

The background of the cover is a desert landscape at sunset or sunrise. The sky is a gradient of orange and red. In the foreground, there are several palm trees of varying heights. In the middle ground, a large pyramid is visible, partially obscured by the trees. The overall scene is a classic representation of ancient Egypt.

# ANCIENT EGYPT 39,000 BCE

## The History, Technology, and Philosophy of **CIVILIZATION X**

EDWARD F. MALKOWSKI

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and Philosophy of  
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Bear & Company  
Rochester, Vermont • Toronto, Canada

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It has been a pleasure working with two progressive and open-minded scientists: John Cadman and Thomas Malkowski. Their scientific insights have been an invaluable source.

John Cadman, I believe, will someday go down in the history books for his experiments and modeling of the Great Pyramid's subterranean chamber and passageways. To the best of my knowledge, he is the only person to experimentally demonstrate something, anything, about Giza's Great Pyramid. In my opinion, his work is the discovery of the century.

Thomas Malkowski, my son, has proven over the years to be a challenging antagonist. As a studying physicist, he has more than once steered me in the correct direction while I've been in the process of building a viable theory to explain ancient Egypt's network of pyramids. He shares the credit with me for the pyramid theory put forth in this book.

The quest to understand ancient Egyptian civilization encompasses many years of work by many researchers, including John Burke and Philip Callahan and their research about ancient agriculture; John Anthony West and Robert Schoch for their research into the age of the Sphinx; Christopher Dunn for his work in discovering proof positive that the civilization that built the pyramids employed some type of machine tools; Dr. Paul LaViolette and his research into galactic core bursts; and Richard Firestone, Allen West, and Simon Warwick-Smith for their work in discovering evidence of prehistoric gamma-ray bursts and their consequences for life on Earth.

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## FOREWORD

My own journey into the subject of ancient Egypt began in early 1999. At that time I had no interest in the pyramids, and like most people, I assumed they were little more than overrated piles of rock that had been used for someone's burial. Also at that time I never dreamed I would one day be writing a foreword to one of the most fascinating books regarding ancient Egypt.

Winters are dark and rainy in northwest Washington. With little else to do, I had made a habit of exploring local bookstores. On one such outing in 1999 I came across Edward Kunkel's book *The Pharaoh's Pump*, which put forth an interesting proposition: the Great Pyramid had a hydraulic ram pump built into the subterranean section. Although Kunkel's work had been around since the early 1960s, I had never heard of it, and after reading it, it made no sense to me—except for one section. Kunkel claimed that an advanced whirlpool had once existed within the subterranean chamber. For me, that not only seemed plausible, but quite ingenious.

Intrigued, I sorted through dozens of books and scoured the Internet for pictures and descriptions of the subterranean section of the Great Pyramid. As a result of this research, my interest continued to grow, and I soon embarked on a quest to build a model of the subterranean section. Almost exactly a year after learning of Kunkel's theory, I completed a running model of this subterranean section, 1:4 scale (¼ inch to the foot). My approach was scientific. In addition to building the model, I described specific experimental setups and recording designs. I reported all the results; these can be viewed on my website.<sup>\*1</sup>

That was seven years ago. Since then, my work—unaltered since 2002 when the final subterranean flows were determined—has been critiqued by some of the top people in the engineering field and held strong. The models that I built can be built by anyone, which I strongly encourage anyone with a keen interest to do. (For you *Mythbusters* fans, I have submitted my work on the Great Pyramid subterranean chamber to them.)

A year ago Edward Malkowski informed me that he intended to describe my work in his book *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE* and that my work was going to be the basis for a new theory on the purpose of the pyramids and the Great Pyramid. Much of the evidence he describes in this book is scientific and backed by substantial data, and I am proud to be part of it.

For me, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE* is the culmination of years of discovery by a number of people that comes together to paint a fascinating picture of the past. These individuals present not only their views, but their personal research, undertaken over the decades. John Anthony West and Robert Schoch's research and compelling theory is presented here: that rainfall eroded the Great Sphinx, thus redating its carving by thousands of years. Sir William Flinders Petrie and Christopher Dunn's insightful analysis of precision granite artifacts is covered extensively, with beautiful photographs. However, the most important artifact, in my opinion, is "the stone at Abu Rawash," dubbed by Malkowski "the new Rosetta Stone." I completely agree with him that its discovery will eventually change how we view history.

