

# **A DELTA-MAN IN YEBU**

Occasional Volume of the Egyptologists' Electronic Forum

No. 1

Edited by  
**A. K. Eyma and C. J. Bennett**

*A Delta-man in Yebu: Occasional Volume of the Egyptologists' Electronic Forum No. 1*

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## Table of Contents

Preface.....	1
<i>(I) Royalty in Ancient Egypt</i>	
Lorton, David - The Institution of Kingship in Ancient Egypt.....	3
Gaber, Amr - Aspects of the Deification of Some Old Kingdom Kings.....	12
Rocchi, Federico - The First Prophet of Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten.....	32
Kramer, Arris - Enigmatic Kiya.....	48
Bennett, Chris - Three Notes on Arsinoe I.....	64
<i>(II) Scarabs and Funerary Items</i>	
Sarr, John - The Gayer-Anderson Amenhotep III Commemorative Scarabs in the Portland Art Museum: Their Discovery and Description.....	71
Anđelković, Branislav, and Troy Sagrillo - The Djed-Ptah-iw-ef-ankh Shabti Figurine from the National Museum of Belgrade.....	76
Uranic, Igor - The Coffin and the Cartonnage of Kaipamaw.....	81
Gibson, Gayle - The Case of the Misplaced Cow: ROM Cartonnage 1910.10.....	88
<i>(III) Archaeology and Early Egypt</i>	
Brass, Michael - Tracing the Origins of the Ancient Egyptian Cattle Cult.....	101
Castillos, Juan José - Preliminary Report on the 2000 Poznan Symposium.....	111
van Wetering, Joris, and G. J. Tassie - Socio-Political Hierarchy of First Dynasty Sites: A Ranking of East Delta Cemeteries Based on Grave Architecture.....	123
Cagle, Anthony - A Spatial Analysis of Deposits in Kom el-Hisn.....	147

*(IV) Egyptology – Past, Present and Future*

Adams, Matthew - The Egypt Archaeological Database and the Birth of Computerized Inter-site Analysis.....	169
Grajetzki, Wolfram - Digital Egypt for Universities: Koptos in the Second Intermediate Period.....	182
Stadnikow, Sergei - Otto Friedrich von Richters Expedition in Unternubien im Jahre 1815.....	190

*(V) Ancient Egyptian Language, Science and Religion.*

Doranlo, Henri - La construction « <i>jw sdm=f</i> prospectif » dans Kagemni.....	203
Lumpkin, Beatrice - Ancient Egyptian Mathematics and Forerunners: Some Hints from Work Sites.....	210
Győry, Hedvig - On a Topos in Egyptian Medical History.....	215
Szpakowska, Kasia - Altered States: An Inquiry into the Possible Use of Narcotics or Alcohol to Induce Dreams in Pharaonic Egypt.....	225
Bailey, Leslie - <i>Weltende</i> .....	238

## Preface

It is with great pleasure that I present to you this volume, produced by the Egyptologists' Electronic Forum (EEF). The EEF is a scholarly e-mail discussion forum for mainstream Egyptology, hosted by Yale University. Since its establishment in 1998, the EEF has become a leading on-line forum for discussion of Egyptological issues.<sup>1</sup> Its subscribers include many well-known Egyptologists, as well as graduate students and interested amateurs. The current volume arose from a suggestion by one of our members, Federico Rocchi, that this new electronic community could also prove to be a vehicle for disseminating ideas and research in a more permanent way. In line with the digital nature of the EEF, the current volume is being printed via new, Internet-based processes (print-on-demand) and is also being released in electronic format (e-book).

The title of this volume comes from a saying found in the *Tale of Sinuhe*, an ancient Egyptian literary text, with which the exiled Egyptian Sinuhe comments on his stay abroad: "As if a Delta-man saw himself in Yebu, a marsh-man in Ta-Seti."<sup>2</sup> In the case of the present title it points at the two media that this volume tries to bridge: the paper and digital worlds. For many contributing Egyptologists this is the first time that they have published a paper in a volume that is produced by an e-community, and that will not appear via traditional printing. In that sense, Egyptology (still very much a traditional paper discipline) is the Delta-man travelling to a distant southern city. But it is also unusual for an e-group to publish something on paper, and in that sense it is EEF that is the stranger in Elephantine (Yebu). Of course we hope and expect that you will not experience Sinuhe's feelings of discomfort while reading this volume, and that you will conclude that Delta and Yebu are after all part of the same Egypt, and that the new medium (the Internet) can make a useful contribution to the old discipline of Egyptology.

The papers in the volume cover a wide spectrum of Egyptological topics and have been grouped according to five broad themes that may be discerned: royalty in ancient Egypt, scarabs and funerary items, archaeology and early Egypt, Egyptology – past, present and future, and ancient Egyptian language, science and religion.

Sincere thanks go to the contributing authors, to my fellow editor Chris Bennett, to David Lorton (for proofreading and editorial advice), and to the following persons for providing suggestions and assistance in a variety of forms: Federico Rocchi, Leslie Bailey, Michael Tilgner, Tamara Siuda, Sarah Parcak, Troy Sagrillo and Michael Schreiber.

