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TRANSITION 18TH - 19TH DYNASTY

الفترة الانتقالية بين الاسرة 18 والاسرة 19

Colleen Manassa Darnell

Der Übergang von der 18. - 19. Dynastie
Transition 18e à 19e dynastie

The transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties, a period beginning with the reign of Aye and concluding with the reign of Sety I, represents the conclusion to the tumultuous Amarna Period and the beginning of the stability and prosperity of the following Ramesside Period. The rule of individuals coming from non-royal families—Aye, Horemheb, and Ramesses I—gives way to a strong dynastic succession with Sety I. Limited monumental construction during the short reigns of Aye and Ramesses I can be contrasted with the extensive building at Karnak during the reign of Horemheb and the impressive construction program of Sety I throughout Egypt. Foreign policy in Syria-Palestine and Nubia during the reign of Sety I reinforce Egypt's imperial domination of those regions, and larger geo-political conflicts are dominated by the rise of the Hittite Empire. In the cultural sphere, the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties reversed the revolutionary changes enacted by Akhenaten, although traces of that period remained in artistic representation, the expression of personal piety, and even the language of monumental inscriptions.

الفترة الانتقالية بين الاسرة 18 والاسرة 19، هي الفترة التي تبدأ بعصر الملك أي وتنتهي بعصر الملك سيتي الأول، وهي تمثل نهاية عصر العمارة المضطرب وبداية الاستقرار والازدهار في عصر الرعامسة. ان حكم الأفراد من غير ذوي الدم الملكي، أي - حورمحب، ورمسيس الأول، مهد طريقا لخلافة أسرة قوية بدأت بالملك سيتي الأول، عدد محدود من المنشآت الضخم خلال العصور القصيرة لكل من أي ورمسيس الأول يمكن تمايزها عن التوسع في الانشآت في الكرنك خلال عصر حورمحب وبرنامج البناء الرائع للملك سيتي الأول في ربوع مصر. ان السياسة الخارجية في سوريا وفلسطين والنوبة في عهد سيتي الأول اعادة تدعيم هيمنة الإمبراطورية المصرية علي تلك المناطق، والصراعات الجيوسياسية الكبيرة التي سيطر عليها ظهور الإمبراطورية الحيثية. في المجال الثقافي، الفترة الانتقالية بين الاسرة 18 والاسرة 19 عكست التغييرات الثورية التي سنها اخناتون، على الرغم من آثار تلك الفترة ظلت واضحة في التمثيل الفني، والتعبير عن التقوى الشخصية، وحتى لغة الاثار المنقوشة.

The death of Akhenaten, after an eventful 17 year rule, provides one starting point for the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties, while the reigns of Neferneferuaten, Semenkhekara, and Tutankhamen create a coda to the Amarna Period. One of the clearest historical markers of change in the late 18th Dynasty—the return to the worship of Amun and move away from Atenism and Akhetaten—appears to begin already with Neferneferuaten, as indicated by a graffito of Pawah in the tomb of Paury in Thebes (IT 139; Gardiner 1928; Gabolde 1998: 161-162). For the scope of the present article, the transition of the 18th to the 19th Dynasty consists of the 30 years that encompass the reigns of Aye, Horemheb, Ramesses I, and Sety I.

Ancient Egyptian divisions of this time period differ from modern chronologies, since the Ramesside king lists omit the reigns between Amenhotep III and Horemheb (Redford 1986: 19-20). An ostrakon from Deir el-Medina juxtaposes the names of Mentuhotep II and Horemheb, suggesting that both were viewed as dynastic founders (Philips 1977; McDowell 1992: 98). Part of the “rewriting” of history was the assigning—probably during the reign of Sety I—of the years of the reigns of Akhenaten through Aye to Horemheb (Redford 1986: 189).

Political History and Chronology: Aye

Aye assumed the throne at an advanced age, probably near his seventieth year, and ruled for four years (Schaden 1977; Vandersleyen 1995: 478-484). An active member of the Amarna administration, he had a long and varied career prior to becoming pharaoh; his most important offices included “fan-bearer on the right of the king,” “master of horses of his Majesty” (i.e., commander of the chariotry), “true royal scribe,” and “god’s father” (Schaden 1977: 56-66). The final title indicates that Aye was a royal adviser and may have played a role in the education of the crown prince (Habachi 1977). Aye’s parents are not definitely known, but Yuya and Tuya, the parents of queen Tiy, are likely candidates (Schaden 1977: 6-10; van Dijk 1996: 32-33), a possibility reinforced by Aye’s

association with the area of Akhmim. Aye’s wife Tiy shared a close relationship to the royal family as “nurse of Neferneferuaten Nefertiti” (Schaden 1977: 81-85; Vandersleyen 1995: 479; van Dijk 1997: 39-41); although some have interpreted Aye’s “god’s father” title to indicate his parentage of Nefertiti, evidence is not conclusive (Dodson 2009: 97-100). During the reign of Akhenaten, Aye commissioned the construction of Tomb 25 at Amarna (Davies 1908).

