

ANCIENT EGYPT

By George Constantourakis

The History of Ancient Egypt stretches roughly from 3100 BC, when a unified kingdom was first created, to 30 BC, when Egypt became a Roman province. In the intervening millennia, Egypt experienced alternative phases of strong, centralized government and periods of near anarchy, when competing dynasties and local rulers fought for power. The Periods marked by strong government at home and expansionist policies abroad are called the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom and the New Kingdom. The Chaotic phases are called Intermediate Periods (I - III). In the so-called Late Period, the centuries prior to Alexander's conquest, Egypt lacked central authority and became easy prey for the great expansionist powers from the North-East.

ARCHAIC PERIOD (3100 - 2575 BC)

THE AGE FOR A UNIFIED KINGDOM - DYNASTIES 1 to 3.

Following the creation of a unified kingdom embracing Lower and Upper Egypt, the Archaic Period rules still faced considerable internal opposition. Only by the beginning of the 3rd Dynasty did a ruler become strong enough to command the entire country. This was king Djoser (2631 -2623 BC). He was able to order the building of his tomb in the form of a Step Pyramid at Saqqara, the first monumental stone building.

OLD KINGDOM (2575 - 2150 BC)

THE AGE OF THE PYRAMIDS - DYNASTIES 4 to 6.

With the power of the central government well established throughout the country Egypt entered an era of peace and stability. This resulted in building projects of such impact that Ancient Egypt is still associated with one particular type of building: the Pyramid. Building the Pyramids was only possible through an efficient administration and technological advances. The Great Pyramids on the Giza plateau by the kings of the 4th Dynasty Cheops (2551-2528 BC), Chephren (2518-2492 BC) and Mycerinus (2490 -2472 BC) mark the zenith of the power of the King or Pharaoh. During the Old Kingdom, arts peaked and the Sun cult became the driving force behind religion.

The Traditional Pyramid Complex

Pyramids were the focal point of a mortuary complex. The site of the complex was chosen on a sound rocky hillside on the west side of the Nile. The Pyramids align with a true north/south axis. The perimeter of the Pyramid base once laid out, would be smoothed with exactitude. While preparations were under way on the Pyramid side, groups of workers would be cutting a canal from the Nile river to the foot of the desert plateau and smoothing a wide causeway from a quayside to the Pyramid itself. In this way, blocks of stone would be shipped close to the building site. These stones would be dragged up the causeway on sledges. Once the first layer of stone was in place, a mud-brick ramp would be erected, increasing in height as the Pyramid grew. Once on top of the ramp, stones would have to be moved into position. The internal corridors and security precautions were established as the Pyramid was being built. The Pyramid was used as a king's tomb. On his death, his body would be taken by boat to the foot of the Pyramid complex, then it would be carried along the causeway to the east face of the Pyramid. Once the body was placed within the Pyramid then the Pyramid would be sealed. The building of the Great Pyramids took 20 years.

SITES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 1) FIRST TRUE T.C.V. (MAXIMUM) CARD ON A PICTURE

POSTCARD (THE SPHINX & THE GREAT PYRAMID OF CHEOPS) (1900)

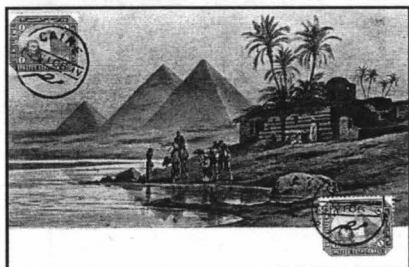
This picture postcard was addressed to *L. Couten in Marseilles*; probably by friends or family, travelling or stationed in Egypt. The first true T.C.V. (concordant) Cards on Picture Postcards - what it will later become known as 'Maximum Cards' - were realized by chance at the beginning of the 20th century by tourists to Egypt, who wanted to mail a souvenir of their travels to friends back home. They were probably postcard collectors. They affixed a stamp of the Pyramids or Sphinx on the view side of a postcard illustrating the same monument. Then the place cancellation CAIRE tied the stamp to the card. Thus the first true Maximum Cards originated, but the term 'Maximum Card' won't be employed till after 1932.. These cards were first called T.C.V. (Timbre Cote Vue) and later 'Analogical Cards'. Stamp: 2m. green; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: German Edition, nr. 1906 (undivided back). Cancel: Mar. 25, 1900, CAIRE. Arrival Cancel: Aug. 1, 1900, MARSEILLES.

