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own houses and gardens or open public spaces. The complex of 20 smallish rooms (most c.11 × 5 m) with two or three rows of stone benches on three walls, and a seat of honor at the apex of the benches, fit the picture of philosophical classrooms attested by ancient literary and pictorial evidence (Majcherek 2007). The interpretation of the “theatre building” close by, following its remodelling in the sixth century, as a hall for public displays of oratorical skill, would suggest that the teaching which took place here was focused on rhetoric rather than on science or technology, as might anyway be expected from the literature and history of this period.

3 Conclusion

Evidently Alexandria produced some magnificent scientists and technologists through the centuries, and her reputation as a center of learning is not misplaced. It is, however, frequently exaggerated, and the private, royal, nature of the Museum and Library is not sufficiently emphasized in most discussions. Science and technology in antiquity was remarkably distributed – great figures came from places otherwise unknown in scientific or technological circles, e.g. Aristotle of Stageira, Dioskorides of Anazarbos, Ktesibios of Askrenia (? Askrania? see above), and Theophrastos of Eresos, and in this context Alexandria performed well above average: Euclid, Heron, and Ptolemy alone would qualify her amongst the great cities in the world history of science and technology, and she can boast more intellectuals in addition; she cannot, however, legitimately claim all those who happened to live at the time, and the Museum and Library can claim only a few of those who passed through Alexandria.

FURTHER READING

On Alexandria in general see Fraser 1972 and Harris and Ruffini (eds) 2004. Argoud (ed.) 1994, Argoud and Guillaumin 1998, Keyser and Irby-Massie 2006, and Oleson 2008 offer introductions to Alexandrian science and the science of the Classical World in general. On sources consult Cuomo 2008, and on the library MacLeod 2000, Casson 2001, and Barnes 2004.

CHAPTER 23

Military Institutions and Warfare: Pharaonic

Anthony J. Spalinger

1 Background: The Archaic Age and the Old Kingdom

The pictorial and archaeological records of late Predynastic Egypt reveal the expansion of small centralized kingdoms in Upper Egypt and provide evidence of overt military activity. Attacks upon fortified cities were a major artistic theme, which seems to reflect the true state of affairs (Partridge 2002: 139–42; Yadin 1963: 50–7, 146–7). For example, a fragment of a slate palette depicts a coalition of Upper Egyptian states hacking down urban garrisons. It is impossible to tell who the foes were. On a second broken palette we see a bull stamping upon and preparing to gore a western enemy, most probably a Libyan, although once more the historical context is lost.

Of great importance for this archaic style of warfare was the development of the double convex bow, a primitive implement frequently depicted on palettes and maces (Partridge 2002: 31–4; Yadin 1963: 43–8). Yet, because of its force maces were employed only in close combat. Hence, the archer came to play a major role in the efficiency and capability of early armies. The dagger sword, a more flexible and lighter close-combat implement than the unbalanced mace, became ubiquitous in the military between 3000 and 2000 BC. Cutting weapons were composed of two separate parts, the hilt and the blade. Owing to the weakness of the join, any downward stroke was somewhat limited. Socketed axeheads, introduced later, were used in Syria at the end of the third millennium BC. A further type, known from Egyptian reliefs of the Eleventh Dynasty, includes epsilon axes which were also socketless (Yadin 1963: 59–62 and 154–5). Their lighter weight permitted easier handling of a longer, sharper cutting surface; the older semicircular axes actually had a shorter contact area. Furthermore, the new axes retained a semicircular head blade that was very useful for cutting and gouging into the mud brick walls of fortified cities. The shields carried by the Egyptian foot-soldiers (but not by the archers) were large and effective against a sword, axe, or dagger, but at this time there was no armor, not even helmets.

The weaponry reflected a static concept of warfare and personal combat. The large shields could limit danger from far-away archers while parrying blows in close combat (Yadin 1963: 46–8). The infantry consisted of foot-soldiers who carried their large cowhide shields on their backs and fought with a sword or spear in the right hand. Some of them served as protection for the archers, with whom they worked in tandem. The regular foot-soldiers could form a wedge or a primitive phalanx in order to forge ahead on the battlefield or attack the wall of a fortified locality.

2 The Old Kingdom and its Ramifications

For a long time, limited war technology prevented the Egyptian state from annexing very much foreign territory. The army consisted of foot-soldiers and marines, who were equipped to control no more than the lands immediately flanking the Nile River. Thus, while we learn from sources such as the Palermo Stone of many attacks upon non-Egyptian enemies, we do not detect any geographical expansion. There was no imperialistic policy (Kemp 1989: 46–53; Davis 1992; Campagno 2004). Expeditions entered into the vast and distant territories of the western desert and the lands south of Libya, but their purpose was to extract ores and stone and to secure the transportation of needed goods. The forays under Khufu and his son Djedefre to the southwest were not military campaigns (Kuhlmann 2002; Kuper and Förster 2003; Shaw 2000; Fischer 1991 for the Old Kingdom routes). The diorite quarry expeditions in Lower Nubia, nonetheless, indicate that this land was in the Egyptian sphere of control. Most of this area was probably devoid of population until the Late Old Kingdom, so there was no opposition to Egyptian quarry activities. On the other hand, the Egyptian campaigns of the Fourth and Fifth Dynasties most certainly devastated the region (Gratien 1995).

Egypt had close commercial relations with the Levant, especially with Byblos and the coast (Redford 1986). Perhaps Asiatics from Lebanon were in the service of the Egyptians as early as the Fifth Dynasty (Bietak 1988). The evidence from Sahure's mortuary temple and Unis' causeway reliefs indicates that expeditions without military intent traversed the eastern Mediterranean as caravans did on land south of Aswan and west of the Nile (Kemp 1991). Sahure's record of 200,000 large and small cattle brought back to Egypt from Nubia is dubious since this figure is a nicely rounded and exaggerated number intended to make an impression.

Inti's tomb at Deshasha depicts a siege in south Palestine or Lebanon (Yadin 1963: 54–5, 146–7; Partridge 2002; Schulz 2002; Vogel 2004: 43–5). The Sixth Dynasty Saqqara mastaba of Kaemhesi shows a siege ladder in use, having been wheeled to an enemy fortress (Vogel 2004: 41–3). These must have been land operations; for no marines appear in the action. Interestingly, at this time there was an "Overseer of Bowmen" who was in charge of the transport boats and who interacted with non-Egyptians (Fischer 1993: 91–5).

Weni's Sixth Dynasty biography reflects the state's interest in removing the threat of trade interruptions or incursions (Goedicke 1963; Lichtheim 1975: 18–23). He would have led his large army along the Sinai coast to Gaza and then



Figure 23.1 An attack on a walled settlement during the Old Kingdom. Scene from the tomb of Anta, Deshasha, Courtesy EES.

inland, but the details of the operation are sparse (Fischer 2002: 38–9). The troops, composed of Egyptians and Nubian mercenaries, moved against the peoples of southern Palestine, but, because food and water had to have been carried by donkeys, especially in the Sinai, the advance was slow. The land "was hacked up," its strongholds were taken and smashed, its vines and fig trees ravaged, and captives certainly brought back to Egypt.