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<sup>1</sup> For information about EEF, please see one of the following URLs: <http://welcome.to/EEF>, <http://egyptology.tk>, or <http://www.netins.net/showcase/ankh/eefmain.html>

<sup>2</sup> Sinuhe B43, R65-66. Cf. A. M. Blackman, *Middle-Egyptian Stories*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca II, Bruxelles 1972, pp. 17-18; M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, Vol. 1, University of California Press 1975, p. 225. Ta-Seti (*t3-sty*) is rendered "Nubia" by Lichtheim and most other translators. But the parallelism between the two lines would suggest that the term more likely refers to the 1<sup>st</sup> Upper Egyptian nome, in which Elephantine (Yebu, *3bw*) was located. That is, in both lines the southern-most region of Egypt is set against the most northern part of the country (the marshy lagoons [*h3t*] of the Delta [*idhw*]). Compare the Turin Coronation Inscription of Horemhab, line 22, which states that this king restored the temples "from the *h3t* of *idh(w)* to *t3-sty*", i.e. in the whole land; see *BAR* III §31 and Alan Gardiner's "Notes on the Story of Sinuhe", Chapter II, "Comments on the Text Part IV", p. 87, available online at the following URL: [http://www.cwru.edu/UL/preserve/Etana/notes\\_story\\_sinuhe/notes\\_story\\_sinuhe.htm](http://www.cwru.edu/UL/preserve/Etana/notes_story_sinuhe/notes_story_sinuhe.htm)



# The Institution of Kingship in Ancient Egypt\*

David Lorton

In studying the civilization of ancient Egypt, we are at the mercy of the surviving evidence, which is uneven in its temporal and spatial distributions, and highly uneven in its content. With regard to architecture, to cite only one example, our evidence is dominated by tombs and temples. With the special exception of Amarna, our evidence for domestic architecture and such texts as we have reflecting the lives of the non-elite stem from atypical sites, namely the villages of the workmen who labored on the royal funerary monuments, at Kahun, Deir el-Medina, and now at Giza as well.

When it comes to texts, the preserved record is also highly skewed. Temples and tombs yield texts we call “historical” and “biographical,” though these labels are really misnomers.<sup>1</sup> Biographical texts can contain information about events that occurred in the lives of individuals, but these events are always selected so as to portray people achieving success in the service of their community, the state, or their temple, and they often include—and sometimes just boil down to—stock phrases to the effect that the deceased was one “who clothed the naked,” “gave bread to the hungry,” and so forth. In short, these texts can easily be compared to the genre of eulogies in our own culture: with their assurances of the goodly life the deceased had led, they serve to encode the values that constituted the accepted norms of society and to transmit them to the next generation. Indeed, these texts were displayed in the more “public” parts of tombs; sometimes they were even carved on the façades.

With regard to the historical texts composed on behalf of kings, there are some containing a fair amount of detail, but they constitute exceptions to the rule. For the most part, such allusions as are made to historical events are brief and lacking in the kind of details that provide grist for the mill of the political historian. Fondness for the inclusion of royal epithets increased over time; by the Ramesside period, they constituted nearly all the content of many a text, with the result that allusions to historical events can seem to have been included as hardly more than an afterthought. By way of a loose analogy, the content of royal inscriptions can be compared to that of an American president’s State of the Union address: little of the personality of the incumbent emerges from this material, stress rather being placed on his presidential—or ancient Egyptian kingly—qualities and on events that exemplify his successful execution of his office. In his dissertation on the kingship, Nicolas-Christophe Grimal took note of the rather impersonal monarch who seems to emerge from these texts.<sup>2</sup> In the writer’s review of Grimal’s book, it was countered that a number of kings—particularly of the Middle and New Kingdoms—have vivid enough personalities in the surviving textual record or in their royal portraiture, and that the phenomenon described by Grimal was not that of an impersonal monarch, but rather that of the royal office itself, devoid of its occupant.<sup>3</sup> With the passage of some time and the opportunity for further reflection, the writer would now modify that observation and suggest that we think in terms of two personas that inhabited a king. On the one hand, there was his individual human persona, which was usually not stressed, but whose expression must have been allowable given that it

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\* This is the publication of a paper given at the annual meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature on November 18, 1995. The remarks are intended to complement the excellent treatment of the topic by R. J. Leprohon, “Royal Ideology and State Administration in Pharaonic Egypt,” in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, ed. J. M. Sasson, vol. 1 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1995), 273–287.

<sup>1</sup> On the points made in this and the following paragraph, see also the writer’s remarks in “Legal and Social Institutions of Pharaonic Egypt,” in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, vol. 1, 346.

<sup>2</sup> N. C. Grimal, *Les Termes de la propagande royale égyptienne de la XIX<sup>e</sup> dynastie à la conquête d’Alexandre*, Mémoires de l’Académie des Inscriptions de Belles-Lettres 6 (Paris, 1986), 719-721.

<sup>3</sup> D. Lorton, *Chronique d’Égypte* 68 (1993), 100-102.

sometimes does occur, as just noted. And on the other hand, there was what could be called the divine royal persona, a single, immortal, self-regenerating persona that transcended the individual mortal monarch but occupied each individual reigning king. As a result of this belief, while individual kings could and did come and go, there was a sense in which, through the three thousand years of ancient Egypt's history, there was only one king: this divine royal persona who was expressed as "Horus" or as the "living royal *ka*." And it is suggested here that the qualities expressed in the royal epithets studied by Grimal, which he refers to as describing an impersonal monarch and which the writer ascribed to the royal office, are in fact the ideal qualities of that divine persona.

