The Lost Histories of the Shetayet of Sokar: Contextualizing the Osiris Shaft at Rosetau (Giza) in Archaeological History

Nicholas Edward Whiting

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The Lost Histories of the Shetayet of Sokar: Contextualizing the Osiris Shaft at Rosetau (Giza) in Archaeological History

By

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Thesis

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The Lost Histories of the Shetayet of Sokar: Contextualization of The Osiris Shaft at Rosetau (Giza) in Archaeological History

Nicholas Edward Whiting
University of Montana
2021

The Osiris Shaft is one of many archaeological signatures associated with Egypt’s Giza Plateau, the most well-known of which are the Great Pyramids. However, the role(s) the Osiris Shaft feature played in the religious and daily practices of ancient Egyptians remain(s) unknown. This research seeks to contextualize the Osiris Shaft in Egyptian history to learn more about this feature’s story. In order to achieve this goal, this thesis examines funerary deities associated with Memphis theology and explores archaeological investigations related to the Osiris Shaft, including the work of Dr. Zahi Hawass and investigations by the Giza Mapping Project. Thanks to modern technology, archaeological discoveries in Egypt are advancing at an exponential rate, and opportunities to solve some of the mysteries associated with the Osiris Shaft (e.g., its original date of construction) are now emerging. After analyzing existing archaeological evidence in tandem with the evolution and transformation of funerary deities leading up to/synonymous with Osiris, the Osiris Shaft may represent the successor of the Shetayet of Sokar.
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### Abbreviations

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AERA</td>
<td>Ancient Egypt Research Associates</td>
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<tr>
<td>APH</td>
<td>African Humid Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCE</td>
<td>American Research Center in Egypt, Cairo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASAE</td>
<td>Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte, Cairo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EES</td>
<td>Egypt Exploration Society, London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPR</td>
<td>Ground Penetrating Radar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HeG</td>
<td>Heit el-Ghurab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKT</td>
<td>Khentkawes Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JEA</td>
<td>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS/SS</td>
<td>Osiris Shaft/Shetayet of Sokar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MVT</td>
<td>Menkaure Valley Temple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRI</td>
<td>Stanford Research Institute</td>
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Part I: Avidya

The Egyptians Didn’t Write History.¹

Chapter I: Project Overview

Introduction

This research explores a passageway associated with the Great Pyramid complex (Figure 1) on the Giza Plateau in Egypt called the Osiris Shaft, also known as the Tomb of Osiris and, as will be shown, the Shetayet of Sokar\(^2\). The OS/SS was constructed one hundred feet below the Giza Plateau, allowing access through the entrance cut into the causeway linking Khafre’s Pyramid to the Sphinx Complex at Giza. The mysterious passageway opens a feature currently mapped in three tiers with preceding vertical shafts allowing access to each tier. Each tier reveals archaeological evidence leading to a sarcophagus on the bottom tier surrounded by a moat and four pillars (Figure 2).

Throughout its archaeological history, the OS/SS has hidden a trove of information, from the first known documentation by Herodotus, c. 430 BC, until Dr. Hassan began proper excavations on the shaft in the 1930s. In 2007, Dr. Hawass published his excavation findings on the OS/SS investigation, dismissing his original claims surmising the feature was the actual site of the funerary god Osiris.\(^3\) Reviewing these preliminary findings in conjunction with new research and sources such as the unprecedented work of the Giza Mapping Project inspires new questions about this mysterious shaft feature on the Giza Plateau. By providing a historical examination of the context(s) associated with the so-called ‘Osiris Shaft’, this research is intended to better understand the link the OS/SS had with the people of Egypt, Giza, and the Underworld.

Dr. Hawass’s theory summarizes the shaft feature as a symbolic site for Osiris. Additionally, results of related research indicate the significance of this site is vastly underrated,

\(^2\) For the rest of this thesis the Osiris Shaft will be known as the Shetayet of Sokar, abbreviated as OS/SS
\(^3\) Z. Hawass. The Discovery of the Osiris Shaft at Giza. FS DB O’Connor 1, 2007: 379-397.
underscoring the need for a more nuanced inquiry such as that presented herein. Ideally, this work will provide future scholars with a contextualized foundation for future research in the area. Given the controversy associated with the OS/SS, it is paramount here to separate and divide the plausible from the implausible. Here I review and synthesize relevant literature, seeking to determine a date/date range of this feature’s construction in an attempt to understand the role(s) the shaft has played in ancient Egyptian history. In so doing, I will have an opportunity to review the current theories resulting from ongoing explorations of the OS/SS.

In addition to the objectives presented above, this document also seeks to highlight preliminary evidence to address several more questions that have come to light during the process of this research. First, what do the artifacts left behind in the shaft indicate about its use(s) over time? Second, who did the tomb(s) in the second and third tiers of the shaft entomb? Third, who constructed/envisioned this overlooked wonder and why? There has been a wide range of controversy surrounding the mud-filled tunnels that branch off from the third-tier shaft. I will examine questions stemming from the story/ies of said features—where they led to and what were their role(s) in ancient times.

The sands of Egypt continue to reveal more information about ancient life with every field season that passes. Looking at the main deities of Giza in relation to the era of reverence on the Plateau and how the deities in question shifted their rule to different sectors, namely the afterlife, are all variables that need to be scrutinized to understand the paradigm shift(s) that occurred over the millennia. With the help of the revolutionary excavations during the Giza Mapping Project, Dr. Lehner and his associates are providing an extensive look into life on Giza allowing the development of the further understanding of key information/components surrounding life/death in ancient Egypt.
This thesis research integrates various lines independent evidence and models relevant to the chronology of the Giza Plateau. The objective is to investigate the context, construction, and history of the OS/SS at Giza to contribute to the current, limited framework used to date and identify the OS/SS. Spanning early human settlements of the region to the collapse of ancient Egyptian society, I intend to triangulate a probable date range or at least minimize the window for the construction of the so-called OS/SS. The primary method of this research will rely on integrating archaeological evidence with historic, geomorphological, and climate change models to lend insight to the reasons the Giza Plateau served as the venue for such iconic wonders of the ancient world.

The deities of ancient Egypt evolved to serve needs of ancient ways of life. This is evident through what their deities symbolized. Their religion was ever changing, not only in terms of what the gods and goddesses stood for, but also because the deities themselves were constantly shifting and merging. The remainder of the chapters here will focus on four specific deities: Sokar, Osiris, Tatenen and Ptah. Screening the evolution of these four deities throughout ancient Egyptian history is intended to answer the questions presented in this thesis using three distinct methods. First, I question and analyze region(s) that held the above-named deities in the highest regard in relation to which era these benevolent gods were held in such reverence. Second, I reexamine Dr. Hawass’s excavations and publications and review the work of Mark Lehner and AERA over the last couple decades to track references to and inquiry relevant to the shaft named after Osiris, attempting to flesh out the potential for the shaft to be associated with another deity, if any, should be represented in its place. Finally, I will examine myths

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4 Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
associated with the above-named deities to study whether and how they evolved in relation to how the changes of ancient Egyptian religion(s) over time.
Chapter 2: The Excavation of the Osiris Shaft

Introduction

During the early 21st century, Dr. Zahi Hawass excavated an ancient shaft on the Giza Plateau between Khafre’s pyramid and the Sphinx. The shaft extends down one-hundred feet into the bedrock, exposing three separate tiers. Dr. Hawass linked the shaft to the Egyptian deity Osiris for several reasons which are explored later in this chapter. The strong correlation made between this unusual tomb structure and the great god of the dead has resulted in the feature being referred to as the OS/SS.

Although several attempts to date the shaft have been employed, the date and use of the shaft is widely debated. Dr. Hawass has recently asserted that he can unequivocally date the (re)use of the OS/SS to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty, but his inquiry did not go back as far as the original excavation of the Shaft into the Giza Plateau. While much of this chapter will focus on the excavations conducted by Dr. Hawass, other perspectives are also considered to ensure this project provides a comprehensive overview about all that is known about this feature.

Dr. Hawass’s Excavation: The Layout

Dr. Hawass’s excavation report was published as an article in a compilation of essays in Honor of David B. O’Connor. In the summer of 1999, Dr. Hawass and his team made the decision to excavate the forgotten shaft. For the first time since Herodotus, the water table offered a chance to gaze at the wonders below Khafre’s causeway. Before any major undertakings were set in motion or plans to excavate were commenced, Dr. Hawass sent divers

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7 Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
8 Ibid.
9 Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
10 Hawass, Magic of the Pyramids, 2015.
11 Blakeney and Rawlinson, Herodotus, 1964.
down into the water of the shaft to collect any surviving artifacts. His goal was to use the divers to determine if the project warranted such a massive undertaking. After the divers observed artifacts and structural features worth investigating, Dr. Hawass agreed to further explorations.

Several challenges still had to be addressed before excavations were even considered. One of the more mammoth hurdles included the fact that the water in the shaft had not retreated as far as Dr. Hawass assumed. All the water had to be properly pumped and drained in order for the shaft to undergo proper excavations. Additionally, there was concern that the drainage of the water might increase the size of the cracks in the walls of the shaft. The solution to this was to apply plaster to the cracks to help stabilize them; in turn, the repaired cracks could act as warning signs if any shifting took place during excavations.

To get to the OS/SS one would have to travel along the causeway connecting the Great Sphinx and Khafre's funerary temple. The entrance can be discovered in the floor of a shallow tunnel running from north to south under the causeway of Khafre. The engineering work of the shaft is a marvelous feat and the layout (Figure 3) is described as follows:

1. Shaft A
2. Level One with Chamber A
3. Shaft B
4. Level Two with Chambers B through H
5. Shaft C
6. Level three with Chamber I

After entering the shaft and leaving all trace of natural light (Figure 4), the descent into Shaft A begins immediately. The descent into the plateau is 9.62 meters down until the first level’s landing platform is revealed, running about 8.6 m long. Level one consists of a rectangular

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12 Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
13 Ibid.
14 Z. Hawass. The Funerary Establishments of Khufu, Khafra and Menkaura During the Old Kingdom, Egypt Pyramids, 1987.
chamber (Chamber A) extending north from the floor of Shaft A. As one enters the second shaft (Shaft B) the descent extends another 13.25 m until to level two (Figure 5). Level two is filled with seven niches that are cut into the bedrock; these niches are labeled B-H (Figure 6). The width of this level (east-west) is 2.60 m wide, and the length (north-south) measures 6.80 m. The last shaft (shaft C) takes a 7.5 m descent to the last tier, which is level three (Figure 7). Level three is the main level of the complex. The eastern wall measures 8.84 m, the southern wall measures 8.60 m, the length of western wall is 9.08 m and the northern wall is 9.20 m.

After descending Shaft A and arriving on level one, there is an empty chamber. After descending into shaft B and arriving at the second level, a room contains artifacts. Level two includes chamber B which bear chambers C to H which were carved from Chamber B. Chamber C located 0.40 m northwest of the exit from the second shaft. The chamber was excavated from the south side. A sarcophagus of granite was discovered, set into a pit that had been cut into the floor. The badly decayed remains of a skeleton were discovered inside the sarcophagus, along with the remains of shabtis and pottery sherds from the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. The shape of the sarcophagus unequivocally dates it to the Twenty-sixth.15 Chamber D is located approximately one meter north of Chamber C and had not been explored prior to our expedition. A basalt sarcophagus in the style of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty was discovered inside this chamber. In this chamber a large number of Twenty-sixth Dynasty shabtis and pottery sherds were discovered on the south side of the sarcophagus.16

Chamber E is located roughly 0.85 m north of Chamber D. On the north side of the floor, 0.80 m from the northern wall, is a small rectangular pit carved into the living rock with no artifacts discovered in this chamber. Moving north we reach chamber F which was cut directly

15 Ibid.
16 Hawass, Magic of the Pyramids, 2015.
from the north wall of Chamber B. Here no artifacts presented themselves. Chamber G is cut into the east wall of Chamber B. This chamber contains basalt sarcophagus, rectangular in shape with a curved front, which fills it completely and extends into the chamber. The remains of human bones, shabtis of blue faience, and pottery shards found near the sarcophagus date to the late period. The last chamber, Chamber H, is located about one m south of Chamber G and does not contain any archaeological evidence.\textsuperscript{17}

Once one is about to make the decent down Shaft C there is a rectangular niche cut into the rock, which are similar in size and shape to the burial chambers, on the second level. There are seven rectangular niches carved into the walls before the descent down Shaft C: four large ones, two each in the northeast and southwest walls; and three small, one in the northeast and two in the southeast walls. Suggestions have been made considering these holes might have been used for lowering a large basalt sarcophagus down the shaft by using wooden beams.\textsuperscript{18} Level 3 is down another 7.5 m, with Chamber one representing the main level of the complex, consisting of a large square chamber that extends to the west of Shaft C. A large basalt sarcophagus stands in a water-filled emplacement in the center of this chamber.

Chamber one extends to the west of the floor of Shaft C. A narrow ledge runs partially around the interior of the walls of the chamber. In the center of the chamber is a rectangular tomb, carved from the living rock, with the remains of square pillars at each of its four corners. The presence of this emplacement creates the effect of a trench running between it and the chamber walls. There are also the remnants of the four pillars or pillar bases, which also carved into the surrounding rock, which since have been in ruins. The floor at the entrance to the chamber, stretching from the exit of the pit to the central emplacement, has been left at the level

\textsuperscript{17} Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
\textsuperscript{18} Hawass, Magic of the Pyramids, 2015.
of the emplacement. This trench is generally filled with water. The burial chamber is thus similar to an island with the sarcophagus in the middle surrounded by water. In the center of the emplacement is a rectangular pit. Inside this pit lies a pseudo-anthropoid sarcophagus of black basalt. Its lid was discovered on the floor of Shaft C; Dr, Hawass’s team moved it to a place over the sarcophagus, supported with wooden beams. The dimensions of the main and only sarcophagi on Level 3 measures as follows: the exterior length is 228 cm, the exterior width is 108 cm, the interior length measures 200 cm and the interior width comes to seventy-two cm. The measurement of lid is as follows: the length is roughly five cm, the width is 108 cm, the thickness comes out to 35 cm. The remains of a skeleton were discovered in the sarcophagus. Two schist amulets, scarabs, primarily heart scarabs, and amulets in the shape of djed-pillars date the tomb to the Late Period. The amulets and scarabs were discovered on the north side of the chamber. An unusual find was red polished pottery with traces of white paint, which can be dated stylistically to the Old Kingdom, specifically to the Sixth Dynasty.  

Archaeological Evidence Produced from the Excavation

Dr. Hawass’s 2007 excavation report mentions nine main finds within the shaft, most which can be dated to the late period. They are as follows:

1. Amulet in the shape of two fingers (Figure 8)
   Material: obsidian
   Length: 10.8 cm
   Width below: 2.7 cm
   Width above: 2.2 cm
   Thickness below: 0.9 cm
   Thickness above: 0.7 cm
   This amulet is in the shape of two fingers showing the index and middle finger. The nails are delineated by two incised round lines, and the joints are also defined. The fingers are well polished. The amulet was put in the opened area of the stomach during mummification.

2. Amulet in the shape of two fingers (Figure 8)

Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
Material: obsidian
Length: 8 cm
Width along the top of the nails: 2 cm
Width at the bottom of the fingers: 0.9 cm
Thickness at the bottom: 1.1 cm
Similar to number one

3. Scarab (Figure 9)
Material: Diorite
Length: 2.6 cm
Width: 2 cm
Few details are evident. The scarab has an oval shape and is represented with a realistic underside. The scarab dates to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty.

4. Scarab (Figure 10)
Material: Schist
Length: 2.5 cm
Width of the stomach: 1.7 cm
Thickness at the legs: 1.2 cm
Thickness without legs: 0.9 cm
This scarab is partially broken but enough remains to show that it was beautifully carved. Its shape is an elongated oval.

5. Bead (Figure 11)
Material: Diorite
Height: 0.8 cm
Outer Diameter: 1 cm
This small bead of diorite is well polished and has a hole for hanging.

6. wȝd Pillar (Figure 12)
Material: Faience
Height: 2.9 cm
Width at the top: 0.9 cm
Width of pillar at bottom: 5 cm
This amulet in the shape of the hieroglyph wȝd is made of green faience. It has a hole for hanging.

7. Amulet in the shape of Atef-plumes (Figure 13)
Material: Faience
Length: 2.8 cm
Width: 1.3 cm
Thickness: 0.4 cm
This amulet is in the shape of the Atef-plumes and is made of blue faience. The wearing of the amulet with Atef-plumes identified the deceased with the gods.

8. Amulet in the shape of Atef-plumes (Figure 13)
This amulet is in the shape of the Atef-plumes and is made of blue faience.

9. Amulet in the shape of Horus (Figure 14)
Material: Basalt
Length: 2.5 cm
Width: 0.5 cm

This small amulet represents Horus with the body of a man and a head of a Hawk. A pillar supports the back of the amulet.

There are two key points left out of the excavation which I address here. The first is a ‘mysterious black goo’ which was left mainly over some of the sarcophagi on the second level; apparently, ancient Egyptians used such 'black goo' to cover wooden coffins and mummy cases of 'social elites'; the substance was made from a mixture of animal fat, tree resin, beeswax and crude oil from the Dead Sea. The second key point is the unfinished excavation—the water on the last tier would not sufficiently drain so there is still information available via underwater archaeology.

This archaeological evidence still needs to be interpreted in context to interpret and understand the history of the so-called OS/SS; such an endeavor is intended to provide an unprecedented examination of the shaft prior to Hawass’s assumed date of Fifth Dynasty construction. Understanding any civilization in lieu of their historical, geological and cultural context, the focus of the section below, is paramount when devolving an analysis within the closest original perspective as possible.

21 L. Andrews. Mysterious 'black goo' used by ancient Egyptians to cover wooden coffins and mummy cases of 'social elites' was made from a mixture of animal fat, tree resin, beeswax and crude oil from the Dead Sea. dailyMail.co.uk. 2020.
Part II: The Osiris Shaft in Cultural, Geological, and Historical Context
Chapter 3: A Comprehensive Glance into the Transformation of Ancient Egyptian Religion

Introduction

The ancient Egyptians practiced monotheistic and polytheistic religious dynamics based on what the current pharaoh or the pharaoh’s top advisors demanded and/or tried to obtain for their legacy, dynasty, and the land. However, for the most part, religion developed around the worship of thousands of deities such as Ra, Anubis, Isis, Osiris, and Horus.²²

The worship of natural forces was an interesting but important aspect of the religion. Elaborate rites and rituals were defined by the religion to appease gods and goddesses; and natural disasters and ailments were presumed to be the result of the gods’/goddess’ discontent with human subjects. To ensure these immortals were in a constant state of gratification, ancient Egyptians prepared and presented offerings to gain favor of the gods.²³ Animal worship was another important aspect of the Egyptian religion, so much so, that most of the Egyptian deities were ascribed animal heads, bodies, totems, or familiars.²⁴ Belief in the divine origin of royalty was a key factor in holding together social order in ancient Egypt. In the Old Kingdom, the pharaoh was believed to be a descendent of the gods and was ascribed magical powers to intercede with the gods on behalf of the common people. For example, the Pharaoh Akhenaten, King Tutankhamun’s father, went as far as prohibiting the worship of any deity other than Aten; even though the Egyptians complied under duress and fear of Akhenaten’s wrath, worship of the other gods was reestablished soon after Akhenaton’s rule.²⁵

A Brief Overview of Religion of Ancient Egypt

²³ Ibid.
Religion was a vital part of ancient Egyptian culture. Their religion was strongly influenced by tradition.\textsuperscript{26} For the most part, ancient Egyptians did not challenge the beliefs that had been handed down to them, even though the religion constantly changed over time. Their main purpose was to emulate the conditions which they believed had existed at the dawn of creation.\textsuperscript{27} Ancient Egyptian religion is very diverse because of the constant growth and evolution of religious beliefs over many centuries. New dogmas were constantly being put into their world without, for the most part, taking any old beliefs taken out.\textsuperscript{28}

The ancient Egyptian culture held that the diversity of beliefs and gods and goddesses was acceptable because it came directly from the pharaoh. The pharaohs were believed to be in direct contact with the gods and their word was not to be challenged.\textsuperscript{29} The people looked to the images of gods as natural no matter how strange or diverse, including half man and animal deities. The myths about these gods were meant to explain the behavior of the forces they represented.\textsuperscript{30} One of the main points of ancient Egyptian religion was to provide for the gods and gain their favor. The religion had its roots in ancient Egypt’s prehistory and lasted for more than 3,000 years. The details of religious belief changed over time as the significance of particular gods rose and their relationships altered. Throughout various times, certain gods and goddesses became greater forces than the other deities, at other times, several gods and goddesses transformed into one sole deity.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{26} Jeffreys, Heliopolis and Memphis, 1998, 63-71.
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{28} C. Aldred, Egypt to the End of the Old Kingdom. McGraw-Hill, 1971.
\textsuperscript{30} Kemp, Anatomy of a Civilization, 2006.
Religion and religious cults played a central role in all aspects of ancient Egyptian society. In Egyptian belief, three types of sentient beings inhabited this cosmos. One type included numerous gods and goddesses. A second included the spirits of deceased humans, who existed in the divine realm and possessed many of the gods' abilities. The third type of being was living humans. Among the human realm, the most important among them was the pharaoh. The pharaohs were considered the most important for several reasons, namely that they were believed to bridge the human and divine realms. The king, or pharaoh, was the most important figure in religion as well as in the state. His responsibilities included ensuring the prosperity and security of the state through his relationship with the gods. Ancient Egypt had a remarkably large and diverse pantheon of deities, with many national, regional, and local gods and goddesses. Unlike the gods of some cultures, who lived in a special place in the heavens, Egyptian deities were thought to inhabit the temples of their cults. Daily temple rituals involved caring for the gods and providing them with food, clothing, and other necessities.

Very few actual Egyptian myths have been preserved from ancient times. Modern scholars have reconstructed stories from such sources as hymns, ritual texts, magical incantations, images on temple walls, in some books and decorations on tombs and coffins. Some bigger myths about major deities were known and valued throughout Egypt. However, many gods and the legends about them had only regional significance. Even the widespread myths often changed or adapted to new situations over the millennia, resulting in numerous

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33 Wilson, Culture, 2013.
37 Such as the Book of the Dead.
variations of a particular story, with the original myth being long lost or unknown. The gods were powerful and for the most part immortal, but their influence and knowledge had limits. Still, they had the ability to be in several places at the same time and could affect humans in many ways. Although generally benevolent, gods could bring misfortune and harm if humans failed to please them or care for them properly.

Egyptian deities were bestowed with shifting identities as time passed mixed with ancient Egyptian iconoclasm. Many did not have clearly defined characters, and their personalities varied from one myth to another. Although most deities were known by certain basic associations, such as the connection of the god Ra with the sun, these associations often overlapped with those of other gods. Some deities possessed a collection of names to go with the different sides of their personality. For example, the goddess Hathor, who helped the sun god, was also called the Eye of Ra. Sometimes the names and characters of two or more gods were combined to form one deity, such as the combination of the sky god Amun and Ra (Re) to create Amun-Ra. The same god Ra was merged with the creator god Atum to become Atum-Ra. Nevertheless, such deities might continue to exist separately as well as in their combined forms. Egyptian gods also could assume different forms, often combining both human and animal features. If a deity was closely associated with a specific animal or bird, they might be depicted in art and text with a human body and the head of that animal or entirely in animal form. For example, Horus appears with the head of a falcon, Sekhmet with the head of a cat, and

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40 Baines, and Shafer, Religion, 99.
Set is portrayed as a donkey or huge dog. Sometimes a god was linked to several animals, each reflecting a different side of their character.\textsuperscript{47}

The ancient Egyptians had elaborate beliefs about death and the afterlife. They believed that humans possessed a Ka, or life-force, which left the body at the point of death. In life, the Ka received its sustenance from food and drink, so it was believed that to endure after death, the Ka must continue to receive offerings of food, whose spiritual essence it could still consume.\textsuperscript{48}

Each person also had a Ka, the set of spiritual characteristics unique to each individual.\textsuperscript{49} Unlike the Ka, the Ba remained attached to the body after death. Egyptian funeral rituals were intended to release the Ba from the body so that it could move freely, and to rejoin it with the Ka so that it could live on as an akh.\textsuperscript{50} However, it was also important that the body of the deceased be preserved, as the Egyptians believed that the Ba returned to its body each night to receive new life, before emerging in the morning as an akh.\textsuperscript{51}

This was not always the original view of ancient Egyptians. Originally, they believed that only the pharaoh had a Ba, and only he could become one with the gods. It was believed that dead commoners passed into a dark, bleak realm that represented the opposite of life. The nobles received tombs and the resources for their upkeep as gifts from the king, and their ability to enter the afterlife was believed to be dependent on these royal favors.\textsuperscript{52} In early times, the deceased pharaoh was believed to ascend to the sky and dwell among the stars.\textsuperscript{53}

During the late Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period, the ancient Egyptians gradually came to believe that possession of a Ba and the possibility of a paradisiacal afterlife

\textsuperscript{48} T. Lekov. Ancient Egyptian Notion of Ka according to the Pyramid Texts. JES 2, 2005: 11-37.
\textsuperscript{49} Morenz. Egyptian Religion, 2013.
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid.
extended to everyone.\textsuperscript{54} In the fully developed afterlife beliefs of the New Kingdom, the soul had to avoid a variety of supernatural dangers in Duat, before undergoing a final judgment known as the ‘weighing of the heart’ judgment. In this judgment, the gods compared the actions of the deceased while alive\textsuperscript{55} to Ma'at, to determine whether they had behaved in accordance with the guidelines of the immortals.\textsuperscript{56} If the deceased was judged worthy, their Ka and Ba were united into an akh.\textsuperscript{57}

Several beliefs coexisted about the akh's destination. Often the dead were said to dwell in the realm of Osiris, a lush and pleasant land in the Underworld. The solar vision of the afterlife, in which the deceased soul traveled with Ra on his daily journey, was still primarily associated with royalty, but could extend to other people as well.\textsuperscript{58} Over the course of the Middle and New Kingdoms, the notion that the akh could also travel in the world of the living, and to some degree magically affect events there, became increasingly prevalent.\textsuperscript{59}

The ancient Egyptians believed that life in the mortal world was short in comparison to eternity in the afterlife. They, therefore, had two concepts of time for 'the eternal cycle of life of earth'\textsuperscript{60} and 'life in the eternity of the kingdom of the dead'.\textsuperscript{61} In the first concept of time, 'Neheh' means a period of time in which something exists, renews and repeats, it is a finite time.\textsuperscript{62} The second concept is 'Djet' refers to the future in which earthly life will have ended and everything accomplished in life lives for an indefinite amount of time in Duat\textsuperscript{63}

\textsuperscript{54} Romano, J. 1990.
\textsuperscript{55} Symbolized by the heart.
\textsuperscript{56} Taylor, Death, 2001.
\textsuperscript{57} Romano, J. 1990.
\textsuperscript{58} Taylor, Death, 2001.
\textsuperscript{60} Translates to: neheh - nḥḥ.
\textsuperscript{61} Translates to: djet - ḫt.
Ancient Egyptian deities and the myths that surround them were two of the most important parts of ancient Egyptian religion. They represent natural phenomena, from physical objects like the earth or the sun to abstract forces like knowledge and creativity. The actions and interactions of the gods, the Egyptians believed, govern the behavior of all these forces and elements.\textsuperscript{64} For the most part, the Egyptians did not describe these mysterious processes in explicit theological writings. Instead, the relationships and interactions of the gods illustrated such processes implicitly.\textsuperscript{65}

Most of Egypt's gods, including many of the major ones, do not have significant roles in mythic narratives, although their nature and relationships with other deities are often established in lists or bare statements without narration. For the gods who would have been deeply involved in narratives, the events of mythology were extremely important expressions of their roles in the cosmos.\textsuperscript{66} The myths were not meant as literal descriptions of the gods or their behavior, although unsophisticated segments of the Egyptian populace may have thought myths were literally true.\textsuperscript{67} The events in mythology were symbolic of events that take place in the realm of the gods and that, therefore, are beyond direct human understanding. Symbolism expresses those mysterious processes in a comprehensible way.\textsuperscript{68} Not every detail of a mythic account had/has symbolic significance; however, some images and incidents in primarily religious texts were meant simply as visual or dramatic embellishments of the broader and more meaningful myths to which they have been added.\textsuperscript{69}

\textsuperscript{64} Pinch, Guide to the Gods, 2004.
\textsuperscript{65} Wilson, Culture, 2013.
\textsuperscript{66} Morenz, Egyptian Religion, 2013.
\textsuperscript{67} Wilson, Culture, 2013.
\textsuperscript{68} Shaw, Egyptian Myths, 2014.
Much of Egyptian mythology consists of origin myths, explaining the beginnings of various elements of the world, including human institutions and natural phenomena. Kingship is said to have arisen among the gods at the beginning of time and later passed to the human pharaohs. An example of this is how warfare originated. It is believed that warfare originated when humans begin fighting each other after the sun god's withdrawal into the sky. Myths also describe the supposed beginnings of less fundamental traditions. In a minor mythic episode, the god Horus becomes angry with his mother Isis and cuts off her head. Isis replaces her lost head with that of a cow. This event is apparently meant to explain why Isis was sometimes depicted with the horns of a cow incorporated into her headdress.