(Figure 2) **THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZA**

The Great Pyramid of Cheops (Khufu) was built in 2550 BC on a high rocky ridge of the west bank of the Nile. It stands 146.60 m (481 ft) tall, its base is 230.30m (756 ft) square and comprises 2.5 million blocks, each weighing 2.5 tons. The Pyramid of Chephren (Khaefre) son of Cheops was built in 2520 BC lying just south of the Great Pyramid, is only 3m lower. The third most southerly Pyramid was by Mycerinus (Menkaure) and stands 61m tall and is dwarfed by the other two Pyramids. Stamp: 2m. green; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: Union Postale Universelle, Egypte (undivided back). Cancel: May 16, 1903, CAIRE-STATION.

(Figure 3) Stamp: 2m. green; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: Lekegian nr. 428 (undiv. back). Cancel: June 18, 1904. Arrival Cancel: June 23, 1904, JOUE-LES-TOURS

(Figure 4) Stamp: 1m. brown; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: German Edition, Aegypten, set 3, nr. 3522. Cancel: June 5, 1906, CAIRE



SITES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 5) THE SPHINX AND THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

Stamp: 4m. brown red; Typo. Issue: - 1906. Card: Liechentern & Harari, Cairo, nr. 20. Cancel: May 2, 1908, CAIRO

(Figure 6) THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

Stamp: 4m. brown red; Typo. Issue: - 1906. Card: British Edition L.L. nr. 19. Cancel: Mar. 3, 1908, CAIRO- GRAND CONTINENTAL HOTEL

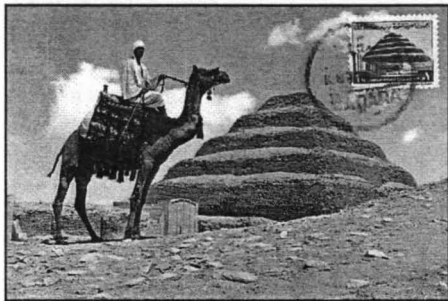
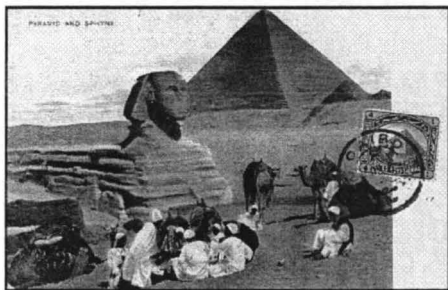
(Figure 7) THE PYRAMIDS OF GIZA

Stamp: 4m. brown red; Typo. Issue: - 1906. Card: British Edition L.L. nr. 74. Cancel: Apr. 3, 1913, CAIRO- SHEPHARDS HOTEL

(Figure 8) THE STEP PYRAMIDS AT SAQARA

Saqara lies south of Giza, near the necropolis of Memphis, where several Pharaohs were buried. Saqara's most famous monument is the Stepped Pyramid of Zoser c.2650 BC standing 68m high. This is the earliest such example; regular Pyramids came later.

Stamp: 1m. multi; Photo. Issue: - 1970. Card: Lehnert, Cairo, nr. 155. Cancel: Feb. 14, 1977, SAQARA (place of site).



SITES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 9) **THE SPHINX** (by the PYRAMIDS OF GIZA)

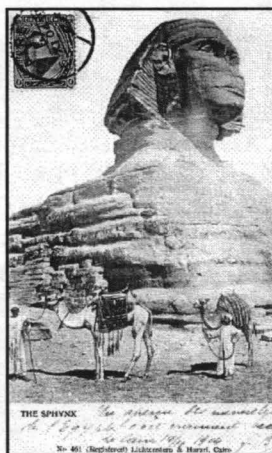
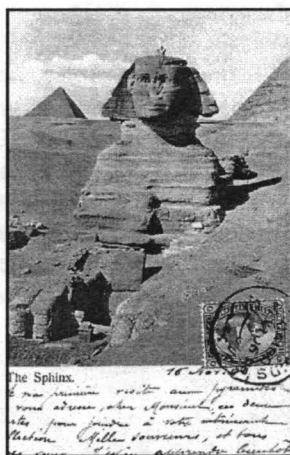
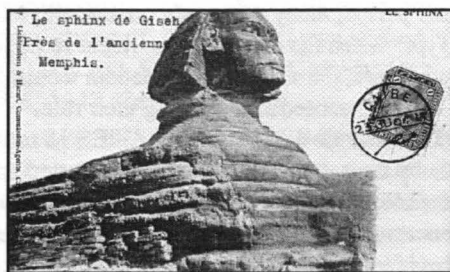
This man-headed lion statue stands 20m high and 73.20m long. It is cut from a natural outcrop of limestone. It represents one aspect of the sun-god RE-HARAKHTE. Its face is said to be that of Chephren since it stands alongside Chephren's causeway.