The preceding was a digression that anticipated some of the discussion to follow; it is now time to return to the matter of the nature of the preserved textual evidence. Some topics, such as medicine and astronomy, are represented by relatively small text corpora, and at any given time only a few scholars are to be found at work on them. Law is an important area of potential relevance to those with comparative interest, but again, the documentation is relatively small in quantity; we have a small corpus of royal decrees from the Old Kingdom through the New Kingdom, and while there is a significant number of procès-verbaux of cases at law before the Late Period, nearly all the preserved documentation stems from a single site, the village of Deir el-Medina mentioned earlier, and it is confined to a period of about two and one-half centuries. Most scholars who concentrate on the textual documentation principally study, not surprisingly, the genres represented by the majority of the surviving texts: history, literature, and religion. But it is religion that accounts for the vast majority of all the surviving documentation from ancient Egypt, whether archaeological, architectural, artistic, or textual, and the textual sources cover a wide range of concerns: one is religion in the (for us) more ordinary sense of concern with the divine; another is the funerary literature, of which major corpora have survived; a third is represented by magic; and finally, there is the ideologically-weighted—that is to say, the religiously-weighted—material related to the institution of kingship.

It should be noted that this seemingly odd circumstance need not be attributed to special religious obsessions on the part of the ancient Egyptians, though of course their beliefs and practices were important to them, but stems rather from the topographical peculiarities of the land. The domestic architecture of the town sites in the Nile floodplain was of mud brick, a circumstance not conducive to its survival in any case. Moreover, for the most part, ancient town sites lie under the present water-table, under cultivated land, or under modern urban sites. Many mounds that actually survived in the Delta down to modern times have been attacked by *sebakhin* or even bulldozed away during the last century, as the expanding population of the country led to a need for more land for cultivation. Indeed, had it not been for its unusual and exceptional desert location, Akhenaten's capital city at Amarna would have been lost to us, and with it the Amarna letters, which have proved such an invaluable source of information regarding history, international law, and language in the second millennium. Our principal textual sources, then, stem from the walls of stone temples, erected principally in urban sites, or from the stelae and statues set up in their forecourts, and from those sites which are located in the dry climate of the desert. Amarna and the workmen's villages have already been mentioned, and there have been recent excavations at Ain-Asil, the site of a late Old Kingdom town located in the oasis of Dakhla in the Western Desert. And, of course, there are the royal mortuary temples, and the royal and private tombs, which were either buildings constructed of stone or excavated into the rock cliffs that frame the Nile valley. These tombs are not only sources of scenes and texts carved or painted on their walls. Much of the textual material that has survived to us on wood, leather, and papyrus, including literary, magical, and medical texts, owes its preservation to the fact that it was placed in tombs, or was left behind in the workmen's villages or the royal mortuary temples.

Considerable space has been devoted here to the nature of our sources, because it explains how it is that certain areas receive a great deal of attention in the scholarly literature while others remain relatively ignored. It is religion that accounts for the vast majority of the evidence we have from Egypt. The office of kingship has had religious aspects in many cultures, Egypt's being no exception,

and because Egypt's king was divine, there is much talk in the evidence about his divinity and his relationship to the gods and goddesses of the land.

And yet, the king both reigned and ruled. He was the head of state, and in certain periods, he was the head of an empire in Africa and Asia. There must have been political intrigues, and the king must have had elite constituencies to satisfy, but such matters are mostly absent from the histories of Egypt, for the simple reason that they are mostly absent from the surviving evidence. They are not, however, entirely absent. Manetho, who was of course not contemporary with the event, mentioned that king Teti of Dynasty VI was assassinated by his bodyguards.<sup>4</sup> From the same dynasty, there is some evidence to the effect that the rule of Pepi I began with a struggle against a counter-king named Userkare.<sup>5</sup> From Dynasty XII, we know of an assassination attempt against Amenemhet I.<sup>6</sup> A fragmentary stela of his coregent and successor, Sesostris I, mentions civil unrest in Elephantine, though it has to remain uncertain whether this was really some sort of rebellion, in the sense of an attempt to institute a new political order or at least a new regime, or just a riot of major proportions.<sup>7</sup> From a rare source, a fragment of a palace day-book of king Sobekhotep III of Dynasty XIII, we have a similar report of the quelling of unrest in a city.<sup>8</sup> There was an attempt on the life of Ramesses III of Dynasty XX.<sup>9</sup> And finally, we have the report that in Dynasty XXVI Amasis usurped the throne from Apries and allowed him to be killed, though he then had him buried with full royal honors.<sup>10</sup>

There is another telling incident, one that has gone unappreciated in the secondary literature, and the writer must thank Dr. Scott Morschauser, who is planning to write on it, for permitting mention of it here. Ramesses II of Dynasty XIX ruled for sixty-seven years,<sup>11</sup> and if there were any kings with long reigns who seem to have defined what it meant to be an absolute monarch, it would be Amenophis III of the preceding Dynasty XVIII and Ramesses II. But in the first year of his sole reign, Ramesses visited the temple of Karnak to appoint a new high priest. The priests staged oracles, and his choices were rejected, as it was believed, by the god himself. Finally, the god—that is to say, obviously the priests—accepted a man named Nebwenenef.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, we shall probably never know the details behind this incident. But Amun of Karnak was the chief god of the country, his priesthood was the richest and most powerful in the land, and we seem to have here, in a report of an incident dating to the outset of this king's reign, an account of a test of wills between the king and the priesthood of Amun, one of the most important of his constituencies.

