

of Lower Egypt. These two dynasties form the end of the Second Intermediate Period. In Manetho's history, the seventeenth dynasty consists of five kings and is erroneously labeled "Shepherd Kings again," a term referring to Manetho's fifteenth and sixteenth dynasties. The Turin Canon lists fifteen kings for the same period, which seems to be more in accordance with the number of kings known through contemporary inscriptions. Some of these kings, however, are known only from the Turin Canon and left no monuments that have yet been identified.

Despite several earlier and recent attempts, there is still no clarity with regard to the genealogical relationship between the early kings of the seventeenth dynasty and the last kings of the (Upper Egyptian) thirteenth dynasty. There is also some doubt as to the sequence of kings during the seventeenth dynasty; only for the later part of the dynasty is the sequence of kings reasonably well established through inscribed monuments of the time.

Almost all the known monuments that mention kings of the seventeenth dynasty come from sites in Upper Egypt. The nature and context of sources reveal that the political influence of these kings did not extend beyond the area delimited by Abydos in the north and Edfu/Hierakonpolis in the south. It is, however, interesting to note that the finding-places of these monuments seem to indicate royal building and other activities in areas of considerable strategic, economic, or religious importance. Within the Nile Valley, these sites include Abydos, Deir el-Ballas, Coptos, Medamud, Elkab, and Edfu, and outside the Nile valley, the "Farshut Road," Wadi Hammamat, and Gebel el-Zeit. The main political center, at least at the end of the seventeenth dynasty, seems to have been a city in the vicinity of the modern village of Deir el-Ballas, rather than Thebes, the capital of the eighteenth dynasty. At Deir el-Ballas, on the western bank of the Nile, remains of a large city with two fortified "palaces" have been uncovered. Inscribed blocks indicate that the Theban rulers Djehuty, Sekenenre Ta'ο, and Ahmose were involved in building activities in the city. Opposite Deir el-Ballas, on the eastern bank, lies the important city of Coptos, the point of departure for quarrying, expeditions to the eastern desert and caravans to the Red Sea. From here, the seventeenth dynasty rulers were able to control activities on both the river and the caravan routes.

Among the rulers of the early and middle parts of the Seventeenth dynasty, only a few have left important records: Nebkheperre Antef V is attested in various places throughout Upper Egypt, especially in Coptos, and probably also on a block from a small chapel on the Theban end of the Farshut Road, the main route to the oases of the Western Desert and the north-south caravan routes. More than any other ruler of this dynasty, Antef V is also known from numerous scarabs, both contempo-

SEVENTEENTH DYNASTY. An Upper Egyptian succession (c.1665–1569) of local rulers in the Theban area. It is partially contemporaneous with the fifteenth dynasty

rary and later. King Sobekemsaf I is known for building activities of some scale; blocks and quarry inscriptions with his name are attested in Karnak, Medamud, and Wadi Hammamat.

From the middle of the dynasty comes a monument that sheds some light on the political situation in Upper Egypt. Created during the reign of Sewadjenre Nebiriaw I, the famous Juridical Stela (discovered in the temple of Amun in Karnak) commemorates a sale of the office of governor of Elkab between members of an important military family. Several members of this family held the position of vizier, while others seem to have been connected with the royal families of the thirteenth and seventeenth dynasties. The text of the stela demonstrates the relative independence and power of local clans.

For the rulers at the end of the dynasty, records are more numerous and diversified, granting us some understanding of the political situation as well as of the genealogical relations of the royal family of this and the early eighteenth dynasty. At least four consecutive kings of this period—Sekenenre Ta'ō, Kamose, Ahmose, and Amenhotpe I—were members of the same family, despite the fact that in the Turin Canon the seventeenth dynasty ends with Kamose.

All these kings were to some extent involved in military campaigns against the contemporaneous rulers of the fifteenth dynasty, the Hyksos, who ruled the Nile Delta and parts of northern Egypt from their capital at Avaris (modern Tell ed-Dab'a). A Ramessid literary text seems to indicate a major quarrel between Sekenenre Ta'ō (c.1600–1571 BCE) and the Hyksos king Apophis. The fact that the skull of Sekenenre's well-preserved mummy shows several lethal wounds, some apparently inflicted by non-Egyptian weapons, has been interpreted as the result of the personal involvement of the king in a military clash with the Hyksos.

It is, however, more likely that Sekenenre Ta'ō's son and successor, Kamose, started the so-called wars of liberation against the Asian rulers in the Nile Delta. Two royal stelae erected by Kamose in the temple of Karnak as well as the famous Carnarvon Tablet and several biographical private inscriptions, commemorate the king's raids against his northern opponent. Under Kamose's successors, Ahmose and Amenhotpe I, the wars continued, and the Hyksos were finally expelled from Avaris.

The royal cemetery of the seventeenth dynasty lies in the northern part of the Theban necropolis in an area called Dra Abul Naga, where a number of royal coffins (today in the Cairo Museum, the Louvre, and the British Museum) and other objects of royal burials were found. However, to date no royal tombs of this period have been positively identified. Dra Abul Naga is also the site of a large private cemetery of the period. During recent excavations there by a joint expedition of the German Archae-

ological Institute and the University of California, Los Angeles, several rock-cut tomb shafts and mud-brick superstructures were discovered.

[See also Dra Abul Naga; Hyksos; Kamose; and Second Intermediate Period.]

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