala* in Cairo. The regularity of the external façade and the uniformity of the windows of this stone edifice are extremely impressive. The first floor has a few small, high, square windows, while the upper stories have three rows of different types of windows, arranged in groups of three. This last row is closed by *mashrabiya* panels, each the width of three windows. The great door with its trilobate arch leads into a central courtyard where the surrounding sections of the building echo its external regularity, with the exception of the first floor, which consists of wide arcades intersected by a gallery. Today the *wakala* houses a craft center.

EL-GHURI MAUSOLEUM. The mausoleum (1503–4), distinguishable from the mosque by its unfinished cupola and a *sabil-kuttab*, includes a funeral chamber to the right and, to the left, a prayer hall with three *iwan* ● *116* evenly distributed around the central, raised and covered part of a lantern, which was once part of a *khanqa* ● *112*. The SABIL-KUTTAB forms the front section of the mausoleum and is a particularly fine example of Mameluke architecture. It has three latticed bays framed by moldings and surmounted by stone panels, while the interior is richly decorated with marble floors and walls and a ceiling with rounded, painted and gilt beams. The entrance to the MAQAAD can be found in the Shari' el-Azhar. The richly decorated walls and ceiling of this large, rectangular room provide a striking contrast with the simplicity of the limestone floor.



EL-GHURI MOSQUE. Built in 1504, the mosque has four *iwan* and a central, sunken courtyard open to the sky. The two large *iwans* are pierced by large Moorish arches; the lateral *iwans*, which are smaller, have raised arches. The base of the bicolored stone façade is occupied by cloth merchants' shops. The formerly covered street between the mosque and the mausoleum used to be the home of the famous silk market. An enormous entrance with a trilobate arch decorated with stalactites opens onto a corridor lit by a central well. The interior decoration has distinctive polychrome marble dados (whose rectangular design is reproduced to infinity), flagging laid in geometric patterns and gilt and painted wood paneling. The southern section of the Shari' el-Muizz is the extension of the main thoroughfare that crossed the city to Old Cairo ▲ *320* and which is now intersected by the Shari' el-Azhar.

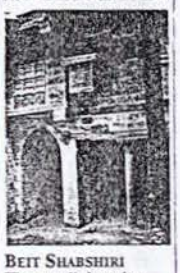


BEIT GAMAL AD-DIN A typical 17th-century residence of a Cairene notable. The house was saved from demolition by the Cairo Conservation Committee, which classified it as an historic monument in 1899. The external façade has two projecting *mashrabiya* panels overlooking the street. The entrance is through a curved arch set deep in the ground (detail below).



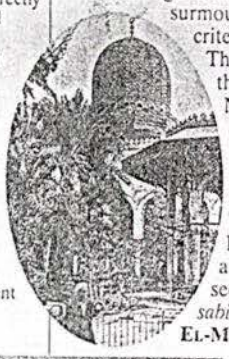
BEIT GAMAL AD-DIN EL-DAHABI. The only surviving house in this once extensive residential district, no. 6 Hara Hoch Qadam was built in 1637. The rectangular, interior courtyard is surrounded by four architecturally distinct façades. The second-floor harem chamber is remarkable for its balanced proportions and the almost perfect symmetry of its spatial organization. The *mashrabiya* walls of the north *iwan* adjoin the loggias at mezzanine level. This allowed the womenfolk to be present and yet remain unseen when (male) guests were received. On the corner of the Shari' el-Muizz and the Shari' Hara Hoch Qadam, the EL-FAKAHANI MOSQUE, constructed in 1145 and rebuilt during the 17th century, still has its original carved wood doors.

HARA EL-RUM. To the east of the Shari' el-Muizz, the Hara el-Rum or "Christian Quarter" was originally located outside the city walls. It became part of the city when the walls were moved during the 11th century and, until the 19th, was the seat of the Coptic patriarchate and housed several churches and monasteries. Today all that remains are the Church and relatively recent MONASTERY OF ST TADROS, and the 6th-century El-Adra (CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN), which was entirely rebuilt after the district was ravaged by fire during the 11th and 14th centuries. At the end of Atfa el-Tateri the 17th-century BEIT SHABSHIRI can be recognized by the projecting *mashrabiya* work on its façade. Although small, the house includes all the elements of a grand aristocratic residence: *tahtabuch*, *maqaad*, various *qaa* (six on three floors) and several staircases which give separate access to each part of the house.



BEIT SHABSHIRI The small, interior courtyard of the house (above) is overlooked by four richly decorated façades with projecting *mashrabiya* panels, lattice windows and galleries. The harem chamber occupies the entire east wing of the house. It is well lit by large, lateral bays covered with *mashrabiya*, which overlook both street and courtyard.

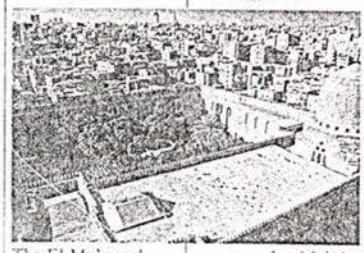
EL-MU'AYYAD MOSQUE
The prayer hall of the mosque looks directly onto a courtyard which has been converted into a shady garden (right and below). The arcades incorporated into the walls of the garden are surmounted by blind niches in the form of Persian-style arches reminiscent of the El-Azhar Mosque ▲ *294*.



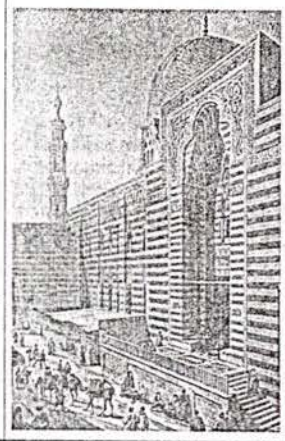
TUSSUN PASHA "SABIL". The *sabil* ● *113* was built in 1820 by Mohammed Ali in memory of his son, Ahmed Tussun, who died at the age of twenty. Its marble-clad, rounded façade surmounted by a wooden canopy observes the criteria of contemporary Turkish architecture. The rooms of the *kuttab* are scattered throughout the building.

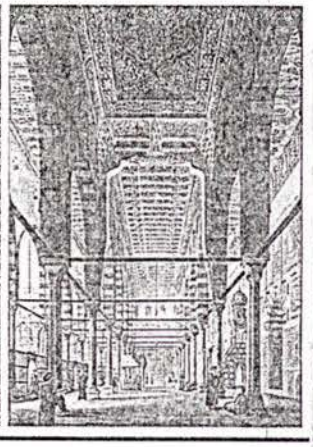
NAFISA EL-BEIDA "WAKALA". This 18th-century *wakala* ● *118* specialized in the manufacture and sale of sweetmeats. Today various structures have encroached upon the large, rectangular courtyard. The *rabaa* section is still inhabited and has around fifty apartments accessible via an interior passageway. The southern section of the building is occupied by a *sabil-kuttab* ● *113* with an overornate façade.

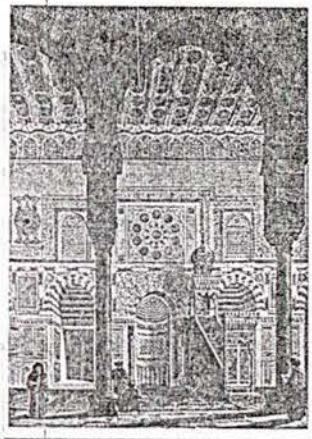
EL-MU'AYYAD OR RED MOSQUE. The mosque was built (1415–20) by Sultan El-Mu'ayyad against the south wall of the city. The bronze-plated entrance door, which bears the titles and name of Sultan Hassan, is from his medersa ▲ *309*. An entrance hall leads into the mausoleum containing the tombs of the sultan and his son. Its walls are completely covered with a polychrome marble revetment forming several geometric patterns. The prayer hall looks directly onto the courtyard, which has been converted into a garden. The columns of the hall are surmounted by two rows of superposed arches which are reminiscent of the great Ommiad mosque in Damascus, where El-Mu'ayyad was governor. The mihrab has a remarkably fine central, marble-covered decoration and festooned archstones, while the minbar is decorated with polygonal panels inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ivory. The two minarets, which stand on the two salient angles of the BAB ZUWAILA (1092), offer a panoramic view of Cairo. To the east is the outline of the city wall and its towers buried beneath the rubble.

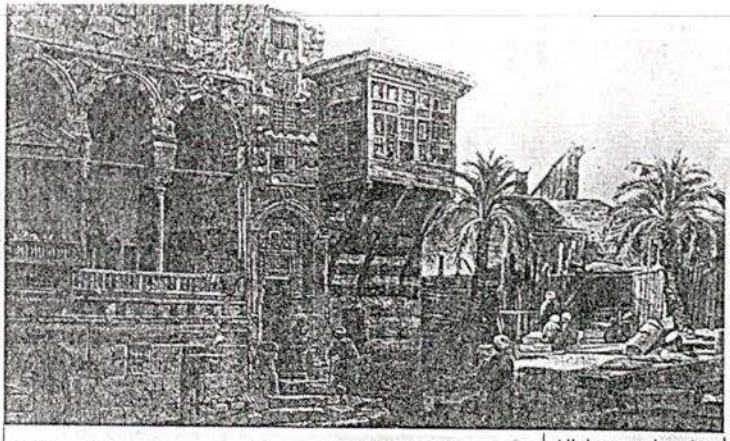


The El-Mu'ayyad Mosque was built by Sultan el-Mu'ayyad on the site of a prison in which he had endured such suffering that he vowed, if he ever regained his freedom, to replace it with a mosque. The fulfillment of this promise gave rise to one of the most beautiful mosques in Cairo. Although the prison was demolished, the site was still used for executions and the heads displayed in accordance with tradition. It was here that the sultan Selim had his enemy Tomanbay, the last of the Mameluke sultans, hanged in the 16th century. Exterior of the mosque (right), the sanctuary (center right) and the prayer hall with the mihrab and minbar (far right).





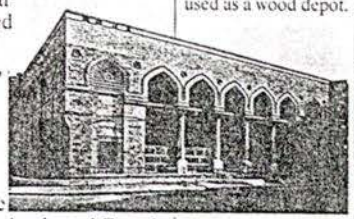


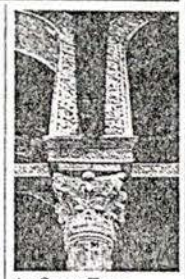


AS-SALIH TALAI MOSQUE ★. The mosque, which stands to the south of the Bab Zuwaila, was founded in 1160 by the emir As-Salih Talai, vizier to the last of the Fatimid caliphs. Around the interior courtyard the columns supporting the arches of the porticos are surmounted by ancient capitals from Christian churches. A subtle combination of stained glass and stuccowork decorates the windows in the upper part of the wall of the *qibla*. The wooden minbar (1300) is engraved with star motifs repeated to infinity. Opposite the mosque, all that remains of the FARAG IBN BARQUQ ZAWIA, which was built in 1408, are two reception rooms, one of which is used as a mausoleum.

RADWAN BEY KASBAH. Opposite the Bab Zuwaila is Cairo's only surviving example of a covered market. It was built during the 17th century by the emir Radwan Bey who dominated Egypt's political life for a quarter of a century and renovated the district, building *rabaa* (apartment blocks), a *wakala*, two *zawia*, a *sabil* and a palace. The market is a covered street whose wooden roof is pierced by lanterns which let in a soft, filtered light. Today it is occupied by manufacturers of tent fabric who have given the market its name (Khayamiya, which means "tentmakers' bazaar"). The living accommodation above the first-floor shops and stalls is virtually abandoned. On the left, beyond the Radwan Bey Kasbah, is the MAHMUD EL-KURDI MOSQUE, built in 1395, which comprises a mosque-medersa and a mausoleum. About 20 yards to the south, the INAL EL-YUSUFI ATABAKI MOSQUE also includes a mausoleum and a *sabil-kuttab*. Built in 1392–3 it is in the same style as the Mahmud el-Kurdi Mosque-Medersa with two *iwan* and a covered courtyard. The difference lies in the shape of the minaret and the minor decorative details. The interior of the second of the two mosques is better preserved with painted ceilings and marble-clad walls.

All that remains of the palace (above) built by Radwan Bey in 1650 is the triple-arched *maqaad* ● *116*. The *wakala*, to the north, is now occupied by a sawmill and the courtyard is used as a wood depot.





AS-SALIH TALAI MOSQUE
The five Persian arches of the freestone façade of the mosque (above) are closed to the street by *mashrabiya* panels which were added in 1303. When the mosque was built in 1160 the shops, which are today below the building, were at street level.

DARB EL-AHMAR

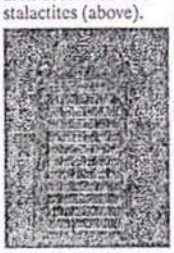
The districts surrounding the Shari' Suq el-Silah and Shari' Darb el-Ahmar were established in the 12th century. They reached the peak of their urban development under the Mamelukes when they were centered around particular activities and markets such as the Suq el-Silah (Weapons Market).

EL-ISHAQI MOSQUE ★. This cruciform mosque ▲ *108* was built in 1480–1 by the Emir Qijmas el-Ishaqi, head of the Sultan Qaitbay's stables. It stands above street level and the lower level is occupied by shops. The complex includes an ablutions room and a drinking fountain in a building across the street, linked to the mosque by a covered gallery surmounted by *mashrabiya* work. The entrance is decorated with marble and Koranic inscriptions and leads into a square entrance hall with a painted wood ceiling surrounded by an epigraphic frieze. A lattice window looks onto the mausoleum. The wall of the *qibla* is decorated with red and white marble and the beautifully carved minbar is inlaid with ivory.

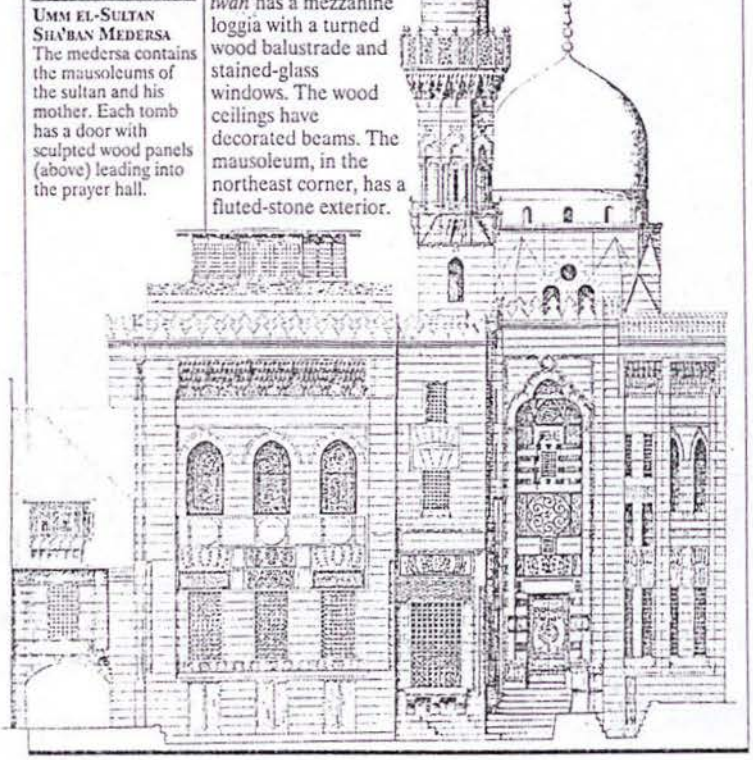
EL-MIHMANDAR MOSQUE ★. Built in 1324–5, the mosque comprises a central courtyard and four *iwan*. The west *iwan* has a mezzanine loggia with a turned wood balustrade and stained-glass windows. The wood ceilings have decorated beams. The mausoleum, in the northeast corner, has a fluted-stone exterior.



EL-MIHMANDAR MOSQUE
The mosque is reached through a gateway with a lobed arch decorated with stalactites (above).



UMM EL-SULTAN SHA'BAN MEDERSA
The medersa contains the mausoleums of the sultan and his mother. Each tomb has a door with sculpted wood panels (above) leading into the prayer hall.



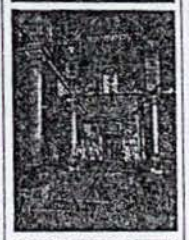


EL-MARIDANI MOSQUE ★. The mosque was founded in 1339–40 by Prince Altanbugha el-Maridani. The work was carried out under the supervision of Ibn el-Suyufi, chief architect to Sultan an-Nasir Mohammed. The central courtyard, surrounded by porticos, is separated from the prayer hall by an attractive wood lattice. Inside, four rows of raised arches are supported by ancient columns. The mihrab, inlaid with geometrically arranged green, red and yellow marble, is one of the most beautiful in Cairo, while the carved minbar is a work of art in its own right. The wall of the *qibla* has a marble revetment and a series of stained-glass, gemel windows with rounded arches. The arch of the main entrance in the Shari' el-Tabbana is decorated with stalactites.

QAITBAY PALACE. All that remains of this luxurious palace, built in 1485, is the *maqaad*, which consists of three Gothic arches resting on two ancient columns.

BEIT ER-RAZZAZ. This grand, 15th-century palace with two courtyards was built by Sultan Qaitbay and converted by Ahmed Katkhuda er-Razzaz in 1778. The present entrance is near the ablutions fountain, which stands between the PALACE and the SULTAN SHA'BAN MEDERSA built in 1369. A passageway leads into an irregularly shaped courtyard surrounded by buildings. On the right the QAITBAY ENTRANCE leads to the upper floors, which consist of several *qaa*, including a beautiful harem chamber. Its originality lies in the carved openwork of the huge vertical wood bays which reach from floor to ceiling. The part of the building overlooking the second courtyard has a first-floor reception room and second-floor *maqaad*.





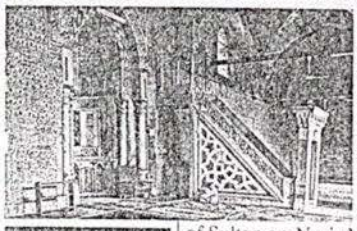


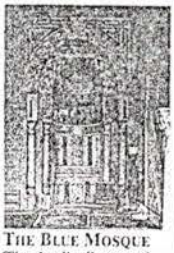
EL-MARIDANI MOSQUE
Unusually, the wall of the *qibla* is separated from the rest of the mosque by a turned and carved wood screen (above). It is one of the earliest examples of *mashrabiya* work in Cairo.



The Beit er-Razzaz has two entrances. Today one of them is actually inside the shops on the Shari' el-Tabbana.

Aqsunqur or Blue Mosque. The mosque was founded in 1346 by the Emir Shams ad-Din Aqsunqur, a member of Sultan an-Nasir Mohammed's entourage, and was restored and slightly modified in 1652 by Ibrahim Aga el-Mustahfizan who had the interior walls covered with blue tiles, thereby giving the mosque its alternative name. The arches of this porticoed mosque are supported by square and octagonal pillars rather than columns, which lends it a very distinctive appearance. The porticos were originally covered by groined vaults instead of the usual wood ceiling, but some of these have been replaced. The first of the mosque's three mausoleums, at the northwest corner, is dedicated to the son of Sultan an-Nasir Mohammed. The second, between the minaret and the south entrance, has the same tiled decoration and is dedicated to Ibrahim Aga, while the third is of more recent construction and contains the tomb of Aqsunqur.



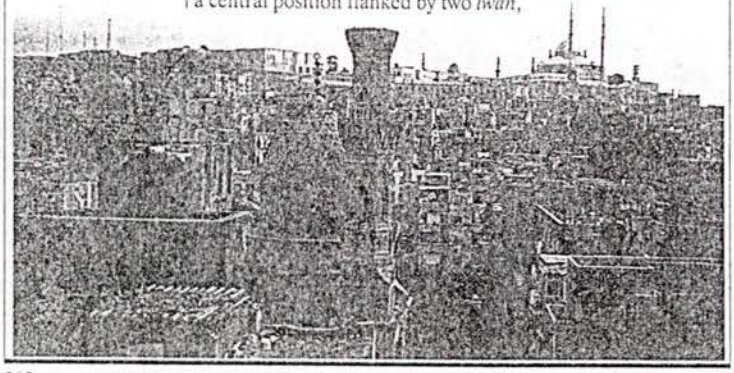


The Blue Mosque The Iznik tiles used to cover the interior of the mosque were imported from Istanbul and Damascus. The mihrab is in polychrome marble, while the minbar, the oldest marble minbar in Cairo, is inlaid with precious stones. The minaret offers a panoramic view of the city.

The Waqf. The Waqf is a religious foundation which converts or acquires property in perpetuity for religious or charitable purposes. The income from a Waqf building is used to ensure the continuation of the foundation. During the Mameluke period the Waqf became widespread and resulted in the creation of a private version of the foundation. The ingenious exploitation of the system has enabled major construction companies to participate effectively in the urban development of the city.

The Omar Aga Waqf. The complex (1621) occupies the west façade of the street and comprises, from north to south, a *sabil-kuttab*, a mausoleum, an ablutions fountain and a *rabua*.

Khayrbay Mosque. Khayrbay, governor of Aleppo during the reign of El-Ghuri, was made commander-in-chief of the army during the conquest of Syria by Sultan Selim I into whose hands he delivered the country. His complex comprises a mausoleum, built in 1502, a mosque and a *sabil-kuttab* added in 1520. The mosque is built according to the irregular layout of a medersa with *iwan*, with the prayer hall occupying a central position flanked by two *iwan*,



although the direction of Mecca is not strictly observed. The funeral chamber, surmounted by a cupola, is surprisingly high.

Alin Aq Palace. Built in 1293, the palace is also known as the Palace of Khayrbay (Khayrbay lived there after being appointed Pasha of Cairo under the Ottomans). All that remains of this once luxurious palace are the freestone walls of the four façades pierced by arched windows. The main entrance in the Shari' Bab el-Wazir is a wide, rectangular opening decorated with stalactites and flanked by two stone benches.

Tarabay as-Sharifi Mausoleum and Gate. About one hundred yards further on in the Shari' Bab el-Tureb is the Tarabay as-Sharifi Mausoleum and Gate built in 1503 on the site of the Bab el-Wazir (Cemetery Gate). The *sabil-kuttab* to the right of the gate used to lead to a medersa (which no longer exists), while the façade of the beautifully constructed mausoleum is composed of vertical panels crowned with stalactites.

Aytmishi Mosque. Built in 1383 by Seif ad-Din Aytmish el-Baghasi, a member of Sultan Barquq's entourage, the structure comprises a *sabil-kuttab* on the corner where only the first floor remains, a mosque and a mausoleum. The mosque consists of a single *iwan* leading off a central area with a wood ceiling pierced by a lantern. The mausoleum is surmounted by a small dome of a type virtually exclusive to Cairo. It is decorated with raised ribs which are vertical at the base and become suddenly helicoidal.

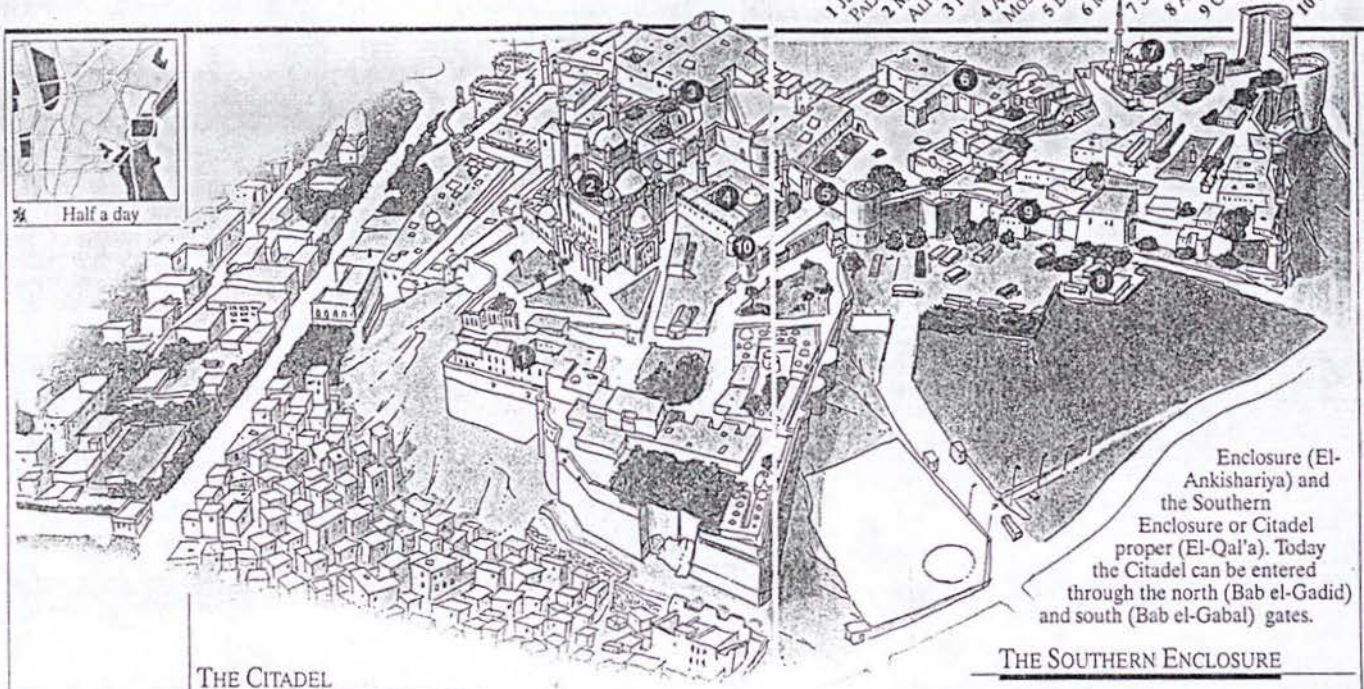
El-Mu'ayyad "mauristan". The impressive ruins of the El-Mu'ayyad *mauristan* (1418) are reached by following the Shari' el-Tabbana southward into the Shari' el-Mahgar and turning right into the Shari' Sikka el-Kumi. The *mauristan* replaced the 14th-century Ashrafiya Medersa founded by Sultan Sha'ban and was once a huge building which covered a vast area. Today much of this area is occupied by apartment blocks. It was Cairo's second largest hospital after the one founded by Sultan Qala'un ▲ *289*. Inside the ruins huge arcades, whose façades are pierced by arched windows surmounted by oculi, can still be seen around a courtyard.



An arch in one of the walls surrounding the courtyard of the ruined El-Mu'ayyad *mauristan*.

1 Jewel Palace
2 Mohammed Ali Mosque
3 Police Museum
4 An-Nasir Mohammed Mosque
5 Bab el-Qulla
6 Military Museum
7 Suleyman Pasha Mosque
8 Archeological Museum
9 Carriage Museum
10 Joseph's Well

½ Half a day

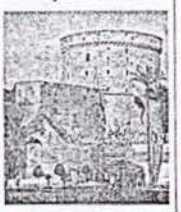


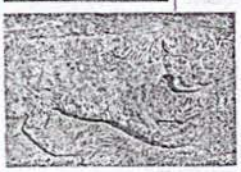
Enclosure (El-Ankishariya) and the Southern Enclosure or Citadel proper (El-Qal'a). Today the Citadel can be entered through the north (Bab el-Gadid) and south (Bab el-Gabal) gates.

THE CITADEL

The site, formed by the foothills of Jebel Moqattam, was first occupied in 810 when the governor Hatim Ibn Hartama built the so-called "Dome of the Wind" pavilion. Since then the Citadel has continually attracted the attention of the governors of Egypt. In 1176 Salah ad-Din ▲ *270* enclosed it with fortifications to protect it against attack by the Crusaders. The Mameluke sultans made it their headquarters and built a number of structures, including the vast QASR EL-ABLAQ PALACE and an 11,000-foot aqueduct with four pumping stations. During the Ottoman period, the Citadel became a real city with two residential districts occupied by Janissaries and *azab* (celibates). It became the main residence and seat of government of Mohammed Ali, who modified the walls and constructed civil and military buildings as well as the mosque named after him. The Citadel has three distinct sections, each surrounded by walls punctuated with towers and gates: the Lower Enclosure (El-Azab), the Northern

The Lions' Tower (below), today transformed into the Military Museum.







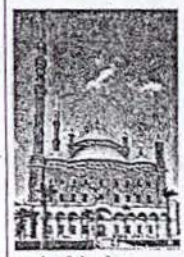
THE SOUTHERN ENCLOSURE

The Southern Enclosure faces Jebel Moqattam and is the highest of the three enclosures. Beyond the south gate is the former Mameluke *hoch* added by Sultan An-Nasir Mohammed in 1335. To the east stands the DAR EL-DARB, the former Mint, built in 1812.

QASR EL-GAWHARA OR JEWEL PALACE. The palace was built in 1814 by Mohammed Ali on a site which was for a long time occupied by Mameluke and Ottoman palaces. Today it houses a collection of furniture and other objects belonging to the family of the viceroy whose apartments and courtroom were in the palace.

MOHAMMED ALI OR ALABASTER MOSQUE. This monumental mosque (1830–57) dominates the city from the site previously occupied by the Mameluke palace, QASR EL-ABLAQ (1315). Mohammed Ali sent to Istanbul for the Greek architect Yussuf Bushnaq, who achieved only a pale imitation of the Ottoman

MOHAMMED ALI MOSQUE
The mosque is dominated by two slender 270-foot minarets. Leading off a large, arcaded courtyard is a vast prayer hall surmounted, in the Ottoman tradition, by a central (170-foot-high) dome, four demi-cupolas and four small cupolas on

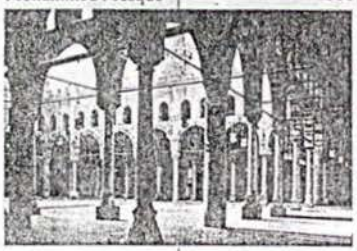


each of the four corners. Inside, the Rococo-style décor is reminiscent of a theater interior. At the far end of the courtyard is a clock, a gift from Louis-Philippe of France to Mohammed Ali.





An-Nasir Mohammed Mosque



The great interior courtyard of the An-Nasir Mohammed Mosque is surrounded by a double row of stone arcades in alternate red and black bricks, supported by ancient Pharaonic, Byzantine and Coptic columns.

mosques. However its position makes it Cairo's most famous and most frequented mosque.

An-Nasir Mohammed Mosque ★. Built by Sultan an-Nasir Mohammed in 1335, it is the only well-preserved Mameluke building in the Citadel. The mosque has two minarets and two entrances. The first entrance, inscribed in an arch decorated with stalactites, was reserved for the sultan, while the second, in the form of a trilobate arch, was situated opposite the Bab el-Qulla and used by the soldiers stationed in the Citadel. The marble panels covering the interior of the mosque were removed and sent to Istanbul by Sultan Selim I when he conquered Egypt in 1517. Their absence accentuates the characteristically sober interior decoration of Mameluke architecture. A gateway opposite the mosque leads onto the esplanade of the Police Museum, which occupies the old Artillery School built in 1830 on the site of the Lions' Tower. The museum traces the history of the Egyptian police force from Pharaonic to modern times. On the left is the Military Prison, built by the British in 1880 and used until 1983.

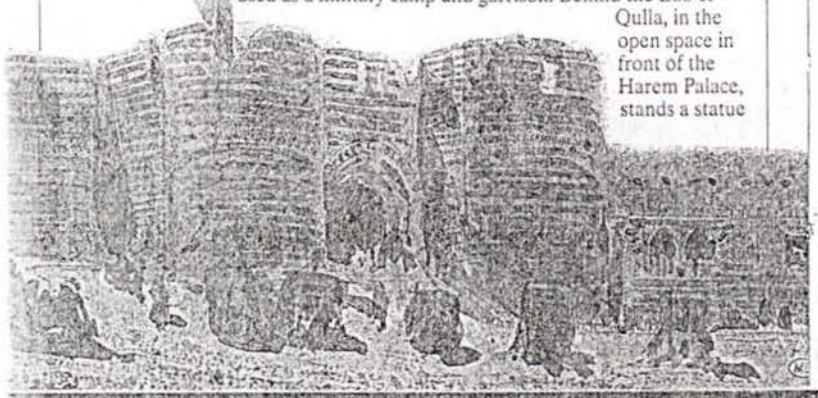
Joseph's Well. The 270-foot well was carved out of the rocky hillside by Salah ad-Din in 1183 to ensure the Citadel's water supply. The water was brought up by two pumping stations. A spiral staircase with observation windows winds around the outside of the well. The additional width (about 6 feet) of the upper section is taken up by an access ramp for the first pumping station.

The inner wall. The wall separating the Northern and Southern Enclosures was built by the Mameluke sultan Baybars el-Bunduqari (1223–77) to isolate his palace from the rest of the Citadel.

Bab el-Azab
The Bab el-Azab (below), which opens onto the Midan Salah ad-Din, was built by Abd el-Rahman Katkhuda in 1754. Today it is surrounded by 19th-century walls. It was on a road somewhere between the Bab el-Azab and the upper part of the Citadel that Mohammed Ali ordered the massacre of five hundred Mameluke chieftains on March 1, 1811.

Northern Enclosure

The Northern Enclosure is surrounded, for the most part, by the fortifications erected by Salah ad-Din and rebuilt by Mohammed Ali. The wall incorporates twenty or so towers and two gates: the Bab el-Gadid (1826) and the Bab el-Qulla, the central gate built in the 16th century and modified by Mohammed Ali, who added the upper sections reserved for the guards. This part of the Citadel has for a long time been used as a military camp and garrison. Behind the Bab el-Qulla, in the open space in front of the Harem Palace, stands a statue of Ibrahim Pasha (one of Mohammed Ali's sons) which is a copy of the one in the Midan el-Opera ▲ *274*. To the left of the gate is the Diwan, which is the equivalent of a ministry of education, built during the reign of Mohammed Ali.



The Harem Palace. The palace (1827) consists of three wings whose interior decoration and painting reflect the Levantine style adopted by Mohammed Ali. It was the residence of the royal family until 1874 when the khedive Ismaïl transferred the seat of government to the Abdin Palace ▲ *281*. It was used as a military hospital during the British occupation and, in 1946, was converted into a museum which traces the military history of Egypt. In the central wing visitors can see the former alabaster-covered *hammam*, while the exit in the left wing leads into a courtyard where the statue of Colonel de Sèves (previously in the Midan Suleyman Pasha ▲ *275*) now stands. On the right, halfway between the palace and the Suleyman Pasha Mosque, stands the 16th-century tomb of Sheikh Mohammed el-Kahaki and, on the left, part of the wall built by Salah ad-Din and circumscribed by the later, 19th-century wall.



The French officer Colonel de Sèves (1788–1860) (left) was employed by Mohammed Ali to reorganize the Egyptian army. He was promoted to general and converted to Islam, taking the name Suleyman Pasha.

Suleyman Pasha Mosque ★. Built in 1528 by an Ottoman governor, Suleyman Pasha (who had no connection with Colonel de Sèves), the Suleyman Pasha Mosque is not only Egypt's first cupolated Ottoman mosque, but also its most beautiful. It stands in a small garden, which is enclosed by an outer wall, and can be reached by way of a courtyard whose arcades are surmounted by small cupolas. The prayer hall has a large central cupola and three demi-cupolas, all richly decorated with floral and geometric motifs. The extremely fine, marble-covered mihrab illustrates the influence of Mameluke art. The mosque is also known as the Sariya el-Gabal Mosque after the Fatimid saint, Sayyid Sariya, whose tomb stands at the eastern end of the surrounding wall. Several of its rooms are surmounted by cupolas and decorated with 19th-century naive designs.



The dome of the Suleyman Pasha Mosque, decorated with Koranic verses.

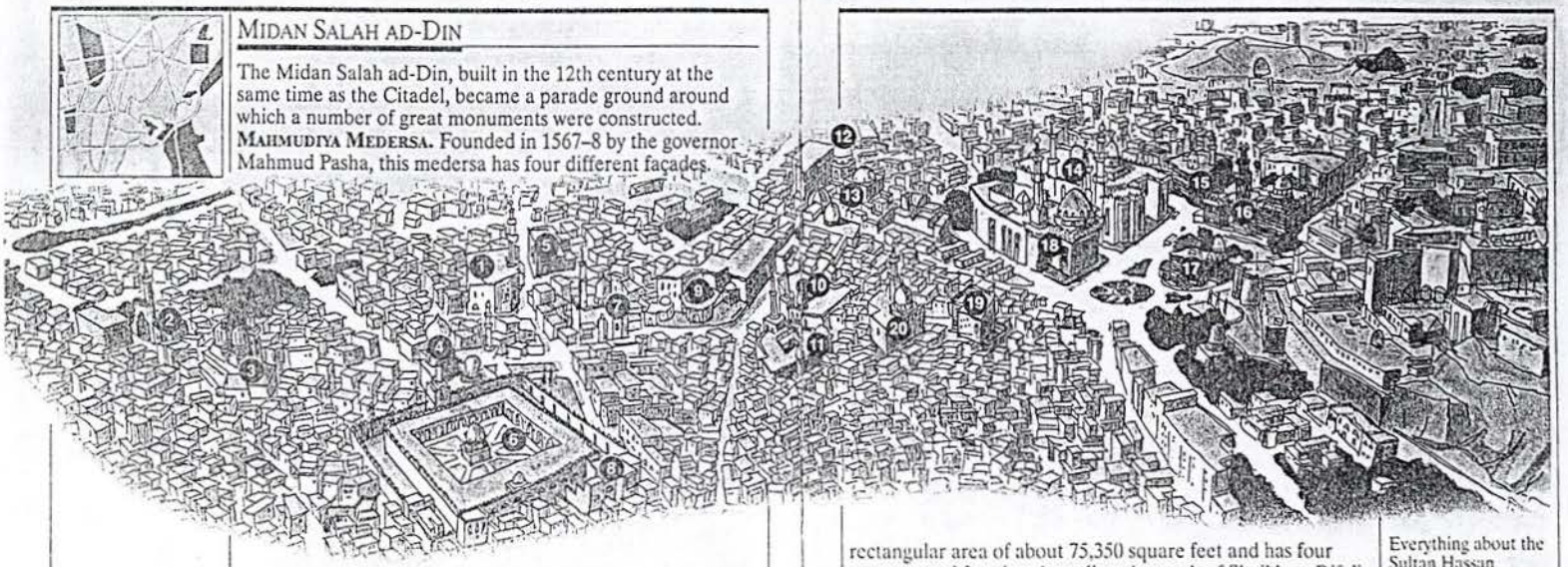


Interior of the Suleyman Pasha Mosque (below).

Carriage Museum. Housed in the building used as the British Officers' Mess during the colonial period, the museum has a collection of eight carriages, the majority of which date from the reign of the khedive Ismaïl; indeed, the collection includes the carriage he used for the opening of the Suez Canal ▲ *232* in 1869. To the south of the museum, the Burg el-Turfa (1207) is one of the few towers in Cairo which is open to the public. Columns from the Ottoman period and the remains of a 15th-century minaret can be seen in the open-air archeological museum.

"... the immense city of Cairo, with its citadels and towers, and walls, and minarets stretching away for miles, the splendid ancient city, and beyond it, modern Cairo, with its turmoil of tramways, railroads, and other modernities."
Wilfred Scawen Blunt

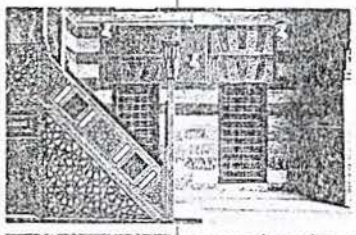
1 El-Yusufi Mosque
2 As-Sayyida Zeinab Mosque
3 Sangar Salar Mosque-Mausoleum
4 Sarghatmish Medersa
5 Ahmed Efendi Sabil
6 Ibn Tulun Mosque
7 Taghri Bardi Medersa
8 Gayer-Anderson Museum
9 Umm Abbas Sabil-Kuttab
10 Sheikhu Mosque
11 Sheikhu Khanqa
12 Sunqur Saadi Mausoleum
13 Dervish Theater
14 Ar-Rifa'i Mosque
15 El-Gawhara el-Lala Mosque
16 Qanibey Medersa
17 Mahmudiya Medersa
18 Sultan Hassan Medersa
19 Qaitbay Sabil-Kuttab
20 Qanibey el-Mohammedi Mosque



MIDAN SALAH AD-DIN

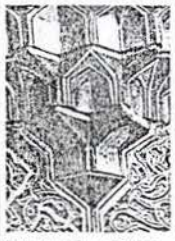
The Midan Salah ad-Din, built in the 12th century at the same time as the Citadel, became a parade ground around which a number of great monuments were constructed.

MAHMUDIYA MEDERSA. Founded in 1567–8 by the governor Mahmud Pasha, this medersa has four different façades.



The interior is about 65 feet square and consists of two *iwan* and a long, narrow courtyard.

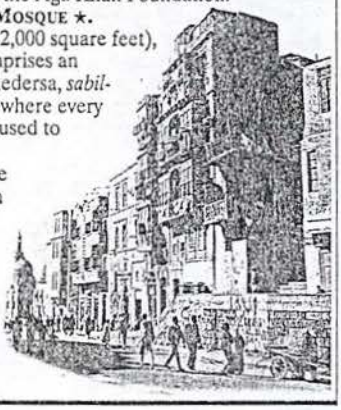
QANIBEY EMIR AKHUR MEDERSA ★. The medersa (1503), whose façade overlooks the square, comprises a *sabil-kuttab*, an entrance at the top of a flight of steps and a mausoleum with a high-pitched cupola decorated with geometric and floral motifs. The building is entirely of stone and consists of a central courtyard open to the sky and four *iwan*. Near the Citadel, the HARA DARB EL-LABBANI was bordered on either side by houses whose upper stories overhung the street. Today only one of these remains, the (probably) pre-18th-century BEIT ALI EFENDI LABIB, situated at no. 4, on the right. This former residence of Hassan Fathi ▲ *442* is now owned by the Aga Khan Foundation.



The wooden minbar inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and detail of the interior decoration (above) of the Qanibey Emir Akhur Medersa.

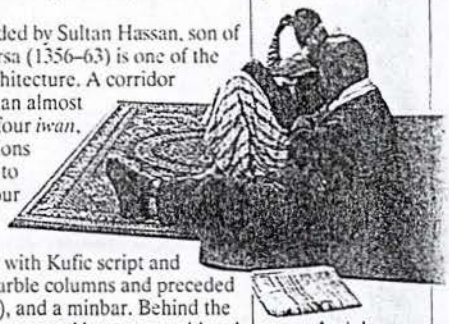
EL-GAWHARA EL-LALA MOSQUE ★. Although small (about 2,000 square feet), the mosque (1430) comprises an ingeniously designed medersa, *sabil-kuttab* and mausoleum where every inch of space has been used to advantage.

AR-RIFA'I MOSQUE. The mosque was founded in 1869 on the site of the Sheikh ar-Rifa'i *zawia* (1122). Designed by the architect Mustapha Fahmi ▲ *281* and completed in 1912 by Max Herz Pasha, it covers a rectangular area of about 75,350 square feet and has four monumental façades. As well as the tomb of Sheikh ar-Rifa'i the mosque also contains those of King Fuad (1868–1936), his mother, and Mohammed Reza Pahlavi (1919–80), the last Shah of Iran.



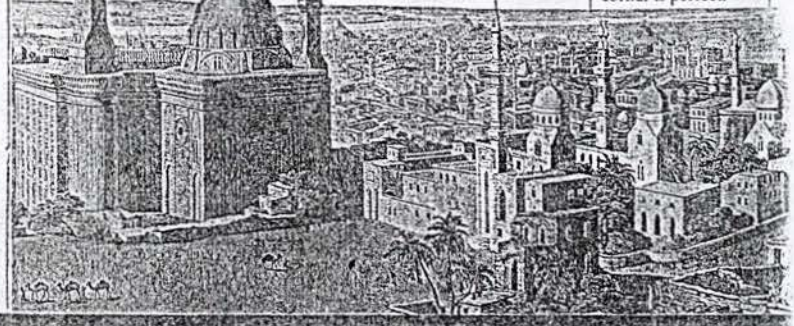
One of the streets leading off the Midan Salah ad-Din (right). In the distance is the Mahmudiya Mosque.

SULTAN HASSAN MEDERSA. Founded by Sultan Hassan, son of An-Nasir Mohammed, the medersa (1356–63) is one of the finest examples of Mameluke architecture. A corridor leads from the entrance hall into an almost square courtyard surrounded by four *iwan*, in the center of which is an ablutions fountain. The four doors leading to the medersa correspond to the four Muslim orthodox schools. The *iwan* of the *qibla* is decorated with stuccowork friezes inscribed with Kufic script and has a mihrab, flanked by eight marble columns and preceded by a marble *dikka* (platform), and a minbar. Behind the minbar the mausoleum, surmounted by a once gold and silver-plated cupola, houses the tombs of Sultan Hassan's two sons (the assassinated sultan's body was never recovered); there is also an ancient wooden Koran case inlaid with ivory.



Everything about the Sultan Hassan Medersa is impressive: its area (about 850, 350 square feet), its façade surmounted by a projecting cornice, its monumental entrance (39 x 125 feet) and its sober interior where every corner is perfect.

SHARI' SUYUFIA. Part of the ancient thoroughfare which





Remains of the Emir Qusun Palace, which still has a vaulted entrance decorated with stalactites.



"Maqaad" of the Emir Taz Palace
The *maqaad* appears to have been added by Ali Aga Dar el-Saada who built the *sabil-kuttab* (1677) at the southern end.

The cupola of the Hassan Sadaqa Mausoleum is covered with plaster decorations.



used to cross the city to Old Cairo, it extends beyond the Ibn Tulun district in the direction of the Imam as-Shafi'i cemetery.

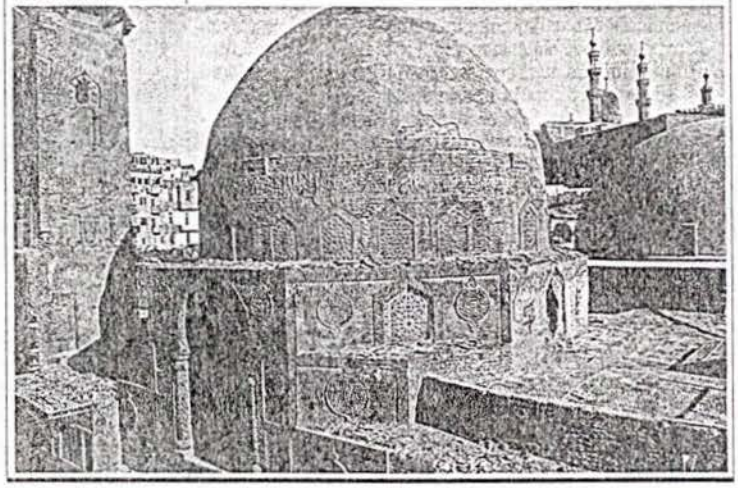
Emir Qusun Palace. The palace, which stands to the west of the Sultan Hassan Medersa, was built between 1330 and 1337 by Emir Qusun and has been renovated several times, in particular by Yashbak Min Mahdi. The existing ruins cannot be visited because they are in a bad state of disrepair.

Emir Taz Palace. The palace, built in 1352 by Emir Taz on his marriage to the daughter of Sultan An-Nasir Mohammed, was significantly modified at the end of the 19th century when it became the first Egyptian girls' school. Today it is used as an educational supplies depot and the interior has been badly damaged. The *qaa* overlooking the west entrance and the entrance itself have collapsed, while the courtyard was divided in two by a wall built in the 19th century at the same time as most of the buildings surrounding the northern section.

El-Abar "zawia". The *zawia* (1248) stands on the corner of the Shari' Suyufia and the Shari' Qaraqol el-Manshiya. It was originally part of a complex consisting of a *khanqa* and a medersa, of which only the mausoleum remains. This now forms part of the façade of the Emir Taz Palace and houses the tombs of Sheikh Ala ad-Din el-Abar and his wife.

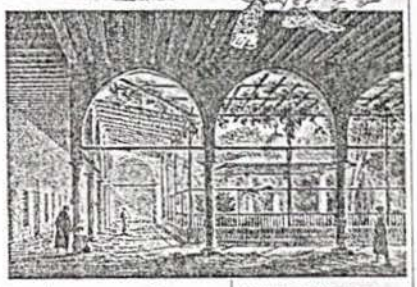
Qizlar "sabil-kuttab" and "rabaa". The façade of this complex, founded in 1618 by Ali Aga Dar el-Saada, consists of a *sabil-kuttab* entirely surrounded by identical bays (each corresponding to a *rabaa*) pierced at first-floor level by wide openings and, on the upper floor, by pairs of superposed, oriel windows.

Hassan Sadaqa Mausoleum. The mausoleum houses the tombs of its founder, Sunqur Saadi, and Hassan Sadaqa. It was part of a complex (1315) consisting of a medersa which no longer exists, a *takiya* ● *112* and a *ribat* (monastery) which was replaced during the 19th century by a Dervish theater.





Dervish Theater. The theater, also known as Sama Khana, is dedicated to the dancing dervishes of the Mawlawiya sect. It was restored between 1979 and 1989 by the Italian Cultural Center and houses an Italian-Egyptian restoration training center and an exhibition hall. The 19th-century building includes some older sections. Excavations have revealed the remains of the Sunqur Saadi Medersa, which were used as foundations. The interior includes a monastery complex and a huge circular chamber with a special women's gallery, whose walls and dome are decorated with flowers and landscapes. The first floor is all that remains of the Yussuf Bey Sabil-kuttab (1772) on the opposite side of the Shari' el-Muzafar, while on the corner of the Shari' el-Helmiya the El-Muzafar Mausoleum (1322) forms part of the adjacent building.



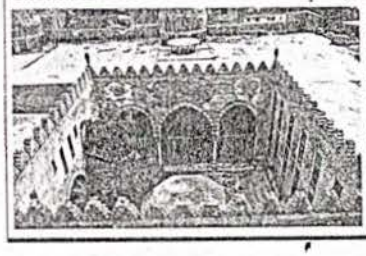
Dervish Theater
The monastery cells of the Sufis occupied a vast complex built around gardens.

Shari' Saliba

In the Shari' Sheikhu, to the west of the Midan Salah ad-Din, the Qaitbay Sabil-kuttab (1479) is, unlike its contemporaries, completely autonomous: an innovation which became popular during the Ottoman period. On the corner of Shari' Sheikhu and Shari' Darb el-Samak stands the Qanibey el-Mohammedi Mosque (1413). The interior consists of a single *iwan* whose wide arch opens onto a covered courtyard with a wood ceiling.

Sheikhu Mosque and "khanqa" ★. The mosque and *khanqa* were built (1349–55) opposite each other by Emir Sheikhu. The absence of any decoration accentuates the strength of the architectural form. The design of the mosque combines the characteristics of mosques with *iwan* and porticoed mosques ● *108* as it consists of two porticoed *iwan* and a central courtyard open to the sky. At the northeast corner of the *khanqa* stands the Emir Abdallah Sabil-kuttab (1719). The 19th-century Umm Abbas Sabil-kuttab, built by the mother of the khedive Abbas, has replaced the Sheikhu *sabil*.

Taghri Bardi Medersa. The complex, founded in 1440 by Emir Taghri Bardi el-Rumi, comprises a medersa, a *sabil-kuttab* and a mausoleum surmounted by an impressive stone cupola decorated with interwoven fluting.

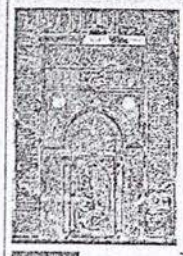


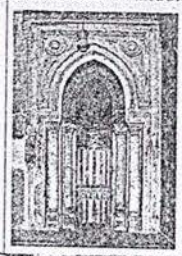


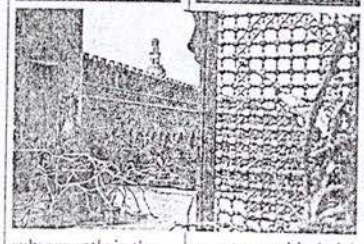
Sheikhu "khanqa"
The *khanqa* was designed to house needy pilgrims. The courtyard (left) is surrounded at second-floor level by wooden galleries leading to the study cells on the west and south sides. The other two sides consist of two *iwan*, one of which is reserved for prayer.



IBN TULUN MOSQUE The mosque's main mihrab consists of a stone niche surrounded by a simple frame. Others were added subsequently in the prayer hall, including a marble mihrab with a wooden arch, flanked by four columns.







The Ibn Tulun Mosque before it was restored in 1918.

EL-QATAI'. In 868 Ahmed Ibn Tulun seized power and founded the city of El-Qatai' ▲ *271*. He erected a fortress-like mosque on a small hill in the center of the new city, as well as a huge castle on the Jebel Moqattam, at the foot of which lay a vast *midan*. In 1069, following a terrible famine, the city was sacked and abandoned. In 1168 Cairo was besieged by the Franes and the vizier Shawar ordered Fustat and El-Qatai' to be burned. Today the Ibn Tulun Mosque is all that remains of this legendary city. The site, upon which a vast lake lay until the mid-19th century, was occupied by the Mamelukes who built palaces, mosques and medersat. It was totally transformed following the draining of the lake, after which modern buildings were constructed.

IBN TULUN MOSQUE. Built in 876–9 by Ahmed Ibn Tulun on the Jebel Yashkur, this is the oldest original mosque in Cairo. It was converted into a military hospital by Ibrahim Pasha in the 19th century, and was subsequently used as a salt warehouse and a beggar's prison before being classified as a historic monument in 1882. It was restored, in 1918. The rectangular building is entirely constructed in brick (including the strange-looking merlons on top of its walls) and surrounded by a "rampart" walk. It is a porticoed mosque ● *108* (the porticos rest on pillars) consisting of five naves on the *qibla* side and two on the other three sides. The plaster of the intrados of the arches is decorated with inscribed geometric designs. The long foliate frieze which runs the length of the porticos is surmounted by a carved wood inscription of Koranic verses. The minaret, a square tower with an external, spiral staircase, is the only one of its kind in Egypt. Faithfully restored by the sultan Lajin in the 18th century, it is reminiscent of the minaret of the Samarra Mosque in Mesopotamia, which is believed to have been the inspiration behind the design of the Ibn Tulun Mosque.

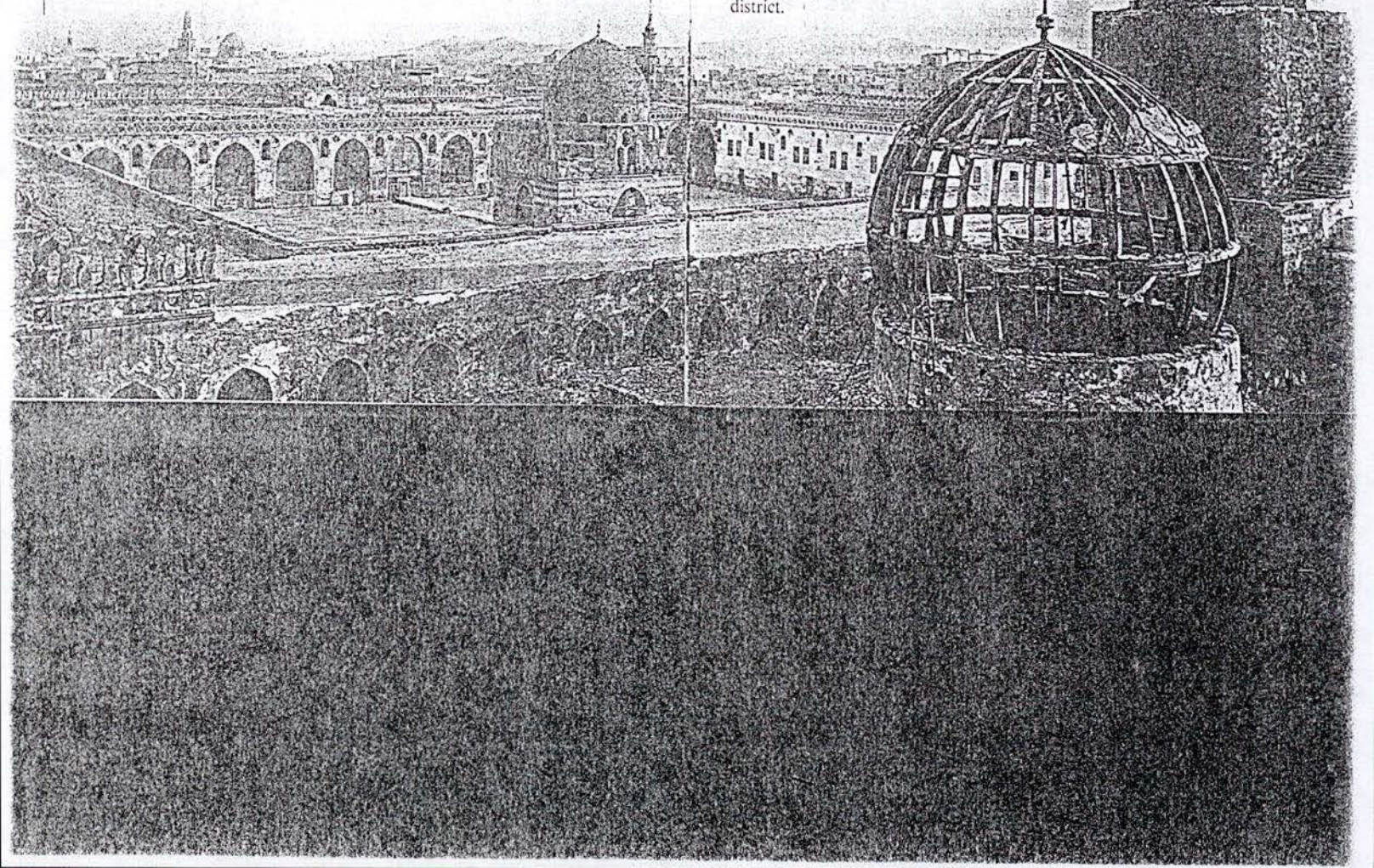
GAYER-ANDERSON MUSEUM. The museum houses the private collection of Major Gayer-Anderson and includes furniture, silks, glassware, crystal, carpets, carved wood paneling and embroidered Arab costumes. It was founded in 1937 in two ancient residences, the BEIT EL-KIRIDILIYA (1632) and BEIT AMNA BENT SALIM (1540), reached via a narrow, private street. The first has a *sabil* at the southwest corner and a *maqaad* with a monumental entrance. The *qaa* situated between the two buildings has been furnished in its original style. The second residence has a small courtyard with a single-arched *maqaad* and a magnificent *qaa* with an extremely high ceiling which runs the length of the house. Several third-floor rooms have been organized to accommodate the collections and include a reconstruction of a Syrian room. Beyond the Ibn Tulun Mosque the Shari' el-Khalifa leads to the cemeteries ▲ *326*.

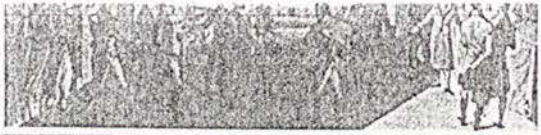
"Allah is the one and only God and Mohammed is his Prophet." The *shahada* (profession of faith) inscribed above the main mihrab in the Ibn Tulun Mosque.



SARGHATMISH MEDERSA. The medersa was built in 1356 by Emir Seif ad-Din Sarghatmish against the northwest wall of the Ibn Tulun Mosque. It has a central courtyard open to the sky, formed by four *iwan* surrounded by study cells. The cupola, supported by wooden pendentives, covering the main *iwan* in front of the mihrab, was rebuilt in 1940 to replace the original which had been destroyed. The mausoleum is situated next to the west *iwan*. In front of the medersa are the recently renovated MOSQUE AND MAUSOLEUM OF EL-KHODARI, built in 1767. Inside, the arcaded prayer hall has a painted wood ceiling.

SANGAR SALAR MOSQUE AND MAUSOLEUM. The complex (1304) is situated to the west of the Sarghatmish Medersa, in the Shari' Abd el-Magid el-Labbani. It houses two similar mausoleums, one dedicated to its founder, Emir Alam ad-Din Sangar el-Gawli, and the other to his comrade, Emir Seif ad-Din Salar. A staircase leads (right) to the mausoleums along a corridor surmounted by groined vaults and (left) to the mosque with its single *iwan*. The eastern gate of the courtyard opens onto the Qal'at el-Kabch district.





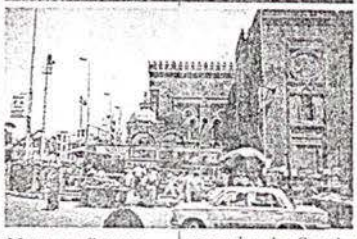
Napoleon Bonaparte visiting the French Institute in Egypt.

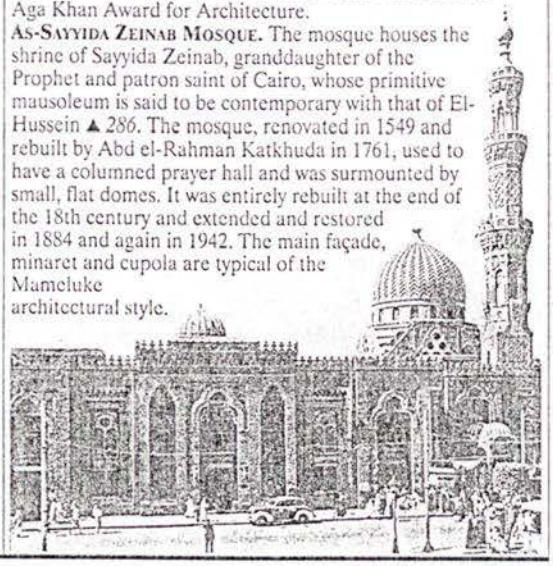
During the Ommiad period the modern working-class district of QAL'AT EL-KABCH was one of the most exclusive districts in Cairo. It experienced its Golden Age during the reign of Sultan An-Nasir Mohammed who carried out extensive renovations and constructed a water supply. At the end of the 14th century the district was destroyed and abandoned as a result of a power struggle between Prince Yalbugha and Sultan Sha'ban. Land and property were subsequently divided into plots and today buildings stand on sites once occupied by gardens.

QAITBAY MEDERSA. The medersa is situated in a square on the Shari' Qal'at el-Kabch. Founded by Sultan Qaitbay in 1475, one year after the construction of the mausoleum-medersa ▲ *328* on which it was based, it is characterized by a profusion of stalactites and honeycomb decorations, especially on the façade and below the balconies of the minaret. Inside there are four *iwan* and a courtyard covered by a wood ceiling. The wood casing of the mihrab is decorated with intricately carved polygonal stars. On the left, in the Shari' Abd el-Magid el-Labbani, the two stone benches in front of the (now condemned) wooden entrance of the YUSSEF BEY SABIL-KUTTAB (1634) are a favorite resting place for peddlers. The stone consoles that used to support the second floor can still be seen. Opposite the *sabil* the mosque founded by Sultan el-Malik el-Zahir Jaqmaq is named after Lajin el-Seifi who rebuilt it in 1449. Behind the mosque is a recently created GARDEN, reached via the Shari' Qadri opposite the Sarghatmish Medersa, which won the 1992 Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

AS-SAYYIDA ZEINAB MOSQUE. The mosque houses the shrine of Sayyida Zeinab, granddaughter of the Prophet and patron saint of Cairo, whose primitive mausoleum is said to be contemporary with that of El-Hussein ▲ *286*. The mosque, renovated in 1549 and rebuilt by Abd el-Rahman Katkhuda in 1761, used to have a columned prayer hall and was surmounted by small, flat domes. It was entirely rebuilt at the end of the 18th century and extended and restored in 1884 and again in 1942. The main façade, minaret and cupola are typical of the Mameluke architectural style.

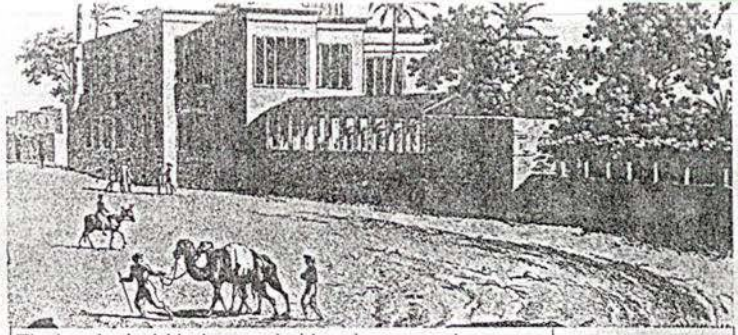






SULTAN MUSTAFA "SABIL-KUTTAB" The façade of the circular *sabil* is pierced by large bays covered by bronze grilles. The interior is decorated with polychrome marble and faïence revetments. The *kuttab* is surmounted by a finely carved wood canopy.

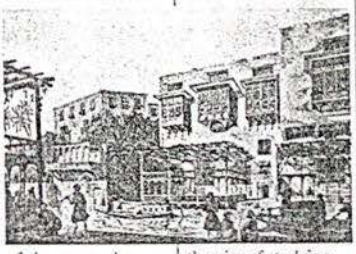
MIDAN AS-SAYYIDA ZEINAB The square was built during the second half of the 19th century during the reign of the khedive Ismail. It was renovated and extended after the canal which crossed it was filled in and has been constantly changing ever since. It owes its popularity to the presence of the As-Sayyida Zeinab Mosque (above and right), which is an important place of pilgrimage for Muslims. During the *muled* (anniversary of the birth) of Sayyida Zeinab, thousands of the faithful from all over Egypt gather in the square.



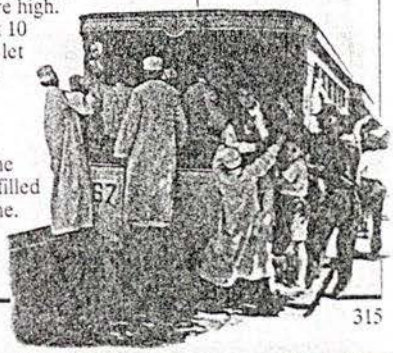
The interior is richly decorated with arabesques and inscriptions, while the colonnaded prayer hall has a painted wood ceiling and is surmounted by a cupola in front of the mihrab. The mausoleum, to the west, is also surmounted by a cupola supported by a pendentive of stalactites. The cenotaph is surrounded by a finely worked bronze grille. Opposite is the SULTAN MUSTAFA SABIL-KUTTAB (1759).

BEIT AS-SINNARI. The Beit as-Sinnari is reached by taking the first street on the right after the *sabil*, turning left into the Shari' Hassan el-Kashef and then right into a narrow alleyway named after a former president of the French Institute, Gaspard Monge (1746–1818). Built in 1794 by Prince Ibrahim Katkhuda as-Sinnari, the house was requisitioned in 1798 (as were the now nonexistent houses of Hassan Kashef and Qasim Bey) as a residence for the scientists and scholars of the Egypt Expedition's scientific mission. The building has all the characteristic elements of Cairene houses ● *116* of that period. To the north the *tahtabuch* forms a wide loggia which opens onto a courtyard, and is surmounted by a *maqaad* with a separate entrance. The harem suite comprises several rooms and *qaa* which are interconnected by a series of stairways and passages. The main *qaa* overlooks both the street and the courtyard, while the huge *mashrabiya* bays of the second *qaa*, to the west, look onto the courtyard.

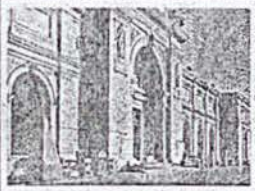
SHARI' PORT SAID OR EL-KHALIG. Today it is difficult to imagine the former charm of this district, which was totally transformed by the urban development of the early 20th-century. The El-Khalig Canal was first dug during the Pharaonic period to link the Nile and the Red Sea and was subsequently filled in and re-dug many times. In the 14th century it was rebuilt and opened to navigation by An-Nasir Mohammed and soon became a popular place for boating. The canal, fed by the Nile opposite Roda Island ▲ *283*, crossed the city from north to south. It was navigable almost all year, when the waters of the Nile were high. During the Nile floods (between August 10 and 20), a special ceremony was held to let the water into the canal by breaking the small dyke at its mouth. The event was followed by a great public celebration during which the Cairenes took to the stretch of water between the Nile and the El-Khalig Canal. In 1897 the canal was filled in once again to make way for a tram line. It was replaced by the Shari' el-Khalig el-Masri, which was later widened and renamed Shari' Port Said.



THE FRENCH INSTITUTE IN EGYPT On July 12, 1798, Napoleon Bonaparte landed in Alexandria with 38,000 men, including a scientific mission consisting of a team of mathematicians, engineers, scientists, economists, artists and writers. The leading members of the mission formed a society, based on the French Institute, with the aim of studying the resources and development of Egypt. The results of their work were published in *La Description de l'Egypte* (1809), which included more than three thousand illustrations.



Elaborately worked bronze lamp (Mameluke period) from the Sultan Hassan Medersa ▲ *308*.



The Islamic Museum, which was founded in 1903, houses one of the largest collections of Islamic art in the world. The museum's exhibits are organized according to medium and style. For over ten centuries successive dynasties made their mark on the development of Islamic art in Egypt and introduced an amazing range of artistic techniques and materials as widely varied as stucco, stone, pottery, wood, ivory, metal and glass. At points where breaks in style might be expected there is nothing but continuity and the transposition of techniques and decorative motifs.







Detail of a wood-paneled room, inlaid with decorative motifs in mother-of-pearl.

Glass lamp (14th century) from the Sultan Hassan Medersa ▲ *308*, decorated with Koranic verses and phrases honoring the sultan.

Fatimid-period filter (11th century) from a terracotta water-cooler decorated with two finely engraved fish, discovered at Fustat. When the cooler was broken the owner usually kept the filter as an ornament.



Iraqi bronze sculpture (9th century) representing a fawn whose sides are engraved with plant and flowers.



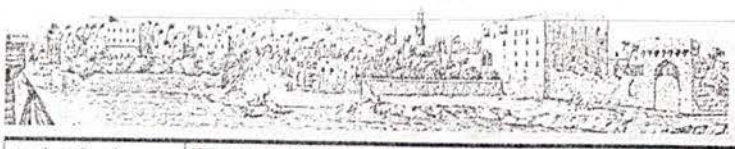


Copper astrolabe. An inscription dates it to the year 912 of the Hegira (1506).



Page from an Arabic manuscript (1582) describing the beneficial effects and medicina properties of certain plants and herbs.

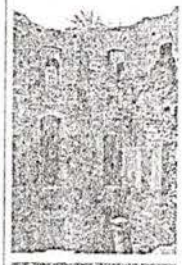




1 Nilometer
2 St George's Church
3 St George's Convent
4 Amr Ibn el-As Mosque
5 Church of St Sergius
6 St George's Church (Coptic)
7 Ben-Ezra Synagogue
8 El-Muallaqa
9 Coptic Museum
10 St Barbara's Church

Ancient Coptic religious community (above)

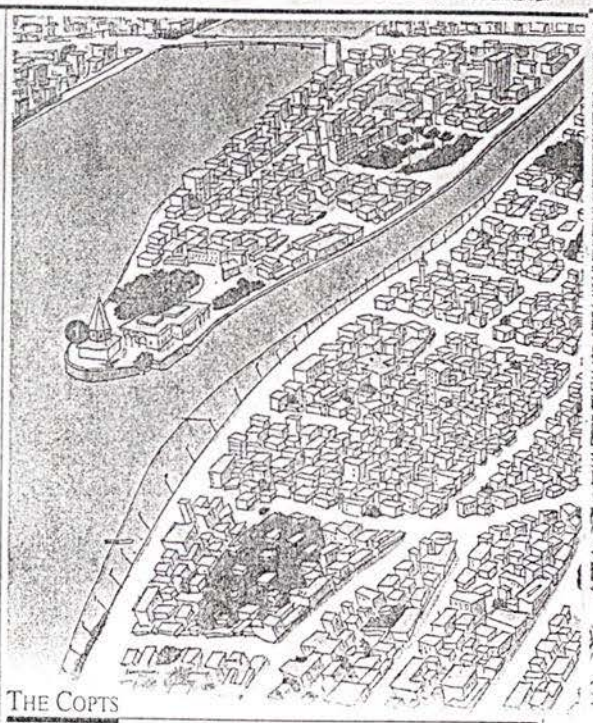
BABYLON
At the time of the Arab conquest in 640, Babylon was a large fort with huge towers, bastions and a 40-foot-high outer wall with a moat. It had a port, and two Nilometers, and was linked to the Red Sea by a canal which had existed in the days of Ancient Egypt. The Nile, which now lies 400 yards or so further west, flowed at the foot of these fortifications, whose remains can still be seen today. The fort

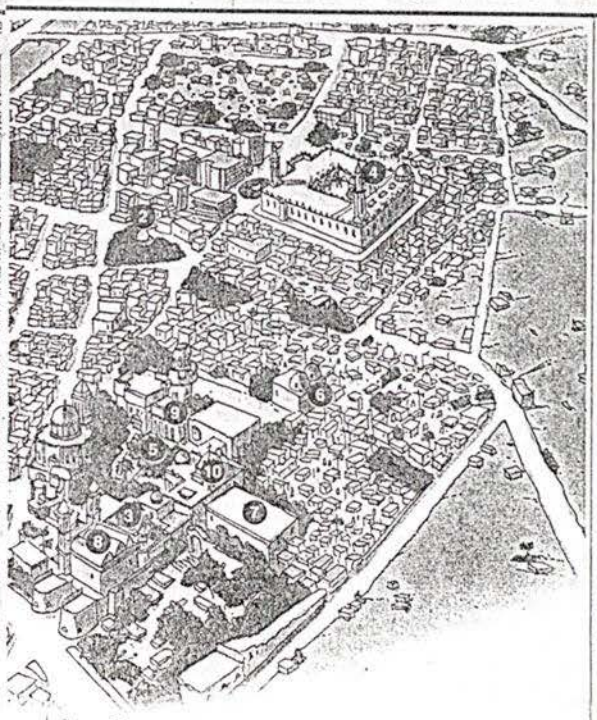




was also known as Qasr el-Shamaa (Castle of the Candle), *shamaa* (candle) being in fact a corruption of the Coptic word *khemi* (Egyptian).

Remains of the Fort of Babylon (above).

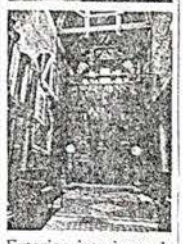






½ Half a day





Exterior, interior and icons in El-Muallaqa (St Mary's Church).

THE COPTS

Traditionally, the Apostle Mark is said to have preached Christianity in Egypt in c. AD 40. Within the context of the Roman and Byzantine occupations, Egypt became one of the main theaters of a schismatic activity which culminated in the appearance of Arianism in Alexandria in c. AD 318. As the object of Roman persecution, Christianity in Egypt took to the desert and gave rise to the cenobite monasticism preached by Saint Pachomius at the beginning of the 3rd century. During the reign of Constantine (324–37) the Egyptians converted en masse but, in response to Byzantine oppression, adopted the Monophysite doctrine which affirms the one, primarily divine, nature of Christ. This hostility toward Byzantium helps to explain the ease with which the Persians (in 619) and later the Muslim armies ● 66 were able to capture Memphis and Babylon. A century later there was a major movement to convert to Islam, but this was accompanied by major uprisings against Arab domination in 725 and 739. Egypt remained predominately Christian until the mid-9th century, but between the 12th and 14th centuries the present proportion of a 90-percent Muslim population was established. The Delta has a small Coptic population concentrated in Middle Egypt, between Minya and Assiut. Social and religious life is centered around the church, presided over by priests (who are allowed to marry), but it is the monasteries, especially Deir Amba Baramus ▲ *208*, which constitute the focal points of the Coptic community and the seat of its episcopal hierarchy.

OLD CAIRO

FORT OF BABYLON. The name Babylon is a corruption of the ancient name Pi-Hapi-n-On, meaning "the home of Hapi" (the Nile god). The site of Old Cairo is believed to have been occupied, well before the arrival of the Romans, by an important settlement which was the forerunner of the towns founded subsequently on the site.

EL-MUALLAQA OR ST MARY'S CHURCH. El-Muallaqa, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is said to have been built between the end of the 3rd and beginning of the 4th century. The name Muallaqa ("suspended") is derived from the fact that its floor was constructed on two of the







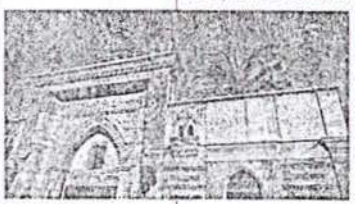
"THIS COUNTRY IS A PALIMPSEST, IN WHICH THE BIBLE IS WRITTEN OVER HERODOTUS, AND THE KORAN OVER THAT."
LADY DUFF GORDON



GATE OF ST GEORGE'S CONVENT
A wooden gate leads onto a small courtyard and St George's Convent, today inhabited by thirty or so nuns.

towers of the ancient Roman fortress, covered with palm trunks and a layer of stone. The church originally consisted of the southeastern section or "upper church", now appearing as an addition. The main church is said to have been built between the 5th and 6th centuries. Destroyed in the 9th and rebuilt in the 11th century, the church became the seat of the Coptic patriarchate until the 14th century. The set of twenty-nine steps leading to the entrance so impressed 14th- and 15th-century travelers that it became known as the "staircase church". The interior is divided into four naves by three rows of marble columns and has seven sanctuaries, six in the two side aisles and one in the upper Church of St Mark. In front of the central sanctuary is an 11th-century pulpit supported by fifteen marble columns. A wooden staircase leads to the chapel of the Ethiopian saint, Takla Haymanot, built on one of the bastions of the fortress. The craftsmanship of the 10th- and 13th-century iconostases, in cedar, ebony and walnut inlaid with ivory, is truly remarkable, as is the collection of over one hundred icons, the oldest of which dates from the 8th century. Other objects belonging to the church, such as icons and manuscripts, are preserved in the Coptic Museum.