Ramesses' beginning would thus appear to have been somewhat shaky, and one escapade nearly cost him his life at Kadesh. In his fifth year, Ramesses led his army into Syria-Palestine, and when he

<sup>4</sup> W. G. Waddell, trans., *Manetho* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1940), 51-53. Waddell follows E. Meyer in identifying the Othoês or Othius of the epitomes, which ascribe the king inconsistently to Dynasty V and Dynasty VI, with Teti; see *ibid.*, 53, n. 2.

<sup>5</sup> H. Goedicke, "Userkare," in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, vol. 6 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992), col. 901.

<sup>6</sup> See A. Volten, *Zwei altägyptische politische Schriften*, *Analecta Aegyptiaca* 4 (Copenhagen, 1945), 110-111. For an English translation, see M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 1: *The Old and Middle Kingdoms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 137.

<sup>7</sup> The text is published and discussed by W. Helck, "Die Weihinschrift Sesostris' I. am Satet-Tempel von Elephantine," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo* 34 (1978), 69-78.

<sup>8</sup> See D. B. Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals and Day-Books*, SSEA Publication 4 (Mississauga, Ont.: Benben Publications 1986), 108.

<sup>9</sup> Sir Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 289-292.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 361-362.

<sup>11</sup> The figure for the length of the reign of Ramesses II is supplied by the Abydos stela of Ramesses IV; see J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 4 (reprint ed., New York: Russell and Russell Inc., 1962), 228.

<sup>12</sup> K. A. Kitchen, *Ramesseid Inscriptions, Historical and Biographical*, vol. 3 (Oxford: B. H. Blackwell, 1980), 283. For a translation and discussion, see K. Sethe, "Die Berufung eines Hohenpriesters des Amon unter Ramses II.," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 44 (1907), 30-35. The understanding of the text here follows that of Sethe and of Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982), 46-47.

was encamped with his vanguard, an attack by Hittite chariotry caused a panic in his army; in the fighting that ensued, Ramesses nearly lost his life. His personal prowess saved him, and he officially claimed a victory . . . but so did the Hittites. There seems to have been a stalemate in this contest between the two great powers, and while Ramesses was able to vaunt his own prowess in his inscriptions, this incident—at least, as reported—was scarcely a credit to his army. And yet, he boasted of it in texts of which we have a number of copies.<sup>13</sup> Perhaps we can say this incident marked the onset of Egypt's decline as a major power in Asia, but we would say it with the advantage of hindsight. What must be noted here is that Ramesses' army failed him, and that in some way we cannot fully fathom today, his commissioning of inscriptions commemorating this fact marks yet another rift between him and an important constituency, the armed forces.

Perhaps there are further cases of this sort in the surviving evidence which have somehow gone unnoticed, but in all likelihood they are few in number. But to the small number of references to specific historical incidents bearing on the practice of kingship we can add two important texts that speak in a sense to the theory of kingship, though not so much to theological concerns as to the practical aspects of the exercise of the office.

One of these texts is the poetic report regarding the battle of Kadesh. There, speeches of Ramesses II define his relationship to his army, as well as his relationship to the god Amun. The speeches have been analyzed by Scott Morschauser.<sup>14</sup> From this analysis, it is clear that each of the two relationships is characterized by a set of mutual obligations, and that in both cases, the obligations are the same. Further, interestingly enough, the mutual obligations that bind the king and his military and his vassals on the one hand, and the king and the god on the other hand, are essentially the same set of obligations as are to be found in the legal and covenantal stipulations of the ancient Near Eastern vassal treaties and the Hebrew Bible. Morschauser's analysis helps us to see the king's status as an intermediary figure between other mortals and the divine, and it also shows us that the Egyptian king was not a despot who ruled arbitrarily, but rather a monarch whose claim to the loyalty and support of his followers was inextricably related to the obligations to them which he, for his own part, was expected to fulfill.

The second source is a didactic text called the Instruction for Merikare.<sup>15</sup> The instruction is supposedly the product of a king of the Heracleopolitan Period for his successor, though there has been some disagreement as to whether that was actually the case, or whether it was a work of the Middle Kingdom, fictitiously set in the past.<sup>16</sup> Our earliest copies of the text, however, can be dated paleographically to Dynasty XVIII, and one of them has been dated by Georges Posener to the reign of Amenophis II or Thutmose IV.<sup>17</sup> Comparing the text to the concerns with the king's divinity to be found in many a royal inscription, Ramses Mofrah has noted the very much this-worldly focus of the text.<sup>18</sup> Its badly broken opening section has been studied by Philippe Derchain,<sup>19</sup> who has been able to show that it advises the king to be a teacher to his followers, and this is followed by practical advice to advance his officials. Next, the king is admonished to do justice and to not oppress the widow or

<sup>13</sup> For English translations of the texts, see M. Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 2: *The New Kingdom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 60–72. See also the important study of the texts by A. H. Gardiner, *The Kadesh Inscriptions of Ramesses II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960).

<sup>14</sup> S. Morschauser, "Observations on the Speeches of Ramesses II in the Literary Record of the Battle of Kadesh," in *Perspectives on the Battle of Kadesh*, ed. H. Goedicke, (Baltimore: Halgo, 1985), 123–206.

<sup>15</sup> For an English translation, see Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. 1, 99–108.

<sup>16</sup> Perhaps the first to argue for a Dynasty XII date was G. Björkman, "Egyptology and Historical Method," *Orientalia Suecana* 13 (1964), 32. The earlier dating has been defended by E. Blumenthal, "Die Lehre für König Merikare," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 107 (1980), 40–41.