The depiction of the Libyan wars of Sahure, later copied by Pepi II, provide us with important pictorial accounts, but it remains unclear where the enemies were situated and why they posed a threat. Later, during the Sixth Dynasty, the Dakhla oasis and Balat became the main centers of Egyptian control (Giddy 1987: 174–212; Kaper and Willems 2002). The expeditions of Harkhuf at the close of this era intermingled commercial and military issues: by the reign of Pepi II there were embryonic states in Lower Nubia (Edel 1955; Lichtheim 1973: 23–5; Jenkins 2000), and Lower Nubia was now a threat to direct Egyptian trade to the south and to the west (Edel 1955).

Travel overland through the western desert was common, with frequent stops at oases (Goedicke 1981; Darnell 1997a; 2003; 2004). Harkhuf mentions that on his third expedition there were three hundred donkeys loaded with exotic produce. He had traveled westward along the oasis road and discovered that the ruler of Yam in

Nubia had departed for Libya in order to smite it. Although no map can be drawn, it seems that Harkhuf rendered the king of Yam impotent. Libya, Tjemeh in this case, may have been in need of Egyptian support. Significantly, he prepared carefully for his return trip to Egypt on the Nile by including troops of the king of Yam.

Later, Sabni, an expedition leader who lived under Pepi II, points out that he went forth to Wawat (in Lower Nubia) with five divisions of foot soldiers. One of his tomb inscriptions relates that he pacified southern countries including Wawat. Pepinakht fought in Nubia on at least two separate occasions, and his title of "Overseer of the Foreign Countries" indicates a deeper strengthening of Egyptian control over the south. First came Pepinakht's successful attack, one that involved Wawat and Irtjet, two Nubian lands known from Harkhuf's accounts, whilst a second expedition was a pacifying foray that ended by taking two Nubian chiefs back to Egypt.

Various naval expeditions were made into Nubian territory in order to show the flag and to insure that the Nubian "statelets" did not interrupt, on a permanent basis, Egyptian trade from the south. The relative freedom with which the Egyptians moved upstream was later challenged by the C-Group People who resided north of the Second Cataract (O'Connor 1993: 26–37) when Irtjet and Satju, now unified Nubian chiefdoms, formed a single unit (O'Connor 1993: 31–7).

3 First Intermediate Period Warfare

Nubian influence

The importance of Nubian archers in the Egyptian army during this time is recognizable from contemporary wooden models (Bietak 1985; 1966; 1968; Strouhal and Jungwirth 1984: 120–1). The Egyptian foot-soldiers bear large cumbersome spears and cowhide shields. They all look alike and thus present an attitude of military cohesion whereas the Nubians have individual characteristics and lack regimentation.

The region of Assiut was not too distant from the border between the southern Theban (nomes I–VIII) and the northern Herakleopolitan domains (see above, p. 82ff). Three Assiut nomarchs of this time have large tombs containing inscriptions that enable us to reconstruct the civil wars between Thebes and Herakleopolis (Schenkel 1965: 69–89), and an early Middle Kingdom tomb in the same region covers one portion of its walls with marching soldiers (el-Khadragy 2006). The strategic geographical and political importance of this region, where rocks of the western desert encroach on the Nile, persisted even after stability had been attained.

Earlier inscriptional material documents the opening decades of this era. Ankhtify's tomb biography, for example, recounts the struggles in the extreme south when the Thebans had not yet taken control over the first seven nomes of Upper Egypt (Goedicke 1993; 1995; 1998b; Morenz 2005; Gabra 1976). The disunity and internecine strife repeat the late Predynastic evolution of small kingdoms that often fought with one another until a single polity emerged (Kemp 1989: 38–46; Gabra 1976; Grajetzki 2006).

Carved models of soldiers recall the few military wall scenes at Thebes dated to the later Eleventh Dynasty (TT 386 of Antef; Bietak 1988: 88–95; Schulz 2002). If the Nubians do not march so powerfully as the Egyptians, ethnic bias may be the explanation. Furthermore, Nubian soldiers fought for more than one faction within Egypt. For example, the Assiut models reflect the Herakleopolitan side just as TT 386 depicts that of Thebes. The evidence of the Gebelein Nubian soldiers is the most significant (Fischer 1961; 1962a). These foreign mercenaries were frequently recorded in Upper Egypt, specifically at Moalla, Gebelein, Thebes, and Aswan. Indeed, some of these troops were attached to the Theban domain from the fall of the Old Kingdom to the reunification in the Eleventh Dynasty, although Egyptian archers are also attested in the pictorial evidence (Fischer 1958; 1962b). Moreover, it is clear that although Nubians were already in the Egyptian army late in the Old Kingdom, it was only in the First Intermediate Period that their value was acknowledged, perhaps because of the battles that were now taking place in the south of Egypt proper. These Nubians, whom the Egyptians called *Nehesiu*, were established along the banks of the Nile. The Theban inscription of Djemy indicates the area of Wawat, Lower Nubia, as their origin (Allen 1921; Goedicke 1960; Schenkel, 1965: 116–17; Darnell 2003: 42–3). It is striking that the first Nubian mercenaries were small compared to the Medjay or Nubian Pan Grave peoples of Dynasties XII–XVII – short stature was an advantage on the battlefield (Bietak 1988).

Oases routes

When access to the river was denied, the oases routes could be used. The Abisko inscriptions of Tjehemau, a Nubian mercenary working during Nebhepetre Mentuhotep's visit to Wawat, provide data (Darnell 2003; 2004). He traveled through the western desert, where lengthy pathways leading to and from the Kurkur oasis southwest of Aswan have recently been analysed. In fact, the Eleventh Dynasty's expansion into Nubia was dependent upon this oasis (Darnell 2003; 2004). Another route from the Shatt er-Rigal, a locality well known from a famous rock inscription of Nebhepetre, merged with the Darb Bitan and then proceeded to the Kurkur oasis. A second path, the Darb Gallaba, operated between the Nile and the plateau region where Kurkur is situated. Control over oases and the interlinking roads was necessary for the southern expansion of Thebes and offered a pathway over which Nubian soldiers could be recruited. Texts of Antef I and II describe Theban activity in the western desert, but in this case directed northwards.

Dakhla Oasis was already under direct Egyptian administration by the Sixth Dynasty. Governors, whose titles implied sailing (see below), organized the area and successfully operated distant routes. Harkhuf, leaving the Nile at Abydos on his way to the kingdom of Yam, followed the "Oasis Road" for seven months, a route which snaked south through the Dakhla Oasis and its settlement at Balat, past the Dunqul Oasis, until it ended at the Kharga Oasis. The trek, named the Abu Ballas Trail after its center at Ballas, was used by the Egyptian traders but also provided state control of all desert caravan traffic (Kuhlmann 2002).

There was a difference in emphasis between the western expeditions commencing in the Fourth Dynasty and the forays that were reorganized in the Eleventh. By the



Figure 23.2 Model Nubian soldiers from the Middle Kingdom tomb of Mesehti, Assiut. Photograph Robert Partridge. Courtesy the Supreme Council of Antiquities.

middle of the First Intermediate Period the army was composed of distinct military contingents. Antef II and Mentuhotep II sent rapidly moving columns of foot-soldiers to gain quick access to the oases closest to the Nile. Thebes was blocked from control of the Nile waterway by three other polities: Wawat, or Lower Nubia, which was eventually subsumed under Amenemhet I of the Twelfth Dynasty; the powerful kingdom of Kerma farther south (Kush); and Herakleopolis in the north (O'Connor 1993: 37–44; Kemp 1989: 166–78).