THE GREEK CHURCH OF ST GEORGE. A long set of steps leads to one of the few round churches which still exist in the East, built on part of the outer wall and the Roman towers. Although rebuilt in 1904 and extensively restored after several fires, it has retained some of its beautiful stained-glass windows.



CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN
In Coptic and Arab manuscripts from the 17th century onward, the church (above) was known as Keniset el-Adra Qasriyet el-Rihan (Church of the Virgin and the Pot of Basil). It can no longer be visited as it was ravaged by fire in 1975.

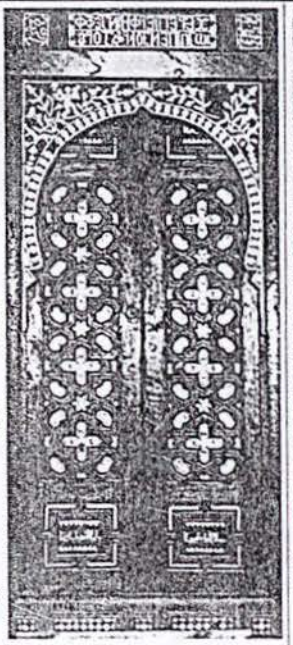
COPTIC QUARTER. A huge, studded wooden gate opens onto Hara Mari Girgis, a narrow street which still has its original paving stones.

ST GEORGE'S CONVENT. The convent is situated at no. 17 Hara Mari Girgis. Only the chapel, the oldest part (10th century) of the convent, can be visited. Its old wooden ceiling has been replaced, but it still has several original wood fixtures, including three doors, one 23 feet high, with beautiful decorations in relief.

KENISET MARI GIRGIS OR ST GEORGE'S CHURCH. A small porchway, beyond no. 9 Hara Mari Girgis, leads into Atfa Mari Girgis. St George's Church, on the right, was founded in 684 by Athanasius, a wealthy scribe, and rebuilt in 1857. The church has one ancient section, the Qaa el-Arsan (wedding chamber), which dates from the 4th century. Formerly reserved for the Coptic marriage ceremony, the chamber houses some real works of art: turned-wood lattice windows, walls decorated with paintings and elements in relief, and a ceiling painted with colored frescos.

EL-ADRA OR CHURCH OF THE VIRGIN. The 9th-century Church of the Virgin, rebuilt in the 18th century, stands at the far end of Atfa Mari Girgis.

ABU SARGA OR THE CHURCH OF ST SERGIUS. The Church of St Sergius is a typical example of Coptic churches and monasteries. Its façade is no different from those of the neighboring houses. Founded at the end of the 4th century and rebuilt at the beginning of the 11th century, it stands on a crypt that is said to have sheltered the Holy Family during their flight from Egypt. It is a place of pilgrimage for Christians of all denominations and is named after Saint Sergius and Saint Bacchus, soldiers martyred during the reign of Maximian. The church, built along the lines of an Eastern basilica with a single nave, three sanctuaries separated by iconostases and two side aisles delimited by arches resting on columns, houses some extremely fine examples of marquetry work inlaid with ivory, especially in the sanctuaries. The original altar can be seen in the Coptic Museum.





The 14th-century Arab geographer Maqrizi (1364–1442) described Sitt Barbara, or St Barbara's Church (above), as the largest and most beautiful Coptic church of its time. Most of the woodwork is now in the Coptic Museum and the only piece remaining in the church is a 13th-century carved wood iconostasis inlaid with ivory (left).

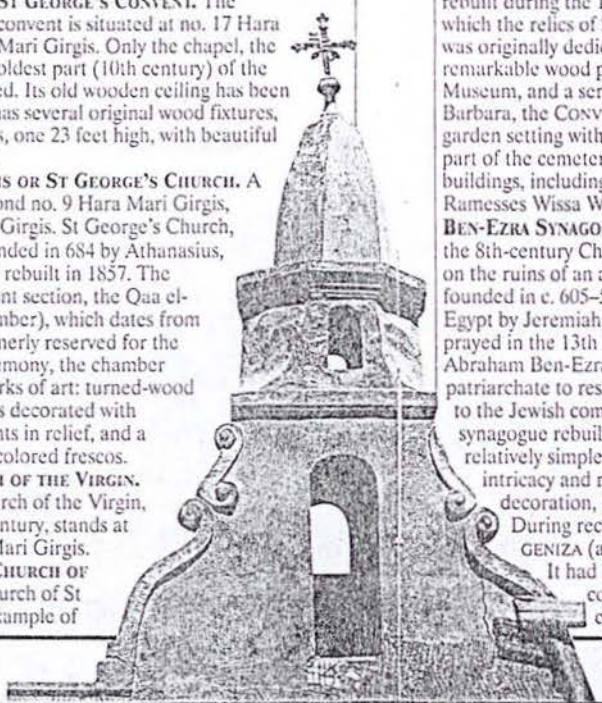
SITT BARBARA OR ST BARBARA'S CHURCH. The church, originally constructed between the 4th and 5th centuries and rebuilt during the 11th century, still has an ancient chapel in which the relics of Saint Cyrus and Saint John (to whom it was originally dedicated) are preserved. It also has some remarkable wood paneling, some of which is in the Coptic Museum, and a series of icons. At the far end of Hara Sitt Barbara, the CONVENT OF ST BARBARA stands in a pleasant garden setting with a view of the ancient fortifications and part of the cemeteries. The convent comprises several buildings, including a school built in 1960 by the architect Ramesses Wissa Wassef.

BEN-EZRA SYNAGOGUE. The synagogue was built on the site of the 8th-century Church of St Michael, which was in turn built on the ruins of an ancient synagogue said to have been founded in c. 605–562 BC by Jews led back into Egypt by Jeremiah, on the very spot where Moses prayed in the 13th century BC. In 1115 the Rabi Abraham Ben-Ezra persuaded the Coptic patriarchate to restore the land, without tribute, to the Jewish community and had the synagogue rebuilt. Its recently restored, relatively simple exterior contrasts with the intricacy and richness of the interior decoration, the 12th-century woodwork in particular. During reconstruction work carried out in 1894 a GENIZA (a repository for documents) was discovered. It had been designed to store all the documents containing a reference to God and which could therefore not be destroyed without

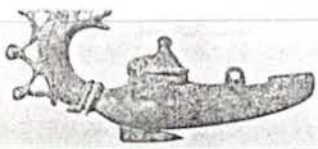




The Ben-Ezra Synagogue houses a large number of antiques, including several ancient Torah (above).



The tower of the Church of the Virgin (right).



Bronze oil lamp of the type used to illuminate Coptic churches, with a handle in the form of an imaginary animal.

In 1910 Marcos Simaïka Pasha, aware of the very specific nature of an art belonging to a period which extended from early Christian times to the Arab conquest in the 7th century, collected funds by subscription and founded Cairo's first Coptic Museum on land belonging to the Coptic Church. The simple lines of the building are emphasized by the elaborately carved *mashrabiya* work from ancient palaces and houses. A new wing was added in 1947 to accommodate the collection of Coptic antiquities put together by Gaston Maspero (1846–1916), which had previously been exhibited in the Cairo Museum.



Detail from a parchment of magical texts.



One of the five pieces of a linen and wool wall hanging (above) whose central section represents Leda and the swan.

Wall fresco.



Painted wooden icon (18th century) showing the two Coptic saints, Abrakaad and Ogbani, who are wearing animal masks.

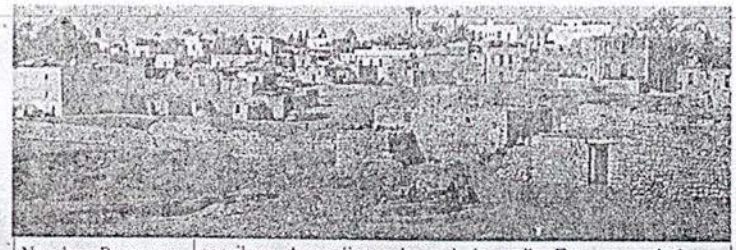


Saint Anthony and Saint Paul
Painted wooden icon (18th century) illustrating a visit by Saint Anthony to the white-bearded Saint Paul. Beside him is the raven which brought him bread every day in its beak.



Details from a piece of Coptic fabric (4th or 5th century) on which flute players (above), dancers and Amazons carrying shields are embroidered with wool and silk threads.

Detail of a 3rd- or 4th-century linen curtain showing a centaur inside a medallion.



Napoleon Bonaparte is said to have built the first windmills in Egypt (their remains can still be seen today) on the plateau of Fustat (above). Their number was subsequently increased, reaching seventy-five by the end of the 18th century. They survived until 1982 when they began to disappear as the area (which today has thirty thousand inhabitants) began to be populated.

sacrilege. According to legend, the scribe Ezra concealed Moses' incomplete Torah there. Among the (now widely dispersed) documents more than 250,000 are said to have dated from 1002 to 1266, including at least 7,000 of great historical value. They constitute a valuable source of information on Cairo during the Fatimid period seen through the eyes of the Jewish community of Fustat.

Fustat and the Arab conquest. When he arrived in Egypt in 640 Amr Ibn el-As ● *66* pitched camp in a large vineyard on the banks of the river to the north of the Fort of Babylon and thus founded Fustat ("encampment"), the first Arab settlement in Egypt. Legend has it that as he was striking camp to move on to Alexandria, Amr discovered a pair of doves nesting on his tent and ordered them to be left untouched. Upon his return the tent was replaced by a mosque around which the *khittat* (districts) were established, as a result of the military concessions granted to each of the ethnic and tribal groups represented among the thousands of soldiers who had fought in the campaign. For three centuries Fustat continued to expand, incorporating the old Fort of Babylon and the town of El-Askar ▲ *270* and finally becoming part of the city of El-Qatai' ▲ *312*. It reached the height of its glory at the end of the 9th century when it (and not Alexandria) became one of the major commercial centers and one of the largest cities (with 120,000 inhabitants over an area of 750 acres) in the Mediterranean Basin. In 1175 the vizier Shawar ordered the city to be razed to the ground to prevent it falling into the hands of the Crusaders. Today all that can be seen is the black smoke from the kilns of the potters who have moved onto this vast wasteland. The last of the several excavation projects carried out at Fustat between the Amr Ibn el-As Mosque and the Greek Orthodox cemetery were the Gayraud excavations which began in 1982 at Istabl Antar, a former powder magazine built on top of the plateau.

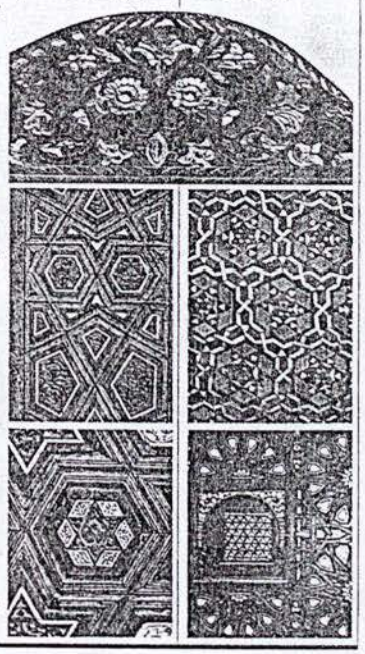
Amr Ibn el-As Mosque. The mosque stands in the Shari' Mari Girgis about 350 yards north of the Coptic district. Built by Amr Ibn el-As in 642, it was Africa's first mosque. It was originally a simple rectangle (197 x 118 feet) of clay bricks with a low ceiling supported by palm trunks. It was used for teaching long before the El-Azhar Mosque ▲ *294* was built and could hold up to five thousand students. The mosque has been destroyed, rebuilt and renovated many times, particularly in 1798 by Murad Bey, who gave it its present form: a parallelogram (394 x 360 feet) with four porticos supported by 150 white marble columns, 8 doors and 3 minarets. It was extensively restored and almost entirely rebuilt in reinforced concrete in the 1970's.



Icon depicting Saint Mercurius.

Church and Convent of St Mercurius. The Church and Convent of St Mercurius or Abu Seifein are situated to the north of the Amr Ibn el-As Mosque, outside the Roman fortifications but inside the rectangle formed by the Coptic, Maronite, Anglican and Protestant cemeteries. After several fires this extremely ancient church was used as a sugar-cane warehouse before being reconsecrated in the 11th century. Inside a painting of Christ and the twelve Apostles hangs in front of the 10th-century sanctuary whose wooden dome is supported by demi-cupolas decorated with biblical scenes. The walls of the second-floor Chapel of St George have revealed several layers of paintings from different periods. A staircase on the north side of the church leads to a crypt where Saint Barsum is said to have lived for twenty years during the 14th century. The 6th-century convent, one of the oldest in Egypt, was entirely rebuilt in the 10th century. Today it is occupied by nuns and is not open to the public. Its wealth of artistic treasures, including an extraordinary collection of icons, makes it a real school of Coptic art.

Details of marquetry work (below) from the Church of St Mercurius.



Church of Amba-Shenuda. The 7th-century church was converted into a mosque in the 11th century. Three centuries later it was restored and reverted to its original function. It has three naves, separated by two rows of marble columns. The iconostasis, in red cedar inlaid with ivory, contains a series of seven extremely valuable icons. It also possesses a triptych of Greek origin and a 14th-century glass lamp.

Egyptian Popular Music

Egypt is the recording centre of the Arab world, although Lebanon is beginning to become a rival once more. Egyptian popular music dates back to pharaonic times, but it is influenced much more by the country's Arab and Islamic heritage. While Western music is popular with the cosmopolitan upper class, the vast majority of Egyptians prefer their own indigenous sounds. Arabic music is based on quarter notes rather than the Western half tone scale.

Classical Arabic Music is the traditional music of the upper class with its roots in the court music of the Ottoman empire. Sung in classical Arabic, it is highly operatic, poetic, and stylized in form. It is characterized by a soloist backed by mass ranks of violinists and cellists and a large male choir. Its most famous singer by far, and the Arab world's first singing super-star, was Umm Kalthoum who died in 1975. During her five-hour concerts, her endless melodic variations could ensure that one song lasted up to two and a half hours.

This tradition was lightened and popularised in the 1960's by Abdul Halim Hafez, the other 'great' of Egyptian music, whose romantic croonings in colloquial Arabic also dominated the Arab musical scene.

By contrast, Shaabi, or 'popular' music, is that of the working classes, particularly the urban poor. Like Algerian Rai, it has retained a traditional form but through stars such as Ahmed Adawia it broke convention by speaking in plain and often raunchy language about politics and the problems of society.

Al-Musika al-Shababeya or 'youth music' is highly popular with the middle and upper classes and is sometimes imitated in the *Shaabi*. First appearing in the late 1970's, it is a mixture of Arabic and Western influences, taking typical Arabic singing and Arabic instruments such as the *dof* drum and *oud* lute and underpinning this with a western beat or melodies. The seminal album is Mohamed Mounir's Shababik (Windows) which, in partnership with Yehia Khalil, revolutionized Egyptian pop music in 1981 by introducing thoughtful lyrics, harmonies and a jazz-rock influence into still authentically Arabic music.

In the late 1980's Hamid al-Shaeri pioneered the offshoot al-Jil or '(new) generation' wave of sound whose fast handclap dance style glories in its self-proclaimed Egyptian-ness. It has spawned a new clutch of stars such as Amr Diab and Hisham Abbas but its disco style and safe lyrics have brought criticism that Egyptian pop music has become stagnant and repetitive.

Much less popular is Egyptian ethnic music, although it has its adherents particularly in the countryside. Of particular note are Simsimmeya music, named after its dominant guitar-like stringed instrument, which comes from Ismailia and around the Suez Canal zone; Saiyidi or Upper Egyptian music the rhythms of which are based on the wooden horn, *mismar saiyidi*, and two-sided drum nahrasan; the Delta Fellahi or peasant music which is calmer and less sharp; and Nubian music, which possesses a more African feel, and, unlike Arabic music, uses the pentatonic scale. The pre-eminent Nubian folkloric singer is Hanza Alaa Eddin, who counts among his admirers Peter Gabriel and The Grateful Dead.

Cassettes of Egyptian music are available in all major cities either from small roadside kiosks (often bootleg), market stalls, or from record shops. Try the English speaking Jet Line, 20 Sh Mansour Mohamed, Zamalek T 3400605 or California, 2 Sh Taher Hussein, Zamalek T 3412619.

Horse riding: on West Bank has become popular, usually passing through villages and some monuments towards the mountains (E£20/hour). Camel and donkey excursions can also be taken.

Tour companies & travel agents
Those in the main hotels are generally very good and can arrange tickets for almost anywhere in the country. The town's travel agents incl *Eastmar Travel*, Corniche el-Nil, *Old Winter Palace*, T 382151, F 382151; *Kuoni Travel*, *Sheraton Hotel*, T 384544.

Tourist offices
The official and very helpful Egyptian Tourist Authority (ETA) office, T 382215, open daily 0800-2000, is on the Corniche between the Luxor Temple and the *Old Winter Palace Hotel*. It is worth a visit to check the current official prices for everything incl *calèches*, taxis and other services. The tourist police are in the same building but also have branches at the airport and the railway station.

Useful telephone numbers
Fire: 180.
Police: 382006.

Transport
Local Cycle hire: from *Hilton Hotel* or *Egotel* for E£5/hour. Cheaper and fairly roadworthy cycles can be hired from El-Hussein behind Luxor Temple.

Air There are frequent daily flights particularly in the winter high season to Cairo, Aswan and Abu Simbel and less frequently to Hurghada. Egyptair (office in *Winter Palace Hotel*, T 380580-380586) and the privately-owned ZAS (in *New Winter Palace*, T 375928), charge identical rates for their flights. There is an increasing number of charter flights to/from European cities.

Train From the station on Sharia al-Mahata there are 6 daily a/c trains to Cairo (12-14 hrs) and slower ones to Aswan (5 hrs). The first class service on the Cairo trains is good and it is a pleasant way to see the Egyptian countryside. It is essential, particularly in the high winter season, to reserve your seat at the station a few days before you travel.

Road Bus: from the Sharia Television bus terminal it is possible to catch 3 daily express buses to Cairo, T 372118 (10 hrs); 3 to Hurghada (4 hrs) via Qena (the left-hand seats are cooler in the Eastern Desert); and frequent slow southbound ones every few hours to Aswan via Esna, Edfu and Kom Ombo. **Private taxi**: sample charges E£100 to Aswan, E£160 to Hurghada, E£13 to airport. **Service taxi**: from the terminal just off Sharia el-Karnak, half way between the Luxor town centre and Karnak temple, these are quicker and more convenient than trains or buses but only go as far N as Qena (1 hr). Change taxis there to go on to Esna (45 mins), Kom Ombo (2-3 hrs) and Aswan (4-5 hrs).

Boat Feluccas: are numerous on this most beautiful stretch of the Nile. Travel is limited to the southward direction, but this also has the most attractive scenery. Sunset is the best time to ride but bring a sweater (E£15/hour).

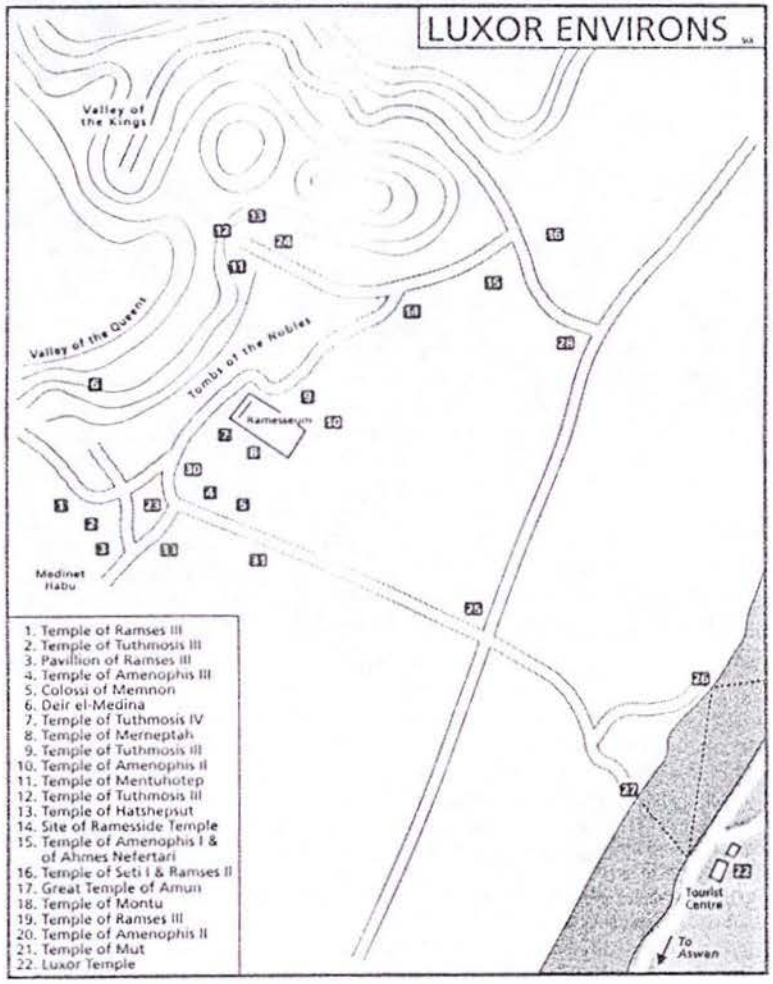
Sites in Luxor and on the East bank

Luxor Temple

The temple, in the centre of town on the Corniche, is open daily 0700-2100 in winter, 0700-2200 in summer and during Ramadan 0800-1100 and 2000-2300. Entry E£10 and E£10 for cameras.

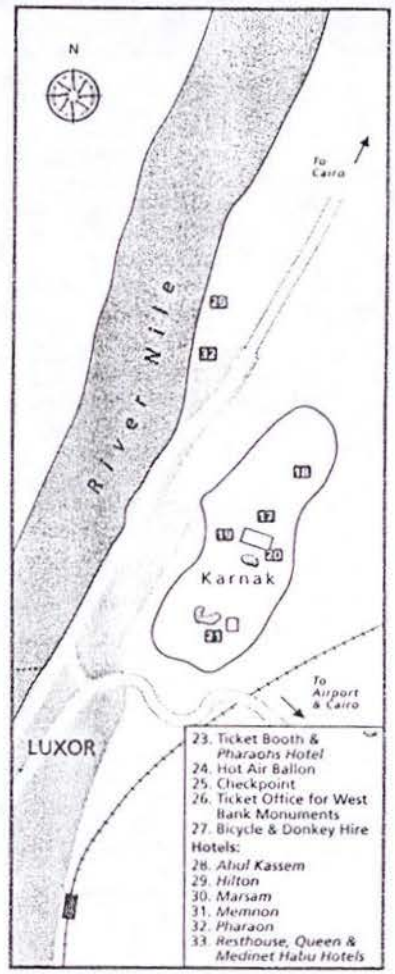
Like the much larger Karnak Temple it is dedicated to the three Theban gods Amun, Mut and Khonsu. **Amun** is usually depicted as a man wearing ram's horns and the feathered Atef crown. His wife **Mut** was considered to be the mistress of heaven and **Khonsu** was their son who was believed to travel through the sky at night assisting the scribe god.

Because it is smaller, more compact and fewer pharaohs were involved in its construction, Luxor Temple is simpler and more coherent than Karnak Temple a few km away. Although the 18th Dynasty (1537-1320 BC) pharaoh **Amenhotep III** (1417-1379 BC) began the Temple, his son **Amenhotep IV**, who changed his name to **Akhenaten** (1379-1362 BC) by which he is better known, concentrated instead on building a shrine to Aten adjacent to the site. However **Tutankhamen** (1361-1352 BC) and **Horemheb** (1348-1320 BC) later resumed the work and decorated the peristyle court and colonnade. **Ramses II** (1304-1237 BC) completed the majority of the building



by adding a second colonnade and pylon as well as a multitude of colossi. The Temple subsequently became covered with sand and silt which helped preserve it although salt encrustation has caused some damage. Because the ground level has risen 6m since its construction the temple now stands at the bottom of a gentle depression. An avenue of sphinxes, a 30th Dynasty (380-343 BC) addition, lines the approach. This avenue once stretched all the way to the Karnak Temple complex.

The **First Pylon** gives an impression of how awe-inspiring the Temple must have looked in its prime. The 22.8m second Obelisk, which was given to France by Mohamed Ali Pasha in 1819 and was re-erected in the Place de la Concorde in Paris, and three of Ramses II's six original colossi have been removed. The reliefs on the First Pylon depict Ramses' victory at the Battle of Kadesh with later embellishments by Nubian and Ethiopian kings.

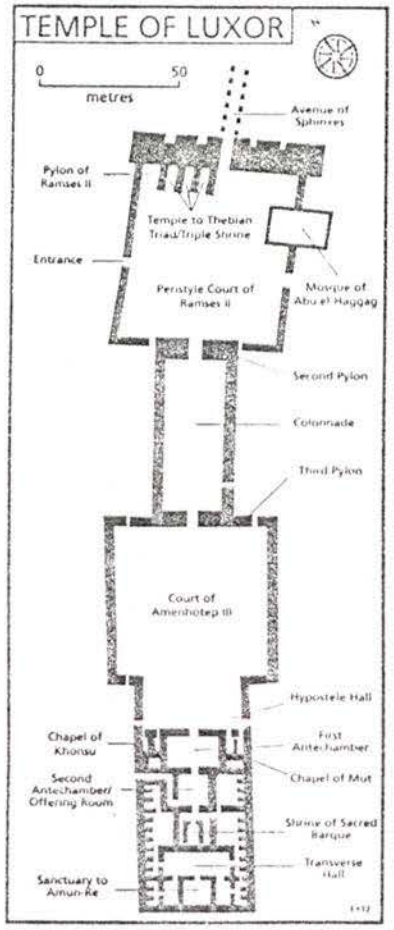


Passing through the pylon, the **Peristyle Court** is set at a slight angle to the rest of the Temple and encompasses the earlier shrine of **Tuthmosis III** (1504-1450 BC) which is also dedicated to the Theban triad. The E end of the court has not been excavated because it is the site of the **Mosque of Abu el-Haggag**, the patron saint of Luxor and, although another mosque with the same name has been built nearby, this one is still preferred by locals. While most of the mosque is 19th century the N minaret is much older. At the S end of the court, the portal flanking the entrance to the colonnade supports two black granite statues bearing the name of Ramses II but the feathers of Tutankhamen.

The **Colonnade** of 14 columns with papyrus capitals was built by Amenhotep but decorated by Tutankhamen and Horemheb. Beyond it is a **Court of Amenhotep III**, which is the second peristyle court with double rows of columns flanking three of the sides. It was built by Amenhotep III for the deity Amun who he claimed was his father. None of the original roof remains, but the columns are well preserved. It leads to the **Hypostele Hall** with 32 papyrus columns which were taken over by **Ramses IV** (1166-1160 BC) and **Ramses VII** (1148-1141 BC) who took no part in their erection but still added their cartouches!

Look out for the chamber which was converted into a **Coptic church** during the 4th century. The Pharaonic reliefs were plastered over and early Christian paintings covered the whitewash although little of these remains today. In a few places the stucco has crumbled away and some of the original reliefs are revealed.

Beyond is a smaller second vestibule, the **Offerings Chamber**, with its four columns still in place. Further on, in the **Sanctuary of the Sacred Barque**, the doors were made of acacia and inlaid with gold. **Alexander the Great** (332-323 BC) rebuilt the shrine in accordance with Amenhotep III's original plans. The E passage leads to the Birth Room built because of Amenhotep's claim that he was the son of the god Amun, who is depicted as entering the queen's chamber disguised as Tuthmosis IV (1425-1417 BC) and breathing the child into her nostrils. The furthest hall has 12 poorly maintained papyrus bud columns and leads on to the small **Sanctuary** where the combined god Amun-Min is represented.



Luxor Museum

The Luxor Museum, located on the Corniche half way between Luxor and Karnak temples, is open daily – winter 0900-1300 and 1600-2100 (last tickets 1230 and 2030) summer 0900-1300 and 1700-2200 (last tickets 1230 and 2130). Prices E£8 plus E£10 for New Hall, E£10 for using a camera, 50% discount for students.

The few exhibits in this modern museum are tastefully displayed, centred around a small garden, with a large ground floor and a smaller upper gallery. The most important are the New Kingdom statues which were found in a cache at Karnak in 1989 but the exhibits range from pharaonic treasures to the Mamluke period (1250-1517 AD).

Of the statues on the ground floor the most striking are the large pink granite head of Amenhotep III (1417-1379 BC), an alabaster crocodile-headed Sobek, and two memorable busts of Akhenaten. A few choice exhibits from Tutankhamen's tomb are also displayed including a gold-inlaid cow's head of the goddess Hathor, a funerary bed and two model barques. The prints showing how the sites looked in the 19th century are also interesting.

On the second floor is the wall of Akhenaten, 283 sandstone blocks found at the Ninth Pylon at Karnak. Here Akhenaten and Nefertiti are shown worshipping Aten.

Karnak Temple

The Karnak Temple complex, 2.5 km N of Luxor town, is the largest pharaonic monument in the country after the Giza Pyramids and covers almost 25 ha. Open daily winter 0600-1730, summer 0600-1830, entry E£10 and E£10 for cameras. The site can just about be covered in 2 hrs. The evening Sound and Light Show (E£30 and E£30 for video cameras) is good with a somewhat overdramatic commentary. See Sound and light, page 219. *Calèches* and service taxis from Luxor town should officially cost about E£3 but you can expect to have to pay double and the ride along the Corniche is very pleasant.

Known in earlier times as **Iput-Isut** 'the most esteemed of places', the extent, scale and quality of the remains is astonishing. The complexes' numerous temples vary greatly in style because they were constructed over a period of 1,300 years. Their only common theme is worship of Amun, Mut and Khonsu who make up the Theban Triad of gods. In order to see as much of the site as possible, aim to arrive very early or just before sunset when it relatively cool and less crowded.

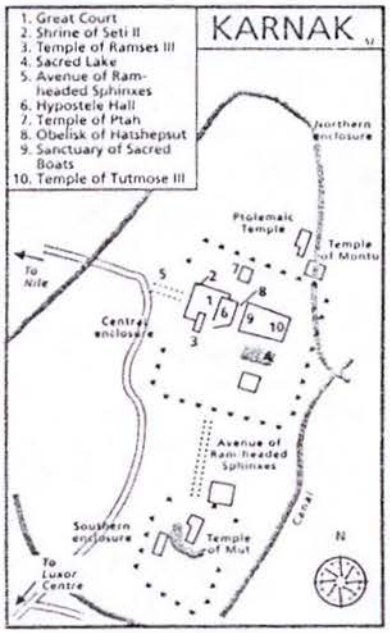
Ramses The Great

Known by the Egyptians as Ramses al-Akbar (the great), a name that would no doubt have pleased him, the achievements of Ramses II, arguably Ancient Egypt's most famous king, were majestic. During his 67 year reign, the pharaoh presided over an empire stretching W from present-day Libya to Iraq in the E, as far N as Turkey, and S into Sudan. While his military feats were suitably exaggerated for posterity in the monuments of the day, Ramses also engineered a peace treaty with Egypt's age-old northern rivals, the Hittites, by a strategic marriage to a daughter of the Hittite king in 1246 BC which ended years of unrest. The peace lasted for the rest of the pharaoh's lengthy reign. Ramses II is believed to be the pharaoh of the biblical 'exodus', although Egyptian records make no mention of dealings with Israelite slaves. His massive fallen statue at the Ramesseum inspired Shelley's romantic sonnet Ozymandias, a title taken from the Greek version of Ramses' coronation name User-maat-re. Egypt's most prolific pharaoh (siring at least 80 children), he was also a prodigious builder. He began building soon after ascending the throne at the age of 25 having discovered that the great temple his father Seti I had begun at Abydos was a shambles. During the rest of his reign he erected dozens of monuments including a temple to Osiris at Abydos, expansions of temples at Luxor and Karnak, and the awe-inspiring cliff temples at Abu Simbel. In an age when life expectancy was 40 years at most, Ramses, who lived to 92, must truly have appeared to be a god.

At the heart of the complex is the enormous **Temple of Amun** which was altered and extended by successive pharaohs. For example although the heretical **Akhenaten**, who converted to the world's first monotheistic religion and moved the capital from Thebes to Tell el-Amarna (see page 183), replaced the images of **Amun** with representations of **Aten**, these were later erased by his successors and Amun's images were restored! Included in and surrounding the main temple are numerous smaller but magnificent ones including the **Temple of Tuthmosis III** (10), the **Temple of Ramses III** (3) and the smaller **Shrine of Seti II** (2).

The **Temple of Amun** is approached via the **Avenue of Ram Headed Sphinxes** (5) which used to link it to the Temple at Luxor. The imposing **First Pylon** is 130m wide and each of the two unfinished towers are 43m high and, although incomplete, nothing else matches its enormous scale. Dynasty after dynasty added to it and one might speculate about which ruler oversaw each of the various sections. Moving towards the inner core of the temple, which is the oldest section, one is moving back in time through successive dynasties. The entry towers are thought to have been constructed by the Nubian and Ethiopian Kings of the 25th Dynasty (747-656 BC) while recent work has revealed that several levels were built during the later Greek and Roman eras. For a little baksheesh it may be possible to climb the stairs up the N tower and marvel at the fantastic view it offers of the complex.

Arriving through the First Pylon, you come to the **First Forecourt** which was begun in the 20th Dynasty (1200-1085 BC) but completed somewhat later. Immediately on the left is the very thick-walled rose coloured granite and sandstone **Shrine of Seti II** (1216-1210 BC) which was a way-station for the



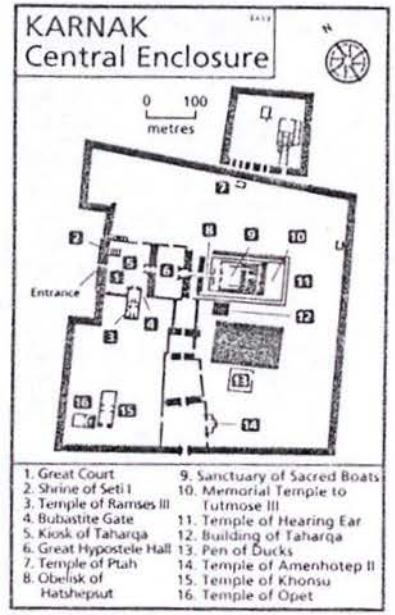
sacred barques of Amun, Mut and Khonsu as they were taken on ritual processions. The W wall had to be subsequently rebuilt because it collapsed when the First Pylon was under construction. The outer façade portrays Seti II making offerings to various deities. In the middle of the First Forecourt are the 10 columns of Taharqa which once supported a 26.5m high kiosk or small open temple.

To the right of the forecourt is the small **Temple of Ramses III** (1198-1166 BC) which would have stood in solitary splendour in front of the **Second Pylon** when it was first built in honour of Amun. Like the Shrine of Seti II, it was used as another way-station for the sacred barques. Part of an inscription in the interior reads: *"I made it for you in your city of Waset, in front of your forecourt, to the Lord of the Gods, being the Temple of Ramses in the estate of Amun, to remain as long as the heavens bear the sun. I filled its treasuries with offerings that my hands had brought."*

To the left of the **Second Pylon** is the 15m high **Colossus of Ramses II** (1304-1237 BC) with his daughter Benta-anta standing in front of his legs. On the right of the pylon is the **Bubastite Portal** named after the 22nd Dynasty (945-715 BC) kings from the Delta town of Bubastis. Through the Second Pylon is the immense 5,000 sq metres (102 x 53m) and spectacular **Hypostele Hall (6)** which is probably the best part of the whole Karnak complex. Its has 134 giant columns, which were once topped by sandstone roof slabs, of which the 12 largest making up the central processional way to the other chambers are 23m high and 15m round. The other 122 smaller columns, which have papyrus bud capitals and retain some of their original colour at the higher levels, cover the rest of the hall. They are decorated by dedications to various Gods, but particularly to the many different guises of Amun and the Theban Triad, and are also inscribed with the cartouches of the pharaohs who contributed to the hall. The S side was decorated by Ramses II with vivid but cheap and simple concave sunk-reliefs, whilst the N is attributed to Seti II whose artists painstakingly carved delicate convex bas-reliefs on the walls. Ramses is shown, on the S side of the internal wall of the Second Pylon, making offerings before the gods and seeking their guidance, while on the left is a beautiful representation of Thoth inscribing Seti's name on a holy tree.

Seti II is depicted on both sides of the **Third Pylon** but the S wall running along the right of the hall was mainly decorated by Ramses II. He is shown being crowned by Horus and Thoth and then being presented to Amun while the Theban Triad is also pictured.

The **Third Pylon** was constructed by Amenhotep III (1417-1379 BC) on the site of several earlier shrines which were moved to the Luxor Museum and the Open Air Museum within the walls of Karnak. On the inner E face is a text of



tribute and a scene showing the gods' sacred boats. Amenhotep III built a small court to enclose four **Tuthmosid Obelisks** in the narrow gap between the Third and Fourth Pylon which at that time represented the entrance to the Temple. Of the four, only one pink granite obelisk (23m high, weighing 143 tonnes and originally tipped with electrum) built by Tuthmosis II (1512-1504 BC) now remains and the stone bases and some blocks from two other obelisks built by Tuthmosis III (1504-1450 BC) are scattered nearby.

Moving towards the earlier centre of the temple is the limestone faced sandstone **Fourth Pylon**, built by Tuthmosis I (1525-1512 BC). Texts describing later restorations are recorded on both sides by Tuthmosis IV (1425-1417 BC) to the left and Shabaka (716-702 BC) to the right. Just inside is a small **Transverse Hall** which was originally a hypostele hall before the Temple was extended outwards. Only 12 of the original papyrus bud columns and one of two 27m and 340 tonne rose-granite **Obelisk of Hatshepsut** (8), which once stood at the entrance, now remain. In the 16th year of the reign of Hatshepsut (1503-1482 BC), the only woman to rule Egypt as pharaoh, the obelisks were transported from Aswan where a third unfinished one was discovered (see The Unfinished Obelisk, page 273). The tip of the second obelisk, which fell to the ground, is now lying near the Sacred Lake. The surviving erect obelisk is decorated along its whole length with the following inscription – *"O ye people who see this monument in years to come and speak of that which I have made, beware lest you say, 'I know not why it was done'. I did it because I wished to make a gift for my father Amun, and to gild them with electrum."* Her long frustrated and usurped infant step-son Tuthmosis III (1504-1450 BC), who had plotted against her during her reign, took his revenge by hiding the obelisks behind walls almost to the ceiling which actually preserved them from later graffiti.

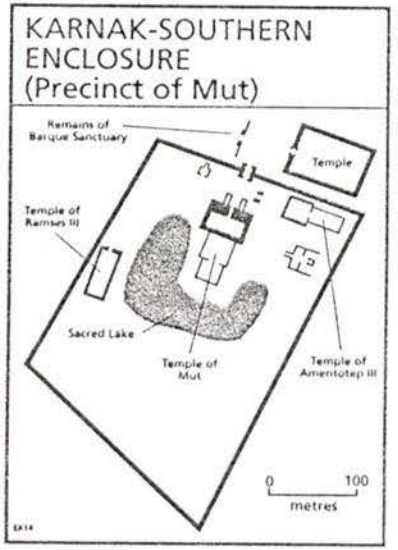
The E wall of the Transverse Hall is the **Fifth Pylon** which has been attributed to Hatshepsut's father Tuthmosis I. Beyond is another hall and then the badly damaged sandstone **Sixth Pylon**. The world's first imperialist Tuthmosis III inscribed it on both sides with details of his vanquished enemies and his victory at the Battle of Megiddo or Armageddon. Past the pylon is a **Vestibule** which is flanked by two courts and is dominated by two granite pillars with carvings showing Tuthmosis III being embraced by Amun, and the lotus and papyrus symbols of Upper and Lower Egypt. A seated statue of Amenhotep II (1450-1425 BC) is against the W wall and on the N side are two colossi of Amun and Amunet, although their faces resemble Tutankhamen (1361-1352 BC) who had had them built. The Vestibule leads to the **Granite Sanctuary** built by Alexander the Great's moronic half brother and successor Philip Arrhidaeus (323-317 BC). The ceiling is covered with

golden stars on a dark base while the walls depict scenes of Philip with the god Amun. The exterior walls are decorated in a similar fashion.

North of the Sanctuary beyond the granite door is a series of small chambers built by Hatshepsut but later altered by Tuthmosis III. Some of the rooms were walled up by her son to conceal Hatshepsut's influence and consequently the bright colours have been very well preserved although Hatshepsut's face has been cut away whenever it appeared.

Further to the E is Tuthmosis III's **Festival Hall** which, with its central tentpole-style columns symbolising the tents used during his campaigns, is unlike any Egyptian building. It was built for his jubilee festivals which were intended to renew the pharaohs' temporal and spiritual authority. Access is via a small vestibule which leads to the central columned hall. The columns in the central aisle are taller than the side ones and would have supported a raised section of the roof thereby permitting sunlight to enter. The hall was later used as a Christian church and early paintings of the saints can still be seen on some of the columns.

Off to the SW is a small chamber where the original stele, or standing block, known as the **Karnak Table of Kings** minus Hatshepsut was found. The original is in the Louvre in Paris, the one on display being a replica. The series of interconnecting chambers beyond is dedicated to the Theban Triad and further N is an attractive chamber known as the **Botanical Vestibule**. Its four columns have papyrus capitals and are carved with the unfamiliar plants and shrubs discovered by Tuthmosis III during his Syrian campaign. Surrounding the small chamber on the far E wall is the small and badly decayed **Sanctuary of Amun,** built by Hatshepsut and originally decorated with two raised obelisks on either side of the entrance – only the bases now remain. The nearby



Chapel of Sokar, which is dedicated to the Memphite god of darkness, is better preserved.

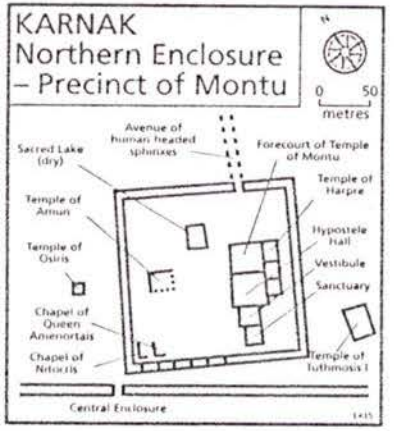
To the S of the main temple is the **Sacred Lake (8)** (200m x 117m), which has been restored to its original dimensions but has become stagnant since the inundation which used to feed the lake by underground channels from the Nile ceased after the construction of the Aswan Dam. Today the lake is totally uninteresting but it has the Sound and Light Show grandstand at the far end and a café on the N side. A Nilometer is attached to the lake and there is a statue of a giant scarab beetle which childless women walk around five times in order to ensure that they soon bear children.

While the main temple runs from W to E there is a secondary axis running S from the area between the third and fourth pylons. It begins with the **Cachette Court** which received its name after the discovery of 17,000 bronze statues and 780 stone ones which had been stored in the court during the Ptolemaic period and the best of which are now in the Cairo Museum. The reliefs on the outside wall of the Hypostele Hall, NW

of the court, depict Ramses II in battle. On the E walls, close to the **Seventh Pylon,** is a replica of a stele now in the Egyptian Museum which shows the only reference to Israel during Pharaonic times. The Seventh Pylon was built by Tuthmosis III and shows him massacring his prisoners before Amun. In front of the façade are parts of two colossi of Tuthmosis.

Although restoration work continues on the nearby **Eighth Pylon** and others further along, it may be possible to have a quick look in return for a small tip to the guard. The Eighth Pylon was built by Tuthmosis II and Hatshepsut and contains extensively restored reliefs and cartouches. As in so many other places, Hatshepsut's name has been erased and replaced by Tuthmosis II's name while Akhenaten's name was systematically erased by Seti I. The S side of the pylon has four of the original six **Seated Colossi,** two of which are Tuthmosis II and one is Amenhotep I.

The **Ninth Pylon** and the **Tenth Pylon** were built by Horemheb (1348-1320 BC) using materials from the demolished Aten Temple. The Tenth Pylon has two colossi of Ramses II and his wife Nefertari usurping the original colossi of Amenhotep III. On the S side of the pylon there are two quartzite colossi of



Amenhotep III. The pylon is part of the outer enclosure and marks the start of the ram-headed sphinx-lined road to the southern enclosure.

To the S, enclosed by a mud-brick wall are the much over-grown remains of the Temple of Mut and associated buildings. They are worth a quick visit. The entrance is in the centre of the N wall. Outside the enclosure and to the E are the ruins of a temple and to the W remains suggested as a barque sanctuary. Inside the enclosure, in a central position between the entrance and the Sacred Lake, and orientated N-S, stands the **Temple of Mut**, consort of Amun. Little remains of this construction accepted as the work of Ptolemies II and VII except a number of diorite statues of the lioness-headed god, Sekhmet. To the NE is the Temple of Amenhotep III, later restored by Ramses II. Little remains except the bases of the walls and pillars and the feet on wall decorations which certainly leaves much to the imagination. To the W of the Sacred Lake stands the Temple of Ramses III with some military scenes on the outer walls and a headless colossus on the W side.

Back in the main central enclosure in the far SW corner are two fairly well preserved temples, but they of limited interest. The **Temple of Khonsu** was built by Ramses III and Ramses IV and dedicated to the son of Amun and Mut. Many of the reliefs show Herihor, high-priest of Amun, who ruled Upper Egypt after Ramses XI (1114-1085 BC) moved his capital to the Delta and delegated power to the high-priest. In the courtyard Herihor's name is inscribed on every pillar and all the scenes depict him venerating the gods and making offerings to them. The **Temple of Optet**, the hippopotamus-goddess, is normally closed to the public.

On the N side of the central enclosure, the **Temple of Ptah** leads on to Karnak's northern enclosure which

includes two temples, a sacred lake (now dry) and some chapels. The **Temple of Montu**, the god of war was built by Amenhotep III, some of his cartouches survive, and restored by Ramses IV. He left his mark too. Also in this small enclosure (150 sq m) to the W is a temple to Amun. At the southern wall, six small gateways gave access to six small chapels of which the chapels of Amenortais and Nitocris are the best preserved.

To the E outside the enclosure is the Treasury of Titmosis I, while to the W stand the remains of a temple to Osiris. This precinct does not have the splendours of the more famous temples and is best appreciated by real enthusiasts.

The **Open Air Museum** is situated to the NW of the complex. It contains 1,300 blocks from the foundations of the Third Pylon and 319 stone blocks reassembled into Hatshepsut's **Sanctuary of the Barque**. Another barque sanctuary built by Amenhotep I is also on display, but the most beautiful monument is the lovely 12th Dynasty (1991-1786 BC) **White Chapel** built by Senusert I (1971-1928 BC) which is divided into four rows of five pillars and includes some wonderful convex bas-reliefs and an interesting geographic list of the Middle East. The rest of the chapel is dedicated to offerings to a phallic Amun-Min who is embraced by Senusert. Open daily 0700-1800 summer, 0700-1700 winter. Entrance E£5, tickets sold at museum entrance.

Theban Death Rites And The Books Of The Dead

The order to fully appreciate the Theban Necropolis in the soft limestone hills opposite Luxor on the West Bank of the Nile it is important to understand a little about the celebration and rituals of death in Ancient Egypt.

The ***Books of The Dead*** feature two main gods, Re and Osiris, who play the most important roles in the journey to the after-life. The oldest written references to this passage from one life to the next are found on the walls of pyramids constructed during the 5th-7th Dynasties (2494-2170 BC). Later the text and descriptions of the rituals which were involved were written on the actual coffins. Eventually lack of space on the sarcophagi led to only the ritual prayers and offerings being listed. When papyrus began to be used during the New Kingdom (1567-1085 BC) written texts were enclosed in the coffin and they became known as the *Books of the Dead*. Many copies of the writings, including the *Book of the Caverns* and the *Litany of Re*, were subsequently discovered.

The ancient Egyptians believed that at sunset the sun-god Re descended into the underworld and voyaged through the night before emerging at dawn to sail his barque (boat) across the heavens until sunset when the whole cycle began again. This journey was believed to be replicated by the dead pharaoh who descended through the underworld and whose heart, which was believed to be the centre of intelligence, would be weighed in the **Judgment of Osiris** to determine whether or not he would be permitted to continue his journey to the after-life.

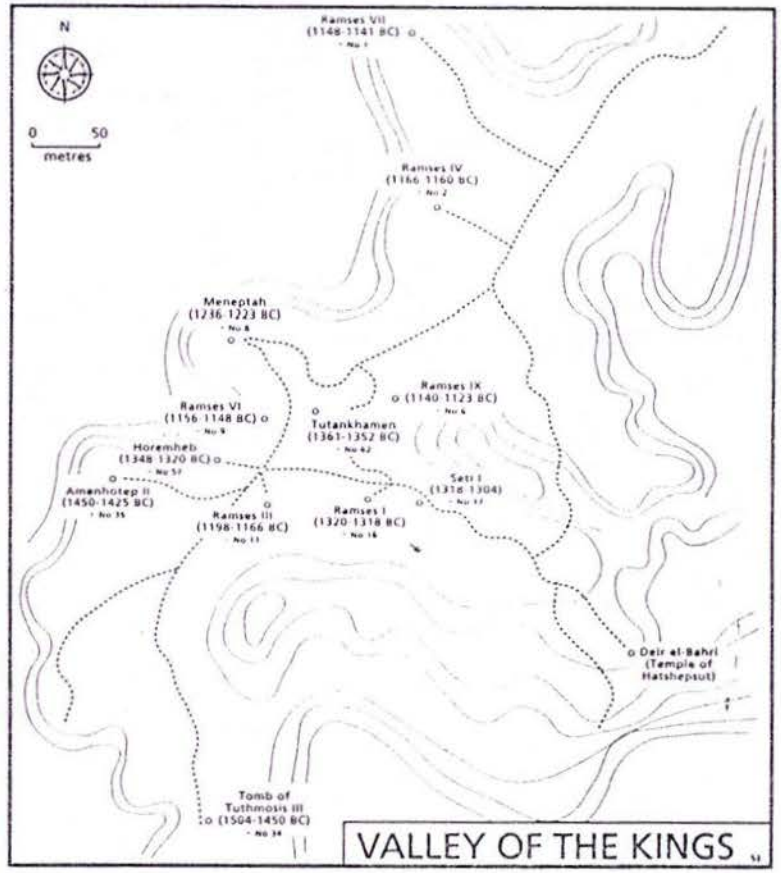
The burial ceremony was elaborate with priests performing all the necessary rites, including sacrifices, in order to ensure that the deceased had a rapid passage to the next life. The tomb, together with everything the pharaoh might need including slaves, was then closed, plastered over and stamped with the royal seal. In order to protect the royal tombs from grave-robbers, they were fitted with false burial chambers and death-traps which unfortunately did not work.

The West Bank and Theban Necropolis

NB TICKETS It is very important to note that tickets for all of the sites on the W bank of the Nile **must** be bought in advance at the main kiosk, where the river ferry from the *Etap Hotel* (E£2 single) arrives from Luxor, although students with identification can buy half-price tickets at the kiosk near the Colossi of Memnon. Both kiosks, which also sell non-refundable photograph permits at E£10/tomb (flash photography is strictly forbidden because it damages the pigment), are open from 0600-1600. Sites are open 0700-1800 summer, 0700-1700 winter. Entry for the Valley of the Kings is E£10 and E£10 extra for Titankhamen's tomb. Entry for other sites is E£6. Some tombs are individually priced at E£6, others E£6 for two or three tombs. A taxi can be hired here for the day for E£40.

The Valley of the Kings

One of many necropoli in the limestone hills on the W bank of the Nile, the area first became a burial site during the New Kingdom rule of Tuthmosis I (1525-1512 BC) in the hope that the tombs would be safe from looters. The kings' tombs are not actually confined to the single valley and it is believed that there may be others still waiting to be discovered. Those already discovered are numbered



in the chronological order of their discovery rather than by location. Although some are simple and comparatively crude the best are incredibly well preserved, stunningly decorated and illustrate their intricate craftsmanship.

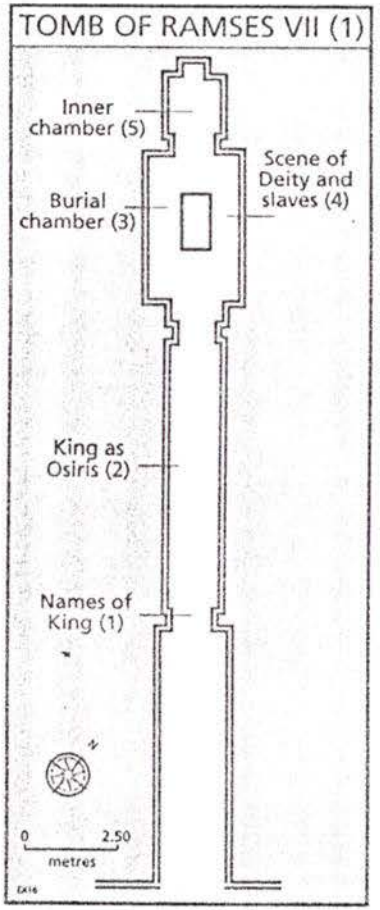
The tombs generally follow two designs. The early 18th Dynasty (1567-1320 BC) tombs are a series of descending galleries followed by a well or rock pit which was intended to both collect any rain water and deter thieves. On the other side of the pit there were sealed offering chambers and then the rectangular burial chamber built at right angles to the descending galleries. The later tombs, from the late 18th to the 20th Dynasties (1567-1085 BC), were built in the same way but the galleries and burial chambers were on the same axis being cut horizontally but deeper straight into the rock face.

VISITING THE TOMBS Although so far a total of 62 tombs have been opened many, including some of the most remarkable such as that of Seti I (1318-1304 BC) (No 17), are closed to the public because they suffered so badly from mass tourism that they have had to be resealed for restoration work. The combination of long queues and the hot and stuffy atmosphere in some of the most popular tombs make it impractical to try and visit all of the tombs on one visit. In order to avoid the heat and the rush it is best to go as early as possible, particularly during the summer, take a bottle of water and a torch both because there are occasional power cuts and the lighting in some of the tombs is inadequate. There are some poor quality rip-off tours offered by some companies and individuals in Luxor and, unless already part of a tour group, it is probably best to rely on the recommendation of other visitors. The entry fee for the Valley of the Kings is E£10 for three tombs plus E£5 for cameras for each tomb.

THROW SOME LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT

There was obviously no need, originally, for light in the tombs and today the authorities maintain the lowest possible illumination necessary. **TAKE A TORCH** which will enable you to read the explanation and diagrams in the book, to admire the outstanding wall decorations and illustrations, to avoid tripping on the uneven ground.

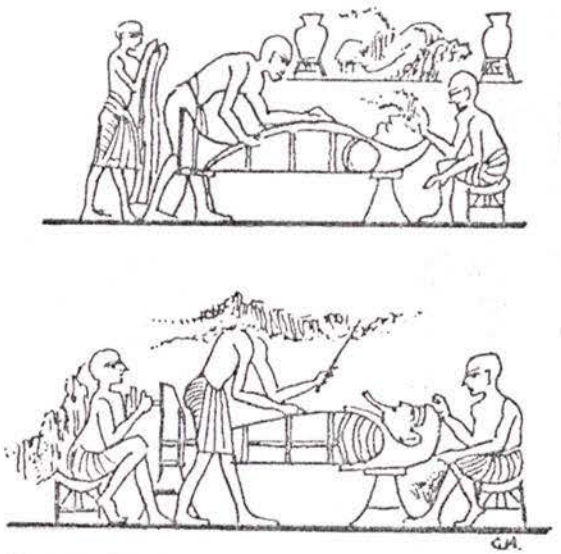
Ramses VII (1148-1141 BC) (No 1) (1) This later style, single horizontal plane, and poorly preserved tomb lies in a small valley before the entrance gate and is seldom visited by tourists. Above the outer door Ramses VII's names are displayed with a scabbard and disc. The



MUMMIFICATION

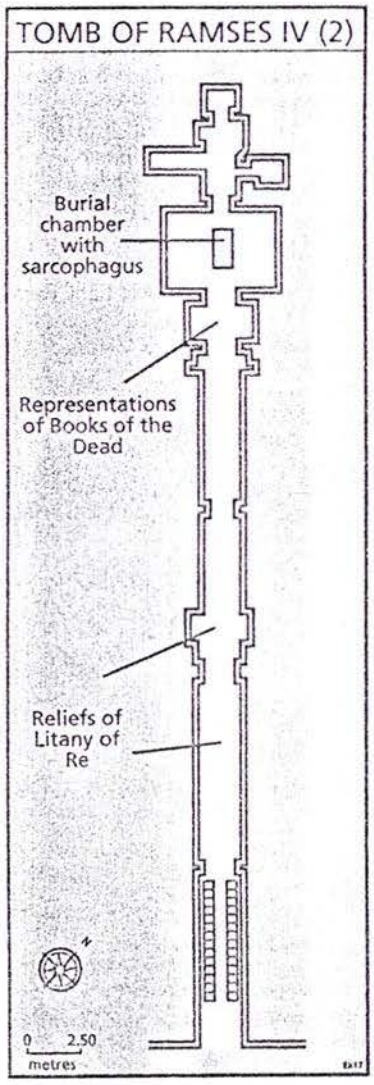
The ritual of Mummification reached its zenith during the New Kingdom at the same time as the Luxor and Karnak temple complexes were built. It was developed because the Ancient Egyptians believed that in order for a person to reach their heavenly aspect or **Ak** in the after-life, it was essential that both their name and body survive thereby sustaining their cosmic double or **Ka** which was transported from one life to the next. In order to achieve this, the mummification ritual developed into an extremely complex means of preserving bodies. The dead were placed in tombs together with any food and utensils thought necessary to accompany the pharaoh's Ka for the journey to the underworld. Although we know the most commonly used New Kingdom mummification methods, others are still being revealed. For example a recently opened princess' tomb in Giza revealed that the body had been hollowed out and lined with very fine plaster. However the most common mummification method found in and around the Valley of the Kings is described below.

The brain was removed through the nose and was discarded because the heart was thought to be the centre of intelligence. The entrails and organs were then extracted and stored in jars, known as Canopic jars, while the corpse was soaked in natrun salts for 40 days until it was dehydrated, when the embalming process began. In an attempt to recreate its original appearance the body was packed and then painted red for men and yellow for women, artificial eyes were inserted and the face was then made up before the body was wrapped in gum-coated linen bandages and placed in its coffin.

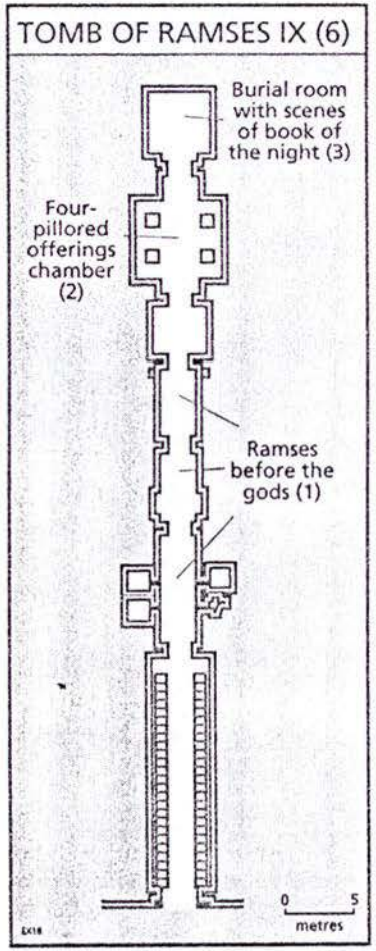


This wall painting found at Thebes shows events during mummification. Bandages are brought in to wind round the body which takes place in the centre of the first picture. The assistant at the head end is fixing the hair. In the second picture the mummy case is being drilled, painted and polished.

walls are lined with scenes from the *Book of Gates*. The most interesting area is the Burial Chamber with its granite sarcophagus still in place. The picture on the ceiling portrays the constellations and calendar of feasts while the sky goddess Nut spans the area. The inner chamber contains scenes of Ramses making offerings to the gods.

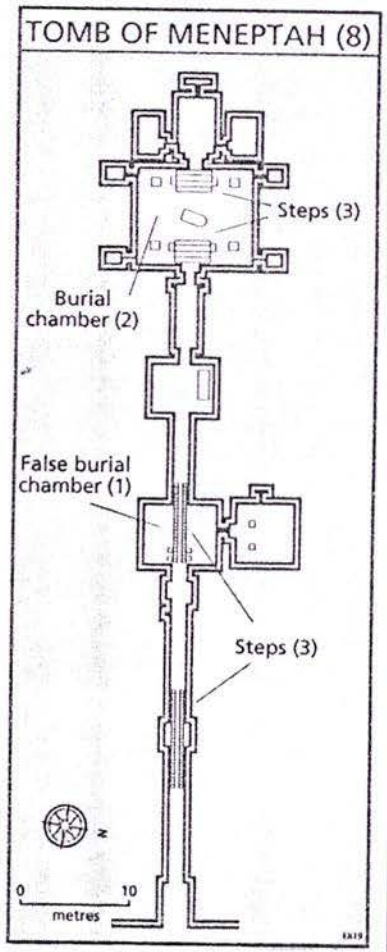


Ramses IV (1166-1160 BC) (No 2) (2)
Nearer but still outside the main gate, is the looted tomb but not the body of Ramses IV, although his coffin was reburied in Amenhotep II's tomb. Do not be discouraged by the Coptic and Greek graffiti because the colours of the inner tomb are truly fantastic. The first two corridors contain poorly preserved reliefs of the *Litany of Re*, while the Hall and Burial Chamber are decorated with parts of the *Books of the Dead* and Nut spans the ceiling. The sarcophagus lid shows Ramses IV protected by Isis and



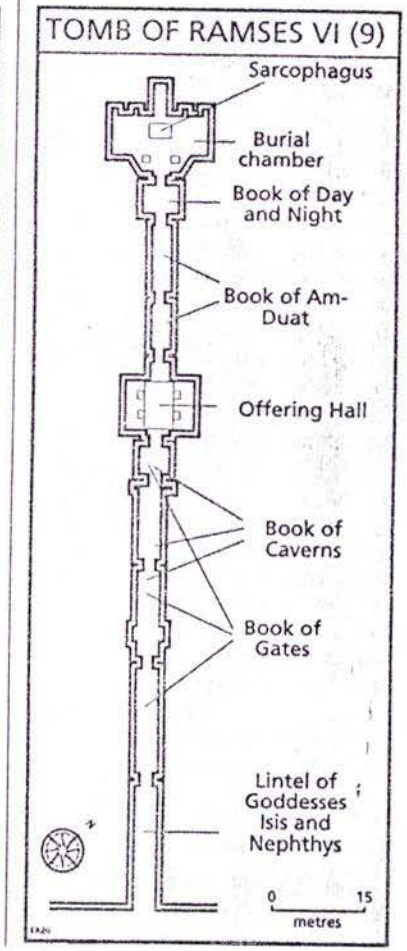
Nephthys and the pink granite coffin is inscribed with magical texts. This is the only tomb for which the original plans, now in the Turin Museum, still survive.

Ramses IX (1140-1123 BC) (No 6) (3)
Situated immediately to the left of the barrier, it is of the typical later long deep style which became the established style by the end of the New Kingdom. The reliefs on the corridor walls depict Ramses before the gods and this is followed by three chambers. The four pillared Offerings Chamber leads to the richly decorated Burial Room but the sarcophagus is



missing. The ceiling depicts a scene from the *Book of the Night* with jackals, watched by Nut, drawing the barque through the skies to the after-life.

Meneptah (1236-1223 BC) (No 8) (4)
Set back against the cliff face on the other side of the road is a long steep 80m tomb with a wonderfully preserved false Burial Chamber. The ceilings of the five corridors are decorated with flying vultures and other forbidding reliefs. Looters abandoned the sarcophagus lid, which portrays scenes taken from the *Book of Gates* and the *Book of Am-Duat*

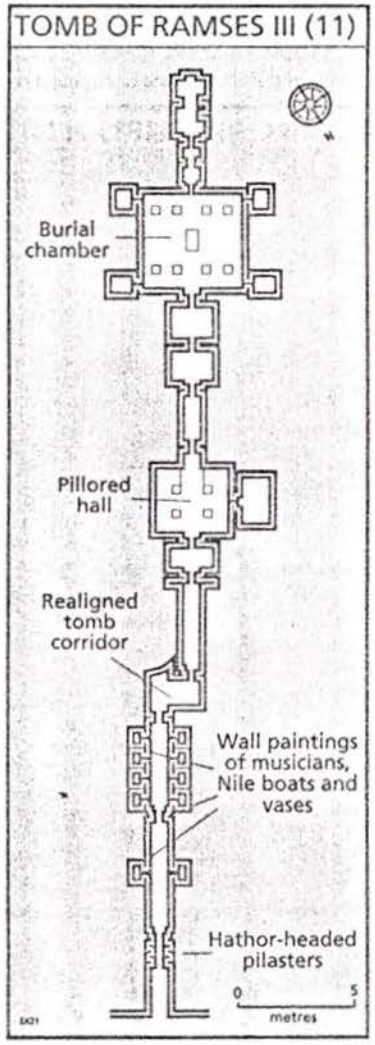


similar to those in the hallway, in the antechamber. Steps lead down to the Burial Chamber where the pink granite inner sarcophagus lies, decorated with intricate designs from the *Book of Gates*.

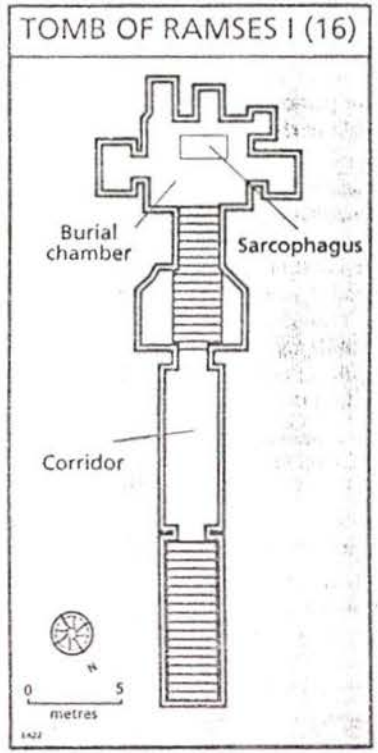
Ramses VI (1156-1148 BC) (No 9) (5)
The discovery of this tomb, which was usurped and enlarged from his predecessor Ramses V (1160-1156 BC) and is one of the longest in the valley, shed light on some aspects of pharaonic beliefs which were not previously understood. The corridor displays reliefs from unknown and long since lost *Books*. Egyptologists were fascinated at their revelation of Pharaonic concepts, more usually associated with India, of reincarnation birth into a new life. One does not, however, have to be an expert to appreciate the graphic designs and the colours beyond the graffiti drawings in the first two corridors.

The themes on the corridor ceilings are predominantly astronomical while the walls are largely devoted to the *Book of Gates* and the *Book of Caverns*. In the Offerings Hall there is a relief of Ramses making libations before Osiris. The pillars are devoted to the Pharaoh making offerings to other gods including Amun. Descending deeper within the tomb the passage leading to the Burial Chamber is guarded by serpents of Nekhbet, Neith, Meretseger and Selket. Further on illustrations from the *Books of the Dead* predominate. Just before the entrance to the Burial Chamber, cryptographic texts adorn the ceiling. The Burial Chamber is supported by four pillars but two are damaged. Astronomical scenes from the *Book of Day* and the *Book of Night* cover the ceiling and the sky goddess Nut observes from above. The sarcophagus, shattered by grave robbers centuries ago, lies broken in the centre of the room.

Ramses III (1198-1166 BC) (No 11) (6)
This particularly beautiful tomb is unusual because, unlike those of most Pharaohs, it illustrates scenes from everyday life as well as a wonderful scene of two harpists from which the tomb's other name is derived. It was originally intended for Sethnakht (1200-1185 BC), but the angle of digging was such that it coincided with another tomb and it was abandoned. Later Ramses III restarted the work by digging into the rock face from a different angle. The lintel with a

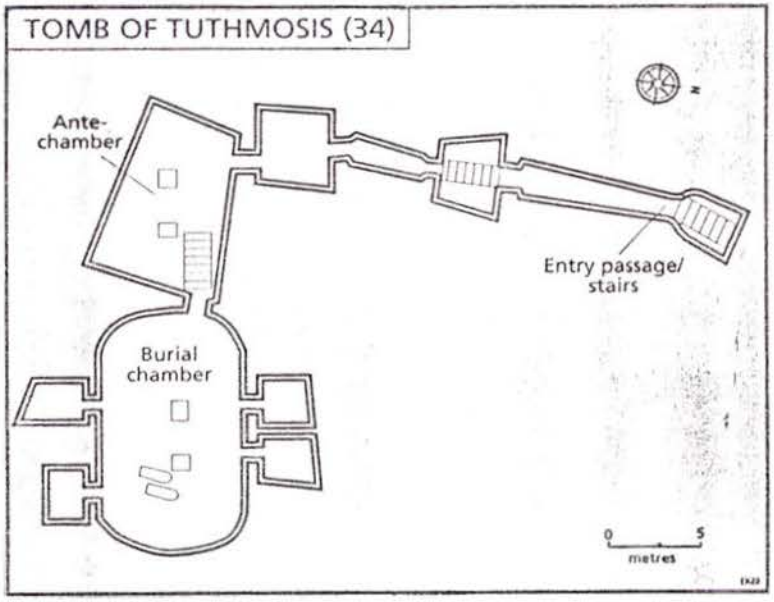


disc and Re shown with a ram's head accompanied by Isis and Nephthys can be seen at the entrance. 10 side chambers – five to the left and five to the right – which were for storing objects that the Pharaoh would require after his death, lead off from the entrance corridor. One section of the tomb is closed because of a collapsed ceiling.



Ramses I (1320-1318 BC) (No 16) (7)
Despite being the founder of the 19th Dynasty, his short reign meant that this Ramses did not merit a larger tomb but it still has beautifully ornate and sophisticated designs which are preserved on the blue-grey foundation. The granite sarcophagus is decorated with yellow while the wall relief depicts scenes of the Pharaoh with local deities and divisions from the *Book of Gates*.

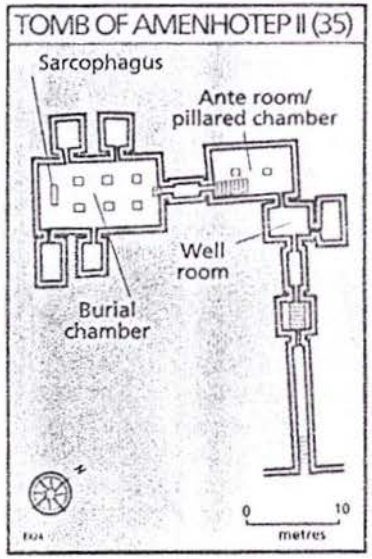
Tomb of Tuthmosis III (1504-1450 BC) (No 34) (8)
Hidden away high up a side valley furthest from the main gate this is one of the oldest tombs. Its simple design is balanced by the interesting layout because,

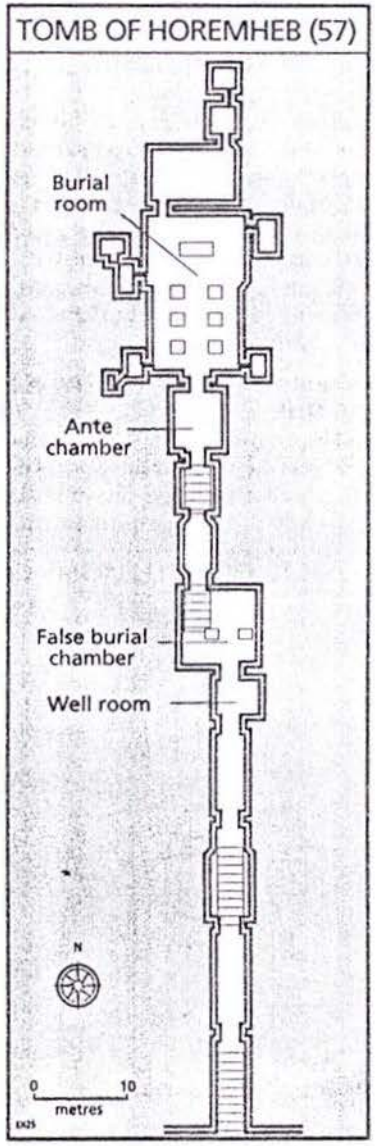


after the first steep corridor, it veers sharply to the left at the antechamber. The walls are lined with lists of 741 deities who are portrayed as tiny stick figures. The walls of the tomb chamber, entered by a set of unusually oval shaped steps, are dominated by sections of the *Book of Am-Duat* with an abridged version also inscribed on two pillars. The Pharaoh is depicted on one of the pillars with his mother standing behind him in his boat. A beautiful carving of Nut, effectively embracing the mummified Tuthmosis with her outstretched arms, lines the inside of the red granite sarcophagus.

Amenhotep II (1450-1425 BC) (No 35) (9)

Over 90 steps lead down to the Burial Chamber which is in one of the deepest tombs in the valley. Here for once the tactics of building false chambers and sunken pits actually worked and the mummified body was found in the sarcophagus, together with another nine royal mummies which had been removed from their original tombs for safety's sake, when the tomb was opened in 1898. Amenhotep's mummy was originally kept in the tomb but after a nearby theft it was removed to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Steep steps and a descending corridor lead into a pillared chamber where the tomb's axis shifts 90° to the left, after which the walls and ceiling are decorated. Further steps





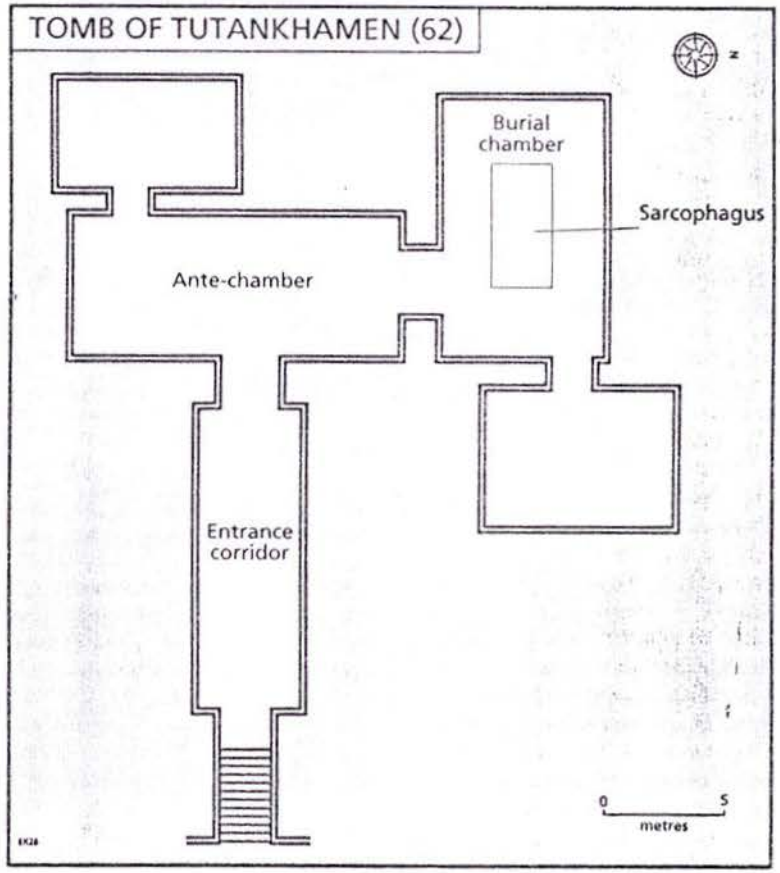
and a short passage lead to the enormous Burial Chamber. The delicate blue-grey of the roof is covered with clustered stars and adorned with the *Book of Am-Duat* as well as images of the Pharaoh before the gods. The sarcophagus is still in place in the centre of the pillared chamber.

Horemheb (1348-1320 BC) (No 57) (10)

After the long, steep and undecorated descent is the Well Room where the reliefs begin. Colourful scenes portray General Horemheb, who despite lacking royal blood was the effective regent during Tutankhamen's short rule and leader of the Theban counter-revolution against Akhenaten's mono-theistic religion, being introduced to Isis, Osiris, Horus, Hathor and Anubis. The scenes are repeated in the antechamber in front of the Burial Room in which the *Books of the Dead* are recounted anti-clockwise around the chamber which is dominated by the huge red granite sarcophagus.