After the death of Akhenaten, Aye served as vizier under Tutankhamen, appearing in an unusually close relationship with the young pharaoh (Gabolde 1987: 56-59; Ockinga 1997: 60-61, pls. 35-39; Davis 2001: 127-129); Aye’s vizierial title may have placed him in more direct competition with Horemheb (Kawai 2010: 265-269). In the burial chamber of Tutankhamen’s tomb, Aye appears in the role of the *sem*-priest who conducts the funerary rites for the deceased pharaoh (fig. 1). The reason for the juxtaposition of the names of Aye and Tutankhamen’s widow, Ankhesenamun, on a ring bezel is unknown, since Aye’s queen was his wife Tiy (Newberry 1932: 50).

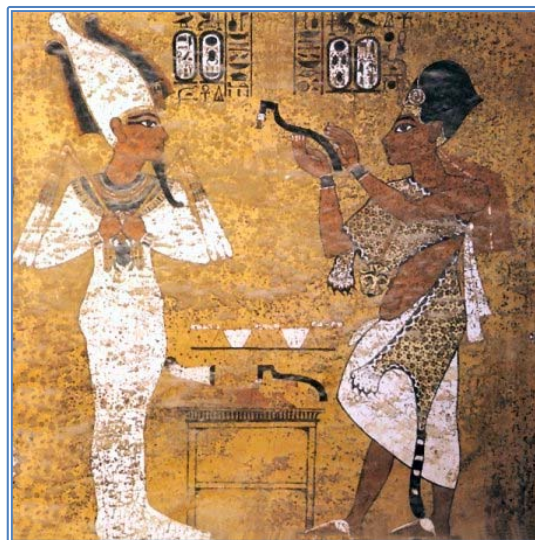


Figure 1. Aye as a *sem*-priest performing the Opening of the Mouth ceremony for Tutankhamen, from the tomb of Tutankhamen, KV 62.

The titulary Aye assumed upon his accession associated the aging courtier with the reigns of his predecessor and the earlier Amarna pharaohs. His prenomen, Kheperkheperura, is similar to those of Akhenaten (Neferkheperura) and Tutankhamen (Nebkheperura). His birth name, Aye, naturally became his nomen, but he also included his title “god’s father” within his cartouche (fig. 2), an unusual choice (Schaden 1977: 217-222; Leprohon 2010: 34-35). In his Horus name, “Victorious bull, scintillating of appearances,” Aye references the Two Ladies name of Amenhotep III (Leprohon 2010: 34).



Figure 2. Block with the *nomen* and *prenomen* of Aye. UC 14381.

Virtually no historical events can be attributed to Aye’s reign, although Horemheb may have been fighting a battle against the Hittites near Kadesh when Tutankhamen died and shortly before Aye was crowned pharaoh (Murnane 1990: 30-31). Aye’s *Nepty*/Two Ladies name “great of power, who subdues the Asiatics” may be linked to his foreign policy aspirations. Around the time of Aye’s coronation, the infamous “Dakhamunzu affair” may have occurred, if it is indeed Ankhnesenamun who writes to the Hittite king Suppiluliuma to request a son for her to marry since she is opposed to marrying one of her “servants” (perhaps even a reference to Aye; Bryce 2003: 187-198; Freu 2004; Dodson 2009: 89-94).

Aye’s most well-known construction was a rock-cut temple dedicated to Min of Akhmim (Kuhlmann 1979, 2007); a lengthy inscription describes the pious acts of Aye in honor of the gods of Akhmim (Gabolde *fc.*). Aye also carried out building activities at Abydos and Memphis (Dodson 2009: 104). In Thebes, Aye continued the decoration of a temple called “Nebkheperura in Thebes” (Gabolde and Gabolde 1989: 139-144; Johnson 1992: 42-47) and began construction on a “mortuary temple” immediately north of Medinet Habu, which was entirely usurped by Horemheb (*PM* II: 457-460); a mud-brick palace structure may represent the first time this architectural form appears in association with a west-bank royal memorial temple (Schaden 1977: 223-224).

