

History of Egypt

CountryEgypt CapitalCairo LocationNorthern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Libya and the Gaza Strip, and the Red Sea north of Sudan, and includes the Asian Sinai Peninsula Size1,001,450 sq km Terrainvast desert plateau interrupted by Nile valley and delta Climatedesert; hot, dry summers with moderate winters LanguagesArabic (official), English and French widely understood by educated classes Nationalitynoun: Egyptian(s) adjective: Egyptian ReligionMuslim (mostly Sunni) 94%, Coptic Christian and other 6% CurrencyEgyptian pound (EGP) Exportscrude oil and petroleum products, cotton, textiles, metal products, chemicals

History of Ancient Egypt

The history of ancient Egypt begins around 3300 BC when Egypt became a unified Egyptian state. It survived as an independent state until about 343 BC, but archeological evidence indicates that a developed Egyptian society existed for a much longer period.

Egyptian chronology

Egyptian history is broken into several different periods according to the dynasty of the ruling pharaoh. The dating of events in Egyptian history is still a subject of research. The conservative dates are not supported by any reliable absolute date for a span of about three millennia. The following is the list according to conventional Egyptian chronology.

- * Predynastic Period (Prior to 3100 BC)
- * Protodynastic Period (Approximately 3100 - 3000 BC)
- * Early Dynastic Period (1st–2nd Dynasties)
- * Old Kingdom (3rd–6th Dynasties)
- * First Intermediate Period (7th–11th Dynasties)
- * Middle Kingdom (12th–13th Dynasties)
- * Second Intermediate Period (14th–17th Dynasties)
- * New Kingdom (18th–20th Dynasties)
- * Third Intermediate Period (21st–25th Dynasties) (also known as the Libyan Period)
- * Late Period (26th–31st Dynasties)

Protodynastic Period

Along the Nile, in the 10th millennium BC, a grain-grinding culture using the earliest type of sickle blades had become replaced by another culture of hunters, fishers and gathering peoples using stone tools. Climate changes and/or overgrazing around 8000 BC began to desiccate the pastoral lands of Egypt, eventually forming the Sahara (c. 2500 BC). Early tribes naturally migrated to the Nile river where they developed a settled agricultural economy and more centralized society (see Nile: History). Evidence of pastoralism and cultivation of cereals in the East Sahara dates to the 7th millennium BC.

Ongoing excavation in Egypt continually reshapes scholars' views about the origins of Egyptian civilization. In the late 20th century archaeologists discovered evidence of human habitation before 8000 BC in an area in the southwestern corner of Egypt, near the border with Sudan. Nomadic peoples may have been attracted to this southern area of Egypt because of the hospitable climate and environment. Now exceptionally dry, that area once had grassy plains and temporary lakes that resulted from seasonal rains. The people who settled there must have realized the benefits of a more sedentary life. Scientific analysis of the remains of their culture indicates that by 6000 BC they were herding cattle and constructing large buildings.

The descendants of these people may well have begun Egyptian civilization in the Nile Valley. A recent genetic study linked the maternal lineage of a traditional population from Upper Egypt to Eastern Africa. A separate study further narrows the genetic lineage to Northeast Africa; reveals also that modern day Egyptians "reflect a mixture of European, Middle Eastern, and African".

Early Dynastic Period

The origins of the unified Egyptian state are unclear, and there are no contemporary sources, and later sources are

unclear and contradictory. Around 3100 BC a king unified the whole of the Nile Valley between the Delta and the First Cataract at Aswan, with the centre of power in Memphis. Traditionally (according to Manetho), this king was known as Menes. This king may be identified as one the individuals known to historians as Narmer or Hor-Aha, or another person entirely.

The unified state seems to have arrived at the same time as the development of writing, the start of large scale construction and the venturing out from the Nile Valley to trade (or perhaps campaign) in Nubia and Syria/Palestine.

Old Kingdom

Egyptologists consider the Old Kingdom as beginning with the Third Dynasty, and around the time of the Fourth Dynasty, the art of embalming began.

Embalming, mummification and preservation

A cautionary note about embalming, mummification and preservation: To embalm and to mummify essentially mean the same thing. To embalm (from Latin in balsamum, meaning to "put into balsam," a mixture of aromatic resins) and the process of mummification are very similar in that corpses were anointed with ointments, oils, and resins. The word mummy comes from a misinterpretation of the process. Poorly embalmed bodies (from the Late Period) are often black and very brittle. It was believed these had been preserved by dipping them in bitumen, the Arabic word for bitumen being mumiya.

There are many modern techniques for preserving a body, however, these were not available to the ancient Egyptians (freezing, pickling etc). The only method they were aware of was drying the body out in the hot sand. This left the body looking most un-lifelike, and not a very suitable home for the Ka. It also wasn't a very reverent way to treat your Pharaoh. The answer came from the Nile.

The Nile floods every year. Without it Egypt would be no more than a desert with a river going through it. The flooding brought with it essential silt which made the land fertile. When the waters subsided, it left pools of water behind which dried out in the sun. Once the water had evaporated it left behind a white crystalline substance called natron. The most notable thing about this substance is that it is highly hygroscopic: it will draw and absorb moisture. During the Old Kingdom, Queen Hetepheres' internal organs were removed and placed in a solution of natron (about 3%).

When the box was opened it contained just sludge, which was apparently all that remained of the Queen. Early attempts at mummification were total failures. This was recognized by the embalmers, so they took to preserving the shape of the body. They did this by wrapping the body in resin soaked bandages. They became so good at this that one example from the Fifth Dynasty of a court musician called Waty, still holds details of warts, calluses, wrinkles and facial details.

The embalming process took 70 days.

Upper and Lower Egypt

A word about Upper and Lower Egypt. Lower Egypt is to the north and is that part where the Nile Delta flows into the Mediterranean Sea and Upper Egypt is to the South from the Libyan Desert down to just past Abu Simbel. The reason for this apparent upside-down naming is that Egypt is the 'Gift of the Nile' and as such everything is measured in relation to it. The Nile enters Egypt at the top, winding its way down until exiting via the fertile delta into the Mediterranean Sea in Lower Egypt.

It was in this era that formerly independent ancient Egyptian states became known as nomes, ruled solely by the pharaoh. Subsequently the former rulers were forced to assume the role of governors or otherwise work in tax collection. Ancient Egyptians in this era emphatically believed that their pharaoh could assure the annual flooding of the Nile for their crops. They also perceived themselves as a specially selected people, "as the only true human beings on earth" ([3]). There is some evidence that around 2675 BC, Egypt started to import timber from Lebanon.

Pyramids

Several Egyptian pyramids were built and some abandoned before they were finished. Around 2575 BCE, Pharaoh Khufu (aka. Cheops) made his mark on the landscape. For him, the greatest and most famous pyramid of all was constructed, the Great Pyramid of Giza. When looking at the pyramid group on the Giza plateau, it does not seem to be the largest. This is because the tallest looking one was built on higher ground, but is 10 metres smaller.

One notable example is the Bent Pyramid—about halfway up it appears that the builders feared they would not be able to maintain the angle they were already building and decided to change it to a less steep angle. This resulted in an odd looking pyramid, whose top sloped in suddenly. The Pharaoh Khufu was also responsible for sending expeditions into Nubia for slaves and anything else of value. It is unlikely that these people would have been used for the building of the

monuments, at least not at first, as there would not have been enough of them. One popular and convincing theory is that the peasant farmers of Egypt built all of the temples and monuments during the floods. This is an attractive theory for many reasons.

When the Nile flooded, the people of Egypt would have had nowhere to live. The Nile floods up to the edge of the desert and would have covered all of the farming and living areas. If there was work to be had building monuments during the flooding season, then the peasant farmers would have had the chance to feed and house their family. Of course, all of this would have been paid out of the taxes the farmers would have paid during the harvest season, but that is the nature of government. This would also account for how the country had become, and stayed, so stable for several hundred years. Pyramid building continued for some time, in fact there are 80 known pyramid sites; although not all of them are still standing.

First Intermediate Period

This era includes the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties and into the First Intermediate Period. The Old Kingdom became weakened by famine and weak leadership. One theory holds that a sudden, unanticipated, catastrophic reduction in the Nile floods over two or three decades, caused by a global climatic cooling, reduced the amount of rainfall in Egypt, Ethiopia, and East Africa, contributing to the great famine and subsequent downfall of the Old Kingdom.

The last pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty was Pepi II, who was believed to have reigned for 94 years, longer than any monarch in history. He was 6 when he ascended the throne and 100 years old when he died. The latter years of his reign were marked by inefficiency because of Pepi's advanced age. When he died the Old Kingdom collapsed. A dark time, marked by unrest, followed. The Union of the Two Kingdoms fell apart and regional leaders had to cope with the famine.

Around 2160 BCE, a new line of pharaohs tried to reunite Lower Egypt from their capital in Herakleopolis Magna. In the meantime, however, a rival line based in Thebes was reuniting Upper Egypt, and a clash between the two rival dynasties was inevitable.

The pharaohs from Herakleopolis descended from a pharaoh named Akhtoy and the first four pharaohs from Thebes were named Inyotef or Antef.

Middle Kingdom

Around 2055 BCE, Mentuhotep II from Thebes ended this period of unrest and united the country again. He installed a new administration and started a royal scale building programme. There is also good evidence for military campaigns against foreign countries.

Amenemhat I moved the capital to North Egypt (Lower Egypt). His son, Senusret I, co-reigned with him until Amenemhat was assassinated. Senusret I was able to take control immediately without the country degenerating into unrest again. Senusret I continued to wage war on Nubia.

In 1878 BCE, the Pharaoh Senusret III became king. He continued the military campaigns in Nubia and was the first to try to extend Egypt's power into Syria. Later, Amenemhat III came to power. He is regarded as being the greatest monarch of the Middle Kingdom and did much to benefit Egypt. He ruled for 45 years. During the Middle Kingdom, the next phase in tomb design was the rock-cut tomb. The best examples of these can be seen in the Valley of the Kings. They still had grand temples built in more visible areas. Much of the greater activities done by the Twelfth Dynasty kings took place outside the valley of the Nile. As before, there were many expeditions into Nubia, Syria, and the Eastern Desert, searching for valuable minerals and timber. Also, trade was established with Minoan Crete.

The Thirteenth Dynasty is often considered part of the Middle Kingdom, although the period seems to be a time of confusion and of migration into Egypt by a mysterious people known as the Hyksos, who took advantage of the political instabilities of the Nile Delta to take control of it and later extend their powers south. They brought with them the horse-drawn war chariot. It didn't take the Egyptians long to realize the power of the war chariot and use it themselves. This breakdown of central control marks the beginning of the Second Intermediate Period.

Second Intermediate Period

New Kingdom

The Eighteenth Dynasty marks the beginning of the New Kingdom. Various pharaohs extended the control of Egypt further than ever before, retaking control of Nubia and extending power northwards into the Upper Euphrates, the lands of the Hittites, and Mitanni.

This was a time of great wealth and power for Egypt. By the time of Amenophis III (1417 BC–1379 BC), Egypt had

become so wealthy that he did nothing to further extend its powers and instead rested upon his throne gilded with Nubian gold. He was succeeded by his son Amenophis IV, who changed his name to Akhenaton. He moved the capital to a new city he built and called it Akhetaten. Here with his new wife Nefertiti, he concentrated on building his new religion and ignored the world outside of Egypt. This allowed various underground factions to build that were not happy with his new world. The new religion was something that had never happened before in Egypt. Previously, new gods came along and were absorbed into the culture, but no god was allowed to push out any old ones. Akhenaten, however, formed a monotheistic religion around Aten, the sun disc. Worship of all other gods was banned, and this move is what caused the majority of the internal unrest. The relationship between Akhenaten's introduction of monotheism, and the biblical character of Moses, who is located in Egypt at a similar (although not necessarily simultaneous) period, is both unclear and controversial.

A new culture of art was introduced during this time that was more naturalistic and a complete turnabout from the stylised frieze that had ruled Egyptian art for the last 1700 years. Concerning art and Akhenaton, an area of interest to many Egyptologists is the peculiarity of Akenatons' physical features. Many pharaohs are portrayed in a stylized manner however, Akenhaten is shown in paintings and carvings with unusually feminine features, specifically wide hips and elongated, delicate facial features. Some theories assume that the depiction is accurate and not stylized, suggesting that Akenhaten suffered from birth defects which were common among the royal families.

Towards the end of his 17-year reign, Akenhaten took a co-regent, Smenkhkare, who is sometimes considered to be his brother. Their co-reign lasted only 2 years. When Akhenaton died, worship of the old gods was revived. In truth, their worship had never ended, but had instead gone underground. Smenkhkare died after a few months of sole reign, and in his place was crowned a young boy. He was not ready for the pressure of ruling this great country, and the advisors that surrounded him made the decisions for him. His given name was Tutankhaton, but with the resurgence of Amun, he was re-named Tutankhamun. One of the most influential advisors was General Horemheb. Tutankhamun died while he was still a teenager and was succeeded by Ay, who probably married Tutankhamun's widow to strengthen his claim to the throne. It is possible that Horemheb made Ay a monarch to act as a transitional king until he was ready to take over. In any case, when Ay died, Horemheb became ruler, and a new period of positive rule began. He set about securing internal stability and re-establishing the prestige that the country had before the reign of Akhenaton.

Nineteenth Dynasty

The Nineteenth Dynasty was founded by Rameses I. He only reigned for a short time and was followed by Seti I (or Sethos I). Sethos I carried on the good work of Horemheb in restoring power, control, and respect to Egypt. He also was responsible for creating the fantastic temple at Abydos. Seti I and his son Rameses II are the only two pharaohs known to have been circumcised, although quite why they had this performed is somewhat of a mystery. Rameses II carried on his father's work and created many more splendid temples. Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote a poem about him called *Ozymandias*.

The time frame for the reign of Rameses II is often believed to have coincided with the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. There are no obvious records in Egyptian history of any of the events described in the Bible, nor any archaeological evidence. Indeed, even though there are records so detailed as to describe the escape of a pair of minor convicts from Egyptian territory, there is no such record for hundreds of thousands of Israelite slaves. Linguistic studies have drawn certain potential origins for elements of biblical history, although they do conflict substantially with the biblical accounts - for example records about the Sea Peoples may indicate that various Israelite tribes attacked Egypt during a certain period, although they also indicate that these tribes were allied with the Philistines rather than against them.