Stamp: 1m. brown; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: Liechentern & Harari. 447 (undivided back). Cancel: July 28, 1904, CAIRE

(Figure 10) Stamp: 5m. carmine-rose; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: Union Postale Universelle, Egypte (undivided back). Cancel: Nov. 16, 1906, PYRAMIDS, CAIRO

(Figure 11) Stamp: 5m. carmine-rose; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: Liechentern & Harari. 461 (undivided back). Cancel: Nov. 15, 1904, CAIRE

(Figure 12) Stamp: 2m. green; Typo. Issue: - 1888. Card: Union Postale Universelle, Egypte. Cancel: Nov. 16, 1906, CAIRO. Arrival Cancel: Nov. 21, 1906, SIENA, Italy.



ANCIENT EGYPT (Continued)

1st INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (2150 - 2040 BC)

DECLINE & CIVIL WAR - DYNASTIES 7 to 11.

Towards the end of the 6th Dynasty, the central government started losing control over the local administrations in the provinces. Out of this chaos arose two rivalling houses, plunging Egypt into a civil war, seeking control over the entire country.

MIDDLE KINGDOM (2040-1640 BC) CLASSICAL ERA - DYNASTIES 11 to 13

The reunification of Egypt by the Thebes ruler Mentuhotep II ended the century of civil war that had followed the Old Kingdom. It also promoted Thebes from a simple provincial city to one of Egypt's most important religious and political centers. This was the time of restoration, when arts, crafts and Egypt's political power would flourish again to a new height. This era was considered as Egypt's classical age.

2nd INTERMEDIATE PERIOD (1640 - 1540 BC) - THE AGE OF THE HYKSOS

The later kings of the 13th Dynasty gradually lost control over the central government allowing local rulers to once again seize power. Among them was a group of people of Asian origin, known as the Hyksos, who would impose their rule on almost the entire country. During the Hyksos period, many new tools, such as the wheel and new weapons, were introduced into Egypt. When the local Theban rulers stopped recognizing the Hyksos as Egypt's legitimate rulers, the struggle for freedom would begin. Kamose (1545 - 1540 BC) ruler of Thebes succeeded in ending their rule.

NEW KINGDOM (1540-1070 BC) AGE OF THE EMPIRE - DYNASTIES 18 to 20.

With the expulsion of the Hyksos by the rulers of Thebes, Egypt started on an imperial adventure that would make it the most powerful nation of its time. Through a series of conquests the Egyptians gained control over Syria - Palestine and Nubia to the south. Bounties and diplomatic gifts provided Egypt with a wealth that found its way to building projects of an unprecedented scale. The best such example, is the long and prosperous reign of Ramses II (1304 - 1237 BC - 19th Dynasty) marks the last great peak of Egyptian power. He concluded a peace treaty with the Hittites in 1283 BC and became a great builder. He has left many monuments among them the two huge sandstone temples at Abu Simbel, carved out of the Nile bank near Aswan.

LATE DYNASTIC PERIOD (1070 - 332)

DECLINE OF POWER - DYNASTIES 21 to 30.

At the end of the 20th Dynasty, feuds and increased power of the Theban priests left Egypt unable to deal with the changing political situation. The prestige Egypt held during the New Kingdom was lost along with its possessions in Nubia and Syria - Palestine. Egypt, weakened and internally divided, lay open to attacks from abroad. Assyria conquered Egypt in 671 BC and Persia in 525 BC.

GREEK - PTOLEMAIC PERIOD (332 - 30 BC) - THE GREAT TEMPLES

When Alexander the Great entered Egypt, he welcomed as liberator from the Persian rule. He founded a new city on shores of the Mediterranean, Alexandria. His successors, the Ptolemies continued the policy of restoration. They also supported the building of new temples and ruled Egypt as an independent country and again made it one of the most prestigious countries. The Ptolemaic Period ended with Cleopatra. She was a capable and gifted ruler, however she became involved in the power struggle of the Romans. She chose the wrong side e.g. Antonius over Augustus. After their defeat at Actium, she committed suicide and thus Egypt became a Roman province.

SITES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 13) **THE TEMPLE OF RAMSES II AT ABU SIMBEL**

In the late 1950's this rock cut Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel in southern Egypt, was moved block by block to a new location 60.9m higher, in order to avoid flooding from the new dam at Aswan. This was an superhuman international effort supported by UNESCO. Here are depicted four Colossal Seated Statues of Ramses II at 20.1m high on the front of the temple. Issue: Oct. 24, 1963. For: Air Mail use. Card: Lehnert, Cairo. Cancel: First Day, Alexandrial, special.