A tomb in the western branch of the Valley of the Kings, (KV/)WV 23 was completed for the burial of Aye (Schaden 1984). The decoration of the burial chamber includes a syncopated First Hour of *The Book of Amduat*, similar to that in the tomb of Tutankhamen, and a scene of fowling and hippopotamus hunting in the marshes, an unusual motif within royal tomb decoration (Schaden 2000). A *damnatio memoriae*, probably carried out during the reign of Horemheb, removed nearly all of the cartouches and parts of the figures of Aye and Tiy in (KV/)WV 23 (Wilkinson 2011); similarly, Horemheb erased Aye’s names from other monuments and/or dismantled his predecessor’s constructions (Schaden 1984: 60-61). Prior to his death, Aye may have appointed a family member (possibly son or grandson) and military commander Nakhtmin as heir to the throne (van Dijk 1996: 33; Ockinga 1997: 54-61), a plan that either did not come to fruition or was thwarted by Horemheb (Kawai 2010: 286-288).

Horemheb

Horemheb ruled as king for approximately 15 years (van Dijk 2008), although a reign closer to three decades has also been proposed (Vandersleyen 1995: 487-488; Dodson 2009: 129-132). The year 59 in the tomb inscription of Mose (reign of Ramesses II) assigns to Horemheb the years of the reigns of Akhenaten through Aye (Gardiner 1905: 52). Horemheb’s pre-royal career is attested in his

Memphite tomb (Martin 1989) and the Coronation Inscription, known primarily from the back of a dyad of Horemheb and Mutnodjmet (Turin 1379; Gardiner 1953). During the reign of Tutankhamen, Horemheb served as chief general of the army (Gnirs 1996: 44-51), while evidence of a military office for Horemheb during the reign of Akhenaten lacks confirmation. Some have suggested an equation between Horemheb and the attested Amarna official Paatenemheb (Hari 1965: 29-36; Aldred 1975: 72), but no evidence confirms this identification (Dodson 2009: 109).

Earlier reconstructions of the late 18th Dynasty characterized Horemheb's accession as a military takeover (Helck 1964), but more recent work has rejected this view (Spalinger 2005: 169-184). Horemheb's Coronation Inscription emphasizes royal and divine recognition of his administrative abilities rather than his military achievements (Gardiner 1953; Murnane 1995: 189-191). The Coronation Inscription further describes Horemheb's role as advisor for Tutankhamen and his effectiveness in aiding the king during the difficult restoration. Horemheb's titles within his Memphite tomb coincide with his role as heir apparent, including variations on "deputy of his Majesty in the entire land" (Martin 1989: 162-164; Thiem 2000: 275-279). The Coronation Inscription credits Horus of Hutnesu (probably Horemheb's home-city) with establishing Horemheb upon the throne. Whether Horemheb actually was appointed heir under Tutankhamen (van Dijk 1997: 36) or whether the Coronation Inscription is propagandistic (Kawai 2010: 270) remains a topic of debate.

The conclusion of the Coronation Inscription and the Karnak Edict of Horemheb describe the king's efforts to restore Egypt after the chaos (real and perceived) of Akhenaten's reign; the usurpation of Tutankhamen's Restoration Stela may be part of this program as well (Gabolde 1987). The ideology of restoration is further embedded in Horemheb's Horus name "Victorious Bull, who is clever of plans" (Leprohon 2010: 35). Horemheb's plans for the restoration of Egypt are detailed in the

Karnak Edict and included the eradication of corrupt practices by civil and military authorities (Kruuchten 1981).

As king, Horemheb took the prenomen Djeserkheperura. His wife and queen Mutnodjmet may have been related to Nefertiti, although this connection is uncertain (Vandersleyen 1995: 485). After Horemheb became pharaoh, the reliefs in his Memphite tomb were altered to reflect his new status, adding a royal uraeus to his brow. Few historical events are documented during his reign. Some military conflict with the Hittites may have occurred around year 10 of Horemheb's reign, although such is only attested in Hittite sources (Bryce 2005: 221-222); a peace treaty may have been concluded with the Hittites after this campaign (Murnane 1990: 37-38; Devecchi and Miller 2011). Horemheb's battle reliefs showing conflict in Nubia are most likely a recasting of events that occurred during the reign of Tutankhamen (Darnell and Manassa 2007: 121-124).