Tutankhamen (1361-1352 BC) (No 62) (11)

The tomb owes its worldwide fame not to its size or decoration, which is small and ordinary, but to the multitude of fabulous treasures that were revealed when it was opened in Nov 1922. The scale of the discovery was so vast that it



Howard Carter – Discoverer Of The Tomb Of Tutankhamen

Howard Carter was born at Swaffham in Great Britain in 1873. When only 17 years of age he was taken on by the Archaeological Survey of Egypt under Flinders Petrie and later became inspector general of antiquities in Upper Egypt in 1899 for the Antiquities Service. Carter was responsible for excavation of the Valley of the Kings and discovered the tombs of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis IV in 1902 for the American Theodore Davis. After a dispute with Davis he moved to Saqqara in 1903 but then left the Archaeological Service to open a studio in Luxor where in 1907 he met and began his archaeological association with the wealthy Earl of Carnarvon, whose own efforts at excavation had failed. When Theodore Davis gave up his concession to excavate in the Valley of the Kings in 1914 Carter, backed by the Earl of Carnarvon, took it up and continued digging, locating six more royal tombs. In 1922, Carter's last year of sponsorship by Lord Carnarvon, he came across a set of remains of workmen's houses built across a stairway to a tomb. Howard Carter waited for Lord Carnarvon to arrive at the site and then dug away the remaining rubble to reveal the entrance to the Tomb of Tutankhamen. Eventually Carter's men cleared the way to the ante-room which was found ransacked in antiquity but full of interesting cloths, furniture and other materials. The burial chamber that Carter found was once again packed with valuable objects but none more so than the gold-laden coffins and mummy of Tutankhamen. Carter remained at the site for a further 10 years supervising the cataloguing activity of so great a find. He died in London in 1939.

Howard Carter will be known principally as the discoverer of the Tomb of Tutankhamen. But his imprint on Egyptology went far deeper. He was among the first archaeologists, following Flinders Petrie, to apply scientific principles to the recording of his excavations. Remarkably, the treasure trove of objects found in 1922 has still to be studied in full and, to Carter's great disappointment, there were in any case no parchments or manuscripts to explain historical events surrounding the boy king and the court politics of the day.

took 10 years to fully remove, catalogue and photograph all of the 1,700 pieces.

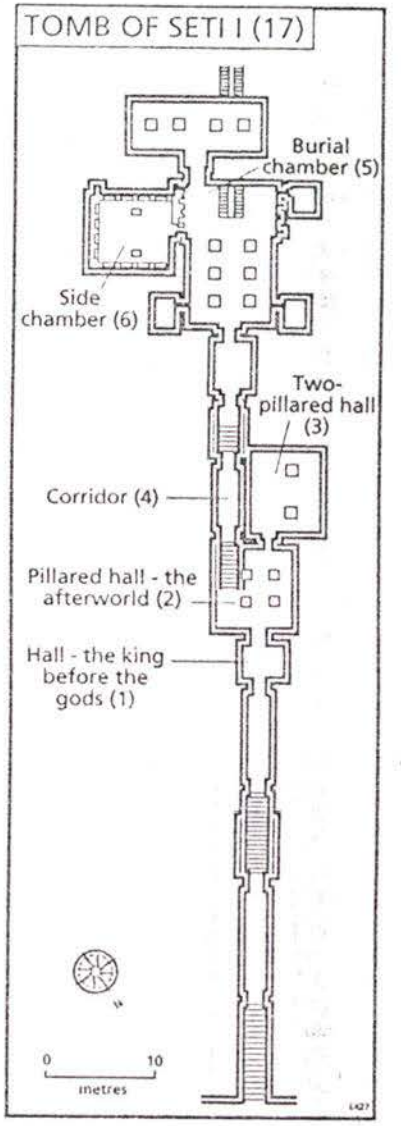
The short entrance corridor leads to four chambers but only the Burial Chamber, which is the second on the right, is decorated. Around the room from left to right murals display Tutankhamen's coffin being moved to the shrine by mourners and officials after which his successor Ay (1352-1348 BC) performs the ceremony of the Opening of the Mouth and makes sacrifices to sky-goddess Nut. Tutankhamen is then embraced by Osiris and is followed by his black-wigged Ka or spirit. A scene from the *Book of Am-Duat* on the left hand wall depicts the Pharaoh's solar boat and sun-worshipping baboons. The quartzite sarcophagus is still in place, with its granite lid to one side, and inside is the outermost of three coffins.

Seti I (No 17)

Seti I is regarded as the most developed form of the tomb chambers in the Valley of the Kings. At some 100m it is among the longest, though it is closed from time to time for conservation purposes since its decorations suffer from condensation produced by visitors. Throughout the tomb there are paintings/reliefs of fine workmanship on nearly every surface, though not all were completed. In particular look out for the picture of Osiris in the pillared

The 'Lost' Tomb

Explored and looted decades ago, dismissed as uninteresting by Egyptologists and used as a dump for debris from the excavation of Tutankhamen's tomb, Tomb 5 in the Valley of the Kings was about to become a car park. However the final exploration in May 1995 unearthed a major discovery, certainly the largest and most complex tomb ever found in Egypt and possibly the resting place of up to 50 sons of Ramses II. Excavations are expected to take at least another 5 years, but the tomb's unusual design is already apparent. Instead of plunging down into the steep hillside, Tomb 5 is more like an octopus with at least 62 chambers branching off from the central structure. There may be more chambers on a lower level where it is hoped some of the mummies may still be entombed. No treasure is expected, robbery of the tomb was documented as early as 1150 BC, but the elaborate carvings and inscriptions along with the thousands of artifacts littering the floor, including beads and fragments of jars used to store the organs of the deceased, nevertheless offer a wealth of information about the reign of one of Ancient Egypt's most important kings. Egyptologists have never before found a multiple burial of a pharaoh's children and in most cases have no idea what happened to them. This find thus raises the question of whether Ramses buried his children in a unique way or that archaeologists have overlooked a major type of royal tomb. And where are Ramses' dozens of daughters? Are they buried in a similar mausoleum perhaps in the Valley of the Queens?

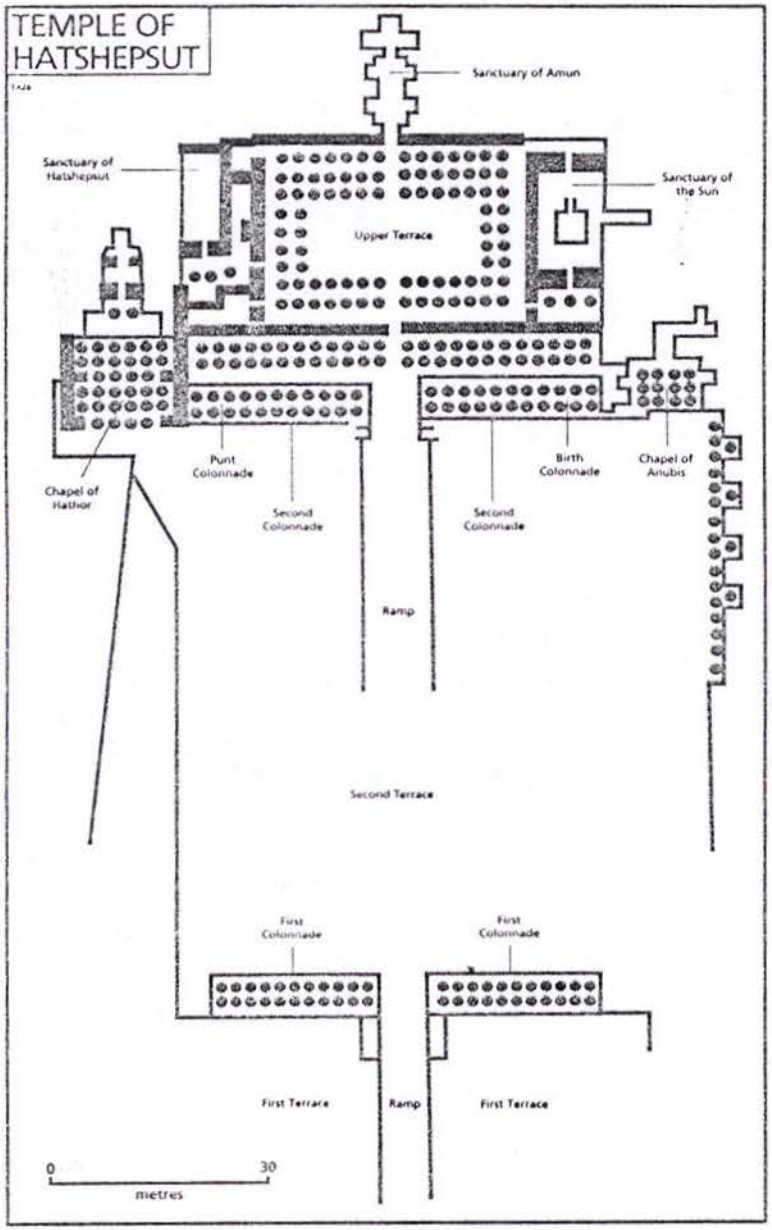


hall (2) and the depictions of tomb furniture in the side chamber (6).

Deir el-Bahri

Meaning 'northern monastery' in Arabic, it derives its name from the fact that during the 7th century the Copts used the site as a monastery. It is now used as

the name for both the temple and area around the magnificent **Temple of Hatshepsut (13),** (entry E£6). The Valley of the Kings is hidden, away from Luxor on the W side of the imposing limestone hills with virtually nothing above ground. By contrast crossing back E towards river over the hills, which is either



a 30 mins hike worth it for the view from the top or 10 mins by road, one arrives at a natural amphitheatre with the beautiful temple, surrounded on three sides by the hills, imperiously looking down on Luxor across the Nile.

Queen Hatshepsut was not only the only female Pharaoh to reign over ancient Egypt (1503-1482 BC) but also one of its most fascinating personalities. She was Tuthmosis I's (1525-1512 BC) daughter and was married to his successor Tuthmosis II (1512-1504 BC) but was widowed before she could bear a son. Rather than give up power to the son of one of her husband's minor wives she assumed the throne first as regent for the infant Tuthmosis III but then as queen. Tuthmosis III, who later hugely expanded the Egyptian Kingdom and was the first imperialist, was only able to assume office when Hatshepsut died 21 years later in 1482 BC. He naturally resented her usurping his position and removed all traces of her reign including her cartouches. Consequently the truth about her reign and the temples she built both here and at Karnak was only fully appreciated by archaeologists relatively recently. As a woman she legitimized her rule by being depicted with the short kilt and the false beard worn by the male pharaohs.

Hatshepsut's imposing temple which was only dug out of the sand in 1905 was designed and built in the Theban hills over an 8-year period between the 8th-16th year of her reign, by **Senenmut** who was her architect, steward, favourite courtier and possibly the father of her daughter Neferure. The temple's three rising terraces, the lower two terraces lined with fountains and myrrh trees, were originally linked to the Nile by an avenue of sphinxes which was aligned exactly to Karnak. A pair of lions stood at the top and another at the bottom of the ramp which leads from the ground level first terrace over the first colonnade to the large second terrace.

The scenes on the restored left hand S side of the first colonnade columns depict the transportation of the two obelisks from Aswan to Karnak temple. Behind its columns on the right hand N side is a relief defaced by Tuthmosis III in which Amun can be seen receiving an offering of four calves from Hatshepsut whose face has been erased. The original stairs from the second terrace to the second colonnade have now been replaced by a ramp. Hatshepsut's famous voyage to **Punt**, which was known as 'God's Land' by the ancient Egyptians, and various texts to Amun are depicted on the left hand or S side of the second colonnade. Voyages to Punt, now believed to be modern-day Somalia, had been undertaken since the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BC) in order to find the incense and myrrh which was required for temple rituals.

Further to the left is the large **Chapel of Hathor** where the goddess is depicted both as a cow and as a human with cow's ears suckling Hatshepsut. This area was badly damaged because Tuthmosis removed most but not all traces of Hatshepsut and Akhenaten later erased Amun. The reliefs on the colonnade to the right hand or N side of the ramp portray Hatshepsut's apparent divine conception and birth. She claimed that her father was the supreme god Amun who visited her mother Ahmose disguised as Tuthmosis I just as Amenhotep III (1417-1379 BC) made similar claims later on (see Luxor Temple, page 221). Further to the right is the fluted colonnade and the colourfully decorated shrine of Anubis, who is portrayed in the customary way as a man with a jackal mask, but the images of Hatshepsut are once again defaced.

The ramp leading to the smaller and recently restored upper terrace is decorated with emblems of Upper and Lower Egypt with vultures' heads guarding the entrance. There are suggestions that this

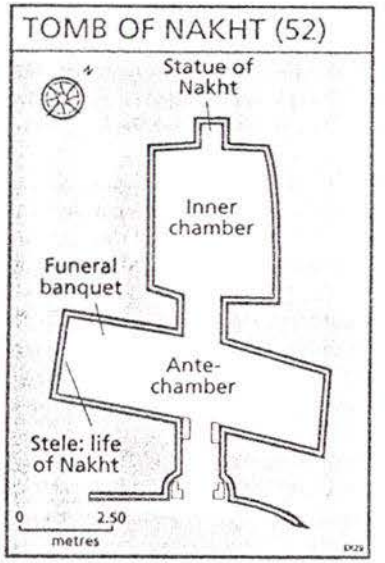
was originally a Hypostele Hall and not a terrace. The columns were originally round but were squared off by Tuthmosis III in an attempt to replace her name with his own and that of his father Tuthmosis II. Beyond the Osiride portico to the left is the **Sanctuary of Hatshepsut** with its enormous altar and to the right is the **Sanctuary of the Sun**. In the middle at the back of the whole temple is the **Sanctuary of Amun** which is dug into the cliff-face and is therefore connected to the Valley of the Kings which lies on the other side of the hill. Hatshepsut's burial chamber lies underneath but it is unclear whether she was actually ever buried there.

Tombs of the Nobles

While the pharaoh's tombs were hidden away in the Valley of the Kings and were dug deep into the valley rock those of the most important nobles were ostentatiously built at surface level overlooking the temples of Luxor and Karnak across the river. Their shrines were highly decorated but the poor quality limestone made carved reliefs impossible so the façades were painted on plaster. Freed from the restricted subject matter of the royal tombs the artists and craftsmen dedicated less space to rituals from the *Books* and more to representations of everyday life and their impressions of the after-life. Because, unlike the royal tombs, they were exposed to the elements many of the nobles' shrines have deteriorated badly over time. Although some were subsequently used as store rooms and even accommodation others are still in relatively good condition and give a clear impression of how they must originally have looked.

Tomb of Nakht (No 52)

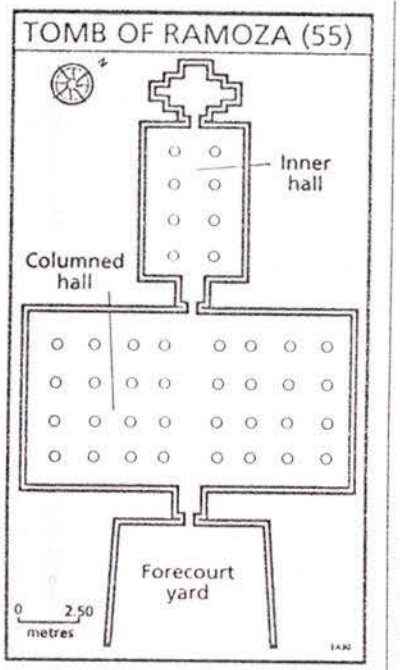
Nakht was Tuthmosis IV 's astronomer, vineyard keeper and chief of his granaries. He and his wife Tawi were buried is this small shrine with its well



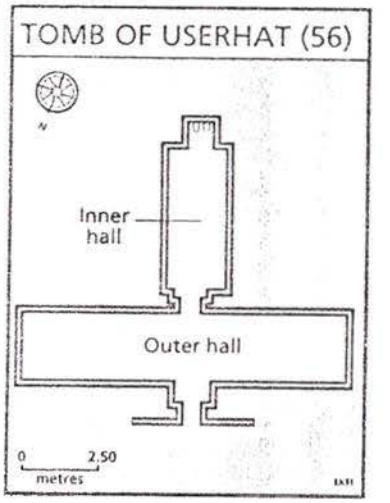
preserved and colourful transverse room which depicts the harvest in intricate detail. On its W wall is the stele illustrating what is known of Nakht's life together with the goddess of the W. On the left of the far wall is a depiction of a funeral banquet is which Nakht, his top half having been badly defaced, is shown seated beside his wife with a cat eating a fish at his feet while being entertained by harpists and dancing girls. Opposite the stele on the E wall, peasants are shown treading grapes while empty wine jars await filling and the ceiling is brightly decorated with designs representing woven mats. In the inner chamber there is a small niche with a replica of a statue of Nakht bearing a stele with a hymn to Re. Unfortunately the original was lost in 1917 when the SS Arabia, which was transporting it to the USA, was torpedoed by the Germans in the Atlantic. There is a deep shaft leading to the inaccessible burial chamber.

Tomb of Ramoza (No 55)

Ramoza was Visir and Governor of Thebes at the beginning of the Akhenaten's heretical rule in 1379 BC and the tomb



illustrates the transition in style between the worship of Amun and Aten (see Tell el-Amarna, page 183). The impressive and excellent quality workmanship of the shrine is probably because it was built by Ramoza's brother Amenhotep who was the chief of works at the family's home-town of Memphis. This is one of the few tombs where the forecourt yard is still preserved and the central entrance leads into a broad hall with 64 columns. On the wall to the right are depictions of Ramoza with his wife and opposite on the back wall Akhenaten and Nefertiti stand at their palace windows giving a golden chain to Ramoza. On the left hand wall are scenes of Ramoza and his wife worshipping Osiris. Beyond is an undecorated inner hall with eight columns and the shrine at the far end. Within each hall are the gated entrances to dark and dangerous tunnels which end with a 15m drop to the burial chamber.

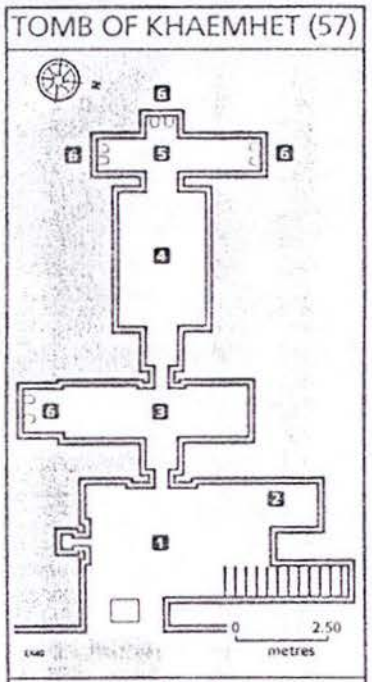


Tomb of Userhat (No 56)

Userhat who, in the reign of Amenhotep II (1450-1425 BC), was a royal tutor and scribe was buried in a small but pinkishly decorated tomb which was partially damaged by early Christian hermits. **NB** The interesting representation of rural life on the left on the way into the hall, the façade of the snake-headed harvest goddess Renehat on the right of the back wall, and a realistic hunting scene on the left of the inner hall.

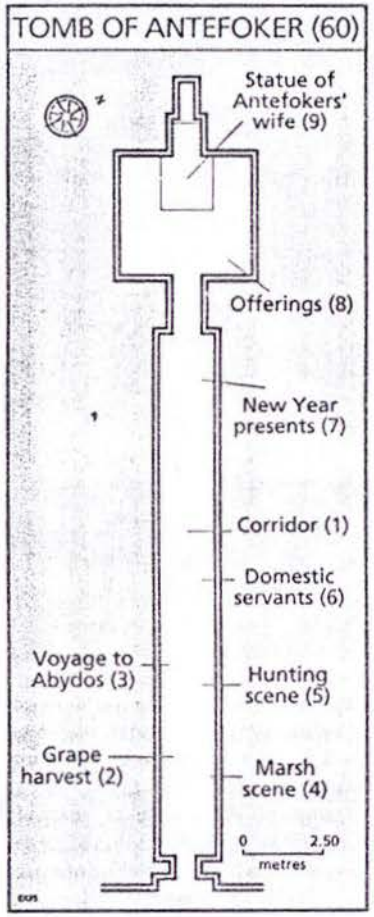
Khaemhet (No 57)

Khaemhet, another royal scribe and overseer of the granaries in the period Amenhotep III in the 18th Dynasty, adopted a raised relief system for the decoration of his tomb-chapel which is well worth seeing for its variety. The tomb is entered through a courtyard off which there are other tomb entrances largely blocked off. The Khaemhet tomb is made up of two transverse chambers (3) and (5) joined by a wide passage (4). There are rich reliefs depicting rural scenes, some of the originals now only to be seen in Berlin. The passage has funeral scenes (south wall) and the voyage to Abydos (north wall), while both the transverse chambers,



thoughmainly (5) have statue niches of Khaemhep and his family.

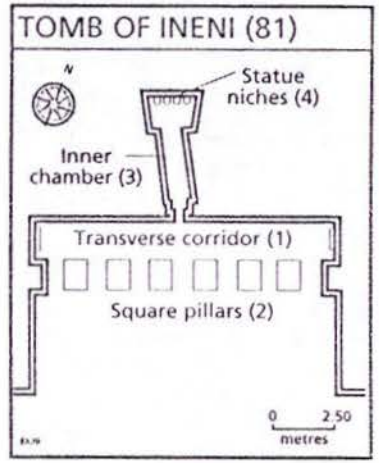
Antefoker (No 60)
Antefoker was the Governor of Thebes and his tomb-chapel deserves a visit. The tomb is structured as a main corridor (1) which carries a series of scenes of farming (2), the life of the marshes and hunting (5) at the time of the 12th Dynasty at the time of Senosert I. Domestic scenes of servants (6) and gifts for the new year (7) are all contained within the main corridor. The inner chamber has figures carrying offerings (8) and in front of the niche at the head of the tomb is a statue of Antefoker's wife (9).

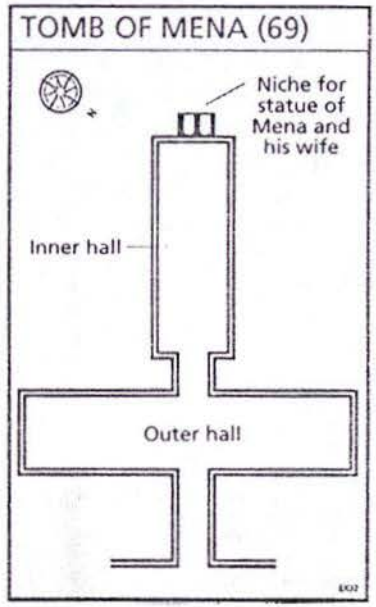


Tomb of Mena (No 69)
This tomb has been undergoing restoration and, although Mena's eyes have been gouged out by rivals, the paintings are in good condition. He was an 18th Dynasty scribe or inspector of the estates in both Upper and Lower Egypt. On the left in the first hall is a scene of field workers while the other walls show Mena and his wife preparing and laying offerings before Osiris. The ceilings are brightly coloured and represent woven cloth.

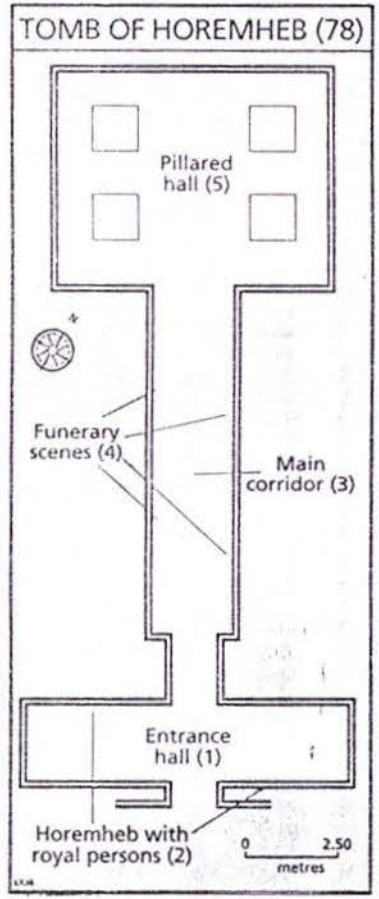
Horemheb (No 78)
Horemheb was a scribe of the recruits in

the reign of Tuthmosis III-Amenhotep III. His tomb-chapel is made up of a rectangular entrance hall (1) and a main corridor (3) leading to a four-pillared hall (5). His tomb is decorated with scenes of his official life in the military (2) and shows a concern with funeral affairs (4).





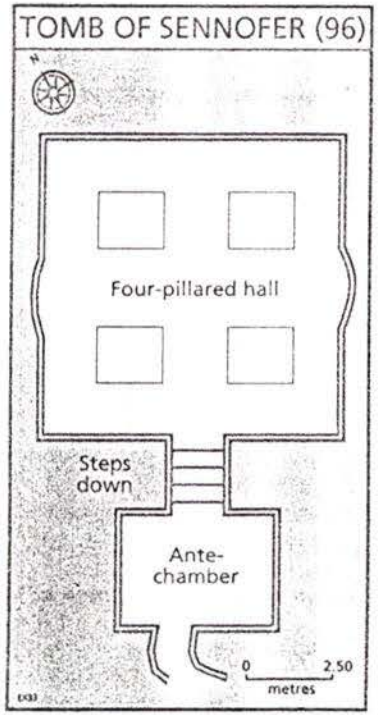
Ineni (No 81)
Ineni was the architect of Tuthmosis I and in charge of granary of Amun. His main work is thought to have been building the tomb of Tuthmosis I and the monarch's obelisk at Karnak. The temple-tomb spans the period Amenhotep I-Hatshepsut of the 18th Dynasty. The tomb is constructed with a transverse corridor (1) defined on the SW by six large square pillars (2). The corridor is decorated with rural scenes of farming and hunting. The inner chamber (3) has the normal offering, banqueting and funeral procession. Additionally at the

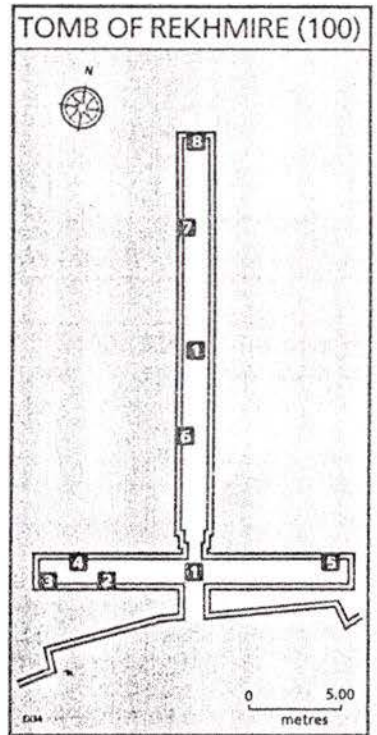


northern end it has statue niches (4) for Ineni, his wife and family.

Tomb of Sennofer (No 96)
At the time of Amenhotep II (1450-1425 BC) amongst other positions Sennofer was Mayor of Thebes, overseer of the granaries and gardens, and chief vintner. The ceiling is covered in vines and the tomb is known locally as the 'Tomb of Vines'. The antechamber is rough and irregular in shape. Within the four pillared hall Sennofer is shown making offerings to the deities and on his journey into the after-life he is accompanied by his wife. A double figure of the jackal-headed Anubis looks down on the whole chamber from above the entrance.

Tomb of Rekhmire (No 100)
This crucifix-shaped tomb should not be missed because its highly decorative paintings and inscriptions reveal some of the secrets of Egypt's judicial, taxation and foreign policy. Rekhmire, who came from a long line of viziers and governors, was the visir at the time of Tuthmosis III's death in 1450 BC when he then served his successor Amenhotep II. Walking left or clockwise around the whole tomb from the entrance wall of the transverse hall one sees – Egyptian taxes, Rekhmire being installed as visir, foreign tributes being received from Punt, Crete, Nubia, Syria and Kush, then along the main corridor the inspection of the various workshops, the voyage to Abydos, the various gods of the dead, and the end niche which would have contained a statue of Rekhmire. On the way out along the other corridor wall are pictures of the after-world and then, back in the transverse hall, illustrations of hunting and fowling, wine-making, Rakhmire's wives and ancestors, and finally more taxes being collected.

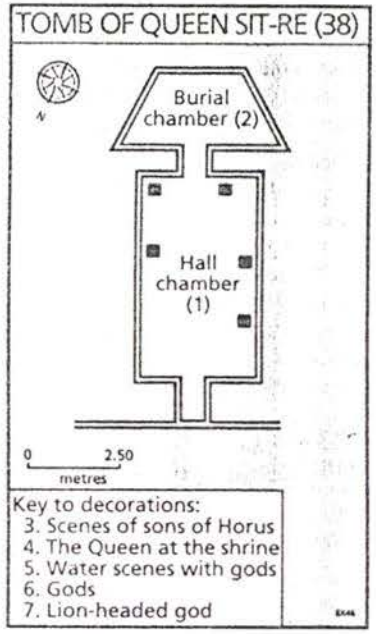


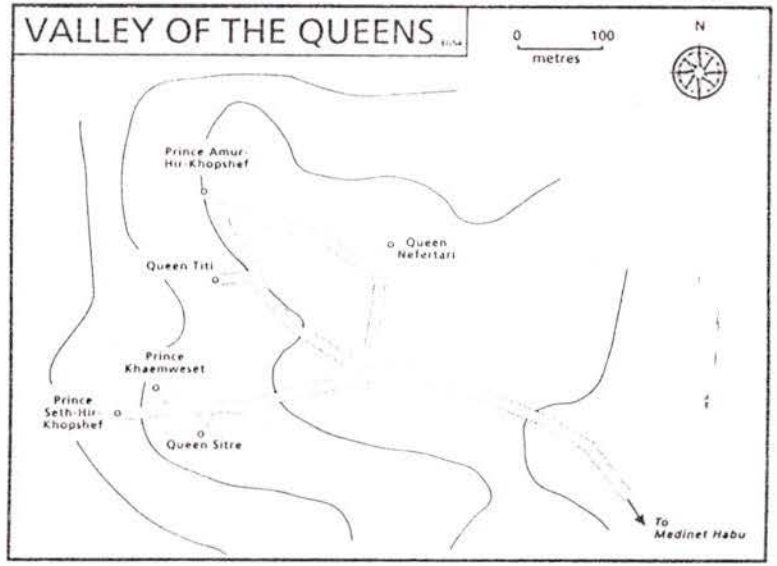


Valley of the Queens

Like the Valley of the Kings, the Valley of the Queens, which is about 3 km S from the tombs of the nobles, can be reached via another road which cuts NW through the main NE-SW escarpment. It was once known as the 'Place of Beauty' and was used as a burial site for officials long before the queens and their offspring, who had previously been buried with their husbands, began to be buried there in the 19th Dynasty (1320-1200 BC). It contains more than 80 tombs but many are still unidentified. The tombs are generally quite simple with a long corridor, several antechambers branching off and the burial chamber at the end. The most famous tomb is that of Ramses II's wife Nefertari newly reopened to the public.

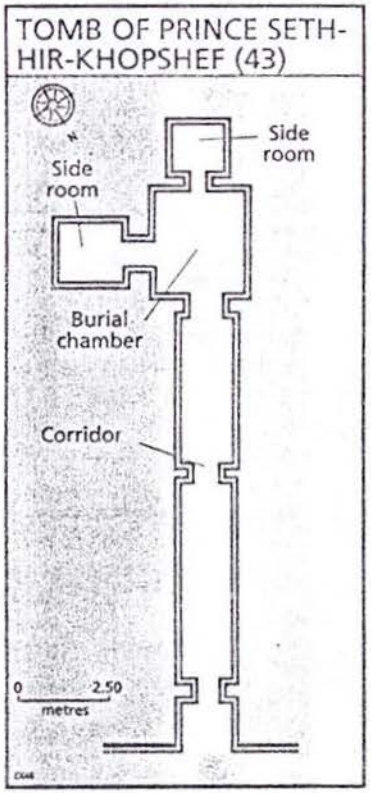
Queen Sit-re (No 38)
Queen Sit-re's tomb-chapel is situated in the S quadrant of the Valley of the Queens. The tomb is normally closed and official permission must be sought



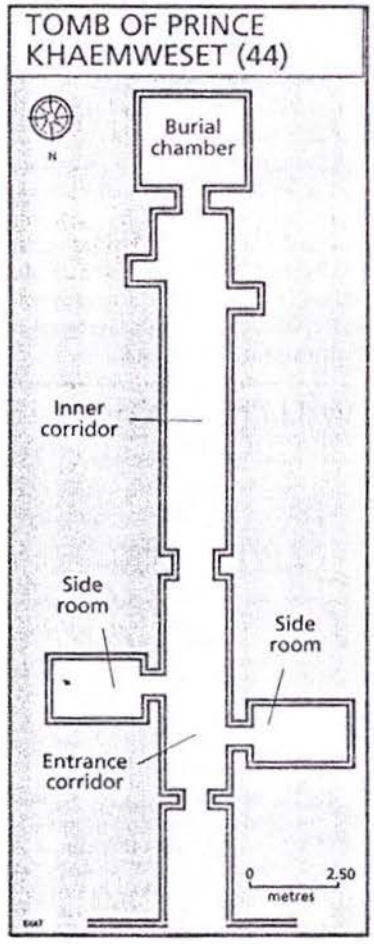


to gain entry. The Queen was the wife of Ramses I and is amongst the earliest tomb-chapels built in the valley. The elemental structure comprises an outer hall chamber (1) and an unfinished burial chamber (2). The decorations include in clockwise order in the hall chamber scenes of the sons of Horus (3), the queen at a shrine (4), a water scene with gods (5), gods (6) and Lion-headed god (7).

Prince Seth-Hir-Khopshef (No 43)
Prince Seth-Hir-Khopshef was a son of Ramses III who died young. He was ceremonial charioteer of the great stables. His tomb-chapel is decorated with a series of scenes of the gods, clockwise from the entrance to the corridor including Ramses III and Seth-Hir-Khopshef in front of Osiria and other deities, the sons of Horus, Osiris enthroned, Ramses III and Prince Seth-Hir-Khopshef offering gifts, Ramses and the prince before a set of deities.

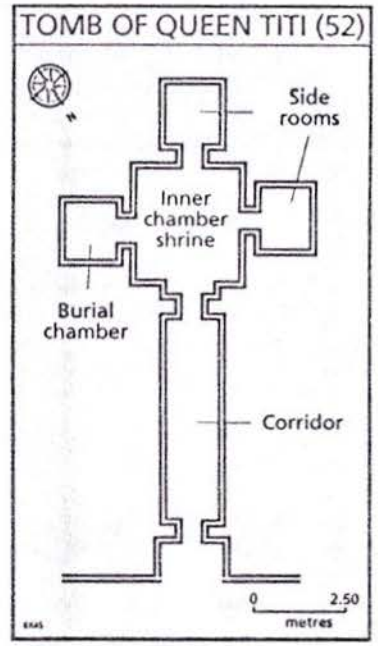


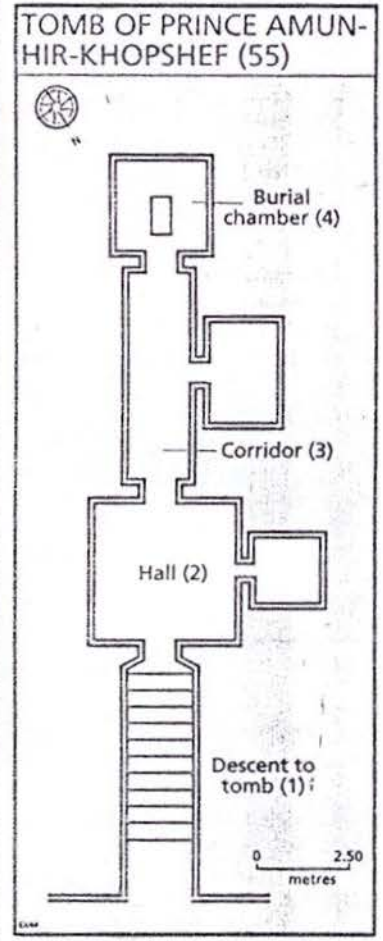
Prince Khaemweset (No 44)
Although the tomb is dedicated to one of Ramses III's (1198-1166 BC) young sons who died of smallpox, it is dominated by the pharaoh himself. The reliefs depict the young boy being led to the underworld by his father who is offering sacrifices and helping his son through the underworld and the judgment of Osiris to the Fields of Yaru.



Queen Titi (No 52)
Queen Titi was the daughter, wife and mother of a succession of the 20th Dynasty (1200-1085 BC) pharaohs called Ramses but it is uncertain which one she was married to. Although the tomb is open to the public the reliefs are faded and damaged. A corridor leads to a square shrine which branches into three antechambers with the badly preserved burial chamber on the left being dedicated to the four sons of Horus and Osiris. The central chamber features the Queen before the gods and the shrine is dominated by animal deities with pictures of jackals, baboons and guardian lions. The right hand chamber is the best preserved and depicts the tree goddess and Hathor as a the cow goddess rejuvenating the Queen with Nile water.

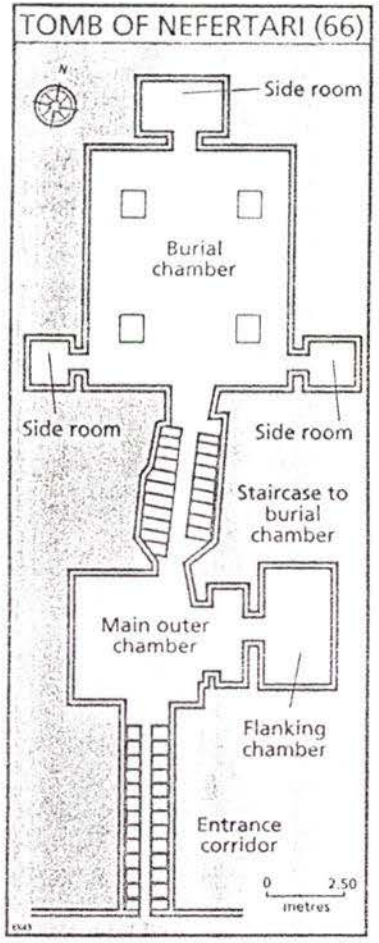
Prince Amun-Hir-Khopshef (No 55)
Prince Amun-Hir-Khopshef was the eldest son of Ramses III who like his younger brother Seth-Hir-Khopshef (43) died young. Descent to the tomb is via a stairway (1) into the main hall (2) from which there is a corridor (3) to the burial chamber (4). The tomb is elaborately decorated with fine illustrations which remain in good condition. The scenes show excerpts from the Book of the Gates and Ramses III leading his son in a course around the stations of the gods. An oddity is the sarcophagus which contained the remains of a foetus, thought to be one of the prince's stillborn infants.





Nefertari's Tomb (No 66)

The most famous and outstanding tomb is that of Ramses II's wife, Nefertari (No 66) which in Nov 1995 was opened to the public for the first time since its discovery in 1904. One of the most sophisticated pieces of artwork created during the New Kingdom, it stands, like the Taj Mahal, as a final testiment to a king's love for his wife. Small compared to the tombs in the Valley of the Kings, its 430 sq metres of fine reliefs were nearly completely destroyed by flood damage and leaching of the salt crystals in the tomb's limestone bedrock which caused the plaster to buckle and crack. After a US$6mn 6-year restoration project by the Getty Conservation Institute, the tomb is ready for public display. But in order to control humidity levels, only 150 visitors are allowed inside per day. Separate tickets are required (EL100 or EL50 for students).



The entrance corridor leads to a main outer chamber and a small flanking chamber, the former dominated by the image of a smiling Nefertari holding hands with Horus and being acknowledged by Isis, the vivid colours splendidly preserved. The stress here is on her beauty rather than good works. The staircase descends to the burial chamber and three small side rooms. Unfortunately the downstairs reliefs are badly damaged but it is still possible to see that in the burial chamber Nefertari, offering sacrifices to the gods, becomes solemn and her fashionable clothes are replaced by more sombre attire. The wall texts are chapters from the Book of the Dead.

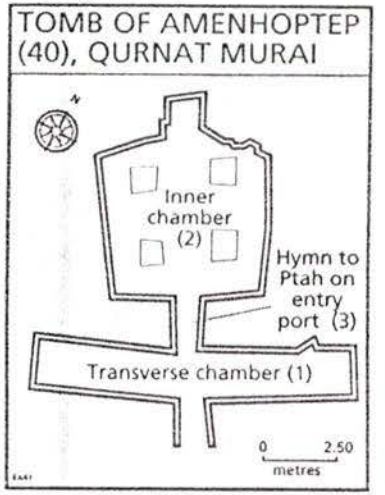
Calling On Nefertari

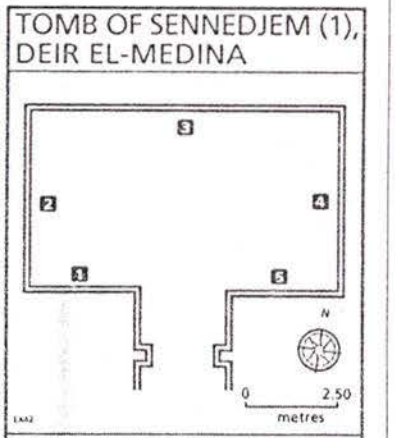
Visitors to Nefertari's tomb are restricted to 200 per day. All must wear masks to reduce moisture in the atmosphere and shoe pads to protect the stone from wear and tear. Nefertari was the favourite wife of Ramses II and her tomb was decorated with 400 sq m of the finest wall paintings. Salt crystals grew on the walls and the murals fell to the floor in fragments. With the help of photographs from the museum in Turin and those taken by Ernesto Schiaparelli who discovered the tomb the carefully cleaned pieces of mural were replaced on the wall, a huge Egyptian jigsaw. Now Nefertari is fit to entertain.

Private tombs

Amenhoptep (Huy) (No 40)

Amenhoptep (Huy) was the Viceroy of Kush in the reign of Tutankhamen. The tomb-chapel is cruciform with a transverse chamber (1) and an unfinished or damaged inner chamber (2). The decoration of the transverse chamber is very pleasing, showing scenes of Nubians offering gifts to Tutankhamen, and Amenhoptep is depicted among the Nubians and also with Tutankhamen. Almost all the worthwhile decorations are in the west wing of the transverse chamber.





1. Mummy protected by Isis and Nephthys
2. Sennedjem and wife before the gods
3. Sennedjem embalmed by Anubis
4. Paintings: barque of Re (above) and life in eternity (below)
5. Sennedjem and wife facing the Deities of the Gates

Sennedjem (No 1)

Sennedjem's tomb was found undamaged in 1886 by Gaston Maspero, then head of the Antiquities Service. It is a simple and small single burial chamber with a slightly domes ceiling. On discovery it held intact the mummies of Sennedjem, his wife, son and two daughters-in-law. There was a handsome range of funeral materials. Unfortunately, the mummies and funerary objects were dispersed across the museums of the world so that a comprehensive view is no longer possible. The scenes shown in the burial chamber are first rate in colour, style and present condition and are worth travelling to see. Clockwise round the chamber are a mummy on a bier with the goddesses Isis and Nephthys protecting it (1). Sennedjem and his wife stand before the gods (2) and, the masterpiece of the tomb, the body of Sennedjem lying on an ornamental bier is embalmed by Anubis opposite to the entrance (3). On the W wall is a double painting of the barque of Re above and a view of life in eternity below (4). The S wall (right of the door) shows Sennedjem and his wife, Iyneferty, face the Deities of the Gates (5).

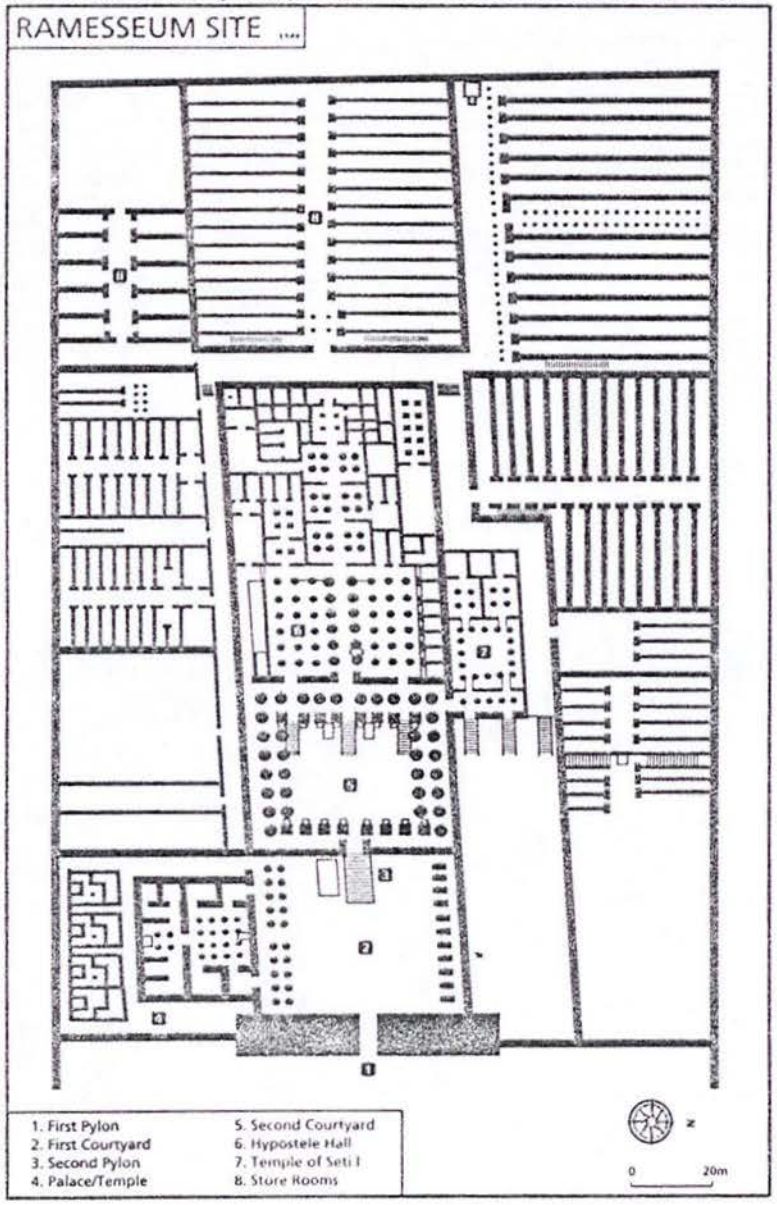
Other temples and sites

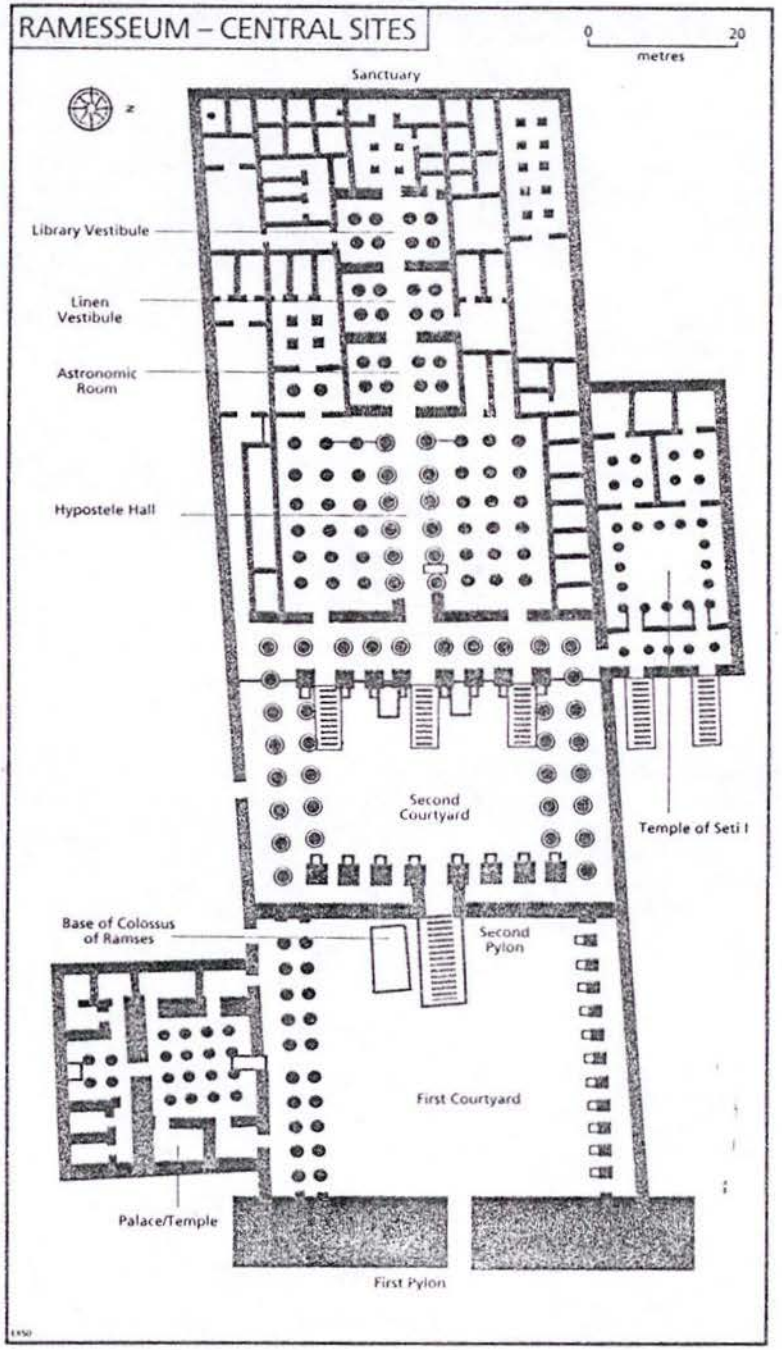
The Ramesseum

While most tourists confine themselves to the two valleys and Hatshepsut's temple there are a number of other interesting W bank ruins closer to the river. Of these amongst the most impressive was the Ramesseum, a 19th century name for what was effectively

a state cult-temple, on the opposite side of the road near the tombs of the nobles. Today only scattered remains and faded reliefs suggest the great temple which once stood there and reportedly rivalled the splendours of the temples at Abu Simbel.

The vain-glorious Ramses II (1304-1237 BC) built this mortuary temple, on the consecrated site of Seti I's (1318-





1304 BC) much smaller but collapsing temple, in order to impress his subjects but he failed to take account of the annual flooding of the Nile. The result was that this enormous tribute to Amun and himself was less eternal than he expected!

The first two pylons collapsed and only a single colonnade remains of what would have been the First Courtyard. On its S side is a palace where Ramses stayed when he attended religious festivals on the W bank. In front of the ruins of the Second Pylon is the base of the enormous colossus of Ramses which was originally over 17m high but it is now much eroded and various parts of his anatomy are scattered throughout the world's museums. The forefinger alone measures more than 1m in length. The upper part of the body crashed into the second court where the head and torso remain. Three smaller colossi stood next to the three stairways leading to the Hypostele Hall but only one fragmented one now remains.

Although it is now roofless, 29 of the original 48 columns still stand in the Hypostele Hall. The centre of the roof would have been higher than the sides in order to allow shafts of sunlight to enter the hall. To the left of the entrance is the famous relief of the Egyptian victory over the Hittite city of Dapur in the battle of Kadesh. Around the base of the W walls some of Ramses' many sons are depicted. At the far end of the hall a central door leads into the Astronomical Room renowned for its ceiling which is illustrated with the oldest known 12 months calendar. Because the temple was dedicated to Amun it is thought to represent a solar year. Two other vestibules, a library and a linen room, lead to the ruined sanctuary which is the temple's highest point.

The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III

The Mortuary Temple of Ramses III, (1198-1166 BC), which lies W of the Colossi of Memnon and S of the Valley of the Queens at a place known in Arabic as **Medinet Habu**, was modelled on that built by his forefather Ramses II (1304-1327) near by. It is second only to Karnak in terms of its size and complexity and within the enormous enclosing walls are a palace, a Nilometer and several smaller shrines with some pre-dating the temple itself.

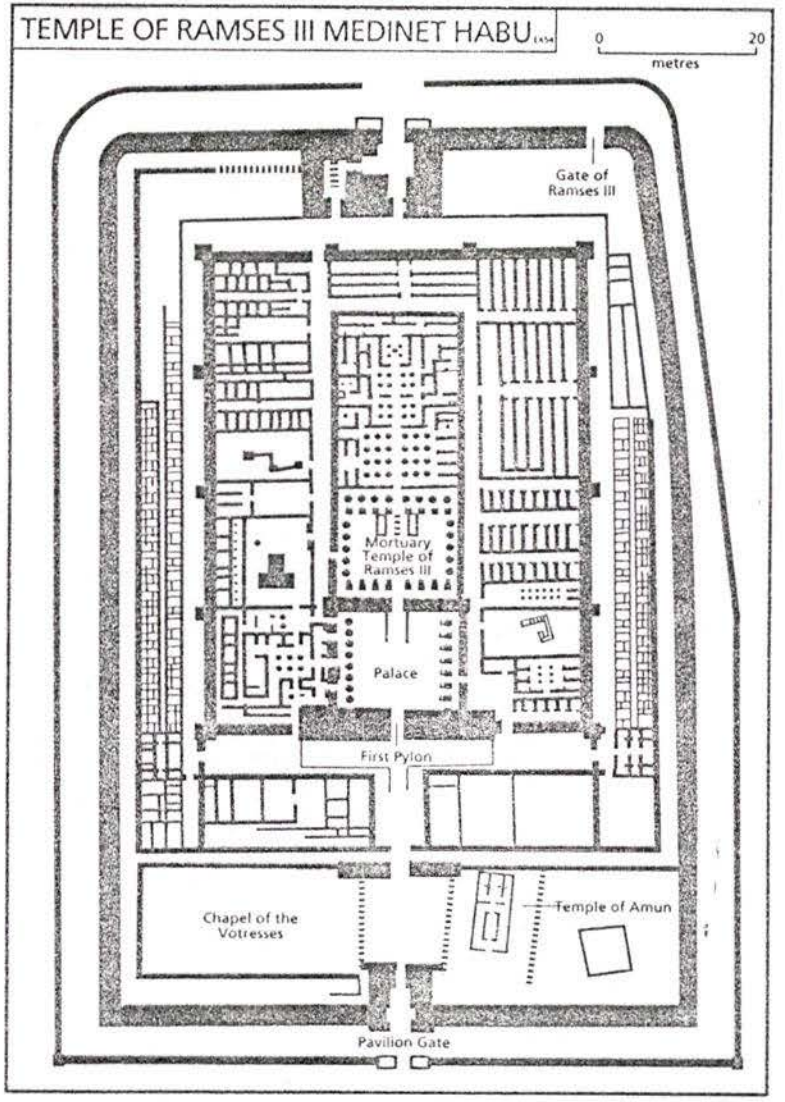
When Thebes was threatened, such as during the 20th Dynasty's Libyan invasions, the enclosing walls sheltered the entire population. Although Ramses III named his temple the 'House of a Million Years', the smaller shrine that already occupied the site next to the S enclosure walls was in use long after the main temple shrine had fallen into disuse.

The small temple, which was constructed by Hatshepsut but later altered by Tuthmosis III who erased her cartouche, was built on a platform from which there are good views in all directions. Until the 18th century a grove of acacia trees led to the Colossi of Memnon. The site, known as Jeser Ast or 'Sacred Place', was venerated because it was thought that the waters of chaos had divided and the primeval mound erupted here. During Akhenaten's rule, Amun's images were destroyed but they were later replaced by Horemheb and Seti I.

The whole temple complex is entered via the 3-storey SE gatehouse which is built like a fortified Syrian pavilion and was originally 22m high. Arriving through it into the large forecourt one sees the small temple to the right, the huge main temple directly ahead, and the small Chapels of the Votressess, dating from the 25th Dynasty (747-656 BC) kings of Kush, just to the left.

The remarkable homogeneity of the main temple's structure reflects the fact that it was designed and built by Ramses III alone rather than being expanded and altered by successive pharaohs. The immense and wonderfully preserved First Pylon, which is 65m long by 27m high, was originally dedicated to Amun but was also used by Ramses II as a memorial to his Libyan and Asiatic campaigns. It would originally have been larger than the one at Luxor, standing 27m high and 65m long, but now the N corner and cornice are missing. The images on the left of the Pylon show Ramses slaying Nubian prisoners watched by Amun and Ptah while Syrians are slain on the right hand side. Although the illustrations are based on genuine wars Ramses III never actually fought either nation!

On the left of the entrance way through the first pylon, before arriving in the large 48m x 34m first court, Ramses III is shown worshipping the deities Ptah, Osiris and Sokar. The W of the great court is flanked by eight columns



The Singing Colossus Of Memnon

The northern gigantic sandstone colossus was broken off at the waist by the earthquake in 27 BC after which it was reputed to sing at dawn. This phenomenon, which was most likely caused by the wind or the expansion of the broken stone in the morning sunlight, attracted many visitors including the Roman emperors Hadrian in 130 AD and Septimus Severus (193-211 AD). The latter decided it should be repaired, after which time it never sang again.

and the E by seven Osiride pillars. On the Second Pylon the Pharaoh is depicted marching rows of prisoners, the third row being Philistines (or Palestinians) wearing feathered head-dresses, towards Amun and Mut. The second court is also made up of a combination of Osiride pillars and columns. Eight pillars line the back and front of the hall while the sides are flanked by six columns. One scene depicts the Feast of Sokar while the lower register of the back wall is dedicated to the Ramses III's sons and daughters. At the far right end of the hall is a small entrance which has two interesting illustrations. One shows the Pharaoh before Seth, but this was later defaced to change him into Horus, while above the door Ramses is shown kneeling on the symbol of the united Upper and Lower Egypt.

The W door connects to the ruins of the severely damaged Hypostele Hall. Above the door the Pharaoh can again be seen kneeling over the symbol of Upper and Lower Egypt and at the base of the entry wall are 13 princesses and 10 princes. The central aisle of the hall would have been raised, in the same way as at Karnak, to allow Re's sunlight to enter.

A multitude of side rooms would originally have led off from the hypostele hall but little now remains because of the severe damage caused by the major earthquake in 27 BC. The best preserved room is the Treasury to the N where the walls are adorned with scenes of the Pharaoh making offerings of gold to Amun. Another small room shows the Pharaoh wearing the Osiride symbols of the Atef feathered crown, a crook and flail.

The outer walls are better preserved and some of the reliefs are clearly visible. At the far end of the S wall is a calendar of religious feasts which is believed to be the longest such inscription. Further along is a portrayal of all the benefits with which Ramses III was blessed by Amun. The rear W wall is dedicated to the Pharaoh's victories in battle. In the NE corner of the enclosure near the small temple is a small sacred lake where childless women came to bathe at night and pray to Isis that they might conceive. Close by stand the remains of the Nilometer that was originally fed by a canal which branched off from the Nile.

Colossi of Memnon

These two gigantic sandstone colossi, which are located on the main road 1.65 km from the river and next to the student ticket kiosk, represent Amenhotep III (1417-1379 BC). They once stood in front of his mortuary temple which collapsed and was plundered for stone long ago. Although the faces and crowns have been eroded the two colossi make a strange spectacle seated in splendour in the midst of the desert and are well worth a visit (see box).

THE NILE VALLEY LUXOR TO ASWAN

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Although the majority of tourists travel non-stop from Luxor to Aswan there are a number of interesting and beautiful temples en route of which Edfu and Kom Ombo are well worth visiting. What is so extraordinary about the generally unspectacular road journey is the fact that the strip of cultivated land between the Nile and the desert is so narrow. On one side is lush vegetation and the river and on the other the harsh and arid desert.

The main road follows the Nile along its E bank from Luxor, past Edfu (115 km) which is on the W bank about half way to Aswan, before continuing via Kom Ombo (176 km) to Aswan (216 km). There is an alternative less crowded but less scenic route along the W bank from the Valley of the Kings to Esna (55 km) and Edfu before having to cross the river to continue the journey along the E bank to Aswan.

Increasing numbers of visitors are now making this journey by river in one of the many floating hotels which moor at the sites along the way. Egyptian village life, which is often obscured from the road and cannot be appreciated from the window of a speeding car, can be seen on this relaxing journey which is thoroughly recommended.

Esna

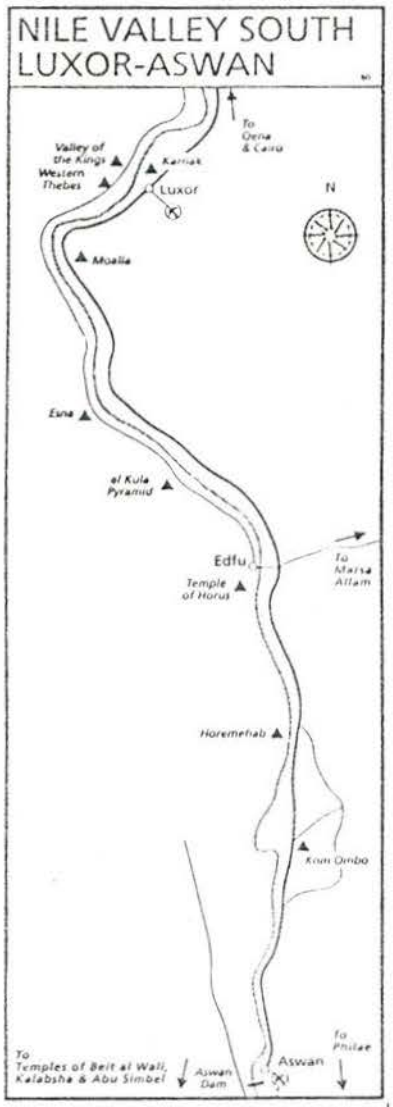
This small market town lies about 55 km S of Luxor on the W bank of the Nile which, besides its **Temple of Khnum**, is mainly known for the sandstone dam across the river. This was built in 1906 at about the same time as the first Aswan dam and today cruise ships and barges usually have to queue for a number of hours for their turn to pass through its locks. The town and the temple are certainly worth a couple of hour's visit.

ACCESS Service taxis and buses stop about 10 mins walk from the temple which is in the centre of town. Walk to the river and then S along the Corniche to the ticket kiosk. The railway station is in the centre of town and is a short *calèche* ride to the temple.

Places of interest

The **Temple of Khnum**, open daily 0700-1800, entrance E£4, lies partially exposed in a deep depression in the centre of town. The excavation began in the 1860s but did not continue because the area above was covered in houses. Over the centuries since its construction the annual Nile flood has deposited 10m of silt over the temple site so that all that is visible today is the **Hypostele Hall**. The part of the temple that can be seen today is Ptolemaic/Roman and was built on the foundations of a much older shrine which was also dedicated to the ram-headed deity Khnum. He was believed to have created man by moulding him from Nile clay on a potter's wheel. Later, when Amun became the principal deity, Khnum's image changed and, in conjunction with Hapy, he came to be regarded as the guardian of the source of the Nile.

The hypostele hall's **Outer Façade** is decorated from left to right with the cartouches of three Roman emperors Claudius (41-54 AD), Titus (79-81 AD) and Vespasion (69-79 AD). Above the entrance, on the lintel, is the winged sun disc. Inside the tall hall 18 columns



support the **Astronomical Ceiling** which, although once a beautiful and complex spectacle, is barely visible today because it was blackened by the wood fires of a Coptic village which was once housed within the temple. In places various deities and animals, including winged dogs, two-headed snakes and the pregnant hippo-goddess Tweri, can be seen intermingled with signs of the zodiac. The hall's columns are decorated with crocodiles and rams and are inscribed with texts detailing the temple's various festivals. On the rear wall the Roman emperors Septimus Severus, Caracella and Geta make offerings to Khnum. Around the N outer walls at the back of the temple are texts of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD) while Titus, Domitian and Trajan slay their Egyptian enemies on the E and W outer walls.

Local information

● Accommodation

The town's only hotel is the **F** *Haramin* about 1 km S of the ticket kiosk along the Corniche but it is best avoided unless stuck in town at night.

● Places to eat

There are a few cafés and stalls in the central square but there are no restaurants.

● Banks & money changers

One bank open Sat-Thur 0830-1400, Sun 1800-2100, and Wed 1700-2000. 1000-1330 during Ramadan.

● Post & telecommunications

Area code: 097.

● Transport

Train To Luxor and Aswan stop at Esna but only very slow and crowded second and third class service.

Road Bus: N to Luxor or S to Edfu, Kom Ombo and Aswan are frequent but crowded in the morning. **Service taxis**: to Luxor (1 hr), Edfu (1 hr) and Aswan (2-3 hrs) are quicker but marginally more expensive than the buses.

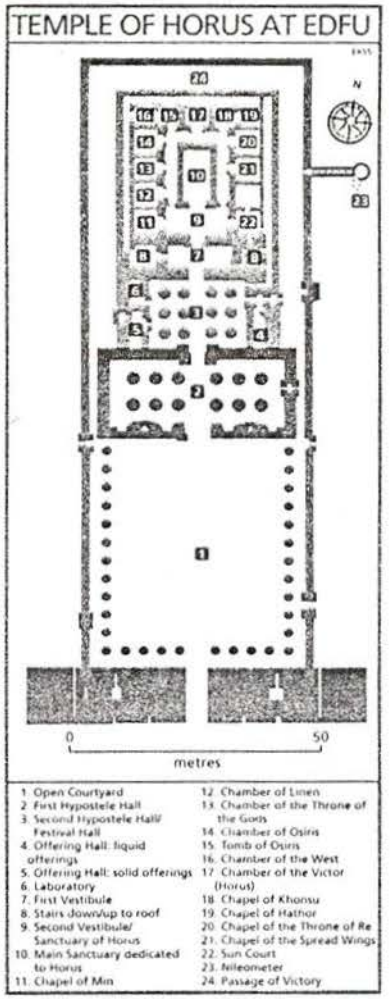
Edfu

Edfu, which is 60 km S along the W bank and almost equidistant between Luxor (115 km) and Aswan (106 km), is the site of the huge, well preserved Ptolemaic cult **Temple of Horus** which, as the most complete in the whole country, is certainly worth a visit.

ACCESS The temple is W or inland from the river along Sharia al-Maglis and can be reached by *calèche*, many of which are drawn by emaciated and badly treated horses, or taxis which await the arrival of the tourist cruise ships. Taxis and pick-ups to the temple can be caught from the train station, which is just across the Nile bridge, while the service taxi terminal at the town-side W end of the bridge is a 20 mins walk or short ride to the temple. Inter-city buses drop their passengers on Sharia Tahrir or the parallel Sharia Gumhorriya about half way between the bridge and the temple.

Places of interest

Edfu Temple, open summer 0600-1800, winter 0700-1600, entry E£10 and E£10 for cameras, is the name given to the enormous **Temple of Horus** which was the focus of the ancient city of Djeba. It was begun in Aug 237 BC by Ptolemy III and took 25 years to complete, with the decoration taking another 5 years. Because of a revolt in Upper Egypt it was not until Feb 176 BC that the opening ceremony took place under Ptolemy VII, but there were further additions until Ptolemy XIII. Like Esna's **Temple of Khnum**, it was completely buried except for its huge pylons under silt and sand and its top was covered with houses until the 1860s but, unlike Esna, the whole site has been excavated. It had been severely damaged by the town's inhabitants and it was not until 1903 that the excavation work was finally completed.



The whole complex is entered from the ticket office in the NW corner at the rear of the main N-S axis temple, which one walks along to reach the entrance at its S end. Just to the SW is the small E-W axis birth house called the **Mammisi of Horus**, which was built by Ptolemy VII and VIII. Each year there is a performance of the miracle play which represents Horus' birth at the same time as the birth of the divine heir to the throne of Egypt. At the SW corner of the birth house there are reliefs of Isis suckling Horus and an erect Amun.

The main **Temple of Horus** is entered through the huge **Grand Pylon**, which was originally protected by an enormous hawk which has been moved to the N end of the **Court of Offerings** guarding the entrance to the **Hypostele Hall**. On the outer wall of the pylon Ptolemy XIII (88-51 BC), who was also known as Neos Dionysus and had usurped the pylon from its original builder Ptolemy IX (170-116 BC), is shown killing his enemies before Horus. On its inner wall Horus travels to Edfu on his barque and Ptolemy makes offerings to Horus and Hathor.

The giant **Court of Offerings** is lined with 32 columns behind which on the W

side Ptolemy IX makes offerings to Horus, Hathor and Ihy and on the right Ptolemy X appears before the same three. At the N end of the court is the **Hypostele Hall**, built by Ptolemy VII (180-145 BC), with its 18 once brightly painted columns supporting the roof, each with a different capital. At the entrance to the Hypostele Hall is the small Chamber of Consecrations changing room to the left and a small Library, where the names of the guests for the day's festival would be kept, to the right.

Leading N from the hall is a smaller 12 slender columned hypostele hall, known as the **Festival Hall**, the oldest part of the building dating back to Ptolemy III (246-222 BC) and completed by his son, where offerings entered the temple and were prepared. These were then carried through into the **Hall of Offerings**, or first vestibule, where the daily offerings would have been made at the many altars and tables bearing incense, juices, fruit and meat. From here there are steps to the E which were used for the procession up to the roof where a **Chapel of the Disc** once stood. The stairs are illustrated with pictures of the priests carrying the statues of the gods to the roof to be revitalized before returning down a separate staircase to arrive back on the W side of the Hall of Offerings. Today all the roof offers is an excellent view of the surrounding area.

The Offerings Hall leads to the inner vestibule called the **Sanctuary of Horus**, where engravings show Ptolemy IV (222-205 BC) making offerings to the deities while others show Horus and Hathor in their sacred vessels. The sanctuary is virtually a separate temple within the main temple and is surrounded by a series of 10 minor chambers of which the most attractive is the **New Year Shrine** which contains a relief of Nut spanning the roof. These chambers, many of which originally served as vestries and store rooms, are better examined with a torch. On the dimly lit NE wall of the outer corridor are the remains of a Nilometer. (See Aswan, page 270) Horus' defeat of Seth, who is portrayed as a hippopotamus, is illustrated in the middle of the W wall of the main temple.

Local information

Accommodation

There are no good hotels in town and most tourists are either only passing through or are staying on cruise ships which moor on the river bank from where *caléches* take them to the temple.

There are a few cheap hotels incl the relatively clean **F** *Dar es-Salaam*, nr the temple; the friendly but shabby **F** *El-Medina*, just off the main roundabout on Sharia Gumhorriya; **F** *El-Magdi*, further down Sharia al-Maglis; the fairly awful **F** *Semiramis*.

Places to eat

The *Happy Land Restaurant* is on the Corniche between the bridge and Sharia al-Maglis where the *Zahrat el-Medina Restaurant* is located: neither of these cheap restaurants are very good.

Bank & money changers

Sharia Gumhorriya in the centre of town is open Sun-Thur 0830-1400.

Post & telecommunications

Area code: 095.

Post Office: located nr the temple on Sharia Tahrir on the S side of the main roundabout.

Transport

Train To Luxor and Aswan stop at Edfu but only very slow and crowded second and third class service.

Road Bus: N to Esna and Luxor or S to Kom Ombo and Aswan, caught from Sharia Tahrir half way between the bridge and the temple, are slow but very cheap. **Service taxis**: N to Esna (1 hr) and Luxor (1 hr), or S to Kom Ombo (45 mins) and Aswan (1½ hrs, E£3.50), can be caught from the W end of the bridge.

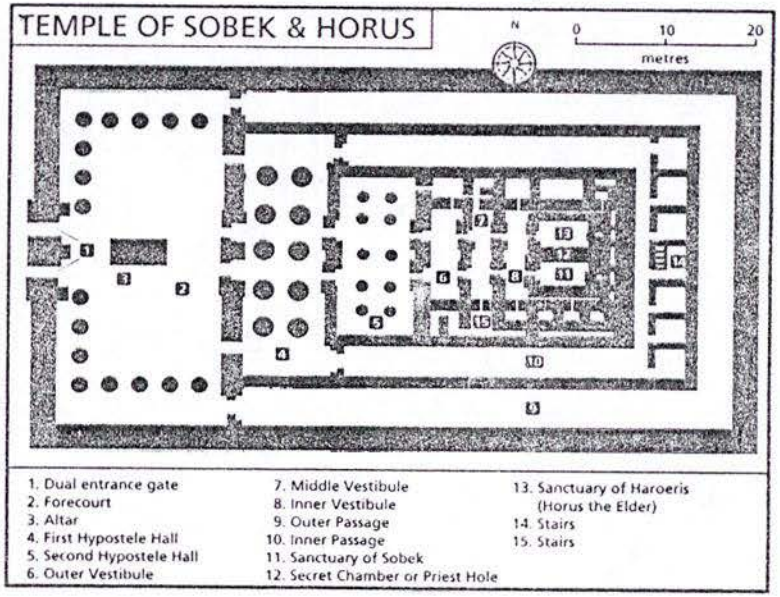
Horus – The First Living God-King

Horus who was originally the Egyptian sky-god and falcon-god was later identified as the son of Osiris and his sister Isis. He subsequently avenged his father's murder by his uncle Seth in an epic fight at Edfu in which Horus lost an eye and Seth his testicles. It was not until Isis intervened that Horus prevailed as good triumphed over evil. Osiris pronounced his judgment by banishing Seth to the underworld and enthroning Horus as the first living god-king. Each Pharaoh claimed to be an incarnation of Horus and the annual Festival of the Coronation, at Edfu's now destroyed Temple of the Falcon in front of the main temple's grand pylon, followed by a crowning ceremony in the temple's main forecourt, symbolized the renewal of royal power.

Kom Ombo

Kom Ombo, 66 km S of Edfu and only about 40 km N of Aswan, is a small E bank town known today for its sugar refinery which processes the cane grown in the surrounding area. It is home for many of the Nubians who were displaced by the flooding which followed the construction of the Aswan High Dam. Kom Ombo was the ancient crossroads where the '40 Days Road' caravan route from western Sudan met the route from the eastern desert gold mines. It was also the site of the training ground for the war elephants used in the Ptolemaic army. Most tourists stop here to visit the **Temple of Sobek and Horus**, which stands on the banks of the Nile 4 km from the town.

ACCESS To reach the temple, leave the service taxi to Aswan at the turnoff 2 km S of Kom Ombo town from where the signposted 'tembel' is only 1.5 km away. In the town itself both buses and service taxis stop on the N-S Sharia 26th July but 300m apart. Cheap pick-ups to the temple can be caught from behind the white mosque which is one block away from the Luxor-Aswan road on the E-W axis Sharia Gamhorriya. These days the vast majority of visitors arrive by coach or by cruise ships which dock on the river bank directly below the temple itself.



Cruising On The Nile

It is recommended for health and safety reasons that travellers use only the best grade Nile Cruise boats. The following list gives the names of Egyptian Government 5-Star grade cruise Nile ships supplied at 1 November 1995:

Boat	Operator/Owner
Alexander the Great	Jolleys Travel & Tours, 4th Flr, 23 Sh Kasr El-Nil, Cairo
Anni Sheraton	4 Sh Ahmad Pasha, Garden City
Aton Sheraton	4 Sh Ahmad Pasha, Garden City
Aurora	European Floating Hotels, 87 Sh Ramses, Cairo
Cairo	Shalakani Tours, 36a Sh Bahgal Ali, Zamalek
Champollion I & II	Le Meridien, 15 Kamel El-Shenawi, Garden City
Cheops	International Co for Nile Cruising, 23b Sh Ismael Mohamed, Zamalek
Cleopatra	Nile Cruising Co, 3 Abu El-Fada Tower, Zamalek
Diamond Boat	Diamond Boat Co, 87 Sh Ramses, Cairo
Excelsior	Seti First Nile Cruises, 16 Sh Ismail Mohamed, Zamalek
Giza	Shalakani Tours, 36a Sh Bahgat Ali, Zamalek
Golden Boat	International Nile Cruises, 87 Sh Ramses, Cairo
Helio	Heliopolis Tours, 2 Sh Pharaune, Alexandria
Honzen	Egyptian Cruise Lines, Abdli Effenda Tower, Zamalek
Hotp Sheraton	4 Sh Ahmad Pasha, Garden City
Imperial	Travcotels, 112, 26 Sh July, Zamalek
Isis Hilton	Nile Hilton, Commercial Centre No 18, Cairo
Jasmin	Wing Tours, 14 El-Oboor Buildings, Sh Salah Salem, Cairo
Lady Diana	Zamzam Co, 23 Sh Zamzam, Dokki
Le Scribe Papyrus	Travel Cruises Co, 17 Abdel Monaim Riad, Mohandasseen
LN Tanis	Seti First Nile Cruises, 16 Ismail Mohamed, Zamalek
LN Kirs	Seti First Nile Cruises, 16 Ismail Mohamed, Zamalek
Nubia Queen III	Ramases Co for Nile Tours, 185 Sh 26 July, Agouza, Giza
Nancy	Nefer Nile Cruises, 5 Sh Kasr El-Nil, Cairo
Nephos Hilton	Nile Hilton, Commercia Centre No 18, Cairo
Neptune	Trans Egypt Travel, 37 Sh Kasr El-Nil, Cairo
Nile Admiral	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nile Beauty	Flotel Nile Cruises, 17 Sh Ahmad Heshmat, Zamalek
Nile Bride	Nile Bride Cruises, 15b Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nile Elegant	Memnon Nile Cruises, 12 Sh Mahmoud Bassuni, Zamalek
Nile Emerald	Nile Sun Cuises, 1 Sh Gezire El-Wosta, Tower A, Zamalek
Nile Emperor	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek

Places of interest

Kom Ombo Temple, open daily 0600-1800 (entry E£4 or E£2 for students and E£10 for commercial photography permit) is the more usual name given to the small but beautiful **Temple of Sobek and Horus**. It faces the Nile at a bend in the river. The temple is unusual because it is dedicated to two gods rather than a single deity. Sobek was the crocodile god which, given the fact that the nearby sandbanks were a favourite basking ground for crocodiles until the construction of the Aswan Dam, was particularly appropriate. On its right hand side Sobek-Re, who is identified with the sun, his wife in another form of Hathor, and their moon-god son Khonsu are honoured. The left hand side is devoted to a form of Horus the Elder or Haroeris known as the 'Good doctor', his consort Ta-Sent-Nefer ('good sister') and his son Horus the Younger who was known as Pa-Heb-Tawy ('Lord of the Two Lands'). A healing cult developed and pilgrims who came to be cured would fast for a night in the temple precinct before participating in a complex ceremony with the priest of Horus in the heart of the temple.