<sup>17</sup> See G. Posener, "Philologie et archéologie égyptiennes," *Annuaire du Collège de France* 62 (1962), 291–293.

<sup>18</sup> See R. Mofrah, *Studien zum ägyptischen Königsdogma im Neuen Reich*, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo Sonderschrift 20 (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1985), 78–79.

<sup>19</sup> P. Derchain, "Éloquence et politique: L'Opinion d'Akhtoy," *Revue d'Égyptologie* 40 (1989), 37–47.

punish wrongfully, and the like, and he is reminded of the Judgment of the Dead, to which even he will be subject. Then, the king is advised to promote individuals from a social group called the *djamu*, who are a source of soldiers, and to reward them with goods and fields, and to promote capable people regardless of their social class. What follows seems somewhat mixed in content: religious piety is advised, along with good relations with the south of the country in this period of political division. Advice not to usurp the monuments of previous kings is followed by a description of conditions in the Delta and a famous passage disparaging Asiatics. Good conditions in the north of the country are mentioned again, along with a praise of the office of kingship, and then an admission of failure when the desecration of a cemetery was followed by a military defeat. The omniscience of the divine is invoked, along with yet another enjoinder to piety. Finally, there is a section with religious content, including the following important passage regarding the creator god's beneficence towards humankind: "Having constructed a shrine behind them, when they weep, he hears. It is for them that he made rulers in the egg, a lifter to lift from the back of the weak of arm. It is for them that he made Magic (*hekau*) as weapons, to ward off what might happen."<sup>20</sup> As the writer has suggested elsewhere,<sup>21</sup> this list is more meaningful to our modern sensibilities if we read it in reverse order. First, the god has made it possible for humans to help themselves in the face of adversity with Magic. Second, the institution of kingship, and the bureaucratic organization and maintenance of social order implied by its mention, makes life easier even for the relatively helpless, as was noted earlier in the text. And finally, in cases of suffering that governmental institutions cannot address—life-threatening illness is an example that comes easily to mind—the god will hear, and presumably respond to, people's weeping. It should be clear enough that although religious matters are duly noted in this text, it is nevertheless, as Mofstah maintains, overwhelmingly this-worldly in its orientation. And in this last section, it is particularly striking that although the kingship is presented as a remedy for human suffering, it is noted as *only one* of three such remedies.

Thus far, mention has been made of two single sources, the poem on the battle of Kadesh and the Instructions for Merikare. In addition to these individual texts, we have a group of sources—namely, the inscriptions and representations from the tombs of the royal officials at Amarna—created within the space of no more than a dozen years and containing a wealth of material that can be studied synchronically. In a paper that appeared in 1993,<sup>22</sup> the writer pointed to a remarkable coincidence that certainly seems to be more than *just* a coincidence, given that our earliest copies of the Instruction for Merikare date to Dynasty XVIII. In Merikare, as just outlined, there is a stress on the king as teacher, on the loyalty the king can promote by rewarding his followers,<sup>23</sup> and on the promotion of commoners, including the social group called *djamu*; this combination of themes is unique to this text in the hieratic literature. But these same themes are stressed in the tombs at Amarna, and their combination there is also unique in the private tombs of Egypt. There is clearly a relationship between the two, though whether it is a direct or an indirect one could be a subject of disagreement. But more important in the present context is the fact that, while considerable stress is placed on the divinity of the king in the Amarna tombs, there is also a stress on these practical aspects of kingship.

In 1979, in the context of a review article,<sup>24</sup> the writer suggested an approach to the kingship employing a model derived from the work of Fritz Kern on early medieval kingship.<sup>25</sup> This interest in

<sup>20</sup> Merikare, P 134–138.

<sup>21</sup> D. Lorton, "God's Beneficent Creation: Coffin Texts Spell 1130, the Instructions for Merikare, and the Great Hymn to the Aten," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 20 (1993), 142.

<sup>22</sup> D. Lorton, "The Instruction for Merikare and Amarna Ideology," *Göttinger Miszellen* 134 (1993), 69–83.

<sup>23</sup> The theme of loyalism in Middle Kingdom sources and at Amarna has been studied by J. Assmann, "Die 'Loyalistische Lehre' Echnatons," *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 8 (1980), 1–32. On the phenomenon of loyalism earlier in Dynasty XVIII, see also the writer's remarks in *Göttinger Miszellen* 134 (1993), 69–70.

<sup>24</sup> D. Lorton, "Towards a Constitutional Approach to Ancient Egyptian Kingship," *JAOS* 99 (1979), 460–465.

<sup>25</sup> S. B. Chrimes, trans., *Kingship and Law in the Middle Ages* (New York and Evanston, 1970).

Kern's work did not derive from the specifics of his study—one cannot, of course, read medieval Europe back into ancient Egypt—but rather from the categories into which he divided his study, for these clearly represent productive questions that one could ask of any kingship. Kern's categories are (1) the divine sanction of the monarchical principle, (2) the individual's right to the throne, (3) the consecration of the king, (4) the king and the law, and (5) the right to resistance. It should be clear enough that this list certainly takes religious matters into account, but I tried to show how it can be used to take a more holistic approach to the institution, one that integrates both the theory and the practice of kingship in ancient Egypt.