Rameses II was succeeded by his son Merneptah and then by Seti II. Rameses III was a pharaoh of the Twentieth Dynasty who, after a couple of battles, was followed by a number of short-lived reigns by pharaohs all called Rameses.

New Kingdom mummies

In this New Kingdom, coffins changed shape from the Middle Kingdom rectangle to the familiar mummy-shape with a head and rounded shoulders. At first these were decorated with carved or painted feathers, but later were painted with a representation of the deceased. They were also put together like Russian Matryoshka dolls in that a large outer coffin would contain a smaller one, which contained one that was almost moulded to the body. Each one was more elaborately decorated than the one larger than it.

It is from this time that most mummies have survived. The soft tissues like the brain and internal organs were removed. The cavities were washed and then packed with natron, and the body buried in a pile of natron. The intestines, lungs, liver and stomach were preserved separately and stored in Canopic jars protected by the Four sons of Horus. Such was the perceived power of these jars that even when the Twenty-First Dynasty started to return the organs to the body after preservation instead of using the jars, the jars continued to be included in the tombs.

Third Intermediate Period

After the death of Rameses XI, the High Priests of Amun at Thebes, in the person of Piankh, assumed control of Upper Egypt, ruling from Thebes, with the northern limit of his control ending at Al-Hibah. (The High Priest Herihor had died before Rameses XI, but also was an all-but-independent ruler in the latter days of the king's reign.) The country was once again split into two parts with the priesthood of Amun controlling Upper and Middle Egypt, and the kings, such as Smendes I, controlling the Delta from Tanis as the Twenty-First Dynasty. Their reign seems to be without any other distinction, and they were replaced without any apparent struggle by the Libyan kings of the Twenty-Second Dynasty.

Egypt has long had ties with Libya, and the first king of the new dynasty, Shoshenq I, was a Meshwesh Libyan, who served as the commander of the armies under the last ruler of the Twenty-First Dynasty, Psusennes II. He unified the country, putting control of the Amun clergy under his own son as the High Priest of Amun, a post that was previously a hereditary appointment. The scant and patchy nature of the written records from this period suggest that it was unsettled. There appear to have been many subversive groups, which eventually led to the creation of the Twenty-Third Dynasty, which ran concurrent with the latter part of the Twenty-Second Dynasty. After the withdrawal of Egypt from Nubia at the end of the New Kingdom, a native dynasty took control of Nubia. Under king Piye, the Nubian founder of Twenty-Fifth Dynasty, the Nubians pushed north in an effort to crush his Libyan opponents ruling in the Delta. He managed to attain power as far as Memphis. His opponent Tefnakhte ultimately submitted to him, but he was allowed to remain in power in Lower Egypt and founded the short-lived Twenty-Fourth Dynasty at Sais.

Memphis and the Delta region became the target of many attacks from the Assyrians, until Psammetichus managed to reunite Middle and Lower Egypt under his rule forming the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty and the start of the Late Period. Eventually he extended his control over the whole of Egypt in 656 BC and felt strong enough to sever all ties with Assyria, whereby Assyrian control lapsed. The Saite period, as the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty is also known, was a century of revived splendour for Egypt. During the reign of Apries, an army was sent to help the Libyans to eliminate the Greek colony of Cyrene. The disastrous defeat of this army brought about a civil war, which resulted in Apries being replaced by Amasis II. According to contemporary Greek records, Amasis was mostly concerned with Egyptian domestic affairs and the promotion of good relations with its neighbours. He died in 526 BC, and the next year Egypt fell under Persian power and the Persian king Cambyses II became the first king of the Twenty-Seventh Dynasty.

The Thirtieth Dynasty was established in 380 BC and lasted until 343 BC. This was the last native house to rule Egypt. The brief restoration of Persian rule is sometimes known as the Thirty-First Dynasty.

Open problems

There are several open problems concerning ancient Egyptian history. Conclusions on the origins of the Hyksos and their first leaders are disputed. It is unclear if the "Nubian Dark Age" really occurred in the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty of Egypt. There is question if the First Intermediate Period of Egypt really was a Dark Age. It is unknown why there were Minoan paintings in Avaris. The exact relationship between the Minoan civilization and the Egyptian civilization is debated. The Battle of Kadesh is ambiguous and who was its victor is open to debate.

There are several events concerning ancient Egyptian history that are questioned. The exact nature of the reign of Pharaoh Smendes I's is unknown. It is unknown if Egypt was split during his governance. The facts are obscure as to whether Ramesses II defended Egypt against the Sea People because they were invading, or if they were people fleeing to Egypt in the middle of a war. Data is either not available or not known as to if Ramesses III or Amenemhat I were assassinated. The exact causes concerning the disappearance of Nefertiti are unknown. It is debated if Necho II really sent out an expedition that sailed from the Red Sea around Africa back to the mouth of the Nile. The Tulli Papyrus is a controversial topic and it is debated if it comes from the reign of Thutmose III.

The events that Herodotus records of Egypt are suspicious to some scholars, and there is question on what he actually witnessed in Egypt. Exactly who Herodotus exchanged ideas with and had conversations with is debated. It is uncertain who Sonchis was, an Egyptian priest of Thebes, and why Plato wrote about Atlantis as described by this priest. It is questioned if Solon met Sonchis. It is unclear why Solon visited Egypt (if he really did).

History of Egypt under Achaemenid Persian domination

The period of history in which Achaemenid Persia ruled over Egypt is divided into three parts: the first Persian domination, an interval of independence, and the second Persian domination.

The last pharaoh of the Twenty-Sixth dynasty, Psammetichus III, was defeated by Cambyses II of Persia in the battle of Pelusium in the eastern Nile delta in 525 BCE, Egypt was then joined with Cyprus and Phoenicia in the sixth satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire. Thus began the first period of Persian domination over Egypt (also known as the Twenty-Seventh dynasty of Egypt), which ended around 402 BCE.

After an interval of independence, during which three indigenous dynasties reigned (the 28th, 29th, and 30th dynasty), Artaxerxes III (358–338 BCE) reconquered the Nile valley for a brief period (343–332 BCE). This is the second period of Persian domination in Egypt.

Cambyses led three unsuccessful military campaigns in Africa: against Carthage, the oases of the Libyan desert, and Nubia. He remained in Egypt until 522 BCE and died on the way back to Persia. The Greek and Jewish sources, especially Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus, present us a bleak portrait of Cambyses' rule, describing the king as mad, ungodly, and cruel. It is impossible unfortunately to compare these texts with Egyptian sources, as all unofficial documents appear doing their best to ignore Cambyses' existence. Herodotus may have drawn on an indigenous tradition that reflected the Egyptians' resentment, especially of the clergy, of Cambyses' decree (known from a Demotic text on the back of papyrus no. 215 in the Bibliothéque Nationale, Paris) curtailing royal grants made to Egyptian temples under Amasis.

In order to regain the support of the powerful priestly class, Darius I (522–486 BCE) revoked Cambyses' decree. Diodorus reported that Darius was the sixth and last lawmaker for Egypt; according to Demotic papyrus no. 215, in the third year of his reign he ordered his satrap in Egypt, Aryandes, to bring together wise men among the soldiers, priests, and scribes, in order to codify the legal system that had been in use until the year 44 of Amasis (c. 526 BCE). The laws were to be transcribed on papyrus in both Demotic and Aramaic, so that the satraps and their officials, mainly Persians and Babylonians, would have a legal guide in both the official language of the empire and the language of local administration. To facilitate commerce, Darius built a navigable waterway from the Nile to the Red Sea (from Bubastis [modern Zaqaq] through the Wadi Tumelat and the lakes Bohayrat al-Temsah and Bohayrat al-Morra); it was marked along the way by four great bilingual stelae, the so-called "canal stelae," inscribed in both hieroglyphics and cuneiform scripts.

In 1972 archeological excavations at Susa brought to light a stone statue of Darius I, standing and wearing a sumptuous Persian garment; it is inscribed in cuneiform (in Old Persian, Elamite, and Akkadian) and in hieroglyphics. This can be interpreted as a recognition of the role of Egypt in the Empire.

Shortly before 486 BCE, the year of Darius' death, there was a revolt of the type that had occurred under Aryandes, that was definitively subdued by Xerxes I (486–464 BCE) only in 484 BC. The province was subjected to harsh punishment for the revolt, and especially its satrap Achaemenes administered the country without regard for the opinion of his subjects.

A still more serious and extensive revolt took place in about 460 BCE under Artaxerxes I. It was led by the Libyan Inarus, son of Psammetichus (Thucydides 1.104), who asked for help from Athens; a fleet of 200 ships sailed up the Nile as far as the ancient citadel of Memphis, two thirds of which was occupied by the insurgents. Achaemenes was killed in the course of the battle of Papremis in the western Delta.

The second Persian domination

It is not known who served as satrap after Artaxerxes III, but under Darius III (336–330 BCE) there was Sabaces, who fought and died at Issus and was succeeded by Mazaces. Egyptians also fought at Issus, for example, the nobleman Somtutefnekhet of Heracleopolis, who described on the "Naples stele" how he escaped during the battle against the Greeks and how Arsaphes, the god of his city, protected him and allowed him to return home.

In 332 BCE Mazaces handed over the country to Alexander the Great without a fight. The Achaemenid empire had ended, and for a while Egypt was a satrapy in Alexander's empire. Later the Ptolemies and the Romans successively ruled the Nile valley.

History of Greek and Roman Egypt

The conquests of Alexander the Great brought Egypt within the orbit of the Greek world for the next 900 years. After 300 years of rule by the Macedonian Ptolemies, Egypt was incorporated into the Roman Empire in 30 BC, and was ruled first from Rome and then from Constantinople until the Persian and Arab conquests in AD 616 AD 639 respectively.

Ptolemaic Roman Empire

In 332 BC Alexander the Great, King of Macedon, conquered Egypt, with little resistance from the Persians. He was welcomed by the Egyptians as a deliverer. He visited Memphis, and went on pilgrimage to the oracle of Amun at the Oasis of Siwa. The oracle declared him to be the son of Amun. He conciliated the Egyptians by the respect which he showed for their religion, but he appointed Greeks to virtually all the senior posts in the country, and founded a new Greek city, Alexandria, to be the new capital. The wealth of Egypt could now be harnessed for Alexander's conquest of the Persian Empire. Early in 331 BC he was ready to depart, and led his forces away to Phoenicia.

After Alexander's death in 323 BC, his empire was divided up among his generals. Ptolemy son of Lagus, one of Alexander's closest companions, was appointed satrap of Egypt, and soon established himself as a ruler in his own right, although he did not take the title of king until 305 BC. As Ptolemy I Soter ("Saviour"), he founded the Ptolemaic dynasty, which was to rule Egypt for 300 years. All the male rulers of the dynasty took the name "Ptolemy", while princesses and queens preferred the names Cleopatra (Of Glorious Ancestry) and Berenice (the Macedonian form of Pherenike, the

Bringer of Victory). Because the Ptolemaic kings adopted the Egyptian custom of marrying their sisters, many of the kings ruled jointly with their spouses, who were also of the royal house. This custom made Ptolemaic politics confusingly incestuous, and the later Ptolemies were increasingly feeble. The only Ptolemaic Queens to officially rule on their own were Berenice III and Berenice IV. Cleopatra V did co-rule, but it was with another female, Berenice IV. Cleopatra VII officially co-ruled with Ptolemy XIII, Ptolemy XIV, and Ptolemy XV, but effectively, she ruled Egypt alone.

The early Ptolemies were wiser rulers than the Persians had been. They did not disturb the religion or customs of the Egyptians, and indeed built magnificent new temples for the Egyptian gods and soon adopted the outward display of the Pharaohs of old. During the reign of Ptolemies II and III thousands of Macedonian and Greek veterans were rewarded with grants of farm lands, and Greeks were planted in colonies and garrisons or settled themselves in the villages throughout the country. Upper Egypt, farthest from the centre of government, was less immediately affected, though Ptolemy I established the Greek colony of Ptolemais Hermiou to be its capital, but within a century Greek influence had spread through the country and intermarriage had produced a large Greco-Egyptian educated class. Nevertheless, the Greeks always remained a privileged minority in Ptolemaic Egypt. They lived under Greek law, received a Greek education, were tried in Greek courts, and were citizens of Greek cities, just as they had been in Greece. The Egyptians were rarely admitted to the higher levels of Greek culture, in which most Egyptians were not in any case interested.

Ptolemy I

The first part of Ptolemy I's reign was dominated by the wars between the various successor states to the empire of Alexander. His first object was to hold his position in Egypt securely, and secondly to increase his domain. Within a few years he had gained control of Libya, Coele-Syria (with Judea), and Cyprus. When Antigonos, ruler of Syria, tried to reunite Alexander's empire, Ptolemy joined the coalition against him. In 312 BC, allied with Seleucus, the ruler of Babylonia, he defeated Demetrius, the son of Antigonos, in the battle of Gaza.

In 311 BC a peace was concluded between the combatants, but in 309 BC war broke out again, and Ptolemy occupied Corinth and other parts of Greece, although he lost Cyprus after a sea-battle in 306 BC. Antigonos then tried to invade Egypt but Ptolemy held the frontier against him. When the coalition was renewed against Antigonos in 302 BC, Ptolemy joined it, and when Antigonos was defeated and killed at Ipsus in 301 BC Ptolemy secured Palestine in the resulting settlement. Thereafter Ptolemy tried to stay out of land wars, but he retook Cyprus in 295 BC.

Feeling the kingdom was now secure, Ptolemy abdicated in 285 BC in favour of one of his younger sons by Queen Berenice. He devoted his retirement to writing a history of the campaigns of Alexander, which is unfortunately lost but was the principal source for the later work of Arrian. Ptolemy I died in 283 BC at the age of 84. He left a stable and well-governed kingdom to his son.

Ptolemy II

Ptolemy II Philadelphus, who succeeded his father as King of Egypt in 283 BC, was a peaceable and cultured king, and no great warrior. He did not need to be, because his father had left Egypt strong and prosperous. Three years of campaigning at the start of his reign left Ptolemy the master of the eastern Mediterranean, controlling the Aegean islands and the coastal districts of Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia and Caria.