There are few complete stories which appear in Egyptian mythological sources. These sources often contain nothing more than illusions to the events to which they relate, as well as texts that contain actual narratives tell only portions of a larger story. Thus, for any given myth, the ancient Egyptians may have had only the general outlines of a story, from which fragments describing particular incidents were drawn. The gods are not well-defined characters, and the motivations for their inconsistent actions are rarely given. Egyptian myths are not well-developed tales. Their importance lay in their underlying meaning, not their characteristics as stories. The myths of ancient Egypt were so flexible they constantly conflicted with each other. This can be seen through the many creation myths throughout the world, as well as the explanations of the movements of the sun, yet some of these myths are very different from each

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71 G. Shaw, Egyptian Myths. 2014.
72 Hart, Myths, 1990.
other. The relationships between gods were also very inconsistent; for instance, the goddess Hathor could be called the mother, wife, or daughter of the sun god Ra.\textsuperscript{74}

One reason for these obvious inconsistencies is that religious ideas differed over time and in different locations. Gods that were once local patron deities gained national importance with the unification of Egypt around 3100 BC. This event likely inspired myths that linked the local gods into a unified national tradition.\textsuperscript{75} The local cults continued to exist and their priests formulated myths that emphasized the importance of their patron gods. As the influence of different cults shifted, some mythological systems attained national dominance. In the Old Kingdom, for example, the cults of Ra and Atum, centered at Heliopolis, profoundly influenced Egyptian religion. They formed a mythical family, the Ennead, which incorporated the most important deities of the time but gave primacy to Atum and Ra.\textsuperscript{76} The Egyptians also overlaid old religious ideas with new ones. For instance, the god Amun was so prominent in the New Kingdom that he was linked with Ra, the older supreme god, and took on many of Ra's roles in the cosmos.\textsuperscript{77} In this way the Egyptians produced an immensely complicated set of deities and myths. The same can be said between the separate roles the triad Ptah-Sokar-Osiris took among themselves keeping order within the cosmos.

Egyptologists in the early twentieth century thought that politically motivated changes like these were the principal reason for the contradictory imagery in Egyptian myth.\textsuperscript{78} Realizing the symbolic nature of Egyptian mythology, Egyptologist argued that apparently contradictory ideas are part of the ‘multiplicity of approaches’ that the Egyptians used to understand the divine

\textsuperscript{74} Shaw, Egyptian Myths, 2014.
\textsuperscript{75} Frankfort, An Interpretation, 2012.
\textsuperscript{76} Breasted, Development of Religion, 1972.
\textsuperscript{77} Hornung and Baines, Conceptions, 1996.
realm. Frankfort's arguments are the basis for much of the more recent analysis of Egyptian beliefs. Political changes affected Egyptian beliefs, but the ideas that emerged through those changes also have deeper meaning. \(^{79}\) Multiple versions of the same myth express different aspects of the same phenomenon. Different gods that behave in a similar way reflect the close connections between natural forces. The varying symbols of Egyptian mythology express ideas too complex to be seen through a single lens. I believe Frankfort captured this concept the best:

> The Egyptian gods are imperfect as individuals. If we compare two of them…we find, not two personages, but two sets of functions and emblems…. The hymns and prayers addressed to these gods differ only in the epithets and attributes used. There is no hint that the hymns were addressed to individuals differing in character. \(^{80}\)

**How has Religion Evolved through the Dynasties of Ancient Egypt?**

Ancient Egyptian religion was a complex system of polytheistic beliefs and rituals which were an integral part of ancient Egyptian society. This system centered on the Egyptians' interaction with a multitude of deities who were believed to be present in, and in control of, the forces and elements of nature. \(^{81}\) The myths about these gods were meant to explain the origins and behavior of the forces they represented. The practices of Egyptian religion were efforts to provide for the gods and gain their favor. \(^{82}\)

> Formal religious practice centered on the pharaoh, the king of Egypt. Although he was a human, the pharaoh was believed to be descended from the gods and bridged the gap between realms. \(^{83}\) In the Old Kingdom the pharaoh acted as the intermediary between his people and the gods and was obligated to sustain the gods through rituals and offerings so that they could

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\(^{81}\) Breasted, Religion and Thought, 1972.


\(^{83}\) Wilson, Culture, 2013.
maintain order in the universe. Therefore, the state dedicated enormous resources to the performance of these rituals and to the construction of the temples where they were carried out. Individuals could also interact with the gods for their own purposes, appealing for their help through prayer or compelling them to act through magic. These popular religious practices were distinct from, but closely linked with, the formal rituals and institutions. The popular religious tradition grew more prominent in the course of Egyptian history as the status of the pharaoh declined. Another important aspect of the religion was the belief in the afterlife and funerary practices. The Egyptians made great efforts to ensure the survival of their souls after death, providing tombs, grave goods, and offerings to preserve the bodies and spirits of the deceased.

The beliefs and rituals now referred to as ancient Egyptian religion existed within every aspect of Egyptian culture. Indeed, their language possessed no single term corresponding to the modern Western concept of religion. Ancient Egyptian religion was not a monolithic institution, rather it consisted of a vast and varying set of beliefs and practices, linked by their common focus on the interaction between the world of humans and the world of the divine. The characteristics of the gods who populated the divine realm were inextricably linked to the Egyptians' understanding of the properties of the world in which they lived.

The Egyptians believed that the phenomena of nature were divine forces in and of themselves. These deified forces included the elements, animal characteristics, or abstract forces. The Egyptians believed in a pantheon of gods, which were involved in all aspects of

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88 Wilson, Culture, 2013.
nature and human society. Their religious practices were efforts to sustain and placate these phenomena and turn them to human advantage. This polytheistic system was very complex, as some deities were believed to exist in many different manifestations, and some had multiple mythological roles. Conversely, many natural forces, such as the sun, were associated with multiple deities. The diverse pantheon ranged from gods with vital roles in the universe to minor deities with very limited or localized functions. It could include gods adopted from foreign cultures, and sometimes even humans. For example, deceased pharaohs were believed to be divine, and occasionally, distinguished commoners such as Imhotep also became deified.

There is much debate among scholars regarding how to interpret depictions of the gods. It is better understood now that the depictions of the gods in art were not meant as literal representations of how the gods might appear if they were visible, as the gods’ true natures were believed to be mysterious. Instead, these depictions gave recognizable forms to the abstract deities by using symbolic imagery to indicate each god's role in nature. Thus, for example, the funerary god Anubis was portrayed as a jackal, a creature whose scavenging habits threatened the preservation of the body, in an effort to counter this threat and employ it for protection. Anubis’ black skin was symbolic of the color of mummified flesh and the fertile black soil that Egyptians saw as a symbol of resurrection. However, this iconography was not fixed, and many of the gods could be depicted in more than one form.

Deities could be given epithets that seem to indicate that they were greater than any other god, suggesting some kind of unity beyond the multitude of natural forces. In particular, this is

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89 Frankfort, An Interpretation, 2012.
90 Watterson, Gods, 2013.
93 Wilson, Culture, 2013.
true of a few gods who, at various times in history, rose to supreme importance in Egyptian religion.\textsuperscript{94} These included the royal patron Horus, the sun god Ra, and the mother goddess Isis. During the New Kingdom, Amun held this position. The theology of the period described in particular detail Amun's presence in and rule over all things, so that he, more than any other deity, embodied the all-encompassing power of the divine.\textsuperscript{95}

Much scholarly debate continues about whether a specific event caused the shift in religion or if religious ideas slowly progressed through time. Morenz,\textsuperscript{96} for example, points out that the evolution of ancient Egypt’s was a slow process over time, concluding that beneath the polytheistic traditions there was an increasing belief in a unity of the divine, thus assisting in the move toward monotheism. There are several instances in ancient Egyptian literature where god (singular) is mentioned without reference to any specific deity. Hornung and Baines,\textsuperscript{97} pointed out that the traits of an apparently supreme being could be attributed to many different gods, even in periods when other gods were preeminent; they further argued that references to an unspecified god are meant to refer flexibly to any deity. While some individuals may have chosen one god to worship, Egyptian religion, as a whole had no notion of a divine being beyond the immediate multitude of deities. On the other side of the debate scholars such as Assmann\textsuperscript{98} and Allen\textsuperscript{99} have since asserted that the ancient Egyptians did, to some degree, recognize a single divine force. Allen,\textsuperscript{100} continues to assert that the notion of an underlying unity of the divine coexisted inclusively with the polytheistic tradition. It is possible that only the ancient Egyptian

\textsuperscript{95} H. Te-Velde. Theology, Priests, and Worship in Ancient Egypt. Civilizations of the Ancient Near East 3 1995.
\textsuperscript{96} Morenz. Egyptian Religion, 2013.
\textsuperscript{97} Hornung and Baines, Conceptions, 1996.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid.
theologians fully recognized this underlying unity, but it is also possible that ordinary ancient Egyptians identified the single divine force with a single god in particular situations.\textsuperscript{101}

The ancient Egyptians experienced a period with some form of monotheism during the New Kingdom, in which the Pharaoh Akhenaten abolished the official worship of other gods in favor of the sun-disk Aten.\textsuperscript{102} This is often seen as the first instance of true monotheism in ancient history. The exclusion of all but one god was a radical departure from Egyptian tradition, some argue the fact that he did not actively deny the existence of other gods; rather, he simply refrained from worshipping any but the Aten.\textsuperscript{103} Atenism, or the Amarna heresy, refers to the religious changes associated with the Eighteenth Dynasty Pharaoh Amenhotep IV, better known under his adopted name, Akhenaten.\textsuperscript{104} The Aten, the god of Atenism, first appears in texts dating to the Twelfth Dynasty, in the Story of Sinuhe.\textsuperscript{105} The Aten was a relatively obscure sun god; without the Atenist period, it would barely have figured in Egyptian history. Although there are indications that the Aten was becoming slightly more important in the Eighteenth Dynasty, notably because of Amenhotep III's naming of his royal barge as the Spirit of the Aten.\textsuperscript{106} However, it was Amenhotep IV who introduced the Atenist revolution, in a series of steps, culminating in the official installment of the Aten as Egypt's sole god.\textsuperscript{107} The concept of taking one deity as the main god under the rule of a pharaoh is not unprecedented. There had never been an attempt to exclude other deities, and the multitude of gods was tolerated and worshipped at all times. During the reign of Thutmosis IV, Aten was identified as a distinct solar god, and his son

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\textsuperscript{101} Baines, and Shafer, Religion, 99.  \\
\textsuperscript{102} Clark and Rundle, Myth and Symbol, 1959.  \\
\textsuperscript{104} E. Budge. Atenism and Egyptian Monotheism. London: Kegan Paul, 2005.  \\
\textsuperscript{105} A.H. Gardiner. Notes on the Story of Sinuhe. Librairie Honoré Champion, 1916.  \\
\textsuperscript{106} Budge. Atenism, 2005, 105.  \\
\end{flushright}
Amenhotep III established and promoted a separate cult for the Aten. Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Amenhotep III neglected the other gods or attempted to promote the Aten as an exclusive deity.

Amenhotep IV initially introduced Atenism in the fifth year of his reign, raising the Aten to the status of supreme god, after initially permitting the continued worship of the traditional gods. To emphasize the change, Aten's name was written in the cartouche form normally reserved for the pharaoh, an innovation of Atenism. This religious reformation appears to coincide with the proclamation of a Sed festival, a sort of royal jubilee intended to reinforce the pharaoh's divine powers of kingship. Traditionally held in the thirtieth year of the pharaoh's reign, this possibly was a festival in honor of Amenhotep III, whom some Egyptologists think held a coregency with his son Amenhotep IV somewhere in the range of two to twelve years. In the fifth year of Amenhotep IV's reign he constructed a new capital, Akhetaten, at the site known today as Amarna. Evidence of this appears on three of the boundary stelae used to mark the boundaries of this new capital. At this time, Amenhotep IV officially changed his name to Akhenaten, agreeable to Aten, as evidence of his new worship. In the seventh year of his reign the capital was moved from Thebes to Akhetaten, near modern Amarna, though construction of the city seems to have continued for two more years. In shifting his court from the traditional ceremonial centers, Akhenaten was signaling a dramatic transformation in the focus of religious and political power.

110 Horizon of the Aten
The move separated the pharaoh and his court from the influence of the priesthood and from the traditional centers of worship, but his decree had deeper religious significance too. Taken in conjunction with his name change, it is possible that the move to Amarna was also meant as a signal of Akhenaten's symbolic death and rebirth.\textsuperscript{113} It may also have coincided with the death of his father and the end of the coregency.\textsuperscript{114} In addition to constructing a new capital in honor of Aten, Akhenaten also oversaw the construction of some of the most massive temple complexes in ancient Egypt, including one at Karnak and one at Thebes, close to the old temple of Amun.\textsuperscript{115}

The ninth year of Akhenaten's rule was perhaps the most important to the shift in monotheism and strengthened the Atenist regime. In this year it was declared Aten to be not merely the supreme god, but the only god, a universal deity, and forbidding worship of all others, including the veneration of idols, even privately in people's homes.\textsuperscript{116} Aten was addressed by Akhenaten in prayers, such as the Great Hymn to the Aten: 'O Sole God beside whom there is none.'\textsuperscript{117} From that point on the people of ancient Egypt were only allowed to worship Akhenaten and in turn only Akhenaten and Nefertiti were allowed to worship Aten.\textsuperscript{118}

Further evidence of this religious change can be found all over ancient Egypt. Akhenaten staged the ritual regicide of the old supreme god Amun, and ordered the defacing of Amun's temples throughout Egypt, and of all the old gods. The word for gods\textsuperscript{119} was forbidden, and inscriptions have been found in which even the hieroglyph of the word for ‘mother’ has been

\textsuperscript{113} J. Van Dijk. The Death of Meketaten. In Causing His Name To Live, Brill, 2009: 83-88.
\textsuperscript{114} J. Vanhe Amarna Period and the Later New Kingdom, c. 1352-1069 BC. The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt, 2000: 272-313.
\textsuperscript{117} M. Lichtheim. The Great Hymn to the Aten; 1.28. The Context of Scripture 1, 1997, 44-46.
\textsuperscript{119} Gods Plural.
removed and re-written in alphabetic signs, because it had the same sound in ancient Egyptian as the sound of name of the Theban goddess Mut.\textsuperscript{120} Aten's name is also written differently after year nine, to emphasize the radicalism of the new regime. No longer is the Aten written using the symbol of a rayed solar disc, but instead it is spelled phonetically.\textsuperscript{121}

Crucial evidence about the latter stages of Akhenaten's reign was furnished by discovery of the Amarna Letters.\textsuperscript{122} Believed to have been thrown away by scribes after being transferred to papyrus, the letters comprise a priceless cache of incoming clay message tablets sent from imperial outposts and foreign allies. The letters suggest that Akhenaten was obsessed with his new religion, and that his neglect of matters of state was causing disorder across the massive Egyptian empire.\textsuperscript{123} The governors and kings of subject domains wrote to beg for gold, and also complained of being snubbed and cheated. Also discovered were reports that a major plague pandemic was spreading across the ancient Near East. This pandemic appears to have claimed the life of Akhenaten's main wife, Nefertiti and several of his six daughters, which may have contributed to a declining interest on the part of Akhenaten in governing effectively.\textsuperscript{124}

Understanding separate religious paradigm shifts within ancient Egypt in relation to said deities allows the development of further understanding of key information/components surrounding the true purpose and date of the Shaft.

\textsuperscript{120} Pinch, Guide to the Gods, 2004.
\textsuperscript{121} Hornung and Baines, Conceptions, 1996
Chapter 4: Amalgamation of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris

Introduction

The religious state of ancient Egypt was an ever-changing entity. After a short-lived experiment with monotheism, ancient Egypt transformed into the New Kingdom with long lived religious stability. It was during this religious balancing that three very influential deities merged into a single supreme entity. This gave the ancient Egyptians the assistance they needed to rapidly grow out of the infancy of the New Kingdom. The deity Ptah-Sokar-Osiris merger was everything ancient Egypt could have needed at the time, representing the three aspects of the universe that created balance: creation, stability, and death. They represented the sun during its journey through the Underworld before it was reborn at dawn.\(^{125}\)

Before reviewing the evolution of Ptah-Sokar-Osiris, it is first necessary to understand what these three deities have in common, as well as what the merger of these three deities represents in the grand scheme of ancient Egyptian religions starting with the family relations of the ancient Egyptian Gods and Goddesses. Ptah, for example, is thought to be the brother as well as the husband to Sekhmet. Sekhmet is also known to be one of the wives of Sokar. Ptah is also seen, in some text, to be the husband to Wadjet. Sokar was also believed to be the husband of Nephthys. Nephthys is the sister to Osiris and through taking Isis’s form (his sister and wife) gave birth to his son Anubis.\(^{126}\) It should also be noted that Nut and Geb were the suspected parents of Nephthys, Osiris, Isis, Set, Sekhmet. From this text we can also deduce that Sokar-Ptah-Osiris, all through some version of the text, had the same wife at one point. An alternative

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point suggested is that Ptah officially has no birth nor parents; interestingly enough, Sokar has no parents on record either, an important point to be addressed later.

**The Symbolism**

The ankh (Figure 15) and the djed (Figure 16) were revered symbols in ancient Egypt. The djed symbol is one of the more ancient and commonly found symbols in Egyptian mythology. It is a pillar-like symbol in hieroglyphs representing stability and is commonly associated with Osiris and Ptah. For Osiris it is commonly understood to represent his spine, which is relevant considering the myth of Osiris’s death. After his coffin was carried via the Nile to the ocean and on to the city of Byblos in Syria, it ran aground and a sacred tree took root and rapidly grew around the coffin, enclosing the coffin within its trunk. The king of the land, intrigued by the tree's quick growth, ordered the tree cut down and installed as a pillar in his palace, unaware that the tree contained Osiris's body. Meanwhile, Isis searched for Osiris aided by Anubis, and came to know of Osiris's location in Byblos. Isis maneuvered herself into the favor of the king and queen and was granted a boon. She asked for the pillar in the palace hall, and upon being granted it, extracted the coffin from the pillar. She then consecrated the pillar, anointing it with myrrh and wrapping it in linen. This pillar came to be known as the pillar of djed.

So why then is it also a powerful symbol that is commonly portrayed with Ptah? Ptah is often depicted holding the djed symbol as a staff, the theory states that the four bands found below the crossbars of some djed pillars correspond to the papyrus and other columns in ancient

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129 Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.  
130 Barr, Queen of the Niggerati', 101-113.  
131 Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.
temples, which symbolically held together the papyrus stalks.\textsuperscript{132} It should be noted that the four gods who were responsible for holding up the sky were the four sons of Horus, and it is interesting to note that they were associated with the four canopic jars that contained the organs of the dead, which often had depictions of djed pillars adorning the exterior of the chest that held the jars. They also provided various services to the dead in the afterlife, strongly relating them to Osiris.\textsuperscript{133}

Even though the origin of the ankh is unknown, it is also one of the most recognizable symbols of ancient Egypt. It has also been known as the key of life or the cross of life and can be dated back to the Early Dynastic Period.\textsuperscript{134} It is simply a cross with a loop at the top sometimes ornamented with symbols or decorative flourishes but most often simply a plain gold cross. The symbol is an Egyptian hieroglyph for life or breath of life (\textsuperscript{3}nh = ankh). The Egyptians believed that one's earthly journey was only part of an eternal life, and the ankh symbolized both mortal existence and the afterlife.\textsuperscript{135}

By the time of the Old Kingdom the ankh was well-established as a powerful symbol of eternal life. The dead were referred to as ankh-su, having life/living, and caskets and sarcophagi were ornamented regularly with the symbol and were known as neb-ankh, possessing life.\textsuperscript{136} During the Middle Kingdom the word \textit{nkh} was used for mirrors and a number of hand-mirrors were created in the shape of the ankh, the most famous being that found in the tomb of Tutankhamun.\textsuperscript{137} The association of the ankh with the mirror was no chance occurrence. The Egyptians believed that the afterlife was a mirror image of life on earth and mirrors were thought

\textsuperscript{132} Armour, Gods and Myths, 2001.
\textsuperscript{133} Clark and Rundle, Myth and Symbol, 1959.
\textsuperscript{134} Baines, Literacy, 572-599.
\textsuperscript{135} Clark and Rundle, Myth and Symbol, 1959.
\textsuperscript{137} Baines, Literacy, 572-599.
to contain magical properties. The ankh was also considered by many as a symbol of fertility and often used to represent enduring life in generations to come. In the Osiris myth it became known as the key of the Nile, representing the holy union of Isis and Osiris. Osiris was often depicted carrying the ankh in statues and painting. There are also mentions in texts of Sokar being associated with djed. Ptah is almost always depicted with the ankh and djed for they were the symbols of his power, giving more insight to the integration of the Sokar-Ptah-Osiris merger.

The Man Behind the Myth: Osiris

Osiris is perhaps one of the most well-known ancient Egyptian gods in Western minds. Though he goes by other names, for purposes of the rest of this research he will referred to by his most common name, Osiris. Following the Legend of Osiris, he appears as a green-skinned man in the form of a mummified pharaoh. He is often depicted wearing the Atef-crown with a pair of ram horns at its base. Osiris palpably played many roles in ancient Egyptian religion; he was the patron of the Underworld, and embodied the dead, resurrected kings, past pharaohs, agriculture (in his old form), and fertility (in his old form). It is imperative to note that though Osiris’s name first begins to appear as a funerary god during ancient Egypt's Fifth Dynasty, but the name Osiris can be found from the First Dynasty.

The connection between the god Osiris and Abydos has mysterious origins but may have been a result of Early Dynastic mortuary rituals and religious beliefs. As early as c. 2450 BC,

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139 Hart, Myths, 1990.
140 Also Known As: Oser, Asir, Aser, Asar, Usire.
143 Much like the crown Sokar wears.
Egyptian funerary text bears the name Khentamentiu, as the lord of the Thinite province; a predecessor to Abydos. The name Khentamentiu is thought to be an earlier aspect of the god Osiris, with the name Osiris-Khentamentiu meaning, “Osiris, foremost of westerners, the blessed dead.” Ancient Egyptian lore presents a narrative associated with Osiris and his responsibility for the beginning of Egyptian civilization as its first king. He is believed to have been worshiped since the First Dynasty as an agricultural god.

Osiris was the first son of Geb and Nut and the brother of Set, Horus, Isis and Nephthys. He married his sister Isis and with her fathered Horus, Anubis and a number of other deities. Osiris is commonly referred to as the first king of Egypt and was one of the most prominent gods of the Heliopolitan Ennead. One of the possible reasons for Osiris’s popularity is twofold. First is his role as a god. Throughout the height of Egyptian civilization, Osiris was the primary deity. In power, he was second only his father, Ra, and was the leader of the gods on earth. The second indication points to ancient lore referring to him as the ‘king of the Underworld,’ giving him power to give eternal life to the dead.

Some of the oldest religious texts refer to Osiris as the great god of the dead, and throughout these texts it is assumed that the reader will understand that he once possessed human form and lived on earth, though this part of this story is not as commonly known as the rest. As the first son of Geb, the original king of Egypt, Osiris inherited the throne when Geb abdicated.