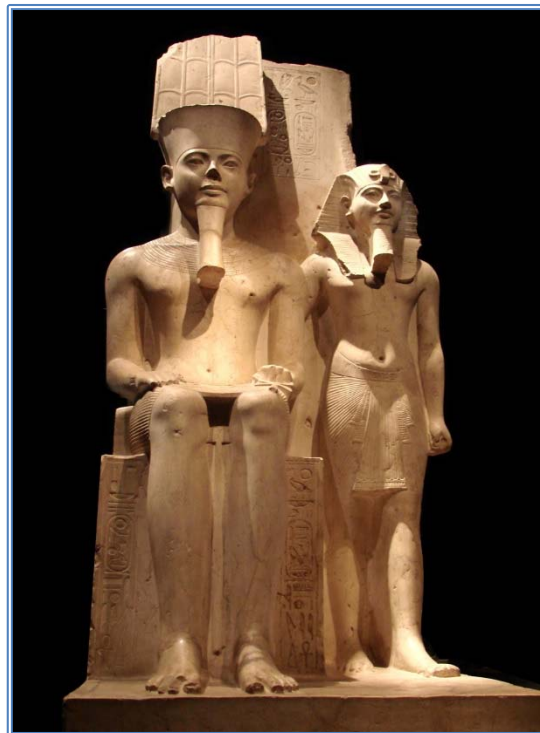


Figure 3. Group statue of Amun and Horemheb. Turin Museo Egizio Cat. 0768.

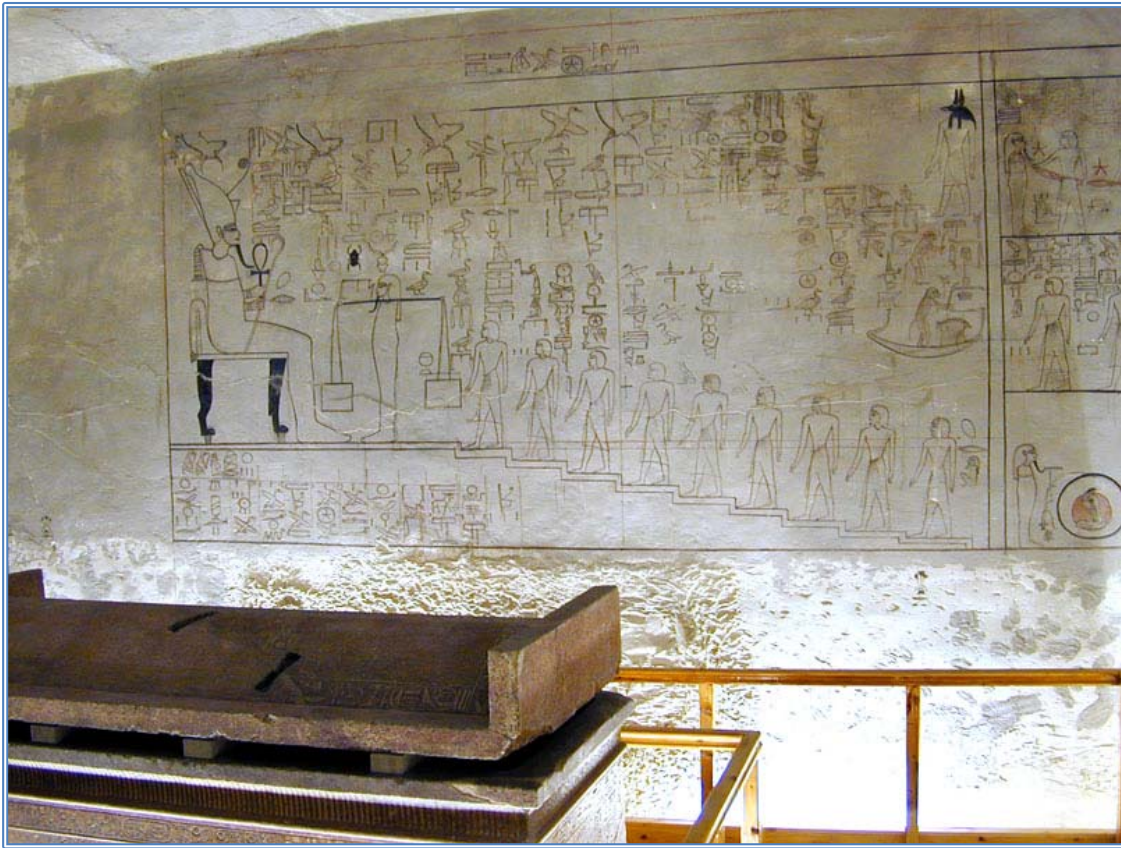


Figure 4. Tomb of Horemheb, KV 57. Depiction of the Judgment Hall from the *Book of Gates*.

