

# EGYPT. THE LAST CENTURIES OF THE EMPIRE (747–332 BCE)



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## S u m m a r y

The book “Egypt. The Last Centuries of the Empire (747–332 BCE)” deals with issues related to the political and social history of Egypt in the period between the beginning of the rule of the Kushite pharaohs and Alexander the Great’s conquest of Egypt. The book comprises an introduction, ten chapters, a conclusion, three appendices and a bibliography.

The introduction leads the reader into relevant issues and remarks on the accepted convention of providing names and a chronological table. Chapter 1 (*The Napatan Dynasty*) discusses the history of the Kushite family reign and the Kushite conquest of Egypt (25<sup>th</sup> Dynasty). Chapter 2 (*Regarding God’s Wife of Amun*) focuses on the rule of successive Napatan rulers (Shebitku, Shabaka), the role of God’s Wife of Amun in the ideology of royal rulers in the Late Period, and also on the 19<sup>th</sup>-century research conducted by Count Michał Tyszkiewicz in the vicinity of the tombs of God’s Wives and their Kushite courtiers. Chapter 3 (*Assyrians at the Gates*) discusses the reigns of Egypt’s last Kushite pharaohs. Chapter 4 (*The Golden Age*) summarises the first years of the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty and changes initiated by its founder, Psametik I. In Chapter 5 (*Naucratis and the Sunken City*), there is a discussion of discoveries: Flinders Petrie’s discovery of Naucratis and Franck Goddio’s of Thonis-Heracleion, and also of the history of the 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty rulers (Necho II, Psametik II) and their relations with the Greek world. Chapter 6 (*Persians at the Gates*) deals with the reign of the dynasty’s last rulers (Apries, Amasis, Psametik III), the Persian king Cambyses’ conquest of Egypt, and also funeral rites in Egypt in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE. Chapter 7 (*Egypt in the Times of Herodotus*) describes everyday life in Egypt in the first period of Persian rule, and also contains fragments of accounts written by

travellers to Egypt in ancient (Herodotus) and modern times (Amelia Edwards). Chapter 8 (*Three Turbulent Decades*) discusses Egyptian rebellions against Persian domination, including that of 404 BCE, which cast off the Persian yoke and initiated the 28<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, as well as the rule of the Mendes kings (29<sup>th</sup> Dynasty). Chapter 9 (*The Last Egyptian Builders*) is devoted to the first two pharaohs of the 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty (Nectanebo I, Teos), the beginnings of Egyptian minting, and the phenomenon of “hyperarchaism” present in Egyptian art and architecture in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Chapter 10 (*Alexander at the Gates*) discusses the reign of the last ruler of the 30<sup>th</sup> Dynasty, Nectanebo II, and the Persians reconquering of Egypt, along with a description of the situation in Egypt on the verge of being conquered by Alexander the Great. This part of the book ends with conclusions derived from studying the history of Egypt in the Late Period.

The book contains three appendices. Appendix A is a list of sources cited in the text, along with information about the most important available translations (including those in Polish). Appendix B is a calendar of the reigns of Egypt’s Late Period rulers (dates, events). Appendix C lists current Polish archaeological expeditions in Egypt (position, name of head and short description of expedition). The book closes with a bibliography.

*Translated by Rob Pagett*