Curiously enough, in his dissertation on the kingship, Grimal objected to this approach, though he conceded the point that we sometimes do catch a glimpse of a “humanity of the king far removed from dogma.”<sup>26</sup> But it must be insisted that the study of the kingship is more than the study of its dogma. An effort such as Grimal's dissertation, while it is both necessary and invaluable, is nevertheless inevitably one-dimensional. To focus exclusively on royal epithets and descriptive phrases, and their theological information regarding the king's divinity, without taking advantage of information such as what we are told in the Instruction for Merikare, or what we find in the tombs at Amarna, or the incidents from the reign of Ramesses II noted above, results in a one-sided and potentially misleading picture of what the ancient Egyptians thought about the institution of kingship and its holders. In this connection, it can also be noted that while the much later Demotic Chronicle might bear traces of foreign influence in its negative evaluations of the reigns of certain monarchs, its approach has early antecedents in the Instruction for Merikare, as noted, and in the Restoration Stela of Tutankhamun.<sup>27</sup>

Turning to the issue of the king's divinity, the notion of an individual who was a mortal, and yet somehow also divine, seems sufficiently removed from Western experience that it has proved to be a dilemma for Egyptologists. Perhaps the most extreme formulation of what the divinity of the king might have meant to the ancient Egyptians was made by Henri Frankfort in his book *Kingship and the Gods*,<sup>28</sup> and in the wake of Posener's critique of Frankfort's approach as long ago as 1960,<sup>29</sup> we have remained without a comprehensive, magisterial treatment of the topic. There was, however, an important advance in 1985, when Lanny Bell published a study of what the Egyptians called the “living royal *ka*” at the temple of Luxor in the time of Amenophis III, where, in his opinion, the king experienced an annual ritual regeneration that entailed this “living royal *ka*.”<sup>30</sup> The earliest evidence for just what this entity might be stems from the Late Period, when a hymn from the reign of the Persian emperor Darius informs us that the “living royal *ka*” was a hypostasis (the Egyptian word is *ba*) of Amun-Re, the solar creator god,<sup>31</sup> but the earlier material studied by Bell seems consistent with this information.

In the course of recent (and as yet unpublished) work on the texts from the tombs at Amarna, the present writer came upon another clue to what constituted the divine aspect of the king, one that is expressed by the term *hau*, which is typically translated, according to context, as “flesh,” “limbs,” or “body.” At Amarna, apparently in the course of a ritual performed at sunrise every morning, when the king offered a Maat symbol and prayed, the king was said to be “embraced” by the rays of the sun, and

<sup>26</sup> Grimal, *Termes de la Propagande*, 288, n. 911.

<sup>27</sup> On the Demotic Chronicle, see J. H. Johnson, “The Demotic Chronicle as an Historical Source,” *Enchoria* 4 (1974), 1–17. For an English translation of the text of Tutankhamun, see J. A. Wilson, in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. J. B. Pritchard, 2d ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 251–252. The texts express the theme of reversals of fortune as stemming from offenses against the gods.

<sup>28</sup> H. Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

<sup>29</sup> G. Posener, *De la divinité du pharaon*, Cahiers de la Société Asiatique 15 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1960).

<sup>30</sup> L. Bell, “Luxor Temple and the Cult of the Royal *Ka*,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 44 (1985), 251–294.

<sup>31</sup> See the writer's treatment in “The Invocation Hymn at the Temple of Hibis,” *Studien zur altägyptische Kultur* 21 (1994), 168 and 184–185.

as a result of this embrace, he “emerged” (*peri*) from the god Aten. This emergence from Aten, which is also described as the god “bearing” (*mesi*) the king, is further explained as an “emergence” from the “rays” (*setut*) of the sun god, from his “body” (*khet*), and from his “limbs” or “flesh” (*hau*). But this term *hau*, which in the Middle Kingdom is written as *ha*, can be traced back to the reign of Sesostri I of Dynasty XII, when it occurs in the White Chapel at Karnak in statements regarding the king’s relationship to the sun god Re and to the Ennead. A single, important example can suffice here: the god Atum says to the king, “It is by his making you into a single *ha* with himself that your father Re made your great rank of King of Upper and Lower Egypt.”<sup>32</sup> A rendering along the lines of “It is by his making you into a single flesh with himself. . .” seems at first sight to yield no real sense, and the writer would suggest that, if only by way of a heuristic bridge, we render *ha* as “substance”: “It is by making you into a single substance with himself that your father Re made your great rank of King of Upper and Lower Egypt.” We are not told just how this is done, but the significance lies in *what* was done: in some manner (at Amarna, this was done when the rays of the sun “embraced” the king), the sun god Re effected a change in the human individual that made him into a “single substance” with himself, thereby conferring on him his “rank” of “King of Upper and Lower Egypt.” The significance of this information becomes clearer when we realize that it helps us to understand an otherwise puzzling statement at the beginning of the Story of Sinuhe, a work probably authored in the reign of the same king, Sesostri I. There, the date of the death of Amenemhet I, Sesostri’s father and coregent, is reported, and we are then told, “The god entered his horizon, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Sehetepibre, he ascended to the sky, he being joined with the sun disk (*itn*, “Aten”), the divine *ha* being merged with the one who made him (or possibly, “it”).”<sup>33</sup> This passage cannot refer to the funeral, which would have taken place later, after a lengthy mummification period, nor can the “divine *ha*” that ascends to the sky be the king’s corpse, which of course remained on earth and was buried. The passage makes real sense only when understood in the light of the information in the passage from the White Chapel cited earlier: it is a special “substance” created by the sun or the sun god, one that made Amenemhet divine (a “god”) and “King of Upper and Lower Egypt,” that left him at his death and returned to his maker in the sky. The Story of Sinuhe is a literary text, but what we are told here clearly reflects or became official royal ideology, for we find it paraphrased in nonliterary sources in Dynasty XVIII in reporting the death of Amenophis I,<sup>34</sup> and repeated almost verbatim in reporting the death of Thutmosis III.<sup>35</sup>