(Figure 14) **THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR (THEBES)**

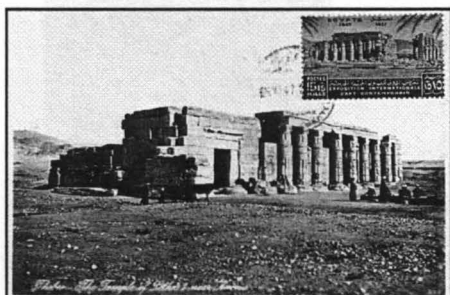
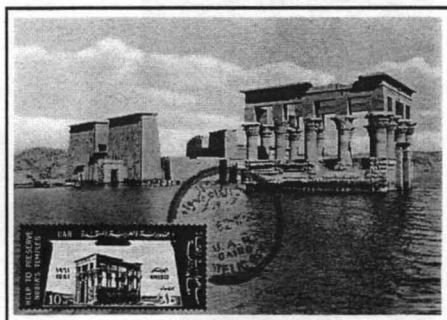
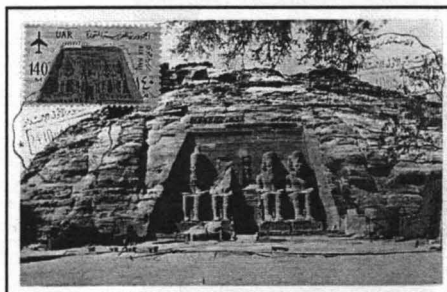
The Temple of Luxor in southern Egypt was built by Amenhotep III c. 1380 BC. A century later Ramses II extended it adding the great pylon gateway and a courtyard. Here are depicted 3 colossal statues of Ramses II among the tall colonnade. Issue: 1970. Card: Lehnert, Cairo, nr. 604. Cancel: Feb. 23, 1973, LUCSOR

(Figure 15) **THE RAMESSEUM (THEBES)**

This huge Temple on the west bank of Luxor. It was built for the cult of Ramses II. Reliefs here show the army assembling ready to march north and scenes of the siege of Hittite city of Dapur. Most noticeable are the remains of a huge seated granite colossal statue of Ramses II known as the Colossus of Ozymandias. Issue: Mar. 8, 1947. For: Intl. Exposition of Contemporary Art. Card: Lehnert, Cairo. Cancel: Mar. 8, 1947, Cairo.

(Figure 16) **THE TEMPLE OF ISIS AT PHILAE - TRAJANS KIOSK**

This Temple of Isis at Philae near in southern Egypt, was built on the Nile island of Agilkia. The Temple of Isis was considered as the pearl of Egypt. Even after Christianity came to the area, Nubians continued to worship Isis. Issue: Nov.4, 1961. For: 15th anniv. of UNESCO and to publisize UNESCO's help in saving the Monuments of Nubia. Card: Lehnert, Cairo, nr. 232. Cancel: Feb. 14, 1962, Cairo.



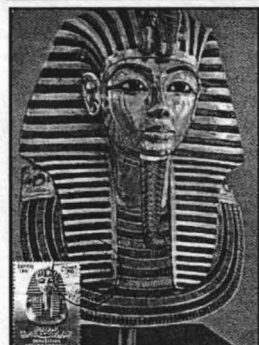
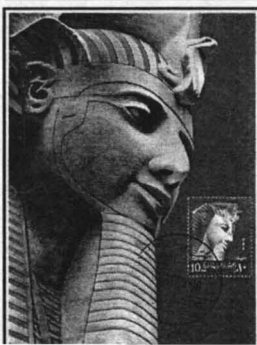
PERSONAGES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 17) **PHARAOH CHEPHREN (KHAEFRE)** Son of Cheops (Old Kingdom - 4th Dynasty) was the builder of the 2nd Pyramid of Giza, lying just south of the Great Pyramid of Cheops, is only 3m lower. This statue shows Chephren seated on his throne. At the back of his head a Horus falcon spreads its wings to protect him. On the side of his throne is carved the symbol for the union of Upper and Lower Egypt with plants of the two lands. Issue: Dec. 24, 1969. Cancel: First Day, Cairo.