Indeed, my own research into the past parallels Malkowski's, particularly one of the least understood events—the end of the Ice Age and the death of millions of animals and numerous species.

Around 9750 BCE, with the end of the Ice Age, came the formation of the Carolina Bays, more than 500,000 shallow elliptical depressions found along North America's Atlantic coastal plain from New Jersey to Florida. At the bottom of these "bays" is an unusual blue clay containing iridium, carbon spherules, and nanodiamonds, which have been determined to be extraterrestrial markers. Ted Bunch, Richard Firestone, and Ken Tankersley propose that the formation of these bays is linked to the Younger Dryas impact event, which may have led to the extinction of large mammals, such as mammoths, and the Clovis people, the first inhabitants of North America.

I especially appreciate Malkowski's coverage of this episode in Earth's history in chapter 11, "An Invisible Cataclysm." Any civilization that existed prior to the end of the Ice Age would have suffered as greatly as the animals did. The decimation of a technical society would certainly explain the evidence put forth here.

After being captivated by ancient Egypt in 1999, I purchased a great number of orthodox and alternative books about Egypt and trawled the Internet to uncover a wealth of information on the topic. If I were to recommend a single book on this subject, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE* would be the one I share with my friends. Edward Malkowski has assembled the best pictures and data, and I believe it is very important to know what others have already discovered and the wealth of historical information that has been put forth. It is my hope that you read this book with an open mind and enjoy the theories and opinions contained herein. And while we need to be open to new discoveries, these discoveries must be rigorously tested and analyzed.

It is also my wish that you pursue your own research to the best of your ability and always use your intuition and imagination. This was absolutely key for me.

JOHN CADMAN

John Cadman is a marine engineer who spent three years scientifically investigating the subterranean chamber of the Great Pyramid. As a consequence of his investigation, he invented the self-powered pulse pump, which pumps water without the aid of electricity. He also spent a number of years as the chief engineer of a king crab boat sailing the Bering Sea.



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## TIMELINE OF EGYPT'S PERIODS AND DYNASTIES

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<b>Predynastic Period</b>	(5500–3100 BCE)	<b>Second Intermediate Period</b>	
<b>Early Dynastic Period</b>		15th Dynasty	(1674–1567 BCE)
1st Dynasty	(2920–2770 BCE)	16th Dynasty	(1684–1567 BCE)
2nd Dynasty	(2770–2650 BCE)	17th Dynasty	(1650–1539 BCE)
<b>Old Kingdom</b>		<b>New Kingdom</b>	
3rd Dynasty	(2650–2575 BCE)	18th Dynasty	(1539–1295 BCE)
4th Dynasty	(2575–2467 BCE)	19th Dynasty	(1295–1186 BCE)
5th Dynasty	(2465–2323 BCE)	20th Dynasty	(1186–1069 BCE)
6th Dynasty	(2323–2152 BCE)	<b>Third Intermediate Period</b>	
<b>First Intermediate Period</b>		21st Dynasty	(1070–945 BCE)
7th Dynasty	(2160–2152 BCE)	22nd Dynasty	(945–712 BCE)
8th Dynasty	(2159–2130 BCE)	23rd Dynasty	(828–725 BCE)
9th Dynasty	(2130–2080 BCE)	24th Dynasty	(725–715 BCE)
10th Dynasty	(2080–2040 BCE)	25th Dynasty	(712–657 BCE)
<b>Middle Kingdom</b>		<b>Late Dynastic Period</b>	
11th Dynasty	(1986–1937 BCE)	26th Dynasty	(664–525 BCE)
12th Dynasty	(1937–1759 BCE)	27th Dynasty	(525–404 BCE)
13th Dynasty	(1759–1633 BCE)	28th Dynasty	(404–399 BCE)
14th Dynasty	(1786–1603 BCE)	29th Dynasty	(399–380 BCE)
		30th Dynasty	(380–343 BCE)
		31st Dynasty	(343–332 BCE)

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Note to the Reader: Some of these dynastic dates overlap, which is endemic to the field of Egyptology given the speculative nature of the discussion.