4 Middle Kingdom Expansion and the Social Background of the Military System

Egypt became expansionist under Mentuhotep II (Habachi 1963; Fischer 1964: 112–18 [No. 45]; Goedicke 1982; Demidchik 1998; 2003). A reused inscription of this king, found at the Twelfth Dynasty royal palace at Ballas, quotes the king speaking to his army about his successes in the south and north (Lacovara 1997: 6–7; Wiener and Allen 1998: 7). His base remained the old Eleventh Dynasty capital, Thebes. This composition refers both to a Nubian campaign and to the seizure of

territory from Medenit (the XXIInd nome of Upper Egypt) to the Mediterranean Sea. Hence, the text must be dated after the fall of Herakleopolis, which happened late in the king's reign. The Eighteenth Dynasty reuse of such a text from an earlier period of civil war may have been intended to reinforce the later Theban rulers' self-image as doughty heroes about to shake off the northern enemy.

Mentuhotep's opening lines summarize the campaign in Nubia. His army then speaks to him indicating that in the future the soldiers will return north. The enemy's designation fits the warfare of the third millennium BC; the Nubians are called "bowmen," a term that encompasses archers supported by well-equipped foot-soldiers but not by a fleet. Upon the return to their capital the Theban army eulogizes the success of the king in Lower Nubia (Wawat) and at the oases. The additional generic term "trouble-makers," used at this juncture, might indicate resistance at the oases or local elites who had refused to support the Egyptians. No princes, rulers, or chiefs are mentioned. The Pharaoh first moved south, campaigning along the oasis routes, and then traveled north, where he seized the twenty-second Upper Egyptian nome – Herakleopolis must already have fallen – and continued marching to the sea. One private stela mentions that the owner was placed in Herakleopolis as an overseer of the "prison" of the "great doorway/garrison/fortress" (Fischer 1960: 261–2). The warfare around Medenit seems to have been conducted by the marine sector of the army since, for example, the rigging of ships is mentioned.

Mentuhotep's narrative is balanced by other sources, including private inscriptions as well as some blocks from Gebelein. Fischer noted the frequency of Nubians within the Upper Egyptian populace and laid emphasis upon the division of the local Theban army into Nubians and Upper Egyptians (Fischer 1961; 1962a). The sporran worn by the Egyptians originated with the Nubians and Libyans of the First Intermediate Period. According to stela depictions the Aswan Nubians wore a feather on their heads, a custom not followed by other Nubians or Upper Egyptian soldiers of this same era.

At Gebelein there is a scene of Mentuhotep who is shown wielding a mace to smite a Libyan (Habachi 1963: 37–40; Marochetti 2005). These triumphal depictions performed an apotropaic role by linking the triumph of the sovereign with the assistance of a god. Another important aspect of this relief is the reference to Hathor, Lady of Dendera, in the king's cartouche. The Pharaoh established a chapel at Gebelein for this female deity, and he later erected one for her at Dendera. On the rear wall at Dendera is the same smiting scene, and Mentuhotep II is designated as a "Horus who subdues the hill/foreign countries." Thebes has now become the center of Upper and Lower Egypt.

Mentuhotep built his chapel at Dendera in which his might over the foreigner is reflected in scenes and small accompanying texts (O'Connor 1999). One key image has the monarch in the common pose of smiting enemies by holding an insignia of a unified Egypt. The accompanying hieroglyphs cite his military successes. Yet another text states that Wawat had to supply physical labor for the Thebans (Allen 1921; Goedicke 1960). Contemporary data relating to "Victorious Thebes" also reinforce this aspect (Aufrère 2001; Helck 1968: 119–26). This concept, which can be found as early as the reign of Antef II, grew out of the

lengthy internecine warfare (Franke 1990: 124–7). The Abisko rock inscriptions note that the citizens of Thebes chanted to celebrate victory with a fervor that is remarkable (Darnell 2003; 2004).

The Egyptian word “youths” (*ankhu*) referred to soldiers; this common Middle Kingdom technical term word, also translated into English as “living one,” indicated a “warrior” (Berlev 1967; 1971). The term referred to the forcefulness, virility, vivacity, and courage of the young soldier. Composite *ankhu* titles designated warriors of a town, a nome, or the simple infantry. These men were subalterns of an *atju*, their military superior. The latter group was composed of superiors (“great ones”) as well as other officers. One Koptite stela presents an *atju* who was chief of police, leading patrols on land or on water and directing hunters in the west and the east. Records refer to *atjus* in both Theban and Herakelopolian domains.

These military chiefs were the predecessors of the officials of the next unified era, the New Kingdom (Chevereau 1987; 1989; 1991; 1992; Stefanovic 2006). Known are *atju* of the Nubians, of the guard, of the House (of the king), of the necropolis, of the oasis, and of ships. Military men at the Nubian fortresses were either *atju* or simple *ankhu*, while others were connected to a city such as Nekhen or Qaw el-Kebir/Tjebu in nomes III and X of Upper Egypt. Khusobek, who was a “great *atju* of the city” before he was promoted to “*atju* of the king’s table,” presents a *cursus honorum* of Middle Kingdom warriors (Baines 1987; Goedicke 1998a). The “*atju* of the king’s table” were the officers of the fleet of Pharaoh, and this title was often associated with the true infantry soldiers.

The southern borders were carefully scrutinized so as to allow entry only to those who had the right; transgressors were arrested. One of the regular patrols was led by the well-known Khusobek. Under Senwosret III he had advanced his career and became an officer of the royal guards. After this, he received the rank of “Great Tutor of the Town Garrison.” When heard from again in the 9th Year of Amenemhet III, Khusobek was already the “tutor of the naval team of the commander/ruler.”

During the Middle Kingdom the practice continued of drawing members of each unit from a particular area. Many soldiers retained their ties to their “home base.” A powerful family-based nomarch could still lead his own troops. From the mid Twelfth Dynasty on the overlapping of military and administrative functions gradually began to resolve. In the Koptos Decree of Antef, dated to the Seventeenth Dynasty, the key governmental roles were divided between a commandant of the local troops and a governor who handled the non-military activities (Breasted 1906: I 339–41). Although this edict is post Middle Kingdom, locally based generals were earlier known at Kusae, This, and Koptos. Infantry in the Nubian fortresses included soldiers from Elephantine, Thebes, and other Upper Egyptian regions. Indeed, Khusobek fought in Nubia against the kingdom of Kush beside his city regiment.

The military commander of a naval team acted as tutor or guardian to the “youths,” and naval terminology was applied to other activities: an *apiru* or “crew” worked on the pyramids; their word for their phylae, *zau*, derived from a noun meaning “board,” as in “wooden board,” and may have referred to their positions on board ship; and agricultural workers of the period were organized into *izut*, “naval teams” or “crews.” Finally, a division of the youths would comprise

one thousand young males led by an *atju* (Berlev 1967). Those who attended the military schools and excelled at the most difficult service in the fleet would become officers.