Returning to the texts at Amarna, there is material there which serves to provide a link between the religious wording of royal ideology and the more practical side of kingship as we find it in the Instruction for Merikare. The texts employ a vocabulary of creation, one used in reference to both the god and the king. Three terms employed in describing creation (including the god’s creation of the world) are used of the king as creator of his followers: *iri* “to make,” *qed* “to build,” and *sekheper* “to create,” and the names of what were divinities in the traditional religion were applied to the king: Hapy (“Inundation”), Shay (“Fate”), and Renenet (“Bounty”). Most often, such matters are mentioned in passing in the hymns at Amarna, but certain passages supply contexts that serve to explain what these terms meant to the ancients. Thus, for example, we find Akhenaten addressed as “my lord, who builds like Aten, plentiful of goods, Inundation surging daily, who sustains Egypt <with> silver and gold like the sands of the shores.”<sup>36</sup> Or again, the king is called, “my god, who built me, the one who ordained good things for me, the one who created me, who gave me income and provided my needs with his *ka*,

<sup>32</sup> P. Lacau and H. Chevrier, *Une Chapelle de Sésostris I<sup>er</sup> à Karnak* (Cairo: Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale, 1956), 124, no. 344.

<sup>33</sup> R. Koch, *Die Erzählung des Sinuhe*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 17 (Brussels, 1990), 4.1–5.7.

<sup>34</sup> *Urk.* IV, 54.15–17.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 896.1–3.

<sup>36</sup> *p3y.i nb kd mi itn ʕs3 ht hʕpy hr hw rʕ nb sʕnh Kmt <m> hd nbw mi šʕw n wdbw*, M. Sandman, *Texts from the Time of Akhenaten*, Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca 8 (Brussels, 1938), 91.12–13 (tomb of Ay).

the ruler, who made me a person.”<sup>37</sup> A third example will suffice here: in yet another hymn, reference is made to “every official whom pharaoh, I. p. h., builds in the entire land, to whom he gives silver, gold, clothing, goods, and cattle every year.”<sup>38</sup> From these passages, it should be clear enough that in calling Akhenaten a creator and an Inundation these texts identify the king as the promoter and rewarder of his loyal officials. To us today, such expressions might seem cynical in the extreme, but we must recall that they are part of a larger, rich theological expression in which the king’s ability to do these things stems from a *homoousia*, a consubstantiality, of him and the solar creator god, as noted earlier.

As the study of the material from the tombs at Amarna progresses, it is becoming increasingly clear that there was little new under the sun there.<sup>39</sup> The theme of the king as creator of his followers can be traced back to the Middle Kingdom, when the verb *sekheper* could be used of the king appointing his officials, as when one of these is called “(the one) whom the Horus, lord of the palace, created,”<sup>40</sup> while another official is said to have been “created as sole companion.”<sup>41</sup> It can be added that the king as rewarder and promoter is closely tied to another theme, which we call “loyalism,” and in an important study, Jan Assmann has shown a close connection between expressions of this theme in the Middle Kingdom and at Amarna.<sup>42</sup>

Turning to the question of potential directions for future research, the following can be suggested. Fortunately, our need for compendia of relevant information in the form of royal titles, epithets, and descriptive phrases is mostly satisfied. Hans Goedicke’s collection of Old Kingdom material from outside the Pyramid Texts bearing on the kingship has long been available,<sup>43</sup> as has been that of Elke Blumenthal on the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom.<sup>44</sup> More recently, Nicolas-Christoph Grimal’s monumental publication of epithets and descriptive phrases from the Ramesside and later periods has nearly completed this indispensable first step.<sup>45</sup> Curiously enough, this leaves us without a reference work of this sort for the Second Intermediate Period and Dynasty XVIII,<sup>46</sup> and it can only be hoped that this gap will be filled in the relatively near future.

An understanding of the ideology of kingship does not automatically flow, however, from the act of preparing such compendia. Material regarding the divine figure Kamutef (“Bull-of-his-mother,” a phrase that means what it looks like it means), a probably related text dealing with the ongoing self-reengendering of the divine royal persona (see above) as Horus, attested in four copies from Dynasty XIII to the Ptolemaic period,<sup>47</sup> Osiris’ posthumous engendering of Horus (these last two themes have

<sup>37</sup> *p3y.i ntr kd (w)i p3 š3 n.i nfrw p3 šhpr (w)i di n.i ʿkw ir hrt.i m k3.f p3 hk3 ir wi m rmt*, *ibid.*, 24.1–2 (tomb of Panehesy).

<sup>38</sup> *sr nb kd pr-ʿ3 ʿ.w.s. m b3 r-dr.f di n.f hd nbw hbs hnw ng3w(?) tnw rnpt*, *ibid.*, 79.4–6 (tomb of Tutu). For the reading of the first word of the passage as *sr*, cf. *ibid.*, 55.17 (tomb of Rames).

