



WORKSHEET
PHARAOHS, PYRAMIDS
AND THE WORLD
OF THE GODS

1. THE PHARAOH

The word 'pharaoh' comes from Egyptian and means 'great house'. The term was used along with the five royal names of the king. The pharaohs were the same as gods and were absolute rulers over the country and its people. They were also responsible for maintaining the order of life on earth. At the same time, they had to make sure that the people of Egypt honored the gods and that the gods were happy with the people. So the pharaohs were responsible for the temples, where they had to provide the furnishings and offerings. It was also the pharaoh's duty to provide for his people's welfare in both this life and the next.

Although the pharaoh's power was absolute, he employed a state administration which included officials, priests and governors. The rights and duties of a ruler began with his coronation, when a pharaoh took his five royal names. Pharaohs were often succeeded by their sons when they died but this wasn't always the case.

The pharaoh's crowns were worn on different occasions, and the 'white' and 'red' crowns symbolized Upper and Lower Egypt. The crowns were designed so that the pharaoh could wear them together. A sceptre and flail were also part of the insignia representing the power of the pharaohs. Menes is thought to be the first king, who united Upper and Lower Egypt into one kingdom around 3000 B.C. This was the beginning of the reign of

the pharaohs, who succeeded each other over a series of 30 dynasties. Historians divide the history of Egypt into the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms and the Late Period. Sovereignty over Egypt was closely connected with belief in various gods. Djoser (about 2700 B.C.) was the first pharaoh of all to have a pyramid built as his tomb.

Very little is known about Pharaoh Tutankhamun today. He was the son of Pharaoh Akhenaten and ruled over the Nile in the period of the New Kingdom (18th–20th Dynasties, 1550–1070 B.C.) The 18th Dynasty began with Ahmose who ended the domination of the 'Hyksos' over Egypt. The Hyksos came from the Near East and ruled over Egypt from the Nile delta. Ahmose drove the Hyksos out of Egypt and his successors reconquered other areas, such as Nubia. Thebes, today known as Luxor, became the residence of the pharaohs. Their empire stretched along the Nile from the Mediterranean to Nubia and extended as far as Mesopotamia. The Valley of the Kings in the city of the dead (necropolis), opposite Thebes on the west bank of the Nile, became the burial site for almost all the kings of the New Kingdom.



Suggested Activity

Read the selection above and look at the map to find the Ancient Egyptian sites. Use the map on page five in the school material or look at maps of Egypt in an atlas or on the internet.

2. THE GODS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

The Osiris legend

The Ancient Egyptians used to recount the following legend: the gods Osiris, Seth, Isis, and Nephthys were sisters and brothers. Osiris was married to his sister Isis, Seth to Nephthys. Osiris had inherited the kingship in Egypt from his father Geb. The people were content with his reign as Osiris gave them good laws. But his jealous brother Seth rose up against him. He killed his brother, cut up his body and threw the pieces into the Nile. Isis, Osiris' grieving widow, searched for the remains of her husband together with her sister Nephthys. According to the legend, they found his body parts scattered across the whole of Egypt and put them together again with the help of Anubis, the god of embalming. This was the first mummy in Egypt. The reconstructed Osiris was then able to conceive a child with his wife Isis. Fearing Seth's anger, Isis hid in the marshes of the Nile delta while she was pregnant. There, she gave birth to the god Horus. When he grew up, Horus left his hiding place in order to avenge his father's murder. He defeated his uncle Seth in a terrible battle but lost an eye in the fight. The god Thoth healed his damaged eye, however, and ever since the Eye of Horus (Egyptian: Udjat – 'whole', 'undamaged') was known



King Sethos I. is sacrificing to the gods Osiris, Isis and Horus

for its healing and protective powers. While Horus became the new ruler on earth, his father Osiris became the King of Eternity, ruling over the realm of the dead. It was he who decided the fate of the deceased at the final judgement. The legend of Osiris soon came to represent the destiny of all people. Every person had to experience death, just as Osiris had, but could also attain eternal life in the hereafter. The Egyptians of old believed that everyone who died became Osiris.



Suggested Activity

1. Write an exciting play which tells the legend of Osiris.
2. Perform part of the Osiris story in a short scene from your play.

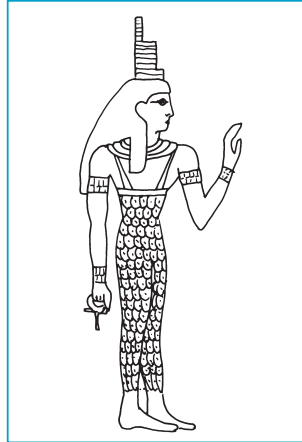
2. THE GODS OF ANCIENT EGYPT

Some Egyptian gods in more detail:



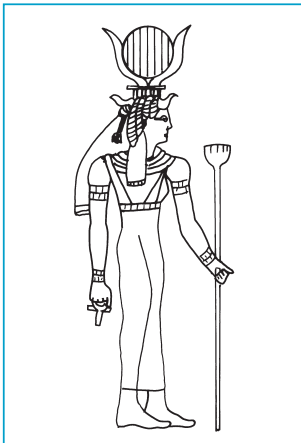
Osiris

God of the afterlife, he presides over the judgement of the dead. He is usually portrayed like a pharaoh with a crown, sceptre and flail.