Nile Empress	Travcotels, 112 Sh 26 July, Zamalek
Nile Jewel	Nile Sun Cruises, 1 Sh Gezire El-Wosta, Zamalek
Nile Legend	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nile Majesty I	Mo Hotel Travel & Nile, 41 Sh Sharif, Cairo
Nile Majesty II	Mo Hotel Travel & Nile, 41 Sh Sharif, Cairo
Nile Monarch	Travcotels, 112 26 Sh July, Zamalek
Nile Plaza	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nile President	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nile Queen	Sphinx Tours & Cruises, 2 Behlef Passage, Kasr El-Nil, Cairo
Nile Ritz	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nile Romance	Flotel Nile Cruises, 17 Sh Ahmad Heshmat, Zamalek
Nile Smart	Memnon Nile Cruises, 18 Sh Hoda Shaarawi, Cairo
Nile Sphinx	Sphinx Tours & Cruises, 2 Behlef Passage, Kasr El-Nil
Nile Symphony	Presidential Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Marasshi, Zamalek
Nora	Noratel Hotels & Tourism, 4 Sh Mehdi, Heliopolis
Oberoi Shehrayar	Oberoi Corporation, Mena House Hotel, Sh Ahram, Giza
Oberoi Shehrazad	Oberoi Corporation, Mena House Hotel, Sh Ahram, Giza
Orchid	Wing Tours, 14 El-Oboor Buildings, Sh Salah Salem, Cairo
Osiris Hilton	Nile Hilton, Commercial Centre No 18, Cairo
Papyrus	Rey Vacances Travel, 47 Sh Abdel Monaim, Mohandesseen
Prince Omar	Zamalek Nile Cruises, 21 Sh Behgat Ali, Zamalek
Princess Amira	Cataract Cruises, 27 Sh Hassan Assemi, Zamalek
Ra	Egyptian Co for Nile Cruises, 13 Sh Kasr El-Nil, Cairo
Ramases Egypt	Nile Co for Tours & Floating Hotels, 195 26 Sh July Agouza
Ramases King of the Nile	Nile Co for Tours & Floating Hotels, 195 Sh 26 July Agouza
Redamis	Movenpick Nile Cruises, Crocodile Island, Luxor
Royale	Travcotels, 112 Sh 26 July, Zamalek
Safir Nile Cruises	Safir International Management Co, Sh Al-Mesaha, Dokki
Salacia	Trans Egypt Travel, 37 Sh Kasr El-Nil, Cairo
Seti II	Seti First Nile Cruises, 16 Ismail Mohamed, Zamalek
Seti III	Seti First Nile Cruises, 16 Ismail Mohamed, Zamalek
Seti the Great	Seti First Nile Cruises, 16 Ismail Mohamed, Zamalek
Sobek	Sobek Nile Cruises, 27 Sh Hasan Assem, Zamalek
Solaris I	Solaris Cruises, 2 Sh Al Bustan, Cairo
Sonesta Goddess	Sonesta International, 4 Sh El-Tayaran, Nasr City, Heliopolis
Spring I	Spring Tours, 3 Sh El-Seyyed Bakry, Zamalek
Sun Boat	Adel Daud, 5a Sh Al Bustan, Cairo
Tut Sheraton	4 Sh Ahmad Pasha, Garden City

The present temple, like many others along this stretch of the Nile, is a Greco-Roman construction, built of sandstone and completed by Ptolemy V (205-180 BC). Its proximity to the Nile was a mixed blessing because, while its silt assisted in preserving the building, the flood waters eroded the First Pylon and Forecourt which were falling into the Nile before they were strengthened by the Department of Antiquities in 1893.

Like so many others the temple lies on a N-S axis with the main entrance at the S end. In front of it to the W on the riverbank itself is the **Mamissi of Ptolemy VII** (180-145 BC) which has been virtually destroyed by flooding. To the E of the main temple is the **Gate of Neos Dionysus**, who is believed to have been Ptolemy XIII (88-51 BC) and the father of Cleopatra, and the tiny two-room **Chapel of Hathor** which is now used to display mummified crocodiles found near the site.

With the Pylon and much of the **Forecourt** now destroyed by water erosion, one enters the main temple at the forecourt which was built by Tiberius (14-37 AD). Unfortunately only the stumps of the colourful columns, with a

high-water mark clearly visible at about 2.5m, and a few pieces of its walls now remain. Continuing the theme from the rest of the temple the twin deities are divided so that the left-hand columns are dedicated to Horus the Elder and the right-hand ones to Sobek-Re. In the centre of the forecourt is a huge altar which is flanked by two granite basins set into the paving. At the N end is the double entrance of the **First Hypostele Hall** with one door for each deity. The capitals are brightly decorated with floral arrays while the base is decorated with lilies. The reliefs on the lintel and door jambs show the Nile gods binding Upper and Lower Egypt together.

The five entrance columns and the 10 columns inside the Hypostele Hall and its wall reliefs are attractively decorated and the curious mixture of the two deities continues. Part of the roof has survived on the E side of the Hall and flying vultures are clearly depicted on the ceiling. The rear walls leading to the older **Second or Inner Hypostele Hall**, which has two entrances and 10 columns, show Ptolemy VII holding hymnal texts before the Nile gods. Inside he is shown offering sacrifices to the gods and on the N side of the Inner Hypostele Hall, between the two doors, is a text detailing the temple gods' various festivals. The most striking relief is adjacent on the left of the N wall where Horus the Elder presents the *Hps*, the curved sword of victory to Ptolemy VII, while Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III, his wife and sister respectively, stand behind him.

This is then followed by three double **Entrance Vestibules**, each progressively smaller and higher than the last, also built by Ptolemy VII. The outer vestibule shows the goddess of writing Sheshat measuring the layout of the temple's foundations, while the middle chamber served as an **Offering Hall** to which only priests were allowed entrance. Two small side rooms originally served as the Library for the sacred texts and the other as a vestry for the altar clothes and the priests' robes. As in Edfu, a staircase originally led to the now destroyed Chapel of the Disk on the roof.

The inner vestibule has two doors leading to the two separate **Sanctuaries of Horus and Sobek** and between the doors the gods give a Macedonian cloaked Ptolemy a notched palm branch from which the Heb Sed, or jubilee sign displaying the number of years of his reign, is suspended. Khonsu, who is wearing a blue crescent around a red disk, is followed by Horus in blue symbolising the air, and Sobek in green representing the water. Just as at Edfu to the N of the sanctuaries there is a **New Year Shrine** with a poorly preserved illustration of the Sky Goddess Nut on the ceiling. The sanctuaries, built by Ptolemy XIII (88-51 BC), are in a bad state and are much smaller than those at Edfu. Within each was an altar upon which a portable shrine would have stood. Beneath the sanctuary are the crypts which are empty but, unusually, are open to the public.

On the right inner wall of the outer corridor is the first known illustration of medical instruments, including bone-saws, scalpels, suction caps and dental tools, which date from the 2nd century AD and show that complex surgery was carried out over 1,800 years ago. Nearby the temple corridor floor is marked with graffiti which were drawn by patients and pilgrims as they spent the night there before the next day's healing ceremonies.

In the NW corner of the temple complex is a large circular well which has a stairway, cistern and rectangular basin which are believed to be connected in some ways with the worship of the crocodile god Sobek.

Local information

● Accommodation

The cheap and clean **F** *Cleopatra Hotel* is located nr the service taxi depot on Sharia 26th July.

● Places to eat

Besides the small stalls which serve '*ful*' (beans) there is the cheap and clean *El-Noba Restaurant* just to the S of the white mosque on the main Luxor-Aswan road.

● Bank & money changers

Next to the mosque, open Sun-Thur 0830-1400 but 1000-1330 during Ramadan.

● Post & telecommunications

Area code: 097.

● Transport

Train To Luxor and Aswan stop at Kom Ombo station just across the highway but only the very slow and crowded second and third class service.

Road Bus: N to Edfu, Esna and Luxor or S to Aswan, leave the bus terminal on Sharia 26th July about 350m S of Sharia Gumhorriya. **Service taxis**: N to Edfu (1 hr) or S to Aswan (45 mins) can be caught from the terminal on Sharia 26 July just S of Sharia Gumhorriya.



The town of El-Ballas still produces the large earthenware jars used for carrying water) for which it is famed (above). However, plastic (Egypt is one of the world's largest per capita consumers) will soon replace this age-old craft industry.

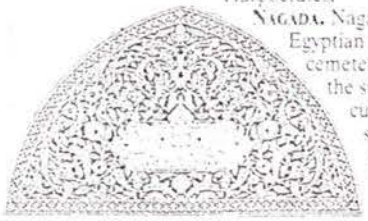
Qift. The ruins of ancient Koptos, in the center of Qift, give little idea of the importance of the town during antiquity. It rebelled during the reign of Diocletian and was razed to the ground. The geographical position of Koptos guaranteed its economic prosperity before it was superseded, during the Mameluke period, by Qus and, in modern times, by Qena. The town stands at the mouth of a *wadi* which opened it up to the desert. Koptos and its god Min ● 63 both date from the beginning of Egyptian history. In Koptos Min was the protector of the gold mines, quarries and caravan routes. All that remains of his temple are a few foundations and fragments of the enclosure wall. The best preserved



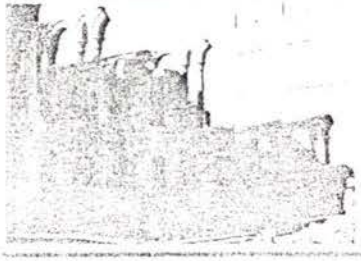
One of the gates (right) of the Temple of Harwer in Qus.

monuments are concentrated in the southern part of the town: a solitary gateway dating from the reign of Claudius, the uprights of a door set in a farmyard (Ptolemy XII and Caligula) and the chapel of the legendary Cleopatra with an image of three concentric naos containing the sacred barque. North of the suburbs of the modern town is the small Temple of El-Qal'a, which dates from Roman times, dedicated to Isis and Harpocrates.

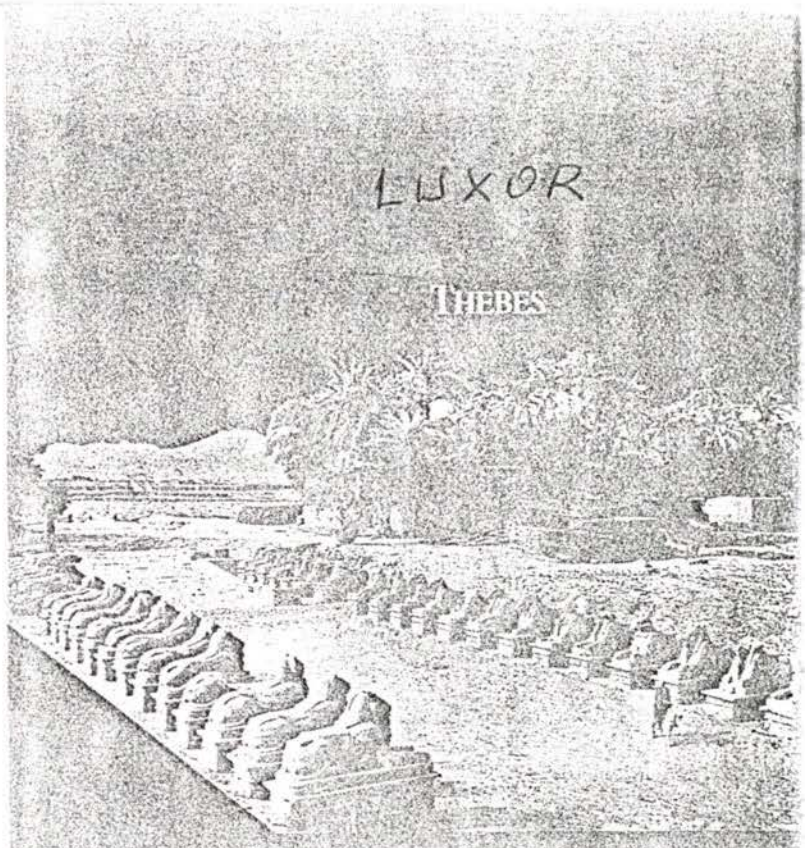
Pilgrims from the Maghreb, Cairo and Alexandria passed through Qus on their way to Mecca. The age and beauty of its mosque are an indication of its prosperity. Detail of the decoration of the mosque and a ruined palace (below).



Nagada. Nagada made a valuable contribution to Egyptian prehistory. Excavations revealed a vast cemetery of small, rectangular tombs just below the surface of the sand. The deceased lay curled up on their side, surrounded by pots, schist offering basins and terracotta figurines. Since this discovery the last stages of prehistory in Upper Egypt (3800–3100) have been known as I, II and III.



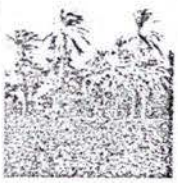
Qus. The two ruined gates of the Temple of Harwer (Horus the Elder) are all that remains of the ancient town of Apollinopolis Parva, the rival of Koptos in the Fifth Nome. The opening of an alternative route to the Red Sea during the 13th century meant that Qus replaced Qift as Upper Egypt's main commercial center trading with Africa, India, Arabia and the Yemen.



Temple of Luxor 402
Temple of Karnak 404
Valley of the Kings 412
Tomb of Tutankhamen 414
Temple of Sethos I 416
Deir el-Bahri 420
Necropolis of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna 424
Ramesseum 426
Medinet Habu 428
Deir el-Medina 430
Valley of the Queens 432
Qurna 432



Restitution of the Theban region to the Middle Kingdom.



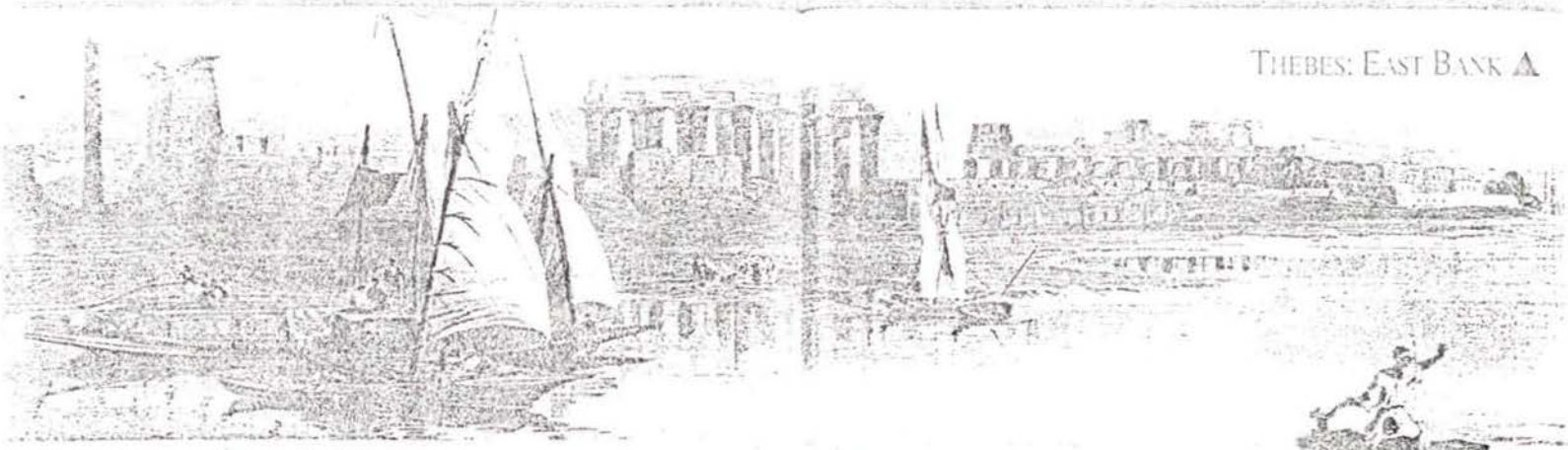
The celebrated Egyptian city of Thebes was described by Homer as "the city of a hundred gates" because so many of its temples had the monumental entrances favored by contemporary Greek architecture. Known to the Ancient Egyptians as Waset, Thebes was twice the Egyptian capital. It was from Thebes that Ahmose restored the unity of Egypt and inaugurated the New Kingdom, one of the most glorious periods in the history of the Two Lands. Even when it was not the capital, Thebes nonetheless played a key role in the history of Egypt. From the Middle Kingdom to the end of antiquity it was the sacred city of Amun-Re, the supreme god and source of Pharaonic legitimacy, and one of the main spiritual, intellectual and economic centers in Ancient Egypt.



City of Thebes. The ancient city of Thebes stood at the center of a vast cultivated region, bordered to the east and west by the arid peaks of the Arabian and Libyan mountains. It was divided by the Nile into two very distinct parts. The city proper lay on the east bank now occupied by the town of Luxor (from the Arabic El-U'qsur, meaning "the palaces"). It was built entirely of mudbrick and consisted of a series of districts, suburbs and villages organized around the temples of Karnak and Luxor and linked by a *dromos*, a straight, paved way bordered by sphinxes. On the west bank, the necropolis, funerary temples and embalming rooms, which were known during the Roman occupation as *memnonia*, were built into the cliff.



Foundations of houses, some of the few remains of the city of Thebes.



THE CORNICHE The Temple of Luxor is situated on the Corniche, whose promenade has just been entirely rebuilt by a Chinese company. It owes its somewhat irregular layout to the fact that it was built on the site of a quay which followed the line of the river. To the east of the Corniche a garden has recently been restored after years of neglect. It is surrounded by bazaars which were relocated here as part of a campaign to smarten up the town.

The first pylon: the temple entrance is flanked by two colossi of Ramesses II and one of the two original obelisks.

THEBES: EAST BANK

By the mid-19th century Thebes was a shadow of its former self. It was nothing but a small town ranged against the Temple of Amenhotep III, a pile of ruins amidst a pile of more ancient ruins, which was under threat from the Nile floods and the lime kilns. Luxor, a town of 11,000 inhabitants in 1900, now has a population of 150,000 and is governed by a special statute which grants it an administrative autonomy unique throughout Egypt. The center of the town revolves around the Temple of Luxor. About 2 miles to the north lies the ruined Temple of Karnak. Some sections of the ancient paved way bordered by sphinxes, which used to link the temple to Luxor, have been excavated.

"EGYPTOMANIA". Following the successive waves of "Egyptomania" that swept Paris and London, and even reached the United States, there was an understandable attempt in this Ancient Egyptian capital to bring official buildings into line with a traditionally "Egyptian" form of architecture, especially after the discovery of the Tomb of Tutankhamun. The National Bank of Egypt near the Winter Palace, the spa south of the *Novotel*, the police station and the 1960's railway station are just a few examples. During the period when Upper Egypt was visited by train, the neo-Pharaonic stations of Edfu ▲ *448* and Kom Ombo ▲ *452* were obligatory stops on the itinerary.



COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE. At the northern end of the temple site are two ocher-colored houses belonging to the descendants of one of Luxor's old Coptic families. These houses have probably survived because they were sequestered after the 1952 revolution. The center of Thebes still has a few Art Deco and Italianate apartment blocks near the station and, in the Sharī' el-Markaz, neo-Arabic-style wooden balconies. At the airport road intersection are three tropical-style, "Nubian" sandstone buildings with huge wooden verandahs: the villa of the head of Luxor Town Council, the "rest-house" of the Egyptian Ministry of Irrigation and the Anglican Coptic School.

TEMPLE OF LUXOR

This monumental complex was linked to Karnak by the long, straight *dromos* completed during the reign of Nectanebo I. The paved way, which is extremely well preserved in front of the temple, crossed the city and ended before a huge sandstone gate, of which only the eroded remains can be seen today. The gate opened onto a forecourt in the corner of which stands a small Roman chapel of burnt brick, dedicated to the god Serapis during the reign of Hadrian. The Temple of Luxor used to be called Ipet Resyt, which has often been translated as "Harem of the South". More broadly speaking it was a southern palace where the god resided like a king, attended by his servants, the priests. The temple was first excavated in 1881 by Gaston Maspero and the work was continued by his successors. Over a century later, during the excavation of the court of Amenhotep III (whose columns were in danger of collapsing), workmen found five carefully preserved royal statues from the New Kingdom buried in the sand about 3 feet below the level of the courtyard. Another twenty or so statues of pharaohs and divinities from different historical periods were discovered buried haphazardly beneath them. They are on display in the Luxor Museum, in a room shaped like a tomb.



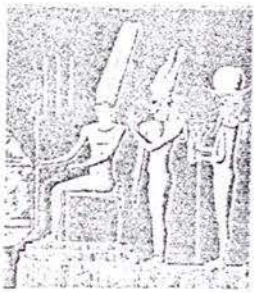
Hagag Mosque stands on a solid mass of earth in the corner of the first court.

ABU EL-HAGAG MOSQUE. The mosque, dedicated to Sheikh Yussef Abu el-Hagag, is one of the oldest in Luxor. The sheikh, who came from Baghdad in the 12th century, was descended from the Prophet via Hassan, son of the Prophet's daughter Fatima. The Fatimid-style mosque has survived several attempts to demolish it and release the site. It has a beautiful mudbrick minaret to which a second was added in the early 20th century by the khedive Abbas Helmi.

"MULED" OF ABU EL-HAGAG. The *muled* ● *126* of Abu el-Hagag is the most important annual feast in Luxor and one of the best known in Upper Egypt. It is held on the fourteenth of the month of Sha'ban, the presumed date of the sheikh's arrival in the town. The *muled* is characterized by a procession of *felucca* ● *122* carried by the Faithful, which is thought to be a ritual dating back to the ancient procession of the sacred barque of Amun from the Temple of Luxor to Karnak. For the Faithful the boats represent the one used by Abu el-Hagag on his journeys. Another special feature of the *muled* is a dish of minced meat, onions and crushed corn.



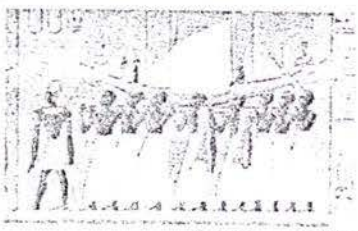
Although the site was cleared by Gaston Maspero ● *96* in 1881 and studied by his successors, the Temple of Luxor has not yet been completely excavated because the Abu el-



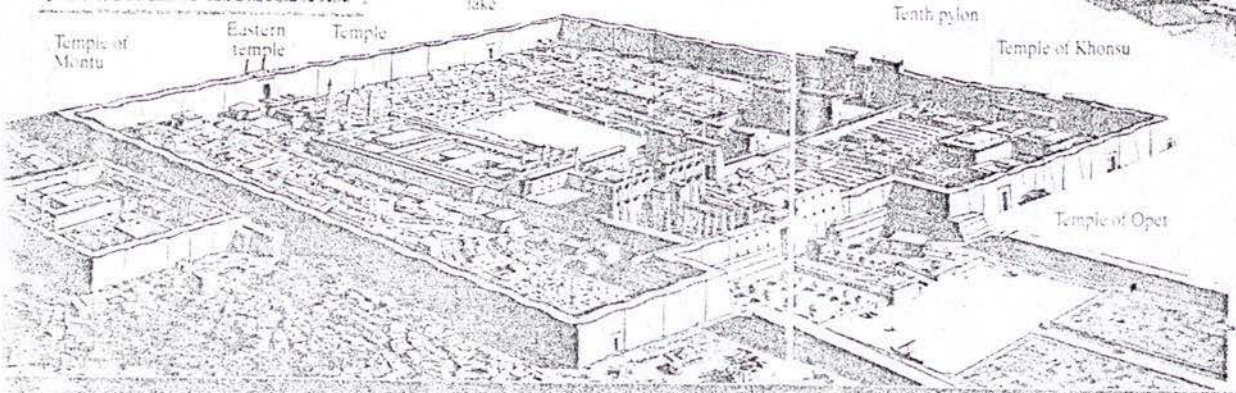
THEBAN TRIAD: AMUN, MUT AND KHONSU

The development of the domain of Amun-Re is linked to that of Thebes, the capital of Egypt from the 18th Dynasty. Each pharaoh recorded his devotion in stone. Karnak was first discovered in the 16th and studied from the 18th century, with the Donati excavations (1759) and Napoleon Bonaparte's Egypt Expedition (1798). The first Egyptologists appeared with Champollion (1828) while the excavation of the Temple of Amun, directed by Mariette (1858), marked the beginning of systematic research.

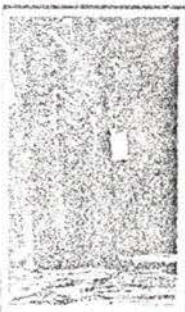
TEMPLE OF LUXOR
The Temple of Luxor, linked to Karnak by a *dromos* (1½ miles) built by Nectanebo, was where the Feast of Opet was celebrated. During the reign of Amenhotep III, the edifice consisted of a south sanctuary preceded by a peristyle court and a colonnade. The entrance pylon and first court were added by Ramesses II.



SACRED BARQUE OF AMUN
During the Beautiful Feast of the Valley and the Festival of Opet, Amun journeyed in his sacred barque carried by thirty priests. The vessel, in gilt and inlaid wood and decorated at the prow and stern with divine symbols, supported an openwork naos surmounted by a dais.



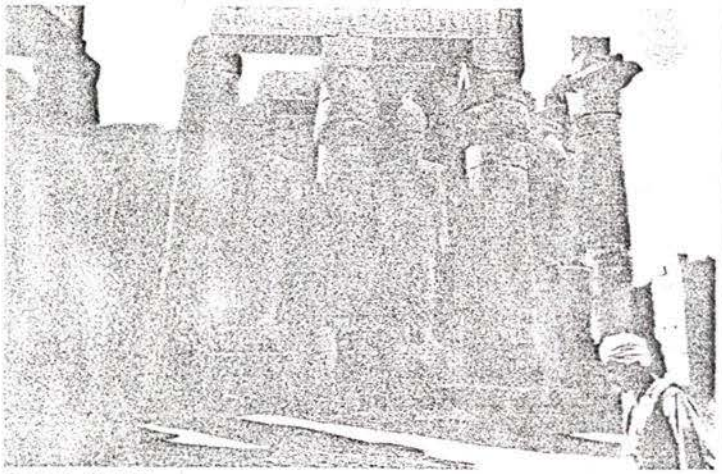
PLAN OF KARNAK
The largest enclosure in the center, with its nine gateways, was dedicated to Amun. The enclosure to the north contains the Temple of Montu, whose original layout is reminiscent of the Temple of Luxor. To the south, and linked to the Temple of Amun by a *dromos*, lies the temple of his wife Mut.



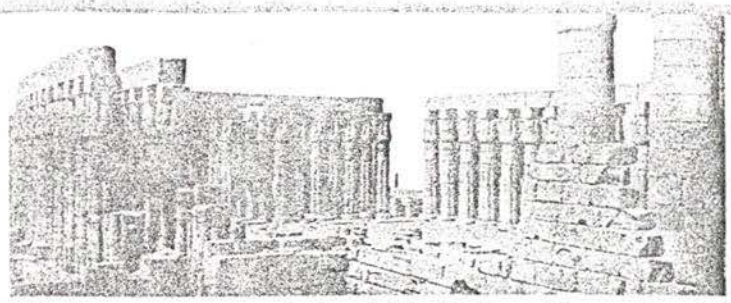
The chapel which served as a shrine for the sacred barques dates from the reign of Hatshepsut and was reused on this site by Ramesses II.

PYLON AND COURT OF RAMESSES II. The great pylon forming the façade of the temple was preceded by colossi and two obelisks, of which only one remains. The other was transported to Paris in the 19th century and now stands in the Place de la Concorde. On the walls are scenes of the Battle of Kadesh, fought by Ramesses II against the Hittites in Syria. A chapel whose façade has four fasciculate granite columns stands in the corner of the first court behind the pylon. It was a triple shrine for the sacred barques of Amun, Mut and Khonsu, which were brought in through a western side door in direct line with the way leading from the quay. In the northeastern corner of the court the massive structure of a Coptic church (whose walls are still standing) provides the foundations of the ABU EL-HAGAG MOSQUE: three very different places of worship whose proximity makes a striking historical summary. Although the south side of the court, where "closed" papyrus columns alternate with pink granite colossi, was open to the public, this was as far as they could go. From here they watched the arrival of processions which then moved on into the part of the temple built during the reign of Amenhotep III.

THE COLONNADE. Two huge, black granite colossi representing Ramesses II seated on his throne and wearing the double crown of Upper and Lower Egypt mark the entrance to the great colonnade whose interior decoration dates from the short reign of Tutankhamun ▲ *418*. The young king's face appears in the sculpted groups (usurped by Ramesses II) at the entrance to the hall. Although the side walls have been reduced to less than one third of their original height, their decoration is extremely interesting because it depicts the first of Thebes' two most important religious festivals, the OPET FEAST (the name of the month in which it was held, the second month of the season of the Nile floods). The king had to take part in the feast at least in the first year of his reign since it confirmed that he was indeed the son of Amun-Re. Originally, during the reign of Hatshepsut, six chapel-shrines served as a "way station" for the sacred barques during their overland journey from Karnak to Luxor.



COURT OF RAMESSES II On the south side of the court, alternate "closed" papyrus columns and pink granite colossi create a powerful effect. The statues on the left show Ramesses II walking majestically. At his side his queen, Nefertari, scarcely reaches to his knee.

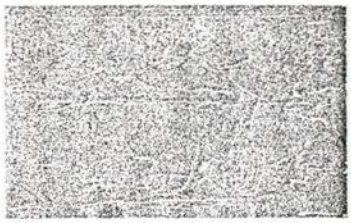


The great colonnade, seen from the Court of Amenhotep III.

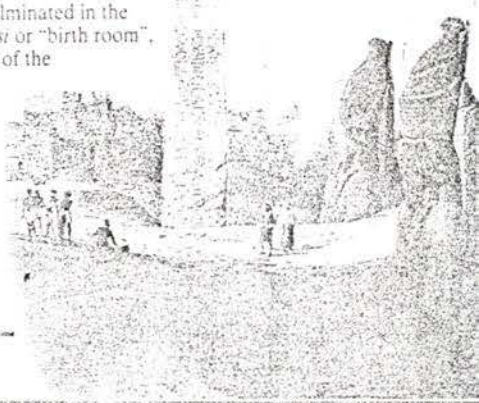
Only the return journey was made along the Nile. But from the reign of Amenhotep III, the festival was continually extended in size and duration (from eleven days to over three weeks) and both journeys were made by river. On the west wall of the columned court are scenes depicting the progress of the outward journey and, on the east wall, the return journey to Karnak. After it had passed through the colonnade, the procession of sacred barques entered the Court of Amenhotep III.

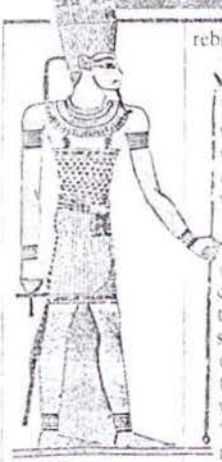
COURT OF AMENHOTEP III. The Court of Amenhotep III, with its fasciculate porticos, is virtually complete. The south side of the court opens onto a long hall, the pronaos of the temple. Two of the side chapels set in the back wall housed the barques of Mut and Khonsu, which ended their journey here. A central door led into an outer hall where there are signs of a large axial niche, remains of frescos and traces of the chapel (which venerated the insignia of the Roman legion that pitched camp around the temple in AD 301). The frescos represented a speech made by the emperor Diocletian at the time of his reorganization of the defense of Upper Egypt. In front of the niche, a canopy supported by four columns (of which only two remain) surmounted the altar. A door appears to have been recently pierced at the back of the niche to allow access into the temple. The door led into the offering hall whose decorations have retained some of their original colors. In the center of the next hall is a chapel built by Alexander the Great who is represented on its walls as a pharaoh, a status conferred on him after his victory by the priests of Amun of Siwa Oasis ▲ *256*. The sacred barque of Amun ended its journey here and was placed on a pedestal, while Amun of Karnak entered all the side chambers of the eastern part of the temple. Today visitors enter beneath the Roman arch added to the entrance by Amenhotep III.

"MAMISSI". The ceremonies culminated in the next room, the so-called *mamissi* or "birth room", with the symbolic annual union of the queen mother and Amun-Re. Ancient texts explain how the god charmed the queen with his scent. The aim of this union was to engender the newborn child and consequently the king himself and his *ka*, which was the expression of his specific function, his royalty. This ceremony symbolized the



THE PROCESSION OF SACRIFICIAL BULLOCKS In the southwest corner of the Court of Ramesses II are reliefs showing the procession of sacrificial bullocks brought to the temple by shaven-headed priests dressed in pleated linen robes (above). At the head of the procession the pharaoh's many sons are recognizable by their long sidelocks. The scene depicts their entry into the temple. The pylon is shown from the front while all its original statues are seen in profile.





Detail from a papyrus scroll representing one of the sacred gods of Karnak.

"Talattat" *Talattat* are the blocks of stone of equal size used for building during the reign of Akhenaten ● 42 and reused in



the construction of more recent edifices. The Luxor Museum has a wall (59 feet by 10 feet) of *talattat* blocks originally used in one of Akhenaten's temples at Thebes. The blocks were taken from the ninth pylon of the Temple of Karnak. The wall (detail right) was painstakingly reconstructed and shows Akhenaten and Nefertiti paying homage to Aten.



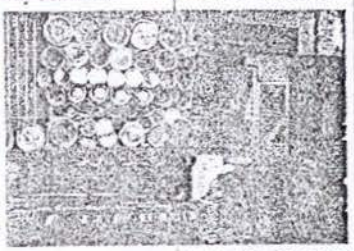
rebirth of the king's royal person and the confirmation of his power, since he was simultaneously re-engendered and recognized by Amun-Re. So when the pharaoh emerged from his temple, he appeared rejuvenated and invested with new strength and wisdom. Although the annual cycle would be repeated, he would remain the guarantor of order. The world would continue to function and Egypt would prosper.

Apartments of Amun of Luxor. The rooms at the far end of the temple constituted the apartments of Amun of Luxor. They were arranged around the great transverse colonnaded hall. In the axial sanctuary chamber traces of the platform which supported the divine naos can still be seen. It may seem strange to the modern mind that Amun could reside simultaneously at Karnak, Luxor and in other temples. Amun was in fact omnipresent throughout the world and was represented in these sanctuaries in a special "concentrated" form. He could only be apprehended in his multiple aspects, each one of which was not only a reflection but also a part of the Great Whole. The Great Whole could not be expressed directly: his inconceivable magnitude, his power and his nature could only be glimpsed through symbols.

Toward Karnak. The ancient route to the Temple of Karnak follows the Shari' el-Markaz, the main street, which runs parallel to the Corniche. This busy street is bordered by bazaars, restaurants and cafés with brightly colored signs. Near the Pharaonic-style police station is the oldest mosque in Luxor, the El-Mekashkesh Mosque, which contains the 10th-century remains of a saint who had come to Upper Egypt to spread the teaching of Islam. The mosque has been restored many times and is often visited by pilgrims because of the miraculous powers attributed to the saint who, according to tradition, was a monk before converting to Islam. Opposite the mosque is the Franciscan Church and its adjacent schools (girls on the right and boys on the left), founded in 1889 and run by Franciscan nuns. Beyond the courthouse and the Coptic church stands the great Coptic basilica.

Luxor Museum

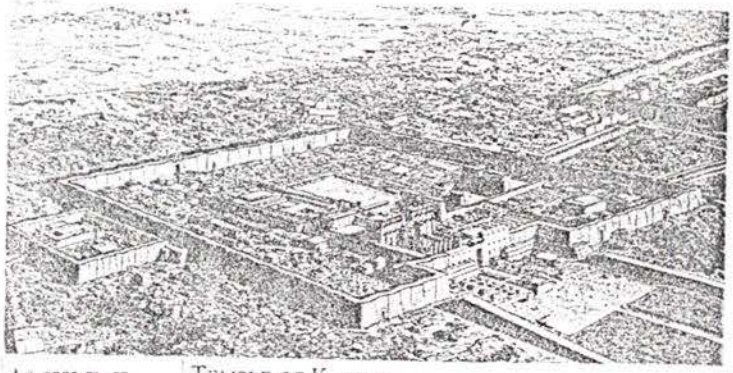
The Luxor Museum, which is situated midway between Karnak and Luxor on the Nile Corniche, is a useful complement to a visit to the two temple sites. In the great basement rooms, to the right of the entrance, are the remarkable discoveries made in 1989 in the great Court of Amenhotep III. These include an amazing quartzite reproduction of a life-size royal statue of Amenhotep III, which stands on the sled on which it was moved. Other fine statues include the goddesses Iwnit and Hathor and, on a single pedestal, a group depicting Horemheb kneeling before Amun. On the first floor is an extremely fine basalt statue of Thutmose III, found in the "Hiding Courtyard" at Karnak, followed by an alabaster group representing the god Sobek and Amenhotep III. Against the wall the great stele of King Kamose depicts the decisive Theban victory over the Hyksos, which heralded the birth of the New Kingdom. On the second floor are scenes reconstructed from the *talattat* blocks taken from the ninth pylon, and a fine head of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) also taken from the edifices built by this king to the east of the great Temple of Amun-Re. Near the ramp is a colossus of Senwosret I in the guise of Osiris, which is thought to have come from the façade of the Middle Kingdom temple at Karnak. At the intersection, the Shari' el-Markaz becomes the Shari' el-Karnak and, after crossing a small bridge, the remains of the recently excavated *dromos* that once linked the Temple of Luxor to the Temple of Karnak gradually come into view, lower down, in the middle of a village. From the ruined Temple of Mut, on the left-hand side, a second *dromos* leads to the gateway of the tenth pylon. It passes the great *pisé* enclosure wall, the gateway of Ptolemy III Euergetes and several houses which can be seen on the left before it finally arrives at the domed tomb of two saints (Sidi Ahmed and Sidi Ali). A road running past the Department of Antiquities leads to the main entrance of the temple.





"Anyone who has drunk of the waters of the Nile, seeks to return to the Nile, for no other water can slake their thirst. Anyone born in Thebes seeks to return to Thebes for no other city in the world can compare with Thebes. Anyone born in a street in Thebes seeks to return to that street; in cedarwood palaces, they long for a hut built of clay; amidst the scent of myrrh and perfumed unguents, they long for the smell of dried cow-dung burning on the fire and the aroma of fried fish . . . Would that I were a swallow or crane with powerful wings to fly in the face of my guards toward the land of Kemi. I would build my nest on the marbled columns of the Temple of Amun, amidst the dazzling, golden brilliance of the obelisks, the scent of incense and the aroma of fatted sacrificial victims."

Mika Waltari
The Egyptian



A SACRED PLACE
Only priests and those who served the god were allowed into the inner sanctum of the temple, which was a veritable "holy city" enclosed by a high mudbrick wall. The temple was not so much a place of worship for the ordinary rank and file as one where mysterious ceremonies involving precise and complex rituals were held, with a view to maintaining cosmic harmony. All that ordinary Thebans saw of the temple were its gates, its enclosure wall and the paved access ways. What could be more impressive than the permanent presence of this awesome, hidden power?

TEMPLE OF KARNAK

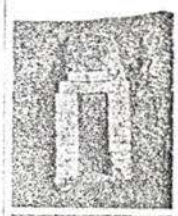
GREAT TEMPLE OF AMUN-RE. The ancient name of Karnak, Ipet Sut ("the most hallowed of places"), designates the "center of the world" where Amun, the creator of the universe, first created himself and then all things and living beings. He combined the power of the Theban demiurge (Amun) with that of the supreme sun-god of Heliopolis (Re). He was the guarantor of the continued survival of the universe that he had created and therefore of the kingdom ruled by his "beloved son" pharaoh, the only official priest. Mankind, by worshipping in the temple, could help preserve the cosmic harmony so essential to life, and encompassed by the Egyptian concept of *ma'at* ● *63* which signified truth, order and justice. All this was part of the pharaohs' duty. Their watchword was "Life, Stability and Strength".

ORGANIZATION OF THE TEMPLE. Amun resided in his temple and was served by a hierarchy of priests who not only performed the sacred rites but also carried out the intellectual and material tasks associated with the running of the most important sanctuary in Egypt. Among other things, this involved managing a vast agricultural domain. A total of eighty thousand people served the temple during the reign of Ramesses III and the High Priest of Amun was a prominent figure who attended all the important events in the life of the kingdom. For more than two thousand years, from the end of the second millennium BC, the pharaohs erected monuments at Karnak as an offering to their divine father Amun-Re to ensure his good offices. Each one modified, embellished and extended Karnak, often demolishing the edifices of his predecessors to dedicate a new building, while Amun-Re, present in the small gold statue which stood in a monolithic kiosk (naos) in the depths of the temple, shone in the darkness.

ARRIVING AT THE TEMPLE: THE QUAY. Karnak is reached along an access road built on the site of the canal that once linked the Temple of Amun to the Nile. All that remains of the dock (now filled in) is the quay and the central raised dais. In ancient times the quay and its approaches were planted with trees and groves. Below the quay to the right (south of the dais) and beyond a Roman dock in red brick are two parallel paved ramps bordered by stone parapets, built during the reign of Taharqa ● *44*, which once led down to the river bank. Beyond the ramps lies the CHAPEL OF ACHORIS, a columned structure with screenlike walls received the sacred barque of Amun on the occasion of its ceremonial voyages. The western *dromos* leading to the temple entrance is bordered by CRIOSPHINXES, creatures with the body of a lion (the epitome of vigilance and guardianship and the symbol of royalty) and the head of a ram (the symbolic animal of Amun and the embodiment of physical strength and procreant energy). Nestling between the feet of the god is a statue of his son Ramesses II. To the right, just before the entrance, are the remains of a Roman chapel dedicated to imperial worship.

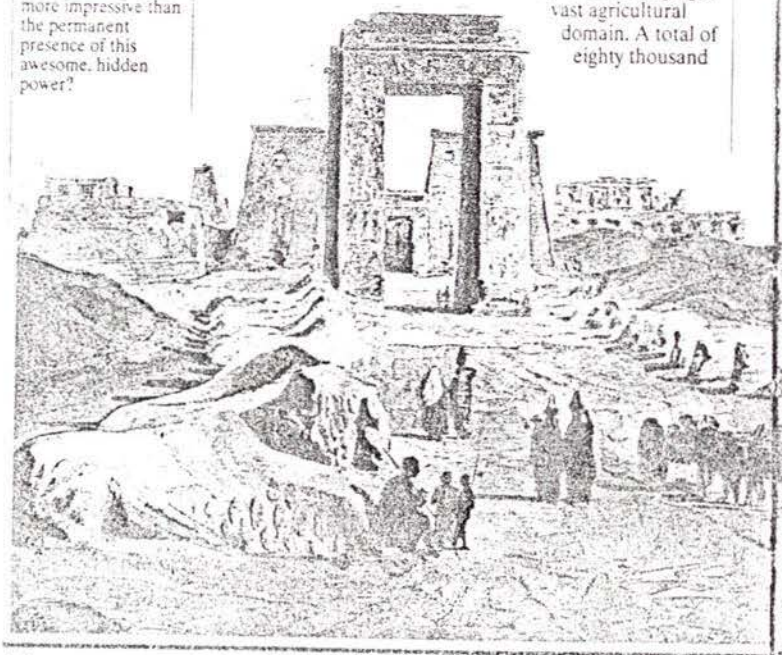
"I know that Karnak is the horizon above the earth, the glorious first ascension, the sacred eye of the Master of the Universe": an inscription by Hatshepsut ● *426* on one of the obelisks.

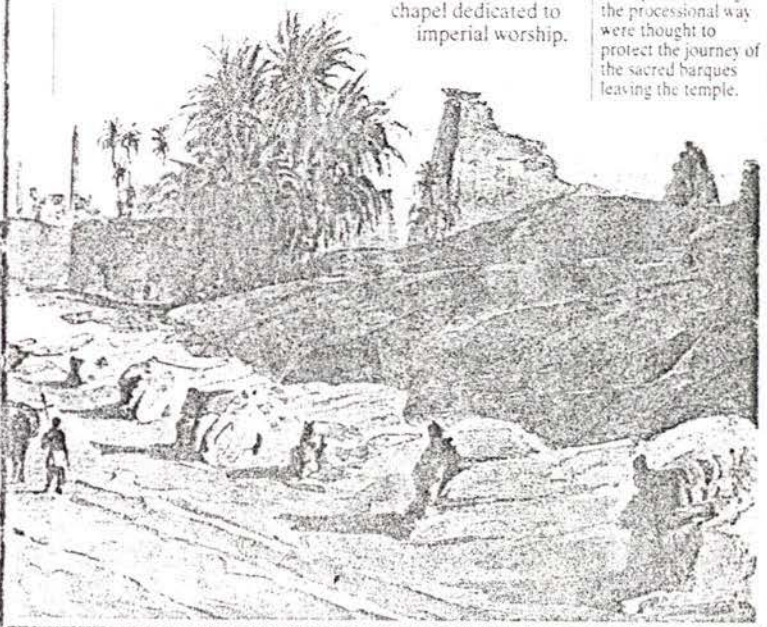
Details of the great enclosure wall.



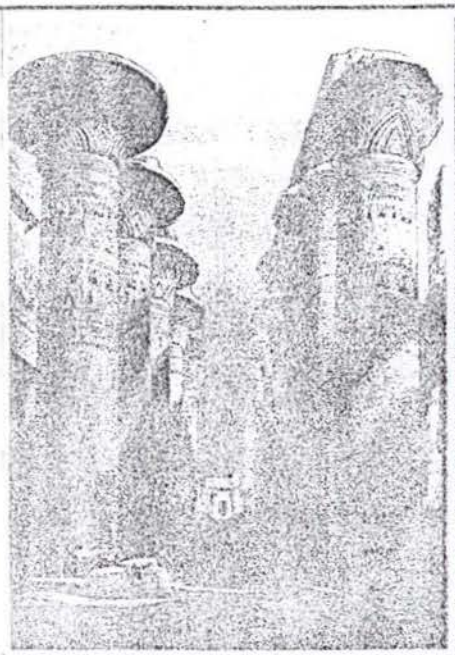


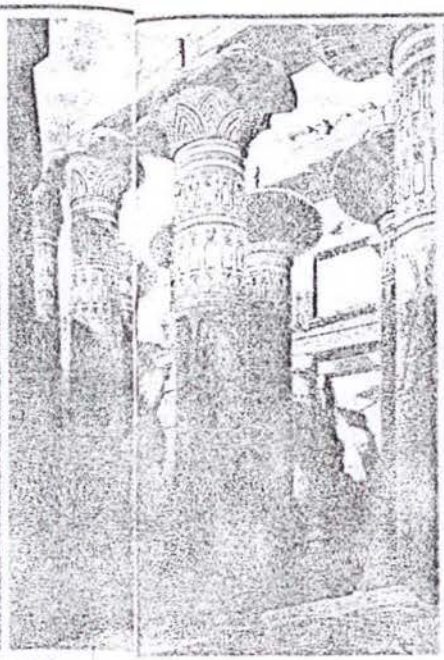
THE "DROMOS"
The sphinxes lining the processional way were thought to protect the journey of the sacred barques leaving the temple.

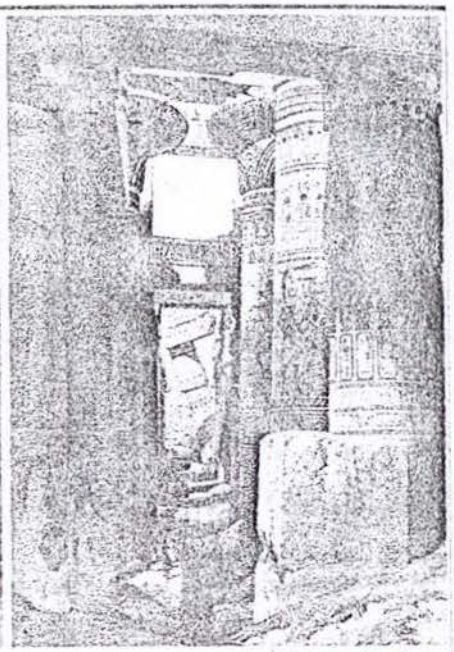




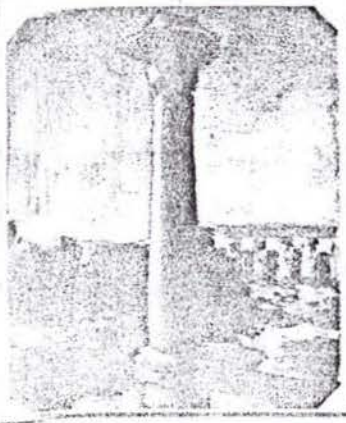
HYPOSTYLE HALL One can only imagine the splendor of the ancient scene when twelve papyrus columns supported the 69-foot-high ceiling. Light flooded in through the high clerestory windows, which opened onto the central nave, while the side aisles remained in the shadows. Here and there a fine pencil of light penetrated the few square openings pierced in the stone ceiling. This "thicket" of giant papyri symbolized the force of life which abounds near its creator. Their "stems" plunged into the water of the *nun* (underground water table), while their stems thrust upward and their corollas opened toward the sky of the blue-painted ceiling.







COLUMN OF TAHARQA The giant papyrus column is all that remains of the kiosk of Taharqa, which stood in the center of the temple's first court.



The steps of the chapel, front colonnade and walls are red brick. Inside are pedestals (once surmounted by statues) inscribed with the names of Roman emperors. The emperors, often represented in the guise of pharaohs on the bas-reliefs of later temples, were honored during the first three centuries AD. The great temple entrance has lost its granite lintel (weighing about 440 tons), whose fragments lie strewn on the ground. It is flanked by two sandstone piers attributed to Nectanebo I. The building was never completed, and the walls have a rough appearance. The pylon, the largest in Egypt, is thought to have once stood about 105 feet high. The piers of a pylon represented the mountain chains which bordered the fertile valley (the only inhabitable part of the region), the two horizons between which the sun (often carved on the cornice in the center of the entrance) ran its course. The pylon protected the temple entrance and gave access to the sacred area. Near the top of the gateway, to the right, an inscription commemorates the visit of the members of the Egypt Expedition ● *140* in 1799.

FIRST COURT. The KIOSK OF TAHARQA, in the middle of the first court, has one remaining column. At its center is the alabaster pedestal on which the sacred barque of Amun-Re rested. The sides of the court are bounded by colonnades from the Bubastite period. At the foot of these columns are traces of a row of rams, the remains of the eastern section of the *dromos* which was removed when the court and kiosk were built. Behind the pylon, to the right, a pile of mudbrick is all that remains of the ramp used to build the edifice. Above the ramp, in the stone façade, a Coptic niche and rows of horizontal holes into which floors were fitted are the legacy of one of the monasteries built inside the temple from the 7th century onward. On the left of the court is the edifice built by Sety II whose three chapels served as a way station for the sacred barques of Amun, Mut and Khonsu. The CENTRAL CHAPEL, preceded by two royal statues (only the pedestals have survived), accommodated the barque of Amun, which was decorated on the prow and stern with rams' heads. At the far end of the building are three niches which held royal devotional statues. On the right is the CHAPEL OF KHONSU, whose sacred barque was decorated at both ends with a falcon's head surmounted by a crescent moon and disk. On the left is the CHAPEL OF MUT, whose barque was decorated with the statue of a woman wearing the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. To the south of the court, a temple built by Ramesses III includes a pylon preceded by colossi, a court and covered halls. It has no shrine, but three rooms which accommodated the barques. At the far end of the great court are the damaged piers of the second pylon, built by Horemheb. The shattered statue of Pinedjem I has been reinstated in front of the entrance. The pylon's gateway,

An impression of strange strength and beauty is created by the superhuman proportions of the hypostyle hall which formed the antechamber (pronaos) of the temple. It was here that the sacred barques gathered before leaving the temple and where part of the coronation ceremonies were held, strikingly depicted in the bas-reliefs decorating the walls. The far wall of the right side aisle includes a scene showing Ramesses II receiving his "jubilees" (promising many years on the throne) from the hands of Amun-Re.





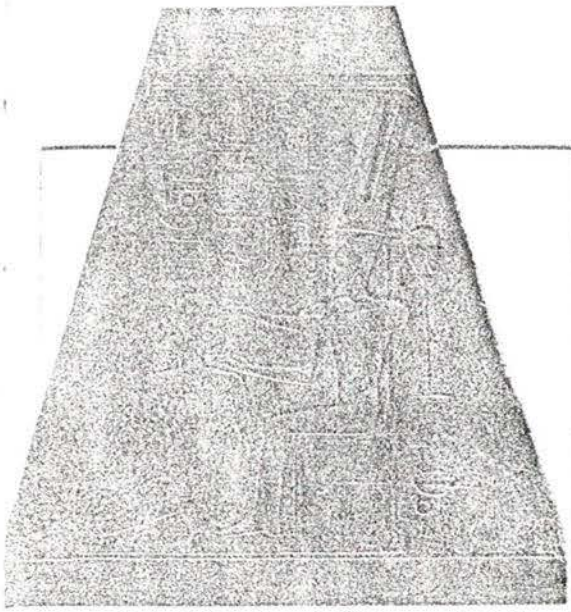
Detail of a fresco representing the procession of the sacred barque.

THUTMOSE III
A row of royal colossi representing Thutmose III stands along the west wall of the "Wadjyt Hall". The king is standing with his arms crossed and is wearing the tight-fitting costume of the *sed* or jubilee celebrations. This is a reminder of the original function of the hall, which was used for one of the stages of the coronation ceremony: the apposition of the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt.

rebuilt during the Ptolemaic period and flanked by two colossi of Ramesses II, leads into the great colonnaded hall begun by Sety I and completed by Ramesses II.

COURT OF THE OBELISKS; THE TEMPLE GATE. As you leave the great hypostyle hall through the gateway of the badly damaged third pylon, you come into a narrow court where several symmetrical obelisks once stood. This was the main point of intersection of the two main axes of the temple, just in front of the entrance to the covered halls. Only one of the obelisks erected by Thutmose I remains, alongside the granite plinths of two of its neighbors, erected by Thutmose III. The eastern gate of the temple, built by the architect Ineni, was preceded by a lightweight canopy supported by two gold-plated columns. As you pass through the gateway of the pylon, you are left to imagine the dark, covered halls. The first, "Wadjyt ('verdant' or 'flourishing') Hall", was refurbished several times. The colossi of Thutmose I are a reminder of its original function: the apposition of the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. It was then converted for a short time into a narrow court where Queen Hatshepsut erected two magnificent obelisks. Thutmose III, who wanted to overshadow his co-regent, restored the columned hall.

BARQUE SHRINE AND PALACE OF MA'AT. The next pylon leads into the inner part of the temple and the central chapel-shrine built of huge granite blocks whose final stage (which can still be seen today) dates from the time of Philip III Arrhidaeus, half-brother and successor of Alexander the Great. It is preceded by a vestibule comprising two pillars carved with the symbolic plants of the Two Lands: the papyrus (north) of Lower Egypt and the lotus (south) of Upper Egypt. The chapel has two sections: a vestibule to the west and then the shrine proper, whose central pedestal is extremely well preserved. It was here that the sacred barque of Amun-Re rested when the god was not traveling. The walls are decorated, on four registers, with scenes showing the king making offerings to Amun-Re represented in his two most common guises (as a king walking and as an ithyphallic, mummiform being). The reliefs on the south wall of the chapel have retained some of their colors. The sacred barque is represented as it appeared during the ceremonies of the "Beautiful Feast of the Valley", which took the divine procession to the west bank of the Nile. The chapel stands in the center of a monumental complex known as the "Palace of Ma'at", which included a suite of offering halls. In front of a stele (in the form of a false door) inlaid with lapis lazuli and

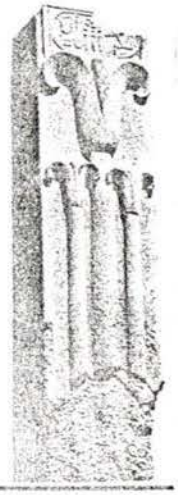




Colossal statue of Ramesses II.

OBELISKS OF HATSHEPSUT
The north obelisk erected by Hatshepsut is still standing while its companion lies on the ground (detail left). In the inscription on the base the queen prides herself on the fact that these monoliths were extracted in seven months. Their upper section and pinnacle were entirely plated in electrum, an alloy of gold and silver.

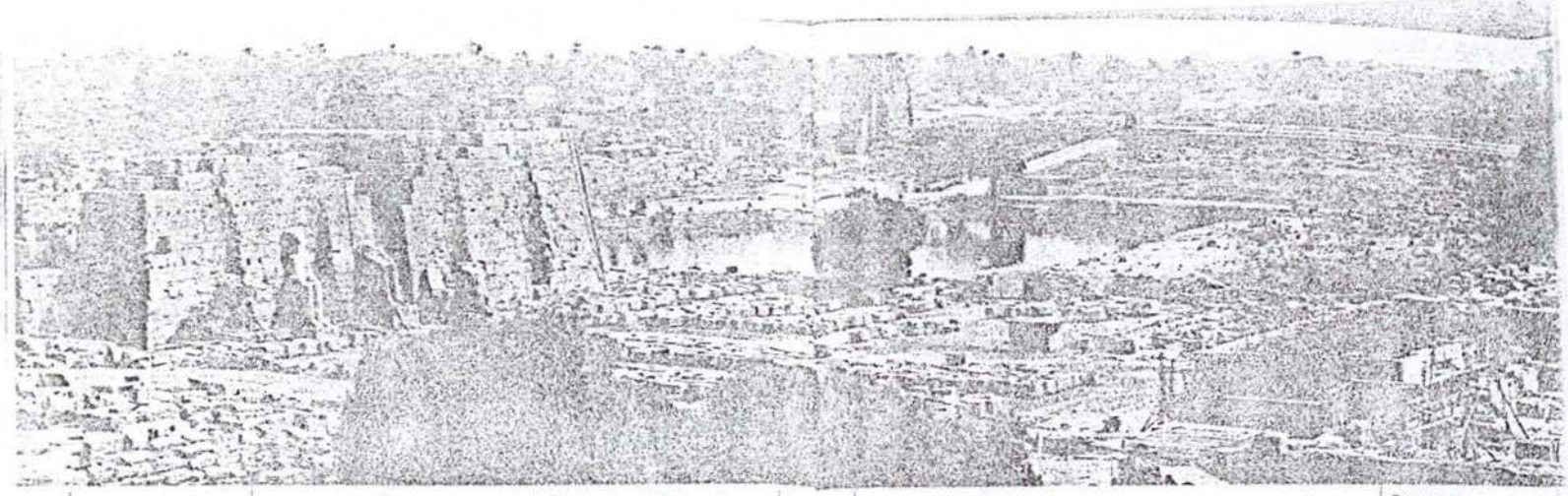
The two pillars decorated with the papyrus and the lotus, the symbolic plants of the Two Lands.



a huge offering table (neither of which have survived), the god received his "meal" in the form of an offering of food which was recovered and redistributed by the priests once he had "eaten his fill". As you make your way round the outside of the chapel, from south to north, you come across a door with black granite uprights which opens onto a series of small rooms. The first shows the ritual purification of Hatshepsut by Horus and Thoth. The water they pour over her is represented by a double line of "crosses of life". In the upper register is the "royal ascent" of the queen accompanied by the gods. The queen's effigy and name have been hacked out, another example of Thutmose III's campaign against the memory of the queen who, for more than twenty years, had overshadowed him by retaining the regency entrusted to her on the death of her husband, Thutmose II.

"MIDDLE KINGDOM COURT": THE LOST SANCTUARY. Below the chapel, to the east, is an area which today resembles a sort of court. It is in fact the site of a former sanctuary and its annexes, built at the time of the foundation of the temple during the Middle Kingdom. The monumental complex, constructed in fine limestone by Senwosret I, constituted the heart of the temple and was hallowed for as long as the latter was in use. It disappeared into the limestone kilns of the inhabitants who occupied the site when the temple was abandoned. A court must have preceded the series of gates (the "Gates of the Hereafter", of which only the granite thresholds have survived) while a huge alabaster platform is probably all that remains of the naos, the kiosk which contained the god's statue. The daily rites of worship were performed here. Every morning the duty priest broke the seal affixed the previous night and opened the wooden shutters of the naos. The officiating priest dressed and prepared the god, reciting the appropriate prayers and making offerings while he ministered to his "needs". He then withdrew, discreetly removing every trace of his footsteps on the thin layer of sand on the floor. Everything in this dark, silent place was steeped in an air of mystery and respect.





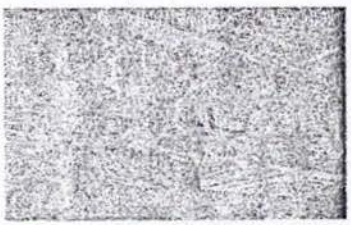
"Botanical garden" On the walls of one of the annexes of the Akhmenu is a catalogue of many strange species of flora and fauna from the lands of Syria. It is thought to represent a great offering of conquered lands, placed opposite the secret sanctuary. The sanctuary door is set in the center of the north wall.

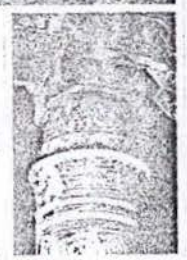
The "Akhmenu" and its annexes. Since the walls have been destroyed it is possible to pass directly into the annexes built by Thutmose III against the east wall of the temple. The most prominent feature of this monumental complex is the great columned hall, known during antiquity as the "Akhmenu" ("jewel of monuments"). It is better to approach it through the entrance to the complex, which lies to the south between two polygonal columns. One of the Osiride colossi that flanked the entrance is still standing. In the southern part of the complex a long corridor leads to a series of small side rooms. The first seven were used to preserve the ritual offerings of food and the last two were split-level magazines. A square hall decorated with images of the sacred barques of Amun, Mut and Khonsu leads back to the great hall. The great hall of the Akhmenu has retained its stone revetment and most of its original wall-paintings, particularly its azure ceiling scattered with gold stars. On the right of the entrance is the "Chamber of the Ancestors", a tiny chapel dedicated to the royal ancestors of Thutmose III, whose walls have been restored using casts made from the original blocks in the Louvre Museum in Paris. The room is basilican in design and comprises a raised, central "nave" illuminated by high windows and two side aisles whose roof is supported by columns in the form of ancient jubilee tent-pegs, a reference to the function of the monumental complex. The mysterious ceremonies associated with the jubilee celebrations were in fact performed here, beginning in the southern suite of rooms, which could be reached through the side door opening onto a well-preserved, eight-columned hall. This was the chthonian part of the complex associated with the journey through the Underworld in which the god Sokar, the main participant in the nocturnal regeneration of the sun, interceded. The ceremonies took place inside the great hall of the Akhmenu where the sacred barques were placed. The fifteen bays of the great hall are noticeably unequal. The central bay is much wider than the others and the texts are arranged symmetrically on the architraves along its axis, which is aligned with the great solar axis of the temple. An axial door to the east opens onto a series of three rooms ending in a narrow door whose raised threshold once stood above an alabaster pedestal. This discrete side entrance is like the doorway to a hidden crypt and leads into a vestibule with four well-preserved, fasciculate columns whose walls are decorated with flora and fauna: the "botanical garden" of Karnak. It is situated opposite the secret sanctuary which consisted of a long hall with niched side walls (most of the niches have since been destroyed). By contrast, the immense red quartzite pedestal which supported the naos at the far end of the hall is well preserved. In front of it stands a huge, granite offering table. To the north of the Akhmenu are three parallel chapels. A staircase on the right leads to the "upper room", which is open to the sky and where a central altar is aligned with the four points of the compass. The room symbolized the victory of the sun, which, having journeyed through the Underworld, rose in the east in the form of the scarab beetle Khepri, pushing the shining disk between its front feet. The union with the solar disk, one of the closing ceremonies of the jubilee, was performed here and was repeated on the occasion of each new annual cycle. During this ceremony the divine and royal statues were exposed to the rays of the rising sun so that they assimilated its vital energy.

Eastern buildings. A wooden gallery runs across the rear of the temple toward the east. Along the axis the nearby ruins of the small Temple of the Hearing Ear can be found, so called in ancient times because it was here that the Thebans were able to present their prayers to Amun. The single, axial obelisk which used to stand on the site of the sanctuary is now in Rome. It is one of the largest of its kind.

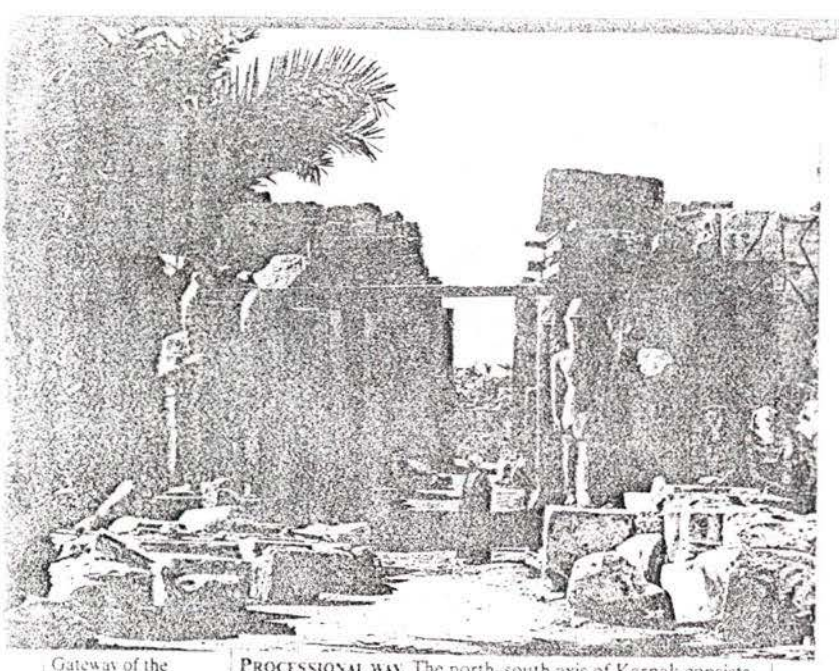
Sacred lake. A tour of the temple takes you, a little further south, to the vast stretch of water known as the sacred lake. To the east, below the stands used for the Sound and Light Show, is the area where the temple priests lived. By following the edge of the lake you come to the remains of a temple built by Taharqa. At one corner of this crumbling edifice with its misshapen walls is the huge granite scarab beetle representing the god Khepri, whose pedestal is engraved with the name of Amenhotep III.

Sacred lake Water from the sacred lake, thought to be a resurgence of the *nun* (primordial water), was used for ablution, purification and the preparation of offerings in the rooms on the far side of the lake. The lake was also the scene of the "sacred voyages" made by statues of the gods in small boats.





Akhmenu The ceiling of the Festival Court of Thutmose III is supported by two rows of ten columns and a row of thirty-two pillars. It has retained much of its polychrome decoration.



Gateway of the seventh pylon, flanked by statues of Thutmose III.

Processional way. The north–south axis of Karnak consists mainly of a series of pylons and courts. The entrance is through the side gate of the first court, the so-called "Hiding Courtyard", which was the scene of an amazing discovery in the early 20th century of thousands of statues and bronzes. These had been removed from the inner rooms of the temple during the Ptolemaic period to release space and facilitate the restoration of the walls, and hidden beneath the pavement of the court where they remained for thousands of years. The finest of the statues can be seen in the Luxor ▲ *403* and Cairo ▲ *276* museums. To the south lies the seventh pylon, built by Thutmose III. Two obelisks used to stand in front of the south façade until the western obelisk was removed in AD 330 on the orders of Constantine. Today it stands in Istanbul, not far from the Church of St Sophia, on the site of the Constantinople Hippodrome where it was relocated. A little further on stand the eighth and ninth pylons, built by Hatshepsut and Horemheb respectively. Inside the ninth pylon tens of thousands of *talatat* were discovered, which had come from edifices built to the east of the temple by Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) at the beginning of his reign. About one hundred of these blocks have been reassembled and are on display on the second floor of the Luxor Museum. On the east side of the next court is a jubilee structure, built by Amenhotep II, comprising a porticoed façade and an axial ramp. Finally the tenth pylon, begun by Amenhotep III and completed by Horemheb, marks the southern boundary of the site. Huge statues of Amenhotep III once stood in front of it.

Statue of the god Amun in the four-columned hall in the Temple of Khonsu.



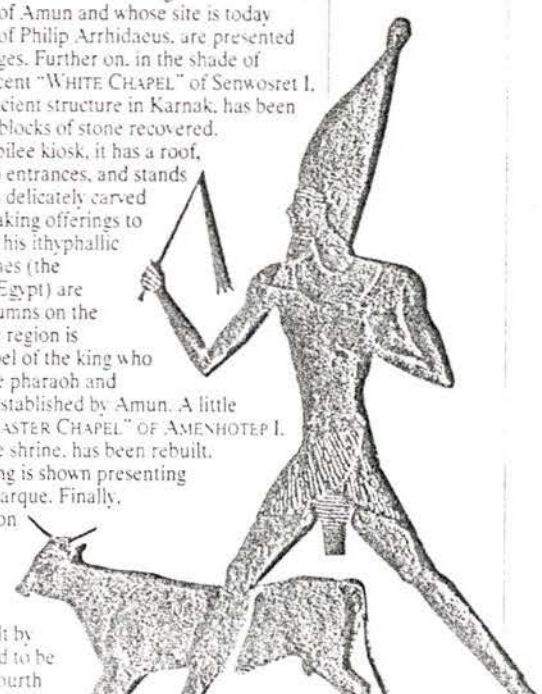
Temple of Khonsu. The Temple of Khonsu, built by Ramesses III, is certainly the most complete and the most revealing of Karnak's architectural structures. Its main entrance was through the great gateway built by Ptolemy III, set in the southern section of the enclosure wall. The edifice is virtually intact. Engraved on the cornice is a solar disk flanked by two protective cobras facing each of the two horizons. It is framed by two great, extended wings which symbolize its heavenly flight. The entrance to the court of the temple is through the gateway of the pylon, which is on the whole well preserved. Beyond the covered hypostyle hall are the remains of a central pedestal for the barque of Khonsu and, beyond that, a four-columned hall with a central altar. The shrine is situated right at the back of the temple. The Temple of Khonsu offers visitors the opportunity to see the most secret part of the temple, no longer possible in the Temple of Amun. It is also a very good example of the general layout of an Egyptian temple, in which the rooms become progressively smaller from the entrance to the inner sanctum: the shrine containing the god's statue.

Temple of Opet. The remains of the Temple of Opet lie to the west and at right angles to the Temple of Khonsu. The later section, built during the Ptolemaic period, is the best preserved. Its external decoration was never completed. In the temple forecourt is a statue of the lioness Sekhmet and nearby an altar and a pool. This layout was linked to the healing powers of the goddess whose help was solicited by those who were sick and infirm through their prayers and magic.

Open-Air Museum. A visit to Karnak should be complemented by a walk to the Open-Air Museum, which can be reached before leaving the site through the north gate of the first court of the Temple of Amun. It has a collection of monuments mainly discovered during excavations carried out inside the third pylon. First of all, blocks from the "Red Chapel" of Hatshepsut, a beautiful building which served as a shrine for the barque of Amun and whose site is today occupied by the chapel of Philip Arrhidaeus, are presented course by course on ledges. Further on, in the shade of some trees, the magnificent "White Chapel" of Senwosret I, the most elegant and ancient structure in Karnak, has been reconstructed from the blocks of stone recovered. Built in the style of a jubilee kiosk, it has a roof, openwork sides and two entrances, and stands on a raised platform. Its delicately carved scenes show the king making offerings to Amun-Re and Amun in his ithyphallic form. The different nomes (the administrative areas of Egypt) are listed in the form of columns on the parapet. Thus the entire region is represented on the chapel of the king who took possession of it, the pharaoh and guarantor of the order established by Amun. A little further north the "Alabaster Chapel" of Amenhotep I, the oldest known barque shrine, has been rebuilt. Inside the shrine, the king is shown presenting offerings to the sacred barque. Finally, beyond the reconstruction of the summit of a small limestone pylon constructed by Thutmose II is that of the "Festival Court" built by Thutmose IV, which used to be situated in front of the fourth pylon on the site of the eastern side of the hypostyle hall.

Detail of a fresco in the Temple of Khonsu.

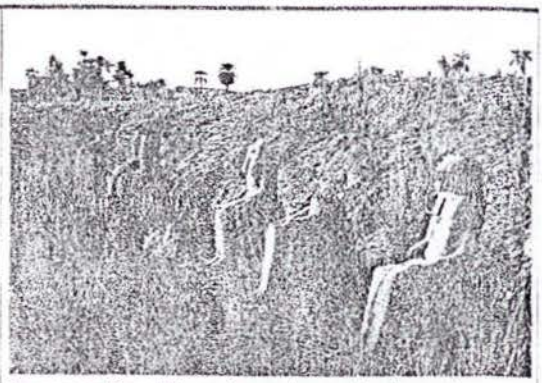
The "Red Chapel". The shrine of the sacred barque was built by Hatshepsut entirely in red quartzite, apart from its black granite foundations and doors. The queen is depicted throughout as a pharaoh (below) and is either alone or precedes Thutmose III, intentionally stressing her ascendancy over her co-regent.



TEMPLE OF MUT
In the courts of the Temple of Mut rows of strange statues of Sekhmet stand among clumps of alfa-grass. There must have been at least one for each day of the year.

"Walking into Karnak was like walking into one of Piranesi's Prisons, solidified suddenly into stone, and grown to natural, nay to heroic size . . . . Beyond the aisle, a vast space littered with fallen masonry lay open to the sky. Cavernous openings, porticos, colonnades, blocks of masonry; obelisks, statues of Pharaohs, some upright, some prone; and beyond them, beyond this magnificent desolation, shrilled the thin piping of the frogs . . . It crushed the mind, since it was not the human mind that had conceived it as it now appeared, but such inhuman factors as time upon earth."

Vita Sackville-West



TEMPLE OF PTAH. The sunken path opposite the north entrance of the great hypostyle hall runs past two chapels dedicated to the "Divine Votaresses of Amun" and leads to the Temple of Ptah, the great god of Memphis who also had a shrine in Thebes. The statue of Sekhmet (his wife), found on the site, has been reinstated in one of the rooms at the back of the temple. The light filters down onto the statue of the powerful woman who was once no stranger to the innermost chambers of the great Temple of Amun-Re.

TEMPLE OF MONTU. The Temple of Montu, the warrior god of Thebes, lies beyond the gate of the great precinct situated opposite the entrance to the Temple of Ptah. The edifice, built by Amenhotep III, is fairly extensively ruined and is not open to the public. It is possible, however, to admire the huge Ptolemaic gateway of the precinct, opposite which there was once a *dromos* and a quay.

TEMPLE OF MUT. South of the tenth pylon and less than 450 yards from the Precinct of Amun is the Temple of Mut, the wife of the great god of Thebes. The now-ruined temple, built by Amenhotep III, has a special romantic charm. On the sides of a ruined colonnade are reliefs representing the god Bes, a bearded and beneficent dwarf and, in the court, rows of strange statues of Sekhmet. The temple is surrounded on three sides by the waters of the crescent-shaped sacred lake (Asheru), which shine and sparkle through clumps of reeds. Beyond the lake is the TEMPLE OF RAMESSES III, preceded by "walking" royal colossi. To the left of the great entrance, in the northeast corner of the precinct, another badly ruined temple, dating from the reign of Amenhotep III and dedicated to Amun-Re, still has some of its painted scenes. Outside the Precinct of Mut is the recently excavated *dromos* which once linked the temple entrance to the great paved way (1½ miles long) which led to Luxor.