(Figure 18) **KING MYCERINUS, GODDESS HATHOR(left) & LOCAL GODDESS** Mycerinus (Menkaure) brother of Chephren (Old Kingdom - 4th Dynasty) was the builder of the 3rd most southerly Pyramid that stands 61m tall and is dwarfed by the other two Pyramids of Giza. This triad statue was found in the valley temple of this small Pyramid, standing only 93cm tall and is made of finely polished greywacke. Issue: Mar. 9, 1947. Cancel: First Day, Cairo, special

(Figure 19) **GOLD MASK OF TUTANKHAMUN** Tutankhamun (New Kingdom - 18th Dynasty, r.1361-1352 BC) was the son of the infamous Pharaoh Akhenaten by the little known minor wife, Queen Kiya. He became Pharaoh at the age 12 and died young with a suspicious head wound. He is famous to us on account of the 1922 discovery of his tomb with all its treasures intact. Issue: Mar. 9, 1947. Cancel: First Day, Cairo.

(Figure 20) **RAMSES II** (c 1304-1237 BC) His long and prosperous reign marked the last great peak of Egyptian power (New Kingdom - 19th Dynasty). He stabilized the Northern frontier with the Hittites and left great monuments, like those at Abu Simbel. Issue: 1959. Cancel: July 31, 1961, Cairo.



PERSONAGES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 21) **NEFERTITI** (c. 1350 BC)

Egyptian Queen, principal wife of Akhenaton. She was immortalized in the beautiful sculptured head found in 1912 at Tell el Amarna (half way between Luxor and Giza), now at Aegyptisches Museum in Berlin. Issue: Oct. 15, 1956. For: Intl. Museum Week (UNESCO) Oct. 8-14. Cancel: Mar. 22, 1960, Cairo.

(Figure 22) **NEFERTITI** (c. 1350 BC)

Issue: Jan. 12, 1984. For: Historic Objects and Sits. Card: Aegyptischen Museum, Berlin, nr. 326D. Cancel: Nov. 10, 1988, Berlin (place kept).

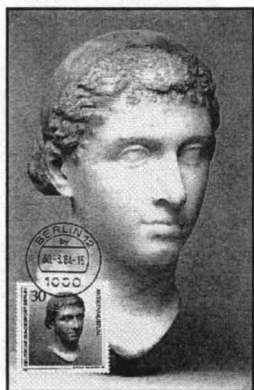
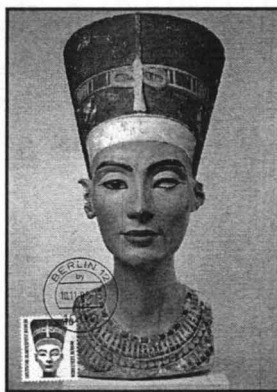
(Figure 23) **PRINCESS NOFRET** (c. 2650 BC)

Wife of Prince Rahotep a son of king Snofru (Old Kingdom - 4th Dynasty). Nofret's jewels are detailed in brightly colored paint. Her inlaid eyes - of rock crystal with amethyst irises - give her an astonishing liveliness.

Issue: Mar. 18, 1961. Cancel: F.D. Mar. 18, 1961, Cairo, special.

(Figure 24) **CLEOPATRA VII** (69 - 30 BC)

Bust in marble at the Antiken Museum in Berlin. Queen of Egypt of Greek origin. A woman of great intelligence, she managed to delay Egypt's annexation by Rome. Defeated along with Antony at Actium, she chose suicide than capture by the Romans. Issue: Jan. 12, 1984. For: To publisize Antiquities Museum Week. Card: B. Hartmann, Berlin, nr. 585. Cancel: Mar. 30, 1984, Berlin (place kept).



PERSONAGES OF ANCIENT EGYPT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 25) GOLDEN STATUE OF KING TUTANKHAMUN THE

HARPOONER (c 1347-1339 BC). The EGYPTIAN MUSEUM, Cairo

This statue of Tutankhamun on a boat is part of the treasures from his tomb at Thebes

Issue: Apr. 26, 1972. For: 50th anniv. of the discovery of the tomb of Tutnkhamen.

Card: G.Rainbird Ltd, London. Cancel: First Day, London, special mention:

TUTANKHAMEN THE HARPOONER

(Figure 26) RAMSES II (c 1304-1237 BC) CELEBRATING HIS VICTORY

Carved Relief from the Abu Simbel Temple, depicting Ramses II on his chariot

celebrating his victory in the South. His long, prosperous reign marked the last great

peak of Egyptian power. He stabilized the Northern frontier with the Hittites and left

great monuments at Abu Simbel. Issue: Sept. 4, 1976. For: Works of Art. Card: P.A.C.