In the civil fleet the “Commander of the Ships” stood over the “Tutors of the Naval Teams,” but in the military fleet the captains of the ships obeyed the king’s commands communicated directly by the vizier. For this reason they were the elite sector of the military. According to an inscription dated to the reign of Senwosret I Hammamat was a geographic center for a fleet. An even larger one ought to have been stationed at the royal residence in the north.

The royal flotilla was the “royal army.” Stationed among this elite sector were foot-soldiers, now organized into teams that formed the basis of squadrons. Together, the latter were called “battleship teams” (*izut*). Infantry officers were usually battle-experienced veterans. Within the naval ranks, especially at the beginning of the Thirteenth Dynasty, the officers were royal princes or relatives of the royal family. Evidence from Seventeenth Dynasty confirms the situation (Juridical Stela: Lacau 1933; Ryholt 1997: 159–60, 261, 289).

Military organization in the Middle Kingdom achieved only the colonization of the part of Nubia that was close to the river, a minor influence on the kingdom of Kush, and perhaps the control of a few Levantine ports. Egyptian military activity in Asia was limited. Notwithstanding the evidence of warfare from the so-called “Annals” of Amenemhet II, the Khusobek stela (with the attack upon Sekmem), the Execration Texts, literary compositions such as Sinuhe, archaeological data, and unpublished details, the conquest of Canaan would have been impossible. The Middle Kingdom army was amphibian; that of the New Kingdom would be land-based.

5 Contemporary Middle Kingdom War and Establishment of Dominion

The war effort presented in Nebhepetre’s Ballas inscription was aimed at controlling Lower Nubia and the western desert routes (Goedicke 1982, a controversial summary). Hence, it is not surprising that graffiti dated to Amenemhet I bear witness to a surge of Egyptian might southwards (Žaba 1974; Eaton-Krauss 1980; Hintze and Reineke 1989). “Patrols” were traversing in Lower Nubia at the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty. Supplementing rock inscriptions, a stela at Buhen dated to the 18th Year of Senwosret I narrates an attack upon Kush which was led by general Mentuhotep (Breasted 1906: I 247–50; Smith 1976: 39–41). The enemy kingdom probably lay around the Third Cataract, although the location has been disputed (O’Connor 1986 and 1987). This polity had permanent settlements, harvested grain, and raised cattle. Corroborative accounts of the Beni Hasan nomarchs of the XVth Upper Egyptian nome supply further details of the Egyptians’ attempt to move their flotillas into southern Nubia.

Senwosret I began this massive push upstream with fortress building connected to military policy (Redford 1987). Beginning in the reign of this Pharaoh, forts were erected south of Mirgissa (Bourriau 1991). Some of them were constructed on the open flat lands close to the Nile (Kemp 1986; 1989: 166–78) and a “plains type” of

design was the first group erected (Kemp 1989: 168). Buhen rapidly became the key center of Middle Kingdom activity in Nubia although there were other garrisons whose large size reflects their role in surveillance and control (Smith 1976: 61–76). Indeed, the grain storage capacities indicate populations up to around three thousand men. The town inside housed artisans, scribes, military, and foods.

Desert surveillance was constant on both sides of the Nile. Semna and Kumma, if not Mirgissa, also seem to have been staging points for potential military expeditions. A carefully planned and logistically developed interlocking system of at least six fortresses finally served as an advance base for aggressive military activity. A method of defence was put into practice that no longer required major expeditions led by the Pharaoh. Studying the topography, the Egyptians learned to build on land that was not flat and even. Semna, Kumma, Shalfak and Askut were carefully erected utilizing the advantages of the rocky terrain in order to repulse the potential enemy. In the extreme south at the Second Cataract, Semna, on hills west of the Nile, regulated the local trade. Kumma, on the less precipitous hill on the east, watched diplomatic messengers and foreign representatives traveling north.

Egyptian war accounts document four separate attacks of Senwosret III upstream. This persistent campaigning must indicate that the Egyptians were unable to dislodge local control over the Nile south of the Third Cataract. Indeed, despite Egyptian desire for gold, the boundary held firmly at Semna. The Middle Kingdom war machine simply could not move deep inland. According to the first Semna Stela of Senwosret III, the southern boundary was fixed (“made”) in the king’s 8th Year. It

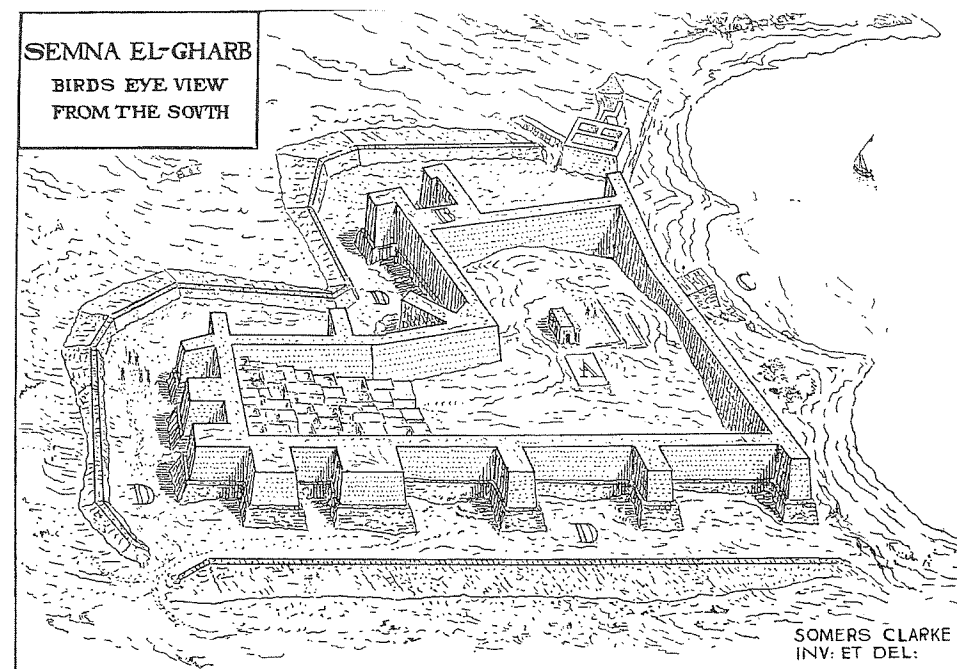


Figure 23.3 The fortress of Semna West built at the Second Cataract by Senwosret III. *JEA* 3, pl. XXXI. Courtesy the EES.

stayed there, even if Senwosret III advanced further “to overthrow vile Kush.” His attempts, if successful, were short-lived.

