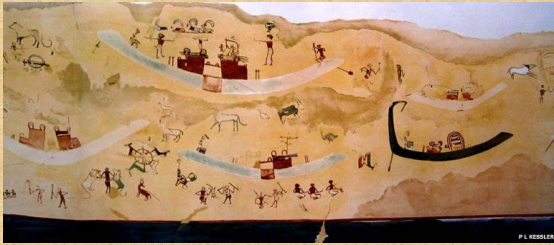
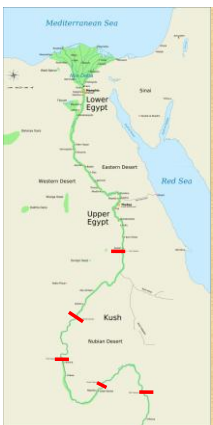


Lecture 9: Pre-Dynastic Egypt



HIST 213 Spring 2012





Natural Advantages

- Transportation (both ways)
- rich soil (450/sq. mi.)
 - annual flooding (silt)
 - simple irrigation systems
- relatively unified culture
 - Upper and Lower Egypt
 - Nomarchs
- Protected by:
 - sea to N. and E.
 - deserts W.
 - cataracts (waterfalls) S.
 - only NE passageway allows for land invasion

Pre-Dynastic Period 5000-3000 BCE



Gebel al-Arak knife

Difference between Nile "Delta" and "Valley"

- physiognomy
- economic traditions
- burial customs
- pottery designs
- lack of a writing system
- contact with Mesopotamian culture
- Farming villages coalesce into provinces or principalities

Egyptian Chronology

<p>Pre-dynastic Period (5500 - 3100 BC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farming villages coalesce <p>Early Dynastic Period (1st – 2nd Dynasties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narmer forms the state (c. 3000 BCE) <p>Old Kingdom (3rd-8th Dynasties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age of the Pyramids <p>First Intermediate Period (9th – 11.5 Dynasties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil War <p>Middle Kingdom (11.5th- 13th Dynasties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classic Era • <i>Tale of Sinuhe</i> <p>Second Intermediate Period 14th-17th Dynasties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyksos Occupation • chariot, compound bow, stone defenses 	<p>New Kingdom (18th – 20th Dynasties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Imperialism • Ramses II • Battle of Kadesh (1274 BCE) <p>3rd Intermediate Period (21st – 25th)</p> <p>Late Period (26th – 31st Dynasties)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assyrian/Persian Control <p>Ptolemaic Dynasty (331 BCE-31 BCE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedonian Control <p>Roman Period (31 BCE-642 CE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caesar Conquers Cleopatra • Byzantine Period
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Neolithic Egyptian Timeline

- Around 9000 BCE
- hunter-gatherers of Nile Valley enjoyed the milder post-glacial conditions
 - domestication of animals
- By 5000 BCE
- farming villages appeared
 - rock art in some of the region's caves
- gradual formation of small states**

Badari culture (4400-4000 BCE)

First culture to practice agriculture in Upper Egypt

- 600 graves
 - small, shallow pit dug in the desert sand
 - body placed on a mat
 - contracted position on its left side
 - the head pointing south facing to the west
 - bodies of young not found



Badari grave goods



- handmade pottery with rippled surface
- personal items:
- hairpins, combs, bracelets and beads in bone and ivory
- grave goods tell us there was a unequal distribution of wealth
- wealthier graves found in a separate part of the cemetery.

Egyptian Timeline

After 4000 BCE

- sudden desiccation of the grass plains of the Sahara
 - migration of people towards the Nile
 - population, and villages sizes increased

3500 to 3000 BCE

- sudden advances in craftsmanship and technology, which culminated in the working of copper, stone mace heads and ceramics

The north and south developed independently

- Upper Egypt displays very distinctive cultural elements
 - new artistic activities
 - highly specialized craftsmanship
 - highly specialized religious beliefs and practices.

Urbanization in Egypt

Upper Egypt (South)

Naqada culture (4200-3050) by 3300 BCE

- The first walled towns appeared at Naqada and Heirakonpolis
 - rich tombs, probably the resting places of the rulers of Upper Egypt (to the south)

Lower Egypt (North)

Maadi culture (3600-3000) by 3600 BCE

- settlement covered about 45 acres of land on historical route to the copper mines of the Sinai Peninsula
 - very simple burials

Naqada culture (4200-3050 BCE)

- Early Naqada culture (I) correspond to Badari culture
- Naqada II-IV demonstrate clear advances towards urbanization
- mud bricks found by Petrie suggests that Naqada was the precursor to the burial monuments constructed by later Egyptian civilizations
 - “the centres of powerful territories, each ruled by a hereditary elite exercising authority on a regional basis.”
- The heads of these states are generally accepted as being early kings of Upper Egypt

Tombs at Naqada

- In 1894 Flinders Petrie unearthed three cemeteries at Naqada that contained 2200 graves, the largest mortuary in pre-dynastic Egypt.
- grave items included copper, ivory, bone and shell jewelry, and small model figurines of humans, oxen and boats, together with model weapons and food.
- These item were believed to have magical purposes and helped with ensure that the dead would have a content afterlife.