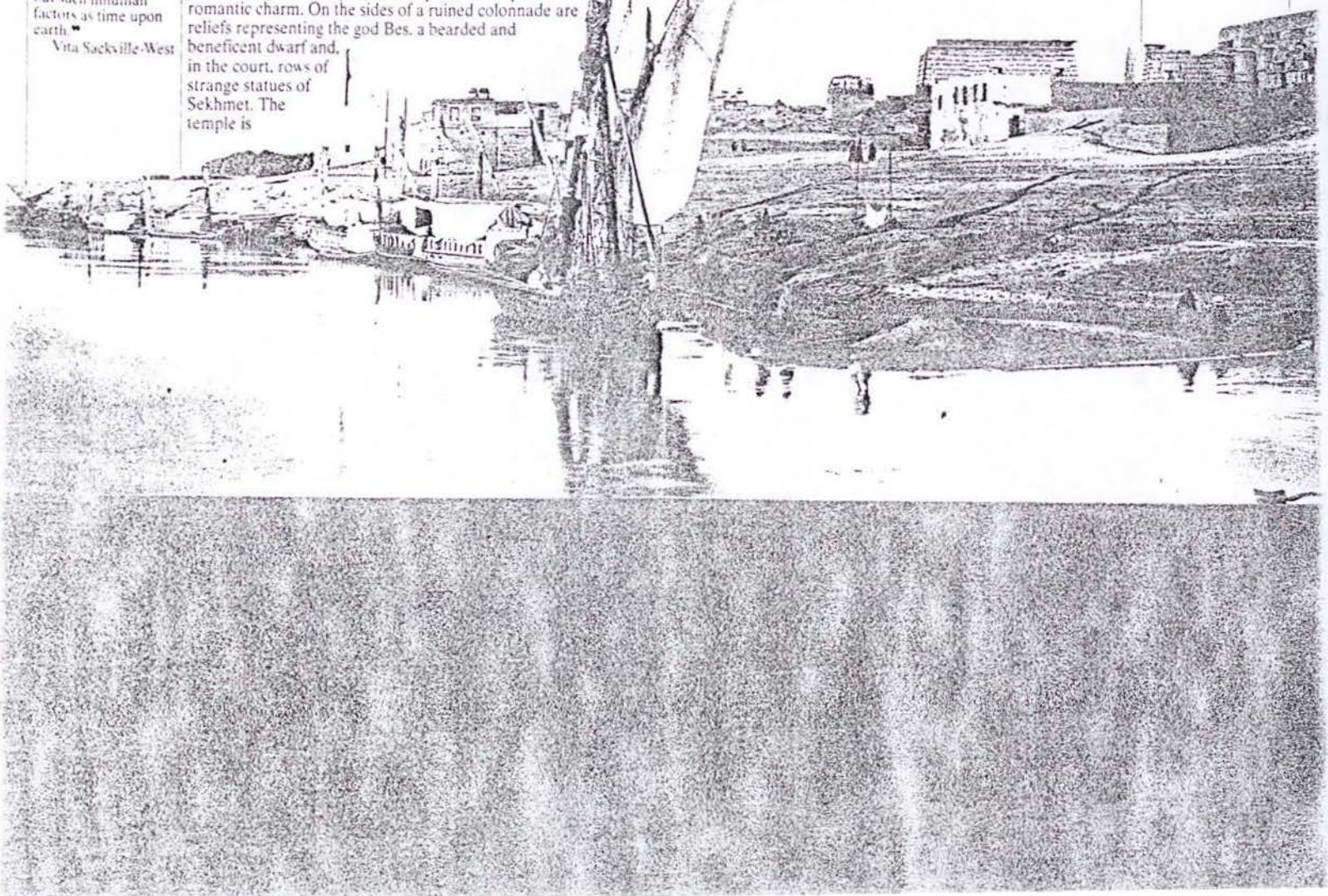
MODERN BUILDINGS. On the left as you leave the temple is the Franco-Egyptian Center which, since 1967, has been responsible for the conservation, study and restoration of the temples. The traditional, Nubian-style residence of the permanent CNRS (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique) mission which constitutes the French team stands lower down on the shores of the Nile. The Epigraphic Survey of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, generally known as Chicago House, has a research library renowned for its photographic collection, which includes an important 19th-century section. Chicago House, founded in 1924 by James Breasted and based in Luxor, gathers information on the sites of Upper Egypt using photogrammetric techniques.



THE GODDESS SEKHMET
Inside the right-hand (south) chapel of the Temple of Ptah stands a black granite statue of Sekhmet, the wife of Ptah. The lion goddess (whose name means "powerful") sometimes unleashed her anger against mortals, especially on the last five days of the year, and was only appeased by long prayers recited by priests. She also possessed healing powers.

CROSSING THE RIVER

All the other important remains in Thebes are found on the opposite bank, which is reached, as in ancient times, by boat. The crossing, which is today one of the main attractions of a visit to Luxor, once had symbolic significance. For the Ancient Egyptians, the westward crossing was not so much a journey to the shores of the Dead (an unthinking, modern interpretation) but more the voyage to the land of Life.

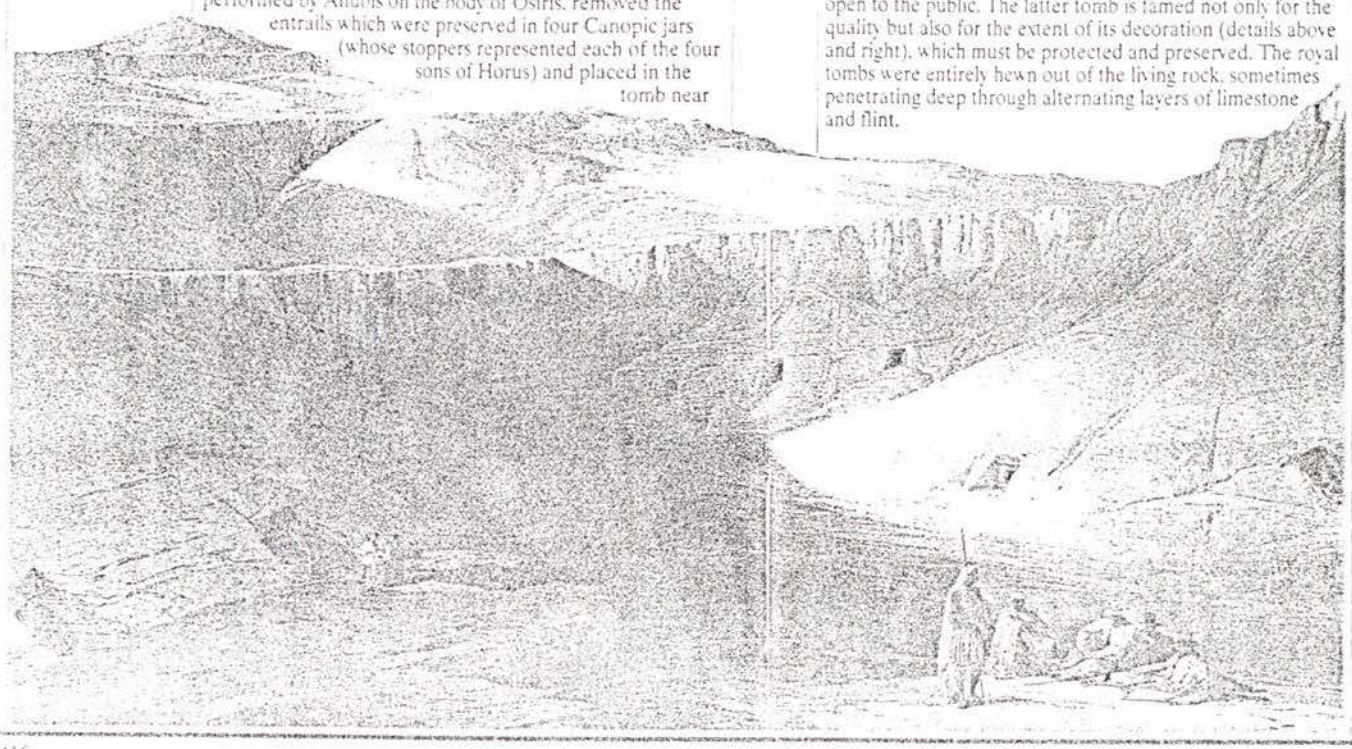


"Every sarcophagus is broken and the bones of the kings of Egypt are scattered. In one I picked up a skull. . . . Among the paintings on the walls was represented a heap of hands severed from the arms, showing that the hero of the tomb had played the tyrant during his brief hour on earth. I dashed the skull against a stone, broke it in fragments, and pocketed a piece as a memorial of a king."
John Lloyd Stephens, 1837

THEBES: WEST BANK

For the Ancient Egyptians the west was not the direction of finality and death but rather the way to the "kingdom of the West" where the deceased could be admitted by Osiris to the Day of Judgment. It was also the direction taken by the setting sun before it journeyed through the Underworld. When it disappeared into the shadows the heavenly body was gradually regenerated and reappeared each morning as a new being. These two aspects of rebirth (Osirian and solar) are represented in all the funerary monuments, tombs and temples on the west bank of Thebes. The Egyptians who cultivated this fertile valley believed that the kingdom of Osiris resembled this earthly kingdom of fields, canals and agriculture. It was a sort of familiar, earthly paradise where the deceased could enjoy a happy life for eternity. They could only recover their completeness, temporarily lost at the moment of death, by gathering together all the various elements which made up their identity during their earthly life: their body, their *ka* (vital energy which was both preserving and creative), their *ba* (spiritual element), their *ankh* (immortality), their shadow and their name.

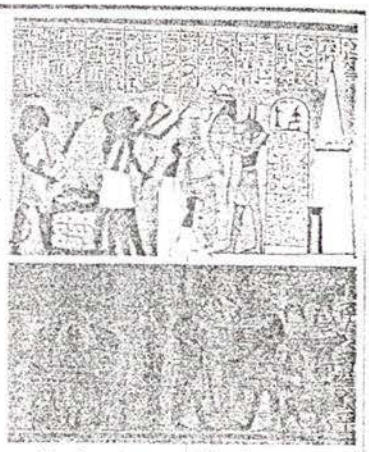
FUNERARY RITES. The body, in particular, was essential to the life that mummification aimed to preserve. The mortal remains, brought by boat from the east bank, were prepared more or less carefully, depending on the family's financial resources. Specialist priests, imitating the rites originally performed by Anubis on the body of Osiris, removed the entrails which were preserved in four Canopic jars (whose stoppers represented each of the four sons of Horus) and placed in the tomb near the sarcophagus. Once the body was cleaned, dried out with natron and coated with ointments, it was tightly bound in strips of cloth. There were many embalming rooms between the Nile and the Theban necropolis.



VALLEY OF THE KINGS

The royal necropolis, known in ancient times as "the Place of Truth", is a logical place to start a visit to the west bank. None of the tombs in the western valley is open to the public and only the present Valley of the Kings enables visitors to discover the very singular world of the 18th- and 19th-Dynasty pharaohs. The mountain of Thebes at the far end of the valley in fact forms a natural pyramid both in terms of its shape and its function since it contains sixty or so royal tombs.

THE GREAT ROYAL HYPOGEA. Today it is only possible to visit about a dozen of the great royal tombs. They are opened in turn from year to year to limit the amount of damage caused by the vast numbers of visitors and enable restoration work to be carried out. The tomb of Ramesses II (a large part of which has collapsed) and that of his father, Sety I, are not open to the public. The latter tomb is famed not only for the quality but also for the extent of its decoration (details above and right), which must be protected and preserved. The royal tombs were entirely hewn out of the living rock, sometimes penetrating deep through alternating layers of limestone and flint.



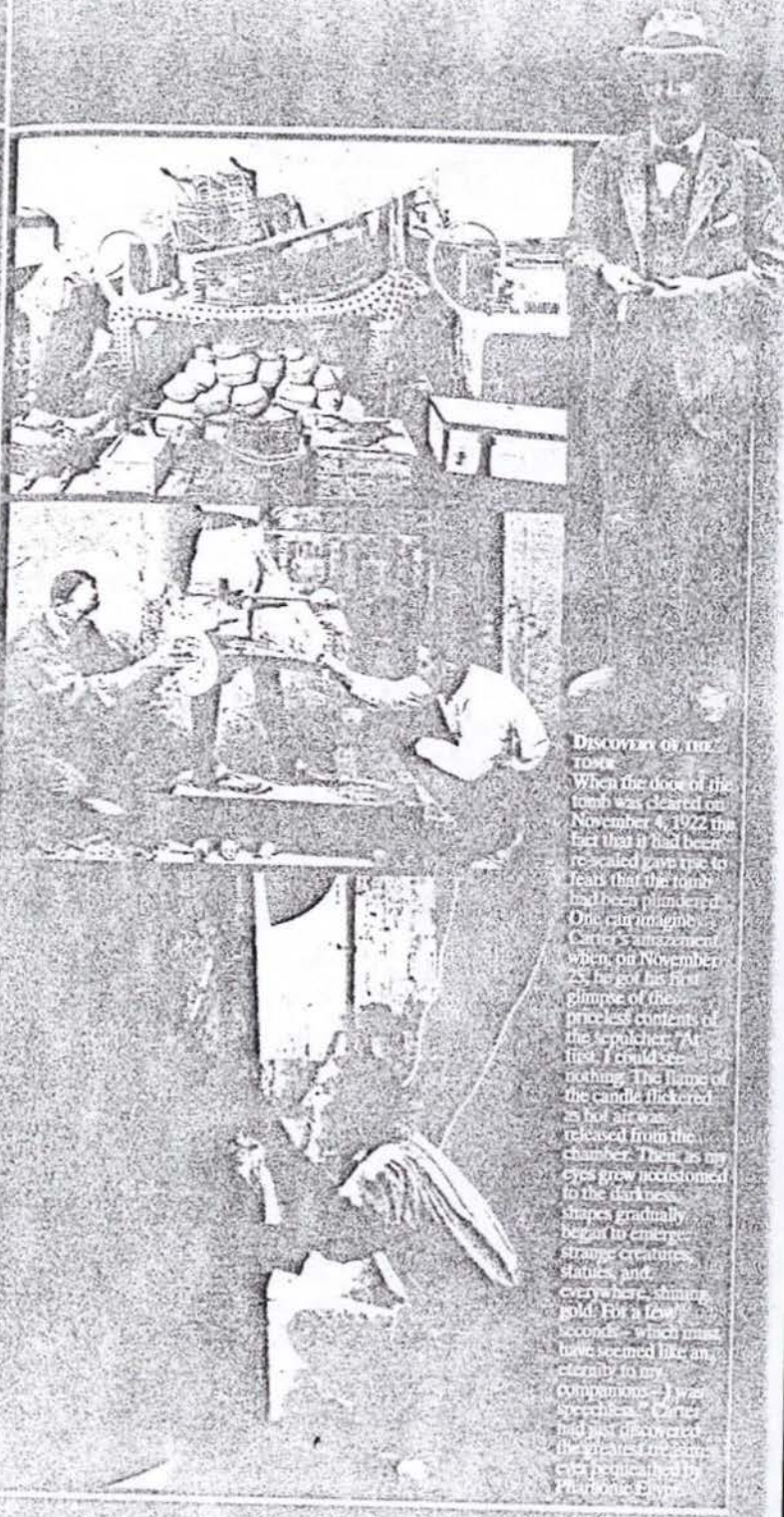
"THE BOOK OF THE DEAD" Sacred texts containing the formulae to be pronounced in the presence of the guardians of the gates of the Twelve Hours of the night were placed in the tombs. These formulae were found in the chapters of what is known today as *The Book of the Dead* but which the Egyptians called *The Book of the Coming Forth by Day*.



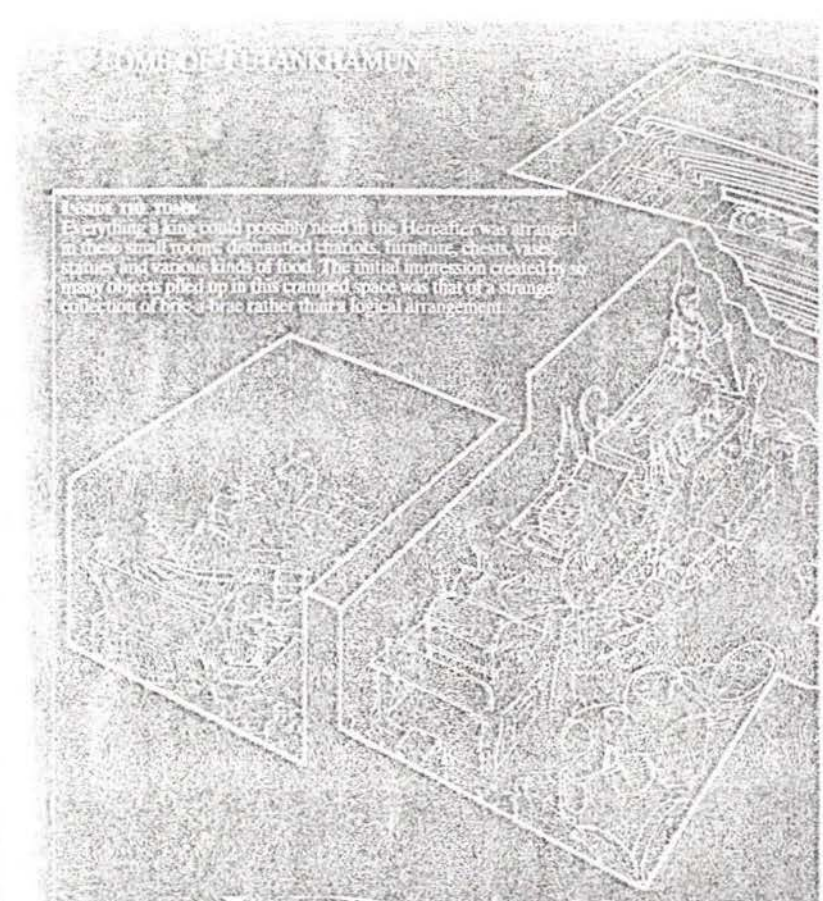
Although one of the smallest in the necropolis, the Tomb of Tutankhamun is undoubtedly the most famous of the Egyptian tombs as a result of the extraordinary discoveries made there in the early 20th century. It had been protected by a particular set of circumstances. An attempt to plunder it during antiquity had proved unsuccessful. The thieves must have been surprised and the tomb closed up again. The debris from the later excavation of the nearby hypogeum of Ramesses VI covered and disguised the entrance to such an extent that the tomb remained exceptionally well concealed from would-be plunderers for centuries. In 1922 Howard Carter directed excavations on the site under the sponsorship of Lord Carnarvon. He was about to abandon his search when a small flight of steps suddenly appeared.



Howard Carter
(1874–1939)
Carter and his assistants
[illegible]
Egypt



Discovery of the tomb
When the door of the tomb was cleared on November 4, 1922, the fact that it had been re-sealed gave rise to fears that the tomb had been plundered. One can imagine Carter's amazement when, on November 25, he got his first glimpse of the priceless contents of the sepulchre. 'At first I could see nothing. The flame of the candle flickered as hot air was released from the chamber. Then, as my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, shapes gradually began to emerge – strange creatures, statues, and everywhere shining gold. But it was [illegible] seconds – which must have seemed like an eternity to my companions – [illegible] I was speechless. Carter had just discovered the [illegible] Egypt.

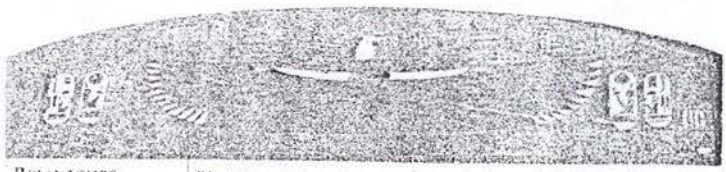


Inside the Antechamber
Everything a king could possibly need in the Hereafter was arranged in these small rooms: dismantled chariots, furniture, chests, vases, statues and various kinds of food. The initial impression created by so many objects piled up in this cramped space was that of a strange collection of bric-a-brac rather than a logical arrangement.



THE FUNERAL MASK
On the forehead were carved the vulture [of Upper Egypt] and the cobra [Lower Egypt], the protective symbols of the goddesses Nekhbet and Wadjet. The beard, which was originally attached by an ear, was decorated with the royal cartouches. Between the shoulders there is a three-lined hieroglyphic text giving the titles of the king.



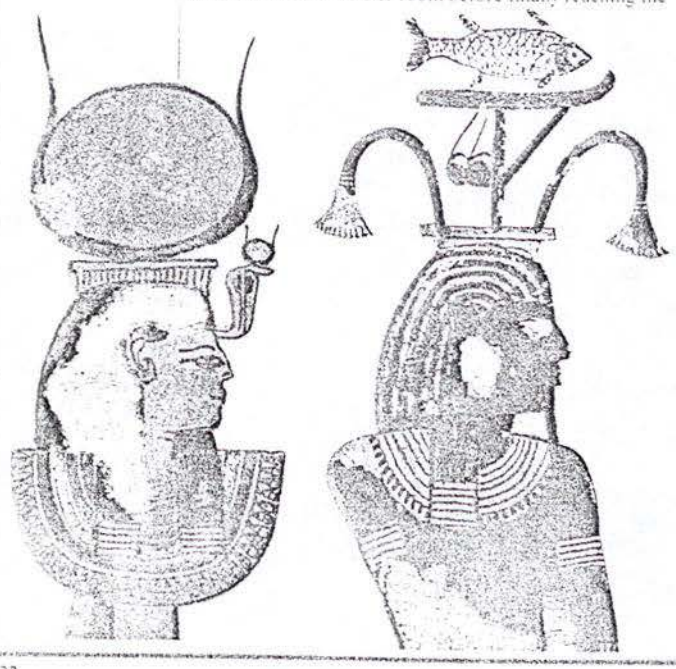


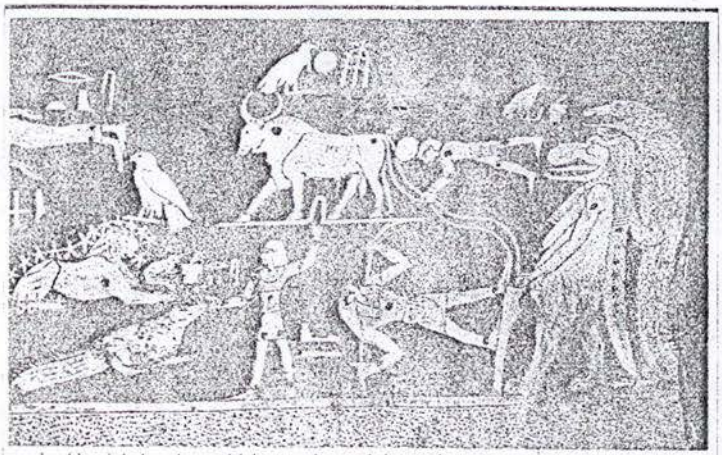
ROYAL TOMBS
In this dark, enclosed world the themes represented on the walls were usually allusions to different chapters of the sacred books: the *Book of the Opening of the Mouth*, the *Book of What is in the Underworld*, the *Book of Gates*, the *Book of Caverns*, the *Litany of Re*... Their purpose was to help the deceased to overcome the obstacles encountered during the journey through the Underworld. There are many images of the difficult route through the darkness, which is depicted as a combat fought by the dead, with the help of the appropriate ritual formulae and guided by the gods, before being finally reborn in the manner of Osiris and Re.

Plaster revetments evened out the irregularities of the walls. The occasionally carved but mainly drawn decorations were painted and it was not uncommon for this type of tomb ornamentation to be completed at the time of the king's death. A large royal tomb had a main staircase (carefully sealed after the burial) and then a descending corridor. During the 18th Dynasty this led onto an interior gallery which was sometimes interrupted by a huge well and might also make several sharp turns before reaching the burial chamber. During the 19th Dynasty the route was generally more rectilinear in design. The burial chamber, situated at the furthest point on this route, housed the sarcophagus containing the royal mummy. Furniture was arranged around it and in small adjoining rooms. The most logical visitor's route from the entrance to the end of the Valley of the Kings cannot take into account the chronological order of the tombs.

TOMB OF RAMESSES IX. This is the first tomb (no. 6) on the route. Its corridor is flanked by four rooms decorated with scenes from the sacred books, while beautiful astronomical images are painted on the blue background of the ceiling. Priests dressed in panther skins are depicted in the furthest room. A four-pillared room precedes the burial chamber where only the mark of the sarcophagus remains on the floor.

TOMB OF MERNEPTAH. The tomb (no. 8) of the son and successor of Ramesses II has a steeply sloping corridor which crosses the first room. In a pillared side room opening off the first, the king is depicted in the presence of various gods. The corridor crosses another room before finally reaching the vaulted burial chamber, which contains a pink granite sarcophagus.





TOMB OF RAMESSES VI. This is one of most complete and best preserved tombs (no. 9) in the necropolis. The first section of the corridor is decorated with images from the *Book of Gates*. The sky goddess Nut (who swallows the solar disk in the evening and gives birth to it each morning) is depicted among the various constellations on the great vault of the sarcophagus chamber.

TOMB OF RAMESSES III. On either side of the entrance to the tomb (no. 11) are two sculpted heads of Hathor, goddess of the Theban necropolis. The decoration of the small side rooms is remarkable for the sheer variety of scenes represented: the preparation of offerings, sailing boats, Nile gods, divinities of the various nomes and two blind harpists singing the king's praises. The next rooms have scenes from the *Book of What is in the Underworld* and the pillared room from the *Book of Gates*. The sarcophagus has been removed from the eight-pillared burial chamber and is today housed in the Louvre Museum ▲ *476* in Paris.

TOMB OF RAMESSES I. The short reign of the founder of the 19th Dynasty explains the small size of his tomb (no. 16). The funeral chamber is decorated entirely with scenes depicting the king in the presence of various divinities and extracts from the *Book of Gates*.

TOMB OF HOREMHEB. In the lower part of the tomb (no. 57), where the scenes are depicted against a blue-gray background, it is possible to see the various stages of the wall paintings. Once the general outline had been established, the drawing was painted in red and then corrected in black by a more expert hand before the different colors were added.

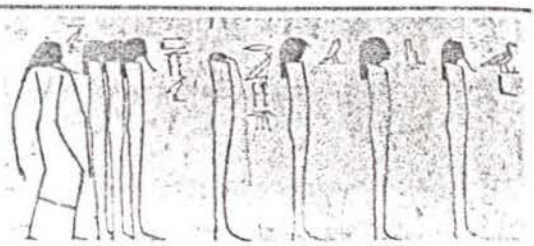
TOMB OF AMENHOTEP II. The scenes in the first rooms of the tomb

TOMB OF RAMESSES III
The variety of scenes depicted in the side rooms is remarkable. The next rooms have scenes from the *Book of What is in the Underworld*, the pillared room from the *Book of Gates* and the corridor from the *Litany of Re*. The goddess Hathor, the Nile god, and Ramesses III (opposite, below).



"THESE HIEROGLYPHS, THESE FIGURES, UNDOUBTEDLY REPRESENT THE HISTORY OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE: THE PRIESTS OF EGYPT ONLY CONSIGNED THEM TO THE SEPULCHRAL DEPTHS TO PROTECT THEM FROM THE CATASTROPHES OF THE WORLD." COMTE DE FORBIN

TOMB OF THUTMOSE III A very steep wooden staircase (below) leads to the concealed entrance of the Tomb of Thutmose III (no. 34) high on the hillside. The very stylized decoration (right) is like that of Amenhotep II's tomb. The rounded corners of the funeral chamber and the tomb's overall design evokes that of a royal cartouche.



(no. 35) show the king in the presence of Osiris, Anubis and Hathor. The extremely stylized decoration of the funeral chamber (painted in black against an ocher background) is reminiscent of the writing on a huge papyrus and evokes the *Book of What is in the Underworld*. The mummy was still in its sarcophagus when the tomb was discovered. In ancient times the small side room to the right was used to conceal nine royal mummies from further plunder following the desecration of their respective tombs.

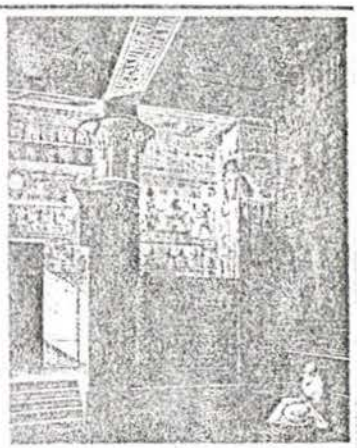
TOMB OF SETHNAKHT. The Tomb of Sethnakht (no.14) was originally the Tomb of Queen Tawsert (wife of Merneptah-Siptah and then of Sety II). Sethnakht extended it and covered the parts decorated by the queen with plaster, but these are now showing through in places, especially in the corridor. In the funeral chamber decorated with scenes from the *Book of Gates* are a few remaining fragments of the sarcophagus. The nearby TOMB (no. 15) OF SETY II has a particularly fine carved decoration at the entrance to the corridor evoking the *Litany of Re* and the *Book of What is in the Underworld*.



The portico of the fasciculate, colonnaded façade of the extremely well-preserved Temple of Sety I occupies the entire western side of the second court.

TEMPLE OF SETY I

Stretching to the north and east at the end of the road to the Valley of the Kings is Thebes' oldest necropolis, the necropolis of Tarif, or Antef (after the 11th-Dynasty princes who founded it). Some of the tombs, most of which have been destroyed, can still be seen along the side of the road leading to the Temple of Sety I. Once through the present gate of the precinct, the ruined gate of the axial pylon which opened onto the first court can be seen on the left. On the south side of the court are the remains of a palace. To the north of the temple the mudbrick walls of a complex of vaulted magazines have been rebuilt to a height of about 3 feet. The walls of the annexes have virtually been leveled. Inside the mortuary temple the ceremonies designed to guarantee the survival of the king in the Hereafter were performed. The road continues south along the side of the necropolis of Dra-Abu el-Naga, which lies on the slopes of the Western Desert. None of the sometimes well-preserved tombs belonging to 18th-Dynasty priests and scribes is open to the public.



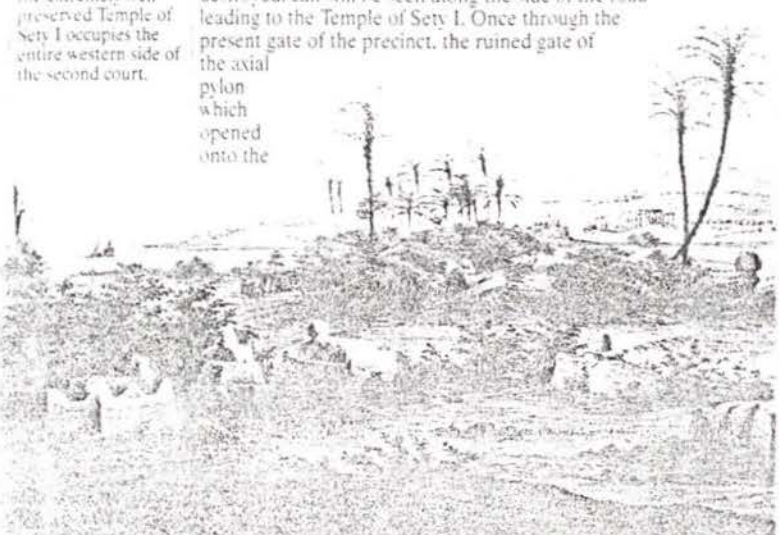
TEMPLE OF SETY I The central entrance opens onto a six-columned, hypostyle hall (above) whose walls are decorated with scenes in which Sety I and Ramesses II make offerings to Amun-Re. The shrine lies on the axis of the temple. The north entrance opens onto a court with a solar altar, while the south leads to a suite of rooms dedicated by Sety I to his father, Ramesses I, and completed by Ramesses II.

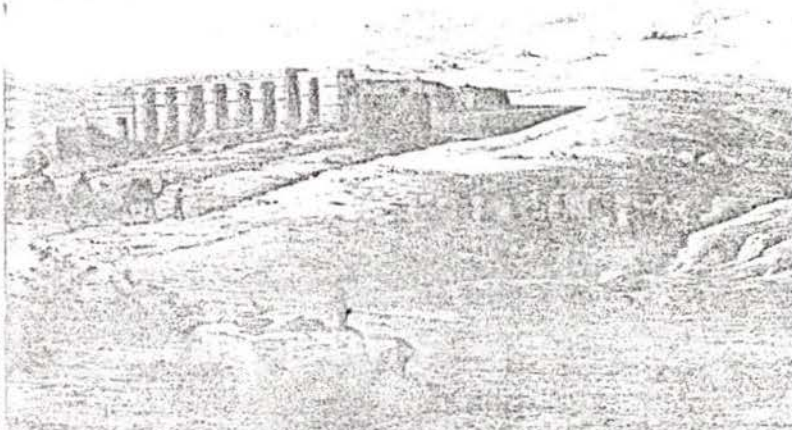
ASASIF NECROPOLIS

After skirting round the necropolis Dra-Abu el-Naga the road continues westward into the Valley of Asasif where only two of the 25th- and 26th-Dynasty tombs can be visited.

TOMB OF PASABA. The tomb of Pasaba, the steward of Nitocris, the Divine Votaress of Amun, has a long flight of steps leading to a pillared court where there is a bee-keeping scene on one of the pillars. The first court leads into a second, which in turn leads to the underground rooms and the gallery opening onto the tomb. To the west of the tomb is the pylon of the TOMB OF MONTUEMHET, one of the largest tombs in Thebes, which is currently being restored.

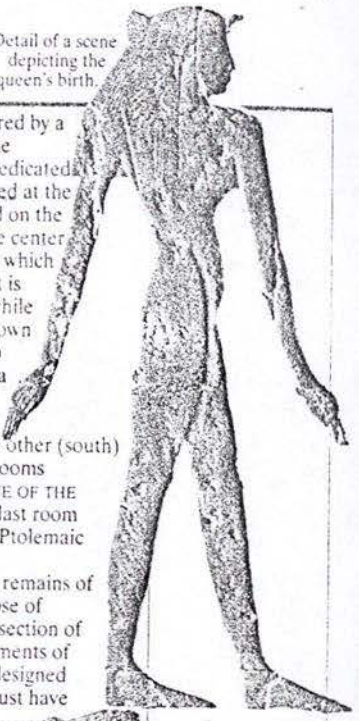
TOMB OF KHERUEF. The Tomb of Kheruef (no. 192), steward of Queen Tiyi during the reign of Amenhotep III, stands about 100 yards southeast of the tombs mentioned above. Although it is very badly damaged it has a series of raised reliefs which are truly remarkable not only for their expressive quality but also for their portrayal of movement in the figures participating in the festival of the erection of the *djed* pillar.







Detail (far left) of the great corbeled vault, painted with a starry blue sky, of the shrine in the Temple of Hatshepsut, and detail (left) of a wall painting.



Detail of a scene depicting the queen's birth.

DEIR EL-BAHRI

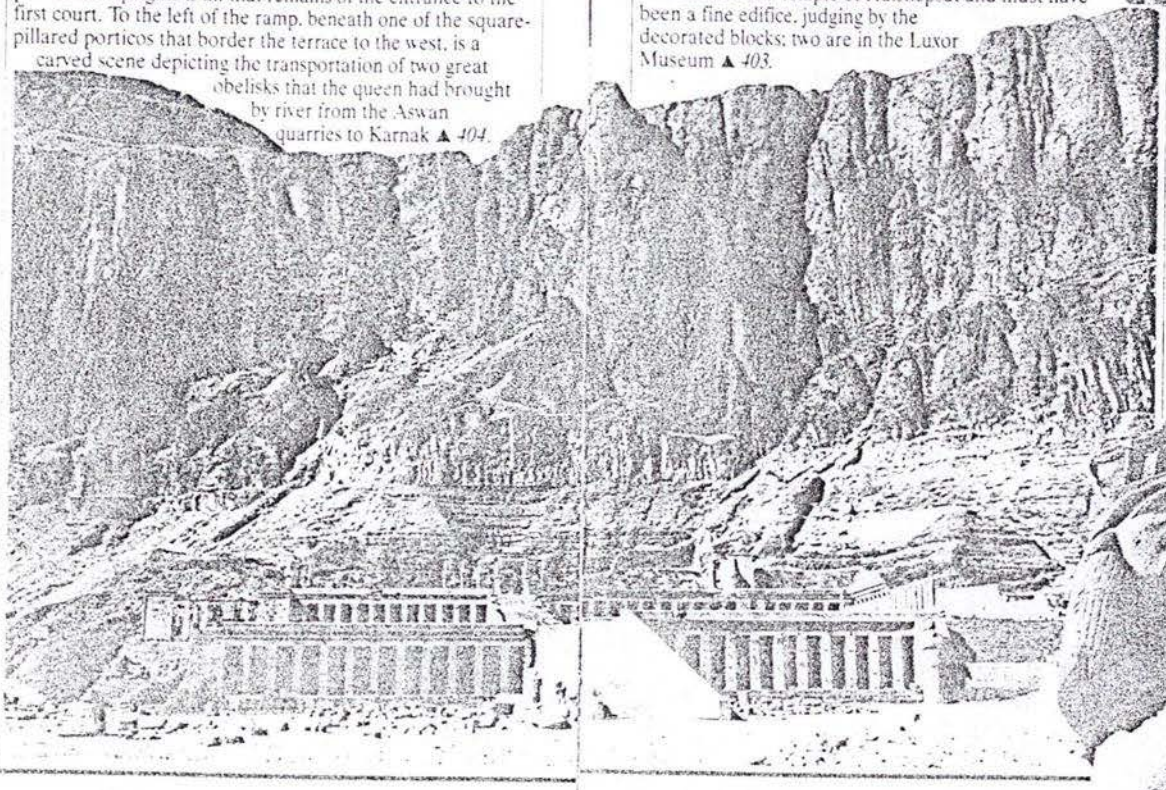
Deir is the Arabic word for "monastery". It is often used in Thebes to designate the site of an ancient Coptic monastery built on the ruins of a Pharaonic structure. The far end of the Valley of Asasif is blocked by the cliff of Deir el-Bahri at the foot of which a series of three temples was built.

TEMPLE OF MENTUHOTEP I. The Temple of Mentuhotep, built during the Middle Kingdom, is the oldest temple in the group and stands on the left. It is characterized by its outer porticos and its ramp leading to a terrace whose center was once occupied by a massive pyramidal, or more probably mastaba-type, structure ● *82*. Behind the temple lay a court open to the sky and a hypostyle hall built against the cliff. A long underground corridor led deep into the mountainside to the tomb. In the rocky spur which closes the mountainous cirque to the left of the temple is the (inaccessible) entrance shaft which led to the cache of royal mummies (including the mummy of Ramesses II) discovered by Gaston Maspero ● *96* in 1881.

TEMPLE OF HATSHEPSUT. The temple stands on the axis of the present access road, formerly the site of the ancient *dromos* which once crossed the entire Asasif depression to the Nile Valley. Several of the limestone sphinxes which stood along its edge are now in New York's Metropolitan Museum. The first part of the uprights is all that remains of the entrance to the first court. To the left of the ramp, beneath one of the square-pillared porticos that border the terrace to the west, is a carved scene depicting the transportation of two great obelisks that the queen had brought by river from the Aswan quarries to Karnak ▲ *404*.

The ramp leads to a second court also bordered by a double porticoed façade of square pillars. The precinct situated in the northwest corner is dedicated to Anubis, the jackal-headed god who presided at the embalming ceremony and who is represented on the walls of the twelve-columned vestibule. In the center of the far wall is the narrow, vaulted corridor which led to the shrines. The north side of the court is occupied by a polygonal-columned portico, while to the south is a monumental annex, with its own access ramp, dedicated to Hathor. The THIRD TERRACE (not open to the public) consists of a central court bordered by a colonnade on three sides and, to the north, a smaller court with a square solar altar in the center. On the other (south) side of the central court is a suite of vaulted rooms dedicated to the royal funeral cult. The SHRINE OF THE TEMPLE was built into the side of the cliff. Its last room and vestibule were additions dating from the Ptolemaic period.

TEMPLE OF THUTMOSE III. Scarcely anything remains of the temple built by Thutmose III between those of Mentuhotep I and Hatshepsut. Only the first section of the ramp, the remains of the terrace and fragments of the walls and columns are still visible. It was designed to dominate the Temple of Hatshepsut and must have been a fine edifice, judging by the decorated blocks; two are in the Luxor Museum ▲ *403*.

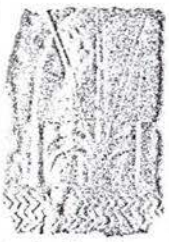


The extremely powerful architectural composition of the temple, designed as a series of terraces and horizontal porticos which stand out against the vertical rock face, was probably inspired by the nearby Temple of Mentuhotep.

Senenmut, chief steward and architect to Queen Hatshepsut, had his own figure included in the statue niches of the central corridor of the temple. His tomb (no. 353) lies to the north of the road as you leave the temple.

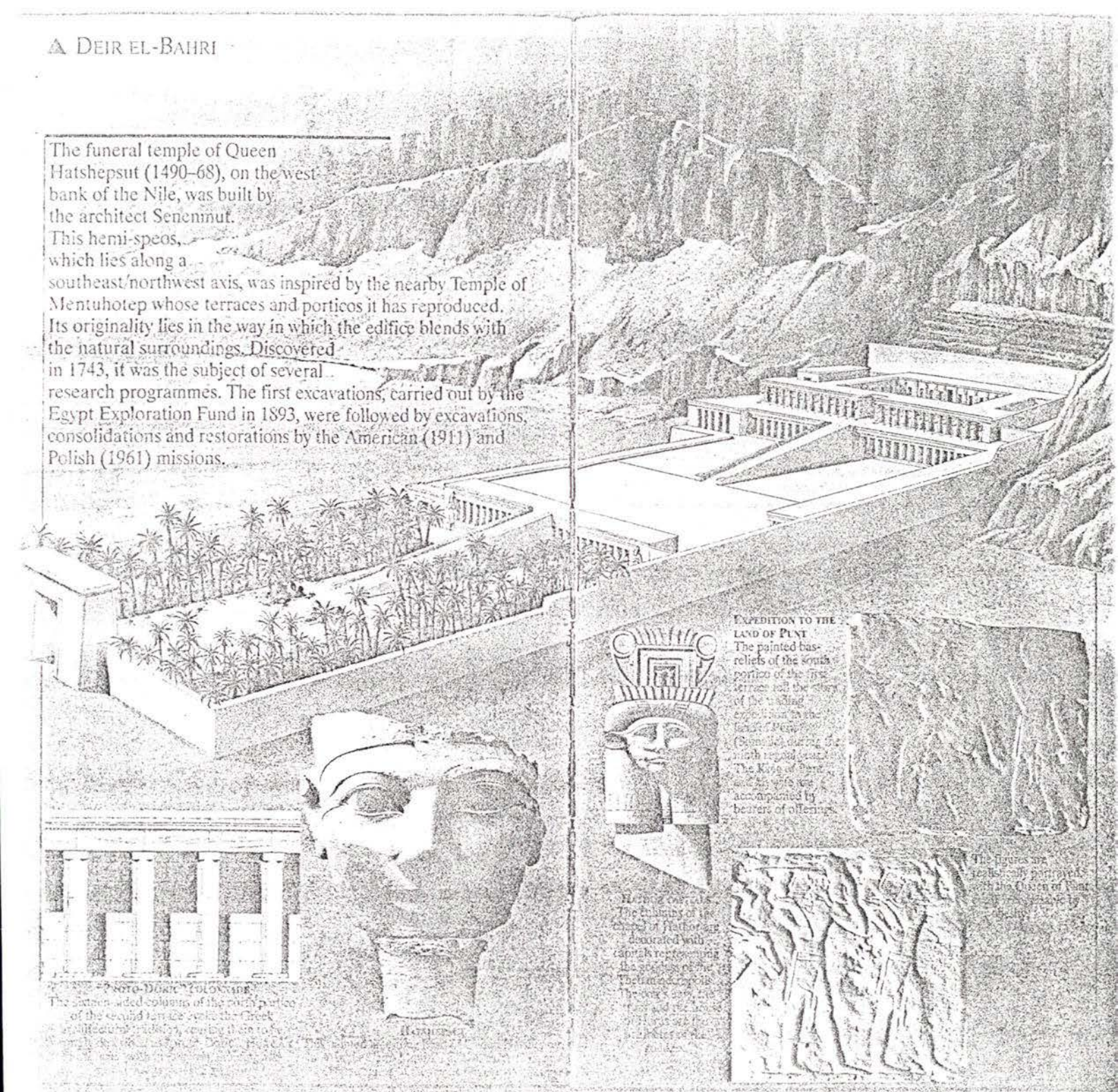


MURALS
Beneath the double portico situated between the complex of Anubis and the ramp is a series of scenes depicting the birth and education of the queen, her accession and divine ancestry. Beneath the opposite portico, south of the ramp, are the celebrated scenes of the maritime expedition sent by the queen to the land of Punt



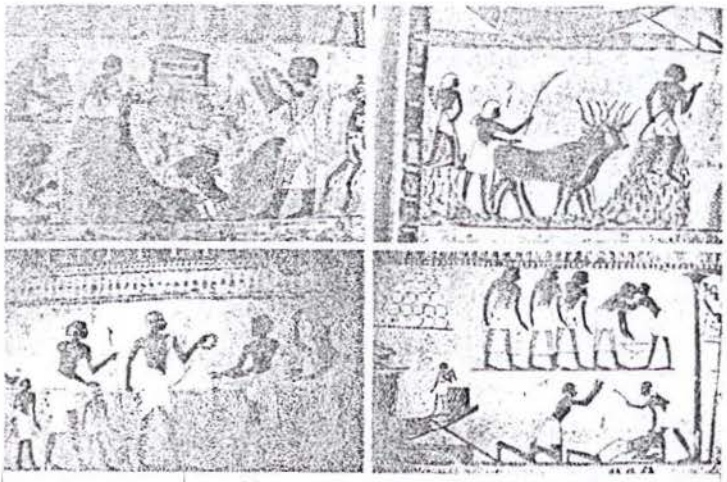
(modern Somalia). Scenes on the low wall forming the southern boundary of the portico show the houses on stilts (above) and flora of these distant lands, as well as the amply proportioned Queen of Punt. (The present relief is a cast of the originals which can be seen in the Cairo Museum ▲ *276*.)

The funeral temple of Queen Hatshepsut (1490–68), on the west bank of the Nile, was built by the architect Senenmut. This hemi-speos, which lies along a southeast/northwest axis, was inspired by the nearby Temple of Mentuhotep whose terraces and porticos it has reproduced. Its originality lies in the way in which the edifice blends with the natural surroundings. Discovered in 1743, it was the subject of several research programmes. The first excavations, carried out by the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1893, were followed by excavations, consolidations and restorations by the American (1911) and Polish (1961) missions.



EXPEDITION TO THE LAND OF PUNT
The painted bas-reliefs of the south portico of the first terrace tell the story of the trading expedition to the land of Punt (Somalia) during the ninth regnal year. The Kings of Punt and his wife were accompanied by bearers of offerings.

The figures are realistically portrayed. The Queen of Punt



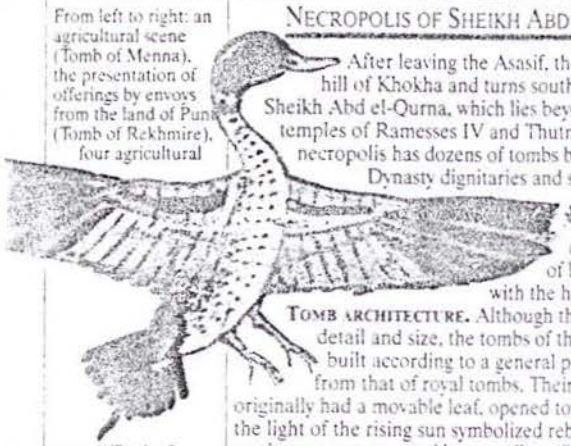
From left to right: an agricultural scene (Tomb of Menna), the presentation of offerings by envoys from the land of Punt (Tomb of Rekhmire), four agricultural scenes (Tomb of Menna) and a barber's scene (Tomb of Userhet).

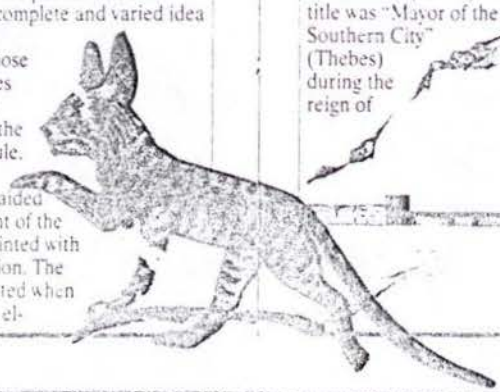
Necropolis of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna

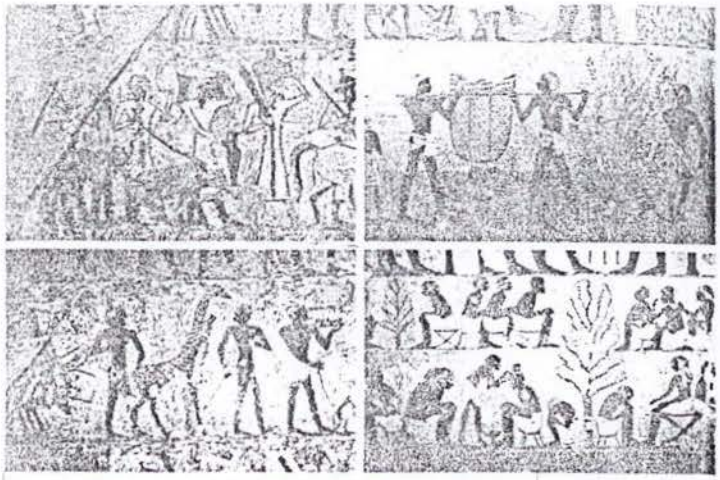
After leaving the Asasif, the road runs past the hill of Khokha and turns south to necropolis of Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, which lies beyond the ruined temples of Ramesses IV and Thutmose III. The necropolis has dozens of tombs belonging to 18th-Dynasty dignitaries and stretches across the surrounding hills. The entire area is dotted with hundreds of holes, interspersed with the houses of the village.

Tomb architecture. Although they vary in terms of detail and size, the tombs of these dignitaries are built according to a general principle that differs from that of royal tombs. Their doors, which originally had a movable leaf, opened toward the east where the light of the rising sun symbolized rebirth. The upper section was surmounted by a small mudbrick pyramid (the remains of some of these can still be seen). The façade sometimes opened through a series of closely placed doors, which meant that the first vestibule remained accessible. In the court in front of the façade stood the biographical stelae of the deceased. Inside the tomb a vestibule wider than its depth opened onto a long, narrow room, at the end of which a niche contained statues of the deceased and his relatives. The rest of the tomb was inaccessible and consisted of a rock-cut corridor leading to an underground tomb which housed the sarcophagus and the funeral paraphernalia. It is impossible to predict the number of tombs open to the public. The six tombs that are generally open give a complete and varied idea of the beauty of this necropolis.

Tomb of Ramose. The Tomb of Ramose (no. 55), vizier and governor of Thebes during the reign of Amenhotep IV, is preceded by a court and is famed for the quality of the bas-reliefs in the vestibule. On the east wall the beauty of the outlines and the fine texture of the braided hair illustrate the degree of refinement of the art of the period. The south wall is painted with scenes depicting the funerary procession. The construction of the tomb was interrupted when Ramose had to follow the king to Tell el-Amarna. The various stages of the drawing, carving and painting of the scenes are can be seen on the walls.







Tomb of Userhet. The Tomb of Userhet (no. 56), a royal scribe during the reign of Amenhotep II, lies to the south of the Tomb of Ramose. The most remarkable scene shows Userhet in a chariot, hunting desert animals with a bow.

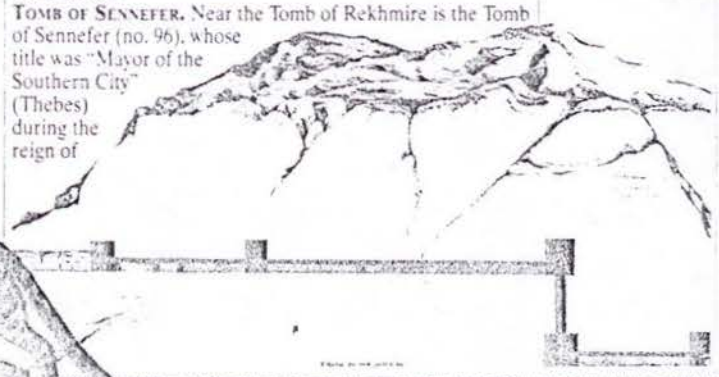
Tomb of Nakht. About 100 yards to the north a path climbs steeply to the tomb (no. 52) of the scribe and astronomer of Amun during the reign of Thutmose IV. On the west wall, to the right of the door, are scenes depicting fishing, hunting and the harvest in the Nile Delta where Nakht probably had an estate. To the left of the door is one of the most beautifully painted scenes (the funerary banquet) in Thebes, but there are no illustrations of the astronomical activities of Nakht.

Tomb of Menna. About 50 yards further up the path, the Tomb of Menna (no. 69), an inspector of estates during the reign of Thutmose IV, contains some extremely realistic agricultural scenes and very detailed funeral scenes.

Tomb of Rekhmire. About 100 yards to the south a path climbs to the tomb (no. 100) of the governor of the town and vizier during the reign of Thutmose III. On the west wall, to the left of the door, are scenes of foreign tribute from Punt (Somalia), Khefti (Crete), Kush (Sudan) and Retenu (Syria), while those in the chapel illustrate Rekhmire's economic and administrative activities. Beyond these, scenes showing the polishing of statues, the making of bricks and goldsmiths and carpenters at work provide a great deal of information on the various attitudes, tools and accessories which characterized these trades.

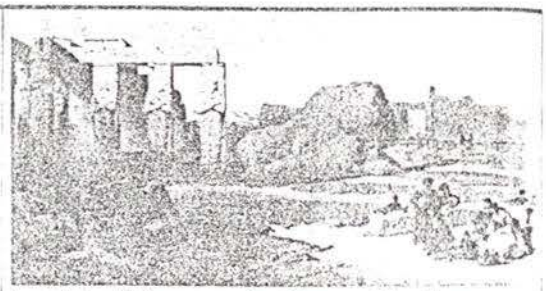
Tomb of Sennefer. Near the Tomb of Rekhmire is the Tomb of Sennefer (no. 96), whose title was "Mayor of the Southern City" (Thebes) during the reign of

Tomb decorations On the walls of the vestibule, painted scenes illustrate the private life and professional activities as well as the funeral procession and banquet of the tomb owner. These images are a remarkable source of information on the civilization of Ancient Egypt both in terms of the wealth of details provided and the meaning and degree of sophistication of representation. At the far end of a narrow room opening off the center of the vestibule was a niche containing statues of the deceased and his relatives.



"IT IS MELANCHOLY TO SIT ON THE PILED STONES AMIDST THE WRECK OF THIS WONDERFUL EDIFICE, WHERE VIOLENCE INCONCEIVABLE TO US HAS BEEN USED TO DESTROY WHAT ART INCONCEIVABLE TO US HAD ERECTED." HARRIET MARTINEAU

BATTLE OF KADESH Beneath the east portico of the second court of the Ramesseum is one of the finest-known representations of the Battle of Kadesh (Syria) where Ramesses II fought the Hittites in 1299 BC. The scene depicts Ramesses II's heroic counterattack. Standing in his chariot the young king fires arrows with deadly precision at the fleeing Hittites, many of whom are drowning in the Orontes. On the left the river reaches Kadesh, which is surrounded by ramparts and water. The intact banner means that the city was not captured. There were other encounters during the Hittite war until the first great peace treaty was concluded in the twentieth year of Ramesses' reign. To the east of the portico other episodes of the Battle of Kadesh are illustrated on the first pylon.

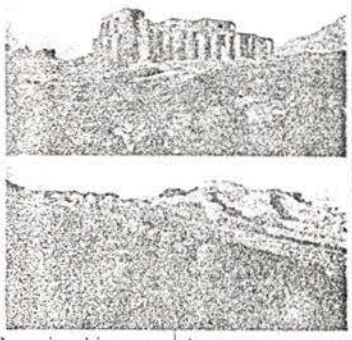


Amenhotep II. Its upper section is inaccessible. A long, underground corridor leads to the tomb, whose ceiling is painted with luxuriant vines and grape clusters, while the walls are decorated with scenes of offerings made to Sennefer by his daughter, the singer of Amun Muttawi.

RAMESSEUM

Below the necropolis the monumental complex of the Ramesseum, built by Ramesses II, stretches along the edge of the fertile valley. It was started at the beginning of his reign and took twenty years to complete. It has been used as a quarry since antiquity. As the walls of the façade have been pulled down the entrance leads straight into the inner area of the second court.

SECOND COURT. The court is flanked to the east and west by pillared porticos with engaged Osiride statues of Ramesses. The king is shown with his arms crossed, holding his scepters and tightly wrapped in a shroud (in imitation of Osiris), being summoned to rebirth in a new life. Beneath the eastern portico is an illustration the Battle of Kadesh. In the last register, at the top of the wall, is the grand procession of the annual festival of Min. The entrance to the second court of the Ramesseum was blocked by the fall of a huge granite colossus on whose shoulder an inscription describes Ramesses as the "sun of princes". The statue must have stood originally about 69 feet high. On the south side of the court was a royal palace whose lower wall sections and column bases can still be seen. The interior of the temple is reached via the east side of the court, beyond the very badly damaged first pylon.

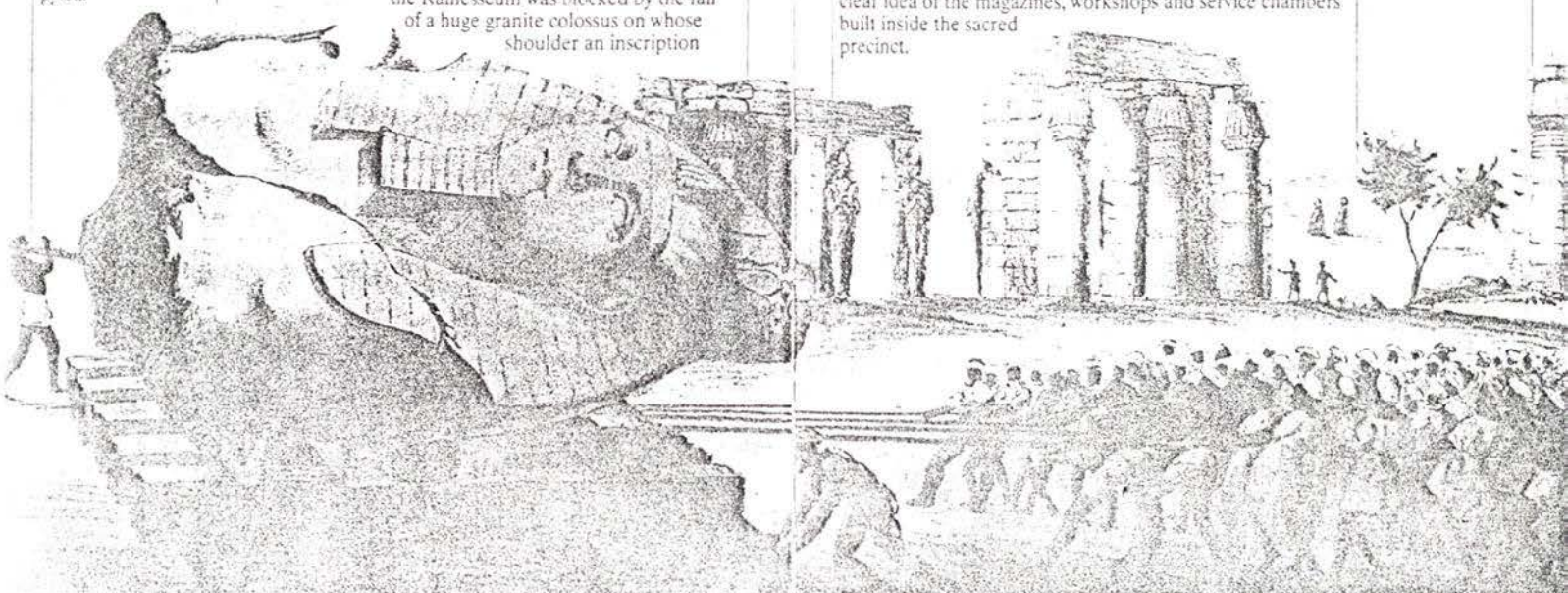


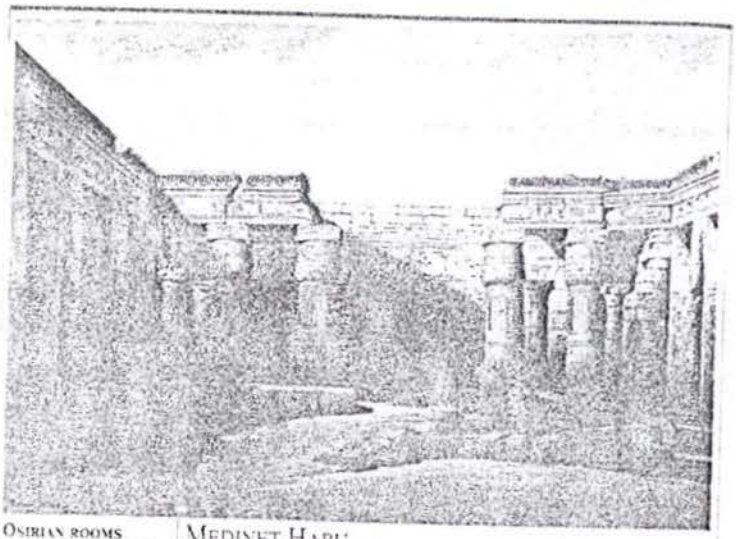
HYPOSTYLE HALL. The central part of the hall (whose ceiling is well preserved) was lit by traceried windows. Behind the façade, on the interior (south) wall of the hall is a scene showing the capture of the Syrian fortress of Dapur. Across the hall, at the far end of the west wall, Ramesses II receives his scepters from Amun-Re. Below this scene is a procession of Ramesses' many sons. On the walls of the next room are the sacred barques of the Theban Triad and the royal barque which came here in procession from Karnak during the "Beautiful Feast of the Valley". In the mysterious shadows of the shrine (which now no longer exists) the king's statue was placed in the presence of a statue of Amun, the source of all life. This annual union invested the dead king with new energy. On the ceiling of the hall are images of the months and seasons of the year. In the center Thoth, master of both writing and time, is represented as a baboon on top of a *djed* pillar, the symbol of renewal.

SMALL TEMPLE. On the north wall of the Ramesseum is a small temple dedicated to Ramesses' mother, Tuya, and wife, Nefertari. Its foundations date from the reign of Sety I and it has retained some of its original paving and column bases.

ANNEXES. The mudbrick annexes of the Ramesseum, which extend for a distance of 20 yards or so around the shrine, are better preserved than in other Egyptian temples. They give a clear idea of the magazines, workshops and service chambers built inside the sacred precinct.

ANNEXES The wealth of the temple, such as cereals, cloth, earthenware jars and precious metals, was stored in the magazines (some still have their original vaults) in the northwest section of the Ramesseum. A sacerdotal necropolis was founded here in the 10th century BC and the chapel walls and entrances to the burial shafts of the many tombs scattered across the site make it difficult to distinguish the original layout of the annexes.





OSIRIAN ROOMS The south door of the second hypostyle hall leads into a first chamber, which in turn leads into a small, two-columned room decorated with scenes of the king's coronation renewed in the Hereafter. The next room is a sort of vestibule which has a long bench (where offerings were probably placed) and opens onto two connecting rooms. A second door in the vestibule led into the Osirian chapel proper, which was linked to the other world by the false door carved on the far wall.

MEDINET HABU

The road runs alongside the ruined temples of Thutmose IV, Merneptah, Ay and Horemheb before reaching the monumental complex of Medinet Habu. The entrance, with its square towers, glacis and rounded merlons, imitates the gateways of oriental fortresses: a reminder of battles fought by Ramesses III during a troubled period in Egyptian history. This fortified entrance was part of a square, mudbrick building which no longer exists.

CHAPELS OF THE "DIVINE VOTARESSES OF AMUN". Inside the complex, on the left, are the adjoining funerary chapels of the "Divine Votaresses of Amun" who were 25th- and 26th-Dynasty queens and princesses. Each chapel has a court leading to a shrine covered, unusually in Egypt, by a vault of bonded stone.

SMALL TEMPLE. Opposite the chapels, to the north, is the Small Temple (18th Dynasty). The main part of the temple (built on a substructure) dates from the reign of Thutmose III and can still be seen today. At the far end, the shrine is preceded by a central barque shrine and surrounded by a gallery with a series of windows set in the outer wall. The temple originally possessed its own mudbrick enclosure whose stone gates, built by Taharqa, have survived. Over the centuries a series of additions were made to the east side of the temple. A kiosk dating from the reign of Nectanebo I was added to the court and small pylon built by Taharqa. This was followed by the construction of a Ptolemaic pylon on which the outer lintel of the gateway has retained part of its painted decoration. Finally a pronaos preceded by a court was begun during the reign of Antoninus Pius. The walls of this unfinished complex were built from reused blocks, as demonstrated by the fragments of bas-reliefs which can be seen on the inner walls. The temple stands on the sacred hill of Djeme, the site of the sepulchers of the eight primordial divinities of Hermopolis and joint creators of the world. Subtle and complex connections, based on the myths of the origins and renewal of creation, linked Amun-Re to this site where important ceremonies were held every year.

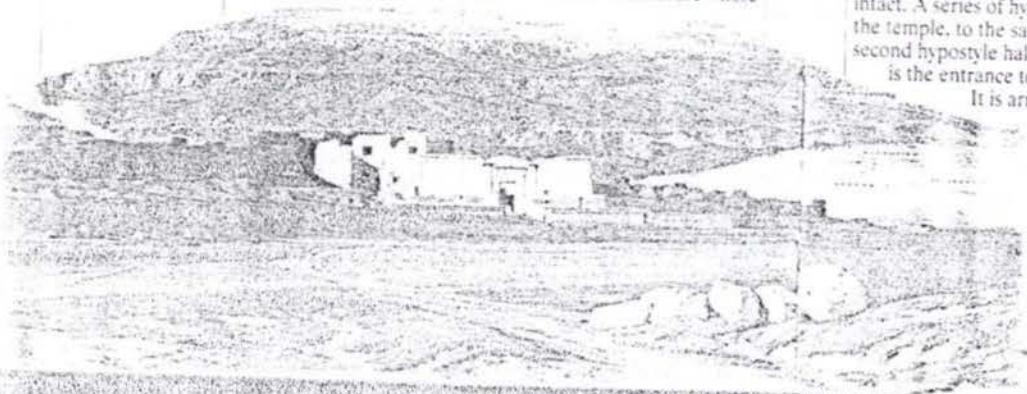


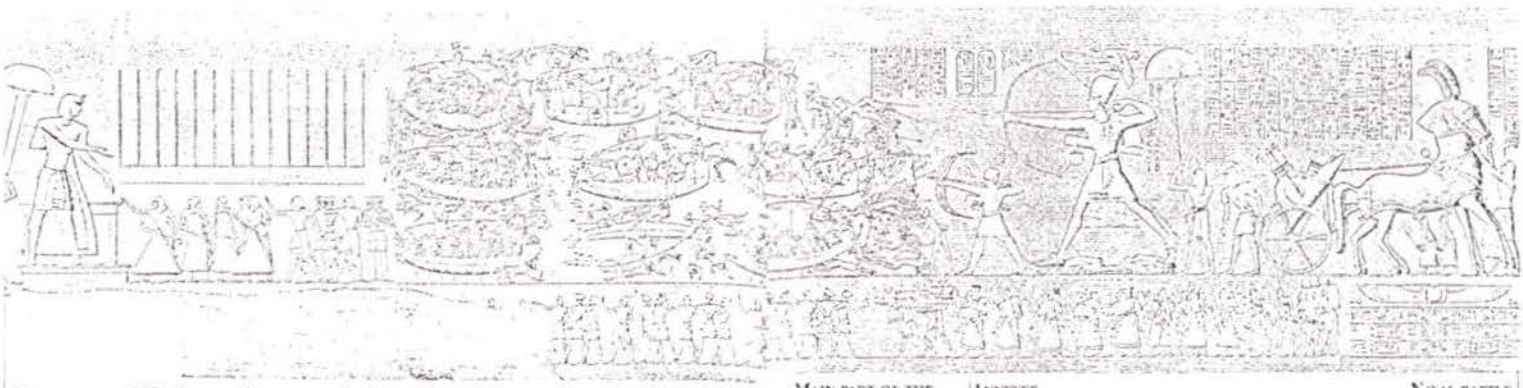
GREAT TEMPLE. The virtually intact pylon of the Temple of Ramesses III stands at the center of the site. It is decorated with scenes depicting the king adopting the traditional stance of the "massacre of the enemy". The north façade of the temple evokes the war fought by Ramesses III against the "Sea Peoples" in the Nile Delta. In the FIRST COURT, in front of each pillar of the north portico, is a colossus of the standing king. Across the court is the outer colonnade of the palace with the king's "Window of Appearances". A ramp leads to the SECOND COURT, whose southwest corner is also decorated with battle scenes. However, the quality and state of preservation of the images of the sacred barques of the Theban Triad, in the western section of the north wall, are far superior. Although most of the inner rooms have lost their ceiling, the lower section is intact. A series of hypostyle halls led, along the central axis of the temple, to the sanctuary. In the north section, near the second hypostyle hall and the staircase leading to the terrace, is the entrance to the complex dedicated to Re-Harakhti. It is arranged around an open courtyard which used to have a central solar altar. On the lintel of the west portico, the king is shown in front of a group of chattering baboons (animals devoted to the rising sun), worshipping the solar barque. On the south side of the central axis is the suite of Osirian rooms.



One of Ramesses I's sons (west wall of the main court of the Great Temple), the sacred barque of the Theban Triad (west wall of the hypostyle hall) and the pharaoh on the River Nile (right-hand side chapel).

ROYAL PALACE. The overall layout of the royal palace built against the temple is clearly visible. The central hypostyle hall





Ramesses III chose the sacred site of Medinet Habu to build his jubilee and funeral temple. Although inspired by the Ramesseum, it is unlike other religious edifices in that it is surrounded by a fortified enclosure wall. Following the death of Ramesses III it became the administrative center of the priests of Amun. After the excavations of Mariette and Morgan in 1859, it was not until the work carried out by the Oriental Institute of Chicago (1927–60) that the site became the subject of extensive research which involved a systematic study of the temple.

MAIN PART OF THE TEMPLE

ANNEXES

NAVAL BATTLE
The bas-reliefs on the north outer wall depict the first great naval battle in history. It shows Ramesses III defeating the Sea Peoples who swept along the eastern Mediterranean coast in c. 1200 BC, destroying the Hittite empire and the coastal towns and cities. The Philistines were driven back by Ramesses III and settled on the Palestinian coast to which they gave their name.

"MIGDOL" FORTIFIED ENTRANCE

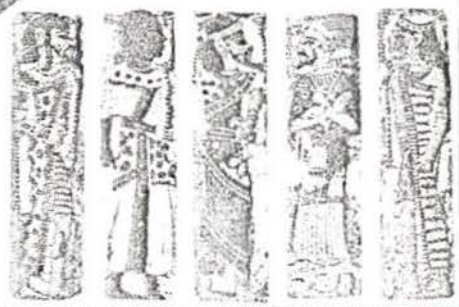
Of the two gateways in the enclosure wall, only the east gate has survived. The first floor consists of solid masonry pierced by a central gateway. The upper floors hold apartments reached via a ramp situated beyond the gateway.

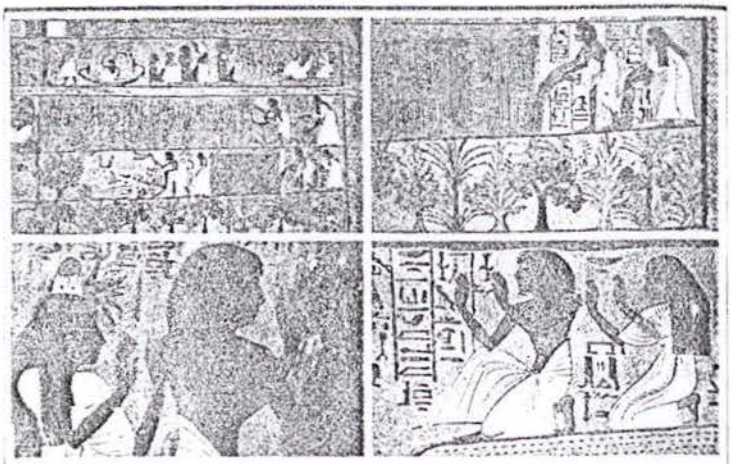
SHOPS
Shops were vaulted and built in brick.

PRISONERS
These faience panels from the Palace of Ramesses III show Egypt's traditional enemies taken prisoner by the pharaoh. They can be recognized by their dress and headgear: a Libyan, a Nubian, a Syrian prince, a Bedouin and a Hittite.

18TH-DYNASTY BARQUE SHRINE
The oldest building on the site is a square-pillared, peripteral temple. It was built by Queen Hatshepsut and completed by Thutmose III as a shrine for the sacred barque of Amun during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley.

The Temple of Medinet Habu covers an area of 20 acres. A text written during the reign of Ramesses III states that 62,626 prisoners of war worked in the temple.





Tomb of Sennedjem On the east wall of the tomb was a beautifully painted image of the "fields of Ialu", a sort of map of the kingdom of the Hereafter (detail above). On the west wall the deceased and his wife adore twelve gods, including Osiris (right), in a naos. On the south wall



Nephthys and Isis, in the form of birds, watch over the mummy. All the scenes have the characteristic yellow background of most of the many tombs of Deir el-Medina.

(the bases of the columns can still be seen) opens to the north toward the first court of the temple, while a door to the south leads to the throne room. The throne dais, behind which the "false door" stele once stood, is still in place. Beyond this are three apartments consisting of a vestibule, chamber and washroom. This was above all a symbolic residence where the dead king would continue to be present and be served within his mortuary temple.

Enclosure walls and annexes. The second enclosure wall of Medinet Habu is the wall of the Temple of Ramesses III, which surrounds a complex of annex buildings. The remains of the houses of the Coptic town of Djeme, which occupied the entire site, gives the outer enclosure wall an irregular outline.

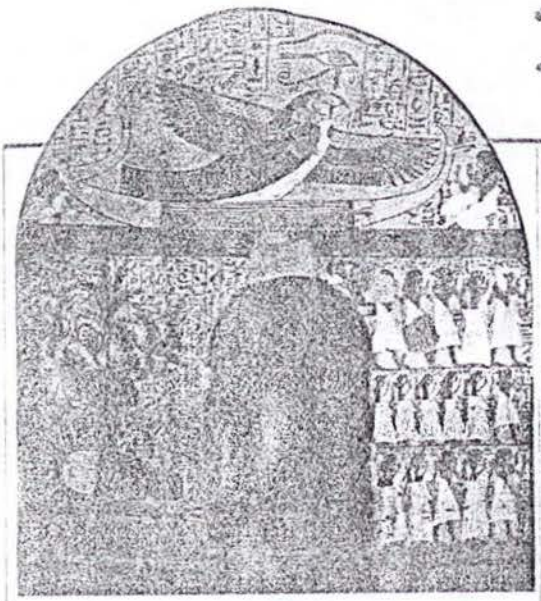
Deir el-Medina

The workmen's village of the royal necropolis, situated in the little valley behind the hill of Qurnet Murai, has been completely excavated. The master quarriers, masons, painters and sculptors who worked on the royal tombs lived within the enclosure wall with their families. They could reach the Valley of the Kings via the mountain path which passed above the cliff of Deir el-Bahri. Their houses, clustered together on either side of the village street, consisted of a main room in which there was a sort of bench with steps and a second, smaller room. Beyond this was an open kitchen with a stove and often a cellar hewn out of the rock. A small flight of steps led to the terrace.

Temple. The temple dedicated to Hathor and Ma'at that stands to the north of the village was completely rebuilt during the Ptolemaic period. It consists of a small court and pronaos (whose columns have composite capitals), a central sanctuary and two side chapels. The south wall in the left of the two chapels is engraved with a beautiful scene depicting the weighing of the heart in the presence of Osiris. The heart of the deceased (the seat of thought), placed on one pan of the scales, should be balanced by the light feather of Ma'at (goddess of Truth). The result was recorded by Thoth. A monstrous creature, Ammit "the Devourer", waited by the scales for those who were rejected, while the successful candidates could attain the Kingdom of the Blest. To the north of the temple lies the Great Pit, an excavated site over 130 feet deep which yielded almost five thousand *ostraca* ● 59. These have provided very useful information on life in Deir el-Medina during the Ramesside period. Only two of the tombs in the hillside necropolis to the west of the ancient village can be visited.