Ptolemy's first wife, Arsinoe I, daughter of Lysimachus, was the mother of his legitimate children. After her repudiation he followed Egyptian custom and married his sister, Arsinoe II, beginning a practice which, while pleasing to the Egyptian population, was to have serious consequences in later reigns. The material and literary splendour of the Alexandrian court was at its height under Ptolemy II. Callimachus, keeper of the Library of Alexandria, Theocritus and a host of other poets, glorified the Ptolemaic family. Ptolemy himself was eager to increase the library and to patronise scientific research. He spent lavishly on making Alexandria the economic, artistic and intellectual capital of the Greek world. It is to the academies and libraries of Alexandria that we owe the preservation of so much of the literary heritage of Ancient Greece.

Ptolemy III

Ptolemy III Euergetes ("the benefactor") succeeded his father in 246 BC. He abandoned his predecessors' policy of keeping out of the wars of the other Greek kingdoms, and plunged into a war with the Seleucids of Syria, when his sister, Queen Berenice, and her son were murdered in a dynastic dispute. Ptolemy marched triumphantly into the heart of the Seleucid realm, as far as at any rate as Babylonia, while his fleets in the Aegean made fresh conquests as far north as Thrace.

This victory marked the zenith of the Ptolemaic power. Seleucus II Callinicus kept his throne, but Egyptian fleets controlled most of the coasts of Asia Minor and Greece. After this triumph Ptolemy no longer engaged actively in war, although he supported the enemies of Macedon in Greek politics. His domestic policy differed from his father's in that he patronised the native Egyptian religion more liberally: he has left larger traces at any rate among the Egyptian monuments. In this his reign marks the gradual "Egyptianisation" of the Ptolemies.

The decline of the Ptolemies

In 221 BC Ptolemy III died and was succeeded by his son Ptolemy IV Philopater, a weak and corrupt king under whom the decline of the Ptolemaic kingdom began. His reign was inaugurated by the murder of his mother, and he was always under the influence of favourites, male and female, who controlled the government. Nevertheless his ministers were able to make serious preparations to meet the attacks of Antiochus III the Great on Coele-Syria, and the great Egyptian victory of Raphia in 217 BC secured the kingdom. A sign of the domestic weakness of his reign was rebellions by the native Egyptians. Philopator was devoted to orgiastic religions and to literature. He married his sister Arsinoe, but was ruled by his mistress Agathoclea.

Ptolemy V Epiphanes, son of Philopator and Arsinoe, was a child when he came to the throne, and a series of regents ran the kingdom. Antiochus III and Philip V of Macedon made a compact to seize the Ptolemaic possessions. Philip seized several islands and places in Caria and Thrace, while the battle of Panium in 198 BC transferred Coele-Syria from Egypt to Syria. After this defeat Egypt formed an alliance with the rising power in the Mediterranean, Rome. Once he reached adulthood Epiphanes became a tyrant, before his early death in 180 BC. He was succeeded by his infant son Ptolemy VI Philometor.

In 170 BC Antiochus IV Epiphanes invaded Egypt and deposed Philometor, and his younger brother (later Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II) was installed as a puppet king. When Antiochus withdrew, the brothers agreed to reign jointly with their sister Cleopatra II. They soon fell out, however, and quarrels between the two brothers allowed Rome to interfere and to steadily increase its influence in Egypt. Eventually Philometor regained the throne. In 145 BC he was killed in the battle of Oenoparas near Antioch.

The later Ptolemies

Philometor was succeeded by yet another infant, his son Ptolemy VII Neos Philopater. But Euergetes soon returned, killed his young nephew, seized the throne and as Ptolemy VIII soon proved himself a cruel tyrant. On his death in 116 BC he left the kingdom to his wife Cleopatra III and her son Ptolemy IX Philometor Soter II. The young king was driven out by his mother in 107 BC, who reigned jointly with Euergetes's younger brother Ptolemy X Alexander. In 88 BC Ptolemy IX again returned to the throne, and retained it until his death in 80 BC. He was succeeded by Ptolemy XI Alexander II, the son of Ptolemy X. He was lynched by the Alexandria mob after murdering his mother. These sordid dynastic quarrels left Egypt so weakened that the country became a de facto protectorate of Rome, which had by now absorbed most of the Greek world.

Ptolemy XI was succeeded by a son of Ptolemy IX, Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos, nicknamed Auletes, the flute-player. By now Rome was the arbiter of Egyptian affairs, and annexed both Libya and Cyprus. In 58 BC Auletes was driven out by the Alexandrian mob, but the Romans restored him to power three years later. He died in 51 BC, leaving the kingdom to his ten-year-old son, Ptolemy XIII, who reigned jointly with his 17-year-old sister and wife, Cleopatra VII.

During Cleopatra's reign Egyptian history merged with the general history of the Roman world, owing to the murder of Pompey in Egypt in 48 BC and the appearance in the country of Julius Caesar in 47 BC. In the wars of that period the young king perished and his younger brother, Ptolemy XIV Philopator, was nominally king with Cleopatra till 44 BC, when she had him murdered. From then till her death in 30 BC, Cleopatra's nominal co-ruler was her infant son by Caesar, Ptolemy XV Philopator Philometor Caesar, known as Caesarion. Cleopatra then made her last, and ultimately fatal, alliance with Mark Antony, and when he was defeated by Octavian, she killed herself.

Roman Egypt

In 30 BC, following the death of Cleopatra, Egypt became part of the Roman Empire as the province Aegyptus, governed by a prefect selected by the Emperor from the Equestrian and not a governor from the Senatorial order, to prevent interference by the Roman Senate. The main Roman interest in Egypt was always the reliable delivery of grain to the city of Rome. To this end the Roman administration made no change to the Ptolemaic system of government, although Romans replaced Greeks in the highest offices. But Greeks continued to staff most of the administrative offices and Greek remained the language of government except at the highest levels. Unlike the Greeks, the Romans did not settle in Egypt in large numbers. Culture, education and civic life largely remained Greek throughout the Roman period. The Romans, like the Ptolemies, respected and protected Egyptian religion and customs, although the cult of the Roman state and of the Emperor was gradually introduced.

Roman rule in Egypt

The first prefect of Egypt, Gaius Cornelius Gallus, brought Upper Egypt under Roman control by force of arms, established a protectorate over the southern frontier district, which had been abandoned by the later Ptolemies. The second prefect, Aelius Gallus, made an unsuccessful expedition to conquer Arabia: the Red Sea coast of Egypt was not brought under Roman control until the reign of Claudius. The third prefect, Gaius Petronius, cleared the neglected canals

for irrigation, stimulating a revival of agriculture.

From the reign of Nero onwards, Egypt enjoyed an era of prosperity which lasted a century. Much trouble was caused by religious conflicts between the Greeks and the Jews, particularly in Alexandria, which after the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 became the world centre of Jewish religion and culture. Under Trajan a Jewish revolt occurred, resulting in the suppression of the Jews of Alexandria and the loss of all their privileges, although they soon returned. Hadrian, who twice visited Egypt, founded Antinoopolis in memory of his drowned lover Antinous. From his reign onwards buildings in the Greco-Roman style were erected throughout the country.

Under Marcus Aurelius, however, oppressive taxation led to a revolt (139) of the native Egyptians, which was suppressed only after several years of fighting. This Bucolic War caused great damage to the economy and marked the beginning of Egypt's economic decline. Avidius Cassius, who led the Roman forces in the war, declared himself Emperor, and was acknowledged by the armies of Syria and Egypt. On the approach of Marcus Aurelius, however, he was deposed and killed, and the clemency of the emperor restored peace. A similar revolt broke out in 193, when Pescennius Niger was proclaimed emperor on the death of Pertinax. The Emperor Septimius Severus gave a constitution to Alexandria and the provincial capitals in 202.

The most revolutionary event in the history of Roman Egypt was the introduction of Christianity in the 2nd century. It was at first vigorously persecuted by the Roman authorities, who feared religious discord more than anything else in a country where religion had always been paramount. But it soon gained adherents among the Jews of Alexandria. From them it rapidly passed to the Greeks, and then to the native Egyptians, who found its promise of personal salvation and its teachings of social equality appealing. The ancient religion of Egypt put up surprisingly little resistance to the spread of Christianity. Possibly its long history of collaboration with the Greek and Roman rulers of Egypt had robbed it of its authority.

Caracalla (211-217) granted Roman citizenship to all Egyptians, in common with the other provincials, but this was mainly to extort more taxes, which grew increasingly onerous as the needs of the Emperors for more revenue grew more desperate. There was a series of revolts, both military and civilian, through the 3rd century. Under Decius, in 250, the Christians again suffered from persecution, but their religion continued to spread. In 272 Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, briefly conquered Egypt, but lost it when Aurelian crushed her rebellion against Rome. Two generals based in Egypt, Probus and Domitius Domitianus, led successful revolts and made themselves Emperor. Diocletian captured Alexandria from Domitius in 296 and reorganised the whole province. His edict of 303 against the Christians began a new era of persecution. But this was the last serious attempt to stem the steady growth of Christianity in Egypt.

Christian Egypt

Egyptian Christians believe that the Patriarchate of Alexandria was founded by Mark the Evangelist around AD 33, but little is known about how Christianity entered Egypt. The historian Helmut Koester has suggested, with some evidence, that originally the Christians in Egypt were predominantly influenced by gnosticism until the efforts of Demetrius of Alexandria gradually brought the beliefs of the majority into harmony with the rest of Christianity. While the collective embarrassment over their heretical origins would explain the lack of details for the first centuries of Christianity in Egypt, there are too many gaps in the history of Roman times to claim that our ignorance in this situation is a special case.

Nevertheless, by AD 200 it is clear that Alexandria was one of the great Christian centres. The Christian apologists Clement of Alexandria and Origen both lived part or all of their lives in that city, where they wrote, taught, and debated.

With the Edict of Milan in 312, Constantine the Great ended the persecution of Christians, and in 324 he made Christianity the religion of the Empire. Over the course of the 4th century, paganism gradually lost its following, as the poet Palladius bitterly noted. It lingered underground for many decades: the final edict against paganism was issued in 390, but graffiti at Philae in Upper Egypt proves worship of Isis persisted at its temples into the 5th century. Many Egyptian Jews also became Christians, but many others refused to do so, leaving them as the only sizeable religious minority in a Christian country. They became the object of bitter hostility, and this may be seen as the beginning of anti-Semitism in the modern sense of the word.

No sooner had the Egyptian Church achieved freedom and supremacy, however, than it became subject to schism and prolonged conflict which at times descended into civil war. Alexandria became the centre of the first great split in the Christian world, between the Arians, named for the Alexandrian priest Arius, and orthodoxy, represented by Athanasius, who became Archbishop of Alexandria in 326 after the First Council of Nicaea rejected Arius's views. The Arian controversy caused years of riots and rebellions throughout most of the fourth century. In the course of one of these, the great temple of Serapis, the stronghold of paganism, was destroyed. Athanasius was alternately expelled from Alexandria and reinstated as its Archbishop between five and seven times.

It was never easy to impose religious orthodoxy on Egypt, a country with an ancient tradition of religious speculation. Not only did Arianism flourish there, but other heresies, such as Gnosticism and Manichaeism, either native or imported, found many followers. Another religious development in Egypt was the monasticism of the Desert Fathers, who

renounced the material world in order to live a life of poverty in devotion to the Church. Egyptian Christians took up monasticism with such enthusiasm that the Emperor Valens had to restrict the number of men who could become monks. Egypt exported monasticism to the rest of the Christian world. Another development of this period was the mutation of the Ancient Egyptian language into Coptic, which became the liturgical language of Egyptian Christianity and remains so to this day.

Byzantine Egypt

The reign of Constantine also saw the founding of Constantinople as a new capital for the Roman Empire, and in the course of the 4th century the Empire was divided in two, with Egypt finding itself in the Eastern Empire with its capital at Constantinople. This meant that within a few years Latin, never well established in Egypt, disappeared, and Greek reasserted itself as the language of government. During the 5th and 6th centuries the Eastern Roman Empire gradually became the Byzantine Empire, a Christian, Greek-speaking state that had little in common with the old Empire of Rome, which disappeared in the face of the barbarian invasions in the 5th century. Another consequence of the triumph of Christianity was the final demise of the old Egyptian culture: with the disappearance of the pagan priesthood, no-one could read the hieroglyphics of Pharaonic Egypt, and its temples were converted to churches or abandoned to the desert.

The Eastern Empire became increasingly "oriental" in style as its links with the old Gr?co-Roman world faded. The Greek system of local government by citizens had now entirely disappeared. Offices, with new Byzantine names, were almost hereditary in the wealthy land-owning families. The rule of the Church in alliance with the State grew more oppressive. But Alexandria, the second city of the Empire, continued to be a centre of religious controversy and violence. Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, convinced the city's governor to expel the Jews from the city in 415 with the aid of the mob, in response to the Jews' nighttime massacre of many Christians. The murder of the philosopher Hypatia marked the final end of classical Hellenic culture in Egypt. Another schism in the Church produced a prolonged civil war and alienated Egypt from the Empire.

The new religious controversy was over the nature of the Trinity. The majority of the Christian world supported the orthodox view that God is three persons in one (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), and that Jesus was therefore of the same nature as God. But Egypt was a stronghold of Monophysitism: the belief that God has only one nature, that of God the Father, and that Jesus (God the Son) and the Holy Spirit are of a different nature: they are from God but not of God. This may seem an arcane distinction, but in an intensely religious age it was enough to divide an empire. The Monophysite controversy arose after the First Council of Constantinople in 381 and continued until the Council of Chalcedon in 451, which ruled in favour of the orthodox position. Many of the monophysites claimed that they were misunderstood, that there was really no difference between their position and the orthodox position, and that the Council of Chalcedon ruled against them because of political motivations. But Egypt and Syria remained hotbeds of Monophysite sentiment, and organised resistance to the orthodox view was not suppressed until the 570s.

The reign of Justinian (482–565) saw the Empire recapture Rome and much of Italy from the barbarians, but these successes left the Empire's eastern flank exposed.