Soissons Cancel: F. D. Paris, special mention: RAMSES II, ABU SIMBEL TEMPLE

(Figure 27) RAMSES II ON HIS THRONE

Carved Relief from the Abu Simbel Temple, depicting Ramses II seated on his throne. Issue: Sept. 1, 1965. For: UNESCO

campaign to save the monuments of Nubia. Cancel: Jan. 31, 1966, Male, Maldives

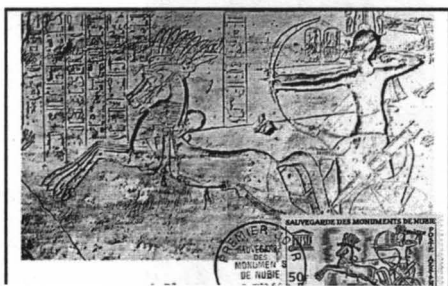
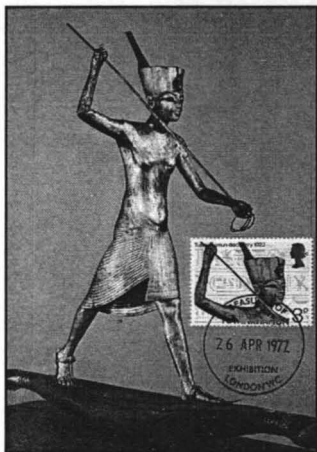
(Figure 28) RAMSES II (c 1304-1237 BC) BATTLING THE HITTITES

Carved Relief from the Abu Simbel Temple, depicting Ramses II on his chariot

battling the Hittites in Syria. Issue: Mar. 9, 1969. For: UNESCO campaign to save the

historic monuments of Nubia. Cancel: First Day, Fort Lamy, special mention:

SAUVEGARDE DES MONUMENTS DE NUBIE



HIEROGLYPHICS - SCRIBES Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 29) **THE ROSETTA STONE**, BRITISH MUSEUM. London

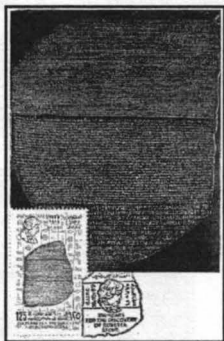
This is a black basalt slab, with trilingual inscription in Greek and Egyptian hieroglyphic and demotic, found in 1799 at the Nile delta near Alexandria. The Greek language gave Jean Francois Champollion the clues he needed to decipher the hieroglyphs and thus enable scholars to study the ancient Egyptian texts. Issue: Oct. 16, 1999. For: 200 years Discovery of Rosetta Stone. Card: Musee Champollion, Figeac (Lot) Cancel: First Day, Cairo, special illustr. and mention: 200 YEARS DISCOVERY OF ROSETTA STONE

(Figure 30) **CHAMPOLLION, JEAN - FRANCOIS** (1790 - 1832), by de Rouge
Champollion, using the clues of the Greek language from the Rosetta Stone, became the first to decipher the hieroglyphs successfully in 1822. Hieroglyphs are pictures used to write the language of ancient Egyptians. These hieroglyphic symbols were not idiomatic but partly alphabetic, with strict grammatical form. Issue: Oct. 16, 1999. For: 200 years Discovery of Rosetta Stone. Card: Musee Champollion, Figeac (Lot) Cancel: First Day, Cairo, special illustr. and mention: 200 YEARS DISCOVERY OF ROSETTA STONE

(Figure 31) **SEATED EGYPTIAN SCRIBE** (c. 2720 BC) EGYPTIAN MUSEUM.
Egyptian scribes began training in childhood. Theirs was a guarded profession, its skills were passed down from father to son. Would be scribes were required to learn not only Reading and Writing, but also Algebra, Religion and Law. The studies were demanding, but the rewards were great. Issue: Jan. 22, 1985. For: 17th Intl. Book Fair (Jan. 22-Feb. 3, '85). Card: Lehnert, Cairo nr. 253. Cancel: Mar. 15, 1985, Cairo

(Figure 32) **EGYPTIAN SCRIBES WITH NOTEPADS** (c. 2420 BC)

Scribes with notepads (on stamp) detail of a painting from the Sechemnofer II burial chamber, pyramid of Cheops, Giza. Issue: Nov. 30, 1984. For: Stamp Day 1984
Cancel: First Day, Linz - Donau.