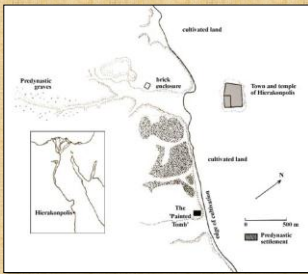
Naqada III burial tomb

Religious Practice in Naqada

- The people who lived in Naqada were followers of the god Seth, the god who killed Osiris, the god of the dead.
- Naqada is considered to be the center for the followers of Seth.

Hierakonpolis

- The complex is thought to belong to a ruler of the ancient city of Hierakonpolis in around 3600 BCE
- it was the largest urban center on the River Nile.



The Painted Tomb at Heirakonpolis



British Museum

Built in about 3300 BCE depicts a floating funerary cortege and scenes of power and dominion, among them one of the earliest scenes of smiting. Probably the burial place of a ruler of Predynastic Upper Egypt. The figure holding up what appears to be two lions is a motif that has links to early Mesopotamia. The tomb was well furnished and elaborately decorated.

Predynastic Hierakonpolis cemetery (HK 43)

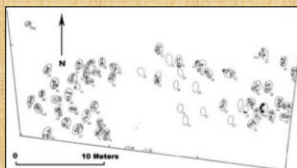
- 260 burials so far uncovered
- some which revealed evidence for what may be the very beginnings of artificial mummification.
- wrapping the head and hands with pads of linen
- Pottery found in association with these burials indicates a date not later than Naqada IIb
 - (ca. 3600 BCE)
 - a good 500 years before the next evidence of mummification will be found in a tomb of a king

Maadi culture (3600-3000 BCE)

- a unique predynastic site
- evidence of foreign house styles and pottery, domesticated donkeys, intricate storage facilities and an advanced copper industry.
- In 3600 BCE foreign trade goods started to reach Egypt having a great effect on the communities in Lower Egypt.
 - prosperity of the trade networks later lead to vast settlements in Egypt such as Memphis and the settlement at Cairo.

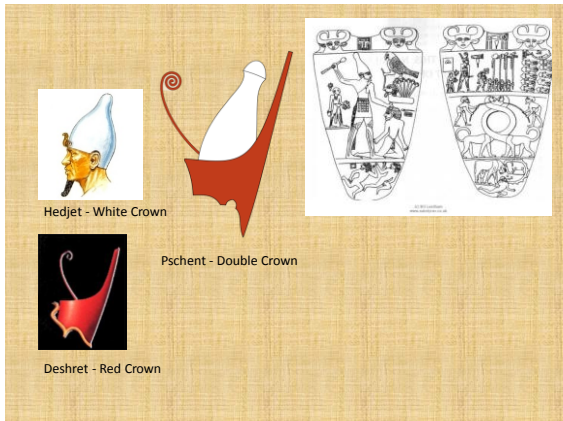
Settlement at Maadi

- covered about 45 acres
 - Almost all of the houses were oval in shape and constructed with post walls and mud-daub wicker frame.
 - These homes had entrances through a slanting passage with steps that were faced in stone.
- very simple burials
 - These types of burials have distinguished the Lower societies from the Upper societies in Egypt.



Egyptian Unification

- One of these rulers was the first to unite the whole valley, from the first cataract near the Nubian Desert to the Mediterranean, as a single kingdom in about 3400 or 3100 BC.



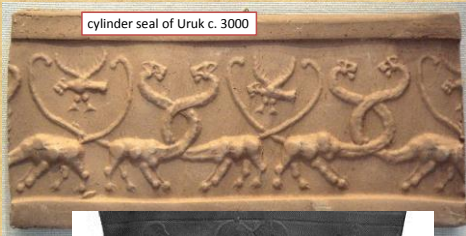
Early Dynastic Period 3000-2647 BCE

- Narmer unifies Egypt 3000 BCE
- Palette of King Narmer
 - little over 2 feet tall
 - found at Hierakanpolis (Nehken)
 - originally a tablet used for grinding eye paint
 - shield shaped
 - depicts the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt
 - dual crowns of Upper and Lower
 - wearing a false beard
 - hair = power

The Palette of King Narmer, c. 3100-3000 BCE, slate



cylinder seal of Uruk c. 3000



Narmer Palette



Literacy in Egypt

- Writing was not brought into Egypt from Sumer
- developed independently and may have begun on Naqada II pottery.
 - pottery apparently charts the gradual stylization of the plants, animals and religious dances
 - *may have resulted* in a set of divine symbols that are virtually hieroglyphic signs



Oldest Mummy Discovered

- in 2003 a coffin thought to date from 3100 to 2890 BCE under Egypt's First Dynasty had been discovered at Saqqara.



2nd Dynasty Pottery

- The vase on the left is of sedimentary stone and dates from the Second Dynasty,
- the other two are stone vases with gold-covered handles, First or Second Dynasty