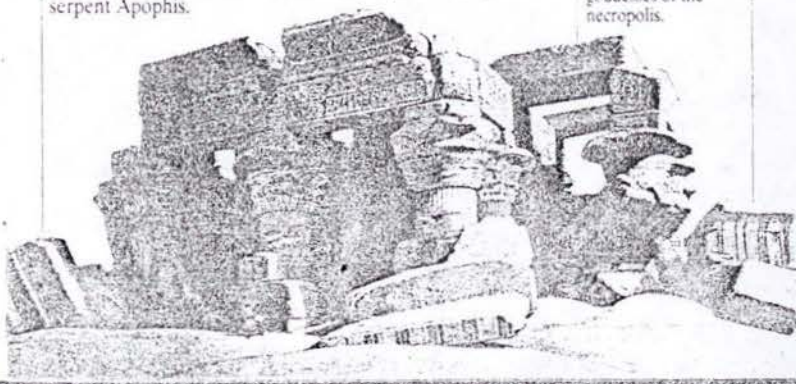
Tomb of Sennedjem. The Tomb of Sennedjem (no. 1), a servant in the royal necropolis during the 19th Dynasty, was discovered intact in 1866. It has a beautiful vaulted ceiling decorated with vignettes from the *Book of the Dead*.

Tomb of Inherkau. The tomb (no. 359) of the "foreman of the mayor of the Two Lands" consists of two vaulted rooms. The second is decorated with vignettes from the *Book of the Dead* superposed on three registers. Inherkau is shown adoring the Phoenix and the cat of Heliopolis slaying the serpent Apophis.

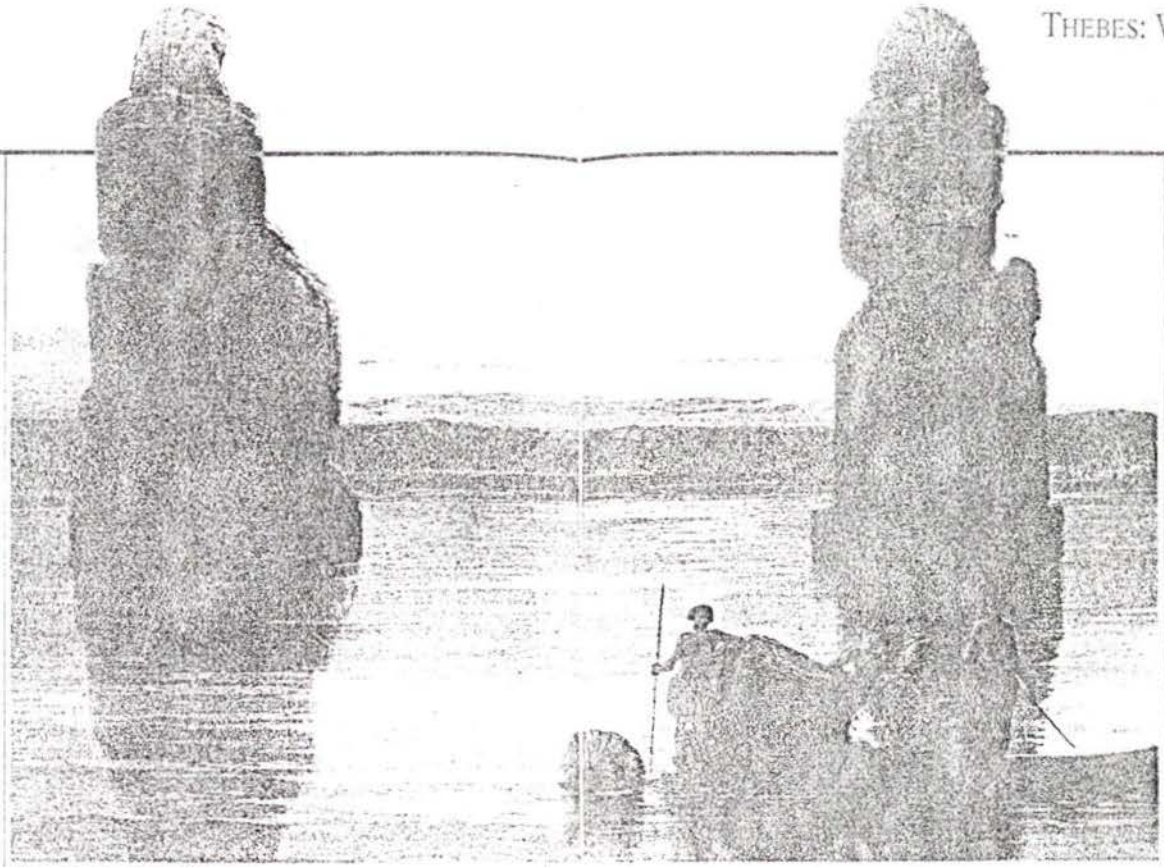


Interior of the Tomb of Pashed (left), from the Ramesside period.

Layout of a tomb The tombs of Deir el-Medina tended to follow the same basic layout. An entrance in the form of a small pylon opened onto a court at the far end of which was the funerary chapel in the form of a small, steep-sided pyramid (one has recently been restored near the two tombs open to the public). In front of the chapel stelae and statues of the deceased were protected by a canopy. The access shaft to the tomb was dug either in the floor of the court or the chapel.



The ruined temple of Deir el-Medina dedicated to Hathor and Ma'at, the two goddesses of the necropolis.



COLOSSI OF MEMNON After several hundred yards the road leading back to the Nile passes the famous Colossi of Memnon (the Greek form of the name of Amenhotep III). These two huge, pink quartzite statues representing the king seated on his throne (which bears the symbol of the union of Upper and Lower Egypt) have not always stood alone on the plain as they do today. They once stood before the façade of the mudbrick pylon of a huge mortuary temple. Few of its remains can still be seen but its layout has been established by taking soundings. The temple was demolished during antiquity and a number of its blocks reused in Karnak and in some of the temples of the west bank.

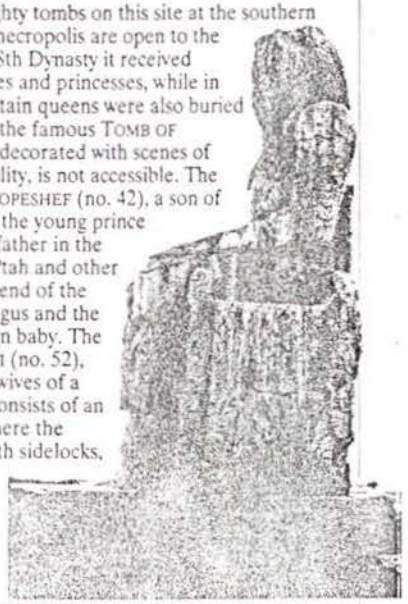
A number of Greek inscriptions (which can be seen on the lower part of the colossus) were carved by the illustrious visitors who came to hear the famous "singing" statue of the Roman period. Some are dated and the oldest originates from the reign of Nero. While most visitors were content to write simple prose, some have composed elaborate poems.

THE "SINGING" COLOSSUS According to Strabo the northern colossus lost the upper part of its torso as a result of an earthquake in 27 BC. For a long time afterward it emitted a strange musical sound at dawn, a phenomenon caused by the effect on the stone of the marked change in temperature. It stopped singing when Septimus Severus repaired the upper part of the statue.

QURNA Most of the population of the west bank is concentrated in a series of hillside villages near the tombs. The largest of these villages is Qurna, which continues to flourish in spite of damage to the tombs, the ban on further building and a number of rehousing projects.

VALLEY OF THE QUEENS

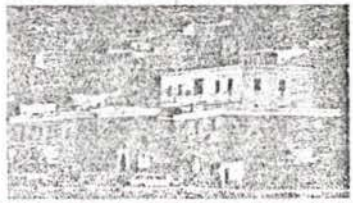
Only a few of the eighty tombs on this site at the southern edge of the Theban necropolis are open to the public. During the 18th Dynasty it received the remains of princes and princesses, while in the 19th Dynasty certain queens were also buried here. Unfortunately the famous TOMB OF NEFERTARI (no. 66), decorated with scenes of exceptional high quality, is not accessible. The TOMB OF AMENHIKHOPESHEF (no. 42), a son of Ramesses III, shows the young prince accompanied by his father in the presence of Thoth, Ptah and other divinities. At the far end of the tomb is the sarcophagus and the remains of a still-born baby. The TOMB OF QUEEN TITI (no. 52), probably one of the wives of a 20th-Dynasty king, consists of an entrance corridor where the queen is depicted with sidelocks, the sign of extreme youth. Several divinities are represented, including Ptah in his naos, Thoth, Atum, Isis and Nephthys. In the second chamber the queen presents an offering to the Hathor cow as it emerges from the sacred mountain. In the furthest chamber offerings were placed before the gods. On the far wall Osiris is depicted between Neith and Selqit, Nephthys and Thoth. The TOMB OF KHAEMWESE (no. 44) shows the young prince dressed in a linen robe and wearing a necklace, with the characteristic sidelock of princes. He first makes a lone offering to the gods and is then presented with his father to the guardians of the gates of the Hereafter.

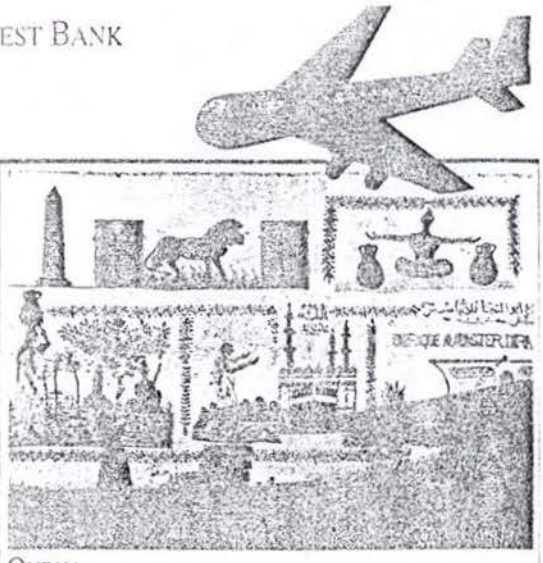


MALKATTA. A track leads south and skirts round the western edge of Medinet Habu. After about half a mile the sparse remains of the mudbrick walls of the various monumental complexes of the Palace of Malkatta, Amenhotep III's royal residence, can be seen on the right and then the left of the track. It is the only known Theban palace and certainly the only one to have been built on the west bank. The construction of the vast lake (Birket Habu) to the east of the palace created the regularly spaced mounds that extend for about 1¼ miles. Near the far end of the ancient lake is the small Roman temple of Deir Shelwit, built at the end of the 1st century AD.









When villagers from Qurna make the journey to Mecca, their houses are decorated with images of pilgrimage. The lion is often featured, symbolizing the difficulties of the journey and the courage of the pilgrim. Appropriate Koranic verses, prayers and the pilgrim's name complete the decorations. The interior of the house is also decorated with paintings and *surah*. Garish banners, which combine Pharaonic and Islamic images, are hung on the walls of the town.

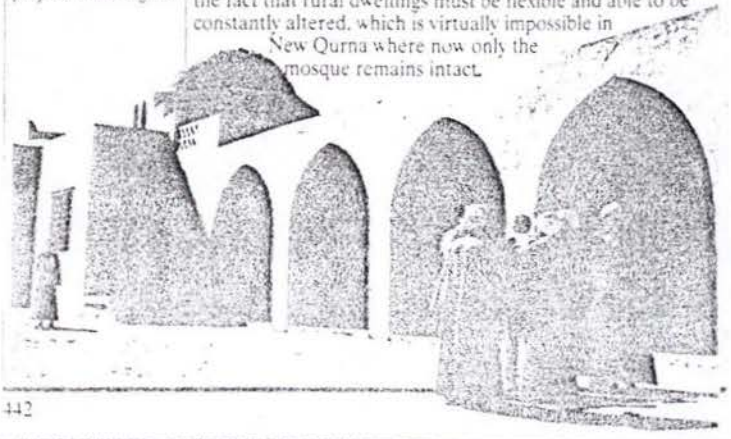
QURNA

Qurna is a fine example of traditional Egyptian rural architecture. The houses, built of mudbrick mixed with straw and cemented together with mortar made from mud, seem to blend with their surroundings. The mud revetment is earthcolored in the plains and ocher in the mountains. Facades are decorated with brick crenelations and raised and rounded corners. The flat roofs are made of planks supported by palm beams or trunks and covered with an insulating layer of earth. The façades are roughcast in bright colors, made from iron oxide-based paints (yellow, ocher, red and blue).

QURNA EL-GEDIDA (NEW QURNA). One reason given for the relocation of the inhabitants of Qurna (still very much on the agenda) was the deterioration of the tombs. The best known of the many projects generated by the proposal was Hassan Fathi's pilot scheme, completed in 1948. It was not, however, appreciated by the mountain-dwellers, who made their living from tourism and the sale of (genuine or fake) antiques favored by the location of their villages, and they refused to leave. The project was inspired by traditional Nubian housing and makes generous use of vaults and *pisé* domes, architectural features that are used in the rest of Egypt only for tombs. Some buildings were eventually inhabited, but only after some major alterations. Finally the project overlooked the fact that rural dwellings must be flexible and able to be constantly altered, which is virtually impossible in New Qurna where now only the mosque remains intact.



HASSAN FATHI
The Egyptian architect Hassan Fathi (1900–89), winner of the 1980 Aga Khan Award for Architecture, researched and completed several projects in the region.







THEBES TO ASWAN

ARMANT. The village of Armant (the ancient Greek settlement of Hermonthis), which stands near the Nile about 12½ miles south of Thebes, is steeped in history. The flourishing Middle Kingdom town, with its large necropolis, was extended during the 18th Dynasty by the construction of huge temples (now destroyed). Much later Cleopatra VII made it the capital of the nome. It was still flourishing at the beginning of the Christian era but was subsequently neglected. Although nothing much remains of the Temple of Cleopatra (its blocks were used in the 19th century to build the Armant sugar refinery), the temple dedicated to the local god Montu, represented here in the form of a Buchis bull, has survived. Buchis bulls, the earthly representation of the god, were buried in the sacred vaults of the Bucheum near the Temple of Montu. Among the scattered blocks and foundations which still exist (pylon of Thutmose III) is the image of a rhinoceros. The four sanctuary towns of Hermonthis, north Karnak ▲ *404*, Medamud and Tod, situated in the vicinity of Thebes and dedicated to Montu, enclosed an area known as the "Palladium of Thebes", the ancestral land placed under the god's protection.



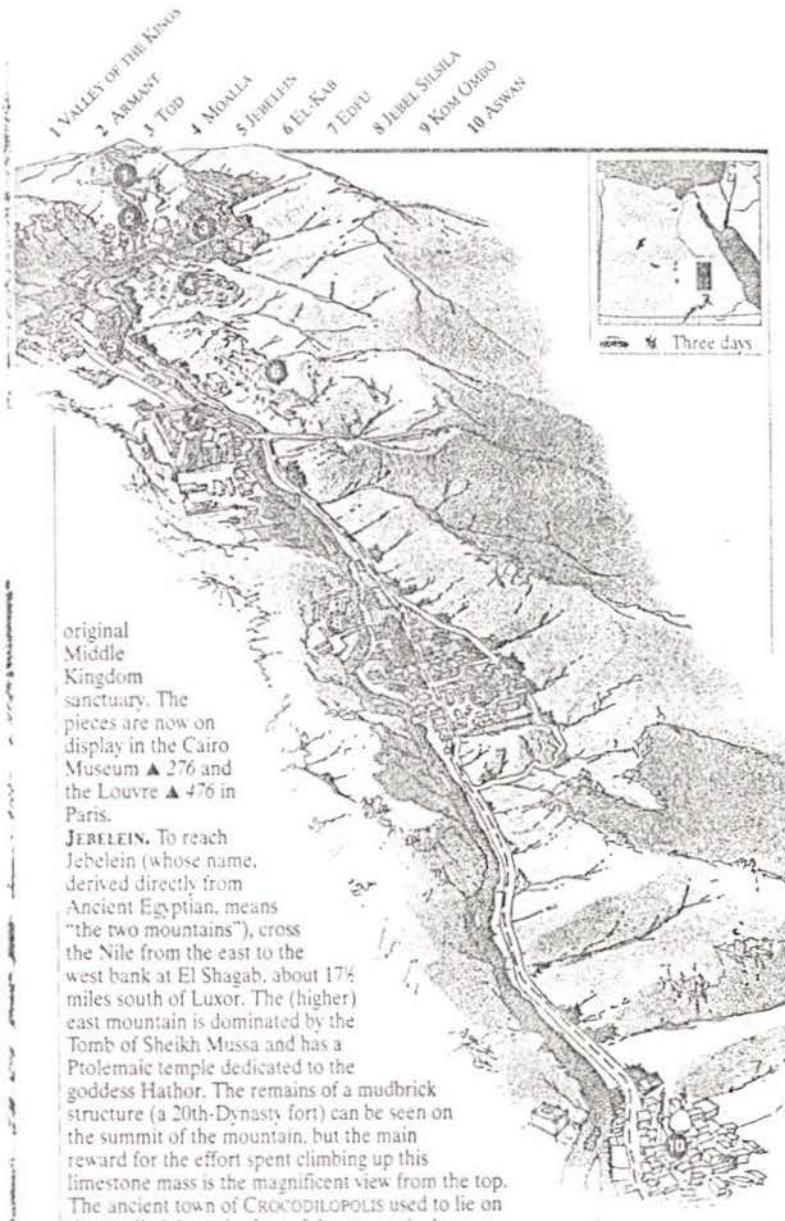
Detail of hieroglyphs and general view of the ruined Temple of Tod.

TOD. Across the Nile from Armant, on the edge of the Arabian Desert, the village of Tod stands on an ancient site which is still mostly buried beneath its houses. Although the first religious settlement dates back to the Old Kingdom, the temple (as it stands today) and sacred lake date from the Ptolemaic period. At the back of the temple, in the area of the pronaos, are scenes commemorating its foundation. On the right the chapel-shrine of Thutmose III, designed to receive the sacred barque of Montu, houses a statue of the falcon-headed god surmounted by a solar disk, two *uraei* and two tall feathers. A vast hoard of treasure consisting of gold and silver ingots, silver chalices and lapis lazuli was found in four chests buried beneath the original Middle Kingdom sanctuary. The pieces are now on display in the Cairo Museum ▲ *276* and the Louvre ▲ *476* in Paris.



Today little remains of the Temple of Cleopatra at Armant, since most of the blocks were reused to build the local sugar refinery.





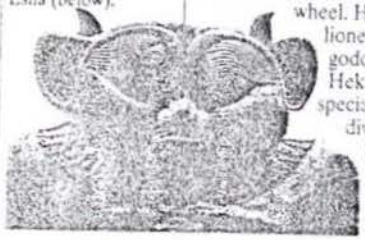
JEBELEIN. To reach Jebelein (whose name, derived directly from Ancient Egyptian, means "the two mountains"), cross the Nile from the east to the west bank at El Shagab, about 17½ miles south of Luxor. The (higher) east mountain is dominated by the Tomb of Sheikh Mussa and has a Ptolemaic temple dedicated to the goddess Hathor. The remains of a mudbrick structure (a 20th-Dynasty fort) can be seen on the summit of the mountain, but the main reward for the effort spent climbing up this limestone mass is the magnificent view from the top. The ancient town of CROCODILOPOLIS used to lie on the small plain at the foot of the mountain, but now only the necropolis remains, on the west mountain opposite. The tombs, which were built between the Middle Kingdom and the Ptolemaic period, have been repeatedly plundered and the site is strewn with debris. Across the Nile from Jebelein, at MOALLA, there are openings on the hillside which mark the entrances to tombs dating from the First Intermediate period and belonging to dignitaries who achieved a degree of independence from a centralized power weakened at the end of the Old Kingdom. A text from the tomb of the nomarch Ankhtifi explains the administration of the region during the famine that had occurred during this time.

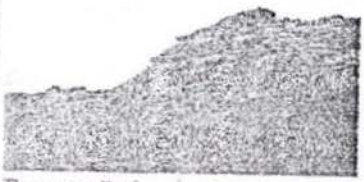
"The alien and mysterious Nile, that gigantic serpent that winds so fabulously, so ungraspably, back through history."
Rose Macauley,
Pleasures of Ruins

ESNA

A barrage lies just outside the town of Esna, which stands on the west bank of the Nile. The town's Greek name was Latopolis because the fish (*lates*), the embodiment of the goddess Neith, was its sacred animal. Esna became increasingly important during the 18th Dynasty when Egypt developed its commercial relations with the Sudan, and an Esna–Derr route was established. The original temple of Esna was built during the reign of Thutmose III. There was a renewal of interest in the town during the 26th Dynasty. Under the Ptolemies and the Romans it became the capital of the Third Nome of Upper Egypt and a second temple was built. Most of the edifice has remained unexplored since the modern town has developed on the site of the ancient city, and its roof, surrounded by modern urban development, is on a level with the floors of the houses. The temple was dedicated to the ram-god Khnum who, at the dawn of time, fashioned mankind from the mud of the Nile on his potter's wheel. His divine companions included the lioness Menhyt (his consort), Nebtu (the goddess of the countryside), and the god Heka (the manifestation of vital energy). A special place was reserved for the androgynous divinity Neith (represented armed with a bow and arrows) who, according to local mythology, was the primordial creator of the world.

TEMPLE OF ESNA
The hypostyle hall, the only part of the temple that has survived, dates from the reign of the Roman emperor Claudius. An image of the god Bes at Esna (below).





HYPOSTYLE HALL. The scenes and texts in the hypostyle hall, executed between the Graeco-Roman period and the reign of Decius in AD 250, were never completed. The style of the period is reflected in the bas-reliefs, whose figures have a more rounded appearance. The rectangular hall (the roof is still intact) opens to the west through an entrance flanked by columns. Inside, a wide variety of scenes illustrating the surrounding countryside is depicted on the capitals of twenty-four columns, while the shafts are reserved for images of the town's three main festivals: the creation of the universe by Neith, the raising of the sky by Khnum, and his victory over the human rebels. The columns support a ceiling, on which all these events are circumscribed by the course of the sun and the constellations. Outside the hall, on the frame of one of the lateral doors of the façade, two cryptographic texts dedicated to Khnum and Neith use only two (ram and crocodile) hieroglyphs.

The necropolis of El-Kab. The entrances to the excavated tombs can be seen on the mountainside.

Coptic statues found among the ruins of the Temple of Esna, which was converted into a church.





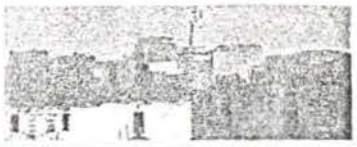


Fresco from the tomb of Paheri, grandson of Ahmose and nomarch of Nekheb, representing scenes from everyday life.



EL-KAB

From the pre-Dynastic period two religious centers developed in the region of El-Kab, one on either side of the River Nile. On the east bank, near the shores of the river, stood the ancient Egyptian city of Nekheb (the Greek city of Eileithyiapolis) and, on the west bank, ancient Nekhen (the Greek city of Hieraconpolis) also known as Kom el-Ahmar ("the red hill") where vast pre-Dynastic cemeteries stretch across the desert. Nekheb el-Kab, one of the oldest towns in Upper Egypt, was placed under the protection of the vulture-goddess Nekhbet. She was also known as "the white goddess" because she offers the White Crown of the south to the pharaoh and presides over royal and divine births. When the capital was moved to Memphis, El-Kab lost its importance even though it was the birthplace of the noble Middle Empire families who reconquered the country after the Hyksos invasion ● *40*. Two sectors of El-Kab lie on a vast plain situated at the mouth of a *wadi*. The first, the town proper, includes temples, a *mamissi* (birth house) and a sacred lake (now a large depression to the east of the town) protected by a thick brick enclosure wall (1,740 feet square) with lateral gates. Today visitors use the west entrance, which provides the opportunity to see various architectural elements. In a smaller enclosure is the main temple dedicated to Nekhbet, a religious establishment dating from the Old Kingdom which was maintained and then converted at the beginning of the New Kingdom until the 30th Dynasty. In front of this crumbling temple the remains of the *mamissi* dedicated to Nekhbet (the embodiment of Hathor) can still be seen. The second sector is centered around the necropolis, on a rocky outcrop. The most important tombs (those of Ahmose, Renni, Paheri and Se date from the 18th Dynasty and the Ramesside period.





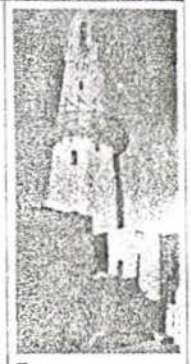
THE GOD HORUS
The Temple of Edfu is inhabited by the falcon-headed god Horus, also depicted crowned with a solar disk whose two spread wings represent the falcon soaring in the skies. As the protector and divine symbol of royalty, the falcon is associated with Re, the solar star, and becomes the guarantor of universal cosmic harmony. The Temple of Horus at Edfu is a fine example of a typical temple layout which is best understood by working inward from the entrance to the sanctuary (or naos) situated in the darkest and most secret recesses of the temple. As well as being a place for the daily worship of the god, the temple was also the focal point of the great annual festivals which constituted the official ceremonies of Horus, as evidenced by the Egyptian calendar. The festival of the coronation guaranteed the annual renewal of Horus' royal status and reaffirmed the power of his earthly representative, the pharaoh, and was held on the esplanade in front of the first pylon. Every year a falcon was chosen for the occasion from a sacred aviary in the Temple of the Falcon (now destroyed).

TEMPLE OF THOTH. Leave the tombs on the left and follow the *wadi* (about 1½ miles) to the Temple of Thoth. The chapel was built by Setau, viceroy of Nubia, during the reign of Ramesses II at the place known locally as El-Hammam ("the bath"). A nearby cave-temple in the mountainside is dedicated to Nekhbet, who was transformed into the lioness Hathor-Tefnut. According to an ancient myth, the disappearance of the moon is linked to the lioness' flight into the desert, from where she was brought back into Egypt after being pacified by the god Thoth. A flight of steps carved out of the rock leads to the Ptolemaic speos. Two vestibules lead into a small, rock-cut chamber with a vaulted ceiling. The temple was converted into a Coptic monastery during the Christian era. Further along the *wadi* is the crag known as "Vulture Rock", which is covered with drawings and inscriptions, some dating from prehistoric times. Beyond the rock is the TEMPLE OF AMENHOTEP III, dedicated to Nekhbet-Hathor. The portico of the façade has disappeared, and one enters the temple directly. The reliefs were mutilated by Amenhotep IV and then restored by Sety I.

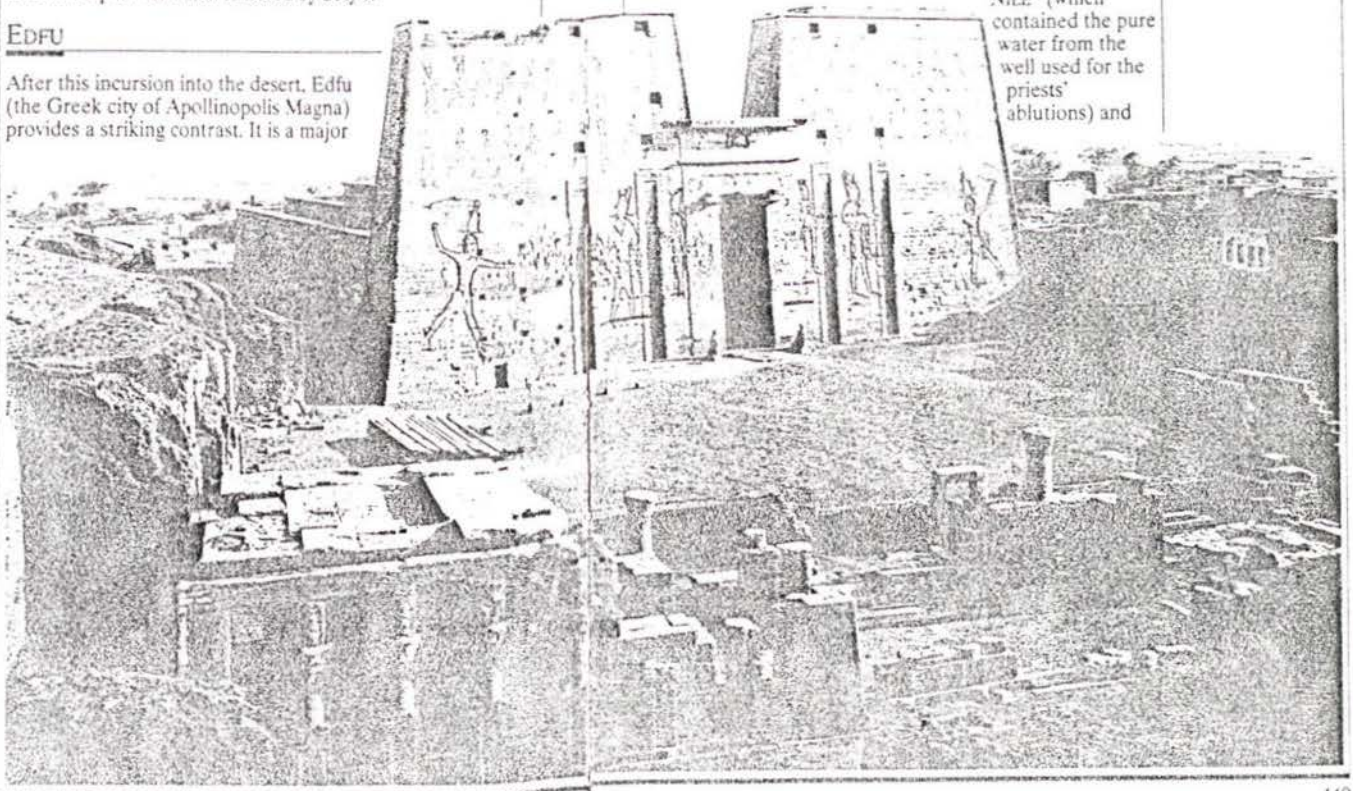
EDFU

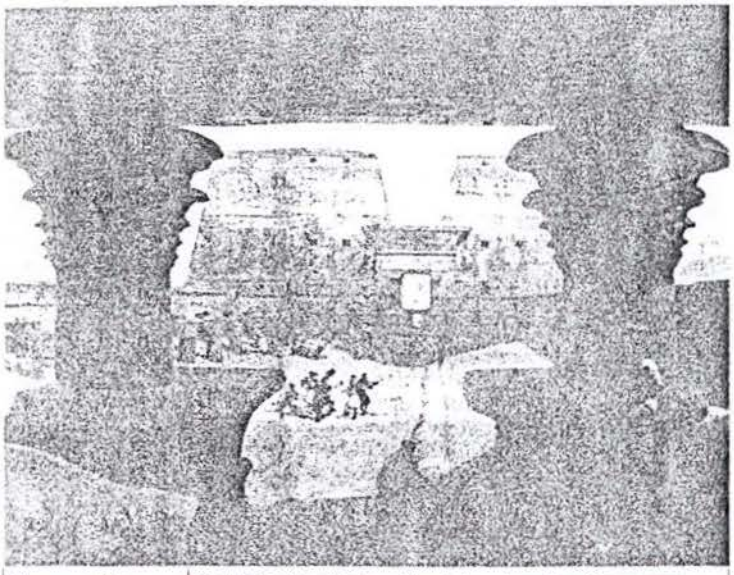
After this incursion into the desert, Edfu (the Greek city of Apollinopolis Magna) provides a striking contrast. It is a major religious and commercial center which stands at the nucleus of the road network and the end of the desert and gold-mine routes. The pile of rubble to the west of the Temple of Horus is probably the original site of the village of DJEBA. Although French and Polish teams were keen to excavate the site and have uncovered Old Kingdom mastabas and Byzantine houses, the nerve center of the town is undisputedly the temple of the falcon-god Horus.

TEMPLE OF HORUS. Access to the site is from the back of the temple. There has been a succession of structures built on this sacred site from prehistoric times (when the falcon-god was housed in a wicker hut) to the New Kingdom. The temple owes its imposing appearance to Ptolemy III Euergetes who began to rebuild the original temple completely in 237 BC. The work was not completed until 57 BC. Today visitors pass beneath the pylon and cross the court bordered on three sides by a colonnaded portico. Beyond the court is the FIRST HYPOSTYLE HALL (or pronaos) whose façade honors Horus and Hathor and whose gates were opened only for festivals. The high priest used to enter the temple through this gate and purify himself in the "ROBING ROOM" (on the left of the entrance to the pronaos) before taking the papyrus bearing the day's order of worship from the library (on the right of the entrance). The SECOND HYPOSTYLE HALL, darker than the first, opens, on the west side, onto the "CHAMBER OF THE NILE" (which contained the pure water from the well used for the priests' ablutions) and



EDFU
The Temple of Edfu, one of the best-preserved temples in Egypt, stands in the center of the town (details above).





The court of the temple is bordered to the south, east and west by identical colonnaded galleries with "open" capitals. The columns in the same gallery are all different.



HYPOSTYLE HALL On the columns were images of the various divinities of the nome to whom offerings were made and who represented all the sanctuaries of Egypt. The south and west walls illustrate the ritual of the founding of the temple. The king is seen choosing the site with the goddess Seshat (crowned with a star), marking out the boundary with a cord and stakes, digging the foundations and filling them with sand before dedicating the divine residence to its master, Horus.

the "laboratory" (where the ointments and perfumes were prepared for the daily anointment of the statue). On the opposite (east) side it opens onto the treasure-house where valuable and religious items were kept. Then comes the OFFERING HALL where food offered to the god was placed on dressers and altars and from where staircases led up to the temple terrace. On certain occasions (transitional periods such as the Festival of the New Year) the god had to be united with the solar disk in the "Court of the New Year", which opened off the so-called "Pure Place" (whose ceiling traced the voyage of the solar barque through the Twelve Hours of the day). The statue, the god's earthly medium, had to be recharged with divine energy by being carried up the side staircase to the temple terrace; here it was exposed to the sun's rays before being taken down again by the opposite staircase. The bas-reliefs on the walls of these staircases show the procession of priests and standard-bearers carrying the cases containing the god's statues up to the court of the New Year on one side and down again on the other. The vestibule opens onto the SANCTUARY and its stone naos, which also contained the sacred barque of Horus. The god (his statue) residing in the temple enjoyed the services of the priests who woke him each morning, dressed him, offered him meals and sang hymns in his honor. They returned in the evening to prepare the god for the night's repose. A corridor ran round the outside of the naos to various CHAPELS reserved for special rites, for storing the cloth used to clothe the god's statues and to welcome divinities, including Hathor, who usually resided in Dendera ▲ *388*. Her visit to her husband, the Horus falcon, for a fortnight every year was an occasion for great public celebration, and the two gods emerged regenerated from this encounter (the "Feast of the Beautiful Meeting").





Leave the darkness of the sanctuary and make your way to the inner, eastern section of the enclosure wall on which the sun-god is depicted destroying his enemies. These events were performed as part of an annual ritual known as the "Triumph of Horus", which ended with Horus seizing power and taking possession of his earthly heritage. The ritual of the "ten harpoons" (which ended with the slaying of the hippopotamus, the symbol of Seth, enemy of the sun and Horus) and Horus sailing victoriously on the sacred lake of Edfu (now buried beneath the village to the east of the temple) were the two main elements of the festival. Another annual ritual performed in the MAMISSI situated in the forecourt of the great temple was the birth scene of the divine child Harsomtus, the son of Horus and Hathor, in the form of the god "Horus who unites the Two Lands", embodied on earth by the pharaoh Horus.

JEBEL SILSILA. About 90 miles south of Edfu, the Nile flows between the rocky shores of Jebel Silsila ("the mountain of the chain"). According to legend, the river was once barred at this point by a chain stretching between two rocks on either side of the river. Jebel Silsila marks the boundary of the Egyptian region of Nubia where the Nile was believed to rise and where the Nile god was worshipped. The site was quarried early on in history because of the excellent quality of the sandstone and the proximity of the Nile. The vast sandstone quarries on the eastern shore provided the stone for the monuments of Dendera ▲ *388*, Thebes ▲ *394*, Esna ▲ *446*, Edfu and Kom Ombo. Three thousand workers toiled to provide stone for the Ramesseum ▲ *432*. Quarrymen's marks and inscriptions provide evidence of the gargantuan tasks carried out by the Pharaonic workforce: the great STELE OF AKHENATEN, for example, hewn out of the rock north of the shore. Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten) ▲ *378* worshipped Amun here (at the beginning of his reign) and the inscription below the stele indicates that a large workforce brought back stone for the sanctuary of Karnak ▲ *404*. Closer to the shore are the remains of a great (unfinished) sandstone sphinx and a chapel of Amenhotep III.

JEBEL SILSILA QUARRIES Many of the (mostly open) quarry faces are as much as 65 feet high. The stone was quarried from a straight or echeloned face (above). The quarry on the eastern shore was worked from the 18th Dynasty to the Graeco-Roman period. The quarry was abandoned in AD 200 and was only reopened in 1906 when the Esna barrage was built.

View of the rock-cut grottos at the entrance to the ancient quarries.





WEST BANK

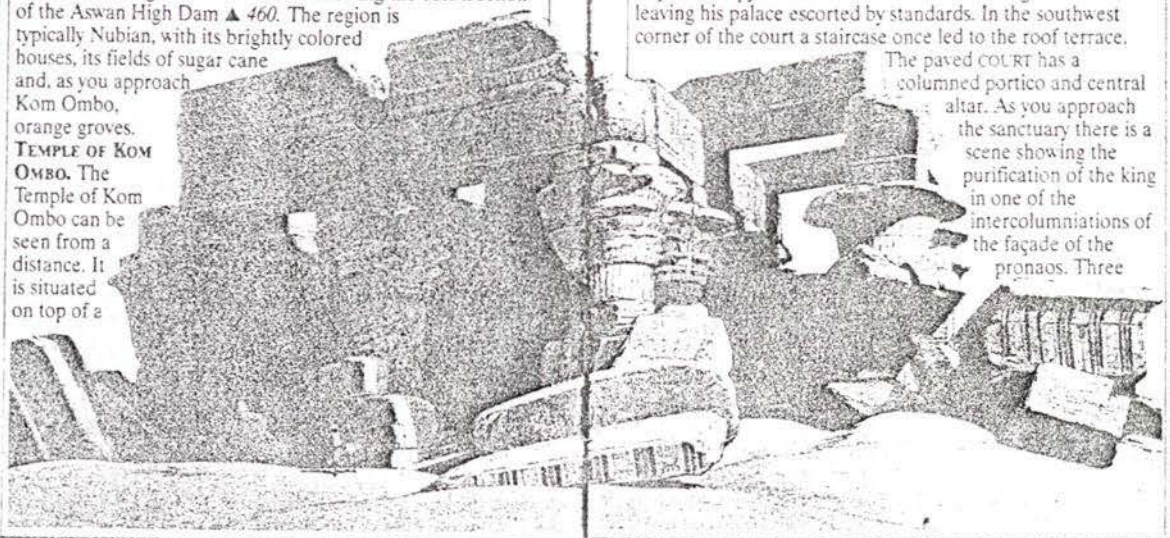
The west bank can now be reached along the road which runs from Edfu, along the canalized section of the Nile, to the old Aswan ▲ *456* dam. Although it, too, has quarries, it is first and foremost the site of a speos and the Nile shrines. The largest SHRINES were built by Sety I, Ramesses II and Merneptah and there is also a stele of Ramesses III with its hymn to the Nile. The kings made offerings during the festivals held in honor of the Nile floods.

SPEOS OF HOREMHEB. The façade of the speos (with its five openings formed by four pillars) is visible from a distance. At one time a flight of steps climbed from the river to a forecourt. The speos itself consists of a vaulted, transverse hall whose far wall opens onto the sanctuary containing seven statues, including Amun (in the center) and Horemheb. The decoration was completed during the reign of Ramesses II. On the southwest wall Horemheb is shown being suckled by the goddess Taweret (represented by a hippopotamus, the embodiment of the Nile and its life-giving floods) who imparts her divine strength and power in her milk, thus enabling him to vanquish the Nubian enemy. As you leave the speos of Horemheb, follow the river south to the great stelae which consecrate offerings from Ramesses III, Ramesses V and Shoshenq I to the gods of Thebes, Heliopolis and Memphis. Beyond the stelae some of the small chapels which line the route (the chapel of Sennefer, for example) are in fact tombs, although most are commemorative monuments erected in honor of the Nile.

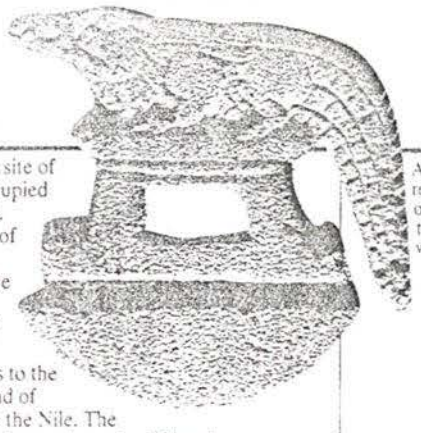
KOM OMBO

The road continues southward along the east bank to Kom Ombo, passing through the villages of New Nubia, where some of the Nubian refugees were relocated when their homes and villages were drowned following the construction of the Aswan High Dam ▲ *460*. The region is typically Nubian, with its brightly colored houses, its fields of sugar cane and, as you approach Kom Ombo, orange groves.

TEMPLE OF KOM OMBO. The Temple of Kom Ombo can be seen from a distance. It is situated on top of a hillock, on the ancient site of Ombos, which was occupied from prehistoric times. The elevated position of the temple offers a splendid view (from the terrace, facing away from the sanctuary) of the modern village of Kom Ombo, which lies to the east, opposite the island of Mansuria on a bend in the Nile. The great temple has some impressive ruins. When it was abandoned by the priests, it was engulfed by sand (the color of the stone is an indication of the level of sand on the inside). The Copts who inhabited it destroyed some of the reliefs, before the edifice was used as a quarry. Finally the Nile completed its destruction by eroding part of the temple's ancient terrace. In spite of the ravages of time and mankind, it is difficult to remain indifferent to the beauty of the site. One very singular feature of the temple's layout and elevation is the double row of doors leading to a DOUBLE SANCTUARY, which is emphasized by a wall-cum-screen separating the two sections. The northern section is dedicated to the falcon-god Harwer, or "Horus the Elder", and the southern section to the crocodile-god Sobek. The two gods are accompanied by their "families": Harwer's wife Tesentnefert ("the Good Sister") and son Panebtawy ("Lord of the Two Lands") and Sobek's consort Hathor and son Khonsu, although the two triads often tend to merge and combine in an extremely complex theology. The overall layout is that of a divine temple during the Ptolemaic period. A few foundations are all that remain of the PYLON whose southern section develops the theme of the king entering the temple, followed by spirits bearing the products of the land of Egypt and the Sobek triad. Beyond the pylon and inside the court the king is shown leaving his palace escorted by standards. In the southwest corner of the court a staircase once led to the roof terrace.



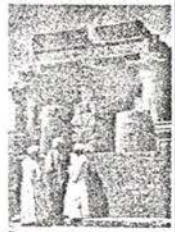
The paved COURT has a columned portico and central altar. As you approach the sanctuary there is a scene showing the purification of the king in one of the intercolumniations of the façade of the pronaos. Three



A crocodile relief on one of the temple walls.

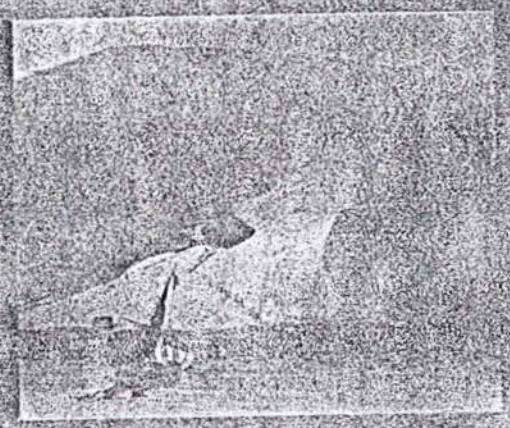






CITY OF GOLD

The name Kom Ombo (the ancient Greek settlement of Ombos) is derived from the Ancient Egyptian word *nubt*, which means "city of gold". In fact the town occupied a strategic position at the mouth of the *wadis*, which led to the regions in which gold was mined.

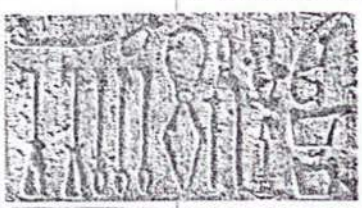


ASWAN
ASWAN HIGH DAM
PHILAE
ABU SIMBEL



OFFERINGS
It was the pharaoh's duty to uphold the worship of the gods and present them with offerings in return for their protection. These offerings are usually depicted in the lower register of temple decorations.

columns with composite capitals flanking the door of the PRONAOS are inscribed with the motifs of the lotus (south) and the papyrus (north), the symbols of the Two Lands. Inside the pronaos the arrangement of the capitals echoes this duality with the exception of one (southwest) column, while the intercolumniations illustrate the king's coronation. The ceiling is decorated with astronomical images, and the scenes on the walls of the hall show the king's purification and his consecration of the temple. On the west wall of the papyrus-columned HYPOSTYLE HALL, between the two doors of the central axis, is an inventory of the sacred places of Egypt, the gods of the main towns and the local and national festivals. In the next room the construction and foundation of the temple are prefaced by a scene showing the goddess Seshat "stretching the cord". This is followed by the purification of the newly erected temple where the king is shown throwing grains of natron. Traces of circles on the paving in front of the entrance to the hall indicate the original position of the offering table. In the OFFERING HALL, a lion goddess, appointed to oversee the offerings made on each day of the year, was accompanied by bull- or ram-headed spirits. Only the south staircase leading to the roof terrace (where the temple statues were exposed to the sun) remains. In the last room before the sanctuary were the statues of the gods and the temple-builder kings who were worshipped there. Although the "Court of the New Year" (to the north of the last room) no longer exists, part of the ceiling of the "Pure Place" (where the statue was dressed for the Festival of the New Year) still remains, decorated with two images of the sky-goddess Nut. On the body of the first are winged solar disks and, on the second, the different phases of the moon, while a barque of the night sails between the two. The pedestals that once supported the sacred barques and some of the chapels of the sanctuary can still be seen. To the south of the temple the CHAPEL dedicated to HATHOR by Domitian houses the crocodile mummies from the nearby crocodile necropolis (about half a mile to the southeast) and some recently discovered sarcophagi. The *mamissi* near the pylon of the temple has been largely destroyed.





SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS
On the inner face of the second enclosure wall is a unique illustration of several surgical instruments. These Roman instruments should be related to the healing powers usually associated with Harwer.



ECONOMIC INDICATORS

	1991	1992	1993
GDP (E£ million)	50,780	50,948	51,473
Imports (US$ million)	9,831	8,901	9,923
Exports (US$ million)	3,856	3,400	3,243
Trade Balance (US$ million)	-5,975	-5,501	-6,680
Foreign Debt (US$ billion)	41.02	40.52	40.63
Inflation (%)	19.7	13.7	12.0
Population (million)	53.92	55.16	56.49

Source: IMF

- The need for higher expenditures on job creation and on the military.
- Defending the currency will mean higher interest rates than the 11% which prevailed in late 1994, which might deter new borrowing and investment in productive enterprise. IMF will also not be pleased with a high exchange rate for the Egyptian pound.
- Tourism will remain depressed as a result of the publicity given to terrorism against tourist targets. With one job in ten dependent on tourism this situation will inevitably slow the economy.
- Long-term economic problems will cure only slowly – ie unemployment at 17.5% of workforce and low productivity of employed labour.
- Manufacturers in Egypt will face a greater governmental policy emphasis on environmental protection. A new law is expected and there will be a need for all new projects to undergo environmental impact assessments.

Despite this list of caveats, there is a useful and growing economy to be found in an economically buoyant Egypt. Disposable incomes are at last beginning to rise appreciably in what after all is a large and youthful country. Egypt looks in the year ahead to be more favourably placed for economic growth than several of the larger Middle Eastern oil-exporting economies because of its diversified base.

The opportunities for Egypt to make negotiated inroads into the EU market through attachment to a Mediterranean oriented policy are very considerable and will grow exponentially over time. It is early days yet but it is clear that the EU needs to coopt Egypt if it is to succeed in the political stabilization of its southern flank in the face of the threat of extreme Islamism. The EU too officially now sees North Africa as a natural prolongation of its interests in the Mediterranean.

Beyond the EU, Egypt has another powerful political and economic patron – the USA. Favourable treatment of Egypt by the USA in defence, technology and investment does no harm to Egypt's economic prospects and has the bonus of guaranteeing a steady commitment to reform within the country which might otherwise be very much neglected.

The question of political stability of the State as a context for economic growth has obvious thorny aspects. But they are generally overstated by the media. The régime has its brittle aspects and is less legitimate in a democratic sense than most Egyptian intellectuals would like. Reliance on a single charismatic leader with powers concentrated in his hands is to an extent outdated in a global though not in a Middle Eastern context. But beyond individuals in power, the Egyptian ruling elite and the régime that represents it has as deep a stability now as at any time since 1970. Thus the prospects for steady growth should not be undermined by significant political upheavals in the immediate future.

CAIRO

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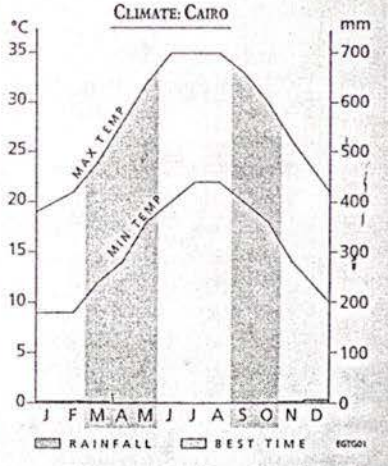
Cairo today is the result of many different cities which have been built on top of one another over the centuries and a cosmopolitan population with connections far beyond the Arab world. It is a teeming mega-city with an estimated 13 million people living in a fabric designed for 2 million. Standing at the crossroads of Africa and the Middle East it has dominated the region for centuries.

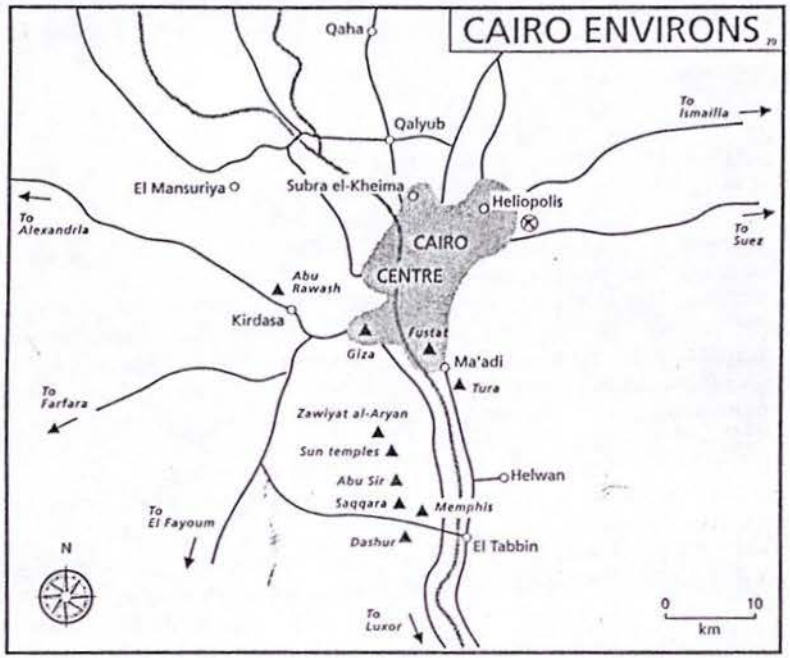
BASICS (*Pop* 13 million (1994); *Alt* 75m)

HISTORY

Since the Arab conquest in 641 AD most Egyptians have called both the city and the whole country **Misr** (pronounced Masr), which was the ancient Semitic name for Egypt and was also mentioned in the Koran. Having rejected Alexandria as the capital of his Egyptian province, because it was considered a Christian stronghold, the Arabs chose **Fustat** (encampment) in the middle of modern-day Cairo as their administrative and military capital. Consequently Cairo rapidly grew in size and importance and it is thought that the name Misr was used in order to distinguish the new city from the many other towns called Fustat in the Arab world. **Al-Qahira** (the Conqueror), which is the city's official but less commonly used name, is derived from Al-Qahir (Mars) because the planet was in ascendance when the Fatimids started the construction of their new city in 971 AD. **Cairo** was the Latin version of the name which was given to the city in mediaeval times and has since stuck.

Although the city of Cairo is younger than Alexandria the surrounding region has a very ancient and impressive past. **Memphis**, which lies 15 km S of Cairo across the Nile, was established as the capital in 3100 BC because of its geographical and symbolic position in

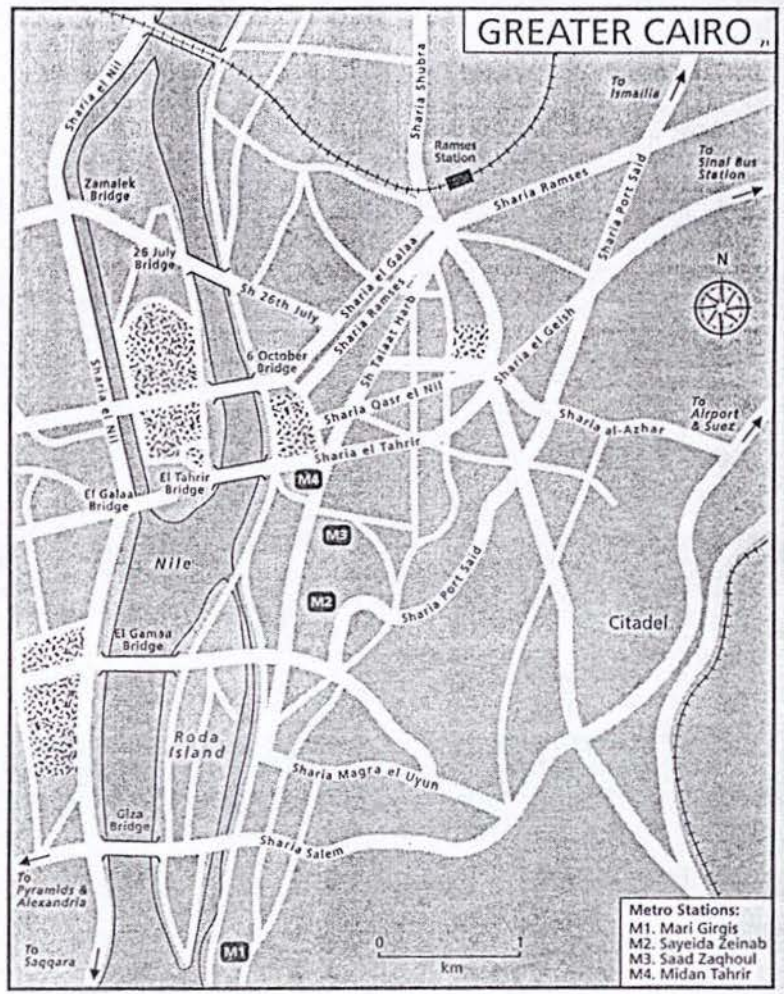




controlling both Upper and Lower Egypt. It was during this period that the huge necropolis was developed across the river on the W bank first at Saqqara and then at the site of modern-day Giza where the largest pyramids were built (see Pyramids, page 164).

Memphis was temporarily eclipsed by the new capital of **Thebes** (Luxor) during the New Kingdom. Then another cult centre known as On, or **Heliopolis** to the Greeks and later Aïn Shams (Spring of the Sun) by the Arabs, was developed further N when a canal was cut between the Nile and the Red Sea. Although the gradual westward movement of the Nile left it stranded and miles from the river, a small E bank fortress which became known as **Babylon in Egypt**, was expanded during the Persian occupation (525-404 BC). At the time of the Roman occupation in 30 BC the fortress had been deserted and Memphis was still the country's second city after Alexandria. Recognizing the strategic importance of the site, the emperor Trajan (98-117 AD) rebuilt and reinforced Babylon and a thriving town soon sprung up around its walls. During the subsequent Christian era Memphis was completely abandoned and never rose again, while Babylon became the seat of the bishopric and the W bank village of Giza grew into a large town.

When the **Arabs** conquered Egypt in 641 AD, they were given specific instructions by Khalifa Omar in Damascus to establish their administrative capital in Babylon rather than at the larger Alexandria. His general Amr Ibn Al-As built his encampment (or Fustat) in the middle of a deserted triangular plain on the E bank which was bounded by Babylon in the S, Aïn Shams (ancient Heliopolis) to the NE and Al-Maks (the Customs Point), which was the Arab name for Heliopolis' former port of Tendunyas and is now the site of Ramses Station, to the NW. The Amr mosque was the first of a number of new and

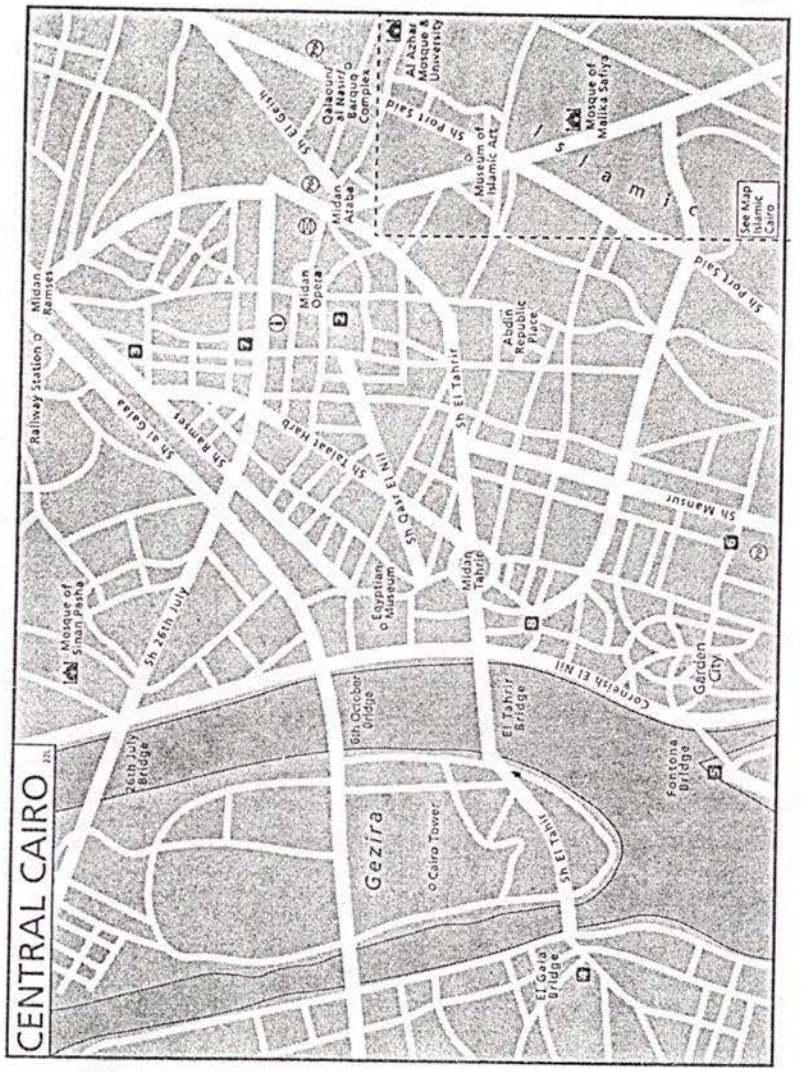


permanent buildings which were erected as the plain filled up and the foundations of modern Cairo were laid.

Under successive Muslim dynasties additions were made to the area as new mini-cities, each to the NE of the previous one, were built. By the time the Fatimid heretical Shi'a invaders arrived from North Africa in 969 AD, under the military command of Gohar, only the S of the plain had been developed. He therefore chose to build a new walled city, (which included the Al-Azhar mosque, palaces, pavilions and gardens for the sole use of the Khalifa, his family and retainers), about 1½ km N of the Fustat complex and called it Al-Qahira. Two centuries later in 1168 AD calamity struck the Fustat area when, fearing occupation by the invading Crusaders, the Egyptian wazir Shawar set fire to the city. Over 54 days the fire almost totally destroyed Fustat whose inhabitants fled with most building temporary houses around Al-Qahira. 3 years later the last Fatimid khalifa died and his wazir, the

Kurdish-born **Salah al-Din**, assumed control of the country and founded the Sunni Muslim orthodox Ayyubid Dynasty (1171-1249 AD). He expelled the royal family from Al-Qahira which he opened to the public and it soon became the commercial and cultural centre of the metropolis.

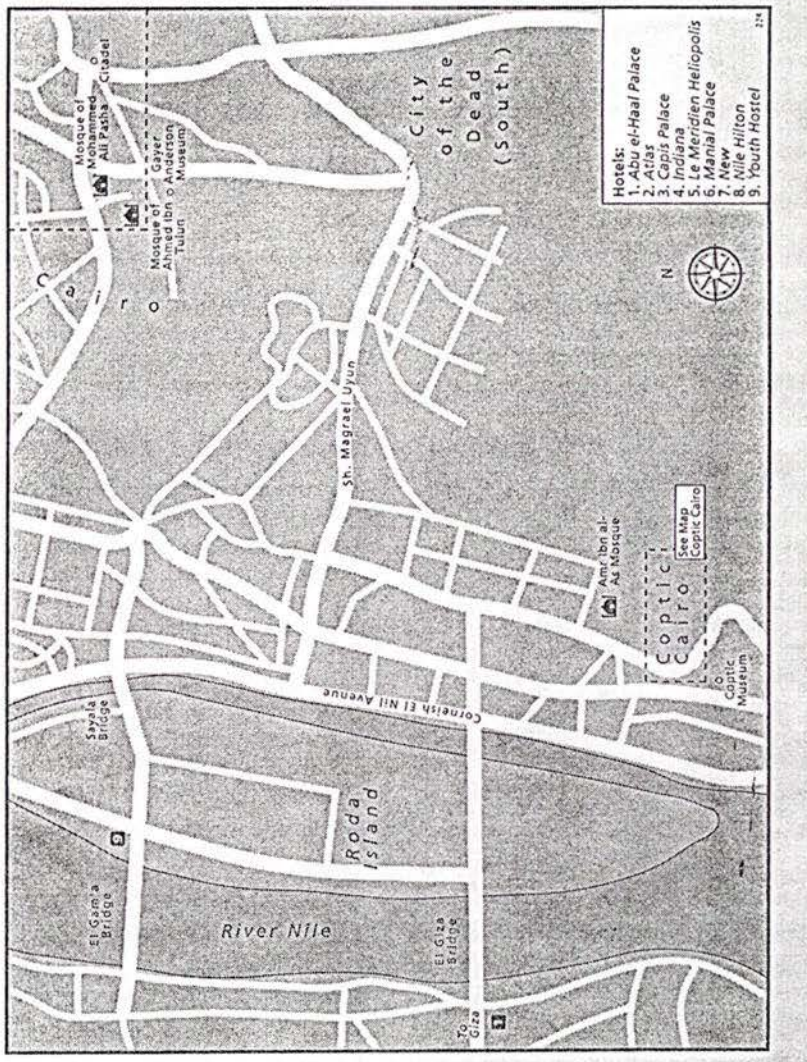
Salah al-Din actually only spent 8 years of his 24 years reign in Cairo. Much of his time was spent fighting abroad where he recaptured Syria and finally Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187 and finally died in Damascus in 1193. He expanded the walls surrounding the Fatimid city and in the SE built a huge **Citadel**, which became the city's nucleus, on an outcrop of the Muqattam Hills. Under Mamluke rule (1250-1517 AD) the city grew rapidly to become the largest city in the Arab world. As the E bank of the Nile continued to silt up, the



newly elevated areas provided additional space which could be developed to house the expanding population.

Under the **Ottomans** (1517-1798 AD) both Cairo and Alexandria were relegated to the position of mere provincial cities with little in the way of public building undertaken in the whole of the 17th and 18th centuries. This changed, however, with the combination of the arrival of the French in 1798 and the coming to power in 1805 of the Albanian-born Ottoman officer Mohamed Ali. As part of his ambitious plan to drag Egypt into the modern world by introducing the best that Europe had to offer, he embarked on a project which included a huge public building programme in Cairo which was turned into a large modern capital city.

The combination of very rapid population growth and extensive rural-urban



migration to the city, particularly since WW2, has totally overwhelmed Cairo. It has totally outgrown its infrastructure and today a city, intended to house only 2 million people, is home to over 13 million. The result is that the transport, power, water and sewage systems are completely inadequate and hundreds of thousands live on the streets or wherever they can find shelter including the infamous 'Cities of the Dead' cemeteries. What is amazing is that, despite all its problems, this ancient city actually functions as well as it does and that in adversity the Cairenes are so good natured and friendly.

ON ARRIVAL

As one of the world's most crowded and noisy cities, arriving in Cairo can initially seem a very daunting experience. Independent travellers, without the advantage of being met at the airport, have to cope with the problems of finding the way to their hotel and must fend off the unsolicited offers of cheap hotels and taxi rides. The best thing to do is to refuse all offers of help, except from official sources, having worked out in advance where you are going and how you are going to get there.

ACCESS **Air** Cairo International Airport, 15 km NE of Midan Tahrir (Tahrir Sq) in downtown Cairo, has two terminals which are about 3 km apart. The new Terminal 2 is used by most of the Western airlines while Terminal 1, which is the old airport, is used by Egyptair and all of the other airlines who cannot or will not pay the higher landing charges. **Transport to town: Taxis** are available immediately on exit from customs for E£40 (check current official fare from airline or airport official). A fixed price **limousine service** taxi at E£20/head for a max of 4 people (check before you get in) leaves from Misr Travel's stand at Terminal 1. The **airport service bus** drops a minimum of 5 passengers at any central Cairo hotel at E£20/head and E£25 for Giza. The cheaper and easier way, costing less than E£1, is bus No 410 to Midan Ataba or the No 400 bus every 30 mins or No 27 minibus every hour from Terminal 1 to the bus terminal at Midan Tahrir which is right in the centre of the city. From here one can get transport to everywhere else in Cairo.

Train All trains arrive at Ramses Station, with different sections for Nile Valley and Delta tracks. It is at the N end of downtown Cairo about 2 km from Midan Tahrir which can most easily be reached by metro (2 stops) although bus (No 95) or taxi can also be taken.

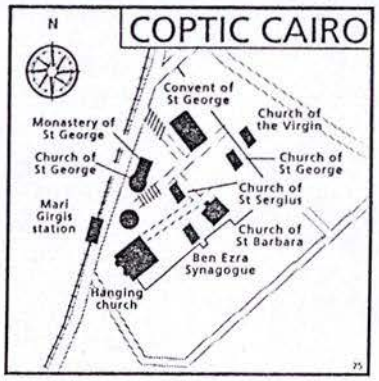
Road Bus: long-distance buses arrive at Sinai Bus Station, also known as Abbassiya Station, about 5 km NE of Midan Tahrir which can be reached by the cheap No 32 minibus or taxi from outside the terminal (expect to pay E£5 to get downtown). Buses from Luxor and Hurghada arrive at the Ahmed Helmi Terminal behind Ramses Station. The city's other two arrival points are the Koulali Terminal, in front of the Ramses Station, for buses from the Suez Canal Zone and the Delta while the Al-Azhar Terminal for those from the Western Desert, is about 450m E of Midan Ataba which is only one stop from both Midan Tahrir and Ramses Station.

PLACES OF INTEREST

It certainly makes sense, if time permits, to visit the major sights of this area in chronological order. Therefore, rather than rushing to the large and exhausting Egyptian Museum, start outside the city at the pyramids and trace their development from the earliest in Saqqara to the splendours of Giza (see separate section **The Pyramids**, page 164). In Cairo city there are few remains from the pre-Christian era other than in the Egyptian Museum, so the logical sequence of visits would be – **Coptic Cairo** in the ancient fortress of Babylon-in-Egypt; the mosques, cemeteries and souks of **Islamic Cairo**; and the modern sites and museums of **Contemporary Cairo**.

Coptic Cairo

This settlement was constructed by the Persians in about 500 BC to guard the



junction of the Nile and the canal linking it to the Red Sea. During the Christian period the fortified settlement of Babylon-in-Egypt grew into a large town. It was perhaps named by the fort's homesick building workers from modern-day Iraq or from the name for Gate of Heliopolis (Bab-il-On). Later the Arabs called it Qasr al-Sham'ah (Fortress of the Beacon). Whatever its origins it is now known, not entirely accurately, as Coptic Cairo.

Copts – The native Christians of Egypt

The Copts take their name from a corruption of the Greek word *aigupioi* for Egyptian. The Copts were concentrated in the region from Girga to Assuit and had a community in old Cairo until recently. Now many have moved to the metropolitan area of Cairo and its suburbs. The number of Christians of all kinds in contemporary Egypt is put officially at 3.5 million but is thought to be much larger (5.85 million) of which the majority (4.4 million) are of the Coptic Church. There are also some 90,000 members of the Alexandrian rite, affiliated to Rome and quite separate from the Coptic Church proper.

The Coptic language is no longer spoken. It originated from the language spoken in Egypt in the early Christian era, at that time written in Greek characters. Although there were regional variations in the Coptic language, by the 5th century AD they had merged into a form universal throughout Egypt. The language has been in disuse since the 16th century as a working language though it survived in use in religious rituals. Arabic is the language of the Coptic church services. The Coptic Church is close in belief and form to the Armenian, Ethiopian and Syrian Orthodox rites and differs from Rome which believe in the dual nature of Christ and God while the Copts believe in the unity of the two. The Arab invasion of Egypt in the 7th century put the Coptic Church under siege and made it a minority religion in the country. It survived, however, despite some persecution.

The Coptic Church is led by the patriarch of Alexandria and all Egypt from Cairo with twelve bishops. The Church runs a series of Coptic Churches and monasteries throughout the country and has a foundation in Jerusalem. The Copts are heirs to a rich Christian literature going back to the 3rd century AD. Egyptian governments have normally recognized the historical and religious importance of the Coptic community by giving cabinet posts to at least one of its members. The appointment of Boutros Boutros Ghali as Secretary General of the United Nations in Jan 1992 did much to highlight the strength of the Coptic role in Egypt.

MONTHS IN THE COPTIC CALENDAR

All the months have 30 days except Ayam el Nasite which has 5 or 6.

Kiyahk	Abib
Tuba	Misra
Amshir	Ayam el Nasite
Baramhat	Tut
Baramoda	Baba
Beshens	Hatur
Bauna	

ACCESS **Coptic Cairo** is located on the E bank of the river about 5 km S of Midan Tahrir opposite the S tip of Roda Island to which it was connected by a pontoon bridge. From Midan Tahrir there are taxis and buses (Nos 92, 93, 134 and 140) and the metro (a better option) to **Mari Girgis** (St George), four stops in the Helwan direction.

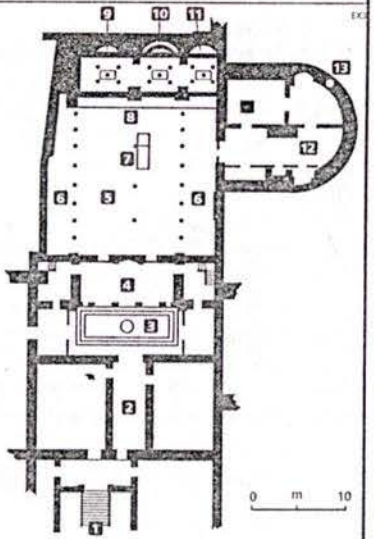
Leaving the station, one is confronted by two circular Roman towers which comprised the W gate of the fortress built on what was at that time the E bank of the Nile and on foundations now smothered beneath 10m of Nile silt and rubble. Much of the original fortress was demolished as part of extensive alterations and today only its towers and gates have survived. The new **Church of St George**, built in 1904 and the only circular church in Egypt, is actually on top of the N tower and is part of the **Monastery of St George**, which is the seat of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria, with the **Convent of St George**, the **Church of the Virgin** and the remains of the original fire-damaged **Church of St George** to the NE.

To the S of the Roman towers is the Church of the Virgin (Coptic masses held on Fri 0800-1100 and Sun 0700-1000), is better known as the **Hanging Church** (Al-Mu'allaqah or 'The Suspended') because it stands on top of the three stone piers of the semi-flooded Roman **Water Gate** from where the Melkite bishop Cyrus, the last Byzantine viceroy, fled by boat as the Muslim army arrived. The gate below the church is reached via a stairway behind the piers, by buying a ticket for the Coptic Museum.

The original church built in the 4th century was demolished in 840 AD by Ali Ibn Yahya who was the Armenian Governor. It was rebuilt in 977 AD and modified several times, most recently in 1775. The church is approached though a wonderful narrow courtyard from which steps lead, via a 19th century vestibule, to the church's entrance. It is divided into four naves by three rows of columns. The 13th century iconostasis, (wooden screen supporting icons) which separates the congregation from the three haikals (altar areas) behind the marble pulpit is an incredible feat of fine woodwork and appears virtually transparent. To the right of the altar is a room which overlooks one of the towers while to its left and right, two secret passageways lead down to the foundations. These recent discoveries are thought to be escape routes used by the Christians during times of persecution.

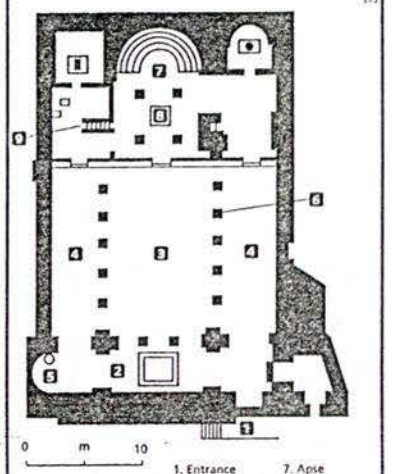
Immediately to the E of the main Roman towers is the 5th century **Church of St Sergius**, dedicated to two martyred soldiers, St Sergius and St Bacchus. It was rebuilt after having been virtually destroyed in the 8th century. The architecture of the church, which contains

CHURCH OF AL-MU'ALLAQAH (The Hanging Church)



1. Entrance from Sharia Mari Girgis
2. Passage
3. Covered courtyard
4. Narthex
5. Nave (wagon-vaulted)
6. Aisle
7. Pulpit
8. Altar Screen
9. Chapel of St.George
10. Sanctuary of Christ
11. Chapel of the Virgin
12. Sanctuary of the Three Altars
13. Baptistry

CHURCH OF ST SERGIUS



1. Entrance
2. Narthex
3. Nave
4. Aisle
5. Baptistry
6. Columns with Corinthian Capitals
7. Apse
8. Altar
9. Steps to Sanctuary of Holy Family

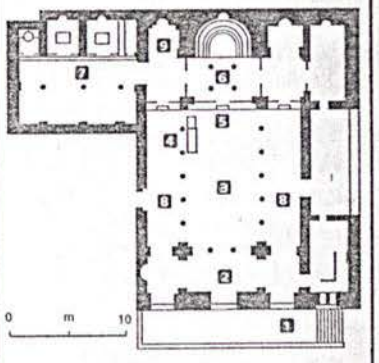
many antiques recovered from ancient monuments, follows the style of a traditional basilica with three naves divided by two rows of pillars. The altar is separated from the main part of the church by a 13th century wooden screen which has fine encrustations and beautiful ornamentation. The partially flooded crypt, the only remaining vestige of the original church, is intriguing because it is claimed that the Holy Family sought refuge there during their flight to Egypt and the places where they sat are still visible. There are two smaller chapels on either side of the altar.

Just behind the church of St Sergius is the very similar 11th century **Church of St Barbara** standing on the site of an older church dedicated to St Cyrus and St John which was destroyed during an Arab assault. The 3rd century's St Barbara's relics were brought to the church and are now contained in a lovely little chapel to the left of the altar. The iconostasis (screen) is another fine example of encrustation work and the wooden panel linking the columns is an equally characteristic example of delicate Coptic architecture.

Just to the S of the Church of St Barbara is the **Ben Ezra Synagogue** in the former 6th century Church of St Michael the Archangel, which itself had been built on the site of a synagogue destroyed by the Romans. In the 12th century it was sold back to the Jews by the Copts in order to raise funds to pay taxes being raised to finance the Ibn Tulun mosque. The synagogue is built in the basilica style with three naves and an altar hidden by doors, which are wonderfully worked and encrusted with ivory. When the synagogue was extensively repaired in the 19th century, medieval Hebrew manuscripts, known as the **Geniza documents** and providing details of the history of the 11th-16th centuries, were discovered.

