

MEMPHIS I

INTRODUCTION

1. THE work at Memphis stands on a footing different from any previous excavations of mine. A season is only time enough to sample various parts of such a site, and no subject there can be worked out in less than two or three years. To clear the temple sites alone would take probably twenty years, as it is only possible to work for a few weeks after the water has subsided. But the rapidly increasing difficulties, owing to the constant and unchecked appropriation of the site by the peasantry, make it all the more urgent to take the place in hand as soon as we can. I long hesitated about this excavation. Two years ago Prof. Maspero suggested it to me, and the next year Sir William Garstin urged the desirability of it. At last the position of the British School of Archaeology seemed so solid that we ventured to attack so large a work. But it will need a considerable budget, owing to the cost of labour on such a scale, and the difficulties of private ownership.

As we hope to be for many years on the site during the spring months (minor excavations elsewhere will occupy the winters), it was needful to build quarters raised well above the damp soil. Mr. Ward and Herr Schuler accordingly went there on Jan. 3 to begin building, and I followed on Jan. 26; before the middle of February our quarters were finished amid the rain, mud, and fogs which abound at that time of year. Our excavations started at the end of January, and went on till the first week in May. Mr. Ward took charge of the Merenptah temple, and other work to the south. Mr. Mackay attended to the Ptah temple and the great fort. Herr Schuler did some surveying. Mr. Wainwright drew many of the plates here published, and Mr. Gregg planned the small temple. Altogether about three months of full work was spent on the place, and a fair beginning of this great undertaking was well started. I have to thank Miss Herford for inking in several plates of pencil drawings.

CHAPTER I

THE RECORDED TEMPLES OF MEMPHIS.

2. IN beginning to examine so great a city as Memphis, it is needful to glean all the information we can from ancient authorities for our guidance. References in the inscriptions, and the account by Herodotos, are nearly all that remain to help us. Diodoros mainly copied from Herodotos, and only yields a few further points; and Strabo is unfortunately very brief about Memphis.

The whole size of the city is stated to have been 150 stadia in circumference (Diod. i, iv); if Greek stadia, this equals $17\frac{1}{4}$ miles. But as the delta is described as being 750 stadia at the side, and 1300 along the sea (lengths of about 120 and 210 miles), this would imply the use of a stadium of just

500 cubits of 20.6 inches. If this Egyptian measure was used, the 150 would equal $24\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The plain was about 4 miles wide, so the two ends of the city would be 8 miles, leaving either 9 or 16 miles for the sides, according to the stadium used, making it $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 miles long. The latter is apparently correct; the length of the cemeteries along the desert suggests about 8 miles for the city, from Dahshur to the north of Abusir. The south side was probably at a fortress, now Kafr el Qala', opposite Dahshur; and the north side would then be at the group of villages by El Manawat. This would be the size of northern London from Bow to Chelsea, and from the Thames up to Hampstead. Probably a large part of this area consisted of gardens and fields belonging to the various villages, which were agglomerated to form the capital, like the component villages and towns of London.

3. The history of this capital of Egypt extends from the first king to the last Roman emperor. Menes founded Memphis; and the Roman governor, John Makaukas, signed the capitulation to the Arabs in its palace. From the beginning to the end of Egyptian history, Memphis was the great centre of civilisation, government and trade. For a few centuries Thebes shared its importance, and it was eclipsed at the last by Alexandria, but those cities are only episodes in the six thousand years of national life.

In such a centre it was natural that the gods of many different cities should have a home, and the temples of nineteen gods are mentioned in various sources. The oldest object of worship was probably the bull Apis, a part of the veneration of animals which preceded the higher theistic ideas. The temple of Apis was therefore the primitive settlement of the place. But it was eclipsed by the great establishment of Ptah, which occupied as large a space as the enclosure of the temple of Amen at Karnak.