Middle Kingdom imperialism was not based solely upon economic interests (Vercoutter 1959; Kemp 1997). Written and pictorial evidence provide a more nuanced viewpoint concerning such aggression. Nonetheless, the limited imperialistic goals and the maintenance of a “clumsy garrison policy” in Nubia (Kemp 1997; S. T. Smith 1995) were a result of the political structures of the First Intermediate Period as well as the lack of horses and chariots. A centralized and nationalistically oriented state did not yet exist. Any imposed “Egyptianness” and the elimination of native cultures came later. While the C-Group People in Lower Nubia were pacified during the reign of Senwosret I, Egypt continued to face opposition from the Kerma Ware People, who meanwhile had developed a mighty polity further south in Upper Nubia. This kingdom grew to resemble a complex chiefdom, if not a primitive state. Around 1725 BC, with the Egyptian Thirteenth Dynasty distracted and in the process of losing the Delta, Kerma secured control over former Egyptian territory north of the Second Cataract forts (Vogel 2004: 61–99).

In earlier Middle Kingdom battle scenes from Mentuhotep II to Senwosret I there are no pictorial representations of battles that took place in Nubia (Schulman 1982). In the tomb of Antef, Nubian archers can be seen shooting their missiles at the enemy and form a shield for the advancing Egyptian infantrymen. A moveable siege engine is also in use. An additional naval scene of warfare reveals the more expected clash of Egyptian troops fighting from shipboard. Nubian archers are present in Mentuhotep II’s battle scenes where there is another attack on a walled Asiatic town (Vogel 2004: 54). Additional fragments depict a battering ram, which turns up later in early Twelfth Dynasty reliefs from the tomb of a Beni Hasan nomarch. In essence, the Nubians still formed the core of the archer sector, protecting advancing foot-soldiers.

The presence of fortress-cities in Asia needs to be stressed. One depiction in the tomb of Baket III of Beni Hasan might indicate a continuance of internecine warfare in the mid-to-late Eleventh Dynasty. Khnumhotep I’s tomb from the same area, however, presents Nubian archers with Egyptian troops and Asiatic auxiliaries or mercenaries. The enemy seems to be Egyptian. Finally, attacking troops of Nubians, Egyptians, and possibly also Asiatics turn up in the Beni Hasan tomb of Amenemhet, dated to Senwosret I.

Egyptian opponents of the Thebans must have been centered at Herakleopolis (Schulman 1982; Schulz 2002). The later “Annals” of Amenemhet II, on the other hand, indicate major Asiatic warfare (Altenmüller and Moussa 1991; Goedicke 1991; Lupo 2004). Some of that fighting, in which the navy took part, was centered in Lebanon, and the number of prisoners was 1,554, with weapons also taken. The original purpose of the expedition could have been to secure raw materials. Warfare, nonetheless, took place.

Recent evidence provided by Khnumhotep II’s historical inscription at Dahshur aids us to no small extent in revealing the seaborne military tentacles of Egyptian power during Dynasty XII (Allen 2008). In particular, Khnumhotep reports upon a naval expedition which was oriented quite north; Ullaza and Byblos are specifically mentioned. Khnumhotep also refers to the ubiquitous conifer woods of that region – traditionally called “cedar” – and he mentioned previous commercial

relations that existed between Egypt and Byblos. The narrative reinforces our analysis of the logistics of the Middle Kingdom's military and commercial power. Egypt did not possess a far-flung empire of any kind to the north. At best, she could influence local affairs on the coast and not far inland by means of her fleet.

6 Egypt and Nubia in the Second Intermediate Period

The decline of Egyptian control over Lower Nubia accelerated as the Thirteenth Dynasty lost control, and there is archaeological evidence for the weakening of Egyptian control over Nubia. In Lower Nubia the presence of weapons in graves, tomb and body destruction, a spate of local native C-Group fortification building, and the subsequent reuse of Egyptian fortifications are striking (O'Connor 1993: 47–57).

Two royal inscriptions indicate the difficulties for Thebes: the first, from the ephemeral Neferhotep Ikhernofret, provides one of the oldest references to "Victorious Thebes" (Vernus 1982) in a context which is military and defensive in nature. Pharaoh guides "Victorious Thebes" against his opponents, while Amun, his father, fights for him. The monarch is stated to have protected Thebes from "strangers," and foreign rebels are also mentioned. It is probable that Thebes was blockaded by Nubians or possibly even Hyksos Asiatics. Significantly, around the same time, the famous military "blue crown" first appears (Davies 1982; time Neferhotep III).

A second contemporary Pharaoh, Mentuhotepi, presents a more rewarding account with the image of Victorious Thebes again rising in a military context (Vernus 1989). Mentuhotepi defended an encircled territory containing bastions and garrisons that were built to defend his constricted land. The Nubians were the greatest threat even if the Asiatic Hyksos of the Fifteenth Dynasty had conquered the entire Delta and parts of middle Egypt (Ryholt 1997: 118–50, 302–09). Somewhat later than Mentuhotepi, an inscription in the el-Kab tomb of Sobeknakht refers to the kingdom of Kush attacking the Thebans (Davies 2003). The text, which refers to Nubians of the eastern desert and the Medjay, notes that Lower Nubia was aroused by Kush and other southerly regions.

The radical weakness of the late Thirteenth Dynasty owed much to the secession of the Canaanite population in the Delta from Pharaonic control. The quasi-independent zone in the North-east Delta soon became the separate Fourteenth Dynasty, and then the Hyksos, followed by a rapid move onto Memphis, took over as the Fifteenth Dynasty with their capital at Avaris (Ben-Tor, Allen, and Allen 1999 question Ryholt 1997 on Dynasties XIII–XIV). Ultimately the latter were successful at establishing their own dynasty because they brought into Egypt the horse and chariot together with excellent weaponry of a Near Eastern type: local axes, for example, fit well into the Syro-Palestinian contemporary cultures of the Middle Bronze Age with their non-Egyptian forms (Philip 2006).

The earlier Twelfth Dynasty stratigraphic levels at Avaris oddly show wider foreign connections than the later ones of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties. This suggests that the rise of the Hyksos was separate from the independence of the North-east Delta and was also dependent upon strong links with the nearby territories of Asia. The

introduction of horses and chariots into the Delta may thus have been a result of these later interconnections, and possibly Manetho's account of a vast sweep upon Memphis by the Hyksos carries with it a core of truth. Furthermore, the Hyksos might not have belonged to the same groups of elite administrators and warriors who had broken away earlier during the Thirteenth Dynasty. The metallic content of tin, for example, so important in making bronze, is of prime importance in supporting this recent hypothesis. Avaris shows little arsenic-based copper, while Egypt, on the other hand, was transforming itself from mid-Dynasty XII onwards to an arsenical bronze metallurgic civilization and then to a tin-bronze one. The surprising use of tin-bronze during the earlier phases of Tell ed-Daba in contrast to the overwhelming employment of unalloyed copper in the later strata cannot be overlooked.

The arrival of the sickle-shaped sword, associated earlier with western Asiatic elites such as warriors, kings, and the gods, took place during the Second Intermediate Period (Vogel 2006). This weapon, iconically and textually prominent in the New Kingdom, indirectly points to the newer military elites drawn into the cauldron of Egyptian politics. Even if the first horses "imported" into Egypt were considerably different from the mid-Eighteenth Dynasty examples (Rommelaere 1991), the Egyptians already had all the necessary materials and technology for chariot production by the time of the Middle Kingdom (Shaw 2001). If we add the subsequent arrival of the horse during the Hyksos Fifteenth Dynasty, then all of the military components were in place for a gradual switch in warfare.