Persian and Arab Conquests

The Persian occupation of Egypt, beginning in 619 or 618, was one of the triumphs in the last Sasanian war against Byzantium. Khosrow II Parvez, of the revived Persian Empire had begun this war in retaliation for the assassination of the emperor Mauricius (582-602) and had achieved a series of early successes, culminating in the conquests of Jerusalem (614) and Alexandria (619). A Byzantine counteroffensive launched by Heraclius in spring 622 shifted the advantage, however, and the war was brought to an end by the fall of Khosrow on 25 February 628 (Frye, pp. 167-70). The Egyptians had no love of the Emperor in Constantinople and put up little resistance. Khosrow's son and successor, Kavad II Seroe (Seroy), who reigned until September, concluded a peace treaty returning territories conquered by the Sasanians to the eastern Roman empire.

The Persian occupation allowed Monophysitism to resurface in Egypt, and when imperial rule was restored by Heraclius in 629, the Monophysites were persecuted and their patriarch expelled. Egypt was thus in a state of both religious and political alienation from the Empire when a new invader appeared.

This was an army of 4,000 Arabs led by Amr ibn al-As, sent by the Caliph Umar, successor to the Prophet Muhammad, to spread his new faith, Islam, to the west. The Arabs crossed into Egypt from Palestine in December 639, and advanced rapidly into the Nile Delta. The Imperial garrisons retreated into the walled towns, where they successfully held out for a year or more. But the Arabs sent for reinforcements, and in April 641 they captured Alexandria, thus completing the Muslim conquest of Egypt. Most of the Egyptian Christians welcomed their new rulers: the accession of a new regime ment for them the end of the persecutions by the Byzantine state church. Thus ended 973 years of Greco-Roman rule over Egypt.

History of early Arab Egypt

From the initial Islamic invasion in 639 CE Egypt became part of the Arab world. It was ruled at first by governors acting in the name of the Umayyad Caliphs in Damascus but, in 747, the Umayyads were overthrown and the unity of the Arab world was broken. Although Egypt remained under the nominal rule of the Abbasid Caliphate, its rulers were able to establish quasi-independent dynasties, such as those of the Tulunids and the Ikhidids. In 969 the Ismaili Shi'a Fatimid dynasty from Tunisia conquered Egypt and established its capital at Cairo. This dynasty lasted until 1174, when Egypt came under the rule of Saladin, whose dynasty, the Ayyubids, lasted until 1252. The Ayyubites were overthrown by their Turkish bodyguards, known as the Mamluks, who ruled under the suzerainty of Abbasid Caliphs until 1517, when Egypt became part of the Ottoman Empire.

The Arab Conquest of Egypt

In 639 an army of some 4,000 men was sent against Egypt by the second caliph, Umar, under the command of Amr ibn al-As. This army was joined by another 12,000 men in 640 and defeated a Byzantine army at the battle of Heliopolis. Amr next proceeded in the direction of Alexandria, which was surrendered to him by a treaty signed on November 8, 641.

Alexandria was regained for the Byzantine Empire in 645 but was retaken by Amr in 646. In 654 an invasion fleet sent by Constans II was repulsed. From that time no serious effort was made by the Byzantines to regain possession of the country.

In all of this it would appear that the Arabs were actually assisted by the Copts, who found the Muslims more tolerant than the Byzantines. In return for a tribute of money and food for the troops of occupation, the Christian inhabitants of Egypt were excused military service and left free in the observance of their religion and the administration of their affairs.

During the period that elapsed between the Muslim conquest and the end of the Umayyad dynasty the nature of the Arab occupation had become a systematic colonisation. Conversions of Copts to Islam were at first rare, and the old system of taxation was maintained for the greater part of the first Islamic century. The old division of the country into districts (nomoi) was maintained, and to the inhabitants of these districts demands were directly addressed by the governor of Egypt, while the head of the community—ordinarily a Copt but in some cases a Muslim—was responsible for compliance with the demand.

The resentment of the Copts against taxation, however, led to a revolt in 725. In 727, to strengthen Arab representation, a colony of 3,000 Arabs was set up near Bilbeis. Meanwhile, the employment of the Arabic language had been steadily gaining ground, and in 706 it was made the official language of the government. Other revolts of the Copts are recorded for the years 739 and 750, the last year of Umayyad domination. The outbreaks in all cases are attributed to increased taxation.

The Abbasid period was marked by new taxations, and the Copts revolted again in the fourth year of Abbasid rule. At the beginning of the 9th century the practice of ruling Egypt through a governor was resumed under Abdallah bin Tahir, who decided to reside at Baghdad, sending a deputy to Egypt to govern for him. In 828 another Coptic revolt broke out. And in 831 the Copts joined with the Arabs against the government.

In the 9th century Egypt was mostly governed by Turks ruling in the name of the Arab governor. Egypt came into conflict with Syria and the Caliphate until peace was made in 891. In 914 Egypt was invaded for the first time by a Fatimid force sent by the Caliph al-Mahdi Obaidallah, now established at Kairawan. The Mahdi's son succeeded in taking Alexandria in 919, and Egypt wasn't freed from the invaders until the year 921, when reinforcements had been repeatedly sent from Baghdad to deal with them. In 969 the Fatimid general Jauhar was placed at the head of an army said to number 100,000 men and attempted to seize Egypt. He had little difficulty defeating the Egyptian army. And on July 6, 969, he entered Fostat at the head of his forces. Egypt was transferred from the Eastern to the Western caliphate.

The Fatimid Period

Jauhar immediately began the building of a new city, Cairo, to furnish quarters for the army which he had brought. A palace for the Caliph and a mosque for the army were immediately constructed, which for many centuries remained the centre of Muslim learning. However, the Carmathians of Damascus under Hasan al-Asam advanced through Palestine to Egypt, and in the autumn of 971 Jauhar found himself besieged in his new city. By a timely sortie, preceded by the administration of bribes to various officers in the Carmathian host, Jauhar succeeded in inflicting a severe defeat on the besiegers, who were compelled to evacuate Egypt and part of Syria.

Meanwhile the caliph al-Muizz had been summoned to enter the palace that had been prepared for him, and after leaving a viceroy to take charge of his western possessions he arrived in Alexandria on May 31, 973, and proceeded to instruct his new subjects in the particular form of religion (Shiism) which his family represented. As this was in origin identical with that professed by the Carmathians, he hoped to gain the submission of their leader by argument; but this plan was unsuccessful, and there was a fresh invasion from that quarter in the year after his arrival, and the caliph found himself besieged in his capital. The Carmathians were gradually forced to retreat from Egypt and then from Syria by some

successful engagements, and by the judicious use of bribes, whereby dissension was sown among their leaders. Al-Muizz also found time to take some active measures against the Byzantines, with whom his generals fought in Syria with varying fortune. Before his death he was acknowledged as Caliph in Mecca and Medina, as well as Syria, Egypt and North Africa as far as Tangier.

Under the vizier al-Aziz, there was a large amount of toleration conceded to the other sects of Islam, and to other communities, but the belief that the Christians of Egypt were in league with the Byzantine emperor, and even burned a fleet which was being built for the Byzantine war, led to some persecution. Al-Aziz attempted without success to enter into friendly relations with the Buyid ruler of Baghdad, and tried to gain possession of Aleppo, as the key to Iraq, but this was prevented by the intervention of the Byzantines. His North African possessions were maintained and extended, but the recognition of the Fatimid caliph in this region was little more than nominal.

His successor al-Hakim bi-Amr Allah came to the throne at the age of eleven, being the son of Aziz by a Christian mother. His conduct of affairs was vigorous and successful, and he concluded a peace with the Byzantine emperor. He is perhaps best remembered by his destruction of the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem (1009), a measure which helped to provoke the Crusades, but was only part of a general scheme for converting all Christians and Jews in his dominions to his own opinions by force. A more reputable expedient with the same end in view was the construction of a great library in Cairo, with ample provision for students; this was modelled on a similar institution at Baghdad. His system of persecution was not abandoned till in the last year of his reign (1020) he thought fit to claim divinity, a doctrine which is perpetuated by the Druze, called after one Darazi, who preached the divinity of al-Hakim at the time. For unknown reasons al-Hakim disappeared in 1021.

In 1049 the Zeirid dynasty in the Maghrib returned to the Sunni faith and became subjects of the Caliphate in Baghdad, but at the same time Yemen recognized the Fatimid caliphate. Meanwhile Baghdad was taken by the Turks, falling to the Seljuk Tughrul Beg in 1059. The Turks also plundered Cairo in 1068, but they were driven out by 1074. During this time, however, Syria was overrun by an invader in league with the Seljuk Malik Shah, and Damascus was permanently lost to the Fatimids. This period is otherwise memorable for the rise of the Hashshashin, or Assassins.

During the Crusades, al-Mustafa maintained himself in Alexandria, and helped the Crusaders by rescuing Jerusalem from the Ortokids, thereby facilitating its conquest by the Crusaders in 1099. He endeavoured to retrieve his error by himself advancing into Palestine, but he was defeated at the battle of Ascalon, and compelled to retire to Egypt. Many of the Palestinian possessions of the Fatimids then successively fell into the hands of the Crusaders.

In 1118 Egypt was invaded by Baldwin I of Jerusalem, who burned the gates and the mosques of Farama, and advanced to Tinnis, when illness compelled him to retreat. In August 1121 al-Afdal Shahanshah was assassinated in a street of Cairo, it is said, with the connivance of the Caliph, who immediately began the plunder of his house, where fabulous treasures were said to be amassed. The vizier's offices were given to al-Mamn. His external policy was not more fortunate than that of his predecessor, as he lost Tyre to the Crusaders, and a fleet equipped by him was defeated by the Venetians.

In 1153 Ascalon was lost, the last place in Syria which the Fatimids held; its loss was attributed to dissensions between the parties of which the garrison consisted. In April 1154 the Caliph al-Zafir was murdered by his vizier Abbas, according to Usamah, because the Caliph had suggested to his favorite, the vizier's son, to murder his father; and this was followed by a massacre of the brothers of Zafir, followed by the raising of his infant son Abul-Qasim Isa to the throne.

Shawar took control of Cairo was at the beginning of 1163; after nine months he was compelled to flee to Damascus, where he was favorably received by the prince Nureddin, who sent with him to Cairo a force of Kurds under Asad al-din Shirkuh. At the same time Egypt was invaded by the Franks, who raided and did much damage on the coast. Shawar recaptured Cairo but a dispute then arose with his Syrian allies for the possession of Egypt. Shawar, being unable to cope with the Syrians, demanded help of the Frankish king of Jerusalem Amalric I, who hastened to his aid with a large force, which united with Shawars and besieged Shirkuh in Bilbeis for three months; at the end of this time, owing to the successes of Nureddin in Syria, the Franks granted Shirkuh a free passage with his troops back to Syria, on condition of Egypt being evacuated (October 1164).

Two years later Shirkuh persuaded Nureddin to put him at the head of another expedition to Egypt, which left Syria in January 1167; a Frankish army hastened to Shawars aid. At the battle of Babain (April 11, 1167) the allies were defeated by the forces commanded by Shirkuh and his nephew Saladin, who was made prefect of Alexandria, which surrendered to Shirkuh without a struggle. In 1168 Amalric invaded again, but Shirkuh's return caused the Crusaders to withdraw. Shirkuh was appointed vizier but died of indigestion (March 23, 1169), and the Caliph appointed Saladin as successor to Shirkuh; the new vizier professed to hold office as a deputy of Nureddin, whose name was mentioned in public worship after that of the Caliph. Nureddin loyally aided his deputy in dealing with Crusader invasions of Egypt, and he ordered Saladin to substitute the name of the Abbasid caliph for the Fatimid in public worship. The last Fatimid caliph died soon after in September, 1171.

Ayyubid Period

Saladin was confirmed as Nureddin's deputy in Egypt, and on the death of Nureddin on April 12, 1174 he took the title sultan. During his reign Damascus, rather than Cairo, was the major city of the empire. Nevertheless he fortified Cairo, which became the political centre of Egypt. It was in 1183 that Saladin's rule over Egypt and North Syria was consolidated. Much of Saladin's time was spent in Syria, where he fought the Crusader States, and Egypt was largely governed by his deputy Karaksh.

Saladin's son Othman succeeded him in Egypt in 1193. He allied with his uncle (Saladin's brother) Al-Adil I against Saladin's other sons, and after the wars that followed, Abu Bakr took power in 1200. He died in 1218 during the siege of Damietta in the Fifth Crusade, and was succeeded by al-Kamil, who lost Damietta to the Crusaders in 1219. However, he defeated their advance to Cairo by flooding the Nile, and they were forced to evacuate Egypt in 1221. Al-Kamil was later forced to give up various cities in Palestina and Syria to Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor during the Sixth Crusade, in order to gain his help against Damascus.

Najm al-Din became sultan in 1240. His reign saw the recapture of Jerusalem in 1244, and the introduction of a larger force of Mameluks into the army. Much of his time was spent in campaigns in Syria, where he allied with the Khwarezmians against the Crusaders and Ayyubids. In 1249 he faced an invasion by Louis IX of France (the Seventh Crusade), and Damietta was lost again. Najm al-Din died soon after this, but his son Turanshah defeated Louis and expelled the Crusaders from Egypt. Turanshah was soon overthrown by the Mameluks, who had become the "kingmakers" since their arrival and now wanted full power for themselves.

Bahri Mameluk dynasty

The Mameluk sultans were drawn from the enfranchised slaves who formed the court and officered the arm. The sultans were unable to effectively form a new dynasty, usually leaving behind infants who were then overthrown. The first of these was Aibek, who married Turanshah's mother and quickly began a war with Syria. He was assassinated in 1257 and was succeeded by Qutuz, who faced a growing danger from the Mongols. Qutuz defeated the army of Hulagu Khan at the Battle of Ain Jalut in 1260, allowing him to regain all of Syria except Crusader strongholds. On the way back to Egypt after the battle, Qutuz was killed by another commander, Baybars, who assumed the Sultanate and ruled from 1260 to 1277. In 1291 Khalil captured Acre, the last of the crusader cities.

The Bahris greatly enhanced the power and prestige of Egypt, building Cairo from a small town into one of the foremost cities in the world. Due to the sacking of Baghdad by the Mongols, Cairo became the central city of the Islamic world. The Mamluks built much of the earliest remaining architecture of Cairo, including many mosques built out of stone using long, imposing lines.