4. The position of the temple of Ptah is certain, as his statues have been found in the West Hall (Pl. I), and the boundaries of his temenos have been traced on all sides during the past winter. In referring to the sketch map here provided, it should be stated that it is mainly copied from the map of Lepsius (*Denkmäler*, i, 9) as that shews the mounds when more complete than at present; but the temenos of Ptah is inserted from recent measurements plotted on to the government survey of the fields. When more is known, an exact survey of the whole site will be prepared, but it is useless to make that until the ancient constructions are discovered.

Several different parts of the temple of Ptah are mentioned by Herodotos. The first building of the temple is attributed to Menes (H. ii, 99). Next Asychis "built the eastern propylaia to the temple of Ptah, which is far the most beautiful and the largest: for all the propylaia have sculptured figures, and other styles of buildings, but this by far the most" (H. ii, 136). This king succeeded Menkaura of the IVth, and preceded Nitaqert of the VIth dynasty; he is probably Aseskaf of the IVth dynasty. The fine reliefs of the IVth dynasty are what would be appreciated by a Greek of the age of Pheidias; and this description shews that such sculpture was still existing down to the Persian age, and therefore may yet be found. The eastern front would naturally be built first as being the usual entrance to a temple

from the river. This may have been the forecourt added on to the first building of Menes.

Next we read that Moiris (Amenemhat III) built the propylaia on the north (H. ii, 101). This was probably where XII is marked on the map (Pl. I), as large blocks of red granite are lying about there, and an entrance more to the east would only open on to the lake.

In the XIXth dynasty we read of a statue of Sety I (Breasted, *Records*, iii, 260). Sesostris (Ramessu II) is said to have brought great stones to the temple (H. ii, 108), and to have built a forecourt on the north, and a temple in the midst of the temenos (B. *Rec.* iii). In front of the temple he placed two statues of thirty cubits of himself and his wife, and others of his four sons, each of twenty cubits (H. ii, 110). One of these is doubtless the well-known colossus, the place of which is marked on the map. So the main entrance during the Persian age must have been that to the south.

Ramessu III built a new temple in the court, of granite below and limestone above, and its doorways of granite. He made a monolith shrine of granite containing the triad of Ptah, Sekhmet and Nefertum; and he made a new image, and new sacred bark for the processions. Also he rebuilt the ruined temples (Harris Pap.). Rhampsinitos built the propylaia facing west, the "West Hall" of the map, and set two statues before it twenty-five cubits high (H. ii, 121). The base of one of these statues is visible now.

Psametek I built the propylaia facing the south (H. ii, 153). This is probably where XXVI is marked on the plan, as colossi are known to be buried there, and it would be probable that the work of the XXVIth dynasty would stand in advance of that of the XIXth. Aahmes placed a colossus in front of the temple, which Herodotos saw lying face up; it was seventy-five feet long. Upon the same base stood two colossi each twenty feet high (H. ii, 176). These we should expect to have been south of the XXVI propylaia.

Lastly we find that Ptolemy IV built the propylaia of red granite at the eastern entrance, the dedication of which we partly recovered.

Thus we have seen that though Herodotos divided his statements into their historical positions, yet he has preserved his notes of a circuit round all the gates of the temenos of Ptah; though he did not—and probably could not—describe anything that was inside the sacred enclosure. Incidentally Strabo

mentions a great hypostyle hall at Memphis (XVII, i, 21). We learn that the sanctuary of Ptah was included in the White Wall (B.D.G. 725), shewing that probably the fortification included the temples of Apis, Ptah, and the camp. And the temple of Ptah is stated to have been south of the sacred lake (B. *Rec.* iii, 223), which was named Ater (B.D.G. 85). This authorises our placing the sacred lake in the low ground between the Ptah temenos and the camp. Such a position is the more likely, as the sacred lake was the brickpit, whence all the enormous quantity of bricks were dug, for the thick walls, and for the great artificial hill of the fort. So it would naturally be between the two main sites of building, while it thus added a water defence on this side of the camp.