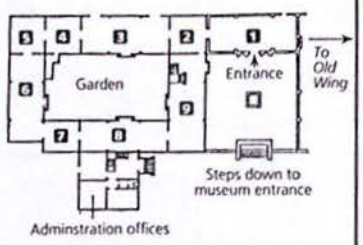
Beside the Hanging Church is the **Coptic Museum**, the other main tourist attraction in Coptic Cairo. It is closed on Sun but open Sat-Thur 0900-1600, Fri 0900-1100 and 1300-1600 but the old

CHURCH OF ST BARBARA

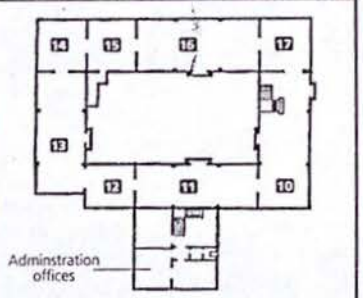


1. Entrance
2. Narthex
3. Nave
4. Pulpit
5. Altar Screen
6. Altar
7. Chapels of St Cyrus & St John
8. Aisle
9. Shrine to St Barbara

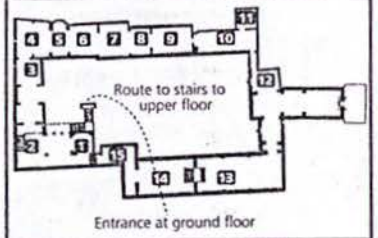
COPTIC MUSEUM, CAIRO



New Wing - Ground Floor Rooms
1. Sculptures
2. Burial ground reliefs
3. Masonry monuments
4. Carved masonry
5. Stone reliefs and capitals
6. Monastery objects from Saqqara (Graeco-Coptic)
7. Graeco-Egyptian sculptures
8. Reliefs and figures of Biblical scenes
9. Christian and traditional Egyptian paintings



New Wing - First Floor Rooms
10. Mummy case and Graeco-Byzantine tapestries. Manuscripts
11. Textiles
12. Religious textiles
13. Female ornaments and toiletries. Icons
14. Metalwork, crucifixes
15. Eagle statue. Roman metalwork
16. Keys, door furniture, surgical instruments
17. Church wall paintings



Old Wing - Ground Floor Rooms
1-5. Church wall paintings
6. Funeral objects
7. Wooden panel carvings
8. Carved panels. Portraits
9. Objects fom Saqqara
10. 7th-17th century woodwork objects
11. Patriarchal furniture
12. Monastery doors
13. Pottery/ceramics
14. Pottery
15. Glass objects

wing closes 30 mins earlier and entry costs E£8. The museum is regarded as among Egypt's principal display of antiquities and houses a fine collection of mainly Coptic treasures. It was founded by a rich and influential Copt, Morcos Simaika, with the support of the royal court. The collection began in 1908 as a means of preserving Coptic artefacts and Egypt's Christian heritage against the acquisitive activities of local and foreign collectors. From 1931 the museum has been managed by the Egyptian Government. There was an expansion programme in 1947 which enabled the collection to include a number of small but very valuable private holdings of objects and items from Coptic churches throughout Egypt and much of the Coptic collection of the Cairo Museum was transferred here too. The site has a closed garden which is very attractive and there is a café.

The Coptic Museum gives an excellent insight into the evolution of Christian and to some extent secular art and architecture in Egypt in the period 300-1800 AD and shows some of the interchange of ideas and forms with the larger Islamic community. The displays are arranged thematically, with the Old Wing of the museum holding glass, ceramics and masonry and the New Wing showing manuscripts, metalwork and textiles. Begin in the ground floor of the New Wing. Leave the museum from the ground floor of the New Wing through the garden via the steps that lead down to the Water Gate.

The most convenient way of getting the best from the displays is to circulate round the museum and indeed each main room in a clockwise direction. Key items to look out for on the ground floor of the New Wing are: **Room 3** the main semi-dome of the Bawit Monastery which shows a wonderful painting of Christ enthroned with four mythological creatures of the Apocalypse; **Room 4** the classical depiction of the sacred

eagle with wings spread out and the figure of a saint above; **Room 6** a perfectly preserved and fresh painted niche of Christ floating above a sitting Virgin Mary holding an infant; **Room 9** the 11th century Fayoumi painting of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is well executed and a good Coptic example of biblical stories told in pictures; **Room 10** there is a fine mummy case, painted in full colour of a robed inmate, who was not necessarily a Christian.

Upstairs in **Room 11** there are some exquisite Coptic funeral robes carrying traditional symbols such as the sign of the fish; **Room 12** look for the copes and other priests' garments, mainly 18th century, with clever silk embroidery; **Room 13** displays a feast of delicate toiletry objects, including illustrations of women dressed for high days; **Room 14** has ecclesiastic paraphernalia, some, like the marvellous set of crucifixes, not to be missed; **Room 15** contains a figure of a Roman eagle from the Babylon site.

In the Old Building there are rewarding sights. The ceiling carving throughout this section are from Coptic houses in Old Cairo and are magnificent. Also look for the very varied and ornate woodwork: in particular see **Room 5** carved screens and **Room 8** painted biblical scenes.

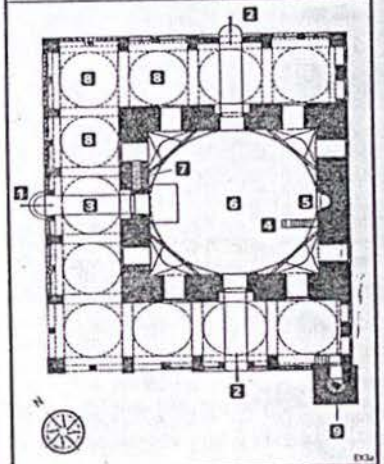
Islamic Cairo

As already noted in the history of Cairo (see page 97), the city was initially developed as a series of extensions and new walled mini-cities which radiated in a NE direction from the original encampment of Fustat outside the walls of the Babylon-in-Egypt fortress. There are literally hundreds of mosques in this Islamic city and it is difficult to know where to begin. Broadly speaking, however, the most important places to visit in Islamic Cairo are away from modern Cairo and the River Nile in a broad belt to the E of the main Sharia Port Said. The exceptions to this are the **Amr Ibn al-As Mosque**, the oldest mosque in the country which is just near Babylon-in-Egypt (visit this while seeing Coptic Cairo) and the **Mosque of Sinan Pasha** nearer the Nile and further N. The rest of Islamic Cairo can be visited by following a series of routes most beginning from the **Al-Azhar Mosque.**

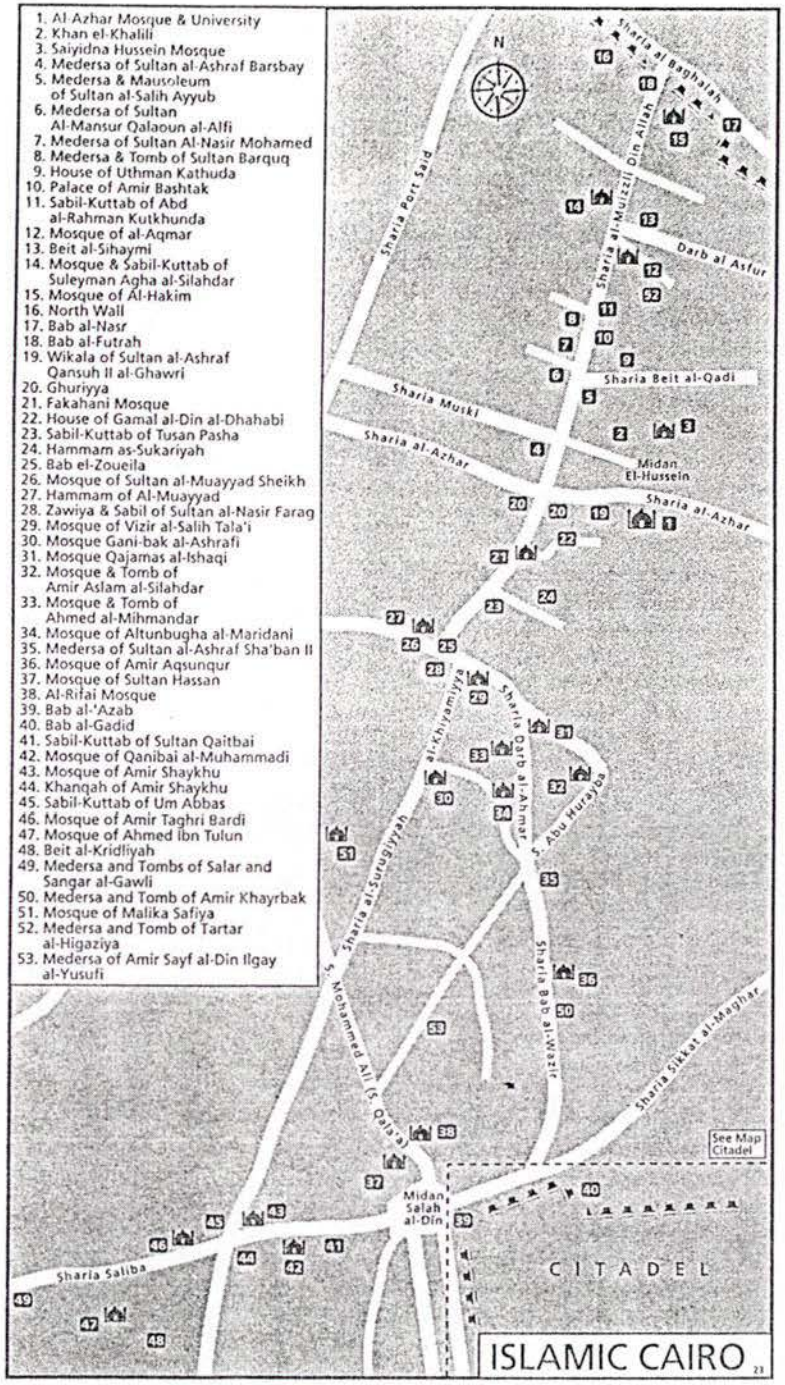
The **Mosque of Sinan Pasha (1571)** is located in Bulaq (see map, page 98).

The Albanian-born Sinan Pasha was recruited for service as a boy at the Sublime Porte in Istanbul and rose to become Sulayman the Magnificent's chief cupbearer. He was governor of Cairo between 1571-72 and is best remembered for his building activities rather than political events. He erected buildings in Alexandria and re-excavated the canal between the Nile and Alexandria but the major buildings he initiated in Egypt were at Bulaq and included the mosque, essential as the focal point of the community, a *sabil*, a *maktab*, commercial buildings, a *hammam*, residential houses, shops, a mill and a bakery.

MOSQUE OF SINAN PASHA AT BULAQ



1. Main entrance
2. Entrances
3. Passage
4. Minbar
5. Marble Mihrab
6. Central domed chamber
7. Stairs to gallery
8. Shallow domes over arcade
9. Minaret



The small, square Ottoman mosque stands in a garden. There are entrances into 3 sides of the mosque into the large central domed chamber which is surrounded on three sides by a colonnade with shallow brick domes. The decorative S-shaped curved windows – 16 in the dome and 8 in the outer area – provide, together with the distinctive marble *mihrab*, the only colour. The *dikka* is above the NW entrance, a gallery running round the brick interior of the dome is reached from the entrance passage while the minaret and ablution area are to the S.

While most of the Sinan Pasha complex has long since disappeared the adjacent public bath, men only, is still in operation.

SUGGESTED ROUTES (see map, page 106).

1. North via the concentration of buildings in the **Qalaoun/Al-Nasir/Barquq** complex, to the **Al-Hakim Mosque** at the N gates of the old city.

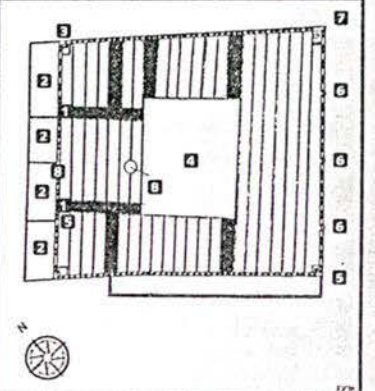
2a. South to the **Al-Muayyad Mosque** which stands at the **Bab el-Zoueila** gate at the S edge of the old city and the buildings on Sharia Darb al-Ahmar to the **Sultan Hassan Mosque** and the modern **Al-Rifai Mosque.**

2b. Continuing to the mosques and museums in the imposing **Citadel** and the huge ancient **Ahmed Ibn Tulun Mosque.**

3. To the mosques and tombs in the **City of the Dead** which lies in the 'Northern Cemetery' to the E of Islamic Cairo.

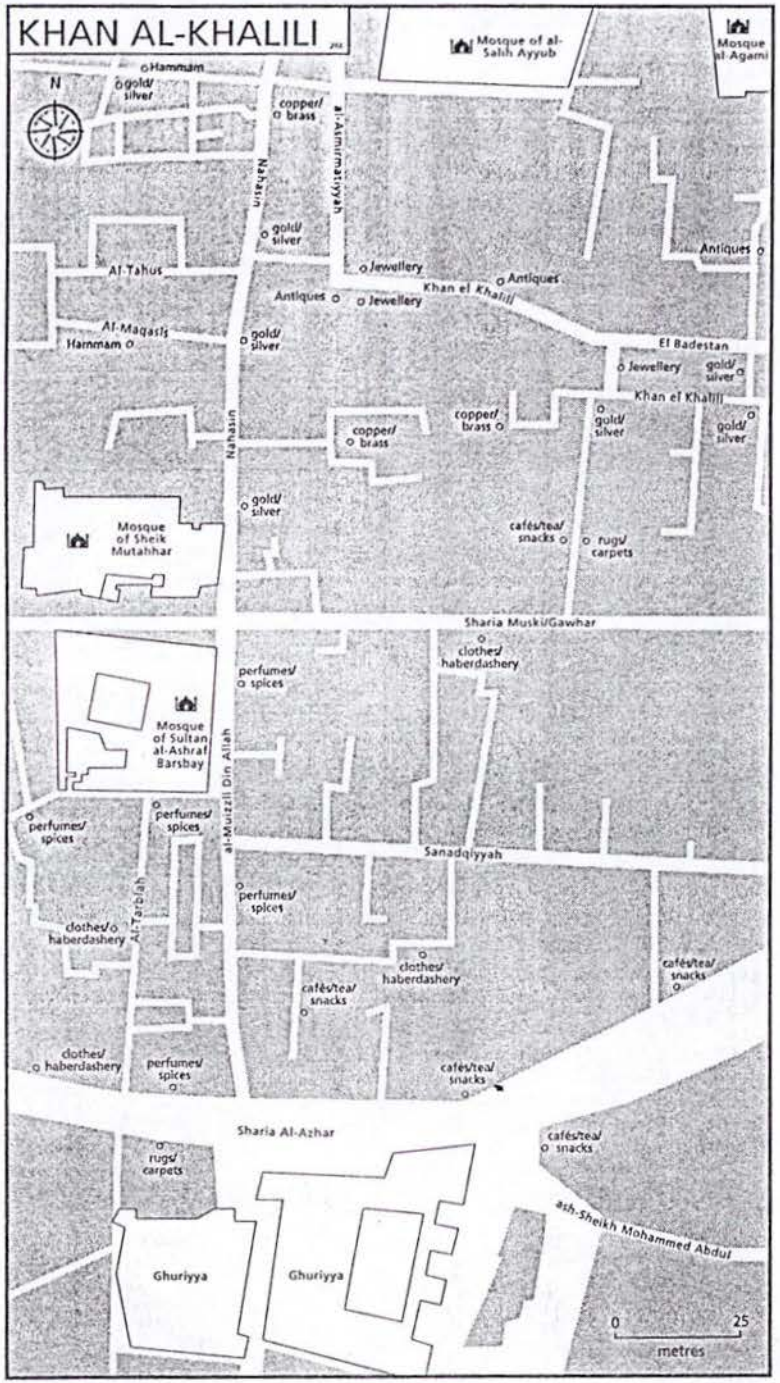
The original **Mosque of Amr Ibn al-As (Gama Amr)**, 500m N of Mari Girgis metro station, was built in 642 AD by Amr Ibn el-As, commander of the Arab army which captured Egypt in that year. Built near both Babylon-in-Egypt and the Arabs' encampment (Fustat) it is the oldest mosque in Egypt and one of the oldest in the entire Islamic world. Because of the continual enlargements, which began in 673 AD only 10 years after Amr's death aged 93 and included major restoration work in the 15th and 18th centuries, nothing of the original mud-brick 30m by 17m thatched-roof mosque exists. Recently repainted and cleaned, its aspect today is virtually modern. As is often the case in the older mosques the interior includes many pillars taken from the ancient Egyptian monuments. As a result the whole mosque is a hybrid with parts of the fabric dating from before the conquest of Egypt until the 19th century alterations. In the N corner under the dome and surrounded by a bronze screen, on the site of Amr's house in Fustat, is the tomb of his son Abdullah who was born when Amr was only 13, became a Muslim before him and was a close companion of the Prophet.

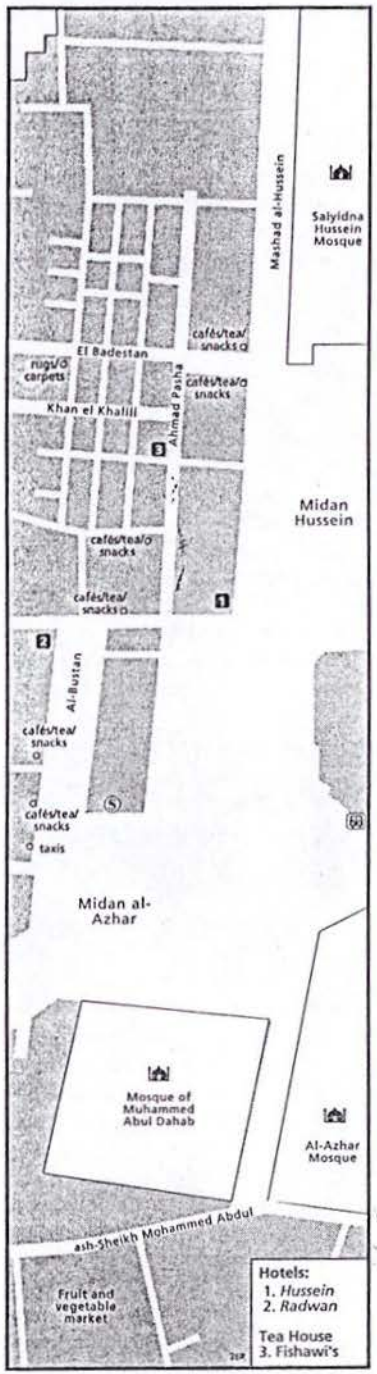
MOSQUE OF AMR IBN AL-AS



1. Entrances
2. Portal (recent)
3. Tomb of Abdullah (son of Amr ibn al-As)
4. Sahn
5. Position of minaret
6. Mihrab
7. Tomb
8. Fountain

The ancient **Al-Azhar Mosque (1)** and the nearby souks in the **Khan el-Khalili (2)** district are at the centre of modern-day Islamic Cairo. They are located SE of Midan Ataba (reached by taxi or No 66 bus from Midan Tahrir). You can either walk E from Midan Ataba beneath the flyover along Sharia





al-Azhar or, better still, along the congested but fascinating Sharia Muski which, once across the tramlines of busy Sharia Port Said, becomes more attractive as you approach Khan el-Khalili.

Although it also refers to a specific street, the **Khan el-Khalili** (open daily except Sun) is the general name given to this district of Cairo which has a large number of individual souks. The Arab/Islamic system of urban planning has traditionally divided the souks by professions or guilds. While the system is less rigid than formerly there is still a concentration of one particular trade in a particular area. The Khan el-Khalili includes streets which almost exclusively sell gold, silver, copper, perfume, spices, cloth or any one of a number of particular products. Many of the products are manufactured within the souk, often in small workshops behind or on top of the shops.

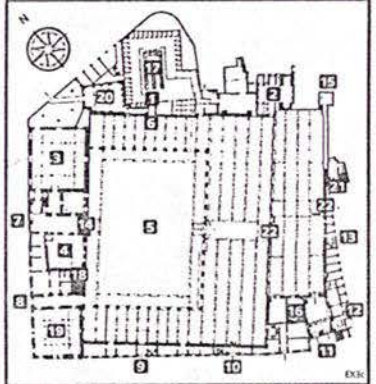
The **Khan el-Khalili** has been the main souk in Cairo since 1382 when it was first created around a caravanserai by Amir Jarkas al-Khalil who was the Master of Horse to the first of the Burji Mamluke Sultans, Al-Zahir Barquq (1382-1389). The caravanserai attracted many foreign and local traders and expanded rapidly, to become a base for the city's subversive groups and was consequently frequently raided. Much of the area was rebuilt by Sultan Al-Ashraf Qansuh al-Ghawri (1501-1517) but it still maintained its role as Cairo's main area for traders and craftsmen. Today the main area of the souk is occupied by tourist shops but a few of the streets to the W are more authentic and much more interesting. Here you will find souvenirs including gold, silver, copperware, leather goods, perfume oils, alabaster, boxes, herbs and spices. **NB** It is essential to bargain because the traders will always start at about double the price they actually expect.

Both Khan el-Khalili's Sharia Muski which is virtually a pedestrian precinct and the more congested Sharia al-Azhar lead E into Midan El-Hussein.

On the SW of the Midan El-Hussein, an underpass below the busy Sharia al-Azhar leads to the famous and very influential **Al-Azhar Mosque & University (1)** whose leader, known as the Sheikh al-Azhar, is appointed for life and is Egypt's supreme theological authority. It is open Sat-Thur 0900-1500, Fri 0900-1100 and 1300-1500, modest entry fee plus tip for any guides, no bare legs allowed, shawls provided for women.

The mosque was built in 970 AD and established as a university in 988 AD which, despite a counter-claim by Fes' Qarawiyin Mosque in Morocco, may make it the world's oldest university. With the exception of the main E liwan, however, little remains of the original building because additions and modifications were made by successive rulers, including modern buildings to the N designed to house the university's administration block.

MOSQUE OF AL-AZHAR



1. Entrance
2. Gawhar Medersa
3. Aqbugha Medersa
4. Taybars Medersa
5. Sahn
6. Bab Qaitbai (Barber's Gate)
7. Bab al-Muzayyinin
8. Bab al-Abbas
9. Bab al-Maghariba
10. Bab al-Shawam
11. Bab al-Saayidal
12. Bab al-Haramayn
13. Bab al-Shurbah
14. Bab and minaret of Qaitbai
15. Tomb of Sitt Nafisa
16. Tomb of Abdel al-Rahman Karkhuda
17. Toilets
18. Minaret of Qahnsuh al-Ghawri
19. Riwaq of Abbas II
20. Riwaq Al-Hanafiyyah
21. Qibla
22. Mihrab

Initially during the Shi'a Fatimid era (969-1171), the university was used as a means to propagate the Shi'a faith in a predominantly Sunni city, but it fell into disrepair under Salah al-Din and his successor Ayyubids (1171-1250) Sunni Muslim rulers before being reopened by the Bahri Mamlukes (1250-1382) and eventually became a bastion of Sunni orthodoxy. Later during the rise in Arab nationalism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Al-Azhar became a stronghold for independent thinkers. It is no coincidence that in 1956 Nasser made his speech against the Suez invasion in the university.

The entrance to the mosque is through the Barber's Gate (where students traditionally had their hair shaved), which was built in the second half of the 15th century by Qaitbai (1468-1496). This opens out on to the 10th century Fatimid *sahn* which is 48m by 38m and is overlooked by three minarets. With the exception of the Mamluke *medressa* (theological schools) surrounding the *sahn* (courtyard), most of the buildings date back to the Fatimid period. The carpeted E *liwan* is particularly impressive with a great number of ancient alabaster columns. The *mihrab* is strangely placed in the middle of the *liwan*, with no *qibla* wall behind it. An extension of the *liwan* by Sultan Abd el-Rahman in 1751 left the *mihrab* in this unusual position. Take the opportunity to climb one of the five minarets for an excellent view over the surrounding area.

Immediately to the S of Al-Azhar is an area known as **Butneya** once notorious as the base for Cairo's underworld where drugs were openly traded by powerful and locally popular gangsters. After a major crack-down in 1988 most of them left but the area is still home to minor local gangs who tend to prey on shops, restaurants and middle-class

Herbs And Spices

A visit to the spice market (Souk al-Attarin) is highly recommended both for the visual impact and the tremendous aromas. Anything that could possibly be wanted in the way of herbs, spices, henna, dried and crushed flowers and incense are on display, piled high on the ancient pavements in massive burlap bags or secreted away in tin boxes in various drawers inside. Ask if what you want does not appear to be in stock but do not be fobbed off with old merchandise, fresh spices are always available. Prices are extremely low by western standards and shopkeepers are prepared to sell small amounts, weighing out the purchase into a little paper cornet. Saffron is the best buy, far cheaper than at home, but sometimes only the local rather than higher quality Iranian saffron is available. The main street of the spice market runs parallel to Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah beginning at the Ghuriyya. Here, many of the shops have been in the same family for over 200 years. Some of the owners are also herbalists *etara*, practising traditional medicine and offering cures for everything from bad breath to rheumatism. Cairo's most famous herbalist, however, is Abdul Latif Mahmoud Harraz, 39 Sh Ahmed Maher, T 923754, near Bab el-Khalq. Founded in 1885, the shop attracts a devoted following throughout the Middle East.

The Arabic names for the more common herbs and spices are:

Allspice	*kebab es-seeny*	Ginger	*ginzabeel*
Arabic gum	*mystica*	Horseradish	*figl baladi*
Bay leaf	*warra randa*	Mace	*bisbassa*
Basil	*rihan*	Marjoram	*bardakosh*
Cardamon	*habbahan*	Mint	*naanaa*
Cayenne	*shatta*	Oregano	*zaatar*
Celery salt	*boudra caraffs*	Paprika	*filfil ahmar roumi*
Chervil leaves	*kozbarra*	Peppercorns	*filfil eswed*
Chilli	*filfil ahmar*	Rosemary	*hassa liban*
Cinnamon	*erfa*	Saffron	*zaa'faran*
Cloves	*orumfil*	Sage	*maryameya*
Coriander	*kosbara*	Savory	*stoorya*
Cumin	*kamoon*	Sesame	*semsem*
Dill	*shabat*	Tarragon	*tarkhoun*
Fennel	*shamar*	Tumeric	*korkom*

Egyptians rather than on tourists who should be perfectly safe.

Route 1: North from Al-Azhar

The area with the greatest concentration of historic buildings in Islamic Cairo lies N from the Al-Azhar complex and the Khan el-Khalili to the N gates of the old city. On the N side of Midan El-Hussein is the **Saiyidna Hussein Mosque (3)**, Cairo's official mosque where President Mubarak and other dignitaries worship on important occasions, closed to non-Muslims. This mosque is named after and contains the head of the Prophet Mohamed's grandson Hussein. He was killed at Karbala in 680 AD at the climax of the struggle which led to the early and continuing schism in the Muslim world between the orthodox Sunni (followers of the way) and the Shi'a (party) followers of Ali. Hussein, because of his marriage to Mohamed's daughter Fatima, was the father of the Prophet's only direct descendants, who revere Hussein as a martyr and a popular saint like his sister Zeinab. His mosque is the focus of his annual *moulid*, one of the city's most important festivals which is held over a fortnight climaxing in Sep, and a number of other religious

Islamic Monuments – A Chronological List

814	Nilometer
827	Mosque of Amr Ibn al-As
876-9	Mosque of Ahmed Ibn Tulun
FATIMID MONUMENTS	
970-2	Mosque of Al-Azhar
9901-1013	Mosque of Al-Hakim
1087	Bab al-Nasr
1087	Bab al-Futrah
1090	Bab el-Zoueila
1125	Mosque of al-Aqmar
1154	Mosque of Saiyidna Hussein
1160	Mosque of Visir al-Salih Tala'i
AYYUBID MONUMENTS	
1176 etc	Citadel
1211	Mausoleum of the Imam al-Shafi'i
1240-49	Medersa and Mausoleum of Sultan al-Salih Ayyub
MAMLUK MONUMENTS	
1295-6	Medersa and Mausoleum of Sultan al-Nasr Mohamed
1298	Medersa and Mausoleum of Zayn al-Din Yusef
1303	Medersa and Tombs of Sakar and Sangar al-Gawli
1318-35	Mosque of Sultan al-Nasr Mohamed (Citadel)
1324	Mosque and Tomb of Ahmed al-Mihmander
1334-9	Palace of Amir Bashtak
1339-40	Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani
1344-5	Mosque and Tomb of Amir Aslam al-Silahdar
1346-7	Mosque of Amir Aqsunqur
1349	Mosque of Amir Shaykhu
1350	House of Uthman Kathuda
1355	Khanqah of Amir Shaykhu
1356-63	Mosque of Sultan Hassan
1360	Mausoleum of Tatar al-Higaziya
1368-9	Mosque of Sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban II
1373	Medersa and Mosque of Amir Sayf al-Din Ilgay al-Yusufi
1384-6	Medersa of Sultan al-Zahir al-Barquq
1384-9	Medersa and Tomb of Sultan al-Zahir Barquq
1409	Zawiya and Sabil of Sultan al-Nasir Farag
1413	Mosque of Qanibai al-Muhammadi
1415-21	Mosque of Sultan al-Muayyad Sheikh
1420	Hammam al-Muayyad
1423-37	Medersa of Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay
1426	Mosque of Amir Gani-bak al-Ashrafi
1432	Mausoleum of Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay
1440	Mosque of Amir Taghri Bardi
1444-53	Mosque of Yehia Zein al- Din
1456	Mausoleum of Barsbay
1472-77	Medersa, Mausoleum and Sabil-Kuttab of Sultan al-Qaibai
1480-1	Mosque of Qajamas al-Ishaqi
1502	Medersa and Mausoleum of Amir Khayrbak
1503-4	Wikala and Mosque of Sultan al-Ashraf Qansuh II al-Ghawri
1501-16	Gates of Khan Khalili
1501-17	Ghuriyya Complex of Sultan al-Ashraf Qansuh II al-Ghawri

OTTOMAN MONUMENTS	
1528	Mosque of Suleyman Pasha
1567	Mosque of Sinan Pasha
1610	Mosque of Malika Safiya
1631	Beit al-Kridliyah
1637	House of Gamal al-Din al-Dhahabi
1648	Beit al Sihaymi
1697	Mosque of Ahmed Katkhuda al-Azab
1735	Fakahani Mosque
1744	Sabil-Kuttab of Abd al-Rahman Katkhunda
1820	Sabil-Kuttab of Tusan Pasha
1824	Qasr al-Gawharah
1824-57	Mosque of Mohamed Ali Pasha
1837-39	Mosque and Sabil-Kuttab of Suleyman Agha al-Silahdar
1867	Sabil-Kuttab of Umm Abbas
1869-1911	Mosque of Al-Rifa'i

festivals. Walk back 200m NW along Sharia Muski to Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah. **NB** On the SW corner of the crossroads the **Medersa of Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay (4)** (1422-1437). This liberal and enlightened Mamluke Sultan, originally from the Caucasus, financed his capture of Cyprus in 1426 by turning the spice trade, which in Cairo is based just to the S of the *medersa*, into a state monopoly. Turn right at the crossroads and head N along Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah passing some of the many goldsmiths and coppersmith shops. These are concentrated in the alleys to the right including the actual Sharia Khan el-Khalili. Although its façade is largely hidden by shops, at the right hand side of the street, on the site of the former slave market, is the **Medersa & Mausoleum of Sultan al-Salih Ayyub (5)** (1240-1249) who was the last of the Ayyubid Sultans and who was the first to introduce the foreign Mamluke slave-soldiers. The *medersa* was special because it was the first built to include all four of Egypt's schools of law while the tomb is the first example where it is placed next to the *medersa* of its founder.

Opposite, with a wonderful unbroken 185m long façade, stands an amazing complex of three ***medressa*** founded by three of the most influential mediaeval sultans, Qalaoun, Al-Nasir and Barquq. This section of the street is known as Bayn al-Qasrayn (between two palaces) because of the Fatimid period's magnificent Great Western Palace and Eastern Palace which stood on either side.

The earliest and most impressive *medersa* is the **Qalaoun (6)** complex built by Sultan Al-Mansur Qalaoun al-Alfi (1280-1290). Like so many other Mamlukes ('possessed') slave-soldiers he was a Kipchak Turk who used the name Al-Alfi because he was originally bought for the high price of 1,000 (or alf) dinars. He subsequently diluted the influence of his own Kipchaks amongst the Mamlukes by importing Circassians whom he billeted in the Citadel. These Burgis Mamlukes (*burg* = tower) were rivals to the Bahri Mamlukes (1250-1382) stationed on Roda Island and eventually created their own dynasty (1382-1517). Qalaoun was constantly fighting the Crusaders and eventually died of a fever in 1290 aged 79, on an expedition to recapture Acre.

The complex was built in just over a year in 1284/85 on the site of the Fatimid's Western Palace and includes a *medersa* and mausoleum to the left and right, respectively, of the entrance with a *maristan* down a now closed 10m high corridor to the rear of the two linked buildings.

The 20.5m by 17m *sahn* of the *medersa* has only two *liwans* while the NE wall has three storeys of tunnel-vaulted alcoves which were used as student rooms. Of particular interest is the *qibla liwan* and the *mihrab* arranged into three aisles with a glass mosaic around the *mihrab*.

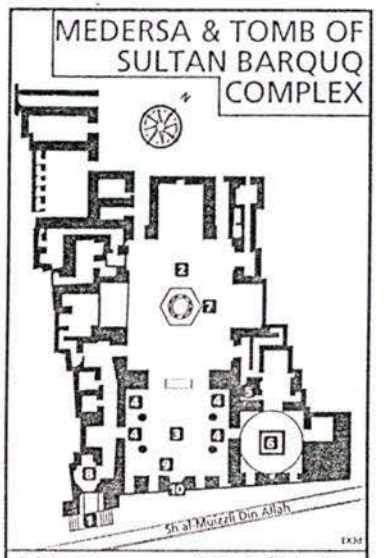
On the N side of the corridor is the beautiful mausoleum (open 0900-1700) which is a 21m by 23m rectangular room with four pillars and four piers arranged in an octagon below an 11.5m diameter 30m high dome built in 1903 to replace the original wooden dome which was demolished in the 18th century. The rose granite pillars have Corinthian capitals and the ceilings are finely carved. The walls are decorated with beautiful marble and mosaics topped by a frieze. The 7m high horse-shoe shaped *mihrab* is particularly outstanding with columns on either side and covered with rich mosaics and marble. The tomb of Qalaoun and his son Al-Nasir Mohamed is in the middle of the room surrounded by a beautifully sculpted wooden rail.

The *maristan* is now reached via an alley along the SW wall of the *medersa*, but little remains of the original hospital except for one of the *liwans* and the remnants of a marble fountain. Since 1910 it has been the site of a modern eye clinic.

To the N is the **Sultan Al-Nasir Mohamed (7)** complex which was started by Sultan Kitbugha in 1295 and finished by Al-Nasir during his second reign in 1304 which is commemorated by over 30 mosques and other public buildings throughout the city. Qalaoun's eldest son Khalil (1290-1294), was assassinated in 1294 and his 9-year-old brother Mohamed (1294-1295) was elected Sultan. He was deposed the following year by the Mongol regent Kitbugha (1295-1297) who in turn was soon forced into exile. Kitbugha was replaced by Lajin (1297-1299) but he was assassinated after a short reign while playing chess. Following this chapter of 'accidents', Mohamed was restored to the throne, but was kept in terrible conditions by his regent until he escaped to Jordan 10 years later. He eventually returned with a large army the following year, executed his enemies, and ruled happily for another 30 years until his death in 1341.

The complex (open 0900-1600) consists of a mosque, *medersa* and tomb. Although restoration work is still in progress it is worth trying to get in to see the *qibla* wall which still has its original decoration and Kufic inscriptions. The *mihrab*, although incomplete, is also interesting because it is one of the last stucco *mihrabs*. Little remains of the mausoleum and parts of the walls have been removed to the Museum of Islamic Art. It was originally built for Al-Nasir but he was buried next door in his father's mausoleum and the two tombs here belong to his mother Bint Suqbay and Anuq, his favourite eldest son who died the year before his own death. The 3-storey minaret is very beautiful with a richly ornamented Andalusian style first storey and the other two storeys surmounted with delicate stalactite cornices. The main door is Gothic and was brought back from the Church of St George in Acre during a campaign against the Crusaders.

This is followed to the N by the *medersa* and tomb which make up the **Sultan Barquq (8)** complex which was built in 1384-1386. The marble entrance and the silver-encrusted bronze-plated door are very impressive and lead into a corridor to the *sahn* which has four *liwans* arranged in a cruciform shape. The *qibla liwan*, to the E is divided into three aisles by four ancient columns which support beautifully carved and painted ceilings. Upstairs there are cells for the Sufi monks who once inhabited the building. To the N of the *medersa* a door leads to the mausoleum where Sultan Barquq was originally buried before being transferred to the mausoleum specially built by his son Al-Nasir Farag (1399-1405 and 1405-1412) in the city's northern cemetery (see below).



Sultan Al-Zahir Barquq (1382-1389 and 1390-1399) reigned twice and was the founder of the dynasty of Circassian slave-soldiers who became the Burgis Mamlukes rulers of Egypt. He was reportedly an enlightened Sultan, who admired piety and intelligence and surrounded himself with learned scholars, before dying of pneumonia aged 60 in 1399.

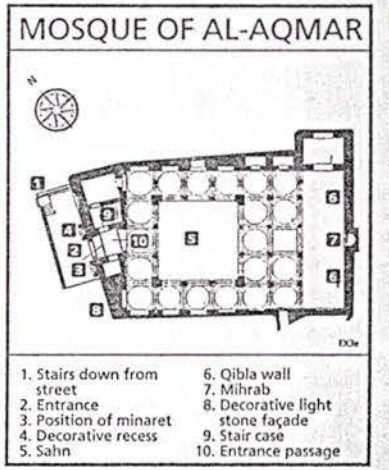
Besides the Qalaoun/Al-Nasir/Barquq complex which is on the W side of Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah there is a number of other interesting, if less important buildings on and near the E side of the street on the route N to the Al-Hakim mosque. This area, which is heart of Islamic Cairo, is definitely worth exploring for a full day.

Directly opposite the Qalaoun complex is Sharia Beit al-Qadi and 40m down on the left hand side is the modern looking house No 19 which is marked with a green plaque where visitors should knock to be shown around in return for a little *baksheesh*. This is the remains of a palace built in 1350 but better known as the **House of Uthman Kathuda (9)** who restored it during the 18th century.

Further N opposite Barquq's complex are the beautiful if neglected remains of the 5-storey **Palace of Amir Bashtak (10)** (Al-Nasir's son-in-law) built in 1334-1339. The warden is usually to be found at the nearby **Sabil-Kuttab of Abd al-Rahman Kutkhunda (11)**. There used to be many of the these Ottoman-influenced *sabil-kuttab*, which combine a water supply for the public at street level and a Koranic school in the building above, throughout Cairo. This example, built in 1744 by a powerful amir seeking absolution for his former sins, stands on a triangular piece of land where two roads meet.

About 75m further N on the right up the main road is the **Mosque of al-Aqmar (12)** which was built in 1121-1125 by the Fatimid wazir of Khalifa al-Amir (1101-1131).

It was originally at the NE corner of the great eastern Fatimid palace. It is particularly important because: it was the first Cairo mosque with a façade following the alignment of the street, rather than the *qibla* wall, so that its



ground plan was adjusted to fit into an existing urban environment; it was the first to have a decorated stone façade, the colour giving it its name which means moonlight; it introduced the shell motif and the stalactite into architectural styles which subsequently became favourites in Cairo.

The mosque has been restored over the centuries. Amir Yalbugha al-Salami restored the *minbar*, *mihrab* and ablution area in 1393 and added the minaret in 1397. The minaret was apparently removed in 1412 because it had started leaning, but the current structure includes the original first storey which is made of brick covered with very uncommon carved stucco decorated with chevron patterns. Because the street level has risen since the mosque was built there are steps down to the entrance which is offset from the main part of the mosque. Despite its importance and unique features the original interior of the mosque is unspectacular. Around the base of the almost square *sahn* the arches bear Koranic verses in the early angular and unpointed Kufic script on an arabesque background.

The **Medersa-Mausoleum of Tartar al-Higaziya (52)** is located in a small street which connects Sharia al-Gamaylia with Midan Bayt al-Qadi. It was built in two phases with the mausoleum, which was connected to the princess's palace, being built in 1347 for her recently murdered husband and the palace itself being converted into a *medersa* in 1360 which explains its irregular shape.

Tartar was the daughter of Sultan al-Nasr Mohamed, the sister of Sultan Hassan and the wife of the Amir Baktimur al-Higazi. The mosque was built on the site of the residence of Amir Qawsun who had married one of Tartar's sisters in 1347. Little else is known about Tartar except that she died of the plague in 1360.

Entrance to the building is via a corridor which leads via a porch with a lovely ceiling into the *sahn* which has a *qibla liwan* to the SE, the ablution *liwan* to the NW and the princess's much larger liwan to the SW which contains a large and most attractive *mihrab* with marble pillars. The *liwans* are united by a beautiful inscription, bands of Koranic script on a blue background which surround them. The triple arcade is supported by reused Byzantine columns. A series of stucco niches are set in the upper section of the *sahn* and the semi-domes of the two *mihrabs*. The high quality craftsmanship is matched by three carved and painted wooden ceilings. The octagonal minaret to the SW of the *sahn* has been missing its top for over a century. Access to the minaret, the ablution area and storage areas are all via doors off the *liwans*. The ribbed stone dome, one of the earliest in Cairo, over the mausoleum is in the N end of the complex on the corner of two streets and passers-by can solicit a blessing or invoke a prayer via the open windows.

MEDERSA-MAUSOLEUM OF TATAR AL-HIGAZIYA



1. Entrance
2. Domed mausoleum
3. Sahn
4. Sarcophagus of Tatar
5. Mihrab
6. Octagonal minaret
7. Porch (lovely ceiling)
8. Ablutions liwan
9. Qibla liwan
10. Princess's liwan
11. External courtyard

The restoration work carried out in the 1980 was done with care and consideration.

Take the next right hand turn for a brief detour to No 19 Darb al-Asfur which is 50m along the left hand side of the street. This is the **Beit al-Sihaymi (13)** (open 0900-1600), actually two houses, built in 1648 and 1796 and inhabited until 1961, and probably one of the finest examples of a luxurious Mamluke mansion in the whole of the city. It has a lovely courtyard and a *haramlik (harem)* for the women including a domed bathroom.

Returning to the main street and continuing N, one reaches the **Mosque and Sabil-Kuttab of Suleyman Agha al-Silahdar (14)**, built in 1837-1839 by one of Mohamed Ali's ministers who also built many other *sabils* throughout the city. The style of the building is very much influenced by the contemporary style in Istanbul including the minaret with an Ottoman-style cylindrical shaft and conical top.

Continuing to the N end of street is the giant **Mosque of Al-Hakim (15)**, (open

AL-HAKIM – THE VANISHING DESPOT

In 996 AD at the age of 11 Al-Hakim succeeded his father as the second Egyptian Fatimid Khalifa and began a despotic reign. At the age of 15 he had his tutor assassinated and started his extremely cruel and relentless persecution of Christians, Jews, Sunni Muslims, women and dogs. He prohibited any Christian celebrations and had the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem demolished. He also prohibited Sunni ceremonies and tried to established Shi'a Islam as the only form of Islam. Women were forbidden to leave their homes and, in order to enforce this, cobblers were not permitted to make or sell women's shoes. At one time all of Cairo's dogs were exterminated because their barking annoyed him. Merchants who were found to have cheated their customers were summarily sodomized by his favourite Nubian slave whilst Al-Hakim stood on their head. Wine, singing, dancing and chess were also prohibited and the punishments for disobeying this laws were very severe and usually resulted in a gruesome death.

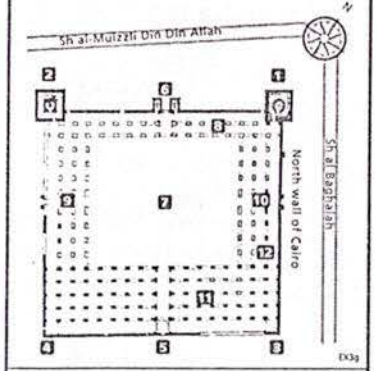
His erratic rule, with laws often changing overnight, led to tensions within Fustat/Cairo, particularly between the various religious communities. In 1020, the news that Al-Hakim was about to proclaim that he was a manifestation of Allah provoked serious riots to which he responded by sending in his Sudanese troops to burn down the city where they clashed not only with the civilians, but also the Turkish and Berber soldiers. An alternative story is that one particular quarter of Fustat was torched because he thought that was where his favourite sister Sitt al-Mulk (Lady of Power) took her lovers, but when she was proved to be a virgin by the midwives he examined the ruins and asked "who ordered this?". Whatever the truth, he then sent his chief theologian Al-Darazi to Syria for safety where he is believed to have originated the theology of the Druze who consider Al-Hakim to be divine.

Despite his ruthless public acts Al-Hakim's personal life was very abstemious and he was a very generous alms-giver. He took to riding around the city and surrounding countryside on a donkey with only a couple of servants but disappeared in Feb 1021. Following the discovery of his knife-slashed robe, it is believed he was murdered, possibly on the instructions of his Sitt al-Mulk with whom he apparently argued because of her refusal to begin an incestuous marriage with him. The fact that his body was never discovered led the Druze to believe that he had retreated from the world to return at a later date, whilst the Copts believe that he had a vision of Jesus, repented and became a monk.

0900-1600, E£10 plus a tip for both your guide and minder in the mosque), which abuts the **North Wall (16)** of the old city of Fustat/Cairo between the **Bab al-Nasr (17)** and **Bab al-Futrah (18)** gates and commemorates its most notorious ruler (see box, page 117). It was begun in 990 by the Shi'a Muslim Fatimid Khalifa Al-Aziz (975-996) and was eventually finished some 23 years later by his son who took the name **Al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah** (Ruler by God's Command) and ruled between 996-1021.

Possibly having a Christian wife was the reason why his reportedly tolerant and humane father Al-Aziz had been more forbearant towards Christians and Jews than towards the indigenous Sunni Muslim population. In contrast his son was very intolerant to everyone. With such a colourful history, the large 122m by 115m mosque itself is actually rather plain. It is organized around a large central *sahn* and built of bricks with a large porch in the traditional Fatimid style. It has been restored many times throughout the centuries, notably after the major earthquake in 1302 and by Sultan al-Hassan in 1359. After the 14th century it was converted to house Crusader prisoners-of-war, then as a stable by Salah al-Din, during the French occupation as a fortified warehouse, and in the mid-19th century to store items destined for the **Museum of Islamic Art** which opened in 1896. Since 1980 the mosque has been restored by the Indian based Bohra sect of Ismaili Muslims who claim direct spiritual descent from the Fatimid imams who they worship. Its twin minarets have been reinforced by stone carvings and from these and from the roof there is a wonderful view over Cairo.

MOSQUE OF AL-HAKIM



1. N minaret
2. W minaret
3. E dome
4. S dome
5. Mihrab dome
6. Great stone porch
7. Sahn
8. NW arcade
9. SW arcade
10. NE arcade
11. Qibla arcade
12. Qibla

Route 2a: South from Al-Azhar

The route S from Al-Azhar mosque has a number of very interesting buildings including the **Mosque of Sultan Al-Muayyad Sheikh** at the medieval **Bab el-Zoueila**. Further to the S of Fustat is the **Sultan Hassan Mosque** and the much more modern **Al-Rifai Mosque** which stand side-by-side below the mighty **Citadel** (see page 128) and its various mosques. One can then head W to the huge and very old **Mosque of Ahmed Ibn Tulun** and the nearby **Gayer-Anderson Museum** before returning to the river. Allow a minimum of half a day to take in all of the sites on this tour of the S part of Islamic Cairo.

Immediately to the S of the Al-Azhar complex are a few of the 20 remaining *wikalas*, hostels for merchants which were usually above a bonded warehouse for their goods, which numbered over 200 in the 1830s. The wonderfully preserved **Wikala of Sultan al-Ashraf Qansuh II al-Ghawri (19)**, which was originally built in 1504, is just off the SW corner of Al-Azhar: it now houses a permanent exhibition of desert life and is also used as workshops for artisans. Traditional handicrafts for sale. Open daily (except Fri) 0900-1700 or 0900-1100 and 1400-1600 during Ramadan, entry E£3.

50m to the NW back on Sharia al-Azhar just near the footbridge, is the **Ghuriyya (20)**, the magnificent complex

of **Sultan al-Ashraf Qansuh II al-Ghawri** (1501-1517), which is bisected by a continuation of Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah. The complex, made up of his domed mausoleum to the E of the street and his mosque and *medersa* to the W, was built in 1504-1505 and was the last great Mamluke public building before the Ottoman conquest. He died of a stroke in 1516, aged about 76, during a battle near Aleppo against the Turks who then immediately invaded and captured Egypt and began their long rule which lasted from 1517 to 1805. Because Al-Ghawri's body was never found, he was not buried in this magnificent and hugely expensive tomb.

Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah between the two buildings, originally roofed, was the site of the exotic silk market. Today mainly household goods are sold in the shops. Each section of this main thoroughfare, Islamic Cairo's main street, was named after the merchandise sold in that particular stretch. For example the fruit-sellers had their own mosque, the **Fakahani Mosque (21)** (built in 1735), about 200m down the street on the left hand side. Make a detour by walking left from its NW corner and then left again where, 70m to the E at No 6, is the **House of Gamal al-Din al-Dhahabi (22)**, Cairo's richest gold merchant in 1637 when this beautiful house was built. It is used as a documentation centre and open to visitors (daily 0900-1400 except Fri). Back to the S of the mosque, is the ornate **Sabil-Kuttab of Tusan Pasha (23)**, built in his name by his father Mohamed Ali Pasha in 1820. From here the S gates of the ancient city are just ahead. Before going through the gates turn left or E at the *sabil-kuttab*. About 75m along the side street is an old 18th century mens' bath-house known as **Hammam as-Sukariyah (24)** which was originally owned by a rich woman who also owned the nearby *wikala* and *sabil* of Nafisah Bayda. Although like the other remaining bath-houses in the city it is no longer a den of vice, it is still an interesting place to visit and relax. Today it helps the local community by allowing its fire for heating the water to be used to cook *ful mudammas* (beans) for the locals' breakfast.

Bab el-Zoueila (25), built by Badr al-Gamali in 1092 when Fatimid fortifications were being reinforced, was one of the three main gates in the city walls. It is named after mercenaries from the Al-Zoueila tribe of Berbers who were stationed in the nearby barracks. The gate was soon inside the city following the successive expansions and Salah al-Din's construction of larger walls further out from the centre. Cairo was in effect divided into two with the inner walls still in existence and both sets of gates locked at night.

Bab el-Zoueila also has a more popular history linked to the caravans departing both to Mecca and the S. It was not only the location of street performers including snake-charmers, story tellers and dancers, but after the 15th century it also became the site of public executions. Common criminals were beheaded, garrotted or impaled, while cheating merchants were hanged from hooks or rope. Defeated Mamluke Sultans, including the last one in 1517, were hanged and sometimes nailed to the doors. Even today the 20m high Bab el-Zoueila, which comprises a 4.8m wide multi-storey arch between two solid stone towers, is still an impressive sight particularly from the S.

Immediately to the W of the gate is the **Mosque of Sultan al-Muayyad Sheikh (26)** (1412-1421) built on the site of the old Kazanat al-Shamaii prison. Al-Muayyad had been incarcerated here on a number of occasions because of his love of alcohol when he was a Mamluke slave-soldier. On being released after one particularly long and unpleasant stretch, he vowed to replace the prison with a mosque which he began in 1415 after becoming Sultan.

The mosque, which is sometimes known as the Red Mosque because of the colour of its external walls, was one of the last to be built in the ancient large enclosure style before the Turkish style was adopted as the norm. The superb bronze-plated wooden entrance doors leading to the mosque were originally intended for the Sultan Hassan Mosque but were purchased by Al-Muayyad for his own mosque. The entrance leads into a vestibule with an ornate stalactite ceiling. From the vestibule, the door on the left leads to the Al-Muayyad's mausoleum and marble tomb with Kufic inscription, while nearby is the tomb of his son, Ibrahim, who died in 1420.

From the mausoleum a door leads to the E *liwan* which was restored at the beginning of this century and gives an impression of the mosque's past splendour. Many of the columns were taken from ancient monuments but the most exceptional sight is the *mihrab* and the surrounding wall because of the perfect harmonization of the coloured marble stucco. The *minbar* is an example of fine woodwork, but has also been restored. The courtyard is now planted with shrubs and palm trees. From the top of one of the two minarets, there is an excellent view over the surrounding area and the adjacent Bab el-Zoueila.

From here a 20 mins walk or 5 mins ride on bus No 75 to the W of Bab el-Zoueila along Sharia Ahmed Maher brings you to the **Museum of Islamic Art** (see page 140).

En route immediately next to the mosque is a large and elegant building which looks like a small palace but is in fact the **Hammam al-Muayyad (27)** bath-house, built 1420, which has fallen into disrepair and is now often flooded. The area between the two is known as the Bab el-Khalq after a mediaeval gate which has long since vanished.

From the S of Bab el-Zoueila there are two routes you can take to reach the **Sultan Hassan** and **Al-Rifai mosques** which stand N of the Citadel. One is to continue SW along what is officially known as Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah but which, like so many other long roads, changes its name in different sections and at this point is also known as Sharia al-Khiyamiyya (Tentmakers) because of its bazaar. After about 1 km you reach a major crossroads where you should turn left or SSE along Sharia al Qala'a which leads to the rear of the two mosques. A much more interesting route includes a few nearby sites on Sharia al-Khiyamiyya before heading E along Sharia Darb al-Ahmar, after which the whole area is named, towards the Citadel.

Immediately S of the gates are two buildings which are bisected by Sharia al-Khiyamiyya. To the W is the *Zawiya* (Sufi monastery) and *Sabil* (public fountain) of **Sultan al-Nasir Farag (28)** (1405-1412) who was Barquq's son and successor. To the E is the much more magnificent **Mosque of Visir al-Salih Tala'i (29)** which was both the last Fatimid mosque and, when it was built in 1160, was the country's first suspended mosque resting on top of a series of small vaulted shops which, with the rise in the street level, are now in the basement. Tala'i reportedly died regretting the construction of the mosque because, being located directly outside the walls of the city, it could be used as a fortress by an enemy.

In 1160 the enfeebled Fatimid Dynasty was about to fall as one child khalifa succeeded another, ruling in name only, whilst a powerful vizir really wielded royal authority. When the Armenian-born Tala'i ibn Ruzzik came to power he called himself al-Salih hence the mosque's name.

The mosque, about 60m by 20m in size, was originally intended as a mausoleum for the remains of the martyr Hussein which were brought to Cairo from Ashkalon when the latter was under threat from the Franks. The great

Adhan – The Call To Prayer

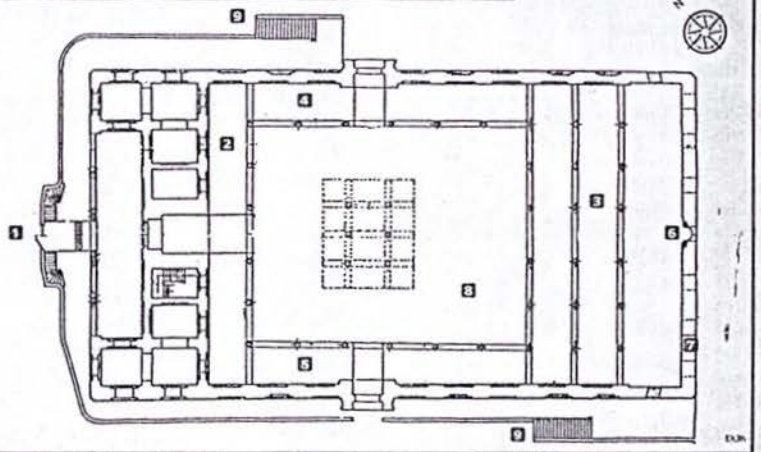
This is know as the *adhan* and is performed by the *muezzin* who calls the faithful to prayer, originally by the strength of his own voice from near the top of the minaret but today, taking advantage of technological advances, it is probably a recording timed to operate at a particular hour. Listening to the first call to prayer just before the sun begins to rise is an unforgettable memory of Egypt.

There is no fixed tune, perhaps tune is too definite a description, but in Egypt there is one particular rhythm used all over the country for the *adhan*. The traditional Sunni *adhan* consists of seven phrases, with two additional ones for the morning prayer. There are some variations which the well-tuned ear will pick up.

1. *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is most great) is intoned four times. This phrase is called *al takbir*.
2. *Ashhadu anna la ilah ill'-Allah* (I testify that there is no god besides Allah) is intoned twice.
3. *Ashhadu anna Muhammadan rasul Allah* (I testify that Muhammad is the apostle of Allah) is intoned twice. This and the preceeding phrase are called the *shihada*, a confession of faith.
4. *Hayya 'ala 'l-salah*, (Come to prayer) is intoned twice.
5. *Hayya 'ala'l-falah*, (Come to salvation) is intoned twice. This and the preceeding phrase are called *tathwib*.
6. *Allahu Akbar* is intoned twice.
7. *La ilah ill'Allah* (There is no god besides Allah) is intoned once.

The two additions to the morning prayer are: *Al-salatu khayr min al-nawm* (Prayer is better than sleep) which intoned twice between the fifth and sixth phrases, and *Al-salatu wa'l-salam 'alayka ya rasul Allah* (Benediction and peace upon you, Oh Apostle of Allah) intoned after the seventh phrase.

MOSQUE OF VISIR AL-SALIH TALA'I



1. Entrance (uniquely above shops)
2. NW liwan
3. SE liwan
4. NE liwan
5. SW liwan
6. Mihrab
7. Qibla wall
8. Sahn
9. Steps to street level

earthquake of 1303 severely damaged the mosque and destroyed the minaret which was restored together with the rest of the mosque by Amir Baktimur al-Gukandar (Polo-Master) and subsequently in 1440, 1477 and lastly and very badly in the 1920s after the minaret had collapsed yet again.

It was only in about 1920 that it was discovered that the street level had risen so much and that the mosque was suspended on shops below. The shops – 7 at the front, 12 on either side but none below the *qibla* wall – were part of the *waqf* and whose rents supported the upkeep of the mosque. The NW entrance porch, with its large portico and an arcade of keel-arches raised on ancient columns with Corinthian capitals, is unique in Cairo. The decoration around the entrance is, however, similar in style to the earlier al-Aqmar mosque. The porch's *mashrabiyya* dates from the first restoration and the bronze facings on the exterior door are also from 1303 while the carvings on the inside of the door are a copy of the original which is now in the Islamic museum.

From the entrance a tunnel-vaulted passage leads into the *sahn* surrounded on four sides by *liwan* but the NW *liwan* is not original. In the NE *qibla liwan* the tie-beams, which are inscribed with Koranic inscriptions in what is known as floriated Kufic script, are original but the ceiling is modern.

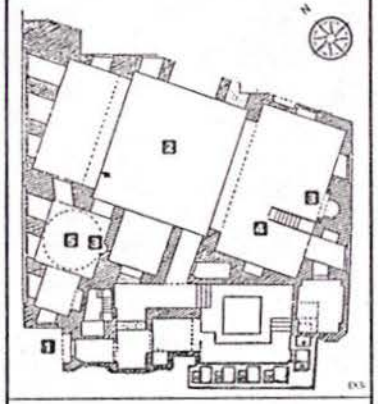
The highlight of the interior is the exquisite *minbar*, the 4th oldest in Egypt and a very fine example of Mamluk wood carving, which was donated to the mosque in 1300 by Amir Baktimur al-Gukandar. Above is the first appearance in a Cairo mosque of a *malqaf* (wind vent) which was an ingenious early Islamic form of air conditioning.

Further S down the street is what is probably the city's best preserved example of a **roofed market** which, because of the multitude of coloured printed fabrics sold here, is known as the **tentmakers bazaar**. Situated slightly further along the street is the **Medersa-Mosque of Amir Gani-Bak al-Ashrafi** (30) which was built in 1426 and is named after a favourite of Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay (1422-1437). Although the mosque has similarities with a number of other Mamluk mosques of the same period and despite the loss of both a coloured marble lintel over the portal door and the windows, its decoration even now is more ornate than other examples.

One enters the mosque from the S and passing through a serpentine corridor one arrives in the central domed cruciform area with the usual *qibla* wall, *mihrab* and *minbar*. There is a two storey minaret, which is very plain and utilitarian.

The Amir Gani-Bak al-Ashrafi had been brought up by Sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay and his meteoric rise to amir in 1422 naturally created many enemies. He was poisoned and died aged 25. He was such a favourite that the Sultan had his body transferred to a tomb in the Sultan's own Eastern Cemetery complex.

MEDERSA & MOSQUE OF AMIR GANI-BAK AL-ASHRAFI



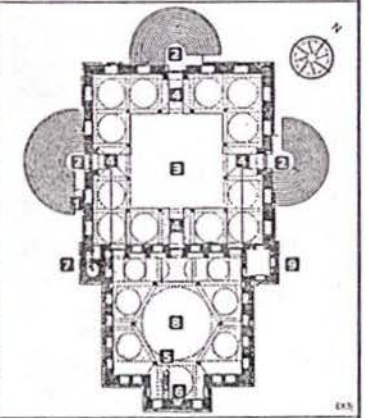
1. Entrance
2. Cruciform medersa
3. Mihrab
4. Minbar
5. Domed tomb

Nearby is what little remains of the **Souk al-Surugiyyah** (saddle-makers market).

The **Mosque of Malika Safiya (51)**, built in 1610, lies to the W in a small street off Sharia Mohamed Ali (see map, page 98. It is one of the few mosques in Cairo which bears a woman's name although Queen Safiya acquired it deviously rather than constructed it herself.

Safiya, who was from the noble Venetian family of Baffo, was captured by pirates along with a large party of other women in 1575 on their way to Corfu where her father was governor. Because of her beauty she was presented to the Sublime Porte where she became chief consort of Sultan Murad III. He made her his *Sultana Khasski* (favourite) which gave her considerable power and influence which was increased further when she produced Murad's first-born son who succeeded his father in 1595. At her son's death Safiya was exiled to Seraglio where she lived in obscurity until she died in 1618.

MOSQUE OF MALIKAH SAFIYA



1. Main entrance
2. Entrances
3. Sahn
4. Domed arcade
5. Minbar
6. Mihrab
7. Minaret
8. Central dome
9. Women's room behind screen

This Turkish style mosque, which was originally set in gardens, is entered on the SW side via some very high steps which lead to a square courtyard. The cloister which runs all round the forecourt has three arches above columns on each side, and is vaulted by a series of small supported Byzantine style domes of a type unknown in Egypt before the Turkish conquest. The roof in the centre of each side is oblong in plan.

One small Mamluk-style dome, entirely distinct from the others, covers a small room in the NE corner of the sanctuary. This room was probably intended for women because a *mashrabiyya* separated it from the sanctuary.

A fine stalactite doorway leads into the sanctuary over which lies the great brick dome, resting on six pointed arches, and surrounded by smaller arches. The *mirhab*, which except for the blue Iznik tiles is in the earlier Mamluk style of coloured marble panels, stands at the back of a square domed annex. The beautiful *minbar* is characteristically Turkish, being entirely carved in white marble with a pointed conical top.

Returning to Bab el-Zoueila and turning right (E) into Sharia Darb al-Ahmar (Red Rd) there is an interesting 1¼ km walk to the Citadel. The street gets its name from the incident in May 1805 when the Mamlukes were tricked into going to discuss their grievances with Mohamed Ali Pasha (1805-1848). He had them slaughtered as they travelled 'Between the Two Palaces' and their heads sent to Istanbul as a demonstration of his power and independence. In Mar 1811 he did a similar thing again on the same street when 470 Mamlukes and their retainers were persuaded into going to a banquet at the Citadel to celebrate his son's imminent departure to fight the Wahabis in modern day Saudi Arabia. They were slaughtered on their return near Bab el-Zoueila.

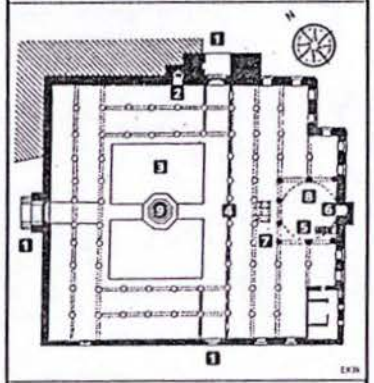
About 150m after the Mosque of Wazir al-Salih Tala'i the road bends towards the S and on the corner of the fork in the road is the beautiful late-Mamluke era **Mosque of Qajamas al-Ishaq I (31)** who was Sultan Qaitbai's Viceroy of Damascus where he died and was buried in 1487. Although the mosque was built in 1480-81, it is now known locally as the **Mosque of Abu Hurayba** after the 19th century sheikh who occupies the tomb.

At this point you can could make a detour off the main road E up Sharia Abu Hurayba where the left hand fork leads 250m to the **Mosque & Tomb of Amir Aslam al-Silahdar (32)** built in 1344-45 and then follow the road around SW and back to the main Sharia Darb al-Ahmar.

Alternatively you can forget about the detour and just continue S from the Mosque of Qajamas al-Ishaqi along Sharia Darb al-Ahmar. About 50m on the right is the **Mosque & Tomb of Ahmed al-Mihmandar (33)**, built in 1324 but restored in 1732, but much more interesting is the beautiful, relaxing and very peaceful **Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani (34)** (1339-40) which is 100m further along the street. This is amongst the most impressive 14th century buildings in Cairo. Altunbugha (Golden Bull), who was originally from the Turkish town of Mardin, rose through the ranks to become amir and then married one of Sultan al-Nasir Mohamed's daughters and became his cupbearer (*saqi*). After the sultan died in 1340 his successors imprisoned Altunbugha until 1342 when he was made governor of Aleppo in modern-day Syria. He died there the following year at the age of 25.

Altunbugha's courtyard mosque, which was extensively restored in 1895-1903, is one of the oldest remaining buildings in this area. The minaret was the first in Cairo with an entirely octagonal shaft. It was built by Mu'allim al-Suyufi, who was the royal chief

MOSQUE OF ALTUNBUGHA AL-MARIDANI



1. Entrances
2. Octagonal minaret
3. Sahn
4. Mashrabiyya
5. Wooden minbar
6. Marble mihrab
7. Red granite columns (8 of them)
8. Position of dome
9. Wooden fountain

architect, who also built the minaret of Aqbugha at al-Azhar. The shafts of both are decorated by two-coloured inlaid stone work. Fortunately the restoration work followed the original plans so that the bulb crowned canopy supported on stone pillars, the earliest existing example, was retained.

The main entrance in the NE wall is composed of a high-pointed vaulted recess which is decorated by a stalactite frieze and inlaid black and white marble. Inside the mosque the large *sahn* with a later Ottoman octagonal wooden fountain canopy, is surrounded by four *riwaq* but the *qibla riwaq* is separated from the rest of the mosque by a beautifully carved part-original, part-restored *mashrabiyya*. There is a three-bay by three-bay domed area, supported by eight red granite pharaonic columns, in front of the marble mosaic and mother-of-pearl *mihrab* and the wooden carved and inlaid *minbar*. There is a stone *dikka* on raised pillars where the Koran is recited. The painted and gilded ceiling above has been partially restored which reveals the glorious original colour but also shows the need for further renovation.

Another 200m further S past a small Turkish mosque, by which time the road is now called Sharia Bab al-Wazir in memory of the Gate of the Wazir which once stood there, is the large **Medersa of Sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban II (35)** (1363-1378). It was built in 1368 when he was only 10 for his mother, who was one of al-Nasir Mohamed's (1310-1340) concubines, which is why it is known locally as *Umm Sultan Sha'ban* ('mother of Sultan Sha'ban') but he died before her and is buried there.

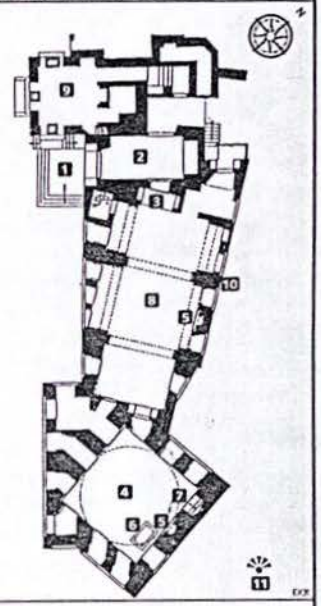
On the road S is the **Mosque of Amir Aqsunqur (36)** who was the son-in-law of al-Nasir Mohamed and later became Viceroy of Egypt. It is sometimes known as the **Mosque of Ibrahim Agha** by locals and the **Blue Mosque** by Europeans because of both the exterior's blue-grey marble and the beautiful indigo and turquoise tiling of the *qibla* wall. In the 1650s Ibrahim Agha usurped the mosque started in 1346 and decorated it with imported tiles.

The **Medersa-Mausoleum of Amir Khayrbak (50)** was built in stages with the earliest, the mausoleum, which was attached to his palace, being erected in 1502. Because it was squeezed between existing buildings the shape of the complex is very irregular. The complex is best viewed from the Citadel end to the S from where one can see that the minaret, undated, which has the upper storey missing and the intricately carved dome of the tomb raised above arched windows.

Unlike most Mamluk *medressa* it was initially not a Friday mosque although this was subsequently introduced in 1531 when the *minbar* was added. Documents show that the *medersa* staff included one imam, six *muezzins*, two *qari* (Koran readers) at the *medersa*, nine *qari* to recite the Koran at the windows, a sufi shaykh, ten *qari* to perform daily in two shifts, and two *qari* at the mausoleum.

The entrance is through a corridor to the left of which is the *sabil-kuttab* and to the right of which is the portal

MEDERSA - MAUSOLEUM OF AMIR KHAYRBAK



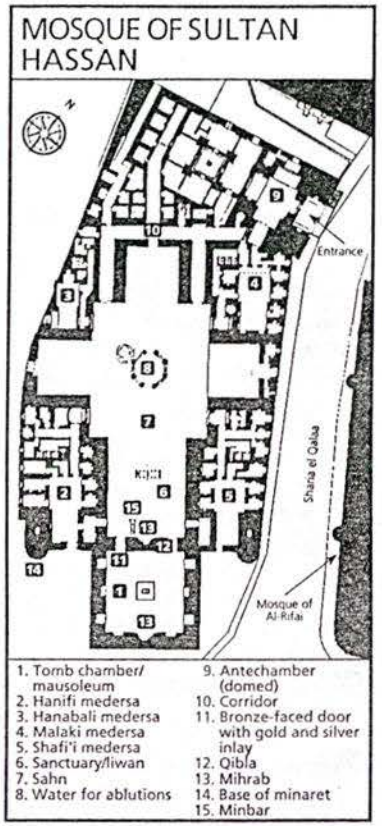
1. Entrance
2. Courtyard
3. Portal
4. Domed tomb chamber
5. Mihrab
6. Sarcophagus of Ganbalat
7. Steps to Alin Aq's palace
8. Sahn
9. Sabil
10. Qibla wall
11. Best viewed from here

entrance to the mosque which one enters by stepping over a piece of pharaonic stone. Three cross vaults cover the mosque's interior but it is noticeable that the arches strangely obscure the windows on the *qibla* wall suggesting a change in plan during construction. The stonework is red and yellow and the *qibla* wall of coloured marble. To the left of the *mihrab* with its pointed arch is a door which leads down stairs direct to the adjacent Alin Aq palace which Khayrbek had requisitioned. Past the wooden *minbar* is the entrance to the rather plain but extraordinarily tall tomb containing the sarcophagus of Ganbalat, Khayrbak's brother. From the windows of the tomb one has a good view of the Alin Aq palace and Salah al-Din's city walls.

For the record, as you admire this building, Khayrbak who was the Mamluk governor of Aleppo, betrayed his master Sultan al-Ghuri at the Battle of Marj Dabiq in 1516 when the Turks routed the Mamluks which led to the Ottoman occupation of Egypt. He was rewarded for his treachery by being appointed as the first Ottoman governor of Egypt where he was reportedly known for his cruelty and greed. From here the road slopes up to the left to meet the approach road to the Citadel but we continue right to the two imposing mosques.

Directly below the Citadel are two adjacent mosques. The **Sultan Hassan Mosque (37)** (Entry E£6) was started in 1356 and finished 6 years later during the second reign of Sultan Hassan (1354-1361). The building is a masterpiece of Islamic art and is of incomparable simplicity and beauty. The main entrance is through a large, impressive doorway decorated with stalactites and finely sculpted ornaments. This leads into an antechamber connected to the main courtyard. The magnificent cruciform courtyard has an ablutions fountain at the centre covered by a large dome which was originally painted blue. Each of the vaulted *liwans* served as a place for the teachings of one of the four doctrines of Sunni Islam. The *liwan* containing the *mihrab* has richly decorated marble lined walls and a Koranic frieze in Kufic writing. Its height is accentuated by hanging lamp-chains.

From here an ornate bronze door with gold and silver motifs leads to Sultan Hassan's tomb. The room is dominated by a large 21m diameter dome which was actually built later during the Turkish period. The 3-section 86m minaret by the mausoleum is the highest in Cairo, with each new section richly decorated at its base with numerous stalactites. Another much smaller 55m minaret on the E side of the mosque was



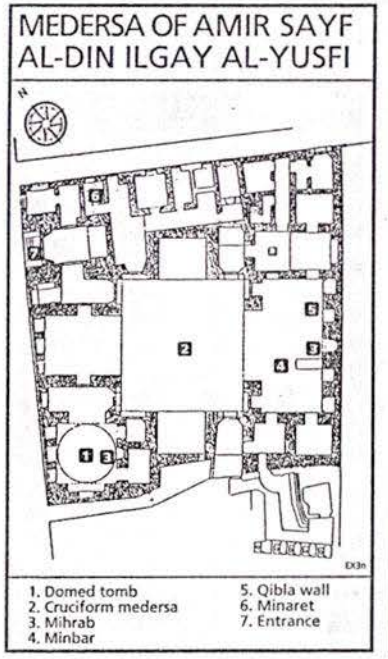
built in 1659 to replace the existing one which was decaying. The building also contains four *medressa* with one for each of the four – Malaki, Hanafi, Hanabali and Shafi'i – Islamic schools of law. Each *medersa* forms a virtually autonomous part of the building. The ground floor is used as a place for teaching, meditation and praying and the first floor as lodgings for the students.

Despite its appearance, the **Al-Rifai Mosque (38)** (entry E£6), directly to the E of Sultan Hassan Mosque, was only started in the late 19th century and was actually finished in 1912. However the mosque, which is named after Sheikh Ali al-Rifai who was the founder of the Sufi Muslim *tariqa* bearing his name and who was originally buried there, blends

remarkably well into the surroundings. It was built over and expanded by the Dowager Princess Khushyar, the mother of Khedive Ismail who died in 1885 before it was finished, and was intended to contain the tombs of her descendants. Besides Al-Rifai and herself it contains the tombs of Khedive Ismail (1863-1879), his sons Sultan Hussein Kamil (1914-1917) and King Ahmed Fouad I (1917-1936) but not King Farouk who died in exile and is buried in the southern cemetery. It is also the last resting place of the last Shah of Iran, (Mohamed Reza Pahlavi) who died in exile in 1980 and, on President Sadat's instructions, was buried with great ceremony in a tomb made of green marble imported from Pakistan.

The **Medersa of Amir Sayf al-Din Ilgay al-Yusfi (53)** built 1373, is located on Sharia Suq al-Salih to the N of Bab Mangak al-Silahdar (1346-47).

Sayf al-Din Ilgay rose through the ranks to become an Amir of the Sword and eventually commander-in-chief of



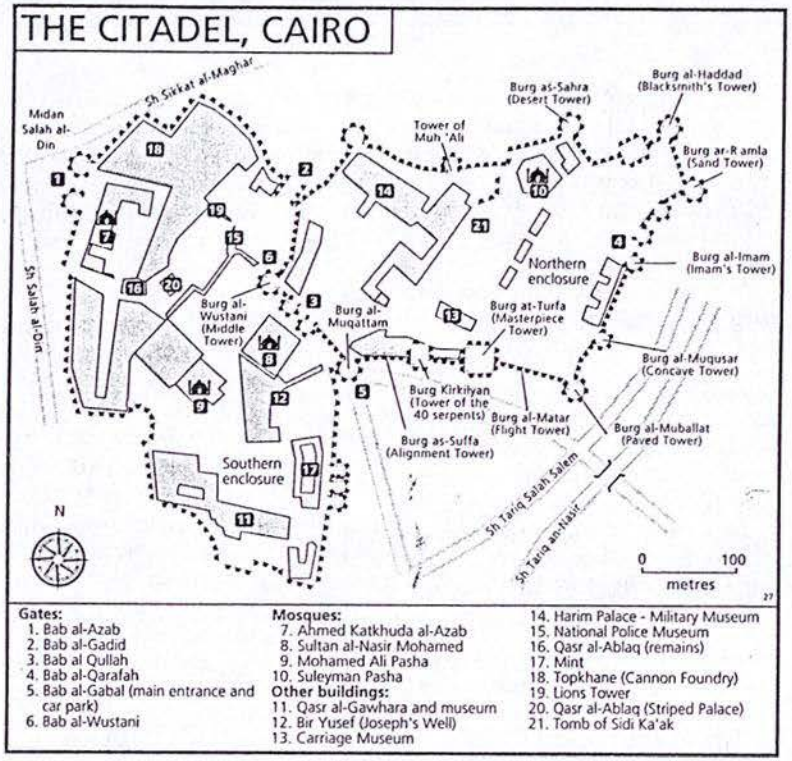
the army. He married Khwand Baraka, who was the mother of Sultan Shaban (1363-77), and he found himself one of the powers behind the throne. After his wife died, however, he quarrelled with the Sultan over her property and lost his influence. He had to flee the court and was drowned in uncertain circumstances while trying to cross the Nile on horseback. His body was recovered and he was buried in the *medersa* that he had built a few years earlier in 1373. His tomb lies beneath the dome at the western corner of the mosque.