ANIMALS OF THE SAHARA DESERT Clockwise from Left:**(Figure 33) ONE-HUMPED CAMEL** (*Camelus dromedarius*)

Camel became the desert man's primary source of transport, shade, milk, meat, wool and hides. Camels can be unpredictable from tempered and obstinate animals who spit and kick to good-tempered, patient and intelligent. A Camel can go 5-7 days with little or no food and water and it uses its hump fat to draw energy when there is no food. A Camel's eyes are large, protected by a double row of long curly eyelashes that also help keep out sand and dust; thick eyebrows protect from the sun. When walking the Camel moves both feet on one side of its body, then both on the other. Issue: - 1921. Card: LL, Scenes et Types, nr. 6174. Cancel: Dec. 8, 1937, Tombouctou, Soudan Francais.

(Figure 34) TRAVEL BY CAMEL ACROSS THE SAHARA

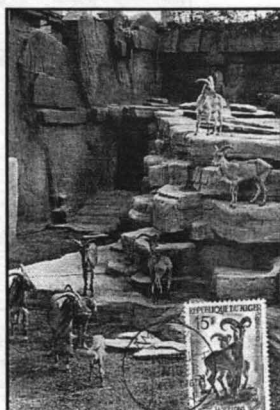
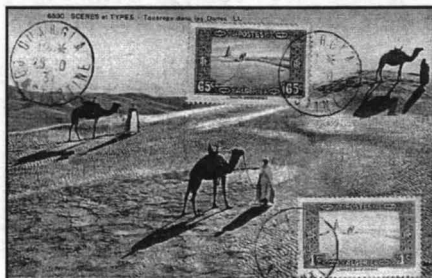
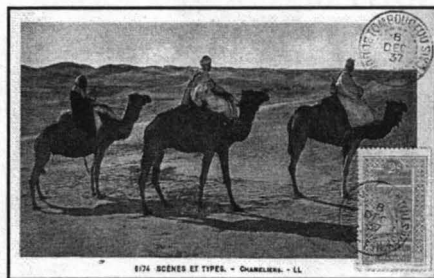
Issue: - 1936 (1m. and 65m.). For: Sites of Algeria. Card: LL, Scenes et Types, nr. 1530. Cancel: Oct. 29, 1937, Constantine, Algeria

(Figure 35) MOUFLON (*Ammotragus lervia*)

A wild sheep with a short tail and thick curling horns. The Mouflon or Ram was sacred to the ancient Egyptian straight-horned ram-headed god KNUM who created the human race on his potter wheel. Issue: June 12, 1960. For: Protection of Fauna of Niger. Card: Nels, Antwerpen, nr. 31. Cancel: First Day, Niamey, Niger.

(Figure 36) FENNEC FOX (or DESERT FOX)

A small nocturnal Fox, native to deserts of North Africa. Thick pale coat, enormous ears, digs burrows in sand; eats rodents, lizards, insects etc. Issue: Apr. 6, 1957. For: French Red Cross. Card: Bourgogne/Union Maximaphile Algerienne. Cancel: First Day, Alger, special mention.



ANIMALS OF THE SAHARA DESERT Clockwise from Left:**(Figure 37) STATUE OF HORUS (FALCON)**

In ancient Egypt the Falcon was a sacred bird both to the Sun-god RE and to the Sky-god HORUS. Horus was associated with the land of the dead. He guided the deceased through the chambers of the underworld.

Issue: July 23, 1978. Cancel: First Day, Cairo, special.

(Figure 38) EGYPTIAN COBRA

A venomous African snake; neck has loose skin which can be spread as a "hood" when alarmed. Queen Cleopatra is said to have committed suicide by a cobra's bite to avoid capture by the Romans.

Issue: July 12, 1980. For: Fauna of Ivory Coast. Card: Institute Royal...de Belgique; Reptiles du Congo, nr. 1. Cancel: First Day, Abidjan, special.

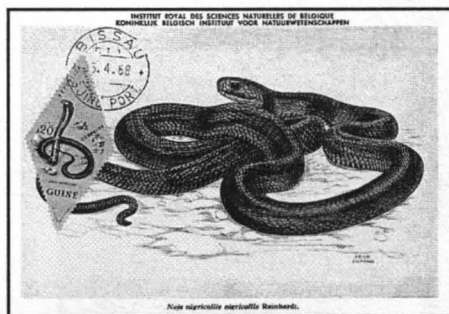
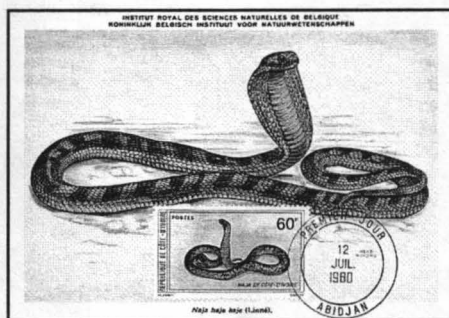
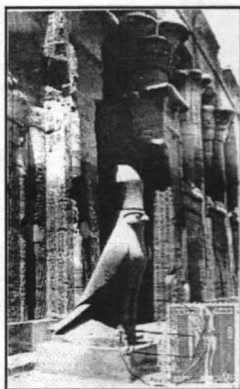
(Figure 39) EGYPTIAN COBRA

Issue: Jan. 17, 1963. For: African Snakes. Card: Institute Royal...de Belgique; Reptiles du Congo, nr. 8. Cancel: Apr. 15, 1968, Bissau - Guine Port.