5. The position of the temple of Apis is the next point of importance. Could that be recovered, we might trace a pre-Menite occupation of the site. We read that Psametek when he built his southern propylaia "made an *aulē* (or open court) for Apis, in which he is fed whenever he appears, built opposite to the propylaia, surrounded with a peristyle and full of figures. In place of pillars are colossi of twelve cubits in the court" (H. ii, 153). This distinctly places the temple of Apis opposite to the propylaia of Psametek, and therefore farther south. Strabo states that the temple of Apis was near the temple of Ptah; in front of the sanctuary of Apis was a court where he was exhibited, and in the court another sanctuary for the dam of Apis (S. xvii, i, 31). To the south is marked on the map the presumed site. This ground is abnormally low, like that of the Ptah temenos, shewing that it was a sacred site not occupied by successive houses; and it has the same system of modern fields shewing that the central part was all taken under cultivation at one time, and not gradually encroached upon, as it was round the edges. I have not succeeded in finding the river approach to it along the eastern side. Perhaps the building of Siamen may lead us to some connection. Pa-hennu is the name of the Serapeum of Memphis (B.D.G. 1257). The temple of Apis was much favoured by Ptolemy V (Rosetta inscription, l. 33).

6. The Hathor temple lay to the south, in the time of Ramessu III, and the bark of Ptah went to it by water (Harris Pap.). It was at Nehat, called from the sacred sycamore of the goddess (Pap. Sall. 4, verso p. 1; B.D.G. 1222), and it is named by Strabo (xvii, i, 31).

The temple of Neit seems to have been to the

north of the camp; for as Ptah is said to be south of the fortress, so Neit is said to be north of the fortress. The sign usually translated wall, is clearly shaped as a fortress-plan in the best examples, as on Pl. XXXII. The ground to the north of the camp (see map) was a mass of mounds and ruins in the time of Lepsius; but, like so much of the site, it has been appropriated by the cultivators and is now all covered with crops.

The temple of Amen is mentioned (B. *Rec.* iii, 530); and the only indication of its position is our finding in the south-west corner of the Ptah temenos a fragment of colossal upright feathers, like those worn by Amen. This suggests that his colossus was not far off.

Imhotep was worshipped in a temple, apparently at the Asklepiion of Greek times, near Abusir (B.D.G. 1098).

Isis had a spacious temple built by Aahmes (H. ii, 176); and Diodoros—who is a poor authority—states that it was in the grove of Ptah (D. i, 2). Whether that means in the temenos of Ptah is doubtful.

7. The temenos of King Proteus, in the Tyrian camp or foreign quarter, is described by Herodotos as "mightily beautiful and well furnished, lying to the south of the temple of Ptah. Round about the temenos dwell the Phoenician Tyrians, and the whole place is called the Tyrian camp. In this temenos of Proteus is a temple called after the foreign Aphrodite" (H. ii. 112). He then unhappily spends four pages about Helen and the Trojan war, where a few lines more of topography would have been priceless to us. We have already seen that the propylaia of Psametek, and the court of Apis, are said to be south of the temple of Ptah; we cannot then look due south for the temple of Proteus. But south of the entrance to the Ptah temenos, at the Kom el Qala' is a region strewn with early Greek pottery of the VIIth century onward, and bounded by a great wall to the south. Here is the locality, then, best agreeing with the description of the foreign camp. In this ground a great lintel was found two years ago, during the clearances by the *sebakh* diggers and covered over after Mr. Quibell had photographed it. Here we dug down, and saw a great gateway in position, sculptured by Merenptah. Clearing inwards to the north of it, we opened the larger part of a forecourt, 120 feet long by about 100 feet wide; with a doorway of Merenptah at the north end, evidently leading further to a temple (see chap. v).

Proteus came between Ramessu II and III, though his exact identification may not be clear; and he lived a little before the Trojan war, which we know was correlated with the reign of Tausert. The date of Merenptah agrees well with the period indicated by Herodotos. The foreign Aphrodite whose temple was here would be the Egyptian Hathor; and in the court of Merenptah we found the only known Memphite tablets of Hathor (Pl. XXVIII). Thus by the general position in the city, by the early Greek pottery, by the date of the temple, by the Hathor tablets, and by many pieces of prehistoric foreign pottery found here, it seems clear that we have the temple of Proteus before us. It will be excavated next season.