Horemheb's monuments are spread throughout Egypt, although the focus of his activity appears to have been the temple of Amun at Karnak (fig. 3). In the north, Horemheb constructed a temple for the god Seth at Avaris (Bietak 1990), contributed to the temple of Ptah at Memphis, and completed work in Heliopolis (Dodson 2009: 123). At Karnak Temple, Horemheb ordered the construction of the second and tenth pylons and modified the ninth pylon (begun by Amunhotep III; Azim 1982); *talatat* blocks from the Aten temples were used in the pylons along the expanded north-south axis. Horemheb also dismantled the festival court of Amenhotep II, building a new structure between the ninth and tenth pylons (Carlotti 2005). Horemheb's Two Ladies name "The one great of marvels in Karnak" emphasizes the role of that temple in his construction program (Leprohon 2010: 35-36). At Luxor Temple, Horemheb usurped the decoration of

Tutankhamen in the Colonnade Hall (Epigraphic Survey 1994); on the west bank, Horemheb usurped the mortuary temple begun by Aye. Horemheb's other monuments include a small rock-cut speos at Gebel el-Silsila (Thiem 2000) and a temple for Amun and Thoth at Gebel Adda (*PM VII*: 119-121).

Horemheb may have restarted the work of the crew at Deir el-Medina (McDowell 1992: 98), who subsequently constructed KV 57 for the king (fig. 4). KV 57 is built as a series of corridors and rooms proceeding along an off-set axis into the cliffs, abandoning the angled plan of previous royal 18th Dynasty tombs. Although unfinished, Horemheb's tomb initiates the tradition of relief carving in royal tombs, in contrast to the earlier painted plaster decoration. The pillared burial chamber in KV 57 has the first example of entire hours from *The Book of Gates* (Hornung 1971).

Ramesses I

The highest attested regnal date for Ramesses I is Year 2, second month of *peret*, day 20 (Vandersleyen 1995: 494), and it is likely that the king ruled for less than two full years. Two scribal statues at Karnak of a general and vizier Paramessu, who is to be identified with the future Ramesses I, names his father, the troop commander Sety (Cruz-Urbe 1978). Ramesses I thus comes from a non-royal family, which, based on other sources, probably originated in the eastern Delta. The veneration of the Ramesside lineage on the 400 Year Stela may refer to Sety I and Ramesses I (Polz 1986: 163-164; Brand 2000: 336-340) or to more remote ancestors (Stadelmann 1965; Fisher 2001: 6-9). Whatever interpretation is adopted, the 400 Year Stela demonstrates family pride on the part of the Ramesside line that is linked with the worship of Seth (Redford 1986: 190-191).

Prior to becoming pharaoh, Ramesses I held high military, civil, and religious offices, including “general of the lord of the two lands,” “overseer of horses,” “vizier,” “overseer of priests of all the gods,” and “crown prince in the entire land” (Miller 1986: 9-11; Polz 1986: 161-164; Murnane 1995: 192-196); if Paramessu is identical to the eponymous individual on the 400 Year Stela, he was also the commander of the fortress of Sile, a significant border outpost (Morris 2005: 289-291). A scene in the Memphite tomb of Horemheb may depict Horemheb, as deputy of Tutankhamen, awarding Paramessu with the gold of honor (Martin 1989: 54-56), although the scene may instead depict Aye awarding Horemheb (Binder 2008: 114-115); a fragmentary miniature obelisk juxtaposes the names of Horemheb and Ramesses I (Aldred 1968: 100-102), although no evidence for a coregency is forthcoming.

Upon his coronation, Ramesses I took a prenomen, Menpehtyra, that may be an allusion to the prenomen of Ahmose, thus linking the new 19th Dynasty with the founding of the preceding dynasty (Leprohon 2013: 108). Construction during Ramesses I’s short reign is limited (Kitchen 1993a: 1-5, 1993b: 1-9), but included further endowments at the temple of Buhen (Kitchen 1990: 19). Foreign

policy during Ramesses I’s reign is equally small in scale: the future Sety I records that he fought battles in the “lands of the Fenekhu” during his father’s reign.

Ramesses I was buried in the uncompleted tomb KV 16, the architecture of which consisted primarily of two stairways, one with two unfinished niches, with a sloping corridor in between, and a burial chamber at the base of the stairway, without additional rooms (Reeves and Wilkinson 1996: 134-135). The burial chamber was painted with a gray-blue background, as in the tomb of Horemheb. Within the decoration, the king interacts with various divinities, including the “souls of Pe” and “souls of Nekhen”; part of *The Book of Gates* form the remainder of the tomb’s decorative scheme.

Sety I

Sety I’s 11 year reign is characterized by an energetic program of monument building and an active foreign policy; earlier claims of a longer reign for Sety I are not supported by ancient sources (Brand 2000: 305-309). The son of Ramesses I and Sitra (also of non-royal birth), Sety I commemorated his family ancestry and the rule of his father in a small chapel at Abydos (Winlock 1937; Schott 1964). Near the end of Sety I’s reign, the king may have appointed his son Ramesses II as regent, although the evidence is highly ambiguous (Brand 2000: 312-332). The reign of Sety I witnessed the last major restorations of Amarna depredations to earlier Egyptian monuments, and in art, theology, and political matters represents the true beginning of the Ramesside Period.