The political set-up of the southern Theban state of the Seventeenth Dynasty resembled an armed camp with a commander-in-chief as ruler. The Koptos Decree of Nubkheperre Antef is clear on this matter, and early Eighteenth Dynasty details concerned with the first administrator of Nubia, Tjarou, support this analysis (Breasted 1906: I 339–41; Ryholt 1997: 266–9, 304–07). The governance of Koptos fell upon a civilian administrator and a warrior. The latter is called a 'King's Son', a prominent military man equivalent to the later "general" (Schmitz 1976). He was also the local commandant at Koptos. This royal edict was issued to the priesthood of Min, the local presiding deity, as well as to the army. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that, just north of Thebes, a centralized war machine controlled the nome in tandem with a civilian governor. The term "King's Son" had been in use since the Late Middle Kingdom, if not earlier; the designee was a military man but not necessarily the child of the ruler (Schmitz 1976; Quirke 2007: 133).

The Koptos decree sheds light upon political and military developments in Nubia under Kamose and Ahmose. The latter appointed a high-ranking military man, a "King's Son," to be the commander over the newly won fortress-town of Buhen (Smith 1976: 205–9). Thus the policy of reconquest in the south was based upon a military system already in place by the mid-Seventeenth Dynasty, when local commanders were in charge of key districts, even though a non-military official took care of day-to-day governmental affairs. In the Seventeenth Dynasty a new administrative system was installed in the south. Pharaoh was both chief of state at Thebes and leader of the army. Thus nationalism reemerged stronger than previously because there were now two enemies: Asiatic Hyksos and southern Nubians.

We should end this historical discussion of the Hyksos "interlude," or conquest, by indicating the efficacy of two of the important technological developments that came

into Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period. The first, the composite bow, is still hard to date precisely within an Egyptian archaeological context. It was considerably more powerful than its precursor, the simple bow, and its range has been estimated to have been around 120 m (Partridge 2002: 42–4). Needless to say, such a weapon meant that, almost automatically, the use of leather armor and helmets for protection had to be employed, neither of which were used in Middle Kingdom times. Composite bows became the staple of the elite military sector, the charioteer soldiers, and were protected in bow cases instead of being slung over the shoulders as the simple bows had been.

Chariots in Egypt were light and propelled by two horses. By the middle of Dynasty XVIII they had six spokes as a rule, although the Pharaoh is sometimes depicted waging war in an eight-spoked vehicle (Partridge 2002: 64–74; Cavillier 2002). From a series of preserved chariot wheels the diameters have been measured. The difference among those extant is slight: between 0.9 and 1.0 of a meter. The cab, or enclosed platform in which only two men stood, was small and narrow. From it one could strike forward provided that some side protection was placed on the cab. This was made usually from ox hide and thus protected the lower portions of the body. The weight of these chariots was slight, and wall reliefs sometimes show them being carried by soldiers on their backs after being unassembled. Probably their total weight would not exceed thirty-five kilograms (Partridge 2002: 65).

There were only two men in the cab, the driver and the warrior. The latter would first employ spears or javelins against the enemy, preferring to hit an opposing horse rather than to aim his arrows carefully against the human foe. Those weapons, as well as bows and arrows, were kept in long cases attached to either side of the cab. In close combat, however, the charioteer would direct his attention against an opposing charioteer hoping to penetrate his armor by means of the composite bow. This last action was considered to be the most important or, at least, was the one that is always depicted when the Pharaoh was depicted attacking a host of foreigners.

Finally, a few caveats should be mentioned concerning the effectiveness of these war vehicles (Spruytte 1983). Although they were highly manoeuvrable owing to their light weight, chariots could not advance well on hills. In fact, on an incline more than ten degrees they would be relatively slow. Add to this the problem of a terrain that contained gorse, unsown wheat, or the like, and Egyptian chariots were unable to advance at a fast pace. We must keep in mind that this new war machine was not equivalent to a modern tank even though this misconception still appears in scholarly literature. Instead, they provided a mobile platform from which a charioteer-soldier could aim his javelins or arrows. The horses were solely employed as the propulsive power; no independent cavalry existed at this time.

7 The Early Eighteenth Dynasty

Under Kamose, Ahmose, Amenhotep I, and Thutmose I consolidation and expansion proceeded under a policy of annexation of territories outside the boundaries of Egypt. Kamose continued the traditional strategy of using his war fleet to transport his



Figure 23.4 Thutmose IV in action with a war chariot and a composite bow. After Howard Carter in Carter and Newberry, *Tomb of Thoutmosis IV*.

chariots, horses, archers, and infantrymen northwards (Smith and Smith 1976; Spalinger 2005: 1–5). He succeeded because he advanced quickly through Middle Egypt. In addition, he had the luck to capture an emissary of the Hyksos ruler, Apophis, who was going west through Libya on his way to contact the independent Nubian monarch. Subsequently, Kamose attacked Avaris with his Theban fleet.

Ahmose, Kamose's successor, deployed chariots outside Avaris, and his war reliefs at Abydos indicate the growing importance of this sector within the Egyptian military (Harvey 1998: 303–72; Spalinger 2005: 19–23). Meanwhile, a governor was installed at the Second Cataract in the fortress of Buhen who acted as the king's deputy over the Nubian territories; this position evolved into the "King's son of Kush." The increasing complexity of administrative control necessitated a garrison system that would include civilians and soldiers.

Egypt was particularly fortunate that adjoining the East Delta lay the extremely arid Sinai. To the north were small city-states that were often fighting with each other and never capable of achieving any unity. After Ahmose sacked the Hyksos capital, he advanced to the kingdom of Sharuhin in the northeast (Oren 1997a). This was the commencement of a series of campaigns, led by the kings themselves, aimed at seizing Palestine. The Asiatic wars of these Pharaohs show how changed was the structure of the Egyptian army. Egypt, already possessing a fleet, quickly developed a Mediterranean flotilla in order to transport war materiel and troops to Lebanese ports. At the same time she now relied upon infantry *and* chariotry in order to expand northwards on land. The first half of the Eighteenth Dynasty witnessed a series of campaigns aimed at controlling Palestine, out of which the chariotry division emerged as the