8. Osiris-Sokar had a temple here, in a place named Aper (Mariette, *Abydos*, i, 46), otherwise named Bahti or Fat (Mar. *Ab.* i, 48a); also in *Ankh-tawi*, a quarter of Memphis, where the *nebes* and *sont* trees grew (De Rougé, *Edfou*, cxliii). How far these names refer to one temple is not known. Sokar is probably a very early god, and we should look for his shrine near the Apis region.

Khnum was worshipped in a temple near Memphis at Uafet (B.D.G. 146), and his sacred ram at Hatut (B.D.G. 175). The latter might be the name of the shrine only, in the place named Uafet.

Bast had a temple at Pa-penat (*Mon. Div.* 34d); and Sekhmet was at Fuat (B.G.D. 240), though probably also worshipped with Ptah in his temple.

Tahuti had a temple built by Ramessu II. (Br. *Rec.* iii, 224). The Aten was adored here (Rougé, *Inscr.* 54), and blocks of the work of Akhenaten were found by Sir Chas. Nicholson and others. The temple of the Kabiri was entered by Cambyses, who burnt their images; who the Kabiri were we cannot say, but they are described as being sons of Ptah, and like him (H. iii, 37). Apparently there was a shrine of Anubis, as we read of "the road of Anpu" (B.D.G. 1108). The principal long road remaining, is that paved with red granite through Kom en Nawy, leading to the limestone temple (see building east of sacred lake, Pl. XXVII); possibly this might be the temple of Anubis. There is also an allusion to Sebek, as the "Wall of Sebek" is named in the Harris papyrus.

We have now some clue to the number of temples that remain to be found in this great capital. There were doubtless many other chapels and dependencies which have escaped record.

9. Not only was there a foreign settlement at the

Kom el Qala', but farther north there seems to have been another. Prof. Sayce informed me of an inscription naming a settlement of the Hittites, described as north of the temple of Ptah, south of the temple of Tahutmes I and IV, and on the west of the mound which lay east of those temples. As the direct north of the Ptah temenos seems to have been occupied by the lake, we look north of the approach, to the Kom en Nawy. There is a quantity of granite building of late date, re-using red granite blocks of Amenemhat II and Aahmes-Si-Neit, at about T on the Kom. If this were the site of the temple of Tahutmes, then the Kom would be east of the temple, and the Hittite region might be about H, south of the temple, west of the Kom, and north of the Ptah temenos, as described. Such seems the most likely site to agree with all these data. It is stated to be 154 *set* in area. The *set* is supposed by Lepsius to be either 40 cubits or 100 cubits in the side (Brugsch, *Aegyptologie*, 373). If of the lesser size, the 154 *set* would be about two-thirds the area of Kom en Nawy, a very possible size for a foreign settlement.

Another foreign settlement is supposed to be indicated by the name Pa-ta-yaht, the land of Yah, or the Jews' quarter, of Roman age (B.D.G. 138). It is to be expected that the foreign quarters should be along the east side, nearest to the river, as commerce was their purpose.

10. The other parts of the site shewn in the map (Pl. I) are not connected with any description that we can trace. Our exploratory work was at various points. Those already named, or described farther on, are as follows:—the Great Gate and eastern line of the camp; at T, where some blocks were found under the palms; around all sides of the Ptah temenos; at the eastern entrance of Ptolemy IV; at the Temple of Merenptah; along the east side of the Apis site; on the west side, finding the Siamen building; south of Kom Helul for the pottery kilns; and at the West Hall and the pond. Other work not here described was a trial on the fort. The structure of that mound was settled to have been like that of the forts of Naukratis, Defenneh, and Pithom—a cellular platform to support buildings above it. A portion of a court on the top contained a fragment of an immense column of white limestone, with the cartouche of Apries, shewing that one of the palaces was of the XXVIth dynasty. The mound has been added to largely on the north face by extra walling. We tried to reach a corner deposit at the N.W., but were stopped by water. Some