It is a late Mamluk complex with an unusual curved and fluted dome. The minaret has an octagonal base and the usual further two storeys above, the galleries of the first of which are supported by attractive corbels of stalactite form. The upper storey of the minaret is a later reconstruction with a pillared pavilion.

The main façade is made up of an ornate formal entrance on the extreme N corner with the remaining façade being divided into two recesses headed with stalactite cornices and crennellated hoods separated by two narrower full-height ornamental arches headed with decorated fluted stone. The recesses and arches carry 36 windows in three courses; the second and third courses are elegant windows with tracery masonry lights.

The entrance to the traditional Mamluk cruciform mosque is via the NW steps near the street corner which lead via a winding corridor into the central *sahn* which is surrounded by four *liwan* each of which have a frontal arch and above which is gilded decoration, now somewhat deteriorated in quality. The *qibla liwan* has been depleted of its former marble dado and the *minbar* has lost its top but still has fine carving and inlay. The entrance to the Ilgay's tomb is between the NE and SE *liwans*. To the right of the *minbar* on the SW wall is an exit to the small outside courtyard.

THE CITADEL, CAIRO



Gates:
1. Bab al-Azab
2. Bab al-Gadid
3. Bab al Qullah
4. Bab al-Qarafah
5. Bab al-Gabal (main entrance and car park)
6. Bab al-Wustani

Mosques:
7. Ahmed Katkhuda al-Azab
8. Sultan al-Nasir Mohamed
9. Mohamed Ali Pasha
10. Suleyman Pasha

Other buildings:
11. Qasr al-Gawhara and museum
12. Bir Yusef (Joseph's Well)
13. Carriage Museum
14. Harim Palace - Military Museum
15. National Police Museum
16. Qasr al-Ablaq (remains)
17. Mint
18. Topkhane (Cannon Foundry)
19. Lions Tower
20. Qasr al-Ablaq (Striped Palace)
21. Tomb of Sidi Ka'ak

Route 2b: The Citadel

The magnificent **Citadel** reached direct from Midan Tahrir by taking a No 82 bus, is also known as Al-Qala'a al-Gabal (Citadel of the Mountain) or Al-Burg, is open daily 0830-1600 (except 1130-1300 on Fri), entry E£10, but entrance into the museums ends at 1530. Enter via **Bab al-Gadid (40).**

It was built by Salah al-Din (1171-1193) as part of a very ambitious general fortification plan which included enclosing the whole city with a new wall which could be controlled from the Citadel. The original fortress and remaining fortifications were strongly influenced by the architecture of castles built in Palestine and Syria by the Crusaders. It was built in two walled enclosures, linked by their shortest walls, with the military area to the NE and the residential quarters in the SW. Every 100m or so along the walls there is a tower and there are numerous gates. The whole complex is still under military control and there are large areas which are closed to the public.

Later the Citadel was abandoned until the Mamlukes' arrival, when it became the Sultan's residence and the *Burji Mamlukes* (1382-1517) took their name from their base in the Citadel. In the 14th century Sultan al-Nasir Mohamed (1310-1340) added a number of buildings including a mosque and later, because of the development of warfare and the use of canons, the Turks undertook major reinforcements. The most recent modification to the Citadel was by Mohamed Ali Pasha (1805-1840) who built an impressive mosque on the site of the original palaces. Today the most interesting features of the Citadel are the **Mosque of Mohamed Ali Pasha,**

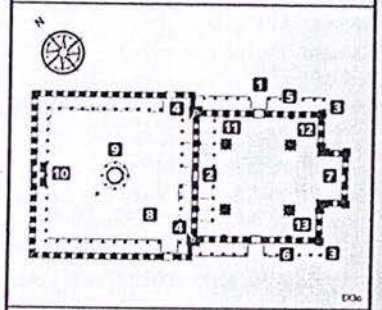
which provides an amazing view W over Cairo and the restored **Sultan al-Nasir Mohamed Mosque.**

Walls, Towers and Gates The Ayyubid walls and towers (1176-1183) around part of the Northern enclosure are from the time of Salah al-Din. The walls are 10m high and 3m thick interspersed with half-round towers. Some of the larger/later towers (1207) such as Burg at-Turfa which enclose parts of the wall were built by al-Kamir (nephew of Salah al-Din and the first Ayyubid sultan to live in the Citadel). **Bab al-Azab** enclosed by a pair of round headed towers stands on the W side of the Citadel. It was the original entrance to the Southern enclosure and is no longer open to the public. The brass bound wooden doors date from 1754. **Bab al-Qullah** (16th century) connects the two separate parts of the Citadel. The original Mamluk gate was replaced after the Ottoman conquest and was widened in 1826 to allow Mohamed Ali's carriage to pass through. **Bab al-Gadid** (new Gate) was built in 1828 and is in reality a large tunnel with a vaulted ceiling. There are guard rooms on either side.

Burg as-Siba (Lion's Tower) was built in 1207 by the Mamluk Sultan Baybars. The frieze of stone lions, the sultans' heraldic symbol, gives it its name. **Burg al-Muqattam** (16th century) is the largest tower in the citadel, being over 25m high and 24m in diameter. The 7m thick walls were built to withstand artillery attack.

The **Mosque of Mohamed Ali Pasha** (Entry E£10, E£5 students) was started in 1824 but only finished 8 years after his death in 1857. The architecture was strongly influenced by the Turkish mosques of Istanbul with the characteristic high, slender, octagonal minarets and an imposing dome which had to be rebuilt in the 1930s. The marble floored courtyard is very finely proportioned, with a beautiful central ablutions

MOSQUE OF MOHAMED ALI PASHA



1. Main entrance
2. Entrance from courtyard
3. Domed turret
4. Octagonal minaret
5. NE arcade
6. SW arcade
7. Mihrab
8. Sahn
9. Ablutions fountain
10. Clock tower
11. Tomb of Mohamed Ali
12. Subsidiary mihrab
13. Minbar

fountain. To the NW is a small square tower for a clock which was a gift from King Louis-Philippe of France in 1846 in exchange for the obelisk now sited in Paris' Place de la Concorde, but the clock has never worked. The mosque is covered by a large dome with four half domes on each side. Once inside, it takes some time to become accustomed to the dim lighting. The white marbled tomb of Mohamed Ali is on the right of the entrance, behind a bronze grille.

The **Sultan al-Nasir Mohamed Mosque** was built between 1318 and 1335. It is certainly the best preserved Mamluk building in the Citadel and is claimed to be one of the finest arcade-style mosques in Cairo, the arches being supported by pharaonic and classical columns plundered from elsewhere. The two distinctive minarets covered in the upper part with ceramic tiles are attributed to Persian craftsmanship. The magnificent marble which covered the floors and lined the walls to a height of 5m was unfortunately removed on instructions of the Ottoman ruler Selim I. The *mihrab* is still in good condition.

The **Mosque of Suleyman Pasha** (1528), in the northern enclosure of the Citadel, was the first to be built in Cairo during the Ottoman period and is believed to be dedicated to the janissary corp of soldiers of which Sulayman Pasha was earlier governor. It may have been designed by one of the architects sent to Cairo to repair the damage caused to the Citadel and the city walls by the Ahmed Pasha revolt.

The main entrance to the mosque is to the left of the minaret. Its stalactite portal leads not directly into the paved courtyard like most Ottoman mosques but into the prayer hall on its SW side. This is due to its cramped position by the Citadel's walls. The minaret is typical of the style common in Istanbul, a tall slender cylinder with a conical top, but like the Mamluk minarets it has two galleries. Like the domes of the surrounding mosque and prayer hall the minaret's pointed cap is covered with green tiles which are similar to a number of Cairo's mosques of the period.

The mosque interior comprises a richly painted domed central area flanked on three sides by three supported semi-domes. The *sahn* is surrounded by a shallow-dome roofed arcade and in the NW corner is the slightly larger dome of the mausoleum containing tombs of a number of janissaries.

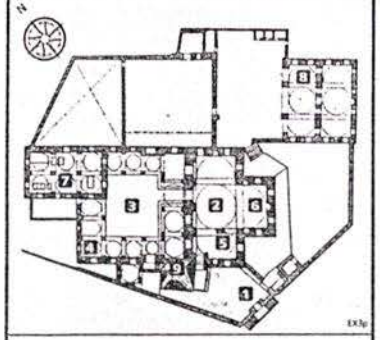
The frescoes on the walls were restored in the 19th century and it is uncertain how faithful they are to the original Ottoman decoration. The conical top of the marble *minbar*, is decorated with a Mamluk inspired geometric pattern based on the stars and polygon forms, similar to the Ottoman minarets.

The **Mosque of Ahmed Katkhuda al-Azab** was built in 1697, Ottoman style.

Museums The **Carriage Museum** is in the dining hall used by British officers who were stationed in the Citadel and on display are eight carriages once used by the Egyptian royal family and some painted wooden horses. The **Military Museum** is situated in the **Harim Palace** built in 1827 as the private residence of Mohamed Ali. There are three extensive wings with many halls and side rooms all decorated in lavish style. King Farouk ordered its conversion into a museum which traces the history of the Egyptian army from pharaonic times to the present day. There are military uniforms, rifles and cannons on display. Tanks captured in the Oct 1973 conflict are in the courtyard. Open 0900-1400 except Mon. The **National Police Museum** has some strange and interesting exhibits of policing problems ranging from assassination attempts to protection of Egyptian antiquities. It is constructed on top of Burg as-Ṣiba.

Qasr al-Gawhara (Palace of Jewels) stands on the site of the palace of the Circassian Mamluk sultans. It was built in 1814 as the first of two palaces with French-style salons that Mohamed Ali built in the Citadel. It contains an impressive audience hall and guest rooms. Having been the residence of Egypt's rulers since the 12th century he predicted that his descendants would rule Egypt as long as they lived in the

MOSQUE OF SULEYMAN PASHA, CITADEL



1. Entrance
2. Domed central area
3. Sahn
4. Roofed arcade
5. Marble minbar
6. Mihrab
7. Mausoleum of Suleyman
8. Maq'Ad
9. Minaret

Citadel: sure enough, Ismail's move to the Abdin Palace foreshadowed the decline in their fortunes.

Today it is a museum with displays of portraits, costumes, furniture and ornaments which belonged to King Farouk. The **Archaeological Garden Museum** in the Northern Enclosure contains an interesting collection of bits and pieces – monuments and statues – as well as welcome benches.

Joseph's Well named after Salah al-Din built in 1183 is also known as the well of the snail as there is a spiral staircase which leads down some 87m through solid rock to the water level of the Nile. There are two platforms where pumps operated by oxen raised the water which was then carried to the surface by donkeys. It is possible to go down, but take great care. It was built by Crusader prisoners and provided a secure supply of drinking water for all of the Citadel. It is covered by a tower and stands just S of the Mosque of Sultan al-Nasir.

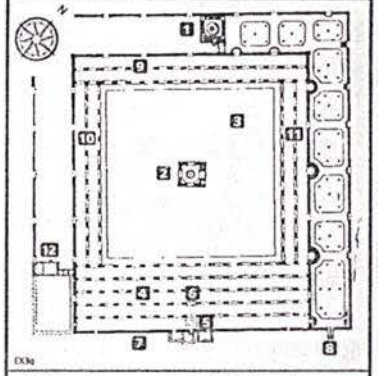
Qasr al-Ablaq (Striped Palace) was built in 1315 by an-Nasr Mohamed for official receptions. Mohamed Ali Pasha had the building torn down but a remaining portion of outer wall shows it was constructed in alternating bands of black and yellow marble, hence the name.

West from the Citadel

From Midan Salah al-Din to the W of the Citadel and in front of the Sultan Hassan Mosque make your way W along Sharia Saliba. On the left is the highly decorated **Sabil-Kuttab of Sultan Qaitbai** (1477) (41). This is another *sabil* and *medersa* but has, unusually, no connection to a larger religious foundation. Continue W past the small **Mosque of Qanibai al-Muhammadi** (42) to the imposing architectural buildings with matching minarets which face each other across the Sharia Saliba. On the right, N, is the **Mosque of Amir Shaykhu** (1349) (43) and on the left, S, the **Khanqah of Amir Shaykhu** (1355) (44). Amir Shaykhu was the Commander in Chief of the Mamluk army during the reign of Sultan Hassan. The *khanqah* had small cells for up to 70 *sufis* around the inner courtyard and in the NE corner of the arcaded prayer hall is Amir Shaykhu's tomb. Go straight ahead at the cross roads, with the **Sabil-Kuttab of Um Abbas** (45) on the corner, passing the small but impressive **Mosque of Amir Taghri Bardi** (1440) (46) with a carved stone dome. While the external structure of this building follows the E-W line of Sharia Saliba the interior is aligned SE to Mecca.

The largest mosque in Cairo and the oldest one which retains its original features is the **Mosque of Ahmed Ibn Tulun** (47) (open daily 0900-1600) which is located about 15 mins walk W of the Citadel along Sharia Saliba on the way towards the river. Alternatively it can be reached from Midan Tahrir by bus No 72 or minibus No 54 which go to the Citadel via the Saiyida Zeinab area and then past

MOSQUE OF AHMED IBN TULUN



1. Minaret
2. 13th century fountain
3. Sahn
4. Sanctuary arcade
5. Mihrab
6. Minbar
7. Qibla
8. To Gayer Anderson Museum
9. NW arcade
10. SW arcade
11. NE arcade
12. Sabil of Sultan Qaitbai

the mosque. Although the Saiyida Zeinab metro station is only two stops from Midan Tahrir it is probably a 30 mins walk from there to the mosque.

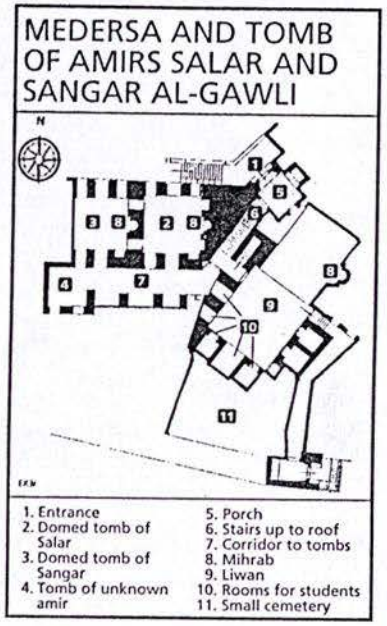
It was built between 876-879 by Ahmed Ibn Tulun, the son of a Turkish slave who became governor of Egypt but who then declared independence from the Baghdad-based Abbasid Khalifas. He thereby became the first of the Tulunids (868-905 AD), at the new town of Al-Qata'i (the Concessions or the Wards) NE of Al-Askar which, in turn was NE of Fustat, and near the foothills of the Muqattam Hills. When the Abbasids regained power in Egypt in 905 AD they destroyed much of the town except for the mosque which fell into decay until it was restored in 1296 by Sultan Langin who had hidden there after he was implicated in an assassination attempt against his predecessor.

The mosque was originally built in 876 by a Syrian Jacobite Christian architect which probably explains the presence of many designs and motifs inspired by Coptic art. Despite the extensive restoration work by Sultan Lagin, but apart from the addition of a spiral minaret with a outside staircase which appears to be a copy of the one at Samarra in Iraq, no major changes were made. Despite its huge size, which is 140m by 122m and a 92m square courtyard, the overall impression is of harmony, simplicity and sobriety. The walls have been plastered but the ornamentation is sculpted and not moulded. **NB** The long Kufic script inscriptions, almost 2 km long, of about 20% of the Koran which circle the mosque several times below the roof. The marble plated *mihrab* is surrounded by an elegant glass mosaic frieze. Directly above is a small wooden dome. The *minbar*, presented by Sultan Lagin in 1296, is a fine work of art. The view from the top over the surrounding area is excellent and worth the climb.

The **Gayer-Anderson Museum**, entrance E£8 using the same ticket as for the Islamic museum (open 0900-1600, Fri 0900-1100 and 1330-1530), which is also called **Beit al-Kridliyah (48)** (House of the Cretan Woman), abuts the SE corner of Ahmed Ibn Tulun's mosque and has its own entrance into the mosque precinct. It is contained in two houses, the one on the W dating back to 1540 and the one to the E to 1631, on either side of a small alley called Atfat al-Gami which originally belonged to the Al-Kiridhi family. Originally one house was for men's accommodation *salamlik* and the other for women *haramlik*. The roof area was solely for the women who crossed from one building to the other by a small bridge on the second floor. A screened balcony *mashrabiyyah* which overlooks the large 2-storey sitting room *qa'ah* with its marble floor and ornately tiled fountain permitted the women to see the male visitors and the entertainments without being seen themselves.

The houses were sold to the government which in 1934 gave them to Major Robert Gayer-Anderson (1881-1945), a retired doctor and member of the Egyptian Civil Service, when he expressed a desire in restoring them and refurnishing them with Ottoman furniture and fittings. A tour of the houses give a good insight into the decoration and organization of a house during the Ottoman rule. Each of the main rooms has a different theme, Damascus room, Persian room, Turkish room and Byzantine room. Other rooms include a library, a writing room and a display room for the Major's collection of pharaonic antiquities.

The Medersa and Tombs of Amirs Salar and Sangar al-Gawli (49) This was once a much larger set of buildings, even so the remaining tombs and the *medersa*/mosque indicate the original grandeur. The domes over the tombs are of different sizes, that to the E being the



largest. The slender minaret stands about 45m high. The entrance is up the steps through a stalactite arch into a porch. Further steps lead to the vaulted corridor and to the tombs. The Tomb of Amir Salar, 7m sq, is encircled by a wooden frieze and has a fine marble mihrab. Note the design of the windows in the dome. The adjacent Tomb of Amir Sangar is smaller at 6.5m sq and is less ornate than its neighbour. Still further W is a third tomb called the Tomb of the Unknown Amir. Even smaller, at only 4.5m sq, the unnamed occupant died in 1348. Turning E from the stairs leads to the mosque. The larger courtyard had small rooms for students (the grills over the doors need some explanation) and a smaller courtyard off which is the *mihrab*.

The area to the W of the giant mosque is known as **Saiyida Zeinab** after the Prophet Mohamed's granddaughter Zeinab (628-680 AD) who settled in Fustat/Cairo in 679 with her five children and the son of her brother Hussein who was murdered at Karbala in the Sunni-Shi'a conflict. Because of her position as closest kinswoman to the martyred Ali and Hussein the area has become a site of pilgrimage for foreign Shi'a Muslims. This is focused on the mosque built and continuously rebuilt over her tomb which is located off Sharia Bur Said but is closed to non-Muslims. Her moulid (saint's day) between 13-27 Ragab (Dec 1994) attracts up to half a million revellers who come to watch the wild Sufi parades and evening festivities.

Route 3: The Cities of the Dead

The **Cities of the Dead** is the name given by Europeans to Cairo's two main cemeteries which spread from the Citadel. The S cemetery is older and spreads to the SE but there are few monuments to see. The N cemetery, which is known locally as Qarafat al-Sharqiyyah (the Eastern Cemetery) because it was E of the old city, is much more interesting and has been the burial place of the sultans since the 14th century. It contains a number of interesting mausoleums including those of Barquq and Qaitbai.

ACCESS The easiest way to the S cemetery is to turn left off Sharia Saliba, about half way between the Sultan Hassan and Ibn Tulun mosques, and head S along Sharia el-Khalifa for about 1 km. The easiest way to the N cemetery is either by taking a taxi direct to Qarafat al-Sharqiyyah or by walking E along Sharia al-Azhar from the Al-Azhar mosque for about 15 mins until you reach the roundabout junction with the N-S dual carriageway of Sharia Salah Salam and then N for 250m. Then cut into the cemetery and head for the dome and minaret which are clearly visible.

WARNING This area is densely populated by Cairenes who live in or near the tombs. In Egypt there has long been a tradition of living close to the dead but the very large numbers are a relatively recent trend caused by an acute scarcity of housing. Consequently the people who live in the cemeteries tend to be comparatively poor and, although certainly not dangerous, it is obviously advisable not to flaunt

your wealth, dress modestly and remember that this is where people live.

In the Northern Cemetery the **Mausoleum of Sultan al-Zahir Barquq** (1382-1389 and 1390-1399) was built over a 12 year period in 1398-1411 by his son Al-Nasir Farag (1399-1405 and 1405-1412). It was the first royal tomb to be built in this modern necropolis after Barquq had expressed a wish to be buried alongside a number of pious Sufi sheikhs who were already buried there. Therefore his body was moved from the *medersa* on Sharia al-Muizzli Din Allah once the 75 sq metres complex had been completed. It is square with two minarets symmetrically placed on the façade. The entrance in the SW corner leads along a corridor to the *sahn* which has an octagonal fountain in the centre and is surrounded by four *liwans*. The N and S *liwans* have one aisle whereas the W has two and the E three. The E *liwan* has three very simple *mihrabs* and an extraordinarily finely sculpted stone *minbar*. Doors lead from either side of the *liwan* into mausoleums. The N mausoleum contains Barquq's own marble cenotaph which is richly decorated with Koranic inscriptions, together with the tombs of an unknown person and another intended for Farag whose body was left in Damascus after he had been assassinated on a military campaign in Syria. The mausoleum to the S holds the tombs of Barquq's wife and two granddaughters.

A little to the S is the **Medersa & Mausoleum of Sultan al-Qaitbai Mosque** (1468-1496), built in 1472-1474, which is a magnificent example of 15th century Arab art and possibly one of Egypt's most remarkable monuments from the Arab era. From the outside the building has very harmonious proportions with the dome finely decorated with polygonal motifs. The minaret is also remarkable because it has with a square base, octagonal middle section and a cylindrical top tier. The mosque is reached by climbing 17 steps to the entrance which leads into the SE *liwan*. The cruciform *medersa* has side *liwans*, and a relatively small covered *sahn* with an octagonal roof lantern. The superbly decorated coloured marble floors are somewhat damaged but still attractive. The *liwans* are very narrow but the E *liwan*, which has a modern ceiling, still has a very well preserved and finely encrusted *minbar*. A door in the S corner of the *qibla liwan* leads to the mausoleum which is decorated with the same sort of marbles as the *medersa*. Its high dome is simply decorated, in contrast with the highly ornate walls. Sultan Qaitbai's tomb is enclosed behind an elaborate wooden *mashrabiyya* while the other tomb is that of one of his sisters.

Contemporary Cairo

Contemporary Cairo has developed further W on both sides of the river into a modern and increasingly Europeanized capital. Although residential suburbs spread outwards in all directions any visit to Cairo should include the **Egyptian Museum**, the **Museum of Islamic Art**, the **Manial Palace** on Roda Island and, provided it is a clear day without too much pollution haze, the **Cairo Tower** on Gezira Island.

The Egyptian Museum

The Egyptian Museum (called in Arabic el-Mathaf el-Misri and sometimes, albeit mistakenly, referred to as The Cairo Museum) rates as one of the wonders of the country. It has an enormous wealth of materials covering early history, ancient Egypt and the Islamic period which is unrivalled even in the grand museums of Berlin, London, New York and Paris. For tourists and scholars alike, the museum is a must if only for a few hours.

The museum is situated in the centre of Cairo taking up the N side of Midan el-Tahrir. Entry is from the sculpture garden fronting the building. The museum is worth visiting either early in the day or during the late afternoon since at other times it is taken over by coach parties. The Tutankhamen exhibit is particularly in demand and it might be necessary to queue for entry. The museum is open daily 0900-1600 (Fri 0900-1115, 1330-1600, Ramadan closes at 1500). From time to time rooms are closed for repair, decoration and for setting up new exhibitions. Similarly there are changes in the lay-out of exhibits. Tickets cost E£10 or E£5 for students. Cameras E£10, E£100 amateur videos, no flash photography. There is an additional fee of E£30 for the Mummy Room, reopened in Mar 1991. It is worth buying a detailed guide to the rooms (E£5), where the layout of displays can change from time to time (but also see plan of Egyptian Museum in this *Handbook*). There is a souvenir shop outside of the Museum on the right of the entrance and an official sales area on the left inside the main building. Café and restaurant facilities are available on the first floor.

The new museum was set up and opened in 1902, the brainchild of Francois Auguste Ferdinand Mariette (1821-81), a Frenchman who was a distant relation of Champollion, the decipherer of Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. He was a great scholar of Egyptology who excavated widely in Egypt throughout the second half of the 19th century. He won the confidence of the crown prince Sa'id Pasha proposing greater preservation of monuments and artefacts and more controls on the export of antiquities. Mariette was appointed to oversee all excavations in Egypt through the Egyptian Antiquities Service and also took responsibility for the setting up of the museum of antiquities. His reign was not without its upsets since he quarrelled violently both with Egyptian officialdom and with rival archaeologists but he was successful in creating the present museum which was specially designed to house the Egyptian national collection. It remains well planned for its age and a great treasure house of objects. There are hopes of a new purpose-built museum to be established, possibly at Giza to overcome the complaint that the present rooms are inadequate to handle exhibits in a satisfactory way and that too many major objects are never seen by the public.

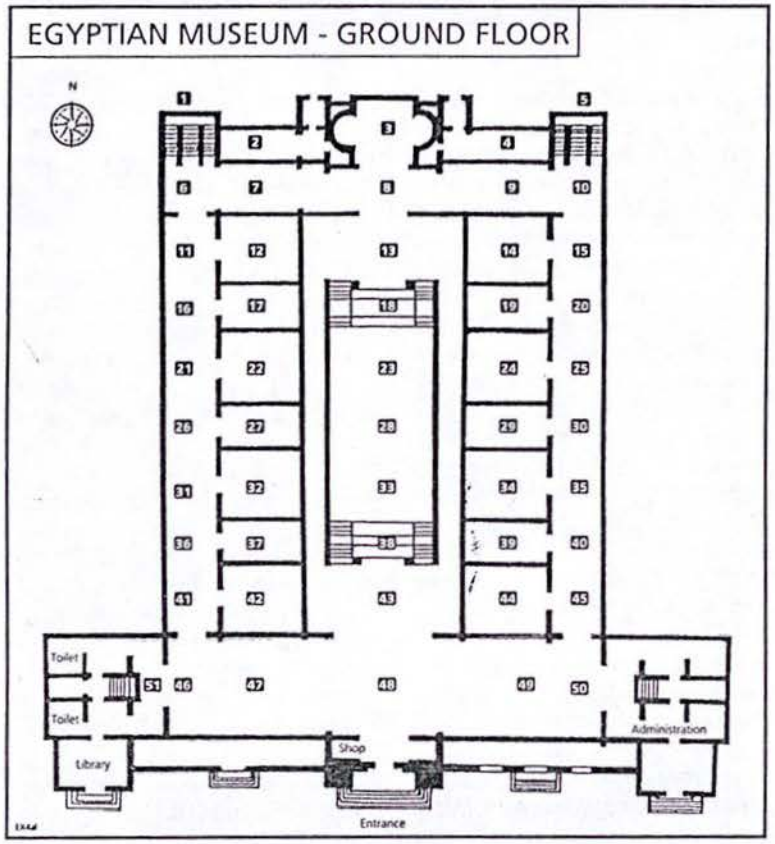
A visit to the museum begins in the sculpture garden, where there is a statue and tomb of Auguste Mariette, a number of sphinx-headed statues and a sarcophagus. The main museum building has two floors, both with 51 principal exhibition rooms. Circulate from the entrance in a clockwise direction. The exhibits are distributed in a generally chronological order beginning in the hallway (Room 48-GF). **NB** GF=Ground Floor; UF=Upper Floor rooms. Rooms and galleries are both included as 'Rooms'.

The museum is fairly large and for a full initial viewing of both floors and all rooms needs some four hours. A shortened tour is recommended for those with only two hours to spend in the museum, with a circuit of the ground floor followed by a visit to the Tutankhamen Gallery in rooms on the upper floor. If there is scope for a one hour visit then the entrance hall (Room 43-GF) and the Tutankhamen galleries, though bear in mind that there can be queues/congestion in this area, especially in Room 3-UF where the principal treasures are stored.

Touring the Museum

The museum also has many other individual objects of great distinction on display. The guide that follows is no more than a check list of items than those in the collections above in this museum's rich holding of objects. In the entrance room (48-GF, display unnumbered) is a cast of the Rosetta Stone, from which Champollion (see his biography,

EGYPTIAN MUSEUM - GROUND FLOOR

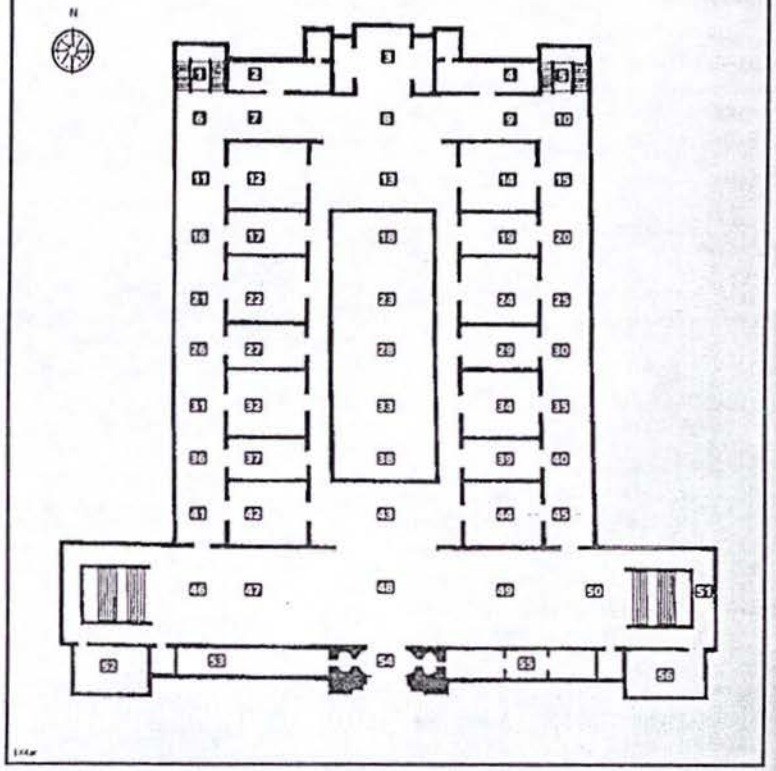


Key Targets In The Museum

It is better to approach a tour of the museum with a set of targets in mind. The Directorate of the Museum considers that there are 13 important coherent collections in the galleries.

Collection	Age	Location
(1) The jewellery of Queen Ah-hotep found at Thebes.	17th Dynasty (1650-1567 BC)	[Room 3-EF]
(2) The mummies of the Kings Tuthmosis I-III, Seti I and Ramses II & III.	18-19th Dynasties (1567-1200 BC)	[Rooms 46, 47, 52-UF]
(3) Funeral equipment from the tomb of the noble Sennedjem.	19th Dynasty (1320-1200 BC)	[Room 17-UF] (See page 253)
(4) Mummies and coffins of the priests of Amen.	21st and 22nd Dynasties (1085-715 BC)	[Room 3, 32, 57-UF]
(5) Objects from the royal tombs of the Middle Kingdom at Dashur.	Middle Kingdom (2050-1786 BC)	[Room 3-UF]

EGYPTIAN MUSEUM - FIRST FLOOR



(6) Objects from the 18th Dynasty tomb of Prince Maherperi from the Valley of the Kings.	18th Dynasty (1567-1320 BC)	[Room 17-UF]
(7) Items from the tomb of Amenophis II in the Valley of the Kings, including 14 royal mummies.	17th-21st Dynasties (1650-945 BC)	[Room 52-UF – Subject to closure]
(8) Objects from the tomb of Yuya and Thuya.	18th Dynasty (1567-11320 BC)	[Room 13-UF]
(9) The Tutankhamen rooms and galleries with 1,700 objects exhibited.	18th Dynasty (1361-1352)	[Rooms 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45]
(10) Objects from the tomb of Hetep-heres.	4th Dynasty (2613-2181 BC)	[Room 2-UF]
(11) Funeral items of the rule of Akhenaten.	18th Dynasty (1379-1362 BC)	[Room 3-GF]
(12) Monuments from the tomb of Hemaka.	1st Dynasty (3100-2890 BC)	[Room 42-UF]
(13) Artifacts from the Tanis tombs.	21st and 22nd Dynasties (1085-715 BC)	[Room 2-UF]

page 296) decoded the hieroglyphic writing of ancient Egypt. The original is in the British Museum. In the same room are recent additions to the museum's collection out of chronological sequence. Room 43-GF holds a number of Early Dynastic period statues. Old Kingdom (2613-2181 BC) objects take up GF Rooms 47, 46, 41, 42, 36, 31 and 32. In Room 42-GF there is a notable standing wooden statue of the priest Ka-aper and a statue of King Chephren, one of the builders of the Giza pyramids. There is also a painted stone statue of a 5th Dynasty scribe, cross-legged on a plinth. In Room 32-GF, display 39, is a painted effigy of Seneb the dwarf and his family. He was a keeper of the royal wardrobe in the 5th Dynasty. A well sculptured painted statue of Ti, a noble of the same period and other figures such as Prince Ra-hoptep and his wife Nofert are also to be found in Rooms 32 and 31-GF (display 27).

The Middle Kingdom period (2050-1786 BC) is represented in Rooms 26, 21, 22 and 16-GF. The painted statue of King Mentuhotep is in Room 26-GF (display 67). It was found at Bahr el-Bahari and is 11th Dynasty. Room 26-GF also houses a series of sarcophagi of painted limestone from this period. In particular see the Sarcophagus of Dagi (display 71), a tomb beautifully illustrating objects in everyday use such as sandals and linen items together with hieroglyphs of magic spells and offerings. King Sesostris I (Senusert) is depicted in ten limestone statues in Room 22-GF though these are outshone for visual impact by the 56 cm wooden statuette of Sesostris I (display 88) carrying sceptres in both hands to denote his royal authority. A granite statue of Amenemhet III is occasionally on show in the same room (display 105) and there are a double statue of that king as the Nile god (display 104) and several sphinxes of the same provenance in Room 16-GF (display 102). The four sphinxes are in grey granite and come from the find by Auguste Mariette at Tanis.

The New Kingdom ran from 2567-1085 BC. The exhibits in the set of galleries 11, 12, 6 and 7 are mainly from the 18th Dynasty, with more complex garments and headgear than in previous eras. Room 12-GF is well endowed with notable objects, mainly statues in granite. Most important are the statues of Senenmut, steward of Queen Hatshepsut and tutor to her daughter. He was responsible for designing the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. The examples here in Room 12-GF include his block statue (display 132) with his pupil, Princess Neferure, peering below his chin. The plaque carries inscriptions of his titles and merits. Queen Hatshepsut is seen in a variety of statues (Room 12-GF, display 952) and in the remnants of her red sandstone sarcophagus (Room 28-GF, display 131), while there is a variety of statues of Tuthmosis III and Isis, his mother. Hatshepsut is represented in a large restored statue in Room 7-GF.

Room 3-GF is given over to objects from the reign of Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV), who set up his capital at Tell el-Amarna (N of Assuit) and altered the mode of public art and architecture in Egypt to one of realism. There are sandstone statues of Amenhotep IV, of which the presentation of an offering tablet (display 160) is perhaps the most interesting, and a gilded coffin lid of Amenhotep's brother, Smenkhkara. Several heads of women are on display in Room 3-GF, with the unfinished head of Nefertiti (display 161) being the most famous, and the head of a princess (display 163) most exquisitely portrayed. Representations of the 'royal family' in the form of what seems to be a shrine (display 167) are also on show.

The central hall of the museum (Rooms 13, 18, 23, 28, 33 and 38-GF) is used to exhibit giant statues of a mixture

of periods. As an example, it is worth while to look at the 7m statue of Amenhotep III and his wife Tyi (display 610).

Objects of the 19th and 20th Dynasties are displayed in Rooms 9, 10, 15, 14 and 20-GF. Room 9-GF contains the Tablet of Sakkara (display 660), which lists the kings of Egypt to Ramses II. The crystalline limestone head of General Nakhtmin (display 195) is in Room 15-GF and shows fine workmanship. The painted bust of Meritamoun, daughter of Ramses II and queen in succession to Nefertari, when available, is also in Room 15-GF.

Best of the Late Period (1085-332 BC) is concentrated in Rooms 25, 24 and 30-GF. Key items include the Psametik group of statues in greenstone of which those of the Psametik, a head jeweller, with Hathor (display 857) and of Isis, wife of Osiris (display 856), are particularly well executed. A statue of Princess Amenartais in alabaster (display 930 in Room 30-GF) is a beautiful example of 25th Dynasty sculpture.

The pride of the museum is contained in the Tutankhamen collection of the 18th Dynasty (years 1361-1352) in rooms 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45-UF with 1,700 objects on exhibition. This remarkable treasure was found intact by the Englishman Howard Carter in 1922 in the Valley of the Kings. Tutankhamen ruled for only nine years between the ages of 9-18. His tomb was saved from heavy destruction grave robbers by its position low in the valley and by the construction of workmens' huts across its entrance. Unlike most other archaeological finds before 1922, the Tutankhamen treasure was retained in Egypt and its full glory can be seen in the Egyptian Museum. All the exhibits have their own value both decorative and academic. Visitors are recommended to look at the entire set of Tutankhamen displays. If time is very short at least look at the following items: (1) **Colossal statue of Tutankhamen** (Room 9-UF, display 173). This is executed in painted quartzite which shows Tutankhamen as a youth and complete with ceremonial beard and hieroglyphs of Horemheb who stole the statue for his own tomb; (2) **The gold mask of Tutankhamen** (Room 4-UF, display 174). The mask is made of gold garnished with carnelian, coloured glass, lapis lazuli, obsidian, quartz, and turquoise. The 54 cm high figure came from the head of the mummy. The blue stripes are in lapis lazuli, there is a ceremonial beard and a head-dress knotted at the back of the neck. There is a gold ureaus and vulture head above the brow; (3) **The gold coffin of Tutankhamen** (Room 4-UF, display 175). This is rendered in gold and semi-precious stones with coloured glass. It is the inner of three coffins, the outer two made in wood. Some 187.5 cm long and weighing 110.4 kg, the coffin is in the form of a mummy in the shape of Osiris with the crossed arms carrying divine emblems. The body is covered by carved feathers and the representations of Upper and Lower Egypt – the vulture and cobra; (4) **Lid of canopic jar** (Room 8/9-UF, display 92), **The goddess Selket** with **The golden shrine** (Room 8/9-UF, display 177). This group of objects includes a wooden shrine gilded with gold and with silver which was in the antechamber of the king's tomb. It is ornately decorated with family and hunting scenes. The jar lid, containing the remains of the king's entrails, is of alabaster, carrying the king's image and lightly painted. There were four Canopic jars as miniature sarcophagi in the tomb. The golden shrine was protected by four goddesses, of which Seket, the water goddess, is displayed in gilded and painted wood about 90 cm high; (5) **Wooden funerary bed** (Room 9/10-UF, display 183). Made of stuccoed wood, these three funerary beds gilded and painted. The most remarkable is the couch in the image of the primordial cow with cow's heads and lyre-like horns

set about sun disks; (6) **The Throne of Tutankhamen** (Room 25-UF, display 179). The throne is 102 cm high and 54 cm wide, made of gilded wood and ornamented with semi-precious stones. In addition to the winged serpent arms of the throne, the seat back carries a gilded and painted scene in which Tutankhamen's wife anoints him with oil; (7) **Ceremonial chair** (Room 25-UF, display 181). The finely inlaid ebony and ivory chair of Tutankhamen is regarded as among the best examples of Egyptian cabinet-making ever found. It is decorated with uraeus snakes and divinities; (8) **Funerary statues 'shawabti'** (Room 35-UF, display 182). The tomb of Tutankhamen contained 413 small, approximately 50 cm high, figures of the king as workers, foremen and overseers, giving one workman per day of the year. They are made of wood, which is painted and gilded; (9) **Tutankhamen with a harpoon** (Room 35-UF, display 182). Among the seven royal statuettes found in the tomb of Tutankhamen, the two gilded wooden statues of Tutankhamen hunting in gallery 35 are most pleasing. One shows the king on a papyrus board hunting in the marshes, harpoon in hand. A second is of the king wearing the crown of Upper Egypt riding the back of a panther. (10) **Painted chest** (Room 40-UF, display 186). This is a 44 cm tall/61 cm wide wooden chest, stuccoed with paintwork above. It is in a good state of preservation and carries pictures of battle against Asians and Africans and a set of hunting scenes; (11) **Anubis chest** (Room 45-UF, display 185). A carrying chest made in stuccoed wood and ornamented with black resin, gold, silver and varnish. The chest itself contained jewellery, cups and amulets. Anubis as a jackal sits on the chest ready to act as a guide for Tutankhamen in the after-world; (12) **Ka statue of Tutankhamen** (Room 45-UF, display 180). This large (192 cm tall) statue is one of two guardians of the tomb. It is made in wood and painted in bitumen. The king holds a mace in his right hand and a staff in his left. He is wearing a **khat** headdress and has a gilded kilt.

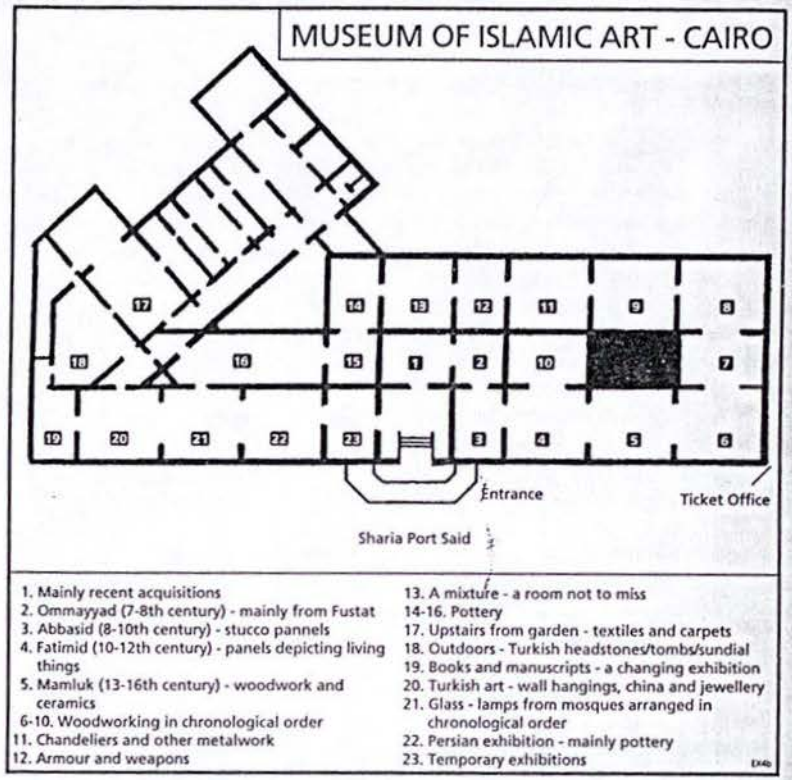
On leaving the Tutankhamen galleries there is much still to see in the museum, including jewellery and monuments. Important objects include the wonderful 25-piece collection of **Meketra's models,** in fact models found in the tomb of Meketra, a noble of the Middle Kingdom (2000 BC), at a site S of Deir el-Bahari.

The miniatures show the form, dress, crops, vessels and crafts of the period. The best known is the offerings bearer (display 74), 123 cm high and made of painted wood. It shows a servant, carrying a basket of vases on her head and a duck in her right hand. There are also models of fishermen, cattle, weavers and carpenters in displays 75, 76, 77 and 78, respectively. In Room 32 (display 117) is a **Ka statue of King Auib-re Hor** in wood now bereft of its stucco coating. The head-dress of upraised arms symbolizes **ka**, the vital force of the king. Worth looking out for if you have time are the **Fayoum portraits** in Room 141-UF for the most part encaustic (wax) painted in wooden bases and painted by Greek artists in the 2nd century AD to leave a likeness of the deceased for his family.

The Museum of Islamic Art

Open Sat-Thur 0900-1600, Fri 0900-1100 and 1330-1600, Entry E£10, ticket is also valid for Gayer-Anderson House – see above, is ideally located on the junction of Sharia Port Said and Sharia Qalaa about equidistant between Midan Ataba and the Bab el-Zoueila.

It was originally established in the courtyard of the Al-Hakim Mosque (see above) in 1880 but it was moved to the present building, containing over 75,000 exhibits from various Islamic periods, in 1903. The dates indicated in the museum's exhibits are AH (After the Hegira), which is the starting point of



the Islamic Calendar in 622 AD when Mohamed is thought to have fled from Mecca. The rooms follow a chronological order through from the Umayyads to the Abbasids, Fatimids, Ayyubids, Mamlukes and Ottomans. Of particular interest are – **The Fatimid panels** in **Room 4** which depict animals and birds because, unlike the Sunni Muslims, the Fatimid Shi'a have no objection to portraying living things; the doors to **Room 6** which were originally from the Al-Azhar Mosque; the reconstruction of an 18th century Ottoman patio in **Room 10**; the Mamluke astrolabe used by Muslim navigators in **Room 11**; the glassware in **Room 21** and the Persian art in **Room 22**. Take refreshment in the shaded garden by a fountain moved from Roda Island and marble panels with Fatimid reliefs.

Other museums

Agricultural Museum, adjacent Ministry of Agriculture in Dokki at end of 6th October Bridge. Oldest agricultural museum in world, stuffed animals, Egyptian farming practices, open 0900-1400, closed Mon, entrance 10 piastres. A new museum was completed in 1993 but is open only by appointment, T 3608682, F 3607881. Here the artifacts are placed in context, the flax plant beside the linen, the papyrus plant beside the rope and paper. The many animals that were worshipped, hunted or eaten – cats, ostrich, Apis bulls and falcons are there as mummies or skeletons. Unfortunately the labels, in a variety of languages, give little information and often there are no labels at all.

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RESTAURANTS IN CAIRO

The following restaurants are those most frequented by Westerners. Prices (without imported liquor) are medium by U.S. standards. Embassy or hotel personnel will be able to help with directions if needed. Keep in mind the health hints regarding public dining, regarding drinking bottled water and taking care about eating raw vegetables.

NAME OF RESTAURANTS	ADDRESS	TEL. NUMBER
ABU CHAKRA KABAB	Kasr El-Aini St.	3648860
AFTER 8	6 Kasr El-Nile St.	5740855
ALIOS GARTLER JUN. (TIROL)	38 Geziret El-Arab St., Mohandessin	3449725
ANDREA	Mariotiah Road, Pyramids and Mokkatam Hills	3854441
ANGUS BRASSERIES (ARGENTINE)	34 Yehia Ibrahim St., Zamalek	3411321
ARABESQUE	6 Kasr El-Nile St., Garden City	5747898 5748677
BASKIN ROBINS	Mohandessein	3026780
BON APPETIT	21 Wady El-Nile St., Mohandessin	3464937
CHANTILLY	11 Baghdad St., Heliopolis	669026 665620 660518
DA BAFFO	15 El-Batal Ahmed Abdel Aziz St., Mohandessin	3467490
DON QICHOTE	9A Ahmed Heshmat, Zamalek	3406415
EL-DAR	Sakkara Road	852289

Cont'd;

LE GRILLON	8 Kasr El-Nile St.	743114
LOLA AND LOLITA (Barbecue Buffet every Thursday Night)	Road 98, No. 15, Maadi	3515465 3515587
McDONALD'S	Tahrir Maadi Dokki Mohandessein Heliopolis	3558131 3785651 705863 3028033 4175993
MERMAID	77 Road 9, Maadi	3503964
NANIWA (Japanese)	3 Lebanon St., Mohandesin	3466154 3465943
NILE PHAROAH (BOAT)	31 El-Nile, Giza	5701000
OKAMOTO (Japanese)	7 Ahmed Orabi, Agouza	495774
OMAM RESTAURANTS: AL FANOUS (Moroccan Restaurant)	5 Wissa Wassef St., Riyadh Tower, Giza	5737592 5737595
OMAR KHAYYAM (BOAT)	Saray El-Gezira, Zamalek	3408553
PAPRIKA	1129, Corniche El-Nile	5749447
PIZZA HUT	Pyramids Heliopolis Maadi Dokki Tahrir Zamalek	3854280 2580518 3517619 3608048 3611347 3562755 3402057
PIZZA INN	Mohandessin	3496654

Cont'd;

All of the major luxury hotels in Cairo and Heliopolis (Nile and Ramses Hiltons, the three Sheratons, the Meridien, the Ramada Renaissance, the Mena House at the Pyramids, the Mariott and Al-Salam Hayatt Hotel) have at least one fine restaurant and a cafe/grill/nightclub located in their facilities. A few of them are listed below:

YA SALAM NIGHT CLUB (Open every day except Mondays from 9:30 p.m. till 2:30 a.m.)	Al-Salam Hotel	2452155 2455155
GEZEIRA GRILL OMAR's CAFE ALAA EL-DIN RESTAURANT ROY ROGERS THE EMPRESS NIGHT CLUB (Al-Ambratora)	Marriott Hotel Saraya El-Gezira St., Zamalek	3408888
ORIENTAL TENT (Open daily from 9:30 p.m. till 1:00 a.m.) KING TUT GRILL ALFREDO'S (Italian)	Sheraton Heliopolis	2902027
BADIAA RESTAURANT LA MAMMA (Italian) ARROUS EL-NILE (Continental)	Cairo Sheraton Hotel and Casino	3488600 3488700
THE CAIRO CALLER	President Hotel 22 Taha Hossein St., Zamalek	3400652
EL-RACHID LA PALME D'OR (French)	Meridien Hotel Garden City	3621717
ABU ALY CAFE THE GRILL (PIZZERIA)	Nile Hilton Tahrir Square	5780444

New Horizons Program

New Horizons is a series of simple easy-to-use educational materials that employ posters, songs, drama and discussions in transmitting messages that are of interest to girls and young women.

The main purpose of the program is to provide knowledge of basic life skills and reproductive health to adolescent girls and young women that would enable them to have better life options.

Areas addressed in the program are:

1- Basic Life Skills: Girl's Identity, Rights and Responsibilities, Nutrition, Health, First Aid, Child's Development and Rights, the Environment, and Little Projects.

2- Reproductive Health: Adolescence, Violence against Women, Marriage, Pregnancy and Delivery, Family Planning, Sexually Transmitted and Dangerous Diseases.

New Horizons addresses girls using a simple approach that does not rely on their being literate. Instead, posters, popular songs, or drama written by the master trainers who developed this program are used.

The program is learner centered and does not use lecturing as a method to relay messages. It is divided into units and every unit consists of sessions to discuss the topic, reinforce the correct information the learners already know and correct any wrong information. For the facilitator of the session, a simple scientific background is included at the beginning of each unit.

Key Facts

31	participants from
5	governorates representing
9	CDAs and NGOs participated in developing the program
104	classes were monitored during the field test
33	male and female volunteers from
11	communities participated in the field testing

FROM CEDPA'S PRESIDENT AND CHAIR

CEDPA is Branching Out

For nearly a quarter of a century in pursuing our mission of empowering women to be full partners in development, CEDPA has trained more than 4,000 women and men in the skills they need to be community leaders. At the same time we have forged close and lasting partnerships with the community-based organizations they manage — 134 partner projects in 40 countries around the world. The seeds of these many partnerships have grown into strong and sustainable development projects, including family planning, economic development, and education programs. But we have recently begun to branch out in profoundly new directions, which might be best explained by letting Peggy recount an extraordinary incident she experienced in October 1997:

"It was mercilessly hot and humid in October in the Anambra state of Nigeria. An hour outside of Enugu, our van turned on to a dusty, dirt road, which seemed to go on forever. Suddenly we were met by an inspiring sight. Gathered on the plain were more than 1000 women — Nigerian village women, colorfully decked out in beautiful, bright dresses. Among the assembled were the local politicians and traditional chiefs. We were to be their guests.

The throng which greeted us that day was part of the 100 Women movement, which was spawned by a summit attended in March 1996 by 100 Nigerian women leaders. Several of those women are alumnae of CEDPA's leadership training, and the organizations they represent are long-standing CEDPA partners. As a result of that summit, a year later we joined with these and other partners in launching a Democracy and Governance program, the goal of which is to train and mobilize women in Nigeria to participate in government. As a practical matter, it was decided to organize the movement into groups of 100 women, representing community-based organizations that span the strata of ethnic groups, religions, and classes in Nigerian society.

That day on the Anambran plain proved to be a festive one. We were treated first to several moving testimonials on the meaning of the 100 Women movement, and then introduced to women who were candidates for local political office. Finally, after being outfitted in the ceremonial costume of a village chief, we danced and sang with our hosts.

In the afternoon, we again boarded the van, headed for another site. We had formed the mistaken impression that the morning's gathering must have drawn every last woman from every nearby village. But to our astonishment, a mere 10 kilometers down the same dusty road we encountered another plain where we were greeted by another 1000 women — incredibly, more than one million women are now enlisted in the 100 Women movement! Across Nigeria, they are successfully vying for local office and participating in the decisions that bear upon the development of their villages."

Tellal Zenhom

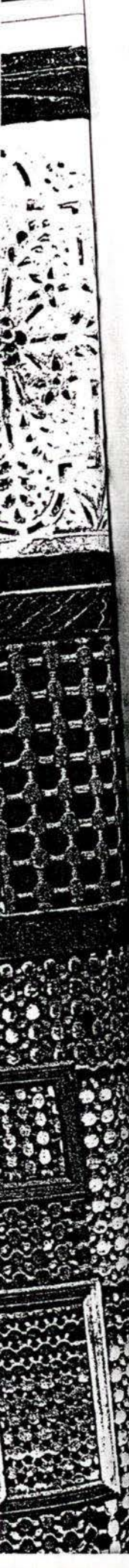
Tellal Zenhom is an urban area in the heart of Cairo, with a population of approximately 20,000 people. In this conservative community, most of the men are employed in governmental jobs while the majority of the women are housewives. The few who work sell fruit and vegetables in the local market.

Although the standard of living is basic, most of the inhabitants can depend on a regular monthly income that averages LE 100-150, which would have to support a family of six to eight. The inhabitants most likely own their home rather than live in rented accommodation, however three or four families have shared bathrooms.

Prevailing values are religious rather than traditional among the Muslim majority of approximately 97%. The girls in Tellal Zenhom suffer from early marriage, circumcision and inferior social status. Women believe that their main role is serving their husbands, childbearing and taking care of their homes, otherwise they have no value.

CEOSS has been working in Tellal Zenhom since 1992. The Partnership Projects for Girls and Young Women has been implemented in Tellal Zenhom since 1995. There are four New Horizons classes in operation conducted by four facilitators.

CEDPA is also implementing the "Video and the Village Dreams" project that aims to empower girls and young women through training New Horizons facilitators and participants to produce simple unedited video programs in which they express their issues. A team of four young women trained last March 1997 produced "Al Khitan" (circumcision), which includes interviews with young girls, a doctor and a Shiekh speaking against the practice. The team will also train three-four girls in the next four months to produce video programs. The team has also produced programs on illiteracy, nutrition and family planning.



BAYT AL RAZZAZ

Historical background of Monument # 235, Cairo

Bayt al Razzaz is a large Islamic urban palace located between Bab al Wazir Street and Suq al Silah Street in medieval Cairo. The building was constructed in many stages between the late 15th century and late 18th century. Bayt al Razzaz has more than 180 rooms and spaces. Many of them contain remarkable examples of Islamic decoration. The *mashrabiya* windows are especially impressive.
The building has been through extensive changes in layout, use, and decoration over the years. Significant conservation in several rooms was carried out by the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe.

Condition of the Building Today.

At the present time, Bayt al Razzaz is virtually derelict and in many areas ruinous. A reinforced concrete bomb shelter was intrusively built in the western courtyard in 1960's. Portions of Bayt al Razzaz are unstable and dangerous to visitors. The local population used the area as a latrine and as a garbage damp for many years.

Conservation Interventions.

With such a large complex structure, conservation and rehabilitation interventions must be prioritized and sequentially implemented as funding and schedules permit. The approved budget will be utilized to protect the most endangered portions of the building with future funds being allocated towards the uses described below. A detailed conservation action plan has been prepared in 1996.
Emergency interventions were recommended where it is necessary to prevent further irreversible damage to Bayt al Razzaz. The property is protected against intruders and vandals by installing or repairing doors. Over 150 truckloads of accumulated trash and garbage were removed. The ruined air-raid shelter has been removed. To prevent collapse of gravely endangered roofs and ceilings, emergency shoring was installed throughout the house and is being maintained and monitored. Localized emergency structural interventions to prevent collapse of endangered walls are done. This involves comprehensive large-scale structural repairs to the collapsing north wing of the eastern of the house's two courtyards, which started in July 1998 and will be completed in the winter of 1999.

As the next step, a comprehensive intervention program will be consecutively implemented in two focus areas around the eastern courtyard. This will include structural stabilization by repairs to masonry and wooden roofs and ceilings; cleaning, consolidation and partial restoration of decoration, protection from water penetration by installing proper roof covers, protection of the interiors by repairs to windows and mashrabiya screens, improving access and permitting future reuse by repairs to staircases, doors, pavements. These localized interventions are intended to bring the selected parts of the complex to fully secure and functional state, thus demonstrating the potential of other parts of the complex for restoration and re-use.

Future Use

The future use is to be determined. It is recommended that in the future, Bayt al Razzaz should be utilized in a variety of mixed uses. Ideally, parts of the buildings should house a conservation training center, where on-the-job training would result in further preservation action in the complex. The house has an enormous potential as an exhibition/museum space for presentation of Egyptian residential design of the Mamluk and Ottoman periods, but also (especially the rooms and spaces around the western courtyard) to serve the cultural and recreation purposes of the Bayt al Razzaz neighborhood.

Schedule

Photographic documentation has been produced. An extensive existing conditions study has been done. Conservation action plans have been prepared for emergency interventions and for conservation work in two focus areas around the eastern courtyard. A localized emergency restoration of the endangered northern wing of the eastern courtyard is under way and is scheduled to be completed by the winter of 1999. A smaller-scale emergency restoration of a wall in a room by the western courtyard has been implemented. Protective emergency shoring was installed in 1997 under endangered ceilings and roof.
A massive cleaning operation was done in summer 1997: accumulated refuse and garbage was evacuated from the complex. Access doors have been repaired and locks installed. A Nasserite period air raid shelter was removed in 1998.

The comprehensive intervention on focus area "A" by the eastern courtyard is planned to start in 1999 and will take two to [illegible]

ARCHITECTURAL CONSERVATION IN CAIRO

By the EGYPTIAN ANTIQUITIES PROJECT of the AMERICAN RESEARCH CENTER IN EGYPT

Since its founding, over fifty years ago, the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) has been dedicated to fostering deeper knowledge and understanding of the history, culture and civilization of Egypt, from prehistoric times through the present and to strengthening the cultural and academic links between institutions and individuals in the United States and Egypt. To achieve its aims, ARCE supports conservation and historic preservation projects and academic and field research in archaeology, anthropology, and sociology. ARCE also presents an array of programs to disseminate this knowledge to the public, bringing together the academic and non-academic communities and creating better understanding between the peoples of Egypt and the United States.

In late 1993, ARCE signed an agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to administer a $15 million grant in Egyptian currency to conduct projects and programs which promote preservation and restoration of Egyptian Antiquities by means of an approach called Culture Resources Management (CRM). The Egyptian Antiquities Project (EAP) was set up inside ARCE to manage and direct conservation projects. The aim of CRM and all our projects is to preserve these antiquities and monuments for the benefit of present and future generations. The scope of conservation work is extensive and covers all periods of Egyptian history including prehistoric, Pharaonic, Graeco-Roman, Islamic, Coptic, and Jewish monuments throughout the country. The largest concentration of EAP projects is in Cairo. The conservation projects are conducted in cooperation with the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA).

ARCE has also signed an additional $2.3 million grant agreement with USAID to conduct conservation work at four sites under the Gore-Mubarak Partnership for Sustainable Growth and Development. These projects include work at the Pharaonic tomb of Seti I in the Valley of the Kings in Luxor, the Ottoman fort at Quseir and two Coptic monasteries in the Eastern desert. These projects follow the CRM principles; historic resources are conserved and sustained for their own sake and in order to promote revenue.

ARCE CONSERVATION IN MEDIEVAL CAIRO

The EAP has focused its conservation work on the Bab Zuwayla area of Medieval Cairo. Based on the concept of area conservation where select improvements to adjacent buildings reinforce each other, attract visitors, further investment and ideally lead to a general upgrading of an entire area, the EAP is concentrating on a number of structures of different periods within the same urban unit. These are: the Bab Zuwayla city gate itself, the Mosque of al Salih Tala'i', the Zawia-Sabil Farag Ibn Barquq, the Sabil Kuttab of Nafisa al Bayda, the Sabil of Muhammad 'Ali Pasha, and building down the Bab al Wazir Street towards the Citadel: the urban palace Bayt al Razzaz, and three 19th century houses. The area already is a vibrant busy locale with numerous other monuments where one can have a first hand experience of the texture of medieval life.

In support of the US-funded EAP projects and to show respect for Egypt's cultural heritage, US Vice President Al Gore visited the Bab Zuwayla conservation area in 1996 and met with local leaders at the Mosque of al Salih Tala'i'.

American Research
Center in Egypt

Egyptian Antiquities Project

Chip
Robert K. Vincent, Jr.
Project Director

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Garden City, Cairo

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EAP Direct line & fax: 354-8622
E-Mail: arceeap@brainy1.ie-eg.com

THE URBAN HEALTH CENTER IN HAKSTEB

It is a new center built near Cairo International Airport on 800 sq. m, half of it is a green area.

The center is two floors, the first contain 12 rooms, and the second has 14 rooms.

It provides a high quality basic health care. In addition to General Practitioner services, the center provides maternal and child health services, health office service, family planing service, and emergency care services. Most preventive health servces are supported by USAID.

The mild regular cases are effetively treated in the center The critical and complicated cases are referred to the specialist in the nearby hospital.

maybe do a ribbon cutting here?

DAY CASE SURGERY CLINICS
IN BASATEEN

The clinic has been established to lower the inpatient high cost burden.

The clinic is equipped with high quality diagnostic and surgical sets with 40 beds intensive care units.

The staff is highly trained, with excellent skills using the guidelines provided by the different USAID ~~fundings~~ funded projects

The clinic is on 3500 sq. m. with two floors. The first contains the specialized clinics, the laboratories, the X. ray unit, the operating rooms, the emergency unit and the pharmacy.

→ official opening ?

→

OLD CAIRO

MASTER PLAN FOR PRESENTATION AND PRESERVATION

As a part of the USAID-funded Egyptian Antiquities Project, the American Research Center in Egypt has commissioned the production Master Plan to meaningfully present and define ways to preserve the district of Old Cairo: an important part of Egyptian and universal historic heritage.

OLD CAIRO: A NEW FUTURE

Old Cairo, once the Roman and early medieval capital of Egypt, has the potential to become a new centre for the visitors and citizens of Cairo. The opening of the Giza Bridge makes Old Cairo easily accessible from the Giza Pyramids, the Citadel and the Islamic Historic City. If sensitively developed, Old Cairo can provide a new focus for the history of Cairo whilst allowing for the protection and improvement of the enclave itself and its immediate surroundings.

The religious importance of the area can also be celebrated. Old Cairo brings together the great religions of Egypt: the site encloses the Old Coptic Cathedral of Muallaqa, built over the Roman Gate, the Chapel of the Holy Virgin in Abu Sarga Church where the Holy Family stopped on their journey into Egypt, and the Coptic Monastery of St.George is a place of reverence for the "Prince of Martyrs" relics; the Greek Orthodox church is the place of the burial of their patriarchs; the newly restored Synagogue provides evidence that the site had a Jewish community for over a millennium; and in Fustat, which adjoins Old Cairo, is the 'Amr Ibn Al-'As Mosque, the first mosque in Egypt and from where Islam was spread to North Africa.

The Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Old Cairo proposes a framework to preserve and present this important area and enable future generations appreciate an important cradle of Egyptian civilisation for over two thousand years.

PROPOSED VISITORS INFORMATION:

A key element of the proposals is to provide for area visitor interpretation and information panels. Two types are proposed; first, general site information showing the area, its monuments and routes, and second, detailed information at each monument showing its brief history and a key illustration. The interior display panels have been designed to match the interiors of the monuments and will be made of gilt, gesso and paint rather than plastic. The new routes will be marked with route marker stones carved with the emblem of St. George and carrying the monument name and number.

Within the area of Old Cairo a smaller visitors centre linked to the Museum is proposed to provide a more detailed exhibition on the standing buildings and what can be seen in the area. This exhibition space will also provide a new access into the museum from the centre of Old Cairo which will

THE TEMPLES

The Survey is presently completing the drawings from the Great Colonnade in Luxor Temple, a colossal hall with columns twenty meters (sixty feet) high. The decoration of the Colonnade Hall was begun by Tutankhamun (c. 1360 B.C.), who did not live long enough to see its completion. The carving was finished under Sety I (c. 1300 B.C.), and later pharaohs added their own inscriptions to the walls, occasionally usurping those of their predecessors. The sequence of these changes and the history of the Colonnade Hall can be reconstructed only through careful recording techniques such as those used by the Chicago House team.

Although the side walls of the Colonnade were torn down centuries ago to be reused as building material, fragments of these blocks have come to light in excavations around Luxor Temple. For years the Epigraphic Survey has been engaged in photographing these fragments, tracing them, and reconstructing on paper the vanished decoration of the upper registers. This project has led to new questions and answers concerning the importance of Luxor Temple as a religious center. Some reconstructed groups have yielded surprises, including the earliest known Egyptian chariot battle narrative, showing the young king Tutankhamun charging against a host of Asiatic foes.

The most recent project of the Survey is the small temple of Amun located at Medinet Habu within the huge funerary precinct of Ramesses III. Although relatively insignificant in size, the small temple served as one of the major cult centers of the Theban area for two thousand years. A color publication of its painted chapels by the Survey and Nimrod Press is expected to appear in 1992.



Figure 5. A correction is carefully pencilled directly onto a blueprint.



Figure 6. The missing decoration of the Colonnade Hall (in the background) has been reconstructed from thousands of relief fragments in the blockyard at Luxor Temple.

THE CRISIS

In the last eighty years the destructive forces recognized long ago by Breasted have increased dramatically. Today monuments are vanishing before they have been adequately studied. The building of the High Dam at Aswan, the rising ground water throughout the Nile valley, the demands of an exploding population, and the expanding tourist industry have placed Egypt's pharaonic remains in great danger. The ancient Egyptian heritage must be documented as completely and accurately as possible, before the ancient record is forever lost.

Chicago House has long been an international research center open to scholars of all nations. The Survey maintains an Egyptological library of more than 16,000 accessioned volumes, one of the finest collections in the world. The photographic archive contains over 15,000 large-format negatives, together

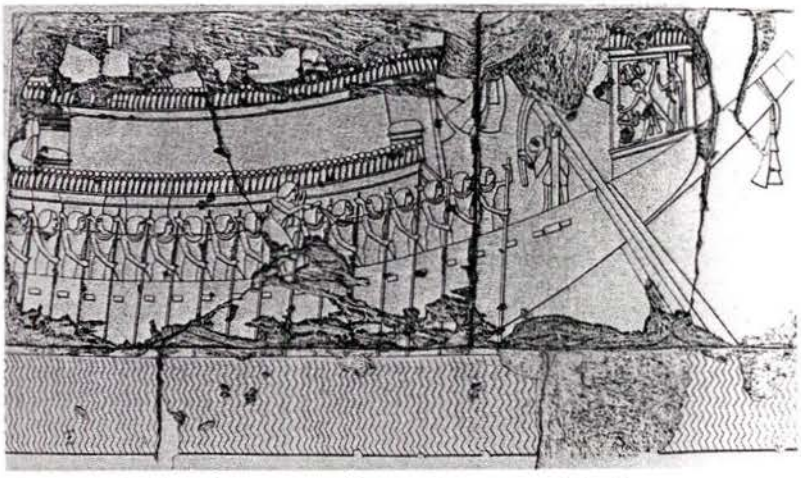


Figure 7. Still in the process of correction, an artist's drawing portrays one of the towboats in the annual Festival of Opet at Luxor Temple.

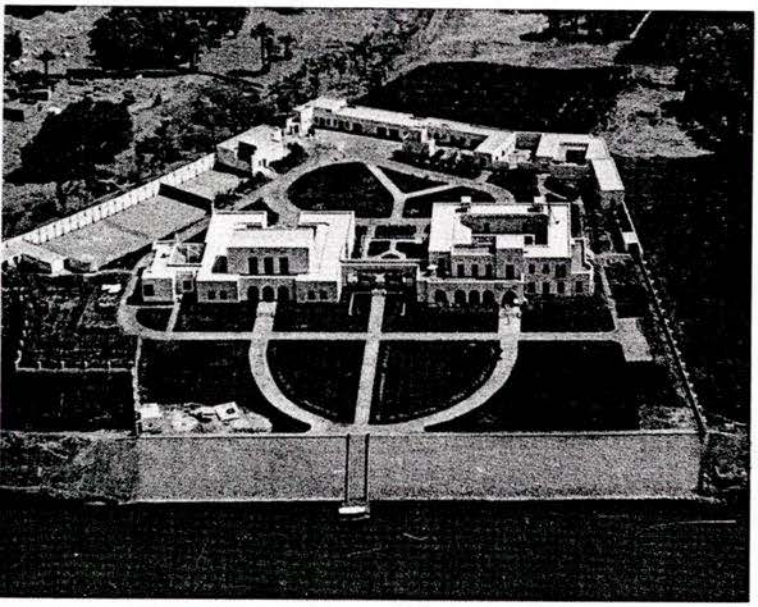


Figure 2. The headquarters of the Epigraphic Survey in Luxor: Chicago House in 1933.

THE METHOD

Although photography can reveal many of the most important details of an inscribed temple wall, the clarity of a black-and-white print depends on the light source and the skill of the photographer during its development. Even in the finest photograph, the carved details of a damaged wall will be lost in the confusing shadows. To supplement the photographic record, precise line drawings are produced at Chicago House through the combined talents of photographer, artist, and Egyptologist.

The process begins with an enlarged photographic print, which is given to the artist as a preliminary drawing surface. Standing before the wall itself, the artist uses a pencil to trace onto the enlarged print the exact lines of the original carving, eliminating accidental marks that obscure the decoration. In the studios at Chicago House, the pencil tracing is carefully inked and the photographic background is bleached away, leaving only the artist's lines.

A blueprint of this drawing is then examined independently by two Egyptologists (called epigraphers), who compare it directly to the carving on the wall. On the basis of their knowledge of related scenes and texts, they can often suggest corrections or restorations for damaged areas of the surface. Repeated consultation between artist, epigraphers, and field director—the consensus of all talents combined—ensures a finished drawing that is faithful to what is preserved on the wall. The final inked drawings, together with an architectural and textual commentary, are then published in folio volumes.

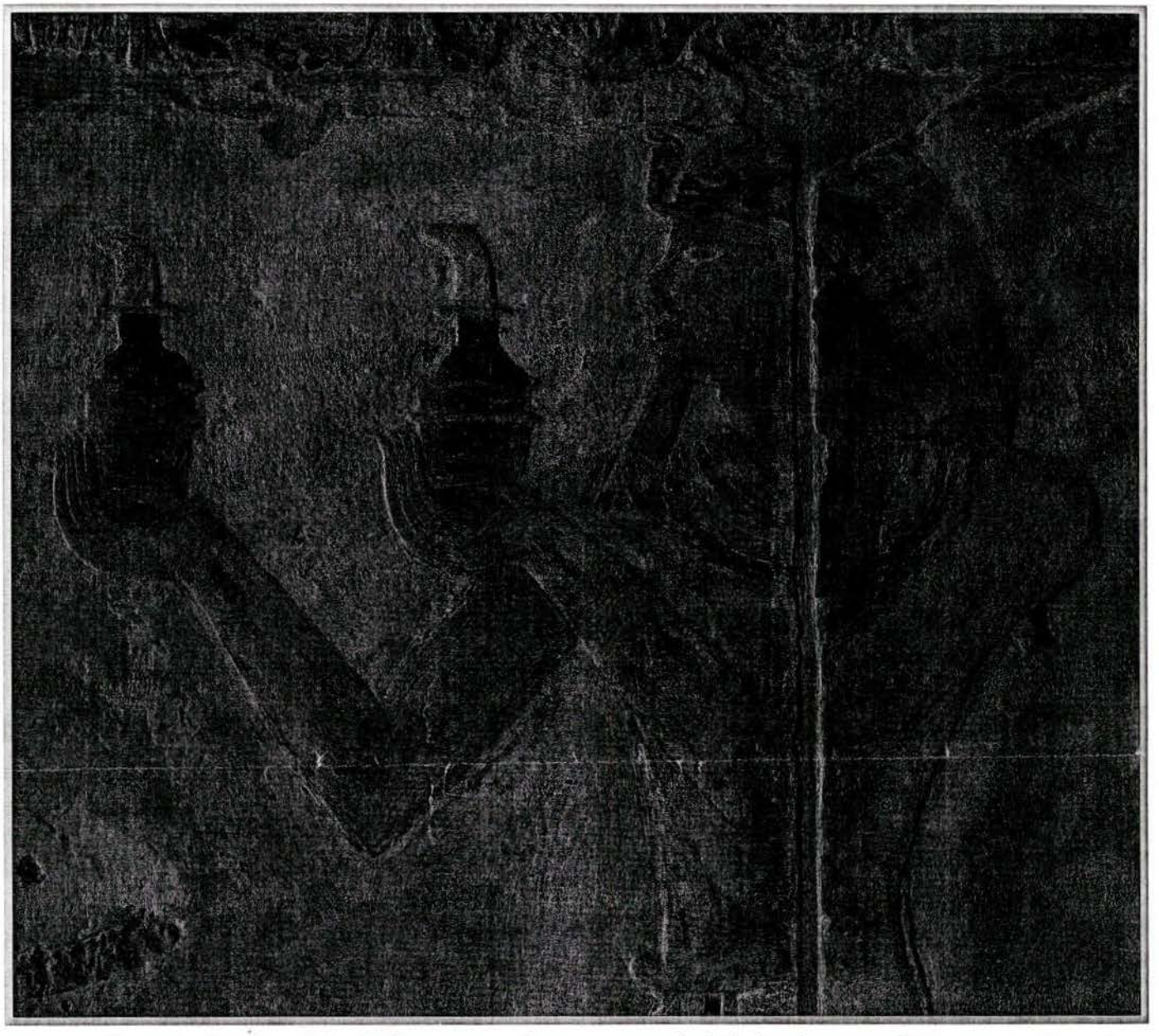


Figure 3. Complete photographic documentation provides the basis of the epigraphic method.



Figure 4. Artists at work in the Colonnade Hall of Luxor Temple.

This process has come to be known as the "Chicago House Method." Scholars of all nations have acknowledged the unrivalled excellence of the work of the Epigraphic Survey in reviews of its publications. What makes such high recording standards possible is a unique combination of conditions: the relatively long expedition season, which begins every year in October and ends the following April; direct access to the monuments for the verification of the drawings at any time; an unsurpassed on-site research library and adjoining photographic archive; and a permanent residence building for the staff, located on an enclosed compound with full support facilities.



In the small temple of Medinet Habu, brilliant paint enlivens a recarved relief of Tuthmosis I offering wine to Amun-Ra.

CHICAGO HOUSE: RESCUING THE PAST

In 1894 a young American Egyptologist from The University of Chicago, James Henry Breasted, visited Egypt with his bride to tour the pharaonic monuments and to record their ancient inscriptions. On his journey through the Nile Valley, Breasted's examination of the original texts made him keenly aware of the inadequacies of previous attempts to copy them. He was also appalled by the distressing amount of damage suffered by the monuments since the early expeditions had seen them.

As the first Director of the University's Oriental Institute, Breasted was determined to establish a permanent expedition in Egypt that would produce an accurate record of the great temples and tombs before the effects of time and modern civilization irretrievably damaged them. In 1924, with the support of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., he founded the Epigraphic Survey in Luxor (the site of ancient Thebes) at an expedition headquarters known world-wide as Chicago House. Recognizing the destructive nature of archaeology in exposing monuments and artifacts to erosion and vandalism, Breasted committed the Epigraphic Survey to the rescue of pharaonic civilization by non-destructive means: through documentation so precise that it could stand alone as a replacement in the absence of the original monument. Since 1924, the Survey has taken to the field every year, with the exception of the war years from 1940 to 1945, producing volume after volume of facsimile drawings of the inscriptions and reliefs carved on the monuments of ancient Thebes.