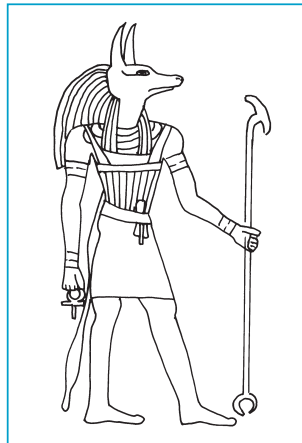
Amun-Ra

For the Egyptians, the sun god Amun-Ra was the creator of the world. He is often portrayed with a hawk's head and a sun disk.



Hathor

Goddess of love. She is often portrayed as a cow with a sun disk between her horns.



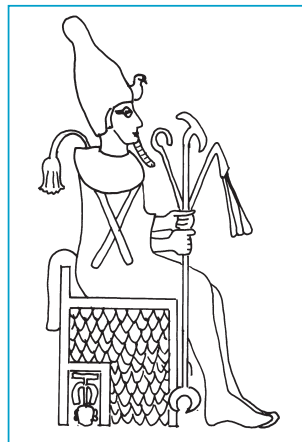
Isis

She is Osiris's wife and was seen as the role model for all mothers and the guardian of children. Isis can be recognized by the throne hieroglyph on her head.



Anubis

He is seen as the god of embalming and supervises the weighing of the heart during the judgement of the dead. He has the head of a jackal.



Horus

According to legend, he is the son of Isis and Osiris. He is portrayed as a hawk and wears the royal double crown. Horus is the protective god of the pharaoh.

2. THE GODS OF ANCIENT EGYPT



Suggested Activity

1. Cut out the pictures and text and put them together in the right order.
2. Explain why the gods are often portrayed as part-human, part-animal. Find out more information about the gods and goddesses listed below. Use a textbook or the internet to help you.

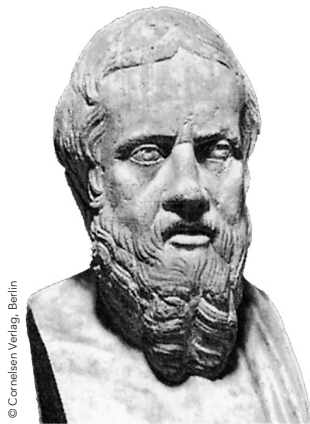
Deity	Appearance	Function
Atum		
Hapi		
Geb		
Nephthys		
Sekhmet		
Ptah		

3. Copy the pictures of the gods and goddesses onto transparent film. Project them onto a large piece of wallpaper and color them in.
4. Present the individual gods and goddesses to your class, describing their appearance and functions.

3. THE PYRAMIDS

A Greek traveler amazed by Egypt

The Greek scholar Herodotus (c. 484–425 B.C.) was born in Halicarnassus in Asia Minor. He traveled widely and got to know the lands of Mesopotamia, the east coast of the Black Sea, Sicily and parts of Africa. He was a keen observer and listened closely, if sometimes too believingly, to the stories the local people told him. His work, *The Histories*, is seen as the first important history book ever written and he is known as the “Father of History.”



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Herodotus

(around 2585 B.C.). He was a pharaoh of the Old Kingdom. The Khufu Pyramid is a popular tourist

attraction today. The pyramids are the only one of the Seven Wonders of the World that still survive. Herodotus recounts what he was told by the local Egyptians about Khufu’s pyramid on his travels almost 2,000 years later: “Khufu became king over them and brought them to every kind of evil: for he shut up all the temples, and having first kept them from sacrifices there, he then bade all the Egyptians work for him [...] For the making of the pyramid itself there passed a period of twenty years; and the pyramid is square, each side measuring eight hundred feet, and the height of it is the same. It is built of stone smoothed and fitted together in the most perfect manner, not one of the stones being less than thirty feet in length. This pyramid was made after the manner of steps which some called ‘rows’ and others ‘bases’...”