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147 Early Dynastic name for Osiris
150 The Elder
151 Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.
At this time the Egyptians were considered barbarous cannibals. Osiris saw this and was greatly disturbed. Therefore, he went out among the people and taught them what to eat, the art of agriculture, how to worship the gods, and gave them laws.\textsuperscript{156} Thoth helped him in many ways by inventing the arts and sciences and giving names to things. Osiris was Egypt's greatest king who ruled through kindness and persuasion. Having ‘civilized’ Egypt, Osiris traveled to other lands, leaving Isis as his regent, to teach other peoples what he taught the Egyptians.\textsuperscript{157} During Osiris' absence, Isis was troubled with Seth's plotting to acquire both her and the throne of Egypt. Shortly after Osiris' return to Egypt, in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, on the seventeenth day of the month of Hathor, Seth and seventy-two conspirators murdered him.\textsuperscript{158}

The myths behind Osiris are key to understanding his role in ancient Egypt as a god. According to Mojsov,\textsuperscript{159} the myth, almost in complete form, presents the story of how Osiris became the king of the Underworld. In a summed-up version, Set was jealous of his brother Osiris' power and popularity for some time; additionally, Set lusted after his brother's wife, Isis.\textsuperscript{160} When Osiris decided to travel the world to bring civilization to its people, he made Isis Regent of Egypt instead of Set. This was the last straw for Set; he was strong and brave but he had a terrible temper and he vowed to kill Osiris and take the power he considered to be rightfully his. Set invited Osiris to a banquet and had a beautiful cedar wood and ebony chest made just for the occasion. He offered the chest to anyone who could fit into it.\textsuperscript{161} Just as Set planned, none of the other guests fit into the chest perfectly; the only person left to try was

\textsuperscript{156} Littleton, Mythology, 2005.
\textsuperscript{158} Redford. Egyptian Religion, 2002.
\textsuperscript{159} Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.
\textsuperscript{160} E. Budge. Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection, 1973;1911.
Osiris. When he laid down in the chest, which had been made to fit him, Set slammed on the lid and nailed it down. He then instantly sealed it with molten lead and threw it in the Nile.\textsuperscript{162}

The chest was swept out to sea and landed on the coast near Byblos.\textsuperscript{163} The instant it touched the land, a huge Tamarisk tree sprouted up to protect it. The tree grew so large that the king of Byblos trimmed it and set it up as a pillar in his palace. Isis tracked his body to Byblos and persuaded the king to give it to her, reciprocating by saving a child from a snake bite.\textsuperscript{164} She took her husband's corpse back to Egypt and used magic to conceive his child, Horus; other accounts suggest she was already pregnant when Osiris died.\textsuperscript{165} However, Set found Osiris's body unattended while Isis took the infant Horus to be cared for by Wadjet or Udjat.\textsuperscript{166} Set cut his brothers corpse into fourteen\textsuperscript{167} parts and distributed them around Egypt. Isis was distraught and enlisted the help of her sister and Nephthys, Set's wife.\textsuperscript{168} They found all but one of the pieces. The missing part was his penis which was apparently swallowed by a fish sacred to Set.\textsuperscript{169} Isis and Nephthys mourned over the dead body of their brother and Ra took pity on them. He sent Anubis to prepare Osiris for the first ever mummification, and instructed Thoth, Isis, and Nephthys to piece the body back together. Isis transformed into a kite, a common small bird, able to breathe life into him, but it was not sufficient for him to take his place with the living.\textsuperscript{170} Instead, Osiris travelled to the Underworld, a seemingly dark and desolate place. However, Ra reassured him that he would find peace and contentment as the king of the dead, and his son

\textsuperscript{162} Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.
\textsuperscript{165} C.E. Goudsouzian. Becoming Isis: Myth, Magic, Medicine, and Reproduction in Ancient Egypt. The University of Memphis, 2012.
\textsuperscript{166} She who is green, the cobra goddess of Lower Egypt.
\textsuperscript{167} Or sixteen, depending on the lore.
\textsuperscript{168} Baines, and Shafer, Religion, 99.
\textsuperscript{169} Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.
Horus would rule over the living until the time that Ra chose to unmake his creation and return everything to the nothingness from whence it came.\textsuperscript{171}

From this myth we come to terms on how Osiris came to reside in the Underworld as the lord of the dead, after being killed by Set; even though he was a god, he could no longer dwell in the land of the living. After Osiris was killed, Isis resurrected him with \textit{The Ritual of Life}, which was later given to the Egyptians so that they could give eternal life to all their dead.\textsuperscript{172} The spells and rituals cast by Isis, plus many others given to the people by the gods over the centuries, were collected into different funerary ‘books’ such as; \textit{The Book of Going (or Coming) Forth by Day}, colloquially known as \textit{The Book of the Dead}.\textsuperscript{173}

Over the years, scholars have deconstructed the story of Osiris and believe it may represent a symbolic story of Egypt’s natural history. Given Osiris’ original association with agriculture, his death and resurrection were seen as symbolic of the annual death and re-growth of the crops and the yearly flooding of the Nile. The sun as well with its daily rebirth and death was associated with Osiris. His rivalry with his brother Seth, the god of storms and the desert, was symbolic of the eternal war between the fertile lands of the Nile Valley and the barren desert lands just beyond.\textsuperscript{174}

In the Underworld, Osiris sits on a great throne, where he is praised by the souls of the just.\textsuperscript{175} Ancient Egyptians believed the deities Anubis, Ammut, Henefer, Ma’at, Osiris, and Thoth would greet the person in the afterlife and perform the weighing of the heart ceremony.\textsuperscript{176} To

\textsuperscript{174} Clark and Rundle, Myth and Symbol, 1959.
pass this test a person's heart was weighed against the feather of Ma'at.\textsuperscript{177} If it was lighter than the feather the judged would be found to have lived a good, and truthful life. All those who pass the tests of the Underworld become worthy to enter the Blessed Land, that part of the Underworld that is like the land of the living, but without sorrow or pain. In some texts, in addition to the weighing of the heart, Osiris passes final judgment over the dead (Figure 17).\textsuperscript{178} It is also believed, at the end of the world, the entire created universe will sink back into Nun. Before there was land, man or god, there was Nun. Nun represents the primordial chaos from which all things created, both mortal and divine, were born.\textsuperscript{179}

**The Man Behind the Myth: Ptah**

Ptah was also one major deities of ancient Egyptian religion. The etymology of Ptah’s original name in ancient Egyptian is reconstructed to have been pronounced as Pitáḥ based on the occurrence of his name in hieroglyphics, pth, surviving into Coptic as Ptah, just as it is now written in English.\textsuperscript{180} The meaning of his name as ‘the opener’ is somewhat uncertain, though it may be related to the ‘opening of the mouth’ ritual that was often credited to him.\textsuperscript{181} However, it should be noted that the only uses of this verb in Egyptian texts place this ‘opening’ in a very particular context, as represented by the verbs ‘to engrave,’ ‘to carve,’ or ‘to chisel.’ In this way, the god's name echoes his association with crafting and creation.\textsuperscript{182}

As with Sokar and Osiris, Ptah also goes by other names as well I will refer to him with solely as Ptah, thought Ptah is the most simplistic and the most complex of the deities; Ptah is everything and nothing.\textsuperscript{183} Ptah is commonly depicted as a bearded man wearing a skullcap and

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{177} Taylor, Death, 2001.
\textsuperscript{178} Mojsov, Osiris, 2008.
\textsuperscript{179} Armour, Gods and Myths, 2001.
\textsuperscript{180} V. Blažek. Hēphaistos vs. Ptah. 2010.
\textsuperscript{182} Clark and Rundle, Myth and Symbol, 1959.
\textsuperscript{183} Major change in Ptah will be recorded within the footnotes within to create a timeline or rather self-lineage of Ptah.
\end{footnotesize}
shrouded as a mummy. His hands emerge from wrappings in front of his body holding a scepter, an ankh, and a djed. Ptah became known as the chief god of the ancient city of Memphis. He was a revered as the creator god who brought all things into being by thinking of them with his mind and saying their names with his tongue. He was, in fact, unique amongst Egyptian creation gods in that his methods were intellectual, rather than physical. According to the priests of Memphis, everything is the work of Ptah’s heart and tongue, i.e. gods are born, towns are founded, and order is maintained.\(^\text{184}\)

Ptah also became known as the patron god of skilled craftsmen and architects. This may be due to the excellent sources of limestone near his temple in Memphis.\(^\text{185}\) As a craftsman, Ptah was said to have carved the divine bodies of the royalty. In the Nineteenth Dynasty, he was shown fashioning the body of Rameses II out of electrum.\(^\text{186}\) In the artisan's community of Deir-el-Medina, near Western Thebes, Ptah was especially venerated.\(^\text{187}\) He was believed to determine the individual destiny of the artists there; craftsmen carved stelae dedicated to their god, often carving ears on these stelae to encourage Ptah to take notice of their prayers.\(^\text{188}\) In fact, one of Ptah's titles at Thebes was, ‘the ear which hears’.\(^\text{189}\)

Ptah was also a great protector of Egypt. According to myth, he saved the town of Pelusium from Assyrian invaders. He ordered all the vermin in the fields to chew through the bowstrings and shield handles of the enemy, destroying their weapons and sending them home in a panic.\(^\text{190}\) The Shabaka stone records that Ptah helped settle the fight between Horus and Set by

\(^{185}\) Shaw, Egyptian Myths, 2014.  
\(^{188}\) Watterson, Gods, 2013.  
\(^{190}\) Allen, Genesis, 1998.
making Set the lord of Upper Egypt while Geb made Horus the lord of Lower Egypt. 191 Thus, he was instrumental in maintaining the quality of Upper and Lower Egypt. 192 The Apis bull was regarded as the Ba of Ptah which Sokar oversaw unifying. 193 However, in later times, the Apis was associated with him only while it was living and associated with Osiris after his death. 194 Herodotus wrote that the Apis bull was conceived from a bolt of lightning; the bull was black with a white diamond on his forehead and had an image of a vulture on his back, double hairs on his tails and a scarab mark under his tongue. 195

**The Man Behind the Myth: Sokar**

Sokar is really one of the more complex Egyptian gods to understand. Over time, Sokar’s name 196 has been shrouded in scholarly controversy. One theory, 197 depicts his name as derived from and based on the term ‘sk-r’ 198 that was found in Coffin Texts and a Twelfth Dynasty papyrus. 199 This term is used in the context of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony in which Sokar does play a part. 200 Another theory is that the etymology of the god’s name comes from one of the Pyramid Texts where Osiris cried out for help to his wife and sister saying, ‘Sy-k-ri’, which translates to ‘hurry to me’. 201

Sokar was an ancient falcon god from the area surrounding Memphis. He was originally associated with either the lord of both darkness and death or craftsmanship. Nevertheless,

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192 Budge, Egyptian Mythology, 1969.
196 Also Known As: Seker, Seger, Sakar, Sokher, Zkr and in Greek, Sokaris or Sochari, for purposes of the rest of this chapter I will refer to him solely as Sokar.
198 Translates to ‘cleaning of the mouth’
199 Clark and Rundle, Myth and Symbol, 1959.
through different texts and myths Sokar was also identified as the deification of the act of
separating the Ba from the Ka, roughly the separation of soul from the body after death. As such,
he also came to be a god of the Giza as well as the Memphis necropolis and an important
funerary deity. In addition to the temple at Saqqara, Sokar also had other cult centers.

At Giza he was the lord of the entrance to the Underworld. His sanctuary in the
Memphite necropolis was called the Shetayet. From earliest times, he was also the patron of
craftsmanship, particularly jewelers, armoires and other workers of metal. Sokar, at times was
also associated with earth, reincarnation and as well as fertility god. The Pyramid Texts
frequently mention the god in an afterlife context where the deceased king is said to be raised
into the ‘henu-barque’ of Sokar which depending on the prevailing dynasty of ancient Egypt,
the henu-barque sailed toward either dawn or dusk. The Pyramid Texts describe Sokar as a
god active in the rebirth of the king and in the ceremonies of confirmation and transfer of royal
power.

Throughout time Sokar has also been related to two groups of deities, including the
Memphite group which included Khnum and a solar group that consisted of Nefertem and the
five divine daughters of Re. The Memphite Khnum is among the deities listed in the Sokar
chapel and the hall of Sokar and Nefertem in the temple of Seti I at Abydos. Though it is
believed by some scholars that Sokar did not have any family except through the term
‘Redoudja,’ in Spell 941 of the Coffin Text (Figure 18) which translated to the ‘son of Sokar’.

Other scholars believe that this is actually a misconception and mistranslation of an adjectival

204 Also Known As: hennu-barque
phrase in the Coffin Text. Other scholars debate that his wife was either Sekhmet or Nephthys. Though Sokar had a number of nicknames, there is one that is of the utmost importance to mention, ‘he of Rosetau.’ The epithet given in the terms of Rosetau refers the entrance to the Underworld which directs to a place on the Giza Plateau. Some of the other names he is also known by are the ‘lord of the mysterious region’ referring to the Underworld and the ‘great god with his two wings opened’ which refers to his place in the Fifth Hour.

Through different texts, Sokar could be ichnographically depicted in various ways in addition to that of the falcon, which appears to have been his original form. The falcon seems ever present in his representations, evoking his divine ability to fly through the Underworld, on earth, and in the heavens. In the more symbolic forms, he is shown as a falcon's head, which is sometimes set in a boat, surmounting an earthen funerary mound. In this regard, an image depicted in vignettes of the Amduat refers to him as ‘he who is upon his sand.’

As a falcon headed man, Sokar is often depicted in a green mummified form and sometimes is adorned with a complicated conical crown that includes the sun disk horns and cobras, not unlike that of the Atef-crown. At times he is depicted wearing the White Crown and holds a scepter and a whip, also the regalia of Osiris (Figure 19). There are also times Sokar is associated with djed.

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212 The Term Rosetau is still under scholarly debate and for more in depth analysis forward to Pg.
213 From the myth mentioned above in the Amduat.
216 Gaballa, Cult of Sokar, 1972, 178-179.
218 Shaw, Egyptian Myths, 2014.
related to Horus, and like him might sometimes wear the Double Crown. A prime example of this can be found in the tomb of Tuthmosis III, on the West Bank at Thebes, in the Valley of the Kings. Here he is shown as a falcon headed god standing on a multi-headed chthonic serpent, emphasizing his power over the nether regions and their inhabitants. One of the most impressive surviving examples of his falcon headed iconography is found in the shape of the silver coffin of Sheshonq.

Through different texts and art, the emblems of Sokar seem to have common features. He is commonly represented in his henu-barque, with onions and geese. His barque, the henu-barque, is thought to represent solar triumphs and is set on a sled (Figure 20). At its prow may be the head of an antelope or a bull. Along the edge of the hull of the barque may be fish and/or birds, generally falcons or swallows. In the center of the barque is a mound-shaped chapel surmounted by his falcon head. At the stern are three or four rudder pins.

Even though there has not been any archaeological evidence of a temple solely dedicated to Sokar, Memphis remained the primary center for his cult. One of the most prominent funerary festivals in Egypt was the festival of Sokar tracing back to the Early Dynastic Period. It was a festival that took place in the middle of an important, 10-day festival that ended on 30 Koiak with the raising of the Djed pillar. By the early Old Kingdom, the great Sokar festival took place each year during the fourth month of the spring Akhet season. At this time, the god was carried from his temple to assist the king in ceremonial activities including the hoeing of the

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220 Modern Day Thebes.
224 Hart, Myths, 1990.
225 Bonnefoy, Mythologies.
226 Shaw, Egyptian Myths, 2014.
227 Also Known As: Choiak in Greek
228 Gaballa and Kitchen. Festival of Sokar, 1969, 1-76.
earth or the digging of ditches or canals.\textsuperscript{229} During the Middle Kingdom, the festival incorporated Osirian aspects of festivals in Abydos. It was here and later times, the festival was also celebrated in western Thebes, where it is depicted by reliefs in the Temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, and where it rivaled the great Opet Festival.\textsuperscript{230} This festival appears to have stressed the continuity of the royal mortuary cult along with the resurrection of Sokar. During the ceremony, the image of the god was probably carried in his distinctive henu-barque, which had a cabin that symbolized a funerary chest surmounted by a falcon.\textsuperscript{231}

Sokar was venerated in other areas of ancient Egypt. For example, he became well established in the Fayoum during the Middle Kingdom, and is well represented in the tombs on the West Bank at Luxor.\textsuperscript{232} During the New Kingdom, he is also represented at Karnak on the east bank at Luxor and can be found in the chapel cavern of Anubis on the second terrace of Hatshepsut's temple, as well as in the Tuthmosis I chapel on the third terrace at Deir El-Bahri.\textsuperscript{233} Tuthmosis III dedicated a suite of rooms to Sokar in Akh-menu and Amenhotep III consecrated a monumental architectural ensemble related to Sokar in his temple of ‘millions of years’ at on the West Bank at Thebes.\textsuperscript{234} During the Ramesside period, Sokar can be found at Gurneh in Hall IX of the temple of Seti I, and was also given a cult site in the temple constructed by Seti I at Abydos. Furthermore, Ramesses II provided a group of rooms in the Ramesseum which are consecrated to Sokar. Ramesses II also had the Sokar depicted on the peripheral wall of the temples of Amun-Re at Karnak.\textsuperscript{235} During the Greek or Ptolemaic Period, a chapel was dedicated

\textsuperscript{229} Gaballa, Cult of Sokar, 1972, 178-179.
\textsuperscript{230} J. Darnell. Opet Festival. 2010.
\textsuperscript{231} Gaballa and Kitchen. Festival of Sokar, 1969, 1-76.
to him in the temple of Horus at Edfu and also in the Hathor temple at Dendera.²³⁶ Beyond funerary beliefs, the veneration of Sokar is difficult to ascertain. Amulets of Sokar are not common, but some depicting a squatting, mummified falcon may represent the god.²³⁷

**Who is Ptah-Sokar-Osiris?**

Every god and goddess in ancient Egypt is responsible for their own aspects of the forces of nature. Though these assignments were malleable and not the easiest to decipher today, they were not without reason. Sokar, for example, was originally associated with both darkness and death. He later was identified as the deification of the act of separating the Ba from the Ka. This would be like the equivalent of separating two souls, much like our conscious mind and our unconscious, which separated at death. Sokar was also the patron of earth, fertility, agricultural reincarnation, and craftsmanship, particularly jewelers, armoires and other workers of metal.²³⁸ Osiris was the patron of the Underworld, embodiment of the dead, resurrected kings, past pharaohs, and in his older form, agriculture and fertility. He was also in charge of giving life to the dead, a means of reincarnation.²³⁹ Ptah was also associated with crafting, skilled artisans, architects, and creation.²⁴⁰ It is becoming even more apparent that these three gods and what they were in control of merged with one another at some point, but this could just be coincidence. More evidence is needed to show why these deities evolved into the single Sokar-Ptah-Osiris entity.

This evidence can be found in ancient depictions of said deities. For example, all three deities were depicted, in their individual depictions, as green-skinned men to reference their

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Agricultural roles. Osiris was often depicted wearing the Atef-crown with a pair of ram horns at its base. Sokar was depicted with a complicated conical crown that includes the sun disk, horns and cobras, not unlike that of the Atef-crown worn by Osiris. At times Sokar is also depicted wearing the White Crown and holds a scepter and a whip, also the regalia of Osiris.

Each deity was given their own title associated with their actions and what they represented. Ptah, for example, as a creator god had many titles, however, one in particular that stands out is ‘noble djed’ further tying him to Osiris. There are two very important titles that refer to both Osiris as well as Sokar. The first is ‘he of Rosetau’. The second, which Sokar was called, ‘lord of the mysterious region’, mimics Osiris’ title of the ‘King of the Underworld’.

The etymology of these deity’s name can also help correlate the link between them. The meaning of Ptah’s name is still open for debate among scholars, one group translates Ptah as ‘the opener,’ but this is somewhat ambiguous, though it may be related to the ‘opening of the mouth’ ceremony in which Sokar plays an important part.

There are several other important concepts that need to be mentioned when looking for a link between these deities. For example, during the New Kingdom, the priests of Sokar had the same titles as the Memphite clergy of Ptah in the Old Kingdom; later such titles commonly referred to the high priests of Heliopolis. Also, during the New Kingdom Period, the Book of the Dead presents Sokar as an image of the world unified in Osiris. The terrestrial Ptah-Sokar became Sokar-Osiris, the nocturnal incarnation of the sun during the Fourth and Fifth Hours of

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243 Smith, Osiris and the Deceased, 2008.
244 Bjerre, Ptah, 1976.
245 Evans, Enduring is the Perfection.
246 Watterson, Gods, 2013.
248 Roth, Birth and Rebirth, 1992: 113-147.
the Amduat. He allowed the sun to complete its course during the night and to be reborn in the morning.\footnote{250}

There is still one important theory that is gaining support among modern scholars and needs to be addressed before coming full circle to Sokar-Ptah-Osiris: Sokar is a reincarnated Osiris. As early as the late Fifth/Sixth dynasty, Sokar was becoming the chief deity at Giza eventually replacing Sokar as the primary among Giza deities. Sokar was the name which preceded Osiris after he had been killed by Seth. Before discussing evidence of this, it is imperative to understand the main source of this information is coming from—the pyramid text.

It is common knowledge that the three main pyramids of Giza were built during Egypt's Fourth Dynasty and they are curiously devoid of any kind of ritualistic hieroglyphic inscriptions. Less than two hundred years later another major pyramid complex appeared at Saqqara, about ten miles southeast of Giza.\footnote{251} Altogether five kings from the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties erected five main pyramids at this new cult location. These pyramids were much smaller than those of Giza and they were also different by the fact that the halls and chambers within these pyramids were completely covered with the inscriptions that are known today as the 'Pyramid Texts'.\footnote{252}

One such passage that comes from the Pyramid of Pepi states:

\begin{quote}
They found Osiris after his brother Seth had thrown him to the ground in Nedit, when Osiris Pepi said: ‘You shall go away from me!’, his name Sokar coming into being.\footnote{253}
\end{quote}

This is a profound text as it refers to Osiris before his brother Set killed him as Osiris. One possible theory can emerge naming Sokar the resurrected version of Set’s murder victim, Osiris. This is not a onetime occurrence.

\footnote{251} Bártá, Old Kingdom, 1.  
\footnote{253} Budge, Osiris, 1973, 1.
Given his association with creation and rebirth, Ptah also came to be included in the Ptah-Sokar-Osiris triad:

Mysterious god who united within himself the attributes of Sokar, and those of Ptah the architect and builder of the material world, and Osiris the giver of everlasting life.\(^{254}\) Thus, this triple entity could be interpreted as representing the whole cycle of regeneration and rebirth.\(^{255}\) It was in this form which highlighted three aspects of the universe that allowed balance: creation, stability, and death. They represented the sun during its journey through the underworld before it was reborn at dawn. This can be seen through the Opening of the Mouth ceremony which play a key role understanding the meaning behind the creation of the OS/SS.

Just as with any story or myth, the original words and intentions of the creator change over time and evolve with the needs and is told within the perspective of the storyteller. It is believed that by the either the late Middle Kingdom or the New Kingdom, all three of the gods were combined into the tripartite deity, Ptah-Sokar-Osiris and remained an important funerary deity for most of the remainder of Egypt's dynastic history.\(^{256}\) There is an ample amount of statues depicting a Sokar-Ptah-Osiris (Figure 21), and these usually show a mummy with a human head standing on a base, wearing a crown with horns. Some statues have the head of a falcon. Occasionally, there is a small falcon on the base in front of the god and facing him. In several instances, the statue of the god, or the base it stood on, hid a funerary papyrus, such as the Book of the Dead, but other netherworld texts have also been found, for example, the Amduat.\(^{257}\)

\(^{254}\) Budge, Egyptian Mythology, 1969, 508.  
\(^{257}\) Hart, Gods and Goddesses, 1986.
Chapter 5: Giza—Geological Landscape of Marvelous Mysteries

Introduction

The Giza Plateau is one of the most explored landscapes in Egypt (Figure 22). Located only a few kilometers south of Cairo, Giza is situated where a limestone cliff rises abruptly creating a drastic border along the edge of a sandy desert plateau. To contextualize the mysteries and debates about the OS/SS as part of the Giza Plateau, geomorphological, climatic, and geographical settings are critical. More is known today about the environmental and archaeological histories of the plateau because of technological advances aiding surveys of the area. Even so, there is not obvious, direct evidence of the exact date of the OS/SS’s original construction. Applying the premise asserted within opens up the possibility of the OS/SS being a major feature of the Giza Plateau before the pyramids were erected. Holdi allows additional lines of evidence in to be explored when adjusting the original period the shaft was cut and for whom.

Geomorphology of the Giza Plateau

The Giza Plateau has been the focal point of investigation-based research offering extensive and detailed field observations. The study area represents a typical karst morphogenetic terrain developed under certain climatic conditions. The development of these karst features and the associated sediments indicate that the study area was subjected to intensive seasonal rainfall and evaporation of temperate, mimicking Mediterranean climatic conditions. Fortunately, exposed cliff-lines have provided rare opportunities to determine ancient sea levels.

Once fossilized, these cliff-lines, ‘commonly marked by an intertidal notch and by specific organisms like lithophaga,’\textsuperscript{261} can offer an invaluable explanation about the plateau’s past. For example, the bedrock lithology and morphological traits in escarpments around the Giza Plateau indicate there were two distinct shoreline types,\textsuperscript{262} and that the Plateau formed a peninsula within the Pliocene Gulf as it flooded the Eonile canyon, the ancestor of the Nile River,\textsuperscript{263} defining escarpments and causing erosional relief.\textsuperscript{264}

Studies done by scholars such as Aigner\textsuperscript{265} and Lehner and Wetterstrom\textsuperscript{266} reveal that around 50 million years ago, during the Eocene era, a preexisting shallow sea retreated and left an embankment. The creation of the embankment is just one step in a series that defined and circumscribed the Giza Plateau. As the Eocene sea retired from the area, it left behind a feature that later became a one of the most notorious plateaus in modern knowledge, the northwest part of the Giza Plateau.\textsuperscript{267} The bedrock of this embankment is composed of shallow marine sedimentary rocks, called the Moqattam Formation. In the northeast embankment, the well tested foraminifer fossil produces the copious occurring Nummulites Gizehensis.\textsuperscript{268} The Moqattam Formation consists of interbedded hard and soft limestone, which dips steadily southeast at three to six degrees.\textsuperscript{269} In contrast, the Maddi Formation exposed on the south of the pyramid sites has

\textsuperscript{262} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{269} T. Aigner, Event-Stratification, 253.
many fissures and gullies in the limestone. This limestone is believed to be used for quarrying large solid blocks, which also produced tafla or natural desert clay, now understood to be the key supporting material for the pyramids.

**African Humid Period**

One of the most interesting questions apropos to the Giza Plateau concerns the appearance of the site before Khufu set his artisans to work on the early foundation. The Sahara was not always a dry barren desert. The Bubalus Period, around 10,000 years ago, Sahara’s earliest rock art period, depicts a time when the desert was abundant with wildlife such as elephants, hippos, crocodiles, and giraffes (Figure 23) some of the earliest depictions of anthropomorphic beings (Figure 24), at a time when the Sahara was green and fertile. Within the last century, the Sahara has revealed its layers of graffiti with more than 15,000 petroglyphs and paintings, displaying 10,000 years of human history and environmental change, including the Fighting Cats (Figure 25), engraved several millennia ago. The incongruence of these lively images in such lifeless settings set Barth on his path to start the understanding what happened, noting the dramatic differences between the elaborate paintings of man pursuing a wealth of meat-bearing animals to a dry barren desert.

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275 Ibid.
By 15,000 years ago, the African Subpluvial Period, more commonly known as the African Humid Period, hosted the transition from green Sahara to dry desert. The AHP was a direct result of African monsoonal climate responses to periodic variations in the Earth's orbit around the Sun that recur roughly every 20,000 years. Impressively, AHP is just the most recent of hundreds of earlier humid events spanning as far back as the Miocene (9 million years ago) and likely much earlier. The Early Holocene African Humid Period is one of the most thoroughly documented and well-dated climate change events in the geologic record, and the number and diversity of paleoclimate records is remarkable. These terrestrial and marine records document both the timing and extent of the humid interval.

Finding archaeological and geographical evidence of a green Sahara is as copious as the sand in the desert. Looking near interdune depressions and other low-lying regions, scholars are able to precisely locate ancient lakebed sediments to help expose geological evidence such as outcrops and shoreline deposits. Most of the early Holocene paleolakes were small, but numerous and widespread. Some lake basins in North Africa were exceptionally large, as large as the Caspian Sea today. Based on their stratigraphic records, these must have been permanent, open-basin lakes, indicating that annual moisture supply exceeded evaporation for many millennia during the African Humid Period, even in the driest regions of the modern-day Sahara.

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276 Henceforth Known As: AHP
Although the African paleoclimate records document a continental wide pervasiveness of the AHP, the transitions into and out of this period may not have been synchronous across all of North Africa, nor were they likely uniformly abrupt. For example, ‘a pollen record of paleovegetation change in the eastern Sahara, extracted from a sediment core from Lake Yoa in northern Chad, documents a gradual end of humid conditions.’ Also, transects of paleohydrological and paleoecological data from the eastern Sahara indicate that the transition out of the humid period was time-transgressive, with dry conditions established earlier in the north and later in the south. One of the most fascinating aspects of the AHP is its impact on North African human sustainability and cultural development. North Africa was nearly completely vegetated during the height of the AHP and populated with nomadic hunter-gatherer communities that increasingly practiced pastoralism. The rock art images mentioned above depict impressions of this life. Towards the end of AHP between 7,000 and 5,000 years ago, the progressive desiccation of the region led to a widespread depopulation and abandonment of North African sites.