In 1377 a revolt in Syria spread to Egypt, and the government was taken over by the Circassians Berekeh and Barkuk. Barkuk was proclaimed sultan in 1382, ending the Bahri dynasty. He was expelled in 1389, but recaptured Cairo in 1390, setting up the Burji dynasty.

Period of Burji Mamelukes

The Burji dynasty (1382-1517) proved especially turbulent, with political power-plays designating short-lived sultans. During the Burji dynasty, the Mamluks fought Timur Lenk and conquered Cyprus. Constant bickering contributed to the inability of the Ottomans to challenge them.

The Ottoman Sultan Selim I defeated the Mamluks and captured Cairo on January 20, 1517, transferring the center of power to Istanbul. However, the Ottoman Empire retained the Mamluks as the Egyptian ruling class. The Mamluks and the Burji family regained much of their influence, but technically remained vassals of the Ottomans.

History of Ottoman Egypt

Egypt was conquered by the Ottoman Empire in 1517. Egypt was always a difficult province for the Ottoman Sultans to control. It remained dominated by the semi-autonomous Mameluks until it was conquered by the French in 1798. After the French were expelled it was ruled by the Albanian Muhammad Ali of Egypt and his descendants who pulled Egypt even further out of Ottoman control. This lasted until 1882 when the British invaded and Egypt became a de facto colony of Britain.

Early Turkish Period

After the conquest of Egypt the Ottoman sultan Selim I left the country, leaving his viceroy Khair Bey with a guard of 5000 janissaries, but otherwise made few changes in the administration of the country. The country was regraded as a vassal state, not a province, of the empire.

The history of early Ottoman Egypt is a competition for power between the Mamelukes and the representatives of the Ottoman Sultan.

The register by which a great portion of the land was a fief of the Mamelukes was left unchanged, allowing the Mamelukes to quickly return to positions of great influence. The Mameluke emirs were to be retained in office as heads of twelve sanjaks into which Egypt was divided; and under the next sultan, Suleiman I, two chambers were created, called the Greater Divan and Lesser Divan, in which both the army and the ecclesiastical authorities were represented, to aid the pasha by their deliberations. Six regiments were constituted by the conqueror Selim for the protection of Egypt; to these Suleiman added a seventh, of Circassians.

In 1527 the first survey of Egypt under the Ottomans was made, the official copy of the former registers having perished by fire; this new survey did not come into use until 1605. Egyptian lands were divided into four classes: the sultan's domain, fiefs, land for the maintenance of the army, and lands settled on religious foundations.

It was the practice of the Sublime Porte to change the governor of Egypt at very short intervals, after a year or even some months. The third governor, Abmad Pasha, hearing that orders for his execution had come from Constantinople, endeavoured to make himself an independent ruler and had coins struck in his own name. His schemes were frustrated by two of the emirs whom he had imprisoned and who, escaping from their confinement, attacked him in his bath and killed him.

The constant changes in the government seem to have caused the army to get out of control at an early period of the Ottoman occupation, and at the beginning of the 17th century mutinies became common; in 1013 AH (1604) the governor Ibrahim Pasha was murdered by the soldiers, and his head set on the Bab Zuwwilla. The reason for these mutinies was the attempt made by successive pashas to put a stop to the extortion called the *tulbah*, a forced payment exacted by the troops from the inhabitants of the country by the fiction of debts requiring to be discharged, which led to grievous ill-usage.

In 1609 something like civil war broke out between the army and the pasha, who had on his side some loyal regiments and the Bedouins. The soldiers went so far as to choose a sultan, and to divide provisionally the regions of Cairo between them. They were defeated by the governor Mahommed Pasha, who on February 5, 1610 entered Cairo in triumph, executed the ringleaders, and banished many others to Yemen. The contemporary historian speaks of this event as a second conquest of Egypt for the Ottomans. A great financial reform was now effected by Mahommed Pasha, who readjusted the burdens imposed on the different communities of Egypt in accordance with their means.

With the troubles that beset the metropolis of the Ottoman empire, the governors appointed thence came to be treated by the Egyptians with continually decreasing respect. In July 1623 there came an order from the Porte dismissing Mustafa Pasha and appointing Ali Pasha governor in his place. The officers met and demanded from the newly-appointed governor deputy the customary gratuity; when this was refused they sent letters to the Porte declaring that they wished to have Mustafa Pasha and not Ali Pasha as governor. Meanwhile Ali Pasha had arrived at Alexandria, and was met by a deputation from Cairo telling him that he was not wanted. He returned a mild answer; and, when a rejoinder came in the same style as the first message, he had the leader of the deputation arrested and imprisoned. Hereupon the garrison of Alexandria attacked the castle and rescued the prisoner; whereupon Ali Pasha was compelled to embark. Shortly after a rescript arrived from Constantinople confirming Mustafa Pasha in the governorship.

Similarly in 1631 the army took upon themselves to depose the governor, in indignation at his execution of Kits Bey, an officer who was to have commanded an Egyptian force required for service in Persia. The pasha was ordered either to hand over the executioners to vengeance or to resign his place; as he refused to do the former he was compelled to do the latter, and presently a rescript came from Constantinople, approving the conduct of the army and appointing one Khalil Pasha as Mustafa's successor. Not only was the governor unsupported by the sultan against the troops, but each new governor regularly inflicted a fine upon his outgoing predecessor, under the name of money due to the treasury; and the outgoing governor would not be allowed to leave Egypt till he had paid it. Besides the extortions to which this practice gave occasion the country suffered greatly in these centuries from famine and pestilence. The latter in the spring of 1619 is said to have carried off 635,000 persons, and in 1643 completely desolated 230 villages.

Later Turkish Period

By the 18th century the importance of the pasha was superseded by that of the Mameluk beys, and two offices, those of Sheik al-Balad and Emir al-*~*ajj, which were held by these persons, represented the real headship of the community. The process by which this state of affairs came about is somewhat obscure, owing to the want of good chronicles for the Turkish period of Egyptian history. In 1707 the Sheik al-Balad, Qasim Iywas, is found at the head of one of two Mameluke factions, the Qasimites and the Fiqarites, between whom the seeds of enmity were sown by the pasha of the time, with the result that a fight took place between the factions outside Cairo, lasting eighty days. At the end of that time Qasim Iywas was killed and the office which he had held was given to his son Ismail. Ismail held this office for sixteen years, while the pashas were constantly being changed, and succeeded in reconciling the two factions of Mamelukes. In 1724 this person was assassinated through the machinations of the pasha, and Shirkas Bey, of the opposing faction,

elevated to the office of Sheik al-Balad in his place. He was soon driven from his post by one of his own faction called Dhul-Fiqar, and fled to Upper Egypt. After a short time he returned at the head of an army, and some engagements ensued, in the last of which Shirkas Bey met his end by drowning; Dhul-Fiqar was himself assassinated in 1730 shortly after this event. His place was filled by Othman Bey, who had served as his general in this war.

In 1743 Othman Bey was forced to fly from Egypt by the intrigues of two adventurers, Ibrahim and Rilwgn Bey, who, when their scheme had succeeded, began a massacre of beys and others thought to be opposed to them; they then proceeded to govern Egypt jointly, holding the two offices mentioned above in alternate years. An attempt by one of the pashas to remove these two by a coup d'etat signally failed, owing to the loyalty of their armed supporters, who released Ibrahim and Rilwan from prison and compelled the pasha to flee to Constantinople. An attempt by a subsequent pasha in accordance with secret orders from Constantinople was so successful that some of the beys were killed. Ibrahim and Rilwan escaped, and compelled the pasha to resign his governorship and return to Constantinople. Ibrahim shortly afterwards was assassinated by someone who had aspired to occupy one of the vacant beyships, which was conferred instead on Ali, who as Ali Bey was destined to play an important part in the history of Egypt. The murder of Ibrahim Bey took place in 1755, and his colleague Rilwan perished in the subsequent disputes.

Ali Bey, who had first distinguished himself by defending a caravan in Arabia against bandits, set himself the task of avenging the death of his former master Ibrahim. He spent eight years in purchasing Mamelukes and winning other adherents, exciting the suspicions of the Sheik al-Balad Khalil Bey, who organized an attack upon him in the streets of Cairo, in consequence of which he fled to Upper Egypt. Here he met one Salib Bey, who had injuries to avenge on Khalil Bey, and the two organized a force with which they returned to Cairo and defeated Khalil, who was forced to flee to Iafila, where for a time he concealed himself; eventually he was discovered, sent to Alexandria and finally strangled. The date of Ali Bey's victory was 1164 AH (Ar. 1750), and after it he was made Sheik al-Balad. He executed the murderer of his former master Ibrahim; but the resentment which this act aroused among the beys caused him to leave his post and flee to Syria, where he won the friendship of the governor of Acre, Ahir b. Omar, who obtained for him the goodwill of the Porte and reinstatement in his post as Sheik al-Balad.

In 1766, after the death of his supporter the grand vizier Raghil Pasha, he was again compelled to fly from Egypt to Yemen, but in the following year he was told that his party at Cairo was strong enough to permit of his return. Resuming his office he raised eighteen of his friends to the rank of bey, among them Ibrahim and Murad, who were afterwards at the head of affairs, as well as Mahommed Abul-Dhahab, who was closely connected with the rest of Ali Bey's career. He appears to have done his utmost to bring Egyptian affairs into order, and by very severe measures repressed the brigandage of the Bedouins of Lower Egypt. He appears to have aspired to found an independent monarchy, and to that end endeavoured to disband all forces except those which were exclusively under his own control. In 1769 a demand came to Ali Bey for a force of 12,000 men to be employed by the Porte in the Russian war. It was suggested, however, at Constantinople that Ali would employ this force when he collected it for securing his own independence, and a messenger was sent by the Porte to the pasha with orders for his execution. Ali, being apprised by his agents at the metropolis of the despatch of this messenger, ordered him to be waylaid and killed; the despatches were seized and read by Ali before an assembly of the beys, who were assured that the order for execution applied to all alike, and he urged them to fight for their lives. His proposals were received with enthusiasm by the beys whom he had created. Egypt was declared independent and the pasha given forty-eight hours to quit the country. ~ahir Pasha of Acre, to whom was sent official information of the step taken by Ali Bey, promised his aid and kept his word by compelling an army sent by the pasha of Damascus against Egypt to retreat.

The Porte was not able at the time to take active measures for the suppression of Ali Bey, and the latter endeavoured to consolidate his dominions by sending expeditions against marauding tribes, both in north and south Egypt, reforming the finance, and improving the administration of justice. His son-in-law, Abul-Dhahab, was sent to subject the Hawwrah, who had occupied the land between Assuan and Assiut, and a force of 20,000 was sent to conquer Yemen. An officer named Ismail Bey was sent with 8000 to acquire the eastern shore of the Red Sea, and one named Ilasan Bey to occupy Jidda. In six months the greater part of the Arabian peninsula was subject to Ali Bey, and he appointed as Sheriff of Mecca a cousin of his own, who bestowed on Ali by an official proclamation the titles Sultan of Egypt and Khan of the Two Seas. He then, in virtue of this authorization, struck coins in his own name (1185 A.H.) and ordered his name to be mentioned in public worship.

His next move turned out fatally. Abul-Dhahab was sent with a force of 30,000 men in the same year (1771) to conquer Syria; and agents were sent to negotiate alliances with Venice and Russia. Abul-Dhahab's progress through Palestine and Syria was triumphant. Reinforced by Ali Bey's ally Ahir, he easily took the chief cities, ending with Damascus; but at this point he appears to have entered into secret negotiations with the Porte, by which he undertook to restore Egypt to Ottoman suzerainty. He then proceeded to evacuate Syria, and marched with all the forces he could collect to Upper Egypt, occupying Assiut in April 1772. Having collected some additional troops from the Bedouins, he marched on Cairo. Ismail Bey was sent by Ali Bey with a force of 3000 to check his advance; but at Bastin Ismail with his troops joined Abul-Dhahab. Ali Bey intended at first to defend himself so long as possible in the citadel at Cairo; but receiving information to the effect that his friend ~hir of Acre was still willing to give him refuge, he left Cairo for Syria (April 8, 1772), one day before the entrance of Abul-Dhahab.

At Acre Ali's fortune seemed to be restored. A Russian vessel anchored outside the port, and, in accordance with the agreement which he had made with the Russian empire, he was supplied with stores and ammunition, and a force of 3000 Albanians. He sent one of his officers, All Bey al-Tantawi, to recover the Syrian towns evacuated by Abul-Dhahab, and now in the possession of the Porte. He himself took Jaffa. and Gaza, the former of which he gave to his friend ~lahir of Acre. On the February 1, 1773 he received information from Cairo that Abul-Dhahab had made himself Sheik al-Balad, and in that capacity was practising unheard-of extortions, which were making Egypt with one voice call for the return of All Bey. He accordingly started for Egypt at the head of an army of 8000 men, and on April 19 met the army of Abul Dhahab at Salihia. Ali's forces were successful at the first engagement; but when the battle was renewed two days later he was deserted by some of his officers, and prevented by illness and wounds from himself taking the conduct of affairs. The result was a complete defeat for his army, after which he declined to leave his tent; he was captured after a brave resistance, and taken to Cairo, where he died seven days later.

After Ali Bey's death Egypt became once more a dependency of the Porte, governed by Abul-Dhahab as Sheik al-Balad with the title pasha. He shortly afterwards received permission from the Porte to invade Syria, with the view of punishing Ali Beys supporter ~ahir, and left as his deputies in Cairo Ismgil Bey and Ibrahim Bey, who, by deserting Ali at the battle of Salihia, had brought about his downfall. After taking many cities in Palestine Abul-Dhahab died, the cause being unknown; and Murad Bey (another of the deserters at Salihia) brought his forces back to Egypt (May 26, 1775).

Ismil Bey now became Sheik al-Balad, but was soon involved in a dispute with Ibrhim and Murad, who after a time succeeded in driving Ismail out of Egypt and establishing a joint rule (as Sheik al-Balad and Amir al-I.Ijj respectively) similar to that which had been tried previously. The two were soon involved in quarrels, which at one time threatened to break out into open war; but this catastrophe was averted, and the joint rule was maintained till 1786, when an expedition was sent by the Porte to restore Ottoman supremacy in Egypt. Murad Bey attempted to resist, but was easily defeated; and he with Ibrahim decided to fly to Upper Egypt and await the trend of events. On August 1 the Turkish commander entered Cairo, and, after some violent measures had been taken for the restoration of order, Ismail Bey was again. made Sheik al-Balad and a new pasha installed as governor. In January 1791 a terrible plague began to rage in Cairo and elsewhere in Egypt, to which Ismail Bey and most of his family fell victims. Owing to the need for competent rulers Ibrghlm and Murad Bey were sent for from Upper Egypt and resumed their dual government. These two persons were still in office in 1798 when Bonaparte entered Egypt.