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## PREFACE

In the spring of 2004 I began work on my second book, *Before the Pharaohs: Egypt's Mysterious Prehistory*, a digest of John Anthony West and Robert Schoch's investigation into the possible prehistoric origin of ancient Egypt's Great Sphinx. Aside from telling the story of West and Schoch's research, I also searched for any evidence in the historical record indicating that a culture sophisticated and ambitious enough to carve a 200-foot-long lion out of bedrock might have existed. What I found was a mystery.

On one hand, I found no obvious physical evidence suggestive of the existence of an advanced prehistoric civilization—one that had some knowledge of physics and the means to implement that knowledge to create useful products. On the other hand, however, oral history as well as the historical record do claim that such a civilization existed; it was often referred to as the Golden Age. Most oral histories claim this civilization was antediluvian, and that it was destroyed by a great deluge. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that a worldwide flood ever occurred. Nor does a worldwide flood make any sense, since a flood of that proportion would have seriously altered Earth's atmosphere and would have required five times the amount of water already existing in the oceans.

Perhaps the deluge originally referred to something other than water, but after many generations, its meaning was altered. If so, then it is also plausible that an advanced civilization existed at that time, just as the ancient historians describe. In this book, I call this culture Civilization X.

A perfunctory treatment of ancient Egypt's history, such as in a world history class, typically makes a straightforward case that the Old Kingdom pharaohs were responsible for some of the greatest monuments and temples in Egypt, most notably Giza's pyramids. But a closer look into the organization, materials, and labor required to erect these monuments, particularly the tunneling performed on the Giza Plateau, raises too many questions. These technical and organizational requirements create a set of assumptions for the historian that cannot be reconciled with today's technology. The broadest assumption is that people of the second millennium BCE had the level of skill required to quarry and move large quantities of stone from as far away as 500 miles and then use this stone in the construction of the temples and pyramids.

No civilization has reproduced these accomplishments. Even today, using modern technology, constructing the Great Pyramid would prove to be a difficult and very expensive task. And yet we are supposed to believe that a people who had emerged from the Stone Age just a few hundred years earlier were able to accomplish this?

Common sense says they could not. But despite common sense, there is a long-standing belief that they built on a vast scale with the simplest of tools. It is belief because there is no evidence to support the assumption that people of the second millennium had the level of technology required. Furthermore, there are too many anomalies and anachronisms that need to be explained, the most obvious one being the Great Pyramid itself, with its extraordinary size and unusual internal design.

All the magnificent structures of the Old Kingdom are attributed to copper chisels and stone hammers. That's the paradigm that has been in place since the late nineteenth century. However, paradigms change, if society is working as it should, when enough people reject the orthodoxy in favor

of a new standard. Even so, paradigm changes are never easy. With exclusive influence in public school systems and a noncritical approach to history, the paradigm is perpetuated. Change almost always occurs very slowly and is not final until the old guard of the orthodoxy retires or passes away, leaving a new, younger generation to interpret the evidence and form their own theories and opinions.

The media is always at the cusp of change in public opinion, and through books and the cinema new ideas that were once lunatic or fringe or even taboo find an audience that senses a correction in thinking may be needed. During the 1970s, for instance, there were no television shows that embraced the paranormal. In 1972, ABC tried to get one off the ground with a series called *The Sixth Sense* starring Gary Collins, but it lasted only a single season. Later in the '70s, *The Night Stalker* achieved some faint success. Today, however, with shows like *Charmed*, *Medium*, *The Ghost Whisperer*, *Angel*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and *Supernatural*, to name just a few, this once-atypical genre is now commonplace. And, of course, in the 1990s there was the phenomenally successful television series *The X-Files*—my own personal favorite.

Why have these shows become so popular?

People accept the idea that there is more to life than the physical world and have opted for nontraditional ways of expressing and entertaining that view. They also seek knowledge about a whole host of alternative subjects, such as consciousness, for example, which is at the core of understanding the human experience. Amazon.com lists more than 108,000 nonfiction titles for “consciousness,” 47,000 under Religion and Spirituality, 41,000 under Health, Mind, and Body, and 44,000 under Science. The same is true for history, particularly ancient Egyptian history, which lists more than 200,000 books.