Pharaoh Khufu ordered a massive pyramid to be erected as his burial site while he was still alive

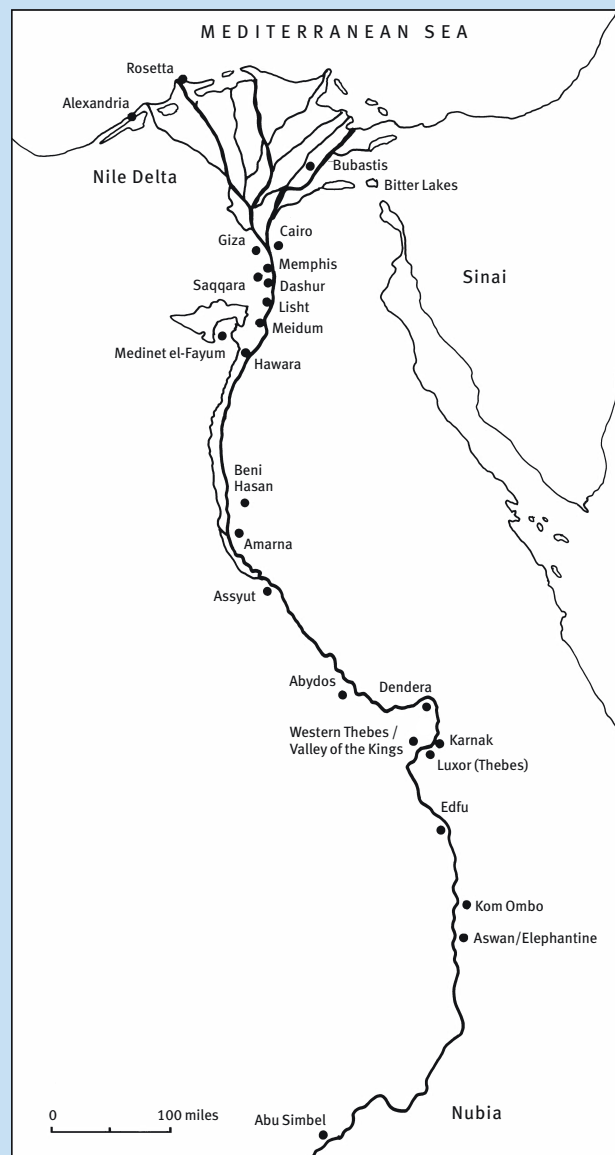
After the Middle Kingdom came to an end, the pharaohs no longer built pyramids and instead had their tombs carved out of rock. Whereas the actual graves were underground and hidden in lonely rocky valleys, the mortuary cult to honor the deceased was practiced in splendid temples in the Nile valley.

3. THE PYRAMIDS



Suggested Activity

1. Find out about the pyramid of Khufu from books or the internet.
2. Draw in the locations of Khufu's pyramid and the other pyramids of Giza on the map of Egypt.



© project map Egypt, by Dieter Potente, Cornelsen Verlag Berlin 2002

4. PHARAOH TUTANKHAMUN

It's relatively certain that Tutankhamun was the son of Akhenaten, who reigned from 1353 to 1337 B.C. Akhenaten introduced a monotheistic faith which was supposed to replace the Ancient Egyptian religion with its many gods. Aten, the sun disk, became the only god. There's been a lot of speculation about Tutankhamun's mother. The latest DNA investigations show that Tutank-



Backrest of the Golden Throne of Tutankhamun

hamun's parents could have been brother and sister. But there's no evidence so far from the Egyptian sources that Akhenaten married a sister of his. Akhenaten's chief wife was the famous Nefertiti. Tutankhamun was originally given the name Tutankhaten, in reference to the worship of Aten. He was crowned pharaoh when he was only a child.

Two years into his reign he changed his name to Tutankhamun, the 'Living Image of Amun'. Tutankhamun married Ankhesenamun, the third daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, in other words his older sister or half-sister. Tutankhamun reigned for nine years. Under him, Memphis became the capital of the kingdom. He went back to the old gods, and abolished his father's belief in one god. A huge stele was set up in the temple of Karnak on which Tutankhamun announced his return to the old religion, and Thebes became the religious centre of Egypt.

Tutankhamun was the head of a well-organized state. Countless officials took care of the administration. The priest Ay, who was perhaps Nefertiti's father, was one of Tutankhamun's most important advisers. General Horemheb was the commander of the armed forces. The country returned to its old traditions under Tutankhamun's rule, and this restoration was an important step towards stabilizing the kingdom again. When Tutankhamun died in the spring of 1323 B.C. at 18 years of age, Ay succeeded him on the throne.

4. PHARAOH TUTANKHAMUN



Suggested Activity

1. Draw in Tutankhamun's tomb in the Valley of Kings on the map of Egypt. (page seven)
2. Look for information about Tutankhamun in a textbook or on the internet. Write a profile of the Pharaoh's life.
3. Look at the pictures, objects, and texts on Tutankhamun at the exhibition. One of the most famous objects from the tomb of Tutankhamun is the golden throne. You can see the throne in the exhibition with its picture of Tutankhamun and his wife. Ankhesenamun is rubbing her husband with perfumed oil. After you've visited the exhibition, write down what impressed you the most about the burial goods. As a group, put together a wall newspaper showing your individual impressions.