These populations did not disappear at the end of the African Humid Period. Adequate indications showing how profoundly the end of AHP guided human populations can been seen

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284 Kuper and Kröpelin, Climate-Controlled Holocene, 803-07.
286 Currently Egypt
287 Currently Sudan and East Africa.
289 Kuper and Kröpelin, Climate-Controlled Holocene, 805.
292 Kuper and Kröpelin, Climate-Controlled Holocene, 806.
through radiocarbon dating of over a thousand archaeological sites across North Africa.\textsuperscript{294} These dates, which record human occupation at these sites, indicate that North Africa was rapidly depopulated between 6,300 and 5,200 years ago as the arid climate we know today started its long hold over the region.\textsuperscript{295} The large-scale exodus was concurrent with the rise of sedentary life and pharaonic culture along the Nile River and the spread of pastoralism throughout the domain.\textsuperscript{296}

Just as the AHP terraformed the ever-changing geography of the landscape making way for what became known the land of great mysteries, the same can be said for the Giza Plateau. The affect the AHP had on the creation of the Giza Plateau paved the way for generations of pyramid builders. Recent work on the influence of the AHP on the Old Kingdom is providing new insights relevant to the objectives if this project. Despite the fact that arid conditions have dominated the majority of the dynastic period of Egyptian history, wetter periods are known to have existed, with the current arid conditions not becoming fully established until the late Fifth Dynasty.\textsuperscript{297} Several studies revolving around the geological and geoarchaeological investigations verified that climate change in ancient Egypt around the third millennium BC was associated with acidification and low floods of the Nile, as well as by heavy rainfall periods.\textsuperscript{298} All these factors surely impacted the rapid collapse of the Old Kingdom at about 4200 to 4100 cal BP.\textsuperscript{299}

\textsuperscript{295} DeMenocal, Green Sahara, 12.
\textsuperscript{296} Kuper and Kröpelin, Climate-Controlled Holocene, 804.
\textsuperscript{299} Bártta and Bezdek, 2008; Marriner, et al., 2012; Fabin and Marks, 2014.
As revealing as these studies have been, the work being done by Mark Lehner and Ancient Egypt Research Associates\textsuperscript{300} are bringing light to the transformation of the Giza Plateau. Fortunately, thanks to better technology and preservation methods, these recent investigations have continued to find new tombs and artifacts since Bezoni, Caviglia, Champollion, and Vyse begin modernizing their research in the early 1800s.\textsuperscript{301} For example, excavations at the ‘lost city’ called the Heit el-Ghurab,\textsuperscript{302} have helped determine the effect the AHP had on Giza. As Dr. Lehner started to expose the walls of the necropolis at HeG during his initial phase,\textsuperscript{303} he ended up reinforcing the work of some of his predecessors, strengthening the case for a relatively lush and green landscape.\textsuperscript{304} During the end of AHP the Giza Plateau was something of a fertile promised land, with thriving rainy seasons and bodies of water that dramatically fluctuated by an astonishing seven meters.\textsuperscript{305} Just for comparison the flood that New Orleans experienced, due to Hurricane Katrina, involved a two-meter fluctuation.\textsuperscript{306} During these wet seasons, wind constantly eroded HeG and blew away the top layers, shaping and cutting the Giza Plateau in the process.\textsuperscript{307} These wind and weather events, along with the already prevailing karst characteristics, created naturally eroded cavities that represented/became underground drainage systems with sinkholes and caverns. Such a geological foundation opened numerous opportunities for the right architect working with the visions of pharaohs and expectations of formidable deities.\textsuperscript{308}

\textsuperscript{300} Will hence forth be abbreviated: AREA.
\textsuperscript{305} Lehner. Egyptology: The Giza Plateau.
\textsuperscript{307} M.M. EL-Aref, Paleokarst, 375.
The Giza Plateau and the Nile River

The Nile River, as any obtainable source of water, has been a focal point of survival since time immemorial. The word Nile comes from the Greek word of ‘Nelios’, which simply translates to ‘River Valley’.

The Greek historian Herodotus wrote about his many adventures to the mysterious and unfamiliar land, referring to Egypt as the ‘Gift of the Nile’. The Nile River has not always flowed systematically as it does currently. Branches of the Nile invaded the land right up to the feet of the Sphinx itself (Figure 26). Additionally, investigations have produced maps outlining locations of the Nile since the Old Kingdom (Figure 27). These maps are made from combining various characteristics of historical maps, satellite images, and recent topographic evidence. Results have suggested that the pyramids were built close to a branch of the Nile that no longer exists. The branch of the Nile that once extended to the Giza Plateau was short lived, moving rapidly eastwards away from the pyramid site with each season.

Lutley’s extensive work has allowed the use of fieldwork and observations of satellite images to show that the Nile is likely to have moved widely over the floodplain during the past 5,000 years. Lutley and Bunbury’s work also supports the idea put forward a century ago inferring the Nile delta’s head was further to the south until the end of the Old Kingdom.

The Giza Plateau Before the Fourth Dynasty

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315 Ibid.
317 Lyons 1908; Toussoun 1925; Bunbury 2008.
Information about the Giza plateau prior to the Fourth Dynasty has been speculative until lately. Abydos had been the royal cemetery for the rulers of the earliest dynasties until a new site had to be chosen due to lack of funerary real estate. The high officials from the Second Dynasty had chosen to site their tombs at Saqqara, which was close to the capital of Memphis. With every field season that passes, the archaeological record reveals more information, offering scholars a deeper look into pre-Fourth Dynasty human activity at Giza. Archaeological evidence in support of early activity at Giza is provided by a number of artifacts that have been recovered on and around the plateau.

The ‘South Field’ cemetery on contains the earliest known tombs on the Plateau. Mastaba V and Mastaba T which is believed to date to the reign of King Djet of the First Dynasty. This mastaba also called ‘Covington's Tomb’ is surrounded by graves of fifty-six retainers. The mastaba’s owner is un-named but the presence of the surrounding graves suggests that he was an important official. A tomb of the Second Dynasty date has also been found at Giza and contained early dynastic jar sealings naming King Nynetjer.

Noticing the quality of these tombs of lower officials, archaeologists had reason to believe that the three first kings of the Second Dynasty whose tombs were not to be found at the cemetery in Abydos. The Kings Raneb, Nynetjer and Hetepsekhemwy had their last resting places hidden somewhere under the sand in Saqqara; archaeological evidence recovered during the beginning of the twentieth century seems to support this assessment. In Saqqara the building of tombs had taken a new big step downwards underground, and the developing of new technique in cutting stone and tunneling in the bedrock made it possible to elaborate the final

319 Adams, B. Signs from the Tomb of Djet. 1994.
resting places of the kings. A new era was underway and the Egyptians were able to master the hardest of stones. This great leap forward was taken in the necropolis of the capital of Memphis, a site that had been used as a burial ground even before the founding of the town itself.

In 1901 the Italian archaeologist Barsanti coincidentally stumbled down into a vast underground gallery of rooms going out from a long corridor ending with a grave chamber. Clay stoppers from storage jars revealed the owner's name, pharaoh Hotepsekhemwy, the first king of the Second Dynasty. Egyptologists now had an example that cutting stone and tunneling the bedrock was well advanced at this early state of Egyptian history. A few decades later another gallery of similar shape was found c. 150 meters to the east – specify whether you are talking about Memphis or the Giza plateau area. Lots of remains from later times were found within it, but remaining clues told that this was the tomb of pharaoh Nynetjer, the third king of the same dynasty\textsuperscript{321}.

Mortensen\textsuperscript{322} discusses four ceramic jars, reportedly found in the late 1800s at the foot of the Great Pyramid at Giza. When these jars were first found, there was little known about the Pre-dynastic period of ancient Egyptian history. It was then widely accepted that the people of the Fourth Dynasty created the Giza site, therefore it was widely accepted at the time of discovery that these jars must be from the Fourth Dynasty.\textsuperscript{323} This theory was never disputed until Mortensen challenged his own theories and began to reexamine the jars from a different and unique perspective. After much needed reanalysis, the jars appeared to be typical of the late Pre-dynastic Maadi period.\textsuperscript{324} Additionally, Emery\textsuperscript{325} investigated the discovery of a large but much

\textsuperscript{321} Firth and Lauer. Excavations at Saqqara. 1935.
\textsuperscript{323} Reader, Geomorphological Study, 2001, 149-65.
\textsuperscript{324} Mortensen, Four Jars, 145.
destroyed royal monument, eventually concluding that the tomb was a consort of Uadji\textsuperscript{326} from the First Dynasty.\textsuperscript{327} Further evidence of Early Dynastic associations with Giza includes two inscribed bowls bearing the name of the first king of the Second Dynasty, Hotepsekhemui\textsuperscript{328} found in Menkaure's pyramid complex,\textsuperscript{329} and jar sealings bearing the name of Neteren,\textsuperscript{330} a later Second Dynasty king.\textsuperscript{331}

In order to properly determine the use of Giza by analyzing pre-Fourth Dynasty monuments and artifacts, one must look at the context within the Giza necropolis of Fourth Dynasty development. In general terms, the Fourth Dynasty land use of the site consisted either of quarrying or construction areas.\textsuperscript{332} These are both rather destructive activities, which may have necessitated the removal of earlier structures and the disposal of the resulting site clearance debris. This debris would have been deposited in the base of worked-out quarries or in other known areas of dumping, outside the area of construction. In the mid-1970s, an Austrian Egyptologist, Karl Kromer, investigated one such area of debris, some one kilometer south of the Great Pyramid. Within the fill, finds have been attributed to the Late Predynastic, as well as the First, Second, and Fourth Dynasties.\textsuperscript{333}

The vital work of both Mortensen\textsuperscript{334} and Kromer\textsuperscript{335} paved the way for indisputable artifact analysis that accounts for pre-Fourth Dynasty activity at Giza. As most of the pre-Fourth

\textsuperscript{326} Also Known As: Wadj, Zet, or Djet.
\textsuperscript{328} Also Known As: Hetepsekhemwy
\textsuperscript{330} Also Known As: Ninetjer
\textsuperscript{332} Reader, Geomorphological Study, 2001, 149-65.
\textsuperscript{334} Mortensen, Four Jars, 145.
Dynasty artifacts found at Giza have been recovered from outside the Fourth Dynasty necropolis, earlier material was likely removed from its original position and deposited elsewhere, a possibility that is now widely understood and generally accepted.\textsuperscript{336} Evidence of ancient Egyptian landfills, such as the notable Oxyrhynchus ancient trash heap, provided a better understanding of the ways in which raw material and debris were handled, eventually giving way to an overall accurate model pre-Fourth Dynasty settlement.\textsuperscript{337}

**The Giza Plateau after the Pyramids in the Old Kingdom**

The conundrum of the burgeoning Giza Necropolis’s abandonment after the Great Pyramids is in as much mired controversy as the construction of the pyramids and Sphinx themselves. It has been suggested that the Giza Necropolis was abandoned after its construction, making it a ghost town for all but a few priests and followers.\textsuperscript{338} In the last decade, archaeological fieldwork at Giza has been able to start answering some of the questions about what happened to the Giza Plateau after the Pyramids of Khafre, Khufu, and Menkaure were constructed.

Egyptologists’ prevailing theory(-ies) maintained the idea there was some activity at Giza by the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties due to random graves dating from that time.\textsuperscript{339} However, this theory has lost support as new evidence points to the deliberate abandonment of the Heit el-Ghurab site or the lost city.\textsuperscript{340} Even though Menkaure died before he could finish his pyramid, his successor Shepseskaf, before abandoning Giza and moving the royal house to South

\textsuperscript{336} Reader, Geomorphological Study, 2001 149-65.
Saqqara,\textsuperscript{341} not only ensured that his pyramid was finished but also finished its complex of temples and his queens’ pyramids. However, with Shepseskaf’s move to Saqqara and the end of the Fourth Dynasty, major construction projects were completed, but Giza was not entirely abandoned as previously thought.\textsuperscript{342} At the foot of the Khentkawe’s monument and the Menkaure Valley Temple, a community of priests, artists and craftsmen lived in the settlement laboring away on tombs in the Western and Central Cemeteries.\textsuperscript{343}

Giza’s Fourth Dynasty abandonment did not last. In middle in the Fifth Dynasty, the royal gaze returned to Giza as a symbol of legitimacy.\textsuperscript{344} Niuserre, an important king, who reigned from roughly around 2402 to 2374 BC, in the middle of the Fifth Dynasty, returned focus to Giza.\textsuperscript{345} Niuserre, the unexpected king and witness to years of dynastic strife, emphasized the parallels between his rule and those of his predecessors at Giza by rebuilding their temples and revitalizing their cults.

This is present in several lines of archaeological data. One of the main pieces of evidence was clay sealings and broken inscriptions discovered by Reisner throughout the pyramid complex which bear the names of Khafre, Menkaure, and Shepseskaf, three of the last rulers in the Fourth Dynasty, but no later kings until Niuserre, followed by almost every other king of the Old Kingdom. This evidence points to Niuserre as the driving force behind the resuscitation of Giza.\textsuperscript{346}

While this was a strong theory, more evidence was needed to confirm this monumental connection. Excavations by AERA uncovered the Silo Building Complex east of the

\textsuperscript{341} Z. Hawass. Chapter Six The Programs Of The Royal Funerary Complexes of the Fourth Dynasty. Ancient Egyptian Kingship 9, 1995: 221.
\textsuperscript{343} Nolan, Fifth Dynasty, 2012, 3.
\textsuperscript{346} Nolan, Fifth Dynasty, 2012, 4.
Khentkawe’s Town, which confirmed the idea of Niuserre’s role. Limited preliminary excavations of the newly discovered mudbrick compound suggest Giza became an administrative/production center. The new discovery is surrounded by a thick mudbrick wall, over thirty-five impressed clay sealings were recovered, many of which bear the name of Niuserre. One sealing in particular includes the title, ‘Overseer of the Pyramid Great is Khafre’ alongside Niuserre’s name. This line of archaeological evidence, at a minimum, suggests Niuserre took an active interest in the well-being of the pyramid town that housed priests and others maintaining the cult of Khafre in his temple.

After the Fifth Dynasty, little is known about the presence of the Sixth Dynasty at Giza. After Niuserre reoccupied Giza, random burials at Giza, as well as the clay sealings, bear the name of every king in the Old Kingdom suggesting someone was using the area during that time. However, why they occupied Giza, as well as why they abandoned the area after the Old Kingdom, are questions that are still being explored by archaeologists and other specialists. The working theory put forth here strengthens the foundation of a funerary complex existence and being functional assisting the Pharaohs heighten their Power. It was during this falling out between dirties that allowed the average Egyptian to ascend with the pharaoh and gods.

**The Giza Plateau after the Pyramids: The First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom**

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349 Nolan, Fifth Dynasty, 2012, 4-5.
Life on the Giza Plateau after the Old Kingdom became increasingly quiescent. During the First Intermediate Period, all aspects of Giza were abandoned.\textsuperscript{351} It remained this way until archaeological evidence indicates another occupation during the Middle Kingdom. At this time in ancient Egyptian history, Giza was fair game to the Middle Kingdom pharaohs and whomever wanted to find anything of value.\textsuperscript{352} The pyramids and tombs were forced open and plundered. There is also evidence that members of the Twelfth Dynasty used causeways and temples as quarries. By the Middle Kingdom, none of the ancient monuments and support features were safe. One example of this ‘repurposing’ period is associated with the Twelfth Dynasty Pharaoh, Amenemhet I (c 1991-1962 BC), who removed pieces of the tomb chapels and pyramid temples and pyramids from the Fourth Dynasty legacy and then used those materials in the core of his own pyramid located at Lisht.\textsuperscript{353}

**The Giza Plateau after the Pyramids in the New Kingdom**

For the most part, the Giza Plateau was abandoned between the First Intermediate Period and the New Kingdom. During the New Kingdom, life was once again vibrant in ancient Egypt. New construction projects emerged as Giza once again became the focus of the royal entourage.\textsuperscript{354} The monumental Sphinx on the Giza Plateau near Cairo, as shrouded in mystery as it may be, still holds many keys to unlocking the secrets on the plateau from the time of the pyramid builders.\textsuperscript{355} There are two temples that surround the base of the Sphinx. One of them, directly in front of the Sphinx, dates to the time when the Sphinx monument was built, while the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{352} C. Lilyquist. Early Middle Kingdom Tombs at Mitrahina. Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt 11, 1974: 27-30.
\item \textsuperscript{354} Hadingham, Sphinx, 1-5.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
other is of New Kingdom construction (Figure 28 and 29). Some of the more notable constructions of Giza during this age include a brick-built chapel which was constructed near the Sphinx during the early Eighteenth Dynasty, by King Thutmose I. Amenhotep II built a temple dedicated to Hauron-Haremakhet near the Sphinx. Pharaoh Thutmose IV visited the pyramids and the Sphinx as a prince and in a dream was told that clearing the sand from the Sphinx would be rewarded with kingship, an event that was recorded on a stela. During the early years of his reign, Thutmose IV, together with his wife Queen Nefertari, had stelae erected at Giza.

Pharaoh Tutankhamun had a structure built there, too, which is now referred to as the King’s Rest-house. During the Nineteenth Dynasty, Seti I added to the temple of Hauron-Haremakhet, and his son Ramesses II erected a stela in the chapel before the Sphinx and usurped the rest-house of Tutankhamun.

Reshaping into Modern-Day Giza Plateau

No matter how much energy was put into restoring the Giza Plateau by later Egyptian leaders, it continued and continues to be a place representing the Old Kingdom. Since the end of the prosperous New Kingdom, a lack of abundant raw material and the inability to move such material may be among the several reasons future generations ceased to use this area. During the Twenty-sixth Dynasty there was saw a valiant attempt to resurrect the glory of the Old Kingdom. A later King borrowed the name of Khufu to cloak his own operations at Giza in

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glory and to promote the antiquity of the Cult of Isis at Giza. During the time when the Cult of Isis at Giza, active priesthood of the Sphinx as Horemakhet appeared and included people referring to themselves as priests of Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure.\(^{364}\) Ironically, the worship of the powerful kings of Egypt who built the largest structures in Egypt were carried out in the tiny Temple of Isis, built amongst the southernmost of the pyramids of Khufu's queens in the Twenty-first Dynasty. A small stela there related another story about Khufu, namely that having found the Isis Temple in ruins he restored the images of the gods and repaired the headdress of the Sphinx.\(^{365}\) This stela can be traced back to the Twenty-sixth Dynasty conjoining the style of the text and the deities mentioned. In referring to the inventory stela, Lehner confirms:

> The story was no doubt told to give greater antiquity and authenticity to the fledgling cult. But its erroneous implication that the Sphinx and the Isis Temple predate Khufu shows just how far the perceived history of the site was slipping from fact.\(^{366}\)

Since around the fifth century BC, and up until recently, stones from the monuments were taken and used to build buildings in nearby Cairo.\(^{367}\) Many of Cairo's oldest buildings are built partly from stones from the pyramids. This destructive re-use continued on the monumental sites well into the nineteenth century until cultural heritage efforts and preservation tactics prevailed. Throughout this time, the OS/SS eluded full exploration, primarily because it was inundated for most of its existence.

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Chapter 6: A Proverbial Summary of Old Kingdom

Introduction

The historical eras known as the Old Kingdom and Late Period will be the main focal points of for this research and a summary of these periods are presented here as even to provide additional context(s) for consideration. The Old Kingdom existed roughly c 2628-2134 BC\textsuperscript{368} and was known for its ornate architecture which appeared at an unprecedented rate. The adherence to the dawn of the Late period or Saite Dynasty reached its glory days around 664 to 525 BC. The Saite Dynasty comes from the city of Sais, where its pharaohs had their capital; this dynasty marks the beginning of the Late Period of ancient Egypt.

Massive builds that still influence the planet thousands of years later started off as a design created by Pharaoh Djoser’s chief architect and physician Imhotep.\textsuperscript{369} The Pharaoh Djoser assisted grand vision finished the first Step Pyramid at Saqqara around 2630 BC. The Great Pyramid of Khufu was constructed around 2554 BC, with the Pyramids of Khafre and Menkaure following around 2522 and 2489 BC.\textsuperscript{370} When it comes to the Sphinx, there has been no shortage of theories and controversy surrounding the date of its construction, its existence as an idea, whom/what dynasty sparked the original notion, as well as for whom/what was it modeled in likeness draws no closer than the speculation it obtains. The Sphinx and the Sphinx Temple,\textsuperscript{371} are currently thought to date from the Old Kingdom, with assumptions that the Great Sphinx at Giza never essentially attained its true form.\textsuperscript{372} There are no annals of any priests or priestesses

\textsuperscript{371} Located in front of the Sphinx
\textsuperscript{372} E. Hadingham. Uncovering Secrets of the Sphinx. Smithsonian 40, no. 11, 2010: 2.
servicing this temple. Was the Sphinx Temple ever operational?\textsuperscript{373} It has been proposed that the Sphinx, the Sphinx Temple, the Mortuary Temple, and the Valley Temple of Khafre were built at the same time as the attribution to Khafre.\textsuperscript{374}

During one of Dr. Lehner’s earliest expeditions with Dr. Hawass, it was postulated that in order to carve the Sphinx, the ancient builders formed a U-shaped ditch, eventually freeing a massive stone from which they then carved the Sphinx.\textsuperscript{375} The resulting stones were used in the cores of the walls of both the adjacent Sphinx and Valley temples. Dr. Lehner and Dr. Hawass found conclusive evidence that supports the idea that the builders did not finish carving out the ditch surrounding the Sphinx. The incomplete project appears to have been conjoined with future dynasties deconstructing the Sphinx temple of its granite casing and alabaster flooring. Dr. Lehner concluded that the Sphinx Temple was the last major item left unfinished just at the end of Khafre’s reign.\textsuperscript{376}

Since legacies left behind by scholars such as the ancestors of Egyptology, Jean-François Champollion\textsuperscript{377} and Sir William Matthew Flinders Petrie,\textsuperscript{378} the popularity of ancient Egypt, along with the research associated with the colonial period, has increased at an exponential rate,\textsuperscript{379} with details of life in this land being understood with ever increasing accuracy. For example, the work of Dr. Lehner and AERA at Giza, including sites such as the Heit el-Ghurab

\textsuperscript{373} M. Bártta. Old Kingdom, Egypt. The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, 2013:1.
\textsuperscript{379} Diprimio, Sphinx, 2011.
(HeG) settlement, have inspired a new generation of inquiry, with theories are proven and disproven every field season.

Given Lehner and others’ ongoing research and publications, the chronology of the Fourth Dynasty is very well known and so there is no reason to repeat that information here. Rather, in an effort to keep this chapter concise, I will only include a brief introduction to the Fourth Dynasty here. The focus of this chapter, in turn, will examine the new archaeological evidence that surrounds the Fourth Dynasty, including building techniques on the Giza Plateau.

An Overture into the History of Pyramid Building: Pre-Fourth Dynasty

From the beginning of the Dynastic Era, around 2950 BC, royal tombs were carved into rock and covered with flat-roofed rectangular structures known as mastabas, which were precursors to the pyramids. One of the oldest known pyramids in Egypt was built around 2630 BC at Saqqara for the Third Dynasty’s King Djoser. Known as the Step Pyramid, it began as a traditional mastaba but grew into something much more ambitious. As the story goes, the pyramid’s architect was Imhotep, a priest and healer who some 1,400 years later would be deified as the patron saint of scribes and physicians. Over the course of Djoser’s nearly twenty year reign, pyramid builders assembled six stepped layers of stone, as opposed to mud-brick, like most earlier tombs, that eventually reached a height of 204 feet. A complex of courtyards, temples and shrines where Djoser would enjoy his afterlife surrounded the Step Pyramid.

The height of power associated with the Old Kingdom blossomed during the Fourth Dynasty, which started under the rule of Sneferu (c. 2575-2551 BC). The building of the

382 A.E. Kalil, Spectral Ratio, 7.
384 Bártá, Old Kingdom, 1.
Pyramids of Giza did not just happen based off a whim. The Egyptian pyramids took time to perfect, as well as practice, trial and error, massive engineering feats, resulting not only in the construction of the pyramids, but also in turning the Giza Plateau into a thriving, globally iconic necropolis.

After Djoser, the pyramid became the beginning of a paradigm shift for royal burials, although none of those planned by his dynastic successors were completed; this can be attributed to their relatively short reigns.\textsuperscript{385} In the Third Dynasty, Pharaoh Huni began construction on a true pyramid at Maidum,\textsuperscript{386} utilizing a step pyramid as a base for the construction.\textsuperscript{387} However, it was his son, Sneferu, the first Pharaoh of the Fourth Dynasty, who took monument building to a new level. Sneferu began by completing the work on his father’s pyramid, then constructed a step pyramid of his own at Maidum. With his first attempt, finishing his father’s pyramid came to an unsuccessful ending. It is believed that the pyramid cracked misconstruction due to improper foundation.\textsuperscript{388}

Once it was completed, Sneferu had a design for a new monument, utilizing what he had learned on his father’s monument. Sneferu's second pyramid was to be a true pyramid from the beginning, unlike Huni’s, which had been built around a step pyramid core. Sneferu went to Dahshur to build his second pyramid (Figure 30), which is now known as the Bent Pyramid.\textsuperscript{389} This pyramid was built mostly on sand, just two of the four corners rest on solid ground. Because sand tends to float, the sides of the pyramid started to shift during construction causing the already build burial chamber to crack. Sneferu had to use thick cedar beams from

\begin{itemize}
\item Also Known As: Meidum or Maydum
\item Kawae and Kamei, Geomorphological Aspects, 864-68.
\item Lepre, Pyramids, 1990.
\end{itemize}
Lebanon to strengthen the walls of the chamber preventing it from collapsing. But this alone was not enough; Sneferu had to change the angle of the outside walls of the pyramid to a lesser angle. To save his pyramid he changed the angle from fifty-five degrees to forty-three degrees; decreasing the force on the on the inner burial chamber at the same time. This was the second time Sneferu failed in building a perfect pyramid and the Bent Pyramid never got used.

By now Sneferu was getting older and time started to catch up with him so when he started the construction of his third pyramid, he knew he had to get it right this time as there was no more room for error. Sneferu started building the Red Pyramid (Figure 31). Learning from his earlier mistakes Sneferu build this structure with a more gradual angle than the first two. He built this pyramid at forty-five degrees, with this avoiding the danger of collapsing during construction. Despite the more flattened appearance of the pyramid it still was the highest building ever built at the time of its construction. By building the Red Pyramid, Sneferu finally succeeded in building the first real pyramid in ancient Egyptian history. After a twenty-four-year reign, Sneferu was succeeded by his son Khufu who built one of the most well-known of pyramids, the Great Pyramid of Giza.