I was surprised and intrigued that the film *10,000 BC* (released in March 2008) portrayed an Egyptian-type civilization as an advanced prehistoric society—pyramids and all. (The producers of the film did an extraordinary job creating the visual effects of pyramid building, but the true majesty and scale of the pyramids can only be appreciated in person.) Although the film was a work of fiction and not a very good one according to most film critics, such a portrayal of ancient Egypt as a “lost civilization” hints at a growing curiosity about prehistory and continued uncertainty about the identity of the builders of ancient Egypt’s temples and pyramids.

Of course, there are those who will vehemently object to this type of imaginative and exploratory approach to history on the grounds that it’s not scientific. But the truth is that history is not scientific and never will be. The inductive approach cannot be considered the definitive means by which to ascertain the truth. In the case of the pyramids, one must see the evidence firsthand to truly begin to understand the truth. There is no substitute for visiting Egypt and walking among the ancient ruins.

No documentary or book has ever truly captured the essence of Egypt’s ancient temples or temple ruins. There is granite everywhere—ashlars, columns, broken temple edifices, fields of rubble, and piles of rubble. The ancient Egyptians built public buildings out of limestone and dressed them with solid granite.

Being the hardest known rock, granite is difficult to work with, even with current technology. This makes it very expensive in today’s world. So how could such an ancient culture build a civilization out of granite using simple hand tools? No civilization has done so before or since.

How could the dynastic Egyptians<sup>\*2</sup> have done it?

They shouldn’t have, couldn’t have. But there has never been irrefutable evidence to suggest otherwise, according to the orthodoxy. Now, in this volume, there is. *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE* is the

sequel to *Before the Pharaohs: Egypt's Mysterious Prehistory*. For readers of the latter, chapter 2 of this volume, "A Prehistoric Sphinx," is an updated and abridged version of chapters 1 and 2 in *Before the Pharaohs: Egypt's Mysterious Prehistory*. Eight new photographs have been added—five of which depict the eroded Sphinx and its enclosure—as well as a 2004 study of limestone erosion that supports a prehistoric age for the Sphinx. Although the evidence concerning the great antiquity of the Sphinx is covered in depth in *Before the Pharaohs*, I wanted this volume to include all the conclusive evidence for the existence of Civilization X that I have discovered. This volume, *Ancient Egypt 39,000 BCE*, is part travelogue, part history, and part science.<sup>†16</sup> As such, it is intended to present ancient Egyptian ruins as I have experienced them and to explain them to the best of my abilities.

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# INTRODUCTION

## A POCALYPSE NOW

Our civilization lives in precarious equilibrium between its distance from the sun and the emptiness of space. Whether you believe that global warming is the result of civilization's emission of greenhouse gases or that it is a natural cycle, the evidence points to global warming as a real phenomenon. But the fact is, global warming has been occurring for the past 13,000 years. Before Earth began its warming trend, the northern climes that are so agriculturally productive today were buried under miles of ice and snow.

Scientists claim that our world could return to such a harsh climate in as little as ten years if the ocean conveyor that pumps warm water into the North Atlantic ceases to do so. There is also the possibility of an Armageddon asteroid, an asteroid sufficiently large to create a "total evaporative impact" that would scour the planet's surface down to the bedrock.

Curiously, however, before the 1960s there was no proof that rocks from space entered Earth's atmosphere and hit the ground. No one believed in the reality of asteroid impacts, and it was only the determination of astronomer Gene Shoemaker through his work at Arizona's Meteor Crater that the science took notice. Apparently, space rocks did fall to earth, and now we know that asteroids have been striking Earth from the very beginning of Earth's history.

Today, asteroids whose orbits are close to Earth have become a serious topic for some astronomers. There are more than a few, astronomers have discovered. Alarmingly, it takes only a single rock greater than a few miles across to pummel us into a dark age. The most likely site of a meteor impact would be one of the oceans, given that two-thirds of the planet is covered by water. Although this may seem like a relatively safe place for an impact, the energy created by vaporizing rock would generate tsunamis of unprecedented proportions, one that might be perceived as a great flood. Trillions of tons of displaced water would create a wave so large it is difficult to imagine. It could never happen in our lifetime, could it?