The accession date of Sety I may be the third month of *shemu*, day 24 (Brand 2000: 301-302). Sety I was the first pharaoh since Tutankhamen to inherit the Pharaonic office from his father; he emphasized the legitimacy of the new royal line through monuments such as the “King’s List” at Abydos, displaying—through careful editing out of the Second Intermediate Period, Hatshepsut, and the Amarna pharaohs—a direct line of legitimate rulership from Menes to Sety I. Sety I modeled his prenomen, Menmaatira, after that of his

father, and the *Nebty* name emphasized his reign as a time of “renaissance” (Masquelier-Loorius 2013: 31-35).

During his first year on the throne, Sety I fought a campaign against the Shasu, who were harassing Egyptian interests along the “Ways of Horus,” the route linking Egypt with the Levant via the Sinai Peninsula. In Palestine, the Egyptian army engaged in another war against cities in the southern Levant, including Yenoam and Beth Shan (Murnane 1990: 40-50; Hasel 1998: 119-151; Spalinger 2005: 188-195). The battle reliefs of Sety I on the northern and eastern walls of the Hypostyle Hall at Karnak

Temple provide extensive evidence for most of the earlier and later campaigns of the king (fig. 5 and 6; Spalinger 2011: 38-46). Among the later campaigns were the conquest of Amurru and Kadesh and a battle against Hittite forces at an unspecified location (Murnane 1990: 51-65; Spalinger 2005: 195-197). The Karnak battle reliefs also record a small campaign against the Libyans, with virtually no details of the conflict surviving (Murnane 1990: 99-100). In the south, probably in his fourth regnal year, Sety I fought a battle against the land of Irem, most likely located southwest of Lower Nubia (Darnell 2011).



Figure 5. Battle reliefs of Sety I at Karnak.

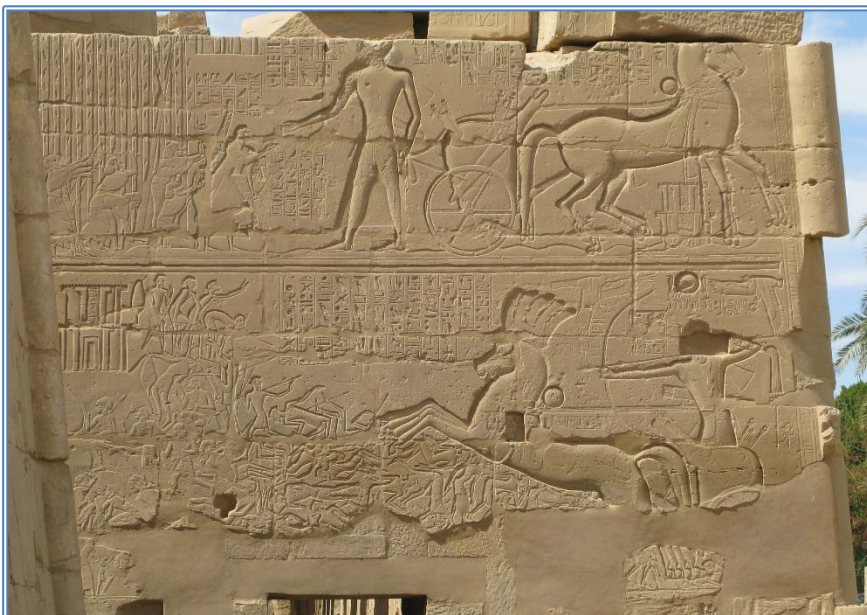


Figure 6. Battle reliefs of Sety I at Karnak.

Sety I commissioned an impressive number of monuments at major centers throughout Egypt (Brand 2000), and restored—in either primary or secondary form—many temple reliefs (Brand 1999). In the Delta, Sety I founded the Ramesside capital at Pi-Ramesse (Qantir) and added to the temple of Seth at Avaris (Bietak and Forstner-Müller 2011). At Memphis and Heliopolis, Sety I erected several temples, along with a series of obelisks at the latter site (Brand 2000: 133-150). At Abydos, the temple of Sety I, dedicated to Osiris and other national divinities, along with the adjoining Cenotaph are a triumphant ensemble of Ramesside art and architecture (fig. 7). In Thebes, Sety I began construction and decoration of the Great Hypostyle Hall of Karnak Temple (Brand 2000: 192-219), while on the west bank, he situated his “mortuary temple” at the northern portion of the western necropolis, near the mouth of the Valley of the Kings (Brand 2000: 228-249).



Figure 7. Relief from the temple of Sety I at Abydos.