The French Occupation

The ostensible object of the French expedition to Egypt was to reinstate the authority of the Sublime Porte, and suppress the Mamelukes; and in the proclamation printed with the Arabic types brought from the Propaganda press, and issued shortly after the taking of Alexandria, Bonaparte declared that he revered the prophet Muhammad and the Qur'an far more than the Mamelukes revered either, and argued that all men were equal except so far as they were distinguished by their intellectual and moral excellences, of neither of which the Mamelukes had any great share. In future all posts in Egypt were to be open to all classes of the inhabitants; the conduct of affairs was to be committed to the men of talent, virtue, and learning; and in proof of the statement that the French were sincere Moslems the overthrow of the papal authority in Rome was alleged.

That there might be no doubt of the friendly feeling of the French to the Porte, villages and towns which capitulated to the invaders were required to hoist the flags of both the Porte and the French republic, and in the thanksgiving prescribed to the Egyptians for their deliverance from the Mamelukes, prayer was to be offered for both the sultan and the French army. It does not appear that the proclamation convinced many of the Egyptians of the truth of these professions. After the Battle of Embabeh, at which the forces of both Murad Bey and Ibrahim Bey were dispersed, the populace readily plundered the houses of the beys, and a deputation was sent from al-Azhar to Bonaparte to ascertain his intentions; these proved to be a repetition of the terms of his proclamation, and, though the combination of loyalty to the French with loyalty to the sultan was unintelligible, a good understanding was at first established between the invaders and the Egyptians.

A municipal council was established in Cairo, consisting of persons taken from the ranks of the sheiks, the Mamelukes and the French. Soon after delegates from Alexandria and other important towns were added. This council did little more than register the decrees of the French commander, who continued to exercise dictatorial power.

The destruction of the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile, and the failure of the French forces sent to Upper Egypt (where they reached the first cataract) to obtain possession of the person of Murad Bey, shook the faith of the Egyptians in their invincibility; and in consequence of a series of unwelcome innovations the relations between conquerors and conquered grew daily more strained, till at last, on the occasion of the introduction of a house tax, an insurrection broke out in. Cairo on October 22, 1798, of which the headquarters were in the University of Azhar. On this occasion the French general Dupuy, lieutenant-governor of Cairo, was killed. The prompt measures of Bonaparte, aided by the arrival from Alexandria of General Jean Baptiste Kleber, quickly suppressed this rising; but the stabling of the French cavalry in the mosque of Azhar gave great and permanent offence.

In consequence of this affair, the deliberative council was suppressed, but on December 25 a fresh proclamation was

issued, reconstituting the two divans which had been created by the Turks; the special divan was to consist of 14 persons chosen by lot out of 60 government nominees, and was to meet daily. The general divan was to consist of functionaries, and to meet on emergencies.

In consequence of despatches which reached Bonaparte on January 3, 1799, announcing the intention of the Porte to invade the country with the object of recovering it by force, Bonaparte resolved on his Syrian expedition, and appointed governors for Cairo, Alexandria, and Upper Egypt, to govern during his absence.

From that ill-fated expedition he returned at the beginning of June. Advantage had been taken of this opportunity by Murd Bey and Ibrahîm Bey to collect their forces and attempt a joint attack on Cairo, but this Bonaparte arrived in time to defeat, and in the last week of July he inflicted a crushing defeat on the Turkish army that had landed at Aboukir, aided by the British fleet commanded by Sir Sidney Smith.

Shortly after his victory Bonaparte left Egypt, having appointed Kleber to govern in his absence, which he informed the sheiks of Cairo was not to last more than three months. Kleber himself regarded the condition of the French invaders as extremely perilous, and wrote to inform the French republic of the facts. A double expedition shortly after Bonapartes departure was sent by the Porte for the recovery of Egypt, one force being despatched by sea to Damietta, while another under Yousuf Pasha took the land route from Damascus by al-Arish. Over the first some success was won, in consequence of which the Turks agreed to a convention (signed January 24, 1800), by virtue of which the French were to quit Egypt. The Turkish troops advanced to Bilbeis, where they were received by the sheiks from Cairo, and the Mamelukes also returned to that city from their hiding-places.

Before the preparations for the departure of the French were completed, orders came to Sir Sidney Smith from the British government, forbidding the carrying out of the convention unless the French army were treated as prisoners of war; and when these were communicated to Kleber he cancelled the orders previously given to the troops, and proceeded to put the country in a state of defence. His departure with most of the army to attack the Turks at Mataria led to riots in Cairo, in the course of which many Christians were slaughtered; but the national party were unable to get possession of the citadel, and Kleber, having defeated the Turks, was soon able to return to the capital. On April 14 he bombarded Bulak, and proceeded to bombard Cairo itself, which was taken the following night. Order was soon restored, and a fine of twelve million francs imposed on the rioters. Murgd Bey sought an interview with Kleber and succeeded in obtaining from him the government of Upper Egypt. He died shortly afterwards and was succeeded by Osman Bey al-Bardisi.

On June 14 Kleber was assassinated by a fanatic named Suleiman of Aleppo, said to have been incited to the deed by a Janissary refugee at Jerusalem, who had brought letters to the sheiks of the Azhar, who, however, refused to give him any encouragement. Three of these, nevertheless, were executed by the French as accessories before the fact, and the assassin himself was impaled, after torture, in spite of a promise of pardon having been made to him on condition of his naming his associates. The command of the army then devolved on General J.F. (Baron de) Menou (1750-1810), a man who had professed Islam, and who endeavoured to conciliate the Muslim population by various measures, such as excluding all Christians (with the exception of one Frenchman) from the divan, replacing the Copts who were in government service by Muslims, and subjecting French residents to taxes. Whatever popularity might have been gained by these measures was counteracted by his declaration of a French protectorate over Egypt, which was to count as a French colony.

In the first weeks of March 1801 the English, under Sir Ralph Abercromby, effected a landing at Aboukir, and proceeded to invest Alexandria, where they were attacked by Menou; the French were repulsed, but the English commander was mortally wounded in the action. On the 25th fresh reinforcements arrived under Husain, the Kapudan Pasha, or high admiral; and a combined English and Turkish force was sent to take Rosetta. On May 30, General A.D. Belhiard, who had been left in charge at Cairo, was assailed on two sides by the British forces under General John Hely Hutchinson (afterwards 2nd earl of Donoughmore), and the Turkish under Ytisuf Pasha; after negotiations Belhiard agreed to evacuate Cairo and to sail with his 13,734 troops to France. On August 30, Menou at Alexandria was compelled to accept similar conditions, and his force of 10,000 left for Europe in September. This was the termination of the French occupation of Egypt, of which the chief permanent monument was the Description de l'Egypte, compiled by the French savants who accompanied the expedition.

Return to Ottoman control

Soon after the evacuation of Egypt by the French, the country became the scene of more severe troubles, in consequence of the attempts of the Turks to destroy the power of the Mamelukes. In defiance of promises to the British government, orders were transmitted from Constantinople to Husain Pasha, the Turkish high admiral, to ensnare and put to death the principal beys. Invited to an entertainment, they were, according to the Egyptian contemporary historian al-Jabarti, attacked on board the flag-ship; Sir Robert Wilson and M.F. Mengin, however, state that they were fired on, in open boats, in the Bay of Aboukir. They offered an heroic resistance, but were overpowered, and some killed, some made prisoners; among the last was Osman Bey al-Bardisi, who was severely wounded. British General Hutchinson, informed of this treachery, immediately assumed Turks and threatening measures against the Turks, and in consequence the killed, wounded and prisoners were Mamelukes given up to him. At the same time Ysuf Pasha arrested

all the beys in Cairo, but was shortly compelled by the British to release them. Such was the beginning of the disastrous struggle between the Mamelukes and the Turks.

Mahommed Khosrev was the first Turkish governor of Egypt after the expulsion of the French. The form of government, however, was not the same as that before the French invasion, for the Mamelukes were not reinstated. The pasha, and through him the sultan, endeavoured on several occasions either to ensnare them or to beguile them into submission; but these efforts failing, Mahommed Khosrev took the field, and a Turkish detachment 7000 strong was despatched against them to Damanhur, whither they had descended from Upper Egypt, and was defeated by a small force under al-Alfi; or, as Mengin says, by 800 men commanded by al-Bardisi, when al-Alfi had left the field. Their ammunition and guns fell into the hands of the Mamelukes. This led to a long civil war between the Albanians, Mamelukes, and Turks. See Muhammad Ali's seizure of power for the history of this struggle.

Egypt under Muhammad Ali and his successors

The reign of Muhammad Ali and his successors over Egypt was a period of rapid reform and modernization that led to Egypt becoming one of the most developed states outside of Europe. It also led to massive government expenditures, that ended up bankrupting Egypt and eventually led to it falling under control of the British.

Rise to power

The process of Muhammad Ali's seizure of power was a long three way civil war between the Ottoman Turks, Egyptian Mamelukes, and Albanian mercenaries. It lasted from 1803 to 1807 with the Albanian Ali taking control of Egypt in 1805, when the Ottoman Sultan acknowledged his position. Thereafter Muhammad Ali was undisputed master of Egypt, and his efforts henceforth were directed primarily to the maintenance of his practical independence.

Campaign against the Wahhabis

The suzerainty of the sultan he acknowledged, and at the reiterated commands of the Porte he despatched in 1811 an army of 8000 men, including 2000 horses, under the command of his son Tusun, a youth of sixteen, against the Wahhabis in Egyptian-Wahhabi War. After a successful advance, this force met with a serious repulse at the Pass of Jedeida, near Safra, and retreated to Yembo. In the following year Tusun, having received reinforcements, again assumed the offensive, and captured Medina after a prolonged siege. He next took Jidda and Mecca, defeating the Wahhabis beyond the latter place and capturing their general.

But some mishaps followed, and Muhammad Ali, who had determined to conduct the war in person, left Egypt for that purpose in the summer of 1813 leaving his other son, Ibrahim, in charge of the country. In Arabia he encountered serious obstacles from the nature of the country and the harassing mode of warfare adopted by his adversaries. His arms met with various fortunes; but on the whole his forces proved superior to those of the enemy. He deposed and exiled the Sharif of Mecca, and after the death of the Wahhabi leader Saud II. He concluded a treaty with Saud's son and successor, Abdullah in 1815.

Hearing of the escape of Napoleon from Elba and fearing danger to Egypt from the plans of France or Britain, Muhammad Ali returned to Cairo by way of Kosseir and Kena. He reached the capital on the day of the Battle of Waterloo. His return was also hastened by reports that the Turks, whose cause he was upholding in Arabia, were treacherously planning an invasion of Egypt.

Second Arabian campaign

Tusun returned to Egypt on hearing of the military revolt at Cairo, but died in 1816 at the early age of twenty. Muhammad Ali, dissatisfied with the treaty concluded with the Wahhabis, and with the non-fulfillment of certain of its clauses, determined to send another army to Arabia, and to include in it the soldiers who had recently proved unruly.

This expedition, under his eldest son Ibrahim Pasha, left in the autumn of 1816. The war was long and arduous, but in 1818 Ibrahim captured the Wahhabi capital of Deriya. Abdullah, their chief, was made prisoner, and with his treasurer and secretary was sent to Constantinople, where, in spite of Ibrahim's promise of safety, and of Muhammad Ali's intercession in their favor, they were put to death. At the close of the year 1819, Ibrahim returned to Cairo, having subdued all opposition in Arabia.

Reforms

During Muhammad Ali's absence in Arabia his representative at Cairo had completed the confiscation, begun in 1808, of almost all the lands belonging to private individuals, who were forced to accept instead inadequate pensions. By this revolutionary method of land nationalization Muhammad Ali became proprietor of nearly all the soil of Egypt, an iniquitous measure against which the Egyptians had no remedy.

The pasha also attempted to reorganize his troops on European lines led, but this led to a formidable mutiny in Cairo. Mehemet Ali's life was endangered, and he sought refuge by night in the citadel, while the soldiery committed many acts of plunder. The revolt was reduced by presents to the chiefs of the insurgents, and Muhammad Ali ordered that the sufferers by the disturbances should receive compensation from the treasury. The project of the Nizam Gedid (New System) was, in consequence of this mutiny, abandoned for a time.

While Ibrahim was engaged in the second Arabian campaign the pasha turned his attention to strengthening the Egyptian economy. He created state monopolies over the chief products of the country. He set up a number of factories and began digging in 1819 a new canal to Alexandria, called the Mahmudiya (after the reigning sultan of Turkey). The old canal had long fallen into decay, and the necessity of a safe channel between Alexandria and the Nile was much felt. The conclusion in 1838 of a commercial treaty with Turkey, negotiated by Sir Henry Bulwer (Lord Darling), struck a deathblow to the system of monopolies, though the application of the treaty to Egypt was delayed for some years.

Another notable fact in the economic progress of the country was the development of the cultivation of cotton in the Delta in 1822 and onwards. The cotton grown had been brought from the Sudan by Maho Bey, and the organization of the new industry from which in a few years Muhammad Ali was enabled to extract considerable revenues.

Efforts were made to promote education and the study of medicine. To European merchants, on whom he was dependent for the sale of his exports, Muhammad Ali showed much favor, and under his influence the port of Alexandria again rose into importance. It was also under Mehemet Ali's encouragement that the overland transit of goods from Europe to India via Egypt was resumed.

Invasion of Libya

In 1820 Muhammad Ali gave orders to commence the conquest of eastern Libya. He first sent an expedition westward (Feb. 1820) which conquered and annexed the Siwa oasis. Ali's intentions for Sudan was to extend his rule southward, to capture the valuable caravan trade bound for the Red Sea, and to secure the rich gold mines which he believed to exist in Sennar. He also saw in the campaign a means of getting rid of his disaffected troops, and of obtaining a sufficient number of captives to form the nucleus of the new army.