Although such devastation has never occurred within the memory of our civilization, we have been periodically reminded of nature's power. Almost 100 years before the 2004 Sumatra tsunami, in 1908 near Russia's Tunguska River, a comet exploded in the atmosphere, releasing energy somewhere between the equivalent of five and thirty-five tons of TNT. It destroyed 800 square miles of forest. If the Tunguska comet had exploded over a densely populated area, millions of people would have been killed.

What if the Tunguska comet had been significantly larger? Would it have destroyed our civilization? How much destruction does it take to erase civilization? If a global catastrophe occurred today, like the meteor strike astronomers warn us will eventually happen, what *would* be the impact on civilization?

The impact on civilization, of course, would depend on the size of the projectile. If the extraterrestrial body were the size of a planetoid, like the moon, for example, nothing of Earth

surface would be left. Except for microbes buried in Earth's crust, all life would be annihilated. ~~much smaller meteor would still do significant damage, such as that which ended the Age of the~~ Dinosaurs. Paleontologists are convinced by the evidence that a six-mile-wide meteor struck Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula sixty-five million years ago, leaving a crater 112 miles wide and three thousand feet deep. What effect this size impact would have on human populations is unknown, although the fossil record indicates even such a small impact would be devastating.

No such devastating impacts have been recorded in human history, but some scientists, such as Dr. Stanley Ambrose of the University of Illinois, believe that a supervolcanic eruption seventy-three thousand years ago wreaked havoc on our planet, leaving a crater thirty miles wide and sixty miles long. According to Ambrose, the fallout from the Toba eruption reduced the human population to possibly as few as several thousand individuals, which, according to geneticists, helps explain the similarity in all human DNA. All of us living today are the descendents of a handful of survivors from the Toba eruption.

If a global catastrophe occurred today, such as Earth being struck by the Armageddon asteroid or an eruption of Yellowstone's caldera, and reduced the world's population to a billion people or less, could our technical society survive? Could the county or state you live in continue with more than 80 percent of its inhabitants gone?

No one knows for sure, although studies have been made on the subject, albeit involving a less magnitude of destruction. In 1972, the Office of Technology Assessment—the U.S. Government's advisory group of scientists, technologists, and engineers—performed a study on the effects of a limited nuclear war. They concluded that the *best case* scenario was that civilization would return to a medieval-style society.

In 1998, a small preview of such a tragedy occurred in Quebec. An ice storm knocked out power and demonstrated the frailty of modern civilization and the dependence it has on its technology. The vital infrastructure of society—energy distribution for heating, food production, a clean water supply, telecommunications, information technology, the transportation of people and goods, hospitals, and banking—was crippled. Within a few days, people were burning their furniture to stay warm.

What would have happened if the situation had not been corrected?

Any modern equipment that survived would be scavenged and used for as long as possible, but without the manufacturing of replacement parts, the equipment would eventually become useless. For equipment requiring fuel of some type, how long would existing supplies last? Regardless of how long fuel supplies lasted, over time the caustic forces of nature would have their way, and any surviving equipment would return to the mineral elements from which it was originally forged.

According to a recent documentary entitled *Life After People*, experts in civil engineering and geology testify to the speed in which civilization's infrastructure would erode into nothing. If the human species were to succumb to extinction, within a few hundred years all buildings, regardless of their composition, would begin to crumble, and after a thousand years there would be very little evidence that cities of steel and concrete had ever existed. Only objects made from the hardest rock—the thickest concrete would survive. Hoover Dam might last for ten thousand years, but after that only Mount Rushmore and its solid granite faces would remain.

As for future generations, only the tools necessary to survive and eke out a living would be those that provided an advantage in the hunt or in the fields. Forget about machines and electronics, even paper and pencil. Individuals born post-apocalypse would have to begin again and forge a new society. In a few thousand years, maybe less, the civilization that once was would be nothing more than a distant memory.

memory, and within ten thousand years all traces of civilization would have vanished.