**The Grand Scheme of the Giza Plateau Envisioned by the Fourth Dynasty**

The extent of knowledge of pyramid building that Sneferu passed onto his son can be seen as the Giza Pyramids reaches for the sky. As of today, this built legacy has survived looters and other dynasties removing parts of it for their own temples, including cases when people blew holes in the side of the Great Pyramid. Most impressively Khufu’s Pyramid has stood the test of

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394 Tyldesley. Pharaohs.
time. The Giza Plateau was the ideal place for setting up the necropolis of wonders. As discussed in the previous chapter, during the Fourth Dynasty, the Giza Plateau was not the arid desert we picture today. In fact, the plateau was in the middle of major climate changes due to the African Humid Phase. Waterways came right up to the Plateau, almost reaching the Sphinx (Figures 32 and 33). The various construction sites of the Giza monuments represent stunning architectural landscape undertakings. The Fourth Dynasty pharaohs made effective use of Eocene limestone bedrocks, the Mokattam and Maddi Formats.395

It is known that the builders of the Great Pyramid of Khufu aligned the huge monument to true north to within six minutes of arc, or one tenth of a degree.396 Also, it has long been recognized that the three Giza pyramids were aligned to the cardinal points with remarkable precision.397 On the question of how this was achieved, evidence other than that of the alignments themselves is fragmentary. However, looking at much of the new and old evidence can help provide the necessary answers.

After the site had been selected and the area leveled, due to either a labor first or most of the work being done by the African Humid Phase (or a combination of both), a plan certainly had to be implemented that dealt not only with the orientation and internal organization of each structure on the plateau but also with the placement of the various structures in relation to one another.398 This theory is becoming more popular as evidence is now showing that construction on the Giza Plateau was carefully planned and happened over a larger period to include some pre-Fourth Dynasty presence.

There is reason to believe that the intention from the outset was to fulfill the needs of more than one pharaoh, even before Khufu’s pyramid began to begin construction. Was this because of the impact and knowledge Sneferu had from his prior three pyramids? Archaeological evidence of this can been seen via the location of the Great Pyramid, which was placed as far north as possible on the Mokattam limestone ridge, thereby leaving room for the construction of the other pyramids.

There have been several noteworthy surveys of the Giza Plateau and the pyramids that have been conducted to help answer some of these questions. There is strong evidence being presented suggesting that the intention from the outset was to fulfill the needs of more than one pharaoh, even before Khufu’s pyramid began to be constructed. Various alignments are evident among the monuments themselves. In particular, the southeastern corners of the three main pyramids lie in a straight line; this has become known as the Giza diagonal. The eastern sides of Khafre’s and Menkaure’s Mortuary Temples are aligned respectively with the western sides of Khufu’s and Khafre’s pyramids. These alignments may have arisen simply because the Egyptian surveyors reused the same natural back sights or foresights and/or sighted along existing structures, when laying out baselines for new foundations. Others argue that there was a pre-existing master plan, and some extend this concept, suggesting that the Giza diagonal may deliberately have pointed directly to the ancient city of Abydos as well as Heliopolis.

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400 C.B. Smith. How the Great Pyramid was Built. Smithsonian Institution, 2018.
401 Petrie 1881; Cole 1925; Dorner 2006; Lehner and Goodman, 2007.
404 Lehner. Complete Pyramids, 38.
Although the latter is not commonly accepted among Egyptologists, what is agreed is that a Giza was premeditated.

One of the strongest lines of evidence is the seemingly straight lines of holes that surround the monuments (Figure 34). These rock-cut holes are what Petrie\textsuperscript{406} refers to as trial passages, noting that their design replicated many of the junctions and doorways of the interior corridors. These trial passages, and a trench that appears to be associated with them, run parallel to the pyramid’s eastern baseline, giving them a north-south orientation. A row of rock-cut holes that crosses both the trench and the trial passages appears to be aligned to structural elements inside the Great Pyramid.\textsuperscript{407} Lehner dates the trench to the construction of the pyramids and judges that these postholes were probably cut at the same time.\textsuperscript{408} This all suggests the eastern side of the Great Pyramid was the primary focus of pyramid construction and survey and that the primary baseline was north–south, with perpendicular offsets being used to mark out the inner passages of the pyramid as well as to determine the orientation of the adjacent sides.\textsuperscript{409} If, as seems probable, many of these postholes surrounding Khafre’s pyramid are more consistently placed. There are three parallel rows of postholes on each of the four sides, the two rows furthest from the pyramid being located on the outside limit of the enclosure wall and the third row along the inner line of the enclosure wall.\textsuperscript{410} On the north, east, and south sides they run the entire length from corner to corner but on the west side they stop some 10 m short of the corners.\textsuperscript{411}

\textsuperscript{406}F. Petrie. The Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh. Рипол Классик, 1883.
\textsuperscript{409}Nell and Clive. Orientations, 2014: 304-360.
\textsuperscript{411}Lehner, Pyramid Age Settlement, 33.
This suggests that the primary baseline might have been laid out using astronomical methods on any one of the north, east, or south sides prior to construction.\footnote{Spence, Astronomical Orientation, 320-4.}

In order to accomplish this, an orientation reference line would be set up in a larger square by measuring off the established square ground plan. This was done by digging post holes at measured distances from the inner square in the bedrock and inserting small posts through which a rope or string ran. These holes were dug at about ten cubic intervals.\footnote{J.A. Legon. The Plan of the Giza Pyramids. Archaeological Reports of the Archaeology Society of Staten Island 10, no. 1, 1979: 33-40.} This outer reference line was needed because the original orientation lines would be erased by building work. Various segments of the reference line could be removed so that building material could be moved into place. Then measurements were taken from the guideline as the material for the platform were put in place so that the platform was in accord with the initial floor plan.\footnote{B. Sampsell. Pyramid Design and Construction–Part 2: Control of Pyramid Shape. Journal of the Egyptian Study Society 12, no. 1, 2001.}

By explaining at some of the portrayals the ancient Egyptians left behind may assist in leading us to clues about how they surveyed Giza and aligned their major monuments. Depictions of foundation ceremonies for sacred buildings appear on temple walls throughout ancient Egyptian history, the most famous of these being that of the so-called ‘stretching of the cord’ ceremony found, for example, in the Temple of Horus at Edfu dating to 237 BC.\footnote{M. Isler. Sticks, Stones, and Shadows: Building the Egyptian Pyramids. University of Oklahoma Press, 2001.} Here the king and the goddess Seshat\footnote{He who represents numeration, counting, and timekeeping.} are each seen holding a post; a rope is attached to both posts.\footnote{Nell and Clive. Orientations, 2014: 304-360.} The accompanying text records that the king first determines where the posts are to be set by astronomical observation and then the rope tight is pulled tight. The stretching of the cord ceremony (Figure 35) is also depicted more than two millennia earlier, in the Fifth Dynasty Sun
Temple of Niuserre at Abu Ghurab. Indeed, variations of this scene have been discovered in several temples and tombs from different periods, often accompanied by texts. These records clearly suggest that cords, posts, and astronomical observations were being used to align and measure buildings. The fact that the stretching of the cord ceremony is mentioned on the Second Dynasty Palermo Stone makes it clear that such methods were already current at the time of the construction of the Pyramids of Giza.

During this era, there were the most changes culturally, politically, and religiously. One significant change was the transition from the Step Pyramid to the smooth-surfaced pyramid. The pyramids on the Giza plateau are visually striking primarily due to their grand size. The Mokattam Formation plays a significant role in glorifying this. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that there may have been political and religious motivations for locating the pyramids. They overlook the royal necropolis at Saqqara and would have ultimately acted as a strong statement reinforcing the ideology of kingship. The Mokettam Formation elevates the pyramids to achieve this status of royal power. Moreover, Mark Lehner notes that the area of the Mokattam behind the pyramids provides an excellent landscape for the economic infrastructure of the building process. Although these theories regarding site choice are highly probable, some claim that the overall reasoning behind the choice of province for pyramid building is still unknown.

The Construction of the Pyramids at Giza

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420 Belmonte, Orientation Egyptian Pyramids, S1-S20.
422 K. Murphy. Monumental Egyptian Architecture.
424 J. Malek. The Old Kingdom, 2000: 89-117.
Questions surrounding the Pyramids at Giza have perplexed Egyptologists since they first tried to explain how these colossal phenomena were fashioned. Theory after theory has emerged as these wonders captured the minds of all who gazed upon them. Field investigations such as the Giza Mapping Project, well into its semicentennial field season, are offering deep investigations into all that was and is the Giza plateau. I will not directly discuss the Construction of the Pyramids at Giza; rather bring forth new evidence that will assist in understanding the construction of the OS/SS.

Seldom in the ancient world did humans alter a landscape in the way it was at Giza. To build the pyramids one would conclude that a human disturbance happened on a geological scale. If this is true, then evidence of this would be apparent in the way of quarries. When choosing a site to construct pyramids, one would have to take into consideration where they were going to get the material for these massive monuments. How big of a hole must be dug to get enough rock to build the pyramids at Giza? This is one of the questions the Giza Mapping Project was set on answering. There must be evidence of quarrying on or near Giza that would match the amount of limestone moved. During their survey they discovered a massive depression that could account for this. They unearthed a horseshoe shaped quarry which lies just south of Khufu’s Great Pyramid. Lehner suspected that this great pit furnished most of the local stone for the core of the Great Pyramids. In order to determine the amount of material that had to be moved, he calculated the volume of material it would take to build Khufu’s and Khafre’s

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427 Smith, Great Pyramid, 2018.
428 Lehner, Pyramid Age Settlement, 55.
pyramids and compared it to the missing volume of stone in the area he believed was used as the quarries.\footnote{M. Lehner. The Development of Giza Necropolis: The Khufu Project. Mitteilungen des Degtschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo 41. 1985: 109-146.}

To calculate the missing volume of stone in the quarry, Lehner and his team used a map from the Egyptian Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction which has spot heights measuring elevations in meters above sea level and contours at one-meter intervals.\footnote{Lehner, Giza Mapping. 2009.} Their calculation is an approximation because of the quarry’s irregular shape and the fact that centuries of blowing sand have refilled the southern extension of the quarry.\footnote{Smith, Great Pyramid, 2018.} A rough comparison with the Great Pyramid reveals a good match. The estimated volumes for Khufu’s pyramid and the missing stone in the quarry are similar. Numbers lead directly to Khufu. Dr. Lehner and his team calculated that it took 2,590,000 cubic meters to build Khufu’s pyramid and there is approximately 2,760,00 cubic meters missing from the quarry.\footnote{Lehner, Giza Mapping, 2009.}

Lehner’s team has been investigating how ancient quarrymen removed stone by cutting channels the size of hotel corridors to isolate big blocks of bedrock (Figure 36).\footnote{F. Habashi. The Pyramids of Egypt. De Re Metallica, Madrid: Revista de la Sociedad Española Para la Defensa del Patrimonio Geológico y Minero 24, 2015: 81-89.} They subdivided these blocks with smaller channels, just wide enough for a single quarryman to drive the channel forward. When they isolated the desired-size block, they would insert levers as big as railroad ties into sockets along the underside and then pry the stone free from the bedrock. Once the stone was free, they would drag it away. You can still see some of their channels and lever sockets.\footnote{G. Magli, Written Landscape, 57-74.} Working this way, the pyramid builders cut the huge quarry to a maximum depth of thirty meters below the plateau surface.\footnote{Lehner, Giza Mapping, 2009.}
The bottom of the quarry slopes slightly upwards to the north toward what would later become the Khafre causeway (Figure 37). Massive amounts of limestone, sand, tafla, and gypsum debris now fill the center of the quarry. Lehner speculates this material might be remnants of the pyramid construction ramps, which the workers removed and dumped back into the quarry to fill it at the end of the project. The largest blocks of bedrock, isolated by channels, still exist between the main quarry and the Sphinx to the east. Here you can see, roughed out of the bedrock but still attached, a fifty to one hundred ton block; symmetrical to blocks the builders used in the Khafre and Menkaure temples. In the quarry basin, which the builders exploited deeper into the bedrock, channels and a stepped face that indicate where the ancient workmen cut the smaller pyramid-sized blocks in a one to two-ton range.

Menkaure built the third, or smallest, of the three Giza pyramids. Reisner correctly identified a depression south-southeast of Menkaure’s pyramid as the quarry for that pyramid, running roughly southeast to northwest. Though calculations of the volume have not been attempted, its size and location make it a likely candidate to be Menkaure’s pyramid quarry.

Though the location of the Khafre quarry is less certain, Khafre may have quarried in several places at Giza. Part of his quarry may lie under the deep sand in the wadi south of the

436 Desert clay.
441 Reisner, Mycerinus, 119.
442 Smith, Great Pyramid, 2018.
pyramids.\textsuperscript{444} Khafre may have also quarried tremendous amounts of stone in the area of his Sphinx and from north of his pyramid causeway.\textsuperscript{445}

With his projects, Mark Lehner created a widely accepted theory called the theory of Tafla.\textsuperscript{446} Tafla is clay that is very strong when it is dried but is easily destroyed by a pickax. When Tafla is wet, it is very slippery and it could have been used to move the two-ton blocks. With a ramp of Tafla, transportation of the blocks up the side of a pyramid would have been more than feasible, as a small-scale demonstration showed.\textsuperscript{447}

After the passing of Khufu, his sons Djedefre and Khafre\textsuperscript{448} entered a quarrel, yet Khafre went on to construct a second pyramid, which consisted of the causeway hiding the OS/SS in plain sight.\textsuperscript{449} Later kings of the Fourth Dynasty included Menkaure\textsuperscript{450}, who built of the smallest pyramid in Giza but unfortunately was not able to finish it in time; Shepseskaf, the last pharaoh of the Fourth Dynasty finished it, ending the period of colossal construction atop the Giza plateau and the golden age of Memphite theology.\textsuperscript{451}

At the end of the Old Kingdom, sometime after Pepi II, construction of pyramids stopped in rapid succession. Pepi II, who was the longest to reign in ancient Egypt, and the last to reign in the Old Kingdom, witnessed the pharaonic system gradually break down during his ninety-year rule. It was during this time Egypt became divided between the two kings of the major nomes: Heracleopolis and Thebes. Though the time around this era is hazy, it was around this time which many of the new deities, such as Osiris and Horus emerged. Throughout the

\textsuperscript{445} Lehner, Giza Mapping, 2009.
\textsuperscript{446} Lehner. Complete Pyramids, 38.
\textsuperscript{447} Kawae and Kamei. Geomorphological Aspects 864-68.
\textsuperscript{448} Also Known As: Khafra, In Greek Chephre
\textsuperscript{450} Son of Khafre
archaeological record evidence can be found showing the different like tombs and shafts thought Egyptian constructed to pay homage to the Osiris and other funerary deities.
Chapter 7: History of Like Tombs, Shafts, Temples and Other Relevant Sites: A Comparative Study to Understand the Function(s) of the ‘Osiris Shaft’

Introduction

Osiris is an important deity in ancient Egyptian religion. His emergence in the Fifth Dynasty gave ancient Egyptians hope. Though the story has changed with every political change of power, the Legend of Osiris gave Egyptians the belief that they had the right to be transformed and to live in the afterlife. The Osiris Cult myths appear to have originated in Lower Egypt in the Delta region.

The cult was able to spread with a rapid succession as there was not much opposition in the beginning, as Osiris did not threaten the more supreme gods of the time. Osiris was not a frightening god to the people of ancient Egypt, though they still felt a need to pacify him. He was their means to eternal life, and this was achieved by copying the exact forms and rituals of his embalming.

The earliest known reference to Osiris as the ruler of the Underworld comes in the Fifth Dynasty Pyramid Text. In spell number 239, the Osiris legend emerges and the priests of the sun God Re Heliopolis incorporate him in the Heliopolitan Ennead as first child of Geb and Nut. The fact that he was a major god who decided ancient Egyptians’ fate in the afterlife meant there was a need to worship and pacify him, inspiring the construction of numerous monuments dedicated to him.

Starting in the Middle Kingdom, Abydos became a cult center for Osiris. A temple dedicated to him flourished at Abydos, and every year a great procession was held where an image of Osiris was carried from his temple to a tomb the Egyptians believed to be his.

Temple of Seti I: Fate or Destiny

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453 Budge, Osiris, 1973, 1.
455 Allen and Manuelian, Pyramid Texts.
The aftermath of the Amarna period left ancient Egypt desperate for a strong leader to bring religion back to its previous position of power. The Pharaohs of the end of the Eighteenth and beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasties brought back polytheism with deities such as Osiris.\(^{457}\) Osiris’s cult thrived at Abydos, which became an important cult center for the god. Abydos has a special place in the sacred landscape of ancient Egypt, as it was believed to be the place where Osiris was buried. Several temples dedicated to Osiris, all of which were located in one area, were built prior to the reign of Seti I.\(^{458}\)

It is thought that as Seti I began the search for a location for his temple, he was led to a location north of Luxor in the bend of the River Nile. There he began to dig the foundation for his Temple.\(^{459}\) During the process of setting up the foundation for his temple, Seti I discovered the Osirian, an ancient temple of Osiris.\(^{460}\) Whether he actually knew whereabouts of the Osirian and intended to locate it is not currently known. What is known is that upon finding this ancient temple in the path of his new temple, Seti I turned his new temple to the left, thus creating the only temple in Egypt that makes a L-shaped turn.\(^{461}\) Unlike most monuments in ancient Egypt, Seti’s Temple was built of fine white limestone and had several sanctuaries for different deities. Though this marvelous temple was started by Seti I, the decoration of the courtyards and first hypostyle hall was completed by his son Rameses II.\(^{462}\)

One of the more stunning parts of this temple is Seti I’s attempt to assist in restoring the worship of the traditional Egyptian gods. With seven sanctuaries in his temple, he dedicated

\(^{457}\) Baines and Shafer, Religion, 99.
\(^{458}\) Richter, Plutarch, 2001, 191-216.
\(^{462}\) P. Rome. The Temple of Set I and the Osireion at Abydos.
many areas to different deities including himself, Isis, Ptah, Ptah-Sokar, Nefertem, Re-Horakhty, Amun, and Horus. Access to the sanctuaries was through two transverse hypostyle halls, the first with two rows of columns and the second with three. In the first hypostyle hall the names of Seti I have been overwitten by Ramesses II. The seven sanctuaries are mostly decorated with scenes from the daily cult ritual showing the king entering the shrine, offering and anointing the god’s statue and barque, and then departing while sweeping away his footprints as he goes. Each sanctuary is roofed over with corbelling slabs cut as flat vaults, which were decorated with stars and the royal cartouches. While six of the chambers had double false doors on their rear walls, that of Osiris had a real door that gave way to a suite of rooms, dedicated to him, just behind the seven sanctuaries. Here an actual door leads to a unique suite of rooms at the back of the temple in which the mysteries of Osiris were celebrated.

The entrance to the outer hypostyle hall is through a central doorway from a portico with square columns decorated with scenes of Rameses II making offerings to various deities. In the time of Seti I there were seven doorways through the façade, each having a processional way from the court to seven sanctuaries. Rameses II filled in these doorways leaving only the central main entrance and a smaller doorway at the north end of the portico. The outer hypostyle was decorated by Ramesses II after the death of his father and while the reliefs are not as delicate as those of Seti I, they are finer than those in some of his later temples. This hall boasts

twenty-four papyrus columns each showing Rameses II in the presence of the god of the shrine at the end of the aisle.468

Seven doorways lead into the second hypostyle hall which serves as a vestibule for the seven cult chapels in the west wall. This hall, decorated in the reign of Seti I, has thirty-six pillars and on its walls there are beautiful reliefs of the king worshipping and performing rituals before various deities.469 On a raised platform to the west the chapels from left to right are dedicated to the deified Seti I, Ptah, Re-Horakhty, Amun-Re, Osiris, Isis and Horus.470 The sacred barques of each god would have been housed in these chapels and the scenes they contain depict fascinating accounts of the rituals associated with the festivals of each deity.471 The chapel of Seti I differs in its reliefs which show the king’s sovereignty being endorsed by the gods. The ceilings are vaulted and six of the chapels have a false door carved on the western wall.472 Unlike the Osiris chapel a door which leads to a suite of rooms behind hidden behind.473

This doorway first connects to the largest room of the suite, a transverse hall with two rows of five columns without capitals.474 This hall was decorated with various scenes of Seti I making an offering to Osiris. The highlight of these ceremonies was the erection of the Djed-pillar, symbolizing the resurrection of Osiris.475 The Osiris chapel is devoted almost exclusively to the different forms of that god, each distinguished by a different headdress, as well as by different ceremonial costumes and equipment. Thus, the chapel summarizes the many forms and

469 Murray, et al. The Osireion, 1904.
470 Naville, Abydos, 1914, 2-8.
471 Murray, et al. The Osireion, 1904.
474 Rome, Osireion.
475 Brand, Seti I.
functions of Osiris. Specifically, because of the meticulousness with which these reliefs were rendered, it is a fine study of details such as the variety of headdresses.\textsuperscript{476} Working under the assumption of Hawass’s name sake gives the possibility this one of the many pieces of Osiris himself hidden across the land. If this held a probability of truth places such as the Osirian, known features directly associated with Osiris shall hold striking similarities.

**The Osirian: The Power of the Cult is Strong**

Immediately behind the chambers dedicated to the Osiris cult is another unique feature, a subterranean structure known as the Osirian.\textsuperscript{477} The Osirian, which served as a cenotaph for Osiris, is thought to be connected with the worship of Osiris; built in the shape of an Eighteenth Dynasty tomb in the Valley of the Kings,\textsuperscript{478} it is entered from the north through a long passage decorated with scenes from *The Book of Gates* and offering scenes.\textsuperscript{479} Taking a ninety degree turn, the passage leads into the structure from the west, along the main axis of the temple, through two transverse halls decorated with mythological scenes, including some from the Book of the Dead.\textsuperscript{480}

The central hall is built of sandstone but has ten huge red granite pillars set in two rows which supported the massive roofing blocks.\textsuperscript{481} The appearance is similar to Khafre’s Valley Temple at Giza and for this reason many scholars speculate on its precise age.\textsuperscript{482} The central part of the hall is an island which may have been cut off from the rest of the building by its surrounding trenches of water. At the end of the island there was a sarcophagus and canopic


\textsuperscript{477}Also known by Osirion, Osireion or Osireon

\textsuperscript{478}Naville, *Abydos*, 1914, 2-8.

\textsuperscript{479}Murray, et al. *The Osireion*, 1904.

\textsuperscript{480}Abdelrahiem, *Book of the Dead*, 1-16.

\textsuperscript{481}Murray, et al. *The Osireion*, 1904.

\textsuperscript{482}Rome, Osireion.
chests suggesting that the purpose of the structure was to serve as a pseudo burial chamber.\textsuperscript{483} The increased height of the water-table means that most of the year the central part of the hall is flooded. There are six small chambers in each of the northern and southern walls. The trenches were drained and cleared of debris in 1993 but the bottoms have never been excavated.\textsuperscript{484}

This whole structure with a central mound surrounded by canal water was symbolic of the origins of life from the primeval waters. It was here that Seti I rested after his death and before being taken to his tomb in the Valley of the Kings.\textsuperscript{485} In imitation of the primeval hill of creation, two platforms were surrounded by a water-filled moat. The final transverse hall contains reliefs of Shu, god of the atmosphere, supporting the sky goddess Nut.\textsuperscript{486}

The Osirian has been interpreted as a kind of monument to the god Osiris. The style, though often thought to reflect the Old Kingdom because of the scale of its masonry, is now presumed to be the attempts by New Kingdom builders to archaize the plan and decoration of elements of a royal tomb of the period. If this is the case then the cult temple of Osiris would have the role of a mortuary temple in relation to the ‘royal tomb’, the Osirian.\textsuperscript{487} Because the ‘royal tomb’ was buried under a mound, it is possible that the central hall was designed to symbolize the great myth of Osiris buried on an island surrounded by the primeval waters.\textsuperscript{488} This offers some resemblance to the OS/SS at Gift in the likely hood that the resting place for Osiris is on a small island which can easily be seen as the original Primordial mound.

\textbf{Philae: The Burying Places of Osiris}

\textsuperscript{483} Naville, Abydos, 1914, 2-8.
\textsuperscript{484} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{485} Attia, Conservation of Seti-I Temple, 1995.
\textsuperscript{486} Wegner, Abydos, 2012, 179.
\textsuperscript{487} Eaton, Osiris and Sokar, 2006, 75-101.
\textsuperscript{488} Naville, Abydos, 1914, 2-8.
In Egyptian mythology Philae is the Island of Bigeh, the neighboring island of the burying-places of Osiris.\textsuperscript{489} Held in high reverence in both by the Egyptians to the north and the Nubians to the south, Philae was dedicated preeminently to Isis, sister-wife to Osiris, and patroness of the Ptolemaic rule.\textsuperscript{490} Although Isis was the major deity honored on Philae, the location of the island on the boundary between Egypt and Nubia meant that cults of Nubia were also featured on the island, represented by significant cult buildings.\textsuperscript{491} It was deemed profane for any but priests to dwell there. Temples to Isis began in the Thirtieth Dynasty and continued through the Ptolemaic Dynasties into Roman times.\textsuperscript{492} As described in previous chapters, Isis is a very important deity in the ancient world. She is associated with funeral rites but as the enchantress who resurrected Osiris and gave birth to Horus.\textsuperscript{493}

The earliest architectural temple on Philae is thought to be erected around the time of the Thirtieth Dynasty during the rule of King Nectanebo II, around 359-341 BC. It was dedicated to Hathor, Isis, and the gods of Senmet.\textsuperscript{494} During that era, there was the belief that Philae was the island of burial of one of the members of the mutilated body of Osiris.\textsuperscript{495} The island became the scene of one of the Osiris ‘passion-plays’, similar to those held at Abydos.\textsuperscript{496} The great shrine of Osiris at Abydos had by this time fallen into decay and its reputation transferred to Philae. This brought crowds of worshipers to the island. Bringing rationale for the second ruler of the Ptolemaic Dynasty, Ptolemy II, Philadelphus (C. 283-245 BC) to restore the temple.\textsuperscript{497} It was

\textsuperscript{489} J. Sellers. The Death of Gods in Ancient Egypt. Lulu, 2007.
\textsuperscript{493} Armour, Gods and Myths, 2001.
\textsuperscript{496} Ramsden. The Myth of Isis and Osiris.
originally supported by fourteen columns but only six survive (Figure 38). These have floral capitals and sistrum capitals bearing Hathor’s head. The columns were united by stone screens six feet high having reliefs showing Nectanebo sacrificing to the gods. These columns are crowned with cavetto cornices and rows of uraeus serpents.

A series of small steps lead to the gateway between the two towers. There are two scenes above this which have unfortunately been quite badly damaged. One depicts the pharaoh offering a garland of flowers to Horus and Nephthys. The other depicts the king offering incense and pouring cleansing water on an altar in the presence of Osiris, Isis, and Horus. A staircase in the western tower leads to the roof and the ‘Osirian Chambers’. The eastern tower has very similar decorations but is in much better condition. Both towers have grooves for flagpoles similar to the different pylons.

Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II and several gods make an appearance in the decorations on the passageway between the towers, but unfortunately the depiction has been quite badly defaced. On the east side of the doorway there is a later inscription dedicated to the Christian Bishop Theodorus. Near the base of the eastern tower, a piece of the granite foundation of the original island protruded from the ground. Ptolemy VI Philometor had this outcrop of granite carved into a stele on which he appears with queen Cleopatra II standing in front of Isis and Horus (Figure 39). The inscription refers to the grant of land to the temple which placed the priests of Philae on a similar standing to those of Elephantine. The grant is known as the ‘Dodekaschoinoi’ which is

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498 W. MacQuitty, and B. MacQuitty. Island of Isis: Philae, temple of the Nile. Macdonald and Jane's, 1976
503 MacQuitty and MacQuitty, Island of Isis, 1976.
Greek for ‘twelve schoinoi’ in which a ‘schoinos’ is a piece of land around seven miles along the riverbank.506

Within the complex at Philae, there are three small antechambers with small rooms set off followed by a sanctuary, the Temple of Isis at Philae (Figure 40). The sanctuary is a small chamber with two small windows.507 It still contains the pedestal installed by Ptolemy III Euergetes I and his wife Berenice, which would have supported the image of Isis in her sacred barque.508 This statue of the goddess would have been carried out in processions from the temple on her ceremonial barque to make the short crossing to the island of Bigeh to visit the tomb of her husband, Osiris.509

Bigeh island was sacred to the ancient Nubians and ancient Egyptians analogously. Senmet is a larger island about a hundred meters from Philae, where it is believed that one of the sixteen mythical tombs of Osiris is located.510 Leading out of the sanctuary, on the west side of the room is a door known as to arrive at the Gateway of Hadrian (Figure 41).

Sitting within the old enclosure wall of the temple, northwest of the Second Pylon, the small Gateway of Hadrian was built in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian and decorated with reliefs by Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus. The gateway presumably led to the Sanctuary of Abaton on the neighboring island of Bigga, where there was a Tomb of Osiris, and accordingly, the reliefs relate to the cult of Osiris.511

The temple complex was later dismantled and relocated to nearby Agilkia Island as part of the UNESCO Nubia Campaign project, protecting this and other complexes before the 1970 completion of the Aswan High Dam.512 Even though it was relocated, the original place can

506 MacQuitty and MacQuitty, Island of Isis, 1976.
508 MacQuitty and MacQuitty, Island of Isis, 1976.
509 Lyons, Temples of Philae, 1908.
511 Lyons, Temples of Philae, 1908.
never be lost in time as ancient scholars, such as Strabo,\textsuperscript{513} Diodorus Siculus,\textsuperscript{514} Ptolemy,\textsuperscript{515} Seneca,\textsuperscript{516} and Pliny the Elder\textsuperscript{517} flocked to one of the sixteen burying places of one of the most prominent gods in Egypt. Finding the exact burial place of Osiris

\textbf{Tomb of Osiris}

On the West Bank of the necropolis of Thebes, complete with multiple shafts and chambers, archaeologists uncovered another fascinating ancient Egyptian monument. A seemingly familiar tomb complex was discovered there over a century ago; but it was not until recently that the ‘eerie blackened tomb’ found proper excavation, revealing that it is much larger than previously thought.\textsuperscript{518} At first glance, archaeologists presumed the tomb to be a smaller version of the Osireion in Abydos,\textsuperscript{519} yet another complex dedicated to the god Osiris. However, after ample excavation and analysis, original assumptions about the site were dismissed.

The unusual structure was uncovered at the Al-Gorna necropolis on the west bank of the River Nile near Luxor. As soon as it was unearthed, archaeologists from the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century thought it belonged to Osiris as a symbolic burial site.\textsuperscript{520} Egyptologists soon followed clues related to an old ritual held between many ancient Egyptian deities and those they allowed to rule the land in their name.\textsuperscript{521} Archaeologists learned that the purpose of the unusual structure was to honor the divine Osiris through symbolic rituals. These impressive rituals allowed the pharaohs

\textsuperscript{513} Strabo. Geography, Book i: 40; Book xvii: 803, 818, and 820.
\textsuperscript{514} G. Diodorus, and G. Peter. Diodorus Siculus, Books 11-12.37.1: Greek History 480-431 B.C., the Alternative Version. 1st ed. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006; Book i: 22)
\textsuperscript{518} Budge, Osiris, 1973, 1.
\textsuperscript{520} P. Virey, and Institut Catholique De Paris. La Religion De L'ancienne Égypte. G. Beauchesne, 1910.
to personally connect to the immortal God of the afterlife. This connection allowed the pharaoh to rule and live blissfully if be willed.522

The complex at Al-Gorna consists of a large hall supported by five pillars. A staircase runs from the north wall of the main room, leading down to the funerary complex, where there is a carving of Osiris, god of the dead, in the middle of a central vaulted temple. To the west of the central temple is a funerary room with the reliefs of demons holding knives.523&524 Opposite the statue of Osiris is a staircase with a nine-meter shaft leading to another chamber. Inside this chamber is a second shaft that descends six meters into two more rooms, which are currently full of debris and no excavations have been done past the debris.525

Finding an enormous ancient reproduction of the mythical Tomb of Osiris as described by Egyptian legend, such as that on Luxor’s West Bank near Al-Gorna has an infinite amount of data that be analyzed and studied. Formulating questions within a wider scope may offer direct comparison and analysis. Inside, the complex embodies all the features of the legendary Tomb of Osiris and is a smaller version of the design of the Osirian in the city of Abydos.526 Although the West Bank of Luxor is around 500 km (over 310 miles) from the so-called OS/SS at Giza, this ancient tomb reproduction near Al-Gorna at Luxor has the potential to provide evidence that assist in answering the questions being answered and tested within this thesis research.

The symbolism of Osiris is very evident here at the Al-Gorna site, since all the elements recalling the mythical Osiris tomb are present. There is a big staircase spanning three and a half

522 Budge, Egyptian Resurrection, 2012.
524 The leader of the Spanish-Italian team that uncovered the tomb, Dr. María Milagros Álvarez Sosa, reinforced the idea that the demons are there to protect the body of the deceased.524
525 Booth et al, TT 223 and TT 391.
526 Although Dr. Hawass’s statements that the Osiris Shaft at Giza mirrors the tomb of Osiris at Abydos, as well as his assertions about the Osiris Shaft’s potential to be a real/symbolic tomb for Osiris, needs additional investigation.
meters long with a four meter high ceiling at the bottom leading to the Netherworld and another staircase leading directly to the Osiris statue, which is therefore at a higher level and ideally isolated on his island.\textsuperscript{527} The Osiris statue itself, the empty corridor surrounding it which symbolizes the channel of water, and the expected burial chamber below the statue identify the deceased with Osiris. Archaeologist Philippe Virey initially discovered part of the tomb in the 1880s and some attempts were made to sketch out the main structure in the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{528} However, it was not until recently that excavations began exposing the more of the structure assigning a preliminary to the tomb complex back to around the Twenty-fifth (c. 760 - 656 BC) or Twenty-sixth Dynasty (c. 672 - 525 BC).\textsuperscript{529} The funerary complex will continue to be explored and the chambers cleared of debris in the near future. The possibility of locating the main burial intact with ties to Osiris would represent a monumental find in the field of Egyptology, offering a deeper understanding of features such as the OS/SS. Additional narratives relevant to the history of Osiris are explored in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{527} Budge, Egyptian Resurrection, 2012.
\textsuperscript{529} Rosati and Guidotti, Archaeopress, 2017.
Chapter 8: The Osiris Shaft Through Time

The Osiris Shaft Through Time: Herodotus

The Great Pyramids have attracted people to the Giza Plateau for thousands of years. However, the marvels of the Giza Plateau are not limited to the pyramids. Numerous archaeological features still exist below the Plateau, hiding just beneath the surface and out of plain sight. The OS/SS is among these subterranean features.

One of the earliest accounts of the OS/SS is shrouded in mystery. A contemporary of Socrates, Herodotus was a Greek historian who was born in Halicarnassus in the Persian Empire and who lived during the fifth century BC. A true explorer and scholar, Herodotus managed to record much information about the geography, politics, and history of Egypt and the surrounding ancient world as understood in his own day. He reported, for example, that the annual flooding of the Nile is said to be the result of melting snows far to the south; his comments about such information include how he cannot understand how there can be snow in Africa, the hottest part of the known world. Herodotus’ method of comparing all known theories on a subject show that such hydrological speculation existed in ancient Greece. He also passed on reports from Phoenician sailors that, while circumnavigating Africa, they saw the sun on the right side while sailing westwards. Thanks to this parenthetical comment, modern scholars have deduced that Africa was likely circumnavigated by ancient seafarers.

One of Herodotus’ major accomplishments was a serious of volumes called The Histories. Written c. 430-425 BC, The Histories were later divided into nine books, named after the nine Muses; The Muse of History, Clio, represented the first book. For purposes within

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530 Brown, Herodotus, 60-76.
there is only one book that needs attention brought to it, Book Two which is entitled, *Euterpe*, which is the Muse of flute playing and lyric poetry. Specifically, Book Two volume 124, which states:

> Of this oppression there passed ten years while the causeway was made by which they drew the stones, which causeway they built, and it is a work not much less, as it appears to me, than the pyramid; for the length of it is five furlongs and the breadth ten fathoms and the height, where it is highest, eight fathoms, and it is made of stone smoothed and with figures carved upon it. For this, they said, the ten years were spent, and for the underground chambers on the hill upon which the pyramids stand, which he caused to be made as sepulchral chambers for himself in an island, having conducted a channel from the Nile. (Herodotus, Histories 2.124)\(^{533}\)

To further draw from Herodotus, Book Two volume 127 which states:

> Cheops reigned, the Egyptians said, fifty years, and was succeeded at his demise by Chephren, his brother. Chephren imitated the conduct of his predecessor, and, like him, built a pyramid, which did not, however, equal the dimensions of his brother's. Of this I am certain, for I measured them both myself. It has no subterraneous apartments, nor any canal from the Nile to supply it with water, as the other pyramid has. In that, the Nile water, introduced through an artificial duct, surrounds an island, where the body of Cheops is said to lie.\(^{534}\)

> Thus, an “awareness” of the feature known as the OS/SS can be traced back to Herodotus, who observed the feature when he visited Egypt in the fifth century BC.\(^{535}\) When Herodotus documented the shaft, he concluded, based on oral stories from locals, it was the resting place of Khufu.\(^{536}\) The first attempt to expose the OS/SS occurred in the 1830s by way of dynamite. The first systematic excavation of the area did not occur until Dr. Hassan made every attempt to access the submerged feature in the 1930s,\(^{537}\)

**The Osiris Shaft Through Time: Napoleon**

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533 Blakeney and Rawlinson, Herodotus, 1964.
535 Brown, Herodotus, 60-76.
536 Blakeney and Rawlinson, Herodotus, 1964.
537 Hassan, Vol. VIII, 1936.
After Herodotus, historical references to/about the OS/SS seem to disappear until the 1800s. Even though there were many expeditions to Egypt between Herodotus and the 1800s, there is no record of the shaft under Khafre’s causeway. One of the most noteworthy Egyptian expeditions was Napoleon Bonaparte’s attempted invasion of Egypt in 1798. In addition to his 400 ships and 54,000 men, Napoleon brought along 150 scientists, engineers, scholars, and artists\textsuperscript{538} whose sole responsibly was to document Egyptian culture and history. Napoleon’s team conducted meticulous topographical surveys, native animal and plant studies, mineral collections, and local trades/industries analyses noted. Most famously, Napoleon’s scholars measured, mapped, and drew, temples and monuments in meticulous detail.\textsuperscript{539}

After their return to France in 1801, Napoleon’s team continued to organize materials, and finally, in 1809, the first volumes of the \textit{Description de l'Égypte} were published. Over the years, concluding in 1828, a total of twenty-three volumes appeared. Three of these were the largest books that had ever been printed, standing over forty-three inches tall. The total set contained eight hundred thirty-seven engravings, many of them of unprecedented size, which captured Egyptian culture from every possible vantage point.\textsuperscript{540}

In these volumes, Napoleon’s scholars made meticulous drawings of the monuments at Giza. Their drawings of the pyramids and the Sphinx became some of the most famous of their time. These depictions show the Sphinx covered up to its neck in sand (Figure 42). A wider view (Figure 43) and several maps (Figure 44) of Giza from Napoleon’s scholars which accompanied his campaign across Egypt fail to show the causeway in which the entrance to the shaft is

located. These depictions show most of the monuments and causeways were buried under layers of sand (Figure 45).

Until the first part of the 1800s, there is little to no mention of the OS/SS until the work of Giovanni Battista around 1817. Original research shows Giovanni was in the proximity of the Shaft but no documentation can be found that he entered that feature nor made any official record of such discoveries.541

The Osiris Shaft Through Time: Vyse and Perring

In 1837, Major-General Sir Richard William Howard Vyse, a British military officer and Egyptologist with the assistance of British engineer, anthropologist, and Egyptologist John Shae Perring, made a controversial expedition into Egypt.542 Though they are most notable for their work excavating and documenting the Egyptian pyramids, their methods were crude and invasive. Following Giovanni Battista’s tactics, they used explosives such as gunpowder to create entrances into the pyramids. They used gunpowder to blast their way into Menkaure's Pyramid, they blasted the back end of the Great Sphinx, and cleared out the lower entrance to the pyramid of Khafre, all with explosives. Though their methods were invasive, they managed to document their finding every step of the way. Perring's work resulted in a three-volume set called The Pyramids of Gizeh, published in 1839 to 1842.543 Vyse also published Perring's sketches in the third volume of his own three-part work Appendix to Operations Carried on at the Pyramids of Gizeh in 1837.544

544 Howard-Vyse, Gizeh in 1837, 1840.
The OS/SS is addressed in the second volume of this set, making this a key primary resource for the goals of this thesis. Volume II of the series notes how Vyse and Perring rappelled down into the OS/SS but were stopped short due to the water level. They explained the third tier of shaft was, ‘full of water, which was perfectly fresh, and covered the floor.’ When they questioned locals about the shaft, they were told a, ‘Horizontal passage proceeded to the northward from these chambers through the side of the rock.’ They noted that the water, which did not rise and fall with the river, was collected in an artificial reservoir for religious purposes. They made the observations of the water levels in the shaft as follows:

On the 7th of June, 1837, the level of the river (it being Low Nile) was 158 feet below the base of the Great Pyramid. The level of the water in the shaft was 154 feet below the base of the Great Pyramid; and it was therefore four feet higher than the river. On the 23rd of October, 1838, the level of the river (it being High Nile) was 137 feet 3 inches below the base of the Great Pyramid. The level of the water in the shaft was 155 feet 4 inches below the base of the Great Pyramid; and it was therefore 18 feet 1 inch lower than the river, as the water in the shafts had decreased 1 foot 4 inches.

However, they concluded whatever was in, ‘the sarcophagi could not have been intentionally immersed, and the inundations of the tombs must have accidentally arisen from the artificial channels.’ Perring was sure to adequately document the location of the shaft on a map of Giza as ‘Shaft No. 1’ (Figure 46). This turned out to be the first known map of the OS/SS; the map also demarcated details that were unknown before. Unfortunately, the exact point the shaft ran under the causeway was unknown at this point for Khafre’s causeway unable to be reached.

**The Osiris Shaft Through Time: Recent Endeavors**

Not knowing the importance of what they discovered, Vyse and Perring simply documented the shaft and water levels and moved on. It was not until over one hundred years

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545 Ibid.
546 Howard-Vyse, Gizeh in 1837, 1840, 148.
later that the OS/SS captured the attention of Egyptologist. Dr. Selim Hassan in his 1933-thirty excavations report for Giza; Selim described finding of the opening to the shaft complex in the sixth season of his work.\textsuperscript{547} However, the OS/SS, then called the ‘subway’ under Khafres’s causeway, did not divulge its secrets to Hassan and his team. They were able to get part way down the shaft complex, but found the remainder flooded. Though the water was clear, efforts at pumping the water out were unsuccessful. Hassan stated, ‘We tried in vain to pump out the water, but it seems that a spring must have broken through the rock, for continual daily pumping over a period of four years was unable to reduce the water-level.’\textsuperscript{548} Through the water Hassan was able to make the observation:

At the bottom of this shaft is a rectangular chamber, in the floor of the eastern side of which is another shaft. This descends about 14.00 m. and terminates in a spacious hall surrounded by seven burial-chambers, in each of which is a sarcophagus. Two of these sarcophagi, which are of basalt and are monolithic, are so enormous that at first we wondered if they contained the bodies of sacred bulls.\textsuperscript{549}

Determined to find the cause of the flood, Hassan had the water in the subway analyzed and found the ice-cold water in the desert heat was clean enough to be used as drinking water.\textsuperscript{550}

The last account of the OS/SS since Hassan’s valiant attempt to explore the feature is spotty at best. In 1945, Abdel Moneim Abu Bakr learned that guides at Giza were swimming in and drinking from the water of an underground shaft. He also learned that this shaft and its attached chambers were not only positioned under the causeway of Khafre, but also that provided a source of drinking water on the Giza Plateau for the locals for many years.\textsuperscript{551} He also discovered that Giza guides and nearby village children would swim in the shaft when the rising

\textsuperscript{549} Hassan, Vol. VIII, 1936, 193 from the behiffff
\textsuperscript{550} Ibid:
\textsuperscript{551} Hawass, Osiris Shaft, 379-397.
water table flooded the complex. However, he never excavated or published on these findings. In subsequent years, the rising water table in the shaft prevented scholars from studying it further and interpreting its function. Workmen responsible for the rest-house of Cairo University, which is located south of Khafre's causeway and in the shadow of his pyramid, used the shaft as a water source, running a pipeline from the shaft to the rest-house. The shaft also continued to provide a summer swimming hole for the guides on the Giza plateau.552

This has been confirmed via personal correspondence with Harvard archaeologist Mark Lehner, who in the early 1980s used the shaft to, ‘gauge the depth of the Giza water table and determine its effect on the stability of the Sphinx. The reports, some of which appeared in quaint local English-language publications, do agree on several key points, most notably that the chamber contained human bones.553

In the 1970s a team of scientists, associated with what came to be known as the Stanford Research Institute (SRI) expeditions, took new approaches and scientific instruments to look for ‘hidden chambers’ around the sphinx and the Great Pyramid. The SRI team planned to create three dimensional maps showing the subsurface features in the area using borescope photography.554 Through their investigations, they found certain subsurface anomalies in the area including the OS/SS but due to a lack of funding, they were not able to explore that or the other anomalies.

In more recent times, subsurface imaging technologies, such as ground-penetrating radar (GPR) have been implemented. Present work has employed a multi-frequency antenna with a chosen frequency of sixteen and one hundred MHz. This frequency allows for greater depth

penetration extending the possibility of locating any possible deeper anomalies. This frequency and imaging were tested on different zones around Egypt as well as the OS/SS s. The project concluded with the recommendation that,

The entire area needs more geophysical work from different directions to strengthen the present result. The amount of work done to date is not a sufficient basis on which to form a definitive judgment on the delineated phenomena.\textsuperscript{555}

Indeed, GPR offers a suite of opportunities to investigate subsurface features like the OS/SS and can be used to study Hawass’s claims or push back the construction/cutting date to an earlier time. Understanding the more extensive temporal contexts in ancient Egypt and the Giza Plateau, the focus of the section below, is intended to assist with interpretations that go beyond the limits of the history of Osiris.

Part III: A Scrupulous Framework of Festivals, Text, Lore and Myths
Chapter 9: Ancient Egyptian Underworld Literature

Introduction

The Duat was the ancient Egyptian equivalent of the Angle-Norman Christian belief of Purgatory or Greek understanding of Hades, a realm through which the soul of the deceased had to pass and be judged before continuing on the journey to the Underworld. The lifegiving text that decorated the tombs of the ancient pharaohs of Egypt basically provided a detailed roadmap of what the Egyptians believed to be the Netherworld. While a number of tombs are said to contain the whole text of one are more of these books, none actually have the entire text of any single book, though some have most of the text. Other tombs simply have passages from the books. These written materials generally belong to a body of work prepared as guidebooks for the dead in the otherworld and inscribed on their tombs, sarcophagi or coffins, so that they would be close at hand in the afterlife. Through these texts one is able to find one of the two ways to the Underworld through the OS/SS.

The Coffin Texts (Figure 47) include descriptions of what the dead might find and various spells to be used throughout the journey. What we now regard as texts, however, are various elements gathered together through the circumstances of their inscription and discovery. These fragments have been compiled and treated as independent and integral texts, but they do not necessarily originate from the same period and were probably often combined and recombined. These were very popular works throughout this long history and are the largest body of surviving Egyptian texts.

Before the period of the Coffin Texts, there were the much older Pyramidic Texts (Figure 48), engraved in the walls of the pyramid. Pyramid Text are the oldest collection of religious spells known to us from ancient Egypt. This collection forms the basis of much of the later
religious theology and literature of ancient Egypt.\textsuperscript{556} The passages were eventually separated and categorized, as well as illustrated and eventually evolved into the Book of the Dead. The oldest of these texts come from that Pyramid of Wenis, or more popularly these days, Unas at Saqqara. However, the first Pyramid Texts that were actually discovered were from the Pyramid of Pepi I. The Coffin Text, which basically superseded the Pyramid Text as magical funerary spells at the end of the Old Kingdom, are principally a Middle Kingdom phenomenon, though we may begin to find examples as early as the late Old Kingdom. In effect, they democratized the afterlife, eliminating the royal exclusivity of the Pyramid Text.

**The Book of Two Ways (Book of the Ways of Rosetau)**

Thought to be the world’s first illustrated book,\textsuperscript{557} and the most graphical configuration of the Coffin Text, the newly discovered copy of the 4,000-year-old edition of *The Book of Two Ways* (Figure 49), thought to be a forerunner to *The Book of the Dead* (Figure 50),\textsuperscript{558} is a mystical road map to the ancient Egyptian Underworld.

These are unlike the modern conception of what a book is, rather these historic writings are a collection of spells deciphered and gathered from coffin writing in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.\textsuperscript{558} The lid of a coffin contained images and spells regarding the sky. The spells written on the bottom of the coffin were of use to voyage into the subterranean realm.\textsuperscript{559}

Different versions of the book have been analyzed over the years. Leading scholars\textsuperscript{560} have divided the Book of Two Ways into types A, B and C. Type A and B represent the longer version of the text and they differ from each other only in certain textual elements, with Type C


\textsuperscript{557} Buck. A. *Egyptian Coffin Text*. University of Chicago Press. 1035.

\textsuperscript{558} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{559} Ibid.


being the shorter version. The books were meant to aid the deceased through the perilous journey to the Underworld, the realm of Sokar, during which they might be beset by demons.

*The Book of Two Ways* refer to two paths which weave across a dangerous landscape beset with obstacles and demonic entities towards Rosetau. The deceased also hopes to reach the Field of Offerings where they will feast with Osiris and their every need will be met. Unfortunately, the road is dangerous, many of the paths cross one another, and some lead to nowhere. The two paths are separated by the Lake of Fire which can destroy but can also revive. The deceased has to contend with a fiery court which surrounds the sun, numerous guardians and demons, and their way is blocked by darkness, high walls of stone and walls of fire.

The paths here are in confusion, every one of them is opposed to its fellow. It is those who know them who will find their paths. They are high on the flint walls which are in Rosetau, which is on both water and on land.\(^{561}\)

If one were to cast the correct spells, he or she might achieve immortality. As most of the book is filled with fire and brimstone, the ending leaves for the possibility of bliss. Spell 1130 (Figure 51) shows:

As for anyone who knows this spell, he will be like Ra in the east of the sky, like Osiris within the Netherworld, and he will go down to the circle of fire. There will never be a flame against him forever. It has come happily to an end.\(^{562}\)

Later texts which help explain the Duat with attempt to divide the afterlife into ‘Hours’ with caves, landmarks or events.

**Book of the Dead**

A more vivid version of the *Book of Two Ways*, the *Book of the Dead* is a collection of approximately one-hundred-ninety-two ancient spells, charms, and magical incantations for the

\(^{561}\) CT Spell 1072  
\(^{562}\) CT Spell 1130
deceased to use in navigating Duat. The more official name *The Book of Going (or Coming)* Forth by Day, came from the German Egyptologist Karl Richard Lepsius, who published the first collection of the texts in 1842.\(^{563}\)

The funerary books were buried with the mummies or rather on the sarcophagi. These incantations and spells within were meant to be recited by the deceased to help travel to their condemnatory trial in the afterlife. *The Book of the Dead* is said to have the ability to conjure up the demons who might be encountered in the other realm. Knowledge of the appropriate spells was considered essential to achieving happiness after death.

Books of the Dead were usually illustrated with pictures showing the tests to which the deceased would be subjected. The most important was the weighing of the heart of the dead against Ma'at, or Truth.\(^{564}\) The heart of the dead was weighed against a feather, and if the heart was not weighed down with sin,\(^ {565}\) they were allowed to go on with Osiris. This ceremony was seen by Anubis, recorded by Thoth and if needed the heart was eaten by god Ammi (Figure 52).

**The Amduat**

The Book of Amduat\(^ {566}\) (Figure 53) was called by the Egyptians ‘The Book of the Secret Chamber’. It represents the sun god's journey through the twelve divisions of the Underworld, beginning on the western horizon and reappearing sun in the East in his solar-barque to assist the deceased pharaoh traveling through the Duat. The modern name of Amduat, that which is in the Duat, derives from the Egyptian name for all the books of the Netherworld. Each hour except the first has a heading which foreshadows the hour. They describe the events that occur in that hour.


\(^{564}\) Teeter. Ritual and Religion. 2011.

\(^{565}\) Such as the heart weighing less than the ostrich feather.

\(^{566}\) Also Known As: the Book of the Hidden Room; the Book of That Which Is in the Underworld; the Book of the Secret Chamber.
along with notations that concern its usefulness as well as orientation, gateway, and its
netherworld region. While most tombs in the Valley of the Kings, ancient Thebes, contain
passages from the book, the burial chambers of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II contain almost
the complete text.

Secret way of the Imhet on which this god is towed.
It is the abomination of Nehes.
Gate of the West.
The secret way of the land of Sokar,
which Isis enters on, to be behind her brother.
It is filled with flames of fire from the mouth of Isis.
The gods, the blessed and the dead cannot proceed on it.
The secret way of the land of Sokar and the Westerners who tow this god,
upon which gods, the blessed and the dead do not pass.
It is filled with flames of fire from the mouth of the Wamemty-serpent.567

Most notably, Dr. Saliem Hassan,568 through his assessments made with the 3,500-year-old
text of the Amduat, argued that it was specifically a description of the Fourth and Fifth Hours
of the night that would have been portrayed at Giza, and relate to the kingdom of Sokar in
Rosetau.569 The Fourth and Fifth Hours of the Duat is where the pharaoh as the sun-god
approached the Midnight Hour, or the dominion of Sokar. Here titles such as the ‘House of
Sokar’, the ‘Land of Sekri’ can be found and more significantly, Rosetau.

Dr. Hassan proposed that the Duat's Fourth (Figure 54) and Fifth Hours (Figure 55)
seemed different to the rest and bore the name Rosetau which was the ancient name for Giza. Dr.
Hassan therefore concluded that the descriptions of these particular ‘hours’ were portrayed in a
very specific manner. According to the translations of the Amduat text570 the approach to the
domain of Sokar in the Duat of Memphis was via ‘the road to the secret things of Rosetau’.