(Figure 40) GRIFFON VULTURE (*Gyps fulvus*)

Huge Vulture (97 - 104cm). Body and wing-coverts uniform ginger-buff. Flight feathers and tail dark brown or blackish. Whitish ruff at base of neck.

Issue: Mar. 24, 1962. For: Fauna and Flora of Somali Coast. Card: Institute Royal...de Belgique, nr. 127. Cancel: First Day, Djibouti, special.



ANIMALS OF THE SAHARA DESERT Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 41) **OSTRICH** (*Struthio camelus*)

The largest bird, height up to 2.50meters; flightless. Mainly black plumage with pinkish neck and legs. It has the largest eggs of any bird. It is found in pairs and small groups in open dry areas of Africa. Issue: Apr. 10, 1957. For: Fauna of Spanish Sahara. Card: N. Boubee, Paris. Cancel: July 6, 1578, Villa Cisneros.

(Figure 42) **OSTRICH** (*Struthio camelus*)

Issue: Sept. 10, 1996. For: World Wild Fund for Nature. Card: W.W.F. Cancel: First Day, N' Djamena, Chad, special.

ANIMALS OF THE NILE RIVER

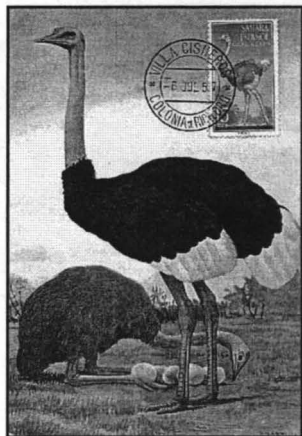
(Figure 43) **SACRED IBIS**

Mainly white with dark head and neck; soft dark plumes on tail; eats fish and insects; lives in wetlands. Native to Africa south of the Sahara, formerly also in Egypt.

Issue: - 1960. For: Fauna and Flora of Somali Coast. Card: Institute Royal...de Belgique/Oiseaux du Congo, nr. 14. Cancel: Dec. 26, 1961, Djibouti, special.

(Figure 44) **EGYPTIAN DUCKS ARISING FROM LOTUS FLOWERS AND**

PAPYRUS From the floor in Akhenaton's Palace (14th cent. BC), Tell el Amarna, now at Cairo Museum. The Egyptian Duck (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*) is a large, goose-like duck (72cm), resident of Egypt. It is brown above, greyer below with prominent patches around the eyes. Frequent loud wheezing and honking calls. Issue: Feb. 27, 1978. For: Historic Sites of Egypt. Cancel: First Day, Cairo, special.



ANIMALS OF THE NILE RIVER Clockwise from Left:

(Figure 45) NILE CROCODILE

The Nile Crocodile is one the largest living crocodiles, reaching a length up to 25 f (7.50 m) and weigh over one tone. It has a long and slender snout and its 4th tooth from the front of the lower jaw is visible when jaws are closed (unlike the alligator). Issue: May 23, 1984. For: Endangered Species - World Wild Fund for Nature.

Card: W.W.F. Cancel: First Day, The Gambia, special.

(Figure 46) YOUNG NILE CROCODILES

Young Nile Crocodiles are about 30cm long when they emerge from their eggs afte an incubation period of around 90 days. Issue: May 23, 1984. For: Endangered Species - World Wild Fund for Nature. Card: W.W.F. Cancel: F.D. The Gambia.

(Figure 47) HIPPOPOTAMUS

Hippopotamus is found in tropical African rivers (e.g. Nile). It spends the day in water, emerges at night; can submerge for five minutes. Large barrel-shaped body, large oblong head. Issue: - 1947. For: Fauna & Flora, Sites & People of French West Africa.. Card: Institute Royal...de Belgique/Mammiferes du Congo, n° 27. Cancel: June 15, 1954, Abidjan, French West Africa.

(Figure 48) HIPPOPOTAMUS

Issue: Aug. 16, 1994. For: Wild Animals. Card: New Zealand Post Cancel: First Day, Wanganui, special.