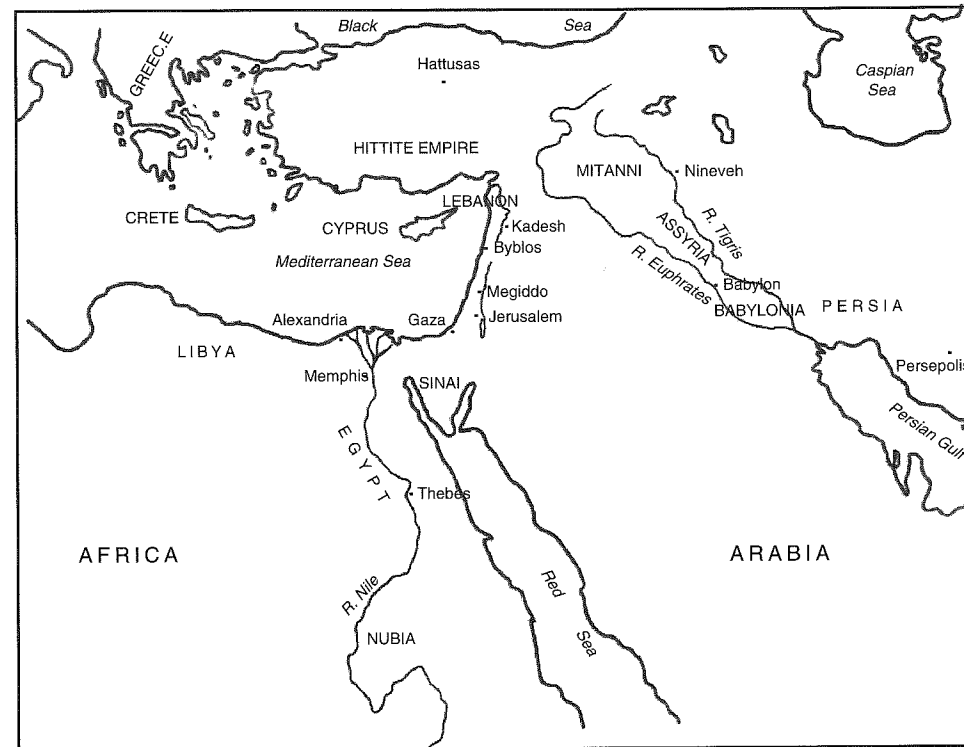


Figure 23.5 The Near East in the second millennium BC. Courtesy Robert Partridge.

premier body of troops within the New Kingdom military (Gnirs 1996: 1–39; Spalinger 2005: 46–69; Redford 2003). The Pharaohs had to ensure that the local dynasts remained under their indirect suzerainty. This would be achieved under Thutmose III by adopting a policy of “personal captives.” Sons and brothers of a kinglet were brought to Egypt and lived at the court until the reigning prince either died or revolted. Because massive campaigns were lengthy, hard to organize, and costly, garrisons were established (Spalinger 2005: 130–6). Gaza soon replaced the old border post of Sile/Tjaru (al-Ayedi 2006), located at the extreme tip of the northeast Delta. Inland, Megiddo, located in the Esdraelon Plain in Palestine and, subsequently, Kumudi in Syria became strategic centers. Obstacles were easily overcome at first. Thutmose I, for example, reached the Euphrates while the inland kingdom of Mitanni was weak. The city-state system in Palestine was disorganized, and, as yet, there was no pressure from the Hittites based in Anatolia. Subsequently, however, Mitanni provoked an uprising in Palestine centered on Megiddo and gained the involvement of the king of Kadesh, located in Syria on the River Orontes.

Thutmose III achieved permanent control over Palestine after he completed his subjugation of Megiddo (Redford 2003), but it was necessary to station a moderately sized garrison there, whereas most of the other Asiatic cities had few Egyptian troops and chariots. The mighty kingdoms of the Mitannians and the Hittites, nonetheless, posed a latent threat to Egypt’s empire. Thutmose III often dispatched his sea fleet to

the Lebanon in order to fortify those ports so that they could supply his land-based troops. It was necessary to coordinate naval with land-based activities in order to advance into the heartland of Syria. Eventually Kadesh was wrested from Mitanni, Aleppo conquered, and the Euphrates reached. Fighting persisted into the reign of Thutmose’s son Amenhotep II (Der Manuelian 1987: 47–56), and ultimately Palestine and Syria were divided into three parts and governors placed over these territories (Na’aman 1975; Spalinger 2005: 130–6).

The wars in Asia did not cease until Thutmose IV and Shutarna of Mitanni agreed to a peace treaty. In the south, despite revolts, Nubia was pacified, occupied, and administered as Wawat (Lower Nubia) and Kush (Upper Nubia). The southern boundary was set at the Fourth Cataract. Pharaoh nonetheless remained the Commander-in-Chief of his troops and an active campaigner. Crown prince Amenhotep II was even in charge of the royal dockyards in the north at Perunefer (either Memphis or Avaris) and was boastful of his warlike deeds. All male royal offspring had to be proficient in archery, horsemanship, chariotry, and rowing, and the “Sporting Tradition” became one of the hallmarks of New Kingdom royalty.

8 The Close of the Eighteenth Dynasty

When Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten came to the throne he inherited a growing problem in Asia. The Hittites were pressuring Mitanni under their great king Suppiluliumas. They attacked north Syria and pushed the enemy aside (Kitchen 1962; Na’aman 1990). Border flare-ups became commonplace, and Egypt intervened, albeit indirectly, in the affairs of Kadesh and the Syrian province of Amurru. The aggressive intentions of Suppiluliumas and difficulties at home led to the weakening of Egyptian control so far north. Carchemish fell to the Hittite king, and Mitanni was reduced to a feeble rump kingdom. The Hittites and the Egyptians now stood to divide Syria; but, instead of negotiating a peaceful relationship, they fought, often by proxy. When the Hittites aimed their forces against Carchemish and Aleppo, the Egyptians feared for their zone of control. Princes of important Syrian cities such as Etaqama of Kadesh and Aziru, with his son Abdi Ashirta of Amurru, decided to swing their loyalties to the Hittite monarch. Egypt could not provide an effective counterbalance except through a major campaign. Tutankhamun was unable to achieve success in retaking the southern zones of Syria, nor was Horemheb (Murnane 1985: appendix 6; Martin 1989; Johnson 1992; van Dijk 1993: 41–54). Chariots and horses empowered the army, but inland warfare required foot-soldiers, which Egypt could not send in sufficient numbers. Larger border garrisons also were needed. Moreover, the northern enemy, Hatti, was in the advantageous position of being able to cross Syria from high ground to low.

In an orderly succession Horemheb’s fellow officer and general, later vizier, the elderly Ramesses I, established the Nineteenth Dynasty. His only son, Sety I, was already middle-aged when he took the throne. During their reigns structural changes were made to the Egyptian army and its relationship to the nation. The warrior class of chariot officers had come to rival, in importance, the scribal bureaucracies. By the Nineteenth Dynasty anti-soldier tractates circulated among civilian officials

emphasizing their non-physical labor and independence from army life (Spalinger 2006: Chapter I). Much of this literature focused upon the lower ranks in the army, the foot-soldiers, but the young chariot men were also denigrated. The scribes set out to parody the daily life of the soldier, and their sharp reed pen underscores the alteration that had occurred in social standing. A schism had taken place in the corporate identities of military men and scribal officials, and certainly by the Nineteenth Dynasty the scribal class felt itself under attack.

9 The Situation in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasty

Ramesses II, the son of Sety I, met Muwatallis, the king of the Hittites in an encounter that was the climax of the attempt to retake southern Syria (Kitchen 1982: 53–62; von der Way 1984; Goedicke 1985; Murnane 1985; Spalinger 2002). The episode started as one of the many flare-ups that occurred in the borderlands since the time of Thutmose III, but this military encounter became the decisive battle in which Ramesses, though meeting a surprise attack by the Hittite king, managed to rally and send the Hittites back across the River Orontes. On the second day's fighting, however, Ramesses could not remove the Hittite army from the field. Kadesh, despite his father Sety's earlier success, remained pro-Hittite. Ramesses' campaign against Kadesh demonstrated that, despite twenty thousand foot-soldiers, archers, Sherden mercenaries, chariot warriors, and the nick-of-time arrival of yet another division of elite warriors, he did not have enough troops to defeat Muwatallis. Ramesses' departure from the battlefield indicates a tactical defeat, but continual skirmishes afterwards were fought to a standstill, and Ramesses was unable to redraw his political boundaries.