567 Amduat, 5th Hour, 434 - 438.
568 Same Dr. Hassan which attempted to excavate the Osiris Shaft in the 1930s.
569 S. Hassan. Excavations at Giza. 1946.
Pictures of the domain of Sokar show a primeval mound or island surrounded by the waterway that was seen to flow through the Duat Underworld. On this mound Sokar is seen standing on an enormous multi-headed serpent holding its wings apart. Above this island is a mound from which protrudes the head of a woman. Above the head of the woman is the Khepri beetle, which emerges from the base of a bell-shaped object, on which two birds perch, guarded by an Aker-Lion(s) (Figure 56).\textsuperscript{571} Dr. Hassan equated the Aker Lion with Giza’s Sphinx monument, which guards the eastern entrance to the plateau, while a mythical location in funerary texts known as the ‘Highlands of Aker’ has been identified as another name for the hills that encircle Giza.\textsuperscript{572}

\textsuperscript{571} Also Known As: Akar, Akeru, Akerui.
Chapter X: Ancient Egyptian Creation Myths

In the Beginning—The Primordial Hill

In the Coffin Text, the Amduat and other creation myths strongly suggest that Giza-Rosetau was itself seen as a place of first creation. This draws attention to the power of place considering the geoarchaeological context of the OS/SS. The Cult of Sokar has been associated with the Shetayet with its center in Rosetau since the beginning. Ancient Egyptian creation accounts note the original mound of land comes forth from the waters of the Nun. The Nun is the source of all that appears in a differentiated world, encompassing all aspects of divine and earthly existence. Egyptian creation myths vary depending on which scale is viewed at as well as the region it is heard from. One common trend they all share is the primordial mound or the Benben. In the beginning there was nothing but a dark, watery abyss of chaos; the primordial ocean of Nun. But just as the waters of this great Nile gave birth to life through the Earth, out of the Nun came the Ben-Ben.

This is where it gets delicate, as the lore of these creator gods can vary. One version sets up Atum as rising from of the primeval ocean of Nu and in the process the Primordial Mound or Ben-Ben was formed. Following Atum, Ogdoad then while sitting on the mound gave existence to deities Shu⁵⁷³ and Tefnut.⁵⁷⁴ The latter two created Geb and nut, respectively god of earth and goddess of heaven. This is the creation myth of the Heliopolitan. References to the Ogdoad date to the Old Kingdom, and even at the time of composition of the Pyramid Texts toward the end of the Old Kingdom, they appear to have been antiquated and mostly forgotten by everyone except their theologians.⁵⁷⁵

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⁵⁷³ God of Air;. Shu means “He Who Rises Up”.
⁵⁷⁴ Also Known As: Tefenet, Tefnet, and Humidity
⁵⁷⁵ Te-Velde. Theology, Priests, And Worship In Ancient Egypt. 1995.
**The God Behind the Myth: Tatenen**

There is another creation myth that is commonly overlooked that might be the primordial glue in becoming one step closer to understanding Giza. Before Sokar got assimilated by Osiris, as explained in previous sections, he is strongly linked to the creator god Ptah. Since there seems to be a common consensus in the existence of Sokar-Ptah. Mirroring the creator pair are the creators of ancient Egypt Ptah-Tatenen (Figure 57).

Ptah-Tatenen can be seen as father of the Ogdoad of Hermopolis, the eight gods who themselves embody the primeval elements from before creation. He was originally believed to be the source of power during the creation. He is linked to Hu and Sia, the representation of the tongue and heart of Ptah. He was also known as Ptah-nu or Ptah-Naunet linking him to the Ogdoad gods Nu and Naunet. Both Tatenen and Ptah were Memphite deities.

Tatenen is first attested in the inscriptions that mostly appear on Middle Kingdom coffins during the First Intermediate Period. In those inscriptions his name appears as Tanenu or Tanuu, 'the inert land', a name which characterizes him as a deity of the primeval condition of the earth. Middle Kingdom texts provide the first examples of the form Tatenen. Tatenen as the primordial mound is the furthest back a creating story has yet to be told. His name means ‘risen land’ or ‘exalted earth.’ As a primeval chthonic deity, Tatenen was identified with creation. Known as the androgynous protector from the Memphis area, the ancient capital of the Inebu-hedj nome or White Walls.

577 Also Known As: Tatenen, Tanenu, Tenen or Tanuu,
579 *Ibid*.
580 Then known as Mennefer
The story goes that Tatenen represented the Earth, where he was born in the moment it rose from the water chaos, or Nu. He was seen as the source of all good things, as his realms were the deep regions beneath the earth, ‘from which everything emerges.’ His father was the creator god Khnum, who made him on his potter's wheel of Nile mud at the moment of creation of Earth (Figure 58).

The name Khnum in ancient Egyptian 'ḥnw' comes from the root word meaning ‘to join’; ‘to unite’, and another root word that has the meaning ‘to build’. This makes Khnum’s name fairly obvious and consistent with his role as a builder and creator. He was not only the creator of human life in the form of children, but also the creator of the universe, the gods, and humankind, in various different interpretations through the history of the ancient Egyptian civilization. There is a very old legend in ancient Egypt which explains how humankind was divided into four types when they were made on the potter's wheel by the great creator Khnum. He made them all out of mud of various colors from the Nile. The order in which they were made was as follows. First was Romut, meaning ‘men’, and these were the Egyptians themselves. The second to come from the potter's wheel was Aamu, the people from the desert mountains east of the Nile. This name was later also used for Asians in general. Number three, called Temehu, contains the fair skinned people from the Mediterranean coast west of the Nile Delta and the oases west of the Nile Valley. The final group made by Kuhum was Nehesy, the black people to the south of Egypt, below the province of Nubia.

Tatenen is attributed not only as the creator deity but also as ancient Egypt’s savior as well. With his staff he repelled the evil serpent Apep from the Primeval Mound. He carried a

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583 Ibid.:.
magical mace dedicated to the falcon, Sokar.\textsuperscript{584} It is through Tatenen who brought the Djed-pillars of stability to the country. He wore a similar Atef-crown, was depicted as green, carried a Djed-staff.

With a staff, Tatenen repelled the evil serpent Apep from the Primeval Mound. He also had a magical mace dedicated to the falcon, venerated as ‘The Great White of the Earth Creator’. In one interpretation, Tatenen brought the Djed-pillars of stability to the country, though it is mainly contributed to Ptah.\textsuperscript{585} Tatenen was combined with the god Ptah, as Ptah-Tatenen with the cult center at the capital Memphis. Tatenen when portrayed by himself always in human form, usually seated with a pharaonic beard. At times he is depicted wearing either an Atef-crown, this is when he is depicted as Ptah-Sokar.\textsuperscript{586} Some depictions show Tatenen with a green complexion, mimicking Ptah, Sokar, and Osiris.

**The God Behind the Myth: Ptah-Tatenen**

From the creation myths of the Memphis Theology, two of the primary Gods to emerge are Ptah and Sokar. Depictions showing Sokar was a solar god is quite clear, but whether he ‘closed’ the day or the night is not certain. Originally his festival of Sokar was celebrated in the evening, wherefrom it appears that he represented some form of the night sun; but in later times the ceremony of drawing the image of the god Sokar in the henu-barque round the sanctuary was performed in the morning at dawn, and thus, united with Ptah, he became the closer of the night and the opener of the day. Before Ptah-Sokar, there was Ptah-Tatenen.

Tatenen is attributed not only as the creator deity but also as ancient Egypt’s savior as well. He carried a magical mace, the one he defeated Apep with, which is dedicated to the

\textsuperscript{584} Allen, Genesis in Egypt. 1988
\textsuperscript{585} This is more commonly attributed to Ptah.
\textsuperscript{586} There are also depictions of ram's horns surmounted by a sun disk and two tall feathers. As Tanenu or Tanuu, obviously a chthonic deity, he carried two snakes on his head.
falcon, Sokar. It is through this Tatenen brought the djed-pillars of stability to the country. Same pillars raised in marking the end of the Festival of Sokar/Osiris. He was depicted wearing an Atef-crown, this is when he is depicted as Ptah-Sokar. Some depictions show Tatenen with a green complexion, mimicking Ptah, Sokar, and Osiris. He is depicted often with the disk of Tatenen and the symbols of Osiris.

Tatenen is first attested in the inscriptions that mostly appear on Middle Kingdom coffins during the First Intermediate Period. In those inscriptions his name appears as Tanenu or Tanuu, 'the inert land', a name which characterizes him as a deity of the primeval condition of the earth. Tatenen as the primordial mound is the furthest back a creation story has yet to be unveiled. Like the rest of the Memphite funerary deities, Tatenen was also known as ‘Mennefer’, the androgynous protector from the Memphis area.

Seker is, like Ptah, Osiris, and Tatenen, a form of the night sun. At the festival of this god, the Hennu boat, a symbol of the god Seker of Memphis, was drawn round the sanctuary at dawn at the moment when the sun casts its golden rays upon the earth.

It is often unclear whether to take Ptah-Tatenen as a combination of the two deities or whether ‘Tatenen’ functions rather as an epithet of Ptah. The logic of the combination is provided in the so-called ‘Memphite Theology’, in which it is said of Ptah, ‘He is Tatenen, who gave birth to the Gods, and from whom everything came forth, foods, provisions, divine offerings, all good things.’ Here Ptah is called Tatenen insofar as the preceding philosophical argument of the text has established that Tatenen’s cosmic function of determinacy can be identified, through a shift in perspective.

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587 There are also depictions of ram's horns surmounted by a sun disk and two tall feathers. As Tanenu or Tanuu, obviously a chthonic deity, he carried two snakes on his head.
590 Also Known As: The ancient capital of the Inebu-hedj nome or White Walls
592 Lichtheim vol. 1. 1997
Ptah-Tatenen can be seen before the creation of the original eight as father of the Ogdoad of Hermopolis,\textsuperscript{593} creator of the first gods. Ptah and Tatenen would then be righteously named creator of the creator. Ptah being among the first that ever was is a commonality highlighted throughout the different theologies of ancient Egypt.\textsuperscript{594} It is written Ptah gave every step of the Opening of the Mouth ceremony which represents the path to ascension or their place alongside Ptah and the like. Postulating that Ptah was the one who created everything which breaks down into other separate creation myths. In one version Ptah created the primordial mound or better known as Tatenen. One myth states the creation of Tatenen was the Creator's first task, and is considered the very embodiment of the Creator, “Ptah-Ta-Tjenen, ‘Ptah the Risen Land’.”\textsuperscript{595}

**Ptah in All**

The festival of Ptah is a ceremony of the first to conquer the Duat just as Ptah-Tatenen-Sokar-Osiris once did. The festivals we know today such the Festival(s) of Sokar and aspects of the Khoiak are just mimics of the Festival of Ptah, honoring the creator god upon Giza, the first ascended as well as the raising of the Djed pillars in Hut-Ka-Ptah, another geographic term for Memphis, which translates to the ‘mansion of the Ka of Ptah’.

Everywhere Ptah is present to unite differences. Nothing steps outside him.\textsuperscript{596} Insofar as he is understood as "on the Great Throne", Ptah is to be found in everything, before everything and giving birth to what created everything. All the deities are "in" him, he is Nun and Atum and the Ennead. Everything is part of Ptah.

It is true the theology of Memphis which at one time was known known as Hut-Ka-Ptah or ‘Mansion of the Soul of Ptah’ seemed to use the Memphite theology on the Shabaka Stone to develop its own interpretation apart from the Heliopolis theology. Through translation of the

\textsuperscript{593} Wilkinson. Creation Myths. 2011
\textsuperscript{594} Allen. Genesis. 1988
\textsuperscript{595} Bierre. Ptah. 2010.
\textsuperscript{596} cf. ‘pan-en-theos’
Shabaka Stone that a more precise depiction of Memphis theology is brought forth (Figure 59).\textsuperscript{597} All deities mentioned in the theology of Memphis are epiphanies of Ptah. They manifest ‘in’ Ptah, they are all parts of Ptah.\textsuperscript{598} The deities encompassed by Ptah represent operational laws of creation or natural variances, only Atum touches pre-temporal and pre-spatial pre-creation. Their names are so divine words thought and spoken by Ptah. Nun and Atum are depicted as manifestations of Ptah as well.\textsuperscript{599} He creates All with his words and takes on the form of everything, for Ptah is Nun, is Atum, is all gods and goddesses and so his work is happening all the time in all of aspects of in and outside of creation, in the pre-existence of chaos, leaving no outside of Ptah.\textsuperscript{600}

Horus came into being in him; Thoth came into being in him as Ptah. Power came into being in the heart and by the tongue and in all limbs, in accordance with the teaching that the heart is in all bodies and mouths of all Gods, all men, all flocks, all creeping things and of everything which lives.\textsuperscript{601}

From him everything came forth: foods, provisions, divine offerings, all good things. Thus Thoth knew and recorded that he is the mightiest of the gods. Thus Ptah was satisfied after he had made all things and all divine words.\textsuperscript{602}

There are translations representing his true place among the gods throughout ancient Egyptian culture. ‘He (Path) who created the gods,’ ‘He (Ptah-Tatenen) gave birth to the gods’\textsuperscript{603} and ‘the gods who manifest in Ptah’\textsuperscript{604} From this, Thoth is represented as Path’s tongue, as such he is able to understand and record Path as the mightiest of the gods or what is echoed throughout ancient Egypt; Great God.\textsuperscript{605} What seems to be clear across many early creation myths is they consists of...
Tatenen as the Primordial Mound and the first death which created it. With his death he became
the first land, which rose and became an embodiment of the Tomb of God, along with the
Benben located at Giza or Rosetau.

**Henu-Barque**

From the beginning of Egyptian history, indeed even into pre-history, boats have held
special funerary significance related to the journey the soul makes in the afterlife. The
archaeological evidence showing the importance of the henu-barque can be found from
predynastic times, with the most prestigious collection of text belonging Rameses which he
depicts the Feast of Sokar. 606

As early as c. 4000 BC, at the beginning of the First Naqada period, boats appeared in
eastern desert rock art within a religious context. 607 Later on, many mud-brick pits in the shape
of boats were associated at First and Second Dynasty tombs at Helwan and Saqqara. 608 This
practice continued through Egyptian history. Moreover, in Abydos, in 1991 the archaeologist
David O’Connor discovered twelve pits near the shrine of Pharaoh Khasekhemwy. 609 In 2000
there were fourteen more boats which are considered the oldest remains of ships ever found on
earth with an even older date, dating back to c. 3,000 BC; these measure around sixty to eighty
feet long and more recently others were found near the tomb of Sesostris III. 610 Abydos became a
place of pilgrimage for pious Egyptians, who desired above all else to be buried as close as
possible to the recognized tomb of Osiris/Djet, which was located at Abydos. It was in this
around the First Dynasty that these fourteen boats were constructed.

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607 J.G., Wilkinson. Modern Egypt and Thebes: Being a Description of Egypt:. Vol. 1. 1843.1
609 2675 BC. Second Dynasty officially.
Boats were of enormous importance in Egyptian religion and life. In a land totally dependent on the river, it was the way that people got around and moved their goods. The gods and the souls of deceased kings were thought to travel through the heavens by boat and their statues were carried in boats during the great religious processions that punctuated the Egyptian calendar. The largest pilgrimage site for Sokar/Osiris, where thousands of pilgrims from ancient times came, was on one side in Rosetau at Giza and the other place of great pilgrimage was at Abydos, at these two places on each side you have graveyards of buried boats.

The Solar as well as funerary boats are prominently depicted in funerary art throughout all dynasties, expressing the significance of Sokar’s Shrine, and the ritualistic rites the henu-barque played on the Giza plateau, as well as forthcoming sites throughout ancient Egypt. Art depictions of the henu-barque such a Royal label of King QAA from the First Dynasty (Figure 60), Naqada label from First Dynasty (Figure 61) Jet Comb from First Dynasty (Figure 62) depicts the henu-barque with most keenly being discovered at Medinet Habu (Figure 63).

It is no coincidence that next to a large number of tombs in Egypt, barques in their pits are found. We have been able to competently ascertain, that as a means to start one’s journey from their ‘house of eternity’ into the Duat, one must begin the journey from a barque.

The beckoning reward after death was the ‘crossing into the holy land.’ The point of departure for the crossing into Duat was the house of eternity. Therefore, the construction and the orientation for the tomb was the most important project in the life of an ancient Egyptian.

The ‘Head of Osiris’ in Abydos, a site of one of the largest pilgrims involving funerary boats, and the other is at Giza, mentioned strongly throughout history as being absorbed by the cult of

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612 Tomb 100 at Hierakonpolis
613 Or possibly two as we learned from Kufu's boat excavations
Osiris but originating as the Shetayet of Sokar.\textsuperscript{615} The Shetayet is often depicted on a hillock where there is a black cone: the hill of Abydos, or that of Giza. It is said that those who venture into the Duat by boat see their boats turning into a serpent to be able to walk along the shores of the kingdom of Sokar. There is also the \textit{Book of the Two Ways}, which was formerly called the \textit{Book of the Paths of Rosetau’}.\textsuperscript{616}

Of all the rites of Sokar the procession of henu-barque (Figure 64) is perhaps the most striking and unique to him. Sokar is intimately associated with his henu-barque and onions mainly. At times the henu-barque was identified with Sokar himself where it is stated: ‘I have appeared as henu. which is followed two lines below by this passage: I have appeared as Sokar’.\textsuperscript{617} The Sokar boat represents the sun’s journey by night through the Underworld. The image of the hawk-headed Sokar was placed in a boat shaped like a sledge.\textsuperscript{618} The boat was never intended to sail on water, it was built to be carried,\textsuperscript{619} and was said by some to be steered by the dead. Depictions of Sokar in the henu-barque sometimes show his hawk’s head only, while his body is covered in a white, luminous shroud.\textsuperscript{620} The higher end of the sledge was fashioned in the shape of the head of an oryx.

The Palermo Stone describes Sneferu as being responsible for, ‘The building of Tuataua ships of mere wood of a hundred capacity, and sixty royal boats of sixteen capacity,’\textsuperscript{621} possibly echoed by the various boat burials found within the pyramid fields. Some pharaohs during the Old Kingdom, Third to Sixth Dynasties even had several boats buried alongside them as part of

\textsuperscript{615} Ramsden. Myth of Isis and Osiris
\textsuperscript{617} Gaballa and Kitchen. Festival of Sokar. 1969.
\textsuperscript{619} Gaballa and Kitchen. Festival of Sokar. 1969.
\textsuperscript{620} A. Gigal, \textit{The Mystery of the Sokar Henu Boat}, 2013.
\textsuperscript{621} P. O’mara. The Palermo Stone and the Archaic Kings of Egypt. Paulette Publishing.
their pyramid complexes. As is evident through the Khufu’s ‘Solar Barge’\textsuperscript{622} (Figure 65) discovered in 1954 by Kamal el-Mallakh, undisturbed since it was sealed into a pit carved out of the Giza bedrock.\textsuperscript{623} However, the plausibility of Khufu’s ship being more of a henu-barque can be further investigated. It was not until 1987 that an electromagnetic radar survey revealed the existence of a second boat in the western pit around the Great Pyramid.\textsuperscript{624} Almost thirty years after its discovery a second ship, much smaller than the first, has bolstered the postulation of the Khufu ship being intended to carry him into the afterlife. Is it possible the original ritual took two barques; the Solar barge Ra runs west to east every night and the henu-barque to escort the King, commanded by Sokar-Osiris.

\textsuperscript{622} A ritual vessel to carry the resurrected king with the sun god Ra across the heavens
\textsuperscript{624} Ibid.:.
Chapter 11: Festivals of Sokar and Khoiak

**Introduction**

Although there is evidence for feasts in the Old Kingdom, there are neither textual nor archaeological sources that inform us about processions or allow us to trace processional routes around that era. In fact, the bulk of source material dates to the New Kingdom. This bias in the chronological distribution of the surviving material has, consequently, a bearing on the relative validity of our interpretations and reconstructions.\(^{625}\) Despite this caution, we may surmise from looking at the evolution of the Festival of Khoiak and the basic features of processions. The predynastic Earth-hoeing and Maati feast upon Giza transformed into the Festival of Sokar during the Old Kingdom, to honor Sokar and his journey atop the Shetayet. Switching the focus from Sokar to Osiris, after the breakdown the last of the Old Kingdom, allowed the diety and his festival to be assimilated by Osiris and the Festival Khoiak.\(^{626}\) With this the Shetayet of Sokar, which was the strongest symbol Egypt had to put forth was being to be transformed into the a different journey of ascension.

Although people would come to the temple complexes to offer sacrifices, offerings, receive various forms of aid, and make requests, they did not enter the temple to worship. Common people were allowed in the courtyard of the temple complex but not in the interiors and certainly not in the god's presence.\(^{627}\) Select Egyptians performed their own private rituals in communion with the gods, but collectively, their only opportunity for worship was at a festival. The festivals of ancient Egypt commonly surround some concept of life and death and the deity they are celebrating, praising for requesting.\(^{628}\)

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\(^{625}\) Williamson, Egyptology, 2015.

\(^{626}\) Eaton, Osiris and Sokar, 2006.

\(^{627}\) Williamson, Egyptology, 2015.

\(^{628}\) Eaton, Osiris and Sokar, 2006.
**Opening of the Mouth**

After the mummification\(^{629}\) process was finished, and the deceased was carefully wrapped in linen, it was time to revive the senses of the deceased one so they could enter the afterlife. For this the Opening of the Mouth ceremony was performed. The Opening of the Mouth Ceremony was designed to reanimate the departed, to bring back the senses of seeing, hearing, and touch. This was to get back the ability to speak was especially, as the deceased would need it at the Weighing of the Heart ceremony (Figure 66), where they needed to speak to the gods and assure them that their life had been free of sin.

After the ceremony of Opening the Mouth (Figure 67) it was believed that the Ba of the deceased moved freely. It was after this crucial step that allowed the deceased could ascend, to the sky and join Ra in his solar barque. Those accompanying the deceased had a last feast with the mummy present. Preceding the meal with their almost departed the mummified remains were taken to back to the tomb where that night the Ba would rejoin the mummified corpse at the tomb where it was believed the perilous journey to the Egyptian afterlife began. The deceased person had to pass through a series of gates, each guarded by a demon. The way to pass them was to name the demons and recite proper spells. This was helped by placing the Book of the Dead in the tomb.

After the ceremony of Opening the Mouth it was believed that the Ba of the deceased moved freely. It was after this crucial step that allowed the deceased to ascend to the sky and join Ra in his solar barque.\(^{630}\)

**Festival of Sokar**

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\(^{629}\) See past works on mummification' Leek (1969) & Smith (1917).

The Feast of Sokar depicted at Medinet Habu on the West Bank of Luxor is translated to the ‘Feast of the Maati Barque’. The emerging festival is associated in a periodical festival of the Maati barque, celebrated at irregular, then six yearly intervals. This festival ‘round the walls of a royal building,’ by the beginning of the Old Kingdom, Maati feast and this procession may have been merged in type with going in with the annual festival of ‘earth-hoeing’ to form the ancestor of the later festival of Sokar. The Festival of Sokar eventually became absorbed by the cult of Osiris and becoming the solemn Khoiak Festival of Osiris which observed his death. It was a very somber affair in its early form but grew to include Osiris’ resurrection. In the festival of Sokar, besides the circumambulation of the walls of Memphis, there was in the ten-day festival, ceremonies specifically at Rosetau, in the Memphite necropolis, at the Shetayet of Sokar. Though the Festival the reign of QAA, for instance references at least three celebrations of a Sokar festival.

Sokar was worshiped in many places across the ancient Egypt but his main cult center was in Memphis, where in the early phases the Sokar festival took place each year in the fourth month of the spring ‘akhet’ season in Memphis.

On the 26th day of 4th month of akhet, the festival of Sokar was held in Giza. Ancient Egyptians performed the rituals of hoeing the earth and driving cattle honoring Sokar with and a huge statue of the god was carried around on a henu-barque.

During the night of Khoiak 25th, the priests of the Ka, or the deceased's family, make the libations and fumigations in the chapels of the tombs. During the night and until the dawn, the

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632 Maaty or Maati Translate to ‘Two Truths’ or ‘Double Maat’
634 the god was carried from his temple to assist the king in ceremonial activities including the hoeing of the earth or the digging of ditches or canals
635 The essentially funerary nature of Sokar is also set forth by Bonnet, Realllexikon.
living creates necklaces of onions and tie them around their neck and also make assemblies of stems of onions in a bundle wreathed with a shackle, which is offered to Sokar and the deceased. Onions were a useful tool used in embalming people. When just the skin was used, it would be placed on the eyes and inside the ears of the deceased to mask the smell. The onions allowed obtaining the breath of life at the time of the ritual of Opening of the Mouth. In the texts are found expressions such as ‘to tie necklaces of onions the divine night’ or ‘the divine morning’ or one is asked to, ‘follow Sokar with onions around the neck; ‘the onions intervene here in order to clean the mouth (and therefore the teeth) and thus to illuminate the deceased's face. At the time of the opening of the mouth, five bulbs of onions are offered to the deceased, each corresponding to one of the orifices to be opened:

Five bulbs of onions for the Osiris, justified, who is here. I bring you your white teeth, become fresh. That your face is more illuminated!638

The temple of Rameses III at Medinet Habu is a huge complex of stone and mudbrick ramparts on the West Bank of the Nile at Luxor. One of the best endowed feasts of Medinet Habu, as how in the southern half of the second court, took place during the reign of Rameses III in mid-September. Its rites were involved with the cycle of death and resurrection in the festival of Sokar which took place over ten days. In the public ceremonies the henu-barque of Sokar was carried out of the sacred chapel on the shoulders of priests and around its walls in a feast of intended to celebrate renewal and reaffirmation.639

Inside this chapel the ancient henu-barque of Sokar is depicted and so it is presumed that it was in this room that the hidden parts of his festival were performed, and from here that the barque was carried out in the procession. These depictions express the existence of a Sokar

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chapel in the west part of the complex where the barque would have been stored and in the charge of by the High Priest of Memphis, called Ur-kherp-hem.640

Additional Evidence

The Wag festival comes after the Wepet-Renpet Festival, another festival celebrating the death and rebirth of Osiris. The Wag Festival, sometimes combined with the Thoth Festival, was dedicated to the death of Osiris and honoring the souls of the deceased on their journey in the Duat. During this festival remembering Osiris' death, Egyptians would make small boats out of paper to either float the paper shrines on the waters of the Nile or set them toward the west on graves.

The Nehebkau Festival honors the funerary god, Nehebkau, who bound the Ka to the khat at birth and then attached the Ka to the Ba after death. The festival commemorated Osiris' resurrection and the return of his Ka as the people celebrated rebirth and rejuvenation.

The Wadi Festival or the Beautiful Feast of the Valley honored Amun while extending some of that curtsey to the souls of the deceased and allowed for the living and dead to celebrate together. The statues of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu641 were taken from their temples to visit the mortuary temples and necropolis across the river. People visited with their departed loved ones at their tombs and brought bouquets of flowers and food and drink offerings.

The Beautiful Festival of the Wadi was a key example of a festival of the dead, which took place between the harvest and the Nile flood. In it, the divine boat of Amun traveled from the Karnak temple to the necropolis of Western Thebes. A large procession followed and the living and dead were thought to commune near the graves which became houses of the joy of the

640 ‘Great One of the Hammer’, A reference to Ptah as cosmic creator god.
641 The Theban Triad
Images of the deceased were carried in the procession so their souls might join in the festivities and were left in the tombs when the festival was completed.

There were many more festivals that transpired throughout Egyptian history. The Sed Festival honored the king and revitalized him. This festival was held every thirty years of the king’s reign in order to ensure he was still in harmony with the will of the gods and physically fit to rule Egypt. The Festival of Neith, united the entire nation as people lighted candles and oil lamps at night to mirror the sky and bring earth into harmony with the realm of the gods. The Festival of Ptah was one of the earliest, honoring the creator god. Another, the Raising of the Djed, dates from the Predynastic Period and is another of the earliest rites observed in Egypt which came to be associated with Osiris. These ceremonies were manifestations of the divine in human existence. Ancient Egyptian religious festivals actualized belief; they were not simply social celebrations. The festivals brought the past into the present, elevated the people toward the divine.

Funerary barque use for the ‘Great Procession Osiris’ is where Osiris embarks on a ‘wrt’ which we know as Sokar’s henu-barque. The term ‘Great Procession’ can be seen in the later periods to mean ‘Great Mourning’. The funerary prototype of the ‘Great Procession’ can be deduced from the most distinctive feature of the locality where it was celebrated, Abydos, where a separate entrance to the Duat was believed to be located. The cult of Osiris maintains its presence at Abydos, the home of the Osirian, the god’s dismembered head as well as his earthly body in which the lore states he ruled and unified Egypt.

642 Nardo, 99-100
644 Nardo, 99.
A recent maritime excavation near the two cities of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus exposed a ship-shaped sledge upon which a coffin was placed so that it might be dragged to the necropolis from land or water (Figure 68). This discovery inspires the questions Is this what the squiggly lines in the middle of the ancient Book of Two Ways telling us (Figure 69). Further work on this site may offer evidence on how to get to the entrance of the Underworld by the either land or water or even possibly from Abydos to Giza? The archaeological trail points to the evidence by way of Ikhernofret's inscription of the ‘desert-dwellers,’ the Decree of Canopus, and the monumental maritime discovery of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus which shed light on the celebrations and rituals that were carried out in the utmost secrecy of the within its temples of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus.

In Abydos, the Ikhernofret's inscriptions shows the barque of Osiris, at the end of the festival, departing on the ‘wrt’ he was apparently dragged back through the desert from the ‘tomb in Peqer.’ For while the dead were buried in their tombs and the ceremony ended there, the statue of the god was returned to its temple. This monumental discovery allows for the presentation of evidence allowing deeper questions to be postulated when trying to gain clarity of the OS/SS and the Shetayet of Sokar? Was a statue of the god stationed in the third tier of the shaft?

The Decree of Canopus—a stele of 238 BC discovered in 1881 at Kom el-Hisn portrays ceremonies celebrating the ‘Mysteries of Osiris were performed in the Great Temple of Amun-Gereb in Thonis- Heracleion, just as they were in most of the cities of Egypt. The Decree of Canopus shows that these mysteries culminated in a long water procession, transporting Osiris along canals from the temple of Amun-Gereb in Thonis-Heracleion to his shrine in the city of Canopus.
Under Franck Goddio’s leadership, the Institut Européen d’Archéologie Sous-Marine, European Institute of Underwater Archaeology, discovered the two cities of Thonis-Heracleion and Canopus in Aboukir Bay, a few miles north-east of Alexandria (Figure 70). There they found the remains of temples mentioned in the Decree that have been submerged since the 8th century AD. Excavations brought evidence directly related to the ‘Mysteries of Osiris’ through analyzed, statues, ritual instruments, monuments and cult offerings.

Temples such as Ramesses III and the Osirian presents the trials and tribulations which had to be encumbered of said cults. Such evidence provides information that help archaeologists understand what happened at these festivals, what they represented, and how they were useful. For instance, this evidence provides a contextual framework to understand the significance the Festival of Sokar played in it first journey to ascension, such as the potential of Tatenen’s ascension to Sokar, an event that purportedly took place at the Shetayet of Sokar/ OS/SS at Giza/Rosetau. The significance and connection of Giza as an important geographic context in this history is explored in the next chapter.
Chapter 12: Unforgotten

Rosetau

Today the place is known as Giza. Ancient Egyptians referred to Giza as Rosetau (also Rostau). In order to explain the reasoning behind theorizing the precedence behind renaming the OS/SS to back to its name ‘Shetayet of Sokar,’ one must recognize the part it played among the Giza Plateau prior to the Fourth Dynasty setting up their legacy. We can see there is clear link at least between Giza, Sokar, and the first tomb—and it all points to a placed referred to as ‘Rosetau’, depicted in the Fifth Hour of Duat, the Shetayet of Sokar which held utmost reverence in the Festival of Sokar.

It is important to consult the stela that once stood between the paws of the Sphinx that is attributed to Thutmose IV; the answer lies in line seven which states that the Sphinx lies ‘beside the House of Sokar ... in Rosetau’. One must also bear in mind that ‘he of Rosetau’ or Lord of Rosetau, is one of the many titles held by Osiris and the Sphinx stela provides; ‘Rosetau’ appears to simply be another name for the Giza Plateau and the many tunnels underneath it as Dr. Hawass stated.

It is known that Osiris ruled the Underworld after this and was not allowed back on the earthly realm. By referring to passages from the Shabaka Stone as well as from the Pyramid Text, it appears that Sokar is merely another name for Osiris. Additional passages on the Shabaka Stone provide further evidence. According to this text Osiris was buried in the ‘House of Sokar’ after his body had been taken by Isis and Nephthys and brought to the land, where after he entered the ‘hidden portals’ and ‘came into the earth at the royal fortress,’ which was in the

646 Bauval and Adrian, Orion Mystery.
648 Budge, Osiris, 1973, 1.
north of the land of Egypt. In Utterance 300 of the Pyramid Texts the king, who is often identified as Osiris, states, ‘...I am Sokar of Rosetau, I am bound for the place where dwells Sokar...' In Utterance 532 the connection is made more explicit:

...they have found Osiris, his brother Seth having laid him low in Nedit; when Osiris said to ‘get away from me,’ when his name became Sokar. The ‘House of Sokar’ is therefore the very same as the ‘House of Osiris’.  

Some of the oldest ancient Egyptian text confirms the Giza Plateau has been known as, ‘pr wsir nb rstaw/Per Wasir Neb Rastaw’ which translates to, ‘House of Osiris, Lord of Rosetau.’ This is echoed by Dr. Hawass whn he references the fourteen locations of Osiris’ body which were called pr-Wsir in ancient Egyptian, meaning the House of Osiris.’ This is, however, biased and based on his hypothesis before the excavation, claiming that the OS/SS was the literal tomb of Osiris with possible, associated tunnels. Rather Rosetau in Old Kingdom translated as the ‘entrance to underground regions’ or in similar ways, extended to mean ‘cemetery’ in general and the Memphite necropolis specifically. Rosetau, as others rightly declared, literally means ‘passage of dragging’ which is used to reference a mouth or the mouth of the passages, referring to Opening of the Mouth Ceremony. Others think that Rosetau is a very specific place at Giza south of the Great Sphinx. 

**The Fourth & Fifth Hours** The Fourth Hour (Figure 71) begins with a very different landscape than the first three hours. The barque is transformed into a Serpent and is on a narrow stretch of
water running in a vast desert, the Earth of Sokar ‘he upon his sand’ or ‘Lord of the mysterious ways of Rosetau’.  

The one belonging to Rosetau.
Secret paths of Rosetau. The divine gate
He cannot pass them, but it is his voice which they hear.
Path entered by the corpse of Sokar-upon-his-sand.
Secret image which can neither be seen nor beheld.
Secret path entered by Anubis to conceal the corpse of Osiris.
Secret path of the edge of the Imhet.

With the desert populated by gigantic serpent monsters, the Sungod is back in his barque, as is the Sun disk upon his head. The scepter in Re's hand has changed. It too has become a serpent, indicative of his commanding power over the serpent world. To journey this dark hour, filled with all kinds of serpents, Raneeds to control them. The zigzag ‘serpentine’ path supports the awkward motility of the solar-barque. Invisible and imperceptible is this secret image of the land which bears the flesh of this god.

A winged deity and the Shetayet of Sokar are central to the theme of the Fifth Hour (Figure 72), and key to the transformation. They eyes of the multicolored Sokar-serpent spat light, illuminating the oval. Within the Shetayet of Sokar, the falcon-headed deity, grasps the wings of this rejuvenating, three-headed serpent. On the border of the cavern it reads: ‘Land of Sokar. Aker, guarding the mysterious flesh,’ ‘the great god who spreads his wings, with multicolored plumes’. Its tail is a man's head with the beard of a god, where it reads ‘he lives from the breath of his mouth every day’. 

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657 The Five Texts in the Desert Path, 4th Hour, 352 - 353.
658 Lost in the 2nd Hour
659 The Five Texts in the Desert Path
660 Amduat, 5th Hour, 384 - 386.
Underneath the Cavern of Sokar is Lake of Fire. Its water is painted red in some tombs and in others it is painted red and blue. Underneath the lower register of the Fifth Hour the Lake of Fire is a place of fiery punishment for the damned, but the blessed dead drink cool water from it. Dependent on one's attitude and condition, this water changes function. Constructive is blue to some but is destructive or red to others.

Total darkness symbolized by Sokar and knowledge of the words of power symbolized by Thoth accommodate the process of rejuvenation. Renewal and rebirths are preluded by a thick darkness and isolation. At the end of the Fourth Hour, another radical change occurs, for Ra he is allowed to circumvent the cave of Sokar. The change of scenery introduced at the beginning of the Fourth Hour acts as preliminary to a more radical alteration of experienced reality introduced with the fifth. For a sacred space is at hand, and a radical transition is about to occur.

What is perhaps the most important moment is seen in the Fifth Hour of the book. In the preceding Fourth Hour, the barque has turned into a serpent and is now being towed across the sand. The Fifth Hour is the deepest part of the Underworld and the serpent’s task is to spit fire to illuminate the inky darkness through which the sun god is passing. This is the Land of Sokar, here the barque needs to be towed. In the Fifth Hour, we see a difference highlighted by the intersection of the registers (Figure 72):

The two birds on the hill are Isis and Nephthys with the hill itself the grave of Osiris. From the bottom of this hill we can see the rejuvenated sun emerging in the form of the beetle that holds the tow rope and helps pull the barque along. The sun is now forced to proceed through a narrow gap in the middle of the hour, and additional help is needed on the ropes. We now see seven males and seven females pulling the barque in place of the four in the previous hour. The oval at the bottom is the cavern of Sokar and this rests upon the shoulders of the earth god Aker. It is here where the mysterious nightly union of the sun god and Osiris takes place and the sun god first returns to awakening life.

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664 E. Hornug and A. Theodor. The Egyptian Amduat. 2007
**Home of Sokar: The Shetayet**

Funerary Texts such as the Amduat suggest that a physical representation of the Underworld exists in the vicinity of the Giza pyramids. Archaeological work in on the Giza Plateau has uncovered text in recent years that adds to the growing evidence the description of a shrine in honor of the Shetayet. Sokar was described or referred to as the ‘Great God with his Two Wings Opened’ (Figure 73) such as his role is pictured in the Fifth Hour, a representation of Giza. He is the ultimate proctor of his children, protecting them from Apep, watching his children through the ages, through the eyes of others. Evidence of the Shetayet is found all around ancient Egypt as being the Shrine of Sokar, located on Giza. The Tomb of Tjanefer, No. 158, offers evidence with translations bearing titles such as: ‘adoring the Lord of Rosetau, residing in Shetayet’.

Egyptologists insist a physical representation of the Duat Underworld might once have existed at Giza, especially since representations of the Fourth and Fifth Hours as viewed from its southeast corner. The problem of The Shetayet of Rosetau is taken up by Edwards.

Burials of extrasepulchral shabtis have been discovered in the Serapeum and at Abydos, both of which were considered burial places of Osiris. Similar caches have been found in the Giza area near the ancient village of Rosetau/Busiris, suggesting that a tomb of Osiris existed there as well. Drawing mainly on the cult of Sokar which appropriated much of the Osiris ritual by the New Kingdom, Edwards argues that the Shetayet, the cult shrine of Sokar, was situated in the Memphite necropolis. Texts mention two Shetayet edifices and remains found near the shabti-caches at Rosetau/Busiris could be of these buildings. The Shetayet of Rosetau was thus a Lower Egyptian counterpart to the tomb of Osiris.

Some of the leading research on the Festival of Sokar as well as the Cult of Sokar shows:

Day 21 of 4th Akhet: the Medinet Habu Calendar begins its Ptah-Sokar(-Osiris) festival with the 'Day of Opening the Aperture (wn wst) in the Shetayet Shrine'

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666 Ibid.
667 For a list of Sokar's shrines; see Lanzone, Dizionario, pp. 1117-1119. See also Wiedemann, Religion, p. 75; Pierret, Panthéon, p. 66.
Day 23 of 4th Akhet: the Medinet Habu Calendar paring (‘making’) the way in the Shetayet Shrine.

Religious festivals actualized belief; they were not simply social celebrations. The festivals brought the past into the present, elevated the people toward the divine.

**Giza Plateau, Once Known as Rosetau**

The Giza Plateau is a marvelous landscape to say the least, but why does this one rise above the rest? Answering questions such as this evokes controversy. Yet new evidence such as the paved processional road represents a feature that may lead to a more nuanced understanding of the reasons ancient Egyptians chose the Giza Plateau as the setting for intense mortuary activity. Kafre’s Mortuary Temple next to his pyramid is connected to Khafre’s Valley Temple by a paved processional road under Khafre’s causeway, implying the potential for a structure or complex to have existed before the Fourth Dynasty’s arrival at Giza.

Communal gatherings for worship took place during festivals, and as the Egyptians set a premium on enjoying life, there were many of them throughout the year. These festivals allowed people to experience the god(s) intimately, give thanks for gifts that were given, track the seasons/celestial events as well as make requests for divine favors. The purpose of most of the festivals was to allow the people to behold the gods with their own eyes. Particular images of the gods, sometimes carried in portable shrines, were taken out of the temple sanctuaries and carried through the streets or sailed on the Nile. Such events would have connected people to important places like Giza, even if they did not have direct daily interactions with the land and water at Giza.

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669 Ibid.
670 Also Known As: heb
Water and the Nile are important factors when considering the importance of Giza, or Rosettau, as a place of geographical and hydrological significance to ancient Egyptians. The third level of the OS/SS contains crystal clear water, impeding the possibility of further exploration without diving gear. Though nothing officially has happened since Dr. Hawass’s excavations in 1999 a flood of amateur videographers and inquisitive adventurers have impacted the shaft. However, in 2007, it was discovered that the local water table under the shaft’s neighbor, Sphinx was rising due to sewage being dumped in a nearby canal. The moisture ultimately spread through the porous limestone of the structure, causing the rock to crumble and break away in large flakes in some cases. As a precaution pumps were installed close to the Great Sphinx, diverting the groundwater.

Throughout ancient Egypt, it was common belief that, after a king passed away and the mummification was complete the dark of night and trials would begin. The twelve trials or gates took twelve hours and if the sun rose the next morning, it meant that the Pharaoh was successful. Before this could happen the king first had to secure passage in the such as the two barques found near Kufu’s pyramid or the two boat graveyards found at Abydos and Giza. Could these two burials be a part of a bigger site, possibly having to make the trip from one site to the other to complete the ceremony? If so, was the royal deceased placed in the third-tier sarcophagus of the OS/SS for a preset amount of time before being moved to a more permanent site? These questions remain unanswered at this time due to lack of evidence to date. Until a full excavation of the third tier and adjusting vertical shafts is conducted and analyzed under the proper framework, this site will be shrouded in controversy.
Part IV: Maya

The boats are the key; Important clues that link up with Egypt’s first pyramids.\textsuperscript{671}

\textsuperscript{671} Hammond Sunday Star Archives, Jan 26, 1992, p. 29.
Chapter 13: The Osiris Shaft = Shetayet of Sokar

Conclusions and Discussion

The project’s research question asked: What was the purpose of the ‘Osiris’ Shaft and for whom was it created? Until more research is conducted, there is still no reliable date for the cutting of the shaft feature. Using the ceramic shards, bone remains, as well as the arrangement of the four stone pillars on the rock slab, Dr. Hawass concluded the OS/SS on the Giza Plateau was a symbolic tomb and a sacred place of worship to the funerary god Osiris and could not have been cut until the mid-Fifth/Sixth Dynasty. The archaeological evidence presented suggests the OS/SS was cut into the Giza Plateau before or during the Fifth/Six Dynasty, as Dr. Hawass declared. The shaft can be loosely dated pre-fourth Dynasty with ‘reuse’ to the Fifth/Sixth Dynasty and ‘reuse’ again in the Twenty-six Dynasty with the original cutting of the site pre-Fourth Dynasty.

However, the story of this feature appears to have a more complex history—plus, Osiris as a god does not seem to have gained note rarity and acceptance at Giza until later in the Old Kingdom. Therefore, I propose that the story is more complex, that the ‘OS/SS’ was originally cut pre-Fourth Dynasty, that it was connected to a larger funerary complex, and that it may represent a candidate for the long sought out “entrance” to the Egyptian Underworld, Rosetau, also the ancient Egyptians’ name for the Giza Plateau.

I assert that the OS/SS on Giza Plateau was mislabeled by the avoidance to look beyond mere reuse and by mistakenly connecting the date(s) with Osiris, who did not come into power in Memphis until after the feature was cut. The evidence to date suggests that the site's original purpose was “lost” around the same time-period the Festival of Sokar was absorbed by Osiris.
Thus, it appears that Osiris was not the original reason or inspiration for creating the so-called OS/SS; rather this feature may be linked with a more ancient deity.

The research presented herein indicates that the character of Osiris, in the context of the late Old Kingdom texts, was based upon and assimilated with an earlier god Sokar. This suggests the shaft dates from the latest the Third Dynasty. If that is the case, this tomb may have originally served as the Shetayet of Sokar and therefore represents an archetypal tomb in Egypt. Drawing from information pulled from with this text it can be surmised Sokar predated Osiris as God of the Underworld and Giza causing the OS/SS to be mislabeled. I propose it is a candidate for a place originally known as the Shetayet of Sokar, or Tomb of God. The Shetayet of Sokar, a shrine on the Giza plateau, under the Khafre causeway, was part of a pre-Fourth Dynasty ceremony conducted on the Giza Plateau honoring Sokar Lord of Rosetau, protector of the pharaoh in the Fifth Hour of Duat. Scribal documentation of the significance of the henu-barque, including the henu-barque of Sokar, was carried out in a sacred chapel/temple on the shoulders of priests and around the walls of the temple in a feast of renewal and reaffirmation (Figure 74). The henu-barque is an important piece of material culture to consider in the context of Sokar, as it is depicted with Sokar around Egypt through every dynasty starting from the first, and fosters interpretations related to water and the Giza Plateau. 672

By means of context, this project underscores the significance of Giza as an important place for ancient Egyptians. For example, Giza may also have a dual purpose in carrying out ritual enactments on the journey to the Underworld. The second level of the OS/SS may be the symbolic sarcophagi of the seven guardians and the third level the beginning of the ascension ceremony depicting how the first god died and ascended by way of Sokar and the primordial

mound. This makes the pyramids of the Fourth Dynasty a secondary feature to the shaft which gives us an abundance of evidence placing Sokar as the deity held in reverence during the cutting of the shaft. Thus, once the Giza Plateau is examined in context through time and space, it appears that the OS/SS was constructed pre-Fourth dynasty to act out and pay homage to the location where the Ptah created all of existence, as well as the initial short lived deity Tatenen; and in this case, the site would possibly honor the death and heroic ascension of him.

Moreover, the existence of a pre-Fourth Dynasty funerary complex is also noteworthy. Archaeologists such as Dr. Lehner and Dr. Hawass have suggested that the Sphinx Temple, and the Valley temple and the Mortuary Temple belong to one monumental construction phase. French archaeologist Auguste Mariette in 1877 working next to the Great Sphinx amongst the ruins of a building he discovered, now known as the Valley Temple, discovered one of the rare depictions of Khafre in a life-size statue. This was not the monumental discovery which offered a missing piece to the Giza mystery. Rather, Mariette’s discovery that is germane here was a paved processional road connecting the Valley Temple to a mortuary temple next to Khafre’s pyramid. Then, in 1925, French archaeologist Emile Baraize probed the sand directly in front of the Sphinx and discovered the Sphinx Temple, strikingly similar in its ground plan to the ruins Mariette had already found.

Remnants of the Sphinx temple walls are visible today in front of the Sphinx. They surround a courtyard enclosed by twenty-four pillars, dubbed by some as a solar temple. The temple plan is laid out on an east-west axis, clearly marked by a pair of small niches or sanctuaries. The Swiss archaeologist Herbert Ricke, who studied the temple in the late 1960s,

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675 Marriner, A. Monuments of Egypt. 1877.
concluded the axis symbolized the movements of the sun; an east-west line points to where the sun rises and sets twice a year at the equinoxes. Dr. Ricke further argued that each pillar represented an hour in the sun’s daily circuit.

Dr. Lehner and Dr. Hawass attribute the construction of these features to the area around the Pharaoh Khafre; however, when the context presented in this thesis is taken into account, there are other, possibly more ancient connections to be considered. Looking at Mariette’s causeway under Khafre’s causeway in context with the Sphinx Temple, the Mortuary Temple, the Valley Temple, the Nile River, and ancient causeways, may represent connections to the original realm of Sokar. Mariette’s causeway is a key feature to examine when looking at a more expansive context of Giza, as ancient Egyptian’s had to quarry around that causeway and were careful not to disturb it (Figure 37) when they built the pyramids. This suggests a presence of existing, likely culturally important activity at Giza before the Fourth Dynasty transformed the landscape. Vassil Dobrev of the Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale in Cairo adds to this interpretation, stating, “that since the causeway connecting Khafre’s pyramid to the temples was built around the Sphinx, the statue must have been already in existence when the temples were being built.”

If you stand in the eastern niche during sunset at the March or September equinoxes, you see a dramatic astronomical event: the sun appears to sink into the shoulder of the Sphinx and, beyond that, into the south side of the Pyramid of Khafre on the horizon. At the very same moment, Lehner says, the shadow of the Sphinx and the shadow of the pyramid, both symbols of the king, become merged silhouettes, which Mark Lenher was able to capture one of the photos (Figure 75).

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*N. Fleming. I have Solved the Riddle of the Sphinx, says Frenchman. The Daily Telegraph. 2004.*
The several architects of Giza arranged for solar events to link the Sphinx, temples and later the pyramids. Collectively, Dr. Lehner describes the complex as a cosmic engine, intended to harness the power of the sun and other gods to resurrect the soul of the pharaoh. This transformation not only guaranteed eternal life for the dead ruler but also sustained the universal natural order, including the passing of the seasons, made possible by many festivals such as the Festival of Sokar.

The Pyramid Texts as well as other funerary text describe Sokar as a god which assists in the rebirth of the king, in the ceremonies of confirmation and transfer of royal power. These ceremonies served as manifestations of the divine in human existence and, as such, wove a pattern of life for the Egyptian people.\textsuperscript{677} These sacred text tell of Sokar who dwells in a cavern by Aker-lions, supervises a snake-infested desert region that must be crossed by the sun god and the royal dead. The primary objects of his cult are the primordial mound, and his sacred boat, the henu-barque which helped carried the dead kings to the Duat.

It is known Sokar is assimilated with the Memphite god Ptah by the time of the Old Kingdom.\textsuperscript{678} Further evidence of his assimilation with Osiris can be seen in certain similarities between some of the ceremonies enacted in Sokar's festival and some episodes in the Khoiak festival of Osiris at Abydos.\textsuperscript{679} In the festival of Sokar, besides the circumambulation of the walls of Memphis, there was at some point in the ten-day festival, ceremonies were conducted at a ‘Sokar-Osiris tomb,’ the Shetayet, in the Memphite necropolis, specifically at Rostau (Figure 76).\textsuperscript{680}

\textsuperscript{677} Bunson. Tomb of the Birds. 2012.
\textsuperscript{678} It is apparent the assimilation had been going on for some time before the Old Kingdom.
\textsuperscript{679} Eaton, Osiris and Sokar, 2006, 75-101.
\textsuperscript{680} Gaballa and Kitchen. Festival of Sokar, 1969, 1-76.
Keeping as close to the original ceremony as possible, the Festival of Sokar, including past and future variations, can be noted as possibly a type of Passion Play representing the Fifth Hour. The Fifth Hour of the Duat is thought to depict the primordial mound mystically guarded by Aker-Lions, in alignment with a Kepri beetle. As Ptah offered instruction for the Opening of the mouth ceremony this was believed to help remind the ancient Egyptians of how the first death occurred and how to find him in the afterlife. Through different variations of communication Ptah and the early ancient Egyptians highlighted the pathway to find the Shetayet of Sokar as well as an instruction manual per se.

Taking all of this into consideration, while it is possible that the OS/SS was used as a ‘symbolic tomb’ or a festival ‘prop tomb’ belonging to Osiris, if anything can be taken from this research it is that ironically the story of the OS/SS does not include Osiris in its creation. Dr. Hawass postulated the high probability of the site having been used for initiatory and/or ritual purposes as a part of Egyptian religion and dating to 1550 BC. Prior to the excavation Dr. Hawass lead with the hypothesis stating:

I have found a shaft, going 29 meters vertically down into the ground, exactly halfway between the Chefren Pyramid and the Sphinx. At the bottom, which was filled with water, we have found a burial chamber with four pillars. In the middle is a large granite sarcophagus which I expect to be the grave of Osiris, the god.

In the last couple of decades, Dr. Hawass's excavations and claims regarding the OS/SS have provided additional evidence about the Giza Plateau. Even so, a date for the tomb/ shaft’s original construction has not been definitively established. Ceramic shards, unknown human remains, as well as the ‘pr’ hieroglyphic he discovered among the architectural features in the third level suggest a possible era of construction dating from the Fifth/Sixth Dynasty. Dr. Hawass

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681 A representation of creation and renewal of life.
references the close connection in the layout inside of a tomb, house of eternity, where it becomes a fixed hieroglyph within the feature.\footnote{Hawass, Osiris shaft, 2007.}

Since Egypt’s Dr. Hawass stepped down from his position as Inspector General of Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities in 2016, Dr. Khaled El-Enany is working to return Egypt’s heritage tourism to a place of instability. Dr. El-Enany currently the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities, has opened the OS/SS, as well as many other sites to public, in attempt to revive Egypt’s tourism-based economy while allowing for more personal connections to ancient Egyptian history. This has opened new perspectives and interpretations about the feature known as the OS/SS, or what I am proposing to rename the Shetayet of Sokar. Given the future of archaeology and technology at the Giza Plateau, knowledge of this and other subterranean features will continue to evolve, ideally inspiring additional research that can build on the context presented herein.
Man fears time, but time fears the pyramids.\textsuperscript{685}

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Figure 76(b): Artist Depiction of what the Osiris Shaft/Shetayet of Sokar might have looked like.
If I had a world of my own, everything would be nonsense. — Alice

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