Sety I also commissioned monuments in Nubia, although primarily stelae survive to attest to his constructions (Masquellier-Loorius 2013: 83-102). Financing for Sety I’s building program came from increased exploitation of Eastern Desert gold mines, and an inscription at the Kanais Temple (within the Wadi Mia)

demonstrates the king’s concern for royal workmen who supply the precious metals for the temple building activities at Abydos (Kitchen 1993a: 56-60, 1993b: 60-62); a lengthy inscription at Nauri further demonstrates Sety I’s commitment to a corruption-free, efficient administration and economic structure for his temple foundation at Abydos (Kitchen 1993a: 38-50, 1993b: 48-55).

The monuments of Sety I mark a high point in Ramesside artistic productions, revealing great care and a highly developed sense of line and proportion. Sety I dedicates much of Egypt’s resources to the cults of divinities throughout Egypt, with particular emphasis on Abydos and the temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak. Sety I may further emphasize his piety towards the gods in his peculiar use of a bowing posture within relief decoration (Vandersleyen 1995: 507). The complete restoration of cults to their pre-Amarna status, and further enhancements thereof, signal Sety I’s reign as the end of the transitional period of the end of the 18th Dynasty and beginning of the 19th Dynasty.

The tomb of Sety I in the Valley of the Kings (KV 17) is the most splendidly decorated monument in the necropolis (Hornung 1991). The ground-plan of the tomb demonstrates the fullest development of the jogged-axis tomb, with two sloping passages, “well shaft,” a pillared-hall (with side chamber)—here the offset of the axis occurs—and additional sloping passageway leading to an antechamber, and finally the vaulted burial chamber with several side rooms and descending passage into the underlying shale. Continuing the innovation begun by Horemheb, the entire tomb was decorated in painted raised relief decoration, most of which was completed by the time of Sety I’s death shortly after the beginning of his 12th regnal year. The decoration of KV 17 includes the *Litany of Ra*, *The Book of Amduat*, *The Book of Gates*, *The Book of the Heavenly Cow*, and—for the first time in a royal tomb—an astronomical ceiling. The anthropoid calcite sarcophagus contains a complete copy of *The Book of Gates*, whose hieroglyphs and images were originally inlaid with blue frit.

Social and Cultural History

The cultural upheavals of the Amarna Period segue into a vibrant reassertion of traditional religious and cultural values of the pre-Amarna Period during the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties. This transitional period simultaneously lays the groundwork for distinctly new trends, including increasingly common expressions of “personal piety,” a new canon of literature (Moers 2010), and alterations in tomb decoration and burial assemblages, all of which help set the stage for the “cultural diglossia” of the Ramesside age (Loprieno 1996: 521-524). Egyptian solar religion continues to develop according to its late 18th Dynasty trajectory, with greater emphasis on the solar deity who “made himself into millions,” thus asserting his uniqueness, distance, and omnipotence (Assmann 1995). The developed New Kingdom concept of the solar ruler of the post-Amarna Period is perhaps best expressed in the stela of Sety I for Ramesses I at Abydos and the longer, more elaborate Dedicatory Inscription of Ramesses II for Sety I (Spalinger 2009). The late 18th Dynasty also witnesses a greater expression of “personal piety”; although that phenomenon does not have its origins in the post-Amarna Period (Luiselli 2011), the intimate relationship with a deity as expressed by “putting god in one’s heart” developed during this transitional period (Assmann 2002: 229-231).

Changes in burial practices occur during the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties. At Memphis, late 18th and early 19th Dynasty tombs have pylons and columned halls, resembling small temples in their ground-plan (Snape 2011: 215-220). At Thebes, the “three-leveled” tomb develops, with a small pyramid (upper level) atop a rock-cut tomb with a courtyard, at times with a pylon entrance (central level), and burial chambers (lower level; Kampp 1996; Kampp-Seyfried 2003). The architecture and the tomb decoration emphasize a solar afterlife in conjunction with an Osirian existence after death. In the early 19th Dynasty, the typical biographical scenes or images of the king that dominated 18th Dynasty tomb decoration are supplemented or replaced by images of the deceased interacting with

deities and excerpts from *The Book of the Dead*, which, together with the architectural transformations, demonstrate a “sacralization” of the tomb (Assmann 2003). Self-presentation of the Ramesside Period can also include other media, such as stelae and statues erected in temple contexts (Frood 2007: 6-8, 20-23). Within the burial assemblage, mummy masks occur alongside mummy boards, which together with shabtis can depict the deceased in white-pleated kilts or dresses, replacing earlier mummiform styles (Ikram and Dodson 1998: 215-216).