The forces destined for this service were led by Ismail, the youngest son of Muhammad Ali. They consisted of between 4000 and 5000 men, comprised of Turks and Arabs. They left Cairo in July 1820. Nubia at once submitted, the Shagia Arabs immediately beyond the province of Dongola were defeated, the remnant of the Mamelukes dispersed, and Sennar was reduced without a battle.

Mahommed Bey, the defterdar, with another force of about the same strength, was then sent by Mehemet Ali against Kordofan with like result, but not without a hard-fought engagement. In October 1822, Ismail, with his retinue, was burnt to death by Nimr, the melk (king) of Shendi; and the defterdar, a man infamous for his cruelty, assumed the command of those provinces, and exacted terrible retribution from the inhabitants. Khartoum was founded at this time, and in the following years the rule of the Egyptians was greatly extended and control of the Red Sea ports of Suakin and Massawa obtained.

Ahmad Revolt

In 1824 a native rebellion broke out in Upper Egypt headed by one Ahmad, an inhabitant of Es-Salimiya, a village situated a few miles above Thebes. He proclaimed himself a prophet, and was soon followed by between 20,000 and 30,000 insurgents, mostly peasants, but some of them deserters from the Nizam Gedid, for that force was yet in a half-organized state.

The peasants were angered by many of Ali's reforms, especially the introduction of conscription and the increase in taxes and forced labour.

The insurrection was crushed by Muhammad Ali, and about one fourth of Ahmad's followers perished, but he himself escaped and was never heard of again. Few of these unfortunates possessed any other weapon than the long staff (nabbut) of the Egyptian peasant; still they offered an obstinate resistance, and the combat in which they were defeated resembled a massacre. This movement was the last internal attempt to destroy the pasha's authority.

The subsequent years saw an imposition of order across Egypt and Ali's new highly trained and disciplined forces spread across the nation. Public order was rendered perfect; the Nile and the highways were secure to all travelers, Christian or Muslim; the Bedouin tribes were won over to peaceful pursuits.

Greek campaign

Muhammad Ali was fully conscious that the empire which he had so laboriously built up might at any time have to be defended by force of arms against his master Sultan Mahmud II, whose whole policy had been directed to curbing the

power of his too ambitious vassals, and who was under the influence of the personal enemies of the pasha of Egypt, notably of Khosrev, the grand vizier, who had never forgiven his humiliation in Egypt in 1803.

Mahmud also was already planning reforms borrowed from the West, and Muhammad Ali, who had had plenty of opportunity of observing the superiority of European methods of warfare, was determined to anticipate the sultan in the creation of a fleet and an army on European lines, partly as a measure of precaution, partly as an instrument for the realization of yet wider schemes of ambition. Before the outbreak of the War of Greek Independence in 1821, he had already expended much time and energy in organizing a fleet and in training, under the supervision of French instructors, native officers and artificers; though it was not till 1829 that the opening of a dockyard and arsenal at Alexandria enabled him to build and equip his own vessels. By 1823, moreover, he had succeeded in carrying out the reorganization of his army on European lines, the turbulent Turkish and Albanian elements being replaced by Sudanese and fellahin. The effectiveness of the new force was demonstrated in the suppression of an 1823 revolt of the Albanians in Cairo by six disciplined Sudanese regiments; after which Mehemet Ali was no more troubled with military mutinies.

His foresight was rewarded by the invitation of the sultan to help him in the task of subduing the Greek insurgents, offering as reward the pashaliks of the Morea and of Syria. Mehemet Ali had already, in 1821, been appointed by him governor of Crete, which he had occupied with a small Egyptian force. In the autumn of 1824 a fleet of sixty Egyptian warships carrying a large force of disciplined troops concentrated in Suda Bay, and, in the following March, with Ibrahim as commander-in-chief landed in the Morea.

His naval superiority wrested from the Greeks the command of the sea, on which the fate of the insurrection ultimately depended, while on land the Greek irregular bands were everywhere routed by Ibrahim's disciplined troops. The history of the events that led up to the battle of Navarino and the liberation of Greece is told elsewhere; the withdrawal of the Egyptians from the Morea was ultimately due to the action of Admiral Sir Edward Codrington, who early in August 1828 appeared before Alexandria and induced the pasha, by no means sorry to have a reasonable excuse, by a threat of bombardment, to sign a convention undertaking to recall Ibrahim and his army. But for the action of European powers the intervention of Muhammad Ali would have crushed the revolt.

War with the Sultan

Ali went to war against the sultan on pretext of chastising the ex-slave Abdullah, pasha of Acre, for refusing to send back Egyptian fugitives from the effects of Muhammad Ali's reforms. The true reason was the refusal of Sultan Mahmud to hand over Syria according to agreement, and Muhammad Ali's determination to obtain at all hazards what had been from time immemorial an object of ambition to the rulers of Egypt.

For ten years from this date the relations of sultan and pasha remained in the forefront of the questions which agitated the diplomatic world. It was not only the very existence of the Ottoman empire that seemed to be at stake, but Egypt itself had become more than ever an object of attention, to British statesmen especially, and in the issue of the struggle were involved the interests of Britain in the two routes to India by the Isthmus of Suez and the valley of the Euphrates. Ibrahim, who once more commanded in his father's name, launched another brilliant campaign beginning with the storming of Acre on May 27, 1832, and culminating in the rout and capture of Reshid Pasha at Konia on December 21.

Soon after he was blocked by the intervention of Russia, however. As the result of endless discussions between the representatives of the powers, the Porte and the pasha, the Convention of Kutaya was signed on May 14, 1833, by which the sultan agreed to bestow on Muhammad Ali the pashaliks of Syria, Damascus, Aleppo and Itcheli, together with the district of Adana. The announcement of the pasha's appointment had already been made in the usual way in the annual firman issued on May 3. Adana was bestowed on Ibrahim under the style of muhassil, or collector of the crown revenues, a few days later.

Muhammad Ali now ruled over a virtually independent empire, subject only to a moderate tribute, stretching from the Sudan to the Taurus Mountains. However the unsound foundations of his authority were not long in revealing themselves. Scarcely a year from the signing of the Convention of Kutaya the application by Ibrahim of Egyptian methods of government, notably of the monopolies and conscription, had driven Syrians, Druze and Arabs, who had welcomed him as a deliverer, into revolt. The unrest was suppressed by Mehemet Ali in person, and the Syrians were terrorized, but their discontent encouraged the Sultan Mahmud to hope for revenge, and a renewal of the conflict was only staved off by the anxious efforts of the European powers.

In the spring of 1839 the sultan ordered his army, concentrated under Reshid in the border district of Bir on the Euphrates, to advance over the Syrian frontier. Ibrahim, seeing his flank menaced, attacked it at Nezib on the 24th of June. Once more, however, the Ottomans were utterly routed. Six days later, before the news reached Constantinople, Mahmud died.

Once more the Ottoman Empire lay at the feet of Muhammad Ali; but the European powers were now more prepared to meet a contingency which had been long foreseen. Their intervention was prompt; and the dubious attitude of France, which led to her exclusion from the concert and encouraged Muhammad Ali to resist, only led to his obtaining less

favorable terms.

End of Ali's rule

The end was reached early in 1841. New firmans were issued which confined the pashas authority to Egypt, the Sinai peninsula and certain places on the Arabian side of the Red Sea, and to the Sudan. The most important of these documents are dated February 13, 1841.

The government of the pashalik of Egypt was made hereditary in the family of Mehemet Ali. A map showing the boundaries of Egypt accompanied the firman granting Mehemet Ali the pashalik, a duplicate copy being retained by the Porte. The Egyptian copy is supposed to have been lost in a fire which destroyed a great part of the Egyptian archives. The Turkish copy has never been produced and its existence now appears doubtful. The point was of importance, as in 1892 and again in 1906 boundary disputes arose between Turkey and Egypt.

Various restrictions were laid upon Muhammad Ali, emphasizing his position as vassal. He was forbidden to maintain a fleet and his army was not to exceed 18,000 men. The pasha was no longer a figure in European politics, but he continued authority to occupy himself with his improvements in Egypt. The long wars combined with a murrain of cattle in 1842 and a destructive Nile flood. In 1843 there was a plague of locusts where whole villages were depopulated. Even the sequestered army was a strain enough for population unaccustomed to the rigidities of the subscription service. Florence Nightingale, the famous British nurse, recounts in her letters from Egypt written in 1849-50, that many an Egyptian family thought it be enough to "protect" their children from the inhumanities of the military service by blinding them in one eye or rendering them unfit by cutting off their limb. But Muhammad Ali was not to be confounded by such tricks of bodily uncompliance, and with that view he set up a special corps of disabled musketeers declaring that one can shoot well enough even with one eye.

Meantime the uttermost farthing was wrung from the wretched fellahin, while they were forced to the building of magnificent public works by unpaid labor. In 1844-1845 there was some improvement in the condition of the country as a result of financial reforms the pasha executed. Muhammad Ali, who had been granted the honorary rank of grand vizier in 1842, paid a visit to Istanbul in 1846, where he became reconciled to his old enemy Khosrev Pasha, whom he had not seen since he spared his life at Cairo in 1803.

In 1847 Muhammad Ali laid the foundation stone of the great bridge across the Nile at the beginning of the Delta. Towards the end of 1847, the aged pasha's mind began to give way, and by the following June he was no longer capable of administering the government. In September 1848 Ibrahim was acknowledged by the Porte as ruler of the pashalik, but he died in the November.

Muhammad Ali survived another eight months, dying on August 2, 1849. He had done a great work in Egypt; the most permanent being the weakening of the tie binding the country to Turkey, the starting of the great cotton industry, the recognition of the advantages of European science, and the conquest of the Sudan.

Muhammad Ali's successors

On Ibrahim's death in November 1848 the government of Egypt fell to his nephew Abbas I, the son of Tusun Abbasad. Abbas put an end to the system of commercial monopolies, and during his reign the railway from Alexandria to Cairo was begun at the instigation of the British government. Opposed to European ways, Abbas lived in great seclusion. After a reign of less than six years he was murdered in July 1854 by two of his slaves.

He was succeeded by his uncle Said Pasha, the favorite son of Mehemet Ali, who lacked the strength of mind or physical health needed to execute the beneficent projects which he conceived. His endeavour, for instance, to put a stop to the slave raiding which devastated the Sudan was wholly ineffectual. He had a genuine regard for the welfare of the fellahin, and a land law of 1858 secured for them an acknowledgment of freehold as against the crown.

The pasha was much under French influence, and in 1854 was induced to grant to the French engineer Ferdinand de Lesseps a concession for the construction of the Suez Canal. Lord Palmerston was opposed to this project, and the British opposition delayed the ratification of the concession by the Porte for two years. To the British, Said also made concessions to the Eastern Telegraph Company, and another in 1854 allowing the establishment of the Bank of Egypt. He also began the national debt by borrowing 3,293,000 from Messrs Fruhling & Gbschen, the actual amount received by the pasha being 2,640,000. In January 1863 Said Pasha died and was succeeded by his nephew Ismail, a son of Ibrahim Pasha.

Ismail the Magnificent

The reign of Ismail, from 1863 to 1879, was for a while hailed as a new era into modern Egypt. He attempted vast schemes of reform, but these coupled with his personal extravagance led to bankruptcy, and the later part of his reign is

historically important simply for its compelling European intervention in the internal affairs of Egypt.

Yet in its earlier years much was done which seemed likely to give Ismail a more important place in history. In 1866 he was granted by the sultan a firman obtained on condition of the increase of the tribute from 376,000 to 720,000. This made the succession to the throne of Egypt descend to the eldest of the male children and in the same manner to the eldest sons of these successors, instead of to the eldest male of the family, following the practice of Turkish law. In the next year another firman bestowed upon him the title of khedive in lieu of that of vali, borne by Mehemet Ali and his immediate successors. In 1873 a further firman placed the khedive in many respects in the position of an independent sovereign.

Ismail re-established and improved Mehemet Ali's administrative system, which had fallen into decay under Abbas's uneventful rule; he caused a thorough remodeling of the customs system, which was in an anarchic state, to be made by English officials; in 1865 he established the Egyptian post office; he reorganized the military schools of his grandfather, and gave some support to the cause of education. Railways, telegraphs, lighthouses, the harbour works at Suez, the breakwater at Alexandria, were carried out by some of the best contractors of Europe. Most important of all, the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. Early in Ismail's reign Egypt took advantage of vastly inflated cotton prices, caused by the American Civil War. Once that conflict ended Ismail had to find new sources of funding to keep his reform efforts alive. Thus the funds required for these public works, as well as the actual labor, were remorselessly extorted from a poverty-stricken population.

A striking picture of the condition of the people at this period is given by Lady Duff Gordon in *Last Letters from Egypt*. Writing in 1867 she said: "I cannot describe the misery here now every day some new tax. Every beast, camel, cow, sheep, donkey and horse is made to pay. The fellaheen can no longer eat bread; they are living on barley-meal mixed with water, and raw green stuff, vetches, &c. The taxation makes life almost impossible: a tax on every crop, on every animal first, and again when it is sold in the market; on every man, on charcoal, on butter, on salt. . . . The people in Upper Egypt are running away by wholesale, utterly unable to pay the new taxes and do the work exacted. Even here (Cairo) the beating for the years taxes is awful."

In the years that followed the condition of things grew worse. Thousands of lives were lost and large sums expended in extending Ismail's dominions in the Sudan and in futile conflicts with Ethiopia. In 1875 the impoverishment of the fellah had reached such a high point that the ordinary resources of the country no longer sufficed for the most urgent necessities of administration; and the khedive Ismail, having repeatedly broken faith with his creditors, could not raise any more loans on the European market. The taxes were habitually collected many months in advance, and the colossal floating debt was increasing rapidly. In these circumstances Ismail had to realize his remaining assets, and among them sold 176,602 Suez Canal shares to the British government for ? 976,582, surrendering Egyptian control of the waterway.