The accounts of Merneptah and his Twentieth Dynasty successor, Ramesses III, are noteworthy for the defensive actions of the Egyptian monarchs (O'Connor 1990; Kitchen 1990; Manassa 2003). Threats upon Egypt's integrity were now a problem. Merneptah also had to face an invasion from the west by tribes-people whose intent was to settle in Egypt, and, although they lacked bronze weapons and a significant chariotry, they came in large numbers. The Egyptian monarch rapidly brought forward his elite troops and marched to the western periphery of the Delta. There he met and defeated the Libyans close to the fortresses that his father had erected in the western desert. An identical situation arose under Ramesses III, and again the armies met west of the Delta where the Libyans invoked the same formation of a massive group of foot-soldiers and archers. The Pharaoh successfully repelled the enemy, but not without a strain upon the Egyptian economy.

The fortifications in the west, as others, were built for control and were not geared to invasion. They served to prevent small numbers of outsiders from entering the lush Delta or possibly hindering any infiltration further south. They could not, however, be used for any large offensive operation. Hence, these garrisons were closely similar to those of the Middle Kingdom Second Cataract fortresses and the later Ramesside forts at the entrance to the East Delta. Both Merneptah and Ramesses III had to



Figure 23.6 Hittite chariotry in action against the Egyptians at the Battle of Kadesh. Note the heavier build of the Hittite chariots and the three-man crew as against two in their Egyptian counterparts. Temple of Ramesses II at Abydos. Courtesy E. J. Gooding.

marshal their troops at a considerable distance from the scene of the invasion. Indeed, Merneptah's Karnak War Inscription provides a striking parallel to the subsequent Libyan war records of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu (Spalinger 2005: 249–55). In the long run the Egyptian war machine was unable to stop the Libyan migration.

The strongholds of the Sherden, who were originally mercenaries in the pay of the Egyptian state, further reveal that these elite troops had become part of the permanent standing army. Indeed, their presence now as agricultural workers in Egypt, “settled” mainly in the north under Pharaonic authority, indicates as well that these elite troops had become similar in occupation to the ordinary native foot-soldiers and minor officers. These former mercenaries, now paid through their land-holdings, had in essence become local troops. They could be called out by Pharaoh in an emergency but seem not to have provided any logistic support to the border garrisons.

The Egyptian territories in Asia had fallen away owing to major political and social stresses in the north. A land-based attack by a confederacy of northerners, called “Sea Peoples” by the Egyptians, moved down along the coastline of the eastern Mediterranean (Oren 2000 for most recent studies). Operating on land with support from their ships, they managed to topple a number of kingdoms, and by the time Ramesses III got his large army into Palestine the enemy had effectively eradicated the Hittite Empire and taken the coastal regions of Syria. The pictorial and written war records at Medinet Habu document Ramesses III's counter-attack. While he



Figure 23.7 The defeat of the Sea Peoples by Ramesses III. Medinet Habu. Courtesy Robert Partridge.

managed to prevent a total disaster, he still lost Asia and had to cede the coastal regions to the Peleset and other Sea Peoples; Egypt's control over Asia was at an end. The Sea Peoples came in family groups with the intention of settling. The Peleset, who gave their name to Palestine, settled on the southern coast of Canaan and became federated allies of Egypt. Ramesses III further had to repel a second attack in the Delta, this time by sea. In this case, however, the naval battle consisted of enemy warriors alone.

The Egyptian army of the Late New Kingdom was polyethnic in composition, including Nubians, Sherden, Libyans, and possibly other groups. Maybe the population of Egypt had declined, but it is equally possible that by mid-Eighteenth Dynasty a stable population had reached its capacity for supplying able-bodied male warriors, so that the only way to increase the ranks was to accept foreigners (Spalinger 2005: 264–75). The locally based military strongholds and the Libyan settlement in the West Delta reflect a gradual turn to an internally oriented military. Furthermore, after the final wars of Ramesses III the army's purpose became more concentrated upon the infrastructure of Egypt, which was slowly splitting into two parts. In the south, with its religious and military center at Thebes, the High Priest of Amun eventually became a generalissimo as well. In the north, the last Ramesside kings lost their grasp on the country until a new family arose at Tanis, a port in the Eastern Delta. Here, the leader, Smendes, first took over militarily and politically as a "Controller," but, subsequently, he founded a new lineage of Pharaohs as the Twenty-first Dynasty. Eventually, the Libyan clan leaders solidified their strength in the north and married into the dynasty, while retaining much of their earlier military structure.

The last seven-hundred years of Egypt's military history before the conquest by Alexander the Great is a tale of familiarity and difference (Lloyd in Shaw (ed.) 2000). Despite long periods of weakness the first four centuries saw a resuscitation of Egypt's

ambitions in Asia in attempts, albeit unsuccessful, to recreate past glories, and the Piye (Piankhi) Stela provides ample evidence that Egyptian and Nubians were well abreast of the best current military practice. The Saite period (664–525) was a time of considerable military enterprise and success in all the traditional areas of military activity, designed fundamentally to guarantee the continued independence of the country (see above Chapter 8). In these efforts the Saite not only used their native Egyptian warrior class (the *Machimoi*) but were assisted by major contingents of mercenary troops, some from Asia, but the most significant forces derived from the Greek states of Asia Minor and the Greek islands. Indeed, so valued were these contingents that permanent camps were established in the country, e.g. at Tell Defenna (see above Chapter 18). The navy too benefited from foreign influence with the introduction of the trireme by Necho II (610–595 BC), a move which could only have taken place with Greek or Phoenician assistance. The conquest of Egypt by the Persians in 525 brought an end to Egyptian independence for some 120 years, but determined efforts were made to throw off the Persian yoke in which significant help was obtained from the Athenian Empire, though Egyptian efforts were denied any long-term success until 404 when the last period of independent Egyptian rule began. As in the great days of the Saite Dynasty, the military force needed to maintain independence was heavily dependent on Greek assistance, either in the form of alliances or the employment of mercenaries, and conspicuous successes were achieved in keeping the Persians at bay. In the end, however, the country fell once more under Persian control in 343 and remained in that position until the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great in 332. However, Egyptian forces continued to function as part of the Persian army and even saw action against Alexander at Issus in 333.

FURTHER READING

Egyptian warfare and military institutions have attracted much interest over the last thirty years. In general see Kitchen 1982; Shaw 2001, Bietak and Schwartz (eds.) 2002; Partridge 2002; and Spalinger 2005. On military organization consult Chevereau 1987; 1989; 1991; 1992; and Stefanovic 2006. On the navy see Berlev 1967, and for things maritime in general consult Fabre 2004–5. For the very important Middle Kingdom stela of Khusobek (Sobekkhu) see the excellent discussion in Baines 1987.