If there were various pockets of survivors scattered across the globe, different civilizations would begin to emerge, most likely with a culture and language specific to each region. Precisely how long would take for these civilizations to emerge no one knows. Nonetheless, they would emerge all about the same time, for human beings are inherently social and naturally organize themselves into a form that benefits the group. Once a threshold of manpower was reached, specialization would occur. Thus, civilization would be reborn. Science, trade, education, and all the other aspects of civilization would develop. Eventually, thousands of years later, civilization would reach a level comparable to what it had been eons ago, yet it might never know that a previous civilization had ever existed.

How would those later archaeologists who were excavating this civilization know that such a break in civilization had occurred? What form would the evidence take?

A large meteor impact or the eruption of a supervolcano would result in nearly everything being buried under leagues of ash, as it was sixtyfive million years ago in Central America's Yucatan Peninsula, or seventythree thousand years ago in the Toba supereruption.

In the Toba eruption, 1,740 cubic miles of magma was ejected; it covered two hundred thousand square miles of land and sea. If the Yellowstone caldera erupted, the continental United States would be devastated by a blast equivalent to that detonated by millions of Hiroshima-sized nuclear bombs, the long-term consequences of which are truly unimaginable.

The toughest of buildings farthest away from ground zero would likely survive and might still be standing if they were not subsequently disassembled for use as materials in new construction by the first few generations of survivors. So too any large monuments carved in stone.

To the new civilization many thousands of years later, Rushmore's emboldened faces would be meaningless, as would be the engraved plates within the mountain's hall of records. The new civilization would infer that the heads of Rushmore had been carved in relatively recent times by the native population of the Black Hills, even though how they accomplished such a feat would remain a mystery.

If not buried in ash, heavy structures made from thick reinforced concrete would lightly pepper the landscape. But with their chambers gutted by scavengers and their exteriors plain, there would be no way of assigning them a history. They too would be designated as structures built by primitive yet extraordinarily resourceful inhabitants.

When the new civilization reached a certain point of sophistication, its archaeologists and historians would assess and reassemble what could be determined about these structures from what legends and stories survived. They would also dig into the soil and discover other structures of a similar nature. Without any other evidence to go on, these enigmatic structures might be categorized as part of some primitive people's religious traditions, just as the more recent ancestors of the new civilization built massive religious structures to honor their god. As with all cultures, the ancient inhabitants who built these majestic temples must have been motivated completely by religious beliefs.

As years pass, the new civilization would become increasingly knowledgeable and its science would progress in unimaginable ways. Such would be its progress that life would become easy, and there would be ample time to exist for many to reflect on life and on history. A number of people would become interested in the ancient ruins that dotted the countryside, and after decades of work, they would be able to recognize some of the unusual technology that previous civilizations employed. Yet, even though they were scientists and engineers, they would remain baffled by their conclusions.

Although the scenario of global cataclysm presented here is hypothetical, it hints at the technical and historical evidence you are about to read. One need only review the effect of Hurricane Katrina on the city of New Orleans in 2005 or the Sumatra tsunami of 2004 to get a glimpse of how devastating natural catastrophes can be. The effect on civilization of a large meteor impact or a supervolcanic eruption would be so vast and so damaging that a hurricane or tsunami would be dwarfed in comparison; a whole new scale of destruction would have to be invented. Yet in our resilience, we humans would likely survive while other species became extinct.

In light of recent archaeological discoveries, such a scenario of cataclysmic decimation appears to be the best explanation for what science simply refers to as “the end of the Ice Age.” It also appears that, as have been recorded in the most ancient of human histories, what our civilization has labeled as myth.



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# 1

## A CIVILIZATION IN GRANITE

Egypt might be the single most visited place in the world. It may also be the most documented place in the world. More books have been written and more documentaries have been filmed about Giza and ancient Egypt than any other ancient civilization of place. And this is for good reason: there are no other man-made monuments more grandiose than the pyramids and the Great Sphinx, and there is no temple more mysterious and majestic than Luxor's Temple of Amun-Mut-Khonsu. So large are the Giza pyramids that it wasn't until the Eiffel Tower's completion in 1889 that a building taller than the Great Pyramid was erected. Even so, the Great Pyramid still ranks as one of the most massive structures in existence. Little wonder that it is the Seventh Wonder of the World and is still standing.