Significance and Main Phenomena

The end of the 18th Dynasty and beginning of the 19th Dynasty is one of the most significant transitional periods in Egyptian history, a time characterized by restoration and stabilization of the political and social systems of the Pharaonic state. While the reigns of Horemheb, Rameses I, and Sety I negated the revolutionary changes that Akhenaten enacted, traces of the “Amarna interlude” remain in artistic representation (Hofmann 2004), the expression of personal piety (Luiselli 2011), and even the language of monumental inscriptions (Junge 2001: 19). The agents of these transformative processes were not descendants of the 18th Dynasty royal family, but rather a series of energetic civil and military officials.

Akhetaten was abandoned during the reign of Tutankhamen, although the city may have had limited activity through the reign of Horemheb (Hari 1984-1985), and Memphis resumed its identity as an administrative capital that complemented the Upper Egyptian center at Thebes. By the end of the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties, Pi-Ramesse in the eastern Delta became the principal royal city. Horemheb’s constructions at the former Hyksos capital of Avaris and probable location of the port city of Perunefer presage the later Ramesside focus in the region.

Aye may have formalized the role of the crown prince in royal ritual, a position that rose to prominence during the Ramesside Period (Gnirs 1996: 98); the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties began the practice of

appointing an heir apparent during the lifetime of the reigning king (Helck 1981: 214-125). After the appointment of three kings of non-royal birth, the reign of Sety I marks the return of a strong dynastic tradition, and Horemheb may have chosen his military colleague Paramessu to be the future Ramesses I due to the existence of a thriving line of descendants (Murnane 1995: 192).

Foreign policy during the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties coincides with the shift in the balance of power to the northeast, with the Hittites replacing Mitanni as Egypt's chief rival in Syria-Palestine. Sety I achieved victories in Syria-Palestine, in stark contrast to the defeats at Kadesh late in the reign of Akhenaten and again under

Tutankhamen. Egyptian-Hittite conflict would define the foreign policy for much of the 19th Dynasty. Nubian policy appears to have remained relatively unchanged during this period: small-scale campaigns fought occasionally against Nubian rebels and continued temple building activity throughout Lower Nubia, setting the stage for Ramesses II's extensive Nubian constructions. Conflict along Egypt's western border under Sety I may have precipitated the fortresses constructed during the reign of Ramesses II and also foreshadowed the Libyan Sea Peoples invasion early in Merenptah's reign and the two Libyan incursions dated to the reign of Ramesses III.

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Overviews of the period include Brand (2008), van Dijk (2000), Dodson (2009), and Vandersleyen (1995). Most of the reigns of the kings during the transition between the 18th and 19th Dynasties have been the subject of lengthier studies: Aye (Schaden 1977), Horemheb (Hari 1965), and Sety I (Brand 2000; Masquelier-Loorius 2013); the two year reign of Ramesses I is most extensively covered in the translation and commentary volumes Kitchen (1993a and 1993b). Military events are covered in Murnane (1990 and 2005), and the social aspects in Gnirs (1996).

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- Figure 1. Aye as a *sem*-priest performing the Opening of the Mouth ceremony for Tutankhamen, from the tomb of Tutankhamen, KV 62.
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ay#mediaviewer/File:Opening_of_the_Mouth - Tutankhamun and Aja.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ay#mediaviewer/File:Opening_of_the_Mouth_-_Tutankhamun_and_Aja.jpg))
- Figure 2. Block with the *nomen* and *prenomen* of Aye. Copyright: Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology, University College London. UC 14381.
- Figure 3. Group statue of Amun and Horemheb. Turin Museo Egizio Cat. 0768. Photograph by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike CC BY 2.0.
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horemheb#mediaviewer/File:Statue of Horemheb with Amun %28Museo Egizio%29.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horemheb#mediaviewer/File:Statue_of_Horemheb_with_Amun_%28Museo_Egizio%29.jpg))
- Figure 4. Tomb of Horemheb, KV 57. Depiction of the Judgment Hall from the *Book of Gates*. Photograph by Jean-Pierre Dalbéra. Licensed under Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike CC BY 2.0.
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horemheb#mediaviewer/File:La tombe de Horemheb %28KV 57%29 %28Vall%C3%A9e des Rois Th%C3%A8bes ouest%29 -6.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horemheb#mediaviewer/File:La_tombe_de_Horemheb_%28KV_57%29_%28Vall%C3%A9e_des_Rois_Th%C3%A8bes_ouest%29_-6.jpg))
- Figure 5. Battle reliefs of Sety I at Karnak. Photograph by Alberto Urcia.
- Figure 6. Battle reliefs of Sety I at Karnak. Photograph by the author.
- Figure 7. Relief from the temple of Sety I at Abydos. Photograph by the author.