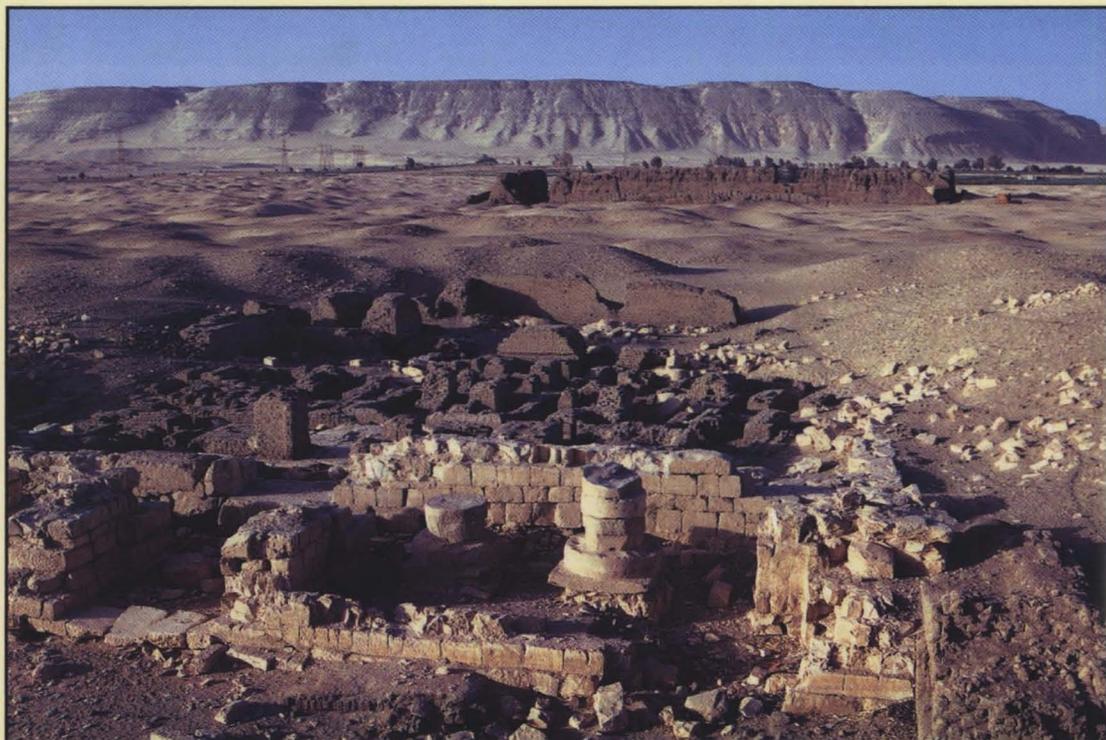


The
Archaeology and
Art of
Ancient Egypt

Essays in Honor of David B. O'Connor



Volume I

Edited by
Zahi A. Hawass
and Janet Richards



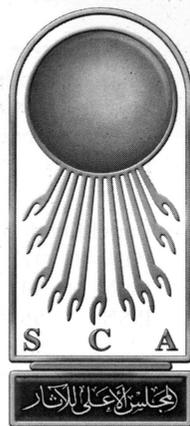
The
Archaeology and
Art of
Ancient Egypt

Essays in Honor of David B. O'Connor

ANNALES DU SERVICE DES ANTIQUITÉS DE L'ÉGYPTE
CAHIER N° 36

Volume I

Edited by
Zahi A. Hawass
and Janet Richards



PUBLICATIONS DU CONSEIL SUPRÊME DES ANTIQUITÉS DE L'ÉGYPTE

Graphic Designer
Lourie, Margaret A.

Director of Printing
Safwat, Amal

(CASAE 36) 2007

© CONSEIL SUPRÊME DES ANTIQUITÉS DE L'ÉGYPTE, LE CAIRE, 2007

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Dar el Kutub No. 5576/2007
ISBN-10 977-437-241-7
ISBN-13 987-977-437-241-4
ISSN 5576/2007

IMPRIMERIE DU CONSEIL SUPRÊME DES ANTIQUITÉS

Contents

Volume I

Preface

ZAHY A. HAWASS

xiii

Acknowledgments

xv

List of Abbreviations

xvi

David B. O'Connor: A Tribute

H. S. SMITH

xix

An Archaeological Biography

JANET RICHARDS

xxi

Essays

MATTHEW DOUGLAS ADAMS, **Household Silos, Granary Models, and Domestic Economy in Ancient Egypt**

1

WILLIAM Y. ADAMS, <i>Anthropology and Nubiology</i>	25
DAVID ANDERSON, <i>Zoomorphic Figurines from the Predynastic Settlement at el-Mahâsna, Egypt</i>	33
DIETER ARNOLD, <i>Buried in Two Tombs? Remarks on “Cenotaphs” in the Middle Kingdom</i>	55
JOHN BAINES AND LIAM McNAMARA, <i>The Twin Stelae of Suty and Hor</i>	63
KATHRYN A. BARD AND RODOLFO FATTOVICH, <i>Mersa/Wadi Gawasis: New Evidence of a Pharaonic Harbor</i>	81
LADISLAV BAREŠ, <i>Lesser Burial Chambers in the Large Late Period Shaft Tombs and Their Owners</i>	87
LAUREL D. BESTOCK, <i>Finding the First Dynasty Royal Family</i>	99
ROBERT S. BIANCHI, <i>The Stones of Egypt and Nubia</i>	109
MANFRED BIETAK, IRENE FORSTNER-MÜLLER, AND TOMASZ HERBICH, <i>Discovery of a New Palatial Complex in Tell el-Dab‘a in the Delta: Geophysical Survey and Preliminary Archaeological Verification</i>	119
PATRICIA BOCHI, <i>The “Image” as Visual Trope and Cognitive Structure in the Ancient Egyptian Harpers’ Songs</i>	127
JANINE BOURRIAU, <i>The Vienna System in Retrospect: How Useful Is It?</i>	137
EDWARD BROVARSKI, <i>King Ntr-k³-R^c ‘Ii-m-ḥtp s³ Pth?</i>	145
BETSY M. BRYAN, <i>A ‘New’ Statue of Amenhotep III and the Meaning of the <i>Kheprsh</i> Crown</i>	151
LAURENT CHIOTTI, HAROLD L. DIBBLE, DEBORAH I. OLSZEWSKI, SHANNON R. MCPHERRON, UTSAV SCHURMANS, AND JENNIFER R. SMITH, <i>Paleolithic Abydos: Reconstructing Individual Behaviors across the High Desert Landscape</i>	169

SUE D'AURIA, <i>The American Branch of the Egypt Exploration Fund</i>	185
ROSALIE DAVID, <i>The International Ancient Egyptian Mummy Tissue Bank: A 21st Century Contribution to Paleo-pathological and Paleo-pharmacological Studies</i>	199
DENISE DOXEY, <i>A New Kingdom Pair Statue in the University of Pennsylvania Museum</i>	215
GÜNTER DREYER, <i>Wer war Menes?</i>	221
KATHERINE EATON, <i>Memorial Temples in the Sacred Landscape of Nineteenth Dynasty Abydos: An Overview of Processional Routes and Equipment</i>	231
YAHIA EL-MASRY, <i>The Ptolemaic Town (Ptolemais)</i>	251
AHMED EL-SAWY, <i>The Necropolis of Ancient Terenouthis (Kom Abou Bellou)</i>	267
RICHARD A. FAZZINI, <i>Some Objects Found before the First Pylon of the Mut Temple</i>	277
LAUREL FLENTYE, <i>The Mastabas of Ankh-haf (G7510) and Akhethetep and Meretites (G7650) in the Eastern Cemetery at Giza: A Reassessment</i>	291
RENEE FRIEDMAN, <i>New Observations on the Fort at Hierakonpolis, Appendix by Dietrich Raue</i>	309
MELINDA HARTWIG, <i>A Head of a Ramesside Queen from Abydos</i>	337
STEPHEN P. HARVEY, <i>King Heqatawy: Notes on a Forgotten Eighteenth Dynasty Royal Name</i>	343
FEKRI A. HASSAN, <i>Droughts, Famine and the Collapse of the Old Kingdom: Re-reading Ipuwer</i>	357
ZAHY A. HAWASS, <i>The Discovery of the Osiris Shaft at Giza</i>	379

COLIN A. HOPE, <i>Egypt and 'Libya' to the End of the Old Kingdom: A View from Dakhleh Oasis</i>	399
SALIMA IKRAM, <i>Animals in the Ritual Landscape at Abydos: A Synopsis</i>	417
RICHARD JASNOW, "Through Demotic Eyes:" <i>On Style and Description in Demotic Narratives</i>	433
JANICE KAMRIN, <i>Toward a New Database for the Egyptian Museum, Cairo</i>	449

Volume II

NAGUIB KANAWATI, <i>The Watchers/Dependents of Min of Akhmim in the Old Kingdom</i>	1
BARRY KEMP, <i>The Orientation of Burials at Tell el-Amarna</i>	21
PETER LACOVARA, <i>A Rishi Coffin from Giza and the Development of This Type of Mummy Case</i>	33
ANTHONY LEAHY, <i>Tomb Relief Carving at Abydos in the Seventh Century BC</i>	39
MARK LEHNER AND FREYA SADARANGANI, <i>Beds for Bowabs in a Pyramid City</i>	59
RONALD J. LEPROHON, "Opening" <i>in the Pyramid Texts</i>	83
CHRISTINE LILYQUIST, <i>Reflections on Mirrors</i>	95
MICHELLE MARLAR, <i>Sex as a Votive Offering at the Osiris Temple</i>	111
GEOFFREY T. MARTIN, <i>The Early Dynastic Necropolis at North Saqqara: The Unpublished Excavations of W. B. Emery and C. M. Firth</i>	121
HEATHER LEE MCCARTHY, <i>The Beit el-Wali Temple of Ramesses II: A Cosmological Interpretation</i>	127

ROBERT S. MERRILLEES, Egyptological Ramblings Down Under	147
A. J. MILLS, Where Are We Going?	157
ANGELA MILWARD-JONES, A Unique Design on a Faience Bowl from Abydos	161
ELLEN F. MORRIS, On the Ownership of the Saqqara Mastabas and the Allotment of Political and Ideological Power at the Dawn of the State	171
KAROL MYSLIWIEC, The Scheme 2 × 4 in the Decoration of Old Kingdom Tombs	191
ADELA OPPENHEIM, Three Deities in Procession: A Relief Block from the Pyramid Complex of Senwosret II at Lahun in the Metropolitan Museum of Art	207
R. B. PARKINSON AND DETLEF FRANKE, A Song for Sarenput: Texts from Qubbet el-Hawa Tomb 36	219
DIANA CRAIG PATCH, Third Intermediate Period Burials of Young Children at Abydos	237
MARY-ANN POULS WEGNER, A Third Intermediate Period Burial 'Ad Sanctos' at Abydos	257
STEPHEN QUIRKE, Labour at Lahun	273
ALI RADWAN, Concerning the Cult of Amenhotep III after His Death	289
DONALD B. REDFORD, Some Toponyms and Personal Names Relating to the Sea Peoples	299
CAROL REDMOUNT, El Hibeh: A Brief Overview	303
JANET RICHARDS, The Archaeology of Excavations and the Role of Context	313

GAY ROBINS, The Decorative Program in the Tomb of Tutankhamun (KV 62)	321
GERRY D. SCOTT, III, Two Ceremonial Palette Fragments in the Collection of the San Antonio Museum of Art	343
STEPHAN JOHANNES SEIDLMAYER, People at Beni Hassan: Contributions to a Model of Ancient Egyptian Rural Society	351
ALAA EL-DIN M. SHAHEEN, “Water Carrier” or the Like in the Ancient Egyptian Sources and Its Resemblance to Dilmun Glyptic Art	369
JJ SHIRLEY, The Life and Career of Nebamun, the Physician of the King in Thebes	381
DAVID P. SILVERMAN AND JENNIFER HOUSER WEGNER, A Late Egyptian Story in the Penn Museum	403
RAINER STADELMANN, King Huni: His Monuments and His Place in the History of the Old Kingdom	425
CHIP VINCENT, International Conservation Methodology, Practice and Ethics and Their Application at the American Research Center in Egypt’s Conservation Project at Abydos	433
DEBORAH VISCHAK, Identity in/of Elephantine: The Old Kingdom Tombs at Qubbet el Hawa	443
JOSEF WEGNER, From Elephant-Mountain to Anubis-Mountain? A Theory on the Origins and Development of the Name Abdju	459

Droughts, Famine and the Collapse of the Old Kingdom: Re-Reading Ipuwer

Fekri A. Hassan
University College London

Preface

Egyptology has benefited immensely from David O'Connor's commitment to an anthropological approach to ancient Egypt. Instead of an overemphasis on the complexities of deciphering texts that are luckily pursued by most Egyptologists, he has ventured into the domain of trying to make sense of the results of such decipherments using anthropological insights. I first came across this when I was asked to review a book in which he had come up with a novel approach to population and population growth in Ancient Egypt. Our paths crossed again when I began to investigate the probable causes of the collapse of the Old Kingdom. Combining archaeological research, not just as a means of digging for texts, with his anthropological perspective, O'Connor refuted traditional, *ad hoc* views on the end of the Old Kingdom in favor of a scenario that invoked an environmental disaster. I am pleased that this contribution lends support to his position.

His ongoing work on the beginnings of Egyptian civilization at Abydos is already showing the fruits of systematic archaeological excavations and an anthropologically-informed approach to ancient Egypt.

David O'Connor has also been active in promoting a cultural heritage approach to Egyptian archaeological resources, and is, indeed, one of a handful of Egyptologists and archaeologists who take this profoundly important matter seriously.

Introduction

For close to 500 years, and after the initial trials of founding a state society, Egypt went through a phase of grandiose state-building, best exemplified by the monumental pyramids that extend over a stretch of 60 kilometers. The period was extremely dynamic with great achievements in state-craft involving the emergence of dedicated state functionaries, and bureaucrats. The sudden and abrupt demise of the centralized government that had developed during the Old Kingdom by the end of the reign of King Pepy II has been one of the most intriguing puzzles in the history of

ancient Egypt. Gardiner noted that the inscriptions from the First Intermediate Period (FIP), the term collectively given to a span of time from c. 2185 to 2020 BCE, “constantly harp upon the lack of grain, a lack which was due as much to the impossibility of undisturbed agriculture as to a succession of low Niles. It may be here noted that the deplorable state of Upper Egypt is clearly reflected in the clumsiness of its artistic efforts; evidently Egyptian civilization was at its lowest ebb” (GARDINER 1962: 111). It became common to refer to this period as a “dark age.”

Recently, Franke (2001) traced the reference to the FIP as a “dark period” to Heinrich Brugsch. Franke acknowledges the breakdown of centralized administration during the First Intermediate Period, and notes that there are indeed texts that mention famine and the loss of royal authority in tombs from Akhmim, el-Hagarsa and Hawawish. Nevertheless, he takes the view that conditions were not as bad as texts tell us. Texts, he argues, were ideologically biased. This is hardly justified since earlier texts do not refer to famine and loss of royal authority. One source of the confusion is that the term FIP lumps together three stages; an initial stage of loss of royal authority and a collapse of centralized government which was short lived (20–30 years), followed by a phase of struggle by various provincial leaders to re-establish order and claim royal authority. This phase entailed wars with “Asiatics” and internal war between contenders for the throne, which culminated in a final phase of re-establishing unity, leading to the emergence of the Middle Kingdom. The last two phases lasted for almost 180 years. The FIP was hardly a period of endless chaos, disorder, famine, and trouble, and it is important to restrict the term “dark age,” if we must use it, to the first 20–30 years of this period. The events of internal warfare, more in the spirit of the 100-year war in Europe, were not particularly bright. Nevertheless, that led to innovative technological achievements as well as novel systems of governance, state policies, ethics and legitimizing agenda. The unsettling political conditions are indicated, according to O’Connor (1974), by a six-fold increase in mortality in the Qau-Matmar region. In addition, excavations at Nag ed-Deir (from 1901 to 1904 and again in 1912, 1913, and 1923) provide evidence for the “unsettled political situation” reflected in the presence of bows and other weapons. There is also gruesome evidence of warfare from the excavations at Deir el Bahari in 1911–1931 (WINLOCK 1942: 123–127).

In exploring the collapse of the Old Kingdom, it has become almost customary to speak about the impoverishment of the resources of king Pepy II (SMITH 1962: 53) on account of immense constructions undertaken at royal expense and the innumerable funerary endowments exempt from taxation. However, such an account is based on no more than an intuitive speculation and generalization from a few pieces of information.

On this topic and other “social” explanations, O’Connor (1974: 17) remarked that the pyramids of the 4th Dynasty were in a sense an “aberration” that was never returned to even by the strong kings of the 12th Dynasty. Those who adhere to the view that the collapse of the Old Kingdom was precipitated by the actions of ambitious local governors forget that after the initial period of anarchy, it was hitherto insignificant centers such as Herakleopolis and later Thebes that became politically dominant rather than the earlier provincial power centers, the dominance of which might be expected to have been enhanced if the end of the Old Kingdom was caused by the efforts of officials from these power centers (O’CONNOR 1974: 16). Recent excavations by Richards (2001) at Abydos have revealed how, in fact, the tombs of the king’s high officials at Abydos were desecrated, robbed, and vandalized. We also lack concrete evidence for the presumed claim that larger temples emerged as strong competitors for power, as claimed by Butzer (1997: 258), nor do we have evidence that the marriage of one of Pepy’s daughters to a prominent family in Upper Egypt was “a misguided effort to counterbalance the excessive power of the high official bureaucracy in the capital.”

O'Connor (1974) dismisses the assertion that the political decentralization of the First Intermediate Period resulted from a decline in the supernatural authority of the kingship, the increasing political power of provincial officials and a "gradual equalization of wealth" strengthening the economic base of a nobility developing out of the secular and religious administration of the provinces. He argues that the exclusion of royal relatives from high offices after the 4th Dynasty was a royal initiative and does not imply a loss of royal control. Moreover, the economic redistribution in the later part of the Old Kingdom need not have weakened royal control, especially since large private estates appear not to have developed. He adds that the comparatively insignificant remains of the provincial temples during the Old Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom indicate their subordination to royal funerary and other cults favored by the state. He also suggests that the official emphasis on the solar cult in the 5th Dynasty increased, rather than reduced, royal political flexibility.

What then was the cause of the collapse? According to O'Connor (1974: 16), "greater weight should be given to the possibility that the politically uncontrollable factor of consistently lower inundations and persistent famine ...was critical in precipitating the political collapse of the I.I.P" [I.I.P is the 1st Intermediate Period]. This is also the view of Grimal as well as Kemp. According to Grimal (1992: 139), the shortage of food as a result of low floods was exacerbated by the decline in centralized administration. The nomarchs would have kept their irrigation canals in a good state of repair. He rightly notes that the chaotic phase lasted no longer than one or two generations, but that the violence it engendered did not immediately die out (GRIMAL 1992: 139).

Kemp (1983: 181) observed that the decline of court culture after the 6th Dynasty occurred close in time to freak low Nile levels and famine. He assumes that the low floods imposed further strain on the balance between competing demands for surplus, particularly if it also came at a time of diminishing returns from a period of increasingly agrarian exploitation.

There is at present plentiful evidence for extremely low flood conditions that lasted for more than a generation, more than what was available when Bell (1971) concluded that the end of the Old Kingdom was caused by droughts as a part of a climatic event of global dimension, and more than what was available when I first wrote in support of this (HASSAN 1997). The focus of this contribution precludes a detailed discussion of the scientific argument for low floods as a result of a global climatic event c. 2200–2150 BCE (subject to the precision of dating methods). Nevertheless, I give here a brief account of current evidence before presenting my discussion of the social dynamics of the disintegration of royal authority and centralized government. The main objective of this contribution is to provide a re-reading of the text by an Egyptian "sage," Ipuwer (GARDINER 1909; LICHTHEIM 1973), which in the opinion of the writer provides an exceptional exposition and an analysis of the catastrophic end of the Old Kingdom.

According to Egyptologist Seidlmayer (2000: 129), "There can be no doubt that these texts [those by Ipuwer and others] relate to fact." This view is also asserted by Assmann: "With these (and numerous similar) texts as sources as clues and traces of real events, we can only conclude that there must have been famines and food shortages in Egypt at that time" (ASSMANN 2002: 102).

In addition to clues to famines and low floods in Ipuwer and other texts from the Middle Kingdom, Ipuwer's contribution is exceptional in as much as it proffers a coherent explanation, albeit not a linear narrative of the breakdown of the Old Kingdom. This aspect of his text has been overlooked by Egyptologists who opted for a literary reading of this work, and who even doubted its historical veracity. I offer here a new reading and a re-evaluation of one of the world's first works of cultural analysis. The reading of the text in this manner was inspired by the reading of

the texts by Al-Baghdadi (reissued 1964) and Al-Maqrizi (reissued 1854, translated by ALLOUCHE 1994) on medieval famines and social conditions in Egypt from the 9th to the 14th century. These texts served as a "control" and a historical reference to the events of the FIP. The categories of social consequences of catastrophically low Nile floods mentioned by the medieval Arab scholars are remarkably similar to those recalled by Ipuwer (with the exception of inflation).

The timing of the collapse of the Old Kingdom has been estimated between 2190 and 2170 BCE (KITCHEN 1991; HAYES 1970; SCHENKEL 1965; STOCK 1949; WARD 1992) with an average of 2185 BCE.

Evidence for Low Nile Level in Egypt and the 2200 BCE Global Climatic Event

In a recent study of the Delta, sediments obtained from drilling the subsurface sediments of the Delta revealed a distinctly thin layer of reddish-brown silt dating to 2250–2050 BCE. This layer indicates that the delta floodplain dried up for a long period of time, allowing iron reddish-brown iron oxides to accumulate at the surface (KROM ET AL. 2002). There is also compelling evidence from the ongoing drilling program at Memphis of dry conditions represented by the encroaching desert sand that began to engulf the Old Kingdom settlement during the First Intermediate Period (GIDDY and JEFFREYS 1991: 2). The desert sand extended as a massive sheet of windblown sand over a distance of at least half a kilometer from the edge of the escarpment. It remained a prominent feature of the landscape until medieval times (GIDDY and JEFFREYS 1991: 2; JEFFREYS 1997: 3–4). The intensification of sand storms and the encroachment of sand on Old Kingdom settlements is also evident outside the Delta. Investigations at 'Ayn Asil in Dakhla Oasis reveal a progressive sanding-up of the site by the end of the Old Kingdom. Over four meters of wind-blown sand were deposited before the site was finally abandoned (SMITH and GIDDY 1985).

The reduction of Nile discharge coincided with low rainfall in the source areas of the Nile, where a dry climatic phase is detected at the same time as the low Nile floods in Egypt c. 2200–2100 BCE (JOLLY and BONNEVILLE 1992; TAYLOR 1993; GASSE and VAN CAMPO 1994). Droughts are also evident synchronously in the Sahel. An investigation of the lake Kajemarum Oasis and dune deposits in northeastern Nigeria, at the border and Sahel, sensitive to climatic oscillations, revealed that a marked deterioration of climate and vegetation commenced at c. 2150 BCE, leading to the formation of the present day semiarid landscape due to a pronounced shift in atmospheric circulation with significant degradation of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems (HOLMES ET AL. 1998). Also, investigations at Lake Bosumtwi in Ghana reveal that the level of the lake fell at c. 2150 BCE in response to arid conditions (TALBOT ET AL. 1984). Droughts were also experienced outside Africa. In the eastern Mediterranean a massive reduction of 20–30% in rainfall at c. 2200 BCE is indicated by a high-resolution study of deposits at Soreq Cave (BAR-MATHEWS ET AL. 1999). In addition, high-resolution study of the sediments of the Gulf of Oman discloses a sharp spike of dust that had blown in from Mesopotamia at c. 2200 BCE (CULLEN ET AL. 2000).

Farther afield, dry conditions were observed in a record from Lake Sumxi in Western Tibet at 2200 BCE (GASSE and VAN CAMPO 1994). In addition, in South America a definite transition to a variable late Holocene climate occurred at c. 2100 BCE as revealed by marine sediments off the southern coast of Chile (LAMY ET AL. 2000). There is also good evidence for a severe centennial-scale drought in mid-continental North America 4200 years ago with apparent global linkages (BOOTH ET AL. 2005).

These diverse regional responses in different parts of the world were most likely due to a weak circulation over the Atlantic as revealed in ice cores from Greenland, as well as a transition from birch and grassland vegetation to arctic conditions in Iceland at 2150 BCE (ROSE ET AL. 1997).

The Medieval Parallel

Well after the end of Pharaonic civilization, a famine caused by a low Nile flood in 963 CE, during the rule of the Kafur al-Ikhshidi, led initially to a many-fold increase in the price of wheat. "Distress prevailed and disorder undermined the pursuit of ordinary life. Estates and storerooms were pillaged. People rioted because of the inflation" reported the medieval historian Al-Maqrizi (ALLOUCHE 1994). As soon as Kafur died, violence and riots mounted with a civil war among the soldiers and the princely rulers which cost many lives. The markets were looted and many neighbourhoods were set on fire. People were frightened and became distrustful of others. Some of the army officials contacted Al-Mu'iz li-din-Illah Al-Fatimi in the Maghreb (Northwest Africa). His general Al-Qa'd Gawhar entered Egypt at the head of his army in 953, ending the rule of the Ikhshids and setting the stage for a new dynastic rule under the Fatimids.

The medieval famines indirectly affected almost all crafts. Craft specialists and artisans depend on barter for their livelihood, and are not food producers. Being at a distinct disadvantage, their numbers are likely to dwindle fast. Al-Baghdadi reported that during the 1200–1202 CE famines, of the nine hundred weavers in Cairo, no more than nineteen were left alive at the end. Death, impoverishment, and illness among the craftsmen would have definitely undermined Egyptian economy and the ability to recover immediately (AL-BAGHDADI 1964).

Reading Ipuwer

Parkinson (1997) regards the text as a dialogue, which led him to re-entitle it "The dialogue of Ipuwer and the Lord of All" (the creator). He guesses that his description of social woes and laments were not addressed to a particular king, but to a generalized representative of authority. He seems to regard it as primarily a work of "forceful elegy for the life-in-death that humanity is forced to lead" (PARKINSON 1997: 167) and a call for action to reform social conditions, followed by a dialogue between Ipuwer and the Lord [of all]. In this dialogue the Lord seems to suggest that the problems of the land is of the Egyptians' own doing and not the fault of the creator. Ipuwer replies by mocking the Lord's speech and refuting his argument. The end is lost, but Parkinson hypothesizes that it might have ended with reconciliation, as the final Lord's reply "will have won the sage over to a stoic acceptance of the imperfection of the world" (PARKINSON 1997: 169).

Nothing perhaps would have been a negation of the whole work such as this "ending." The overall tenor of the work, in my opinion, is the validation of order and perfection— notions that are widely accepted as at the core of the Egyptian world-view. The ending suggested by Parkinson is inconsistent with the rest of the work. Moreover, many texts from the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom underscore what the person has achieved by his "arm." The First Intermediate Period, if anything, empowered officials to act. Good speech was not a substitute for action, as may be gathered from the following line from the stela of Treasurer Iti of Imyotru (LICHTHEIM 1973: 89):

I was a citizen who acted with his arm (3)

And this one from the so-called "Instructions addressed to King Merikare" (LICHTHEIM 1973: 105):

Don't say, "it is trouble," don't slacken your hands (110, 22)

The suggestion of a certain ending, however, is perhaps an over-reading of the text. Undoubtedly, all readings involve a dynamic intercourse between reader and text, where words

generate currents and eddies between one imagined social world and another imagined world. This is well captured in "autopiscografia" by the Portuguese Poet Fernando Pessoa (HONIG and BROWN 1986) where he explores the relationship between the poetic experience and truth simultaneously with the relationship between the poet and the reader, and is the subject of a great deal of current approaches to literature.

Certainly there can be an infinite number of readings of the same text, including several by the same reader depending on the context and purpose of the reading. In the present context, I am concerned with the historical and sociocultural significance of the work—a subject that may benefit from the sociocultural approaches to literature engendered by the French Revolution (BARBÉRIS 2002). Parkinson does recognize that "literature was a culturally central artifact in the Middle Kingdom" and proposes that the texts affirmed loyalist values, and that many of them were didactic (PARKINSON 1997: 14). But, the main question is how does this literature differ from that of Old Kingdom writings and why? Ipuwer's poem should perhaps be considered as the French literary works after the revolution of 1789. The French needed literary works that celebrated new values and reflected upon the new realities of society and of individual ambitions. Authors examined their own lives and suffered the pain of the imperfections that fell short from the ideals. Writing became reflective and persuasive. To understand the literature of this period, Germaine de Staël, writing in the 19th century, called for a theory of the particularity of the text within the social and historical context of its motives, objectives, and consequences (BARBÉRIS 1987). Ipuwer, like Balzac, wrote in the light of what he believed to be two pillars of society; kingship and religion, but the texts of both of them could not be reduced to a conservative reflection by royalists. Their texts were imbued with historically constituted ideals and events, but their words had the seeds of a new future.

From a sociocultural perspective, whether Ipuwer's text was addressed to a certain king or to a generalized representative of authority is irrelevant because his work denounces disorder and calls for stability and order through actions. In this respect, the search by T. S. Eliot for stability and stillness though traditionalism (MAXWELL 1961: 208–212) is revealing. His *Waste Land* may stand for Ipuwer's own. Eliot reaches for spiritual salvation, Ipuwer calls for action. But although he called for "restoration," his text was far richer, thicker, and more diversified to be merely a loyalist treatise. His dissent, scepticism, and courage reveal that his "poetry" was not a means to transform an imperfect world into perfect speech (PARKINSON 1997: 17), but to transform an imperfect world by perfect speech.

Ipuwer's Text: A Literary History

The analysis of an ancient text is a daunting exercise (ASSMANN and BLUMENTHAL 1999; LICHTHEIM 1988, 1996; LOPRIENO 1996; PARKINSON 1991, 1996, 1997, 2002; QUIRKE 1996). Ipuwer's text is especially difficult perhaps because it is complex, thick with details and generalizations with shifting modalities and expressions. The titles and appellations given to by Egyptologists as "admonitions," "lamentations," or "loyalist propaganda" (LICHTHEIM 1973) have distracted both from its manifold literary merits and its universal [trans-cultural and trans-temporal] appeal that makes it such compelling and gripping reading. Moreover, treating this exceptional work as no more than a literary fiction has led some renowned Egyptologists to negate its historical value. The correspondence between descriptions by Al-Baghdadi of the events associated with the famine of 1200–1202 CE and Ipuwer, separated by a huge span of time and from different cultures and social position, leaves little doubt that Ipuwer was either an eyewitness to the famine or that he had first hand access to historical material on which he based his work in the same way that

Al-Maqrizi writing in 1405 CE used the information from Al-Baghdadi and others in his opus on famine and economy in medieval Egypt (ALLOUCHE 1994).

Even if Ipuwer lived at the end of the 12th Dynasty, c. 1900–1800 BCE (PARKINSON 1997: 166), the famine would have occurred 260–370 years earlier compared with 200 years separating Al-Maqrizi from Al-Baghdadi. The similarity is interesting because the impact of the famine described by Al-Baghdadi was so severe that the information he provided was preserved by later historians and commentators on medieval Egypt. As Al-Maqrizi depended on written historical accounts, Ipuwer's work, if it were written much later than the events it described, would have also depended on earlier sources sufficiently close to the event to allow him to give such a detailed and, by analogy with medieval famines, fairly accurate depiction. Surely the severity of the famine and its consequences made the events of the First Intermediate Period memorable. The recurrence of occasional famines during the early part of the Middle Kingdom would have sustained the memory of the great famine. Similarly, Al-Maqrizi's account was prompted by famines in his own lifetime. Moreover, Al-Maqrizi's work was not a dispassionate historical anecdote. Al-Maqrizi aimed to deliver a message concerning the importance of good government when people are hit by famine. He was concerned with greed, corruption, inflation of prices, and the debasement of the currency as complicating factors. Likewise, Ipuwer might have had his political motives.

Ipuwer's work has been considered of the same genre as that of Neferty (LICHTHEIM 1973: 149), to whom we referred when we dealt with Ankhtifi's reference to famine before. Neferty's work is a straightforward piece of political writing. It is shorter and direct, which led Lichtheim to suggest that Ipuwer's longer and more repetitive work was a "late comer" in the genre of "national distress" and of purely literary inspiration. This is hardly justifiable since there is no rule for dating texts sequentially on the basis of their length and repetitiveness. In addition, we do not know the original form of the texts—both Neferty's and Ipuwer's texts survive as copies from the New Kingdom, the 18th and 19th Dynasty respectively.

In rejecting the historical content of Ipuwer's work, Lichtheim relied on an analysis by the Russian historian S. Luria (1929), whose aim was to provide an historical analysis of the mythic and mental [cognitive] structure of the work.

Ipuwer's richness in the details of famine and physical suffering compared with Neferty's and Ankh's greater emphasis on reversal of fortune, social upheaval and moral crisis in my opinion places Ipuwer closer to the beginning of the 12th Dynasty if not earlier. Later derivative works had the benefit of his rich opus to create shorter versions with a single specific objective.

According to Ward (1999), Ipuwer's work belongs to the late Old Kingdom. He rejects the assertion by J. van Seters (1964), who suggested a late 13th Dynasty date, by pointing out that the text is a copy made during the New Kingdom and it is most likely that copyists could slip into using current words for more archaic or disused words. They could also do that in editing texts for contemporary audiences, which would make the text appear much later than its original copy (VAN DE WALLE 1948; DONADONI 1968). However, Franke, Parkinson, and Quirke tend to assign Ipuwer's work to the late Middle Kingdom (FRANKE 2001; PARKINSON 1997: 166, Quirke: personal communication 2003) on the basis of various internal criteria such as institutions and titles cited in the text. However, this might have been a feature of a late Middle Kingdom copy of the original (see below).

Ipuwer was perhaps a young man by the end of Pepy II's reign; if he was 20 years old at that time, he would have been 45 by the beginning of the 9th Dynasty, having lived through the terrible events of the 7th and 8th Dynasties and witnessed the tragic collapse [from his own point

of view] of Memphite rulers. Depending on how long he lived, he would have lived through the early years of the Herakleopolitan rule. If he died at the age of 65, he would have lived through the first 20 years of that period, but if he lived to a ripe old age of 90 years he would have 45 years, dying c. 2115 within less than 10 years from the 11th Dynasty. If, on the other hand, he was 6-10 years old when famine struck, he might very well have lived up to the beginning of the 11th Dynasty, but certainly his writing would have been done at age 50-55, during the Herakleopolitan period.

The wealth of information on the famine and its devastating consequences, confirmed but by no means excelled by any other writer, gives the distinct impression, especially with the kind of emotional impact it had on Ipuwer, that he could have been an eyewitness who lived to tell the story, perhaps writing in his fifties under the more stable conditions of the Herakleopolitan kings. If so, his work was thus not a loyalist pretext for Amenemhet I, as that by Neferty, but the work of a royalist who decried the weakness of the last kings of the Memphite Period (7th and 8th) because they could not hold the throne and charge their responsibilities. Ipuwer, in his old age, would have thus expressed his faith in the efforts of Khety I (or perhaps Khety II), exhorting him to expel the Asiatics from the eastern Delta, and to consolidate the realm by crushing any rebellion. He also advised the king to restore the temples to their old glory, and to venerate the gods (but perhaps with a shift from the god who went to sleep oblivious to the chaos that engulfed Egypt).

If this assessment of the dating of Ipuwer's composition is wrong, then an explanation has to be given for the detailed and particular themes cited in this work, as well as for his motives for writing this at some time in the late Middle Kingdom. Although it appears that the royal family by the end of the 12th Dynasty was dying out and that there was a rapid succession of kings during the 13th Dynasty, there was no loss of stability or prosperity. Moreover, Egypt lost none of its prestige or power at home or abroad (BAINES and MALEK 1980: 40-41).

But suppose that the text was written in the 10th/11th Dynasties, and later copied and recopied during the Middle Kingdom for over 400 years, wouldn't reference to some words, institutions and titles common at that time have been added or substituted? The Middle Kingdom version, as many others from that period, became a classic (WILDUNG 2003) to eventually survive in a 19th Dynasty tattered copy. This will require an approach to texts that considers their epigenesis—the transformations in vocabulary, structure, and format. It is well known that there are "unavoidable" errors that may even escape editorial reading. For example, there are about 20 errors in all current editions of *Salambo* by Flaubert (DE BIASI 1990).

If Ipuwer were a contemporary of the Herakleopolitan kings, he might not have just been a sage, or a great essayist and poet, but might have been also a key historical figure in the re-birth of Egypt and in drafting a new monarchical charter that redefined monarchy not as a divine right, but as an institution predicated upon responsibility and action. Though perhaps a loyalist, Ipuwer does in fact castigate the king and spells out for him his responsibilities. It might be that Ipuwer's work was a *Charta* that spelled out the primary duties and responsibilities of the king—to fight the enemies of Egypt, to destroy rebellion, and to keep the religious rituals, as a work that extolled the importance of kingship.

Ipuwer's message would have transcended time, reverberating across the ages by rulers who used his work as a political platform to justify their actions against political rivals and to legitimize the role of the king as the keeper of law and order. It might have also survived as a great literary work because of its forceful evocation of the death and chaos that linger on the edge of life and perfect order. His creative and imaginative power has molded a dreadful historical experience into a gripping existential encounter with self, society, sovereign and the gods. Ipuwer

expressed his view of life and has since injected his text into life. Although, as philosopher Karl Jaspers realized, no one can escape his historical position; within the limits and conditions of each world-view "Being" itself is encountered (SEIDLMAYER 2000: 127–8).

Ipuwer's Annals

The deep philosophical aspects of Ipuwer's work and his yearning for stability under a strong monarch do not, however, detract from his detailed account of the processes that led to the demise of kingship and the loss of central authority. The key factor in the collapse of the monarchy was the loss of revenues from the provinces as famine became widespread because of persistently low Nile floods. Conditions worsened as peasants died in large numbers thus reducing the size of the labour force. Even when good floods returned, agricultural productivity was low. The control of the Memphite rulers was minimal. Their strongholds in the provinces also collapsed as famine and despair led peasants to riot, loot, and murder. Tombs and temples were violated. Tax records and government documents were destroyed. As riots and violence spread, the administrative structure of the country was ruined. This further undermined the possibility of collecting and delivering revenues to the royal household. In places, thugs took charge of towns and cities. Enmity, greed, and aggression extended even to family members. The Memphite kings, weakened and impoverished, were unable to repel the encroachment of Bedouins in the eastern Delta. In almost two decades it appeared that all was lost. Peasants, who survived, were demoralized and dilapidated. They had no protection against those who managed to accumulate power and fortune in those tumultuous times. The noblemen lost their power-base and their fortunes—some were reduced to abject poverty and degraded beyond their imagination. The restoration of kingship as a means to re-establish order, stability and peace became a tantalizing dream, and for some even a necessity for survival.

The reading of Ipuwer's text as a literary work of little historical factuality robs the reader of appreciating the analytical framework used by Ipuwer to explain the collapse of the Old Kingdom. This collapse of the government of the Old Kingdom was not a result of a social revolution. It was a period of breakdown of control and chaos. The following phase of reclaiming order and re-instituting the monarchy entailed a religious reformation and a re-interpretation and re-packaging of "divine" kingship. The outcome was "revolutionary" in its consequences, but it was neither due to an organized peasant revolution, nor the result of a political movement that aimed to overthrow the ruling kings of Memphis by power-hungry nomarchs. Egyptologist Stephan Seidlmayer is specifically clear on this point (SEIDLMAYER 2000: 127–8):

It is important to realize... that the end of the Old Kingdom was not brought about by the increasing power of the great families of monarchs. In fact, a new line of local magnates appeared during the First Intermediate Period.

The situation during the initial phase of famine, plunder, violence and breakdown in governmental control was aggravated by an increasing presence of Asiatic marauders from the desert lands east of Egypt, who became well established at a time when the ruling kings had neither the economic means to raise an army nor the political structure to mobilize conscripts from a country torn by famine, internal fighting, and a breakdown in the lines of command.

Ipuwer portrays the destruction of the monarchy as follows (LICHTHEIM 1973: 149–163):

See, one buried as hawk/ falcon is .../devoid of biers/ (7,2)
What the pyramid hid is empty. (7,2)

See now, the land is deprived of kingship By a few people who ignore custom. (7,2-3)
 [Stolen is the crown] of Re,
 who pacifies the Two Lands/makes the two lands contend/. (7,3-4)
 See, the secret of the land, its limits are unknown {no known borders}, (7,4)
 See, Egypt has fallen to pouring /of/ water,(7,4-5)
 He who poured water on the ground seizes the mighty in misery. (7,5)
 See, the Serpent is taken from its hole, (7,5)
 See, the Serpent --- the dead, (7,7-8)

Ipuwer paints this scenario of the loss of royal power as follows:

Loss of revenues and taxes:

/Indeed, Elephantine and 'Thinis' {are in the series} of Upper Egypt, (but) without paying taxes/. Lo, Yebu, <this> --- are not taxed because of strife. (3,10-11)
 What good is a treasury without its revenues? Happy is the heart of the king when gifts come to him. (3,12)
 The grain of Egypt is/common property/ "I go-get-it." (6,9)
 and the whole palace is without its revenues. (10,4)
 The king's storehouse is "I go-get-it," for everyone, (10,3)
 It should have emmer, barley, fowl, and fish; it should have white cloth, fine linen, copper, and oil. It should have carpet and mat ---, all good woven products.... (10,4)
 /If the..., it in the palace were delayed, men would be devoid of...(10,5)
 See, the residence is fearful from want, (7,6)

Ipuwer realizes that the survival of the crown depended on the steady flow of taxes and revenues, and thus proclaims a political "law":

If the residence is stripped, it will collapse in a moment. (7,4)

Economic slump:

Lacking are <grain>, charcoal, *irtyw*, *m3'*-wood, *nwt*-wood, brushwood. (3,11)
 The output of craftsmen is lacking --- ...are the profits of the palace. (3,11)
 See, all the craftsmen, they do not work,
 The land's foes have despoiled its craftsmen. (9,6)

Attack by mobs and rebels:

See now, things are done that never were before, (7,1)
 The king has been robbed/deposed by beggars/rabble. (7,1-2)
 See now, men rebel against the /Uraeus/ Serpent, (7,3)

The disintegration of the country through fighting:

See now, fire has leaped high, (7,1)
 Its flame will attack the land's foes! (7,1)
 Men stir up strife unopposed. (7,6)
 See, the land is tied up in gangs/confederates/(7,7)
 The coward is emboldened to seize his goods. (7,7)

Mystique of kingship divulged:

- Lo, those who were entombed are cast on high ground, (4,4=6,14)
- Embalmer's secrets are thrown away. (4,4)
- Lo, those who were entombed are cast on high ground, (4,4=6,14)
- Embalmer's secrets are thrown away. (4,4=6,14)
- The secrets in it are laid bare. (6,6)
- Lo, magic spells are divulged, Spells are made worthless through being repeated by people. (6,6-7)
- Lo, the beggar comes to the place of the Nine Gods, (6,11)
- The /erstwhile/ procedure of the House of Thirty is laid bare/divulged. (6,11)
- Lo, the great council chamber is invaded, (6,12)
- Beggars come and go in the great mansions. (6,12)
- The secrets of Egypt's kings are bared/divulged/. (7,5-6)

The collapse of the Old Kingdom was to a great extent a result of breakdown of specific administrative mechanisms and functions listed by Ipuwer as follows:

Destruction of Records:

- Lo, the private/council/ chamber, its books/writings are stolen, (6,5)
- Lo, offices are opened, (6,7)
- Their records stolen, (6,7)
- Lo, [scribes] are slain, (6,8)
- Their writings stolen, (6,8)
- Lo, the scribes of the land-register, Their books are destroyed, (6,9)
- [See, he who recorded] the harvest knows nothing about it (9,7),

Destruction of administrative structure:

- Every town says, "Let us expel our rulers."/Let us suppress the powerful among us. (2,7-8)
- Lo, the ship of the South founders/broken up, (2,11) Towns are ravaged/destroyed, Upper Egypt became wasteland. (2,11)
- The nomes are destroyed, (3,1)
- Those who were in the god's bark are yoked [to it]. (3,6)
- Lo, the whole Delta cannot be seen, (4,6)
- Lower Egypt puts trust in trodden roads. (4,6)
- <See>, the chiefs of the land flee, They have no purpose because of want --- (8,14)
- See, all the ranks, they are not in their place, Like a herd that roams without a herdsman. (9,2)
- See, cattle stray with none to bring them back, Everyone fetches for himself and brands with his name. (9,2-3)
- He who was a <magnate> does his own errands. See, the mighty of the land are not reported to, (9,5-6)

Breakdown of law and order:

- Lo, the laws of the chamber are thrown out, (6,9-10)
- Men walk on them in the streets, (6,10)
- Beggars/poor men/ tear them up in the alleys. (6,10-11)
- Lo, --- throughout the land, The strong man sends to everyone (5,10),

Corruption:

Lo, [Right] is the land in name, Standing on it one does wrong (5,3)

See, the serfs eat beef/ Behold, 'priests' transgress with the cattle of the poor, The paupers
----- (8,11)

See, the serfs eat geese/Behold. 'priests' transgress with geese, Offered <to> the gods in place
of cattle. (8,12)

The collapse of the Old Kingdom entailed much more than a changeover of a political regime. The collapse was aggravated by the emergence of dilapidating, antisocial attitudes. Fortunately, Ipuwer provides us with a perspective on the disruptive anti-social attitudes bred by the deterioration in living conditions; the violence, the countless deaths, civil disorder, and loss of fortunes. These anomic social disorders included enmity, greed, aggression, and dissolution of family values and bonds.

Enmity:

A man regards his son as his enemy. (1,5)

Hostility ----- another. (1,6)

The children of magnates are ejected into the street, (6,12) (see also LICHTHEIM 1973,
p. 155)

He who puts his brother in the ground is everywhere. (2,13-14)

The great do not mingle with their people [<when they rejoice>]. (2,5)

Greed:

Lo, men's slaves, their hearts are greedy [sad] (2,5)

Aggression:

Lo, hearts are violent, (2,5)

Dissolution of Family Morality:

A man strikes his maternal brother. (5,11)

See, a man is slain by the side of his brother, who abandons him to save himself. (9,3)

From an intellectual point of view Ipuwer regards as one of the main ills of society the lack of guidance by wise men, whose words are no longer heeded:

there is no man of yesterday. (2,2)<The word of the wise has fled without delay>. (2,14)

The breakdown in the moral fabric of society and the heart-wrenching horrors witnessed by those who lived were traumatic as one may gather from Ipuwer's account. The combination of antisocial attitudes and the emotional disorders ranging from sadness to utter despondency contributed significantly to the worsening of conditions as people became listless. Many remained "silent" as killing, corruption, and destruction raged across the country.

The brewers ----- sad. (1,5-6) The man of character [the virtuous man] walks in mourning on
account of the state of the land. (1,8)

Lo, the face is pale -----(1,9)

Lo, the face is pale, (2,2)

Lo, merriment /laughter/ has ceased, is made no more, (3,13-14)

Groaning is throughout the land, mingled with laments. (3,14)

Lo, all beasts, their hearts weep, Cattle bemoan the state of the land. (5,5)

One says, "Don't walk here, there's a net," People flap like fish, (42c) The scared does not discern it in his fright. (2,12-13)

Lo, terror kills; (5,7)

the frightened says..... (5,7)

Lo, great and small <say>, "I wish I were dead," Little children say, "He should not have made me live!" (4,2-3)

Ipuwer masterfully interweaves specific details and figurative metaphors with overall generalizations, leading us back and forth from the microscopic view of events, from the emotive images, to a bird's eye view of the country as a whole and of the spirit of the time, what the Germans call *Zeitgeist*—the overall condition of Egypt and its state of mind. Egypt was injured, its fortunes overturned, people no longer guided by their past, confused and distraught, subdivided, and weak. All is ruin.

(<The land is injured>, (2,12)

Lo, all beasts, their hearts weep, Cattle bemoan the state of the land. (5,5)

Lo, [*one is numb*] from noise/because of noise, noise is not [...] in years of noise, and there is no end of noise, No <voice is straight> in years of shouting, No <end of shouting>. (4,1-,2)

Lo, gone is what yesterday was seen, (4,5)

The land is left to its weakness like a cutting of flax (4,5)

All say, "We don't know what has happened in the land." (2,3)

The affairs of the people have gone to ruin/All is ruin! (3,13 = 9,5-6)

The disastrous events and the array of mishaps from starvation to social anarchy with all the sorrows and emotional anguish they created, led to different responses. We can detect these responses by analyzing the words of Ipuwer and related works in which the disaster of the First Intermediate Period was the main subject. We can do this by attempting to uncover the fundamental mental "formula," or [cognitive] schema, that inspired and structured the generation of the various statements in the work. By looking at the major "themes," we can detect three core issues that capture the overall content of the work. These themes (regardless of how they appear in text) may be expressed as follows:

(I) Ruination [leads to]

(II) Distress [demands action]

(III) Action [by king leading to] restoration of order.

We may thus abbreviate Ipuwer's long work into the following lines:

(I) All say, "We don't know what has happened in the land." (2,3)

The affairs of the people have gone to ruin/All is ruin! (9,5-6)

(II) The man of character [the virtuous man] walks in mourning on account of the state of the

land. (1,8)

That is our fortune/fate/ (3,13)

What shall/can we do about it? (3,13)

(III) [Destroy the foes of] that noble [residence], rich in offices. Lo, ----- (10,7-8). There are plenty of fighters to repel the Bowmen. Is it Libyans? Then we will turn them back (14, 13-14).

Remember the erecting of flagstaves, the carving of offering stones; the priest cleansing the chapels, the temple whitewashed like milk; sweetening the fragrance of the sanctuary, setting up the bread-offerings (11,3-4).

By comparison, Neferty's work could be rendered in the same manner as follows (LICHTHEIM 1973: 139-144):

- (I) The land is quite perished, no one is left (1.24)
- (II) Bewail this land from which you have sprung! (20)
Rise against that what is before you (22)
- (III) A king will come from the South (57-58)
Rebels [will fall] to his wrath (64)
Asiatics will fall to his sword (63)
Then order will return to its seat (68)

Neferty's work belongs to the same "schema" as Ipuwer's and his response to the chaos and distress is to prophesize the coming of a king who will take the action called for by Ipuwer. However, a variant of that schema does not call for action, and Part III of the schema is no more than an expression of impotence against the arrows of fate, as in the work by Khakheperre-Sonb, called Ankhu, dated to Sesostris II or shortly thereafter. It survives in a copy from the middle of the 18th Dynasty (LICHTHEIM 1973: 145-149):

- (I) The land breaks up, is destroyed
Becomes [a wasteland] (rt 10)
- (II) There is mourning everywhere
The whole land is in great distress (rt 11)
- (III) The sufferer lacks strength to save himself (vs. 4)

In yet another version, the "Dispute between a Man and His Ba" dating from the 12th Dynasty Part III expresses the view that death is preferable to life under evil conditions (LICHTHEIM 1973: 163-169):

- (I) Goodness is cast to the ground everywhere (109)
The land is left to evildoers (122-123)
- (II) Death is before me today <like> a sick man's recovery (130-131)
- (III) Truly, he who is yonder will be a living god,
Punishing the evildoer's crime (142-143).

In simplifying the texts to these "formulae" we can immediately detect the range of mental attitudes and responses to the catastrophe, regardless of the range and number of characteristics of the state of ruin (e.g., starvation, pestilence, death, depopulation, crime, reversal of fortunes,

collapse of monarchy, etc.) as well as in the literary form by which any element of a schema is expressed.

Undoubtedly many Egyptians felt the same way as Khakheperre-Sonb, or the Man who talked to his Ba, opting for forfeiting the present by giving up hope or relinquishing their own responsibility for action to the gods; the latter to become a major element in the religions of subjugated peoples at a much later time, succinctly expressed in the biblical apocalypse.

Ipuwer's formula called for action. He recognized what has been translated as "fate," but he clearly thought that fate is not destiny!

That is our fortune/fate/ (3,13)
What shall/can we do about it? (3,13)

Perhaps fate was for him no more than a premonition:
What the ancestors foretold has happened. (1,11)

Ipuwer's text takes us into the mind of an Egyptian and exposes in front of our own eyes the innermost thoughts and feelings that help us in bridging the gap of time and cultural differences to gain a personal perspective on how an Egyptian responded to the catastrophe.

If only this were the end of man, No more conceiving, no births (7,1)
But since giving birth is desired, grief has come and misery is everywhere.
So it is and will not pass, while these gods are in their midst (12,3-4).

Ipuwer also candidly expresses his private doubts and uncertainty. How could God allow such a state of affairs to happen? Why did not he, all knowing and omnipotent, prevent this devastating calamity? This is almost like a soliloquy that might have also made his audience confront their own doubts. The sway of religion, which was paramount in the minds of the Egyptian elite, is allowed to play itself out as individuals take the matter in their hand—after all, it is God's plan!

Lo, the hot-tempered says: "If I knew where god is I would serve him." (5,3)
Lo, why does he seek to fashion <men>, when the timid is not distinguished from the violent?
(11,12-13)
If only he had perceived their nature in the first generation! Then he would have smitten the evil/have imposed obstacles/, stretched out his arm against it/them/, would have destroyed their seed and their heirs!/their herds and heritage. (12,2-3)
But since giving birth is desired, grief has come and misery is everywhere. So it is and will not pass, while these gods are in their midst. (12,3-4)
Where is he today? Is he asleep? Lo, his power is not seen! (12,5-6)

Ipuwer's work reveals that perhaps he was himself one of those who urged the rulers of Herakleopolis to take action and save the country from total ruin, or it tells the story of those who did just that. Ipuwer, mincing no words, addresses the king, reminding him of his responsibility and, in fact, making him responsible for the political strife:

If we had been <fed>, I would not have found you, one would not have summoned me
-----

Authority, Knowledge and Truth are with you - turmoil is what you let happen in the land, and the noise of strife. Lo, one man assaults another, and one transgresses what you commanded. When three men travel on the road, only two are found. For the greater number kills the lesser. Is there a herdsman who loves death? Then you could order it done. It means the replacement of love: one man hates another. It means reducing their numbers everywhere. Is it your doing that brought this about? Do you speak falsely? The land is a weed that kills people. One does not expect to live. All these years there is strife. A man is killed on his roof. He must keep watch in his gatehouse. If he is brave he may save himself. Such is his life! (12,6-13,3)

When a <servant> is sent to citizens, he walks on the road until he sees the flood. If the road is washed out, he halts distressed. Then he is robbed, attacked with blows of the stick, and criminally slain. If only you would taste a little of these miseries! Then you would say ----- (13,3-6).

Now the course of action is clear, the king must destroy his foes at home:

Destroy the foes of the noble residence, resplendent in courtiers, -----. The mayor of the city goes unescorted.

[Destroy the foes of] the noble residence, rich in laws, -----.

Destroy the foes of that [noble] residence -----./none can stand/ (10,10)

The king must destroy the traditional enemies of Egypt: the Asiatics, the Nubians and the Libyans:

--- in their [midst] like Asiatics -----. None are found who would stand up to protect them. ----- Every man fights for his sisters and protects himself. Is it Nubians? Then we will protect ourselves. There are plenty of fighters to repel the Bowmen. Is it Libyans? Then we will turn them back. The Medjai are content with Egypt. How then does every man kill his brother? The troops we raised for ourselves have become Bowmen bent on destroying! What has come from it is to let the Asiatics know the state of the land. Yet every foreigner fears it. The experience of the people is that they say: "Egypt will not be given over <to> sand!" -----.

The king must finally restore the land uphold the rituals of divine kingship:

Remember..., fumigating with incense, libating from a jar at dawn. (10,13-11,1)

Remember <bringing> fat *ro*-geese, *terep*-geese, *set*-geese, and making divine offerings to the gods. (11,1-2)

Remember chewing natron, preparing white bread, <as done> by a man on the day of ... (11,2)

Remember the erecting of flagstaves, the carving of offering stones; the priest cleansing the chapels, the temple whitewashed like milk; sweetening the fragrance of the sanctuary, setting up the bread-offerings. (11,3-4)

Remember the observing of rules, the adjusting of dates,

removing one who enters the priestly service unclean' for to do this is wrong, ... (11,4-5)

/it is destruction of the heart. The day which precedes eternity, the months... years are known----- (11,5-6)

Remember the slaughtering of oxen ----- (11,6)
Remember going out ---.../purged/ who calls to you (11,6-7)
----- /to open the jar,, (11,7)
/the shore of the waters ... of women/ (11,8)
Clothing ...to give praise in order to appease you. (11,9-10)
/,, lack of people; come...Re who commands...worshipping him.. West until...
are diminished.----- (11,11-12)

Ipuwer was a shrewd politician, if not just a great literary figure. His message to the king must gain the support of noblemen who will have to fight against armed gangs and rebuild the country. In closing his work he tempts the noblemen with the dividends of peace. I recalled as I read his words, the tempters in *Murder in the Cathedral* by T. S. Eliot, who came to tempt the Archbishop of Canterbury by revealing his own thoughts:

Your Lordship won't forget that evening on the river,
Fluting in the meadows, viols in the hall
Laughter and apple-blossom floating on the water,
Singing at nightfall, whispering on the water,
Fires devouring the winter seasons,
Eating up the darkness, with wit, wine and wisdom!
T. S. Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*

It is perhaps not coincidental that the play which was set in the context of the struggle between the power of the king and the power of the Church as well as in the political conflicts between king and barons, that another tempter appeals both to lofty social ideals, fortune and authority, as Ipuwer did:

The Chancellor. King and Chancellor
King commands. Chancellor richly rules
This is a sentence not taught in schools.
Beneath the throne of God can man do more?
To set down the great, protect the poor,
Disarm the ruffian, strengthen the laws,
Rule for the good of the better cause
Dispensing justice, make all even
Is to thrive on earth, and perhaps in heaven.

For Ipuwer, nobles can have it all; by bolstering kingship they can thrive both in heaven and on earth. They will have tombs that will not be violated and they will have funerary rituals that will ensure that they will be cared for in Heaven. On earth, they will garner the rewards of peace and the pleasures of the good life; when a man is happy eating his food, clothed in clean robes, and his bed made ready:

God ordains it for whom he favors. (---)
[It is however] good when ships sail upstream,----- -----It is however good ----- . It is how-
ever good when the net is drawn in

And the birds are tied up -----.

It is however good -----, And the roads are /passable/ made for walking.

It is however good when men's hands build tombs/pyramids/,

When ponds are dug

and orchards made for the gods.

It is however good when mouths shout for joy,

When the nome-lords watch the shouting from their houses,

Lo, a man is happy eating his food. Consume your goods in gladness, while there is none to hinder you.

It is good for a man to eat his food.

When one is clothed in clean robes ...

/cleansed in front and

well provided within/

It is however good when beds are readied,

The masters' headrests safely secured;

When every man's need is filled

by a mat in the shade,

And a door shut on him who slept in the bushes.

It is however good when fine linen is spread on New Year's Day,----- fine linen is spread, robes are laid out. ----- (13,10-14, 5)

It is however good when people get drunk, When they drink *miyet* with happy hearts (13.13-14).

Ipuwer was clearly a good Egyptian who loved life and had no wish either to give up hope or buckle under. He is the protagonist who prepares the stage for the heroes of the First Intermediate Period. But before we explore the deeds of those great men who resurrected Egypt, we owe Ipuwer a final evaluation of his text.

References Cited:

AL-BAGHDADI, A.

1964 *The Eastern Key*. (Kitab Al-Ifada wa'l Itibar). Translated by H. Kamal, A. John and E. Ivy. London.

ALLOUCHE, A.

1994 *Mameluk Economics: A Study and Translation of Al-Maqrizi Ighathah*. Salt Lake City.

AL-MAQRIZI, T. el-D.

1854 *Al-Mawa'z wal -l'tibar bi-zikr al-Khitat wal-Athar* (in Arabic). Bulaq, Egypt.

ASSMANN, J.

2002 *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*. New York.

ASSMANN, J. and BLUMENTHAL, E.

1999 *Literatur und Politik im pharaonischen und ptolemäischen Ägypten: vorträge der Tagung zum Gedenken an Georges Posener 5.-10. September 1996 in Leipzig*. Cairo.

BAINES, J and MALEK, J.

1980 *The Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford.

- BAR-MATHEWS, M., AYALON, A., KAUFMAN, A., and WASSERBURG, G. J.
1999 The Eastern Mediterranean Paleoclimate as a Reflection of Regional Events: Soreq Cave, Israel. *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* 166: 85–95.
- BELL, B.
1971 The Dark Ages in Ancient History: I. The First Dark Age in Egypt. *AJA* 75: 1–26.
- BARBÉRI, D.
2002 Moral Education for the Elite of Democracy: the *Classe de Philosophie* between Sociology and Philosophy. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 38(4): 355–369.
- BARBÉRI, P.
1987 Madame Staël: du romantisme, de la littérature et de la France. *Nouvelle Europe* 693: 11.
- BIASI, P.-M. de
1990 Le critique génétique. In *Introduction aux méthodes critiques pour l'analyse littéraire*. Paris.
- BOOTH, R. K., JACKSON, S. T., STEVEN, L., KUTZBACH, J. E., and E. A. BETTIS III, J. KREIG and D. K. WRIGHT (EDS).
2005 A Severe Centennial-Scale Drought in Mid-Continental North America 4200 Years Ago and Apparent Global Linkages. *The Holocene* 15: 321–328.
- BUTZER, K. W.
1997 Sociopolitical Discontinuity in the Near East c. 2200 BCE. In H. N. DALFES, G. KUKULA and H. WEISS (EDS.), *Third Millennium BC Abrupt Climate Change and the Old World Collapse*, pp. 245–296. Berlin.
- CULLEN, H. M., P. M. de MENOCAL, S. HEMMING, G. HEMMING, F. H. BROWN, T. GUILDERSON and F. SIROCKO
2000 Climate Change and the Collapse of the Akkadian Empire: Evidence from the Deep Sea. *Geology* 28: 379–382.
- DONADONI, F. S.
1968 A propos de l'histoire du texte de 'Merikarè'. In *Proceedings of the XXVIth International Congress of Orientalists*, 2, pp. 8–11. New Delhi.
- FRANKE, D.
1995 The Middle Kingdom in Egypt. In J. M. SASSON (ED.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East II*, pp. 735–748. New York.
2001 First Intermediate Period. In D. B. REDFORD (ED.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. I, pp. 526–32.
- GARDINER, A. H.
1909 *The Admonitions of an Ancient Egyptian Sage, from a Hieratic Papyrus in Leiden*. Leipzig.
1962 *Egypt of the Pharaohs*. Oxford.
- GASSE, F. and VAN CAMPO, E.
1994 Abrupt Post-Glacial Climate Events in West Asia and North Africa Monsoon Domains. *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* 126: 435–456.
- GIDDY, L. and JEFFREYS, D.
1992 Memphis, 1991. *JEA* 78: 1–11.
- GRIMAL, N.
1992 *A History of Ancient Egypt*. Translated by I. Shaw. Oxford.
- HASSAN, F. A.
1997 Nile Floods and Political Disorder in Early Egypt. In H. N. DALFES, G. KUKULA and H. WEISS (EDS.), *Third Millennium BC Abrupt Climate Change and the Old World Collapse*, pp. 1–23. Berlin.
- HAYES, W. C.
1970 Chronology, I. Egypt to the end of the Twentieth Dynasty. In I.E.S. EDWARDS, C. J. GADD and N. G. L. HAMMOND (EDS.), *Cambridge Ancient History I*, pp. 173–193. Cambridge.

- HOLMES, J. A., P. FOTHERGILL, A., STREET-PERROTT, F. A., and R. A. PERROTT
 1998 A High-Resolution Holocene Ostracod Record from the Sahel Zone of Northeastern Nigeria. *Journal of Palaeolimnology* 20: 369-380.
- JEFFREYS, D.
 1997 Excavation and Survey East of the Saqqara-Abu Sir Escarpment. *JEA* 83: 2-4.
- JOLLY, D. and BONNEFILLE, R.
 1992 Histoire et dynamique du marécage tropical de Ndurumu (Burundi), données polliniques. *Review of Palaeobotany and Palynology* 75: 133-151.
- KEMP, B. J.
 1983 Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period c. 2686-1552 BC. In B. G. TRIGGER, B. J. KEMP, D. O'CONNOR AND A. B. LLOYD (EDS.), *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*, pp. 71-182. Cambridge.
- KITCHEN, K. A.
 1991 The chronology of Ancient Egypt. *World Archaeology* 23(2): 201-208.
- KROM, M.D., STANLEY, J. D., CLIFF, R. A., and J. C. WOODWARD
 2002 Nile river sediment fluctuations over the past 7000 years and their key role in sapropel development. *Geology* 30(1): 71-74.
- LAMY, F., HEBBELN, D., WEFER, G., and M. MARCHANT
 2000 Reconstructing Latitudinal Shifts of the Southern Westerlies from Marine Sediment Studies along the Chilean Continental Margin. *PAGES* 8(2): 8-9.
- LICHTHEIM, M.
 1973 *Ancient Egyptian Literature: Vol. I: The Old and Middle Kingdoms*. Berkeley.
 1988 *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: A Study and Anthology*. Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, vol. 84. Freiburg.
 1996 Didactic literature. In A. LOPRIENO (ED.), *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, pp. 243-262. Leiden.
- LOPRIENO, A.
 1996 Defining Egyptian Literature: Ancient Texts and Modern Theories. In A. LOPRIENO (ED.), *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, pp. 39-58. Leiden.
- LURIA, S.
 1929 Die Ersten werden die Letzten sein. *Klio* 22 (N.F.IV): 405-31.
- MAXWELL, D. E. S.
 1961 *The Poetry of T.S. Eliot*. New York.
- O'CONNOR, D.
 1974 Political Systems and Archaeological Data in Egypt: 2600-1780 BC. *WA* 6: 15-38.
- PARKINSON, R. B.
 1991 Teachings, Discourses and Tales from the Middle Kingdom. In S. QUIRKE (ED.) *Middle Kingdom Studies*, pp. 91-122. London.
 1996 Individual and Society. In A. LOPRIENO (ED.), *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, pp. 137-155. Leiden.
 1997 *The Tale of Sinuhe and Other Ancient Egyptian Poems (1940-1640 BC)*. Oxford.
 2002 *Poetry and Culture in Middle Kingdom Egypt: A Dark Side to Perfection*. London.
- QUIRKE, S. G.
 1996 Narrative Literature. In A. LOPRIENO (ED.), *Ancient Egyptian Literature: History and Forms*, pp. 263-276. Leiden.
- RICHARDS, J.
 2001 Time and Memory in Ancient Egyptian Cemeteries. *Expedition* 44(3): 16-24.

- ROSE, J., WHITEMAN, C. A., LEE, J., BRANCH, N. P., HARKNESS, D. D., and J. WALDEN.
1997 Mid- and Late-Holocene Vegetation, Surface Weathering and Glaciation, Fjalljokull Southeast Iceland. *The Holocene* 7(4): 457–471.
- SCHENKEL, W.
1965 *Memphis, Herakleopolis, Theben: die epigraphischen Zeugnisse der 7–10 Dynasties Ägyptens*. Ägyptologische Abhandlungen 12. Wiesbaden.
- SEIDLMEYER, S.
2000 The First Intermediate Period (2160–2055). In I. SHAW (ED.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, pp. 118–147. Oxford.
- SETERS, J. VAN
1964. A Date for the 'Admonitions' in the Second Intermediate Period. *JEA* 50: 13–23.
- SMITH, W. S.
1962 The Old Kingdom in Egypt. In I.E.S. EDWARDS, GADD, C. J., and N. G. L. HAMMOND (EDS.), *The Cambridge Ancient History, I*, pp. 1–73. Cambridge.
- STOCK, H.
1949 *Die Erste Zwischenzeit Ägyptens*. Studia Aegyptiaca 11. An. Or. 31. Rome.
- SMITH, H. S. and GIDDY, L. L.
1985 Nubia and Dakhla Oasis in the Late Third millennium B.C.: The Present Balance of Textual and Archaeological Evidence. In F. GEUS and F. THILL (EDS.), *Mélanges offert à Jean Vercoutter*, pp. 317–330. Paris.
- TALBOT, M. R., LIVINGSTON, D. A., PALMER, P. G., MALEY, J., MELACK, J. M., DILIBRIAS, G., and S. GULLIKSEN
1984 Preliminary Results from Sediment Cores from Lake Bosumtwi, Ghana. *Palaeoecology of Africa* 16: 173–192.
- TAYLOR, D. M.
1993 Environmental Change in Montane Southwest Uganda: a Pollen Record for the Holocene from Ahakagyazi Swamp. *The Holocene* 3(4): 324–332.
- WARD, W. A.
1999 Dating, Pharaonic. In K. A. BARD (ED.), *Encyclopedia of the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt*, pp. 229–233. London.
- WALLE, B. VAN DE.
1948 *La transmission des textes littéraires égyptiens*. Brussels.
- WILDUNG, W.
2003 Looking Back into the Future: The Middle Kingdom as a Bridge to the Past. In J. TAIT (ED.), *'Never Had the Like Occurred': Egypt's View of Its Past*, pp. 61–78. London.
- WINLOCK, H. E.
1942 *Excavations at Deir el Bahari*. New York.