In the numerous books and documentaries about ancient Egypt, what is seldom addressed in a meaningful way is the volume of granite still remaining on the plateau—even after thousands of years of scavenging. *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt* barely mentions it except to state that “the pyramid of Menkaure shows extensive use of granite.”<sup>1</sup> Although this is true, granite rubble can be found nearly everywhere on the Giza Plateau, particularly on the south side of the middle pyramid and to the east and south of the Valley Temple.

Without knowing its significance, tourists capture on film Giza's fields of granite rubble. Granite rubble is not majestic, nor is it anything special to show your family and friends in presentation on your vacation. In fact, granite rubble is close to being uninviting. To the average tourist the rubble scattered about the plateau might even be perceived as an eyesore compared with the majesty of the pyramids and the Sphinx. However, among the rubble there are large, beautifully crafted pieces of ornate granite displaying the handiwork of Giza's builders.

Two characteristics, each of which required a great deal of skill, distinguish the buildings of the “granite” civilization. First, the ancient Egyptians built on a colossal scale. Why they did this is a matter of conjecture, but for whatever reason, it is a good bet that they considered it necessary. The second characteristic is that the structures are finished with granite. Although most of the granite casings, facings, and columns of ancient Egypt's structures have been either destroyed or scavenged and stored in the Cairo Museum, or reduced to rubble, the granite workmanship that still exists speaks of a grand unified ancient civilization. For those who want to know not only why but also how, the abundance of granite used in the building of these structures is problematic, given the rudimentary level of skill that existed in dynastic Egypt.

Granite is the hardest rock there is. Cutting it into shapes and sizes to build a structure or carve a forty-foot statue is a feat that is today best left to modern technology and machines that use diamonds for tooling. Yet whoever built the ancient civilization that we see remnants of in Egypt were clearly experts in granite quarrying, transporting, and finishing. There is no statistic as to how much granite was used in ancient Egypt, but at nearly every ancient site there *is* granite, and a lot of it. At some sites there are multiton granite artifacts, evidence of the technical means and knowledge necessary to efficiently quarry, cut, shape, and assemble mass quantities of granite.

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# THE GIZA PYRAMIDS

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Despite a small army of local salesmen hawking trinkets, souvenirs, and camel rides, as one wanders across the Giza Plateau it's difficult not to be awestruck by the pyramids—simply because of their sheer size. Large blocks of limestone and granite that were once part of these giant stone hills pepper the landscape as a testament to the sense of permanence the builders desired. Standing between the third and second pyramids, a local saying comes to mind: “Man fears time but time fears the pyramids.” There is no sensation or vista in the world like it. From a distance, people walking along the base of the second pyramid look like an army of ants marching in rhythm to the feast of the day. The pyramids dwarf everything man-made I have ever seen, except perhaps the presidents of Mount Rushmore.

The scale of construction exceeds everything known to mankind except for the most recent projects built with twentieth-century construction technology. Each monumental pyramid on the plateau was built on the scale of Arizona's Hoover Dam. It is as if some ancient civilization's Department of the Interior decided to build not one dam but three, all within a quarter mile of each other, and then covered two of them with granite.

Today, however, these structures have been stripped of their granite glory and stand as mountains of coarse limestone blocks. Seeing them as they appeared soon after completion must have been a sight almost more spectacular than can be imagined: two large mountain peaks of pink granite and a third peak of white limestone—the brilliant sun dancing off the surfaces of all three.

The Great Pyramid, the crowning glory of the plateau and the focus of speculation for many authors, has been picked clean of its limestone casing. Only a few casing stones remain, most of which are in sorry shape. Why the builders of the Great Pyramid chose limestone as its siding is unknown. Limestone is softer than granite and easier to work with, so it is no surprise that the limestone casing of the Great Pyramid has been completely removed.

The pyramid builders also used granite in various parts of the Great Pyramid. In its interior, the uppermost chamber (more commonly known as the King's Chamber) was constructed out of smooth, solid granite slabs, some of which weigh seventy tons. Although not polished, the slabs that make up the uppermost chamber walls feel as if they were run through a planer machine. Only minute depressions remain where crystals once existed but were torn out by whatever process surfaced the slab.