These crises induced the British government to inquire more carefully into the financial condition of the country, where they had many investments. In December 1875, Stephen Cave, MP, and Colonel (afterwards Sir John) Stokes, RE, were sent to Egypt to inquire into the financial situation; and Mr Caves report, made public in April 1876, showed that under the existing administration national bankruptcy was inevitable. European powers used Egypt's indebtedness to extract concessions. Other commissions of inquiry followed, and each one brought Ismail more under European control. The establishment of the Mixed Tribunals in 1876, in place of the system of consular jurisdiction in civil actions, made some of the courts of justice international. The Caisse de la Dette, instituted in May 1876 as a result of the Cave mission, led to international control over a large portion of the revenue. Next came (in November 1876) the mission of Mr (afterwards Lord) Goschen and M. Joubert on behalf of the British and French bondholders, one result being the establishment of Dual Control, i.e. an English official to superintend the revenue and a French official the expenditure of the country. Another result was the internationalization of the railways and the port of Alexandria. Then came (May 1878) a commission of inquiry of which the principal members were Sir Charles Rivers Wilson, Major Evelyn Baring (afterwards Lord Cromer) and MM. Kremer-Baravelli and de Blignires. One result of that inquiry was the extension of international control to the enormous property of the khedive.

Driven to desperation, Ismail made a virtue of necessity and accepted, in September 1878, in lieu of the Dual Control, a constitutional ministry, under the presidency of Nubar Pasha, with Rivers Wilson as minister of finance and de Blignires as minister of public works. Professing to be quite satisfied with this arrangement, he announced that Egypt was no longer in Africa, but a part of Europe; but before seven months had passed he found his constitutional position intolerable, got rid of his irksome cabinet by means of a secretly-organized military riot in Cairo, and reverted to his old autocratic methods of government. England and France, anxious about losing influence under this affront, decided to administer chastisement by the hand of the suzerain power, which was delighted to have an opportunity of asserting its authority. The Europeans and the Sublime Porte decided to force Ismail out of office. On the June 26, 1879 Ismail suddenly received from the sultan a curt telegram, addressed to him as ex-khedive of Egypt, informing him that his son Tewfik was appointed his successor. Surprised, he made no attempt at resistance, and Tewfik was at once proclaimed khedive.

Dual control

After a short period of inaction, when it seemed as if the change might be for the worse, England and France in November 1879, re-established the Dual Control in the persons of Major Baring and M. de Blignieres. For two years the Dual Control governed Egypt, and initiated the work of progress that England was to continue alone. Its essential defect was what might be called insecurity of tenure. Without any efficient means of self-protection and coercion at its disposal, it had to interfere with the power, privileges and perquisites of a class which had long misgoverned the country. This class, so far as its civilian members were concerned, was not very formidable, because these were not likely to go beyond the bounds of intrigue and passive resistance; but it contained a military element who had more courage, and who had learned their power when Ismail employed them for overturning his constitutional ministry.

Among the mutinous soldiers on that occasion was an officer calling himself Ahmed Urabi. He was a charismatic leader who was followed by a group of fellow army officers and many amongst the lower classes. He became the centre of a protest aimed at protecting the Egyptians from the grasping tyranny of their Turkish and European oppressors. The movement began among the Arab officers, who complained of the preference shown to the officers of Turkish origin; it then expanded into an attack on the privileged position and predominant influence of foreigners, many of whom were of a by no means respectable type; finally, it was directed against all Christians, foreign and native. The government, being too weak to suppress the agitation and disorder, had to make concessions, and each concession produced fresh demands. Urabi was first promoted, then made under-secretary for war, and ultimately a member of the cabinet.

The danger of a serious rising brought the British and French fleets in May 1882 to Alexandria. Because of concerns over the safety of the Suez Canal and massive British investments in Egypt the Europeans looked to intervene. The French hesitated, however, and the British alone tried to suppress the revolt. On July 11, 1882, after wide spread revolts in Alexandria, the British fleet bombarded that city. The leaders of the national movement prepared to resist further aggression by force. A conference of ambassadors was held in Constantinople, and the sultan was invited to quell the revolt; but he hesitated to employ his troops against what was far more a threat to European interests.

Egypt occupied by the British

The British government decided to employ armed force, and invited France to cooperate. The French government declined, and a similar invitation to Italy met with a similar refusal. England therefore, acting alone, landed troops at Ismailia under Sir Garnet Wolseley, and suppressed the revolt by the battle of Tell-el-Kebir on September 13, 1882. While this was meant to be only a temporary intervention, British troops would remain in Egypt until 1956.

The khedive, who had taken refuge in Alexandria, returned to Cairo, and a ministry was formed under Sherif Pasha, with Riaz Pasha as one of its leading members. On assuming office, the first thing it had to do was to bring to trial the chiefs of the rebellion. Urabi pleaded guilty, was sentenced to death, the sentence being commuted by the khedive to banishment; and Riaz resigned in disgust. This solution of the difficulty was brought about by Lord Dufferin, then British ambassador at Constantinople, who had been sent to Egypt as high commissioner to adjust affairs and report on the situation. One of his first acts, after preventing the application of capital punishment to the ringleaders of the revolt, was to veto the project of protecting the khedive and his government by means of a Praetorian guard recruited from Asia Minor, Epirus, Austria and Switzerland, and to insist on the principle that Egypt must be governed in a truly liberal spirit. Passing in review all the departments of the administration, he laid down the general lines on which the country was to be restored to order and prosperity, and endowed, if possible, with the elements of self-government for future use.

History of Modern Egypt

The History of Modern Egypt is generally accepted as beginning in 1882, when Egypt became a de facto British colony. This situation persisted until 1922 when Egypt was officially granted independence; British troops, however, remained in the country and true self-rule did not occur until 1952 with the rise to power of Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser. Nasser's one party state has seen many changes but has remained in place, firstly under Anwar Sadat, and until the present day under Hosni Mubarak.

British Occupation

In 1882 Ahmed Urabi led a revolt of Egyptian military officers and commoners against European and Ottoman domination of Egypt. A British expeditionary force crushed this revolt and while this was meant to be a temporary intervention, British troops stayed in Egypt, marking the beginning of British occupation and the virtual inclusion of Egypt within the British Empire. A group known as the Wafd Delegation attended the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 to demand Egypt's independence. Included in the group was political leader, Saad Zaghlul, who would later become Prime Minister. When the group was arrested and deported to the island of Malta, a huge uprising occurred in Egypt.

In March through April of 1919, there were mass demonstrations that became uprisings. This is known in Egypt as the First Revolution. British repression of the anticolonial riots led to the death of some 800 people. In December, 1921, after a brief return, Zaghlul is deported and again, demonstrations led to violence. In deference to the growing nationalism, the UK unilaterally declared Egyptian independence in 1922. British influence, however, continued to dominate Egypt's political life and fostered fiscal, administrative, and governmental reforms.

Representing the Wafd Party, Zaghlul was elected Prime Minister in 1924. He demanded that Egypt and Sudan merge. On November 19, 1924, the British governor general of Sudan, Sir Lee Stack, was assassinated in Cairo and pro-Egyptian riots broke out in Sudan. The British demanded that Egypt pay an apology fee and withdraw troops from Sudan. Zaghlul agreed to the first but not the second and resigned.

In the pre-1952 revolution period, three political forces competed with one another: the Wafd, a broadly based nationalist political organization strongly opposed to British influence; King Fuad, whom the British had installed in 1922; and the British themselves, who were determined to maintain control over the Canal. Other political forces emerging in this period included the communist party (1925) and the Muslim Brotherhood (1928), which eventually became a potent political and religious force.

King Fuad died in 1936 and Faruq inherited the throne at the age of sixteen. Alarmed by Italy's recent invasion of Ethiopia (see Second Italo-Abyssinian War), he signed the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty, requiring Britain to withdraw all troops from Egypt, except at the Suez Canal (agreed to be evacuated by 1949).

During World War II, British troops used Egypt as a base for Allied operations throughout the region, see Military history of Egypt during World War II. British troops were withdrawn to the Suez Canal area in 1947, but nationalist, anti-British feelings continued to grow after the war. On July 22–23, 1952, a group of disaffected army officers (the "free officers") led by Lt Col Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrew King Farouk, whom the military blamed for Egypt's poor performance in the 1948 war with Israel. Popular expectations for immediate reforms led to the workers' riots in Kafr Dawar on August 12, 1952, which resulted in two death sentences. Following a brief experiment with civilian rule, the Free Officers abrogated the 1923 constitution and declared Egypt a republic on June 18, 1953. Nasser evolved into a charismatic leader, not only of Egypt but of the Arab world, promoting and implementing "Arab socialism."

Nasser and Arab socialism

When the United States held up military sales in reaction to Egyptian neutrality vis-a-vis the Soviet Union, Nasser concluded an arms deal with Czechoslovakia in September 1955. When the US and the World Bank withdrew their offer to help finance the Aswan High Dam in mid-1956, Nasser nationalized the privately owned Suez Canal Company. The crisis that followed, exacerbated by growing tensions with Israel over guerrilla attacks from Gaza and Israeli reprisals, support for the FLN's war of liberation against the French in Algeria and against Britain's presence in the Arab world, resulted in the invasion of Egypt in October by France, Britain, and Israel.

Nasser helped establish with India and Yugoslavia the Non-aligned Movement of developing countries in September 1961, and continued to be a leading force in the movement until his death.

Nasser ruled as an autocrat but remained extremely popular within Egypt and throughout the Arab world. His willingness to stand up to the Western powers and to Israel won him support throughout the region. However, Nasser's foreign and military policies were central in provoking the Six Day War. This conflict saw the Egyptian armed forces routed by the Israelis. Israel also occupied the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip. This defeat was a severe blow to Nasser's prestige both at home and abroad. Following the defeat, Nasser made a dramatic offer to resign, which was only retracted in the face of mass demonstrations urging him to stay. The last three years of his control over Egypt were far more subdued.

The Sadat Era

After Nasser's death, another of the original "free officers," Vice President Anwar el-Sadat, was elected President of Egypt. In 1971, Sadat concluded a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union but, a year later, ordered Soviet advisers to leave. In 1973, he launched the Yom Kippur War with Israel, in which Egypt's armed forces achieved initial successes in The Crossing, but were eventually defeated in Israeli counterattacks. However, in a sense the war was a success for Sadat, since it broke the political stalemate with Israel and indirectly led to the later peace agreements.

Domestic Policy and the Infitah

Sadat used his immense popularity with the Egyptian people to try to push through vast economic reforms that ended the socialistic controls of Nasserism. Sadat introduced greater political freedom and a new economic policy, the most important aspect of which was the *infitah* or "open door". This relaxed government controls over the economy and encouraged private investment. While the reforms created a wealthy and successful upper class and a small middle class, these reforms had little effect upon the average Egyptian who began to grow dissatisfied with Sadat's rule.

Liberalization also included the reinstatement of due process and the legal banning of torture. Sadat dismantled much of the existing political machine and brought to trial a number of former government officials accused of criminal excesses during the Nasser era. Sadat tried to expand participation in the political process in the mid-1970s but later abandoned this effort. In the last years of his life, Egypt was wracked by violence arising from discontent with Sadat's rule and sectarian tensions, and it experienced a renewed measure of repression.

International Relations and the Camp David Accords

In foreign relations Sadat also launched momentous change from the Nasser era. President Sadat shifted Egypt from a policy of confrontation with Israel to one of peaceful accommodation through negotiations. Following the Sinai Disengagement Agreements of 1974 and 1975, Sadat created a fresh opening for progress by his dramatic visit to Jerusalem in November 1977. This led to the invitation from President Jimmy Carter of the United States to President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin to enter trilateral negotiations at Camp David.

The outcome was the historic Camp David accords, signed by Egypt and Israel and witnessed by the US on September 17, 1978. The accords led to the March 26, 1979, signing of the Egypt–Israel peace treaty, by which Egypt regained control of the Sinai in May 1982. Throughout this period, US–Egyptian relations steadily improved, and Egypt became one of America's largest recipients of foreign aid. Sadat's willingness to break ranks by making peace with Israel earned him the enmity of most other Arab states, however.

From Sadat to Mubarak

On October 6, 1981, President Sadat was assassinated by Islamic extremists. Hosni Mubarak, Vice President since 1975 and air force commander during the October 1973 war, was elected President later that month. He was subsequently confirmed by popular referendum for three more 6-year terms, most recently in September 2005. The results of the referenda are however of questionable validity as they listed only Mubarak as the sole candidate. President Mubarak has immense control over Egypt. He is even considered by many to be an autocrat, though a moderate one. Mubarak has maintained Egypt's commitment to the Camp David peace process, while at the same time re-establishing Egypt's position as an Arab leader. Egypt was readmitted to the Arab League in 1989. Egypt also has played a moderating role in such international forums as the UN and the Nonaligned Movement.

Since 1991, Mubarak has undertaken an ambitious domestic economic reform program to reduce the size of the public sector and expand the role of the private sector. There has been less progress in political reform. The November 2000 People's Assembly elections saw 34 members of the opposition win seats in the 454-seat assembly, facing a clear majority of 388 ultimately affiliated with the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). The opposition parties have been weak and divided and are not yet credible alternatives to the NDP. The Muslim Brotherhood, founded in Egypt in 1928, remains an illegal organization and may not be recognized as a political party (current Egyptian law prohibits the formation of political parties based on religion). Members are known publicly and openly speak their views, although they do not explicitly identify themselves as members of the organization. Members of the Brotherhood have been elected to the People's Assembly and local councils as independents. The Egyptian political opposition also includes groups and popular movements such as Kifaya, although they seem less organized and therefore more vulnerable to crack-downs.

A dramatic drop in support for Mubarak and his domestic economic reform program increased with surfacing news about his son Alaa being extremely corrupt and favoured in government tenders and privatization. As Alaa started getting out of the picture by 2000, Mubarak's second son Gamal started rising in the National Democratic Party and succeeded in getting a newer generation of neo-liberals into the party and eventually the government. Gamal Mubarak branched out with a few colleagues to set up Medinvest Associates Ltd., which manages a private equity fund, and to do some corporate finance consultancy work.[1]. A corporate finance consultancy firm headed by the President's own son also raises questions of corruption, influence peddling and political power-brokerage, the same type of accusations leveled against his brother Alaa. Due to Gamal's increasing visibility and influence, rumours about him being groomed for the presidency became common. Nevertheless, this was publicly denied by the president several times. Moreover, although some of the public generally likes Gamal Mubarak as a person, many believe that his succession would mean a hereditary pseudo-monarchy (see Family dictatorship).

Source http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Egypt