<sup>39</sup> See D. B. Redford, “The Sun-disc in Akhenaten’s Program: Its Worship and Antecedents, I,” *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 13 (1976), 47–53; J. Assmann, *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 8 (1980), 1–32; and the present writer’s remarks in *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur* 20 (1993), 135–137 and *Göttinger Miszellen* 134 (1993), 69–83.

<sup>40</sup> E. Blumenthal, *Untersuchungen zum ägyptischen Königtum des Mittleren Reiches*, vol. 1: *Die Phraseologie*, *Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philosophisch-historische Klasse* 61/1 (Berlin, 1970), 286.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 371. For further occurrences, see *ibid.*, 285–286 and 322.

<sup>42</sup> See the study cited in note 23 above. Expressions of loyalism can in fact be traced back to the Old Kingdom; see *Urk. I* 195.6–9.

<sup>43</sup> H. Goedicke, *Die Stellung des Königs im Alten Reich*, *Ägyptologische Abhandlungen* 2 (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1960).

<sup>44</sup> See note 40 above.

<sup>45</sup> See note 2 above.

<sup>46</sup> While a fair amount of representative material is to be found in R. Mofteh, *Studien zum ägyptischen Königsdogma*, this work was not intended to be a compendium along the lines of those cited just above.

<sup>47</sup> The text has been studied by H. O. Lange, *Ein liturgisches Lied an Min*, *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 28 (1927), 331–338, citing examples from a private stela of Dynasty XIII date, the temple of Seti I at Abydos (Dynasty XIX), and the temple of Horus at Edfu. To these examples should be added the one in N. de G. Davies,

to do with the “divine royal persona” mentioned above), as well as the divine birth legend making the reigning monarch the child of the sun god, all represent controlling concepts that must be taken into account in a full explication of Egyptian thought regarding the kingship. A first attempt along these lines was in fact made by Helmuth Jacobsohn, in his monograph *Die dogmatische Stellung des Königs in der Theologie der alten Ägypter*.<sup>48</sup> Unfortunately, his treatment was too brief and his arguments insufficiently cogent, and his work has been essentially ignored. The writer believes that Jacobsohn’s basic insights were correct, though the material he reviewed must be dealt with in greater depth, as it has been in part by Lanny Bell in his work on the “living royal *ka*” with respect to the temple of Luxor<sup>49</sup> and by Dieter Müller in his investigation of the sexual aspect of the concept *ib* “heart” in ancient Egyptian.<sup>50</sup>

Past attempts at syntheses on the topic of the kingship have tended to draw on evidence from various periods. Conservatism in Egyptian religious belief can be cited to justify such an approach, though the obvious need to take into account the likelihood of developments over time can also be cited in objection to it. The publication of compendia of material from specific periods of Egyptian history reflects an awareness of this issue. But approaching the matter from a slightly different perspective, given the highly uneven temporal distribution of the evidence, a good case could be made for the study of the ideology of kingship from an extremely synchronic point of view, that is, in specific reigns from which we have a significant amount of evidence. Good candidates for such study would be the reign of Sesostri I, including the information from his White Chapel at Karnak, that of Hatshepsut and her funerary monument at Deir el-Bahri, that of Amenophis III and the information from the temple of Luxor, that of Akhenaten and the information from the boundary stelae and the private tombs at Amarna, that of Ramesses II, including the cults of the royal colossi, and that of Ramesses III, with the information from his monument at Medinet Habu.

And finally, it cannot be forgotten that the institution of kingship was a practical one in ancient Egypt, for as noted, the king both reigned and ruled. While work on the religious aspects of the kingship represents a front on which there is still much progress to be made, it has proceeded at the expense of the near total neglect of the exercise of the office, with the result that there can even seem to be an unbridgeable gap between the theory and the practice of kingship. As indicated, however, there is evidence bearing on the practical side of the royal office, as well as evidence bearing on how this evident gap was bridged in the minds of the ancient Egyptians. The quantity of religiously weighted information on the kingship makes this aspect of it an understandable preoccupation, but in the longer run, we must strive to make this institution an object not just of intellectual history, but of social history as well.<sup>51</sup>

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*The Temple of Hibis in el Khargeh Oasis*, Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition 17 (New York, 1953), vol. 3, pl. 32, upper left; most of this last version has been translated by E. Cruz-Urbe, *Hibis Temple Project*, vol. 1 (San Antonio: Van Siclen Books, 1991), 124–125. For a partial translation, see also Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods*, 189.

<sup>48</sup> H. Jacobsohn, *Die dogmatische Stellung des Königs in der Theologie der alten Ägypter*, *Ägyptologische Forschungen* 8 (Glückstadt, 1955). Jacobsohn’s approach was in part anticipated by Frankfort; see *Kingship and the Gods*, 180.

<sup>49</sup> See note 30 above.

<sup>50</sup> D. Müller, “Die Zeugung durch das Herz in Religion und Medizin der Ägypter,” *Orientalia*, N.S. 35 (1967), 247–274.

<sup>51</sup> The above remark is not intended to suggest that intellectual and social-historical approaches are inherently unrelated, as should be clear enough from the theological explication of Akhenaten’s relationship to his followers at Amarna. The writer’s earlier contribution, cited in note 21 above, was an initial attempt at a more holistic approach; in this vein, see also A. J. Spalinger, “The Concept of the Monarch During the Saite Epoch: An Essay of Synthesis,” *Orientalia* N.S. 47 (1978), 12–36. On the potential for integrating intellectual and social approaches, see also the writer’s remarks in *Studien zur Altägyptische Kultur* 20 (1993), 149–154.