The second (middle) and third pyramids were cased in granite, and amazingly some of these casing stones still remain today. Even more remarkable is that the second pyramid has retained its pinnacle of granite casing. Neither the third pyramid nor the Great Pyramid have held onto casing stones near their peaks.

Why the second and third pyramids were cased in granite is a mystery. It may have been due to the beauty of granite's sparkling quartz, yet a sizable portion of the third pyramid's casing stones were never finished, but were left rough and uneven. Its uneven and bumpy exterior makes for a curious sight. An area of smooth, finished casing stones rests next to another area where each and every stone is rounded, displaying a “bumpy” appearance. Evidently it was more important for the granite casing stones to fit the inner limestone course work than to have a smooth, finished appearance. Some theorists believe that the granite casing stones were first put in place, then cut to a smooth, flat finish. Such a technique would ensure flat and even sides for the pyramid, but enough granite exists at the

base of the pyramid to suggest that it had been fully cased. However, only a small section of granite casing stones near the ground level appears to have been leveled.

It might also be the case that granite was chosen for its functionality and not for its aesthetic. Granite is erosion resistant and would have been an apt choice for siding if the desired structure was intended to last for an indefinite period. On that point, it certainly appears that the pyramid builders succeeded.

Uniquely, and although no one knows why, the third pyramid has retained a greater percentage of its casing stones than the other two, and it boasts a granite pavement of megalithic proportion. Each pavement stone is nearly four feet high. Standing amid these humongous blocks, I felt as if I was in the *Land of the Giants*. Around the base of the third pyramid are piles of granite rubble, or I should say piles of boulders, really, since the blocks are incredibly large.

The descending passage of the third pyramid is also lined with granite. Discovered in 1908 by Egyptologist George Reisner, the passageway was buried, “covered with a tangled mass of granite blocks.” According to Reisner, under his direction Egyptian workers removed several hundred pieces of granite weighing anywhere from one to eleven tons from around the pyramid’s entrance.<sup>2</sup>

How the granite casing stones of the pyramids were removed is unknown. Perhaps a major earthquake occurred at some time in the remote past. The field of rubble on the east and south sides of the middle pyramid and the piles of blocks and rubble around the third pyramid suggest that an earthquake might have been the cause. Perhaps later, scavengers pilfered only the lighter stones that offered the easiest access. It might also be the case that demolition teams climbed to the top of the stone peaks and pried away the casing blocks one by one.



*Fig. 1.1. Vast amounts of granite rubble surround Giza’s third pyramid. Notice that some of the pyramid’s granite casing stones remain in place.*



*Fig. 1.2. Not all casing stones of the third pyramid were cut smooth. Granite may have been chosen for its durability as opposed to its beauty.*



*Fig. 1.3. Megalithic granite paving blocks at the base of Giza's third pyramid*

Whatever happened during more recent times, scavenger crews attempting to harvest the granite crop met the stubbornness of hardened volcanic stone. Whoever was attempting to break and tow away ready-made granite blocks found it a futile venture. A good portion of the granite blocks littering Giza's landscape display chisel furrows—deep cuts where someone attempted to split the block in half. Today, such acts are no doubt a crime, but for those who chose to scavenge the pyramids, certainly was easy access to granite that had already been quarried. Prior to the eighteenth century, the pyramids were likely to have been derelict structures anyway.



*Fig. 1.4. Numerous granite blocks with chisel grooves litter the base of the third pyramid. In vain, scavengers tried to split these blocks.*



*Fig. 1.5. Close-up of the chisel groove*

Unlike the third pyramid, the second pyramid has no piles of rubble at its base. However, on the east side of the middle pyramid, within a field of granite and limestone rubble there is a clue as to the pyramid's purpose: a granite trough emerges from the sand. (See [plate 1](#) of the color insert.) That this trough was a part of the pyramid complex suggests that its builders built for functionality. Presumably, the complex might have had something to do with water, possibly irrigation.

A few hundred feet east of Giza's middle pyramid, among strewn-about granite blocks, lies another testament to the genius of the pyramid builders. Exactly what this large granite object was may never be known (speculatively, it may be the pillar of an entranceway), but its smooth surface and perfