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BOOK REVIEWS

Bard, K.A. 2007. *An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt.* – Malden/Oxford/Carlton, Wiley-Blackwell Publishing

W.M. van Haarlem



The book is preceded by lists of (black-and-white and colour) plates, figures, maps and abbreviations; then a 'Preface' and 'Acknowledgments.' Special subjects are discussed for each chapter in so-called 'boxes', like 'Napoleon in Egypt,' 'Hieroglyphic Signs,' 'State Formation,' 'the Deir el-Medina Workers,' etc.

Chapter 1 is concerned with 'Definitions and History,' and, apart from discussing methods and theory, also with ancient Egypt in fiction and films. Chapter 2 deals with hieroglyphs, language and chronology; especially the last topic is treated in detail. Chapter 3 presents Egypt's geography and environment. Not only the ancient environment, but also the modern environmental problems are discussed. The constant threat to ancient sites posed by the growing population and the looting of sites are important factors. Chapters 4 to 10 offer a detailed chronological treatment of the archaeo-

logical features of each of the periods in which Egyptian history is commonly divided: Prehistory (chapter 4), the Predynastic and Early Dynastic Age (Chapter 5), Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period (Chapter 6, including a substantial section on the pyramids), Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period (Chapter 7), the New Kingdom (Chapter 8, with an extensive account on the royal tombs), the Third Intermediate Period (Chapter 9), and finally, in chapter 10, the Greco-Roman Period.

Nubia is dealt with in a special section in some of these chapters. Chapter 11, headed 'The Study of Ancient Egypt' is the final one, and presents a synthesis and the conclusions.

The book ends, besides the index, with a glossary, and suggested and additional (non-English) literature. The fact that the non-English bibliography is set apart from the English-language 'suggested readings' gives the impression

that this is a sort of second-rate collection, even though this cannot be the author's intention. Surely Montet's Tanis publications, for example, range among the foremost source literature for the Third Intermediate Period, and should be treated as such.

A special section with chapter summaries and discussion questions for each chapter is an original feature, especially meant for the educational aspect. However, test questions would be a better qualification for these than discussion questions: there is not much to discuss concerning questions like 'What are the different scripts that were used to write Egyptian' or 'How does the Ptolemaic Dynasty differ from earlier Egyptian dynasties'.

Contrary to many general survey books on ancient Egypt, the chronological chapters are

not written by separate experts, but all by the author. This approach has its advantages, because now they are all written in a coherent, accessible style. A disadvantage is, that the author's own field of research, which is the early period, makes the first chapters a bit unbalanced in comparison with the later chapters.

This book is primarily and expressly meant for teaching purposes and can certainly be used as such, regarding the clarity and the summary-style of the text.

Bard, K.A. 2007. An Introduction to the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt. - Malden/Oxford/Carlton, Wiley-Blackwell Publishing. 424 pp. ISBN 978-1-4051-1148-5. Price € 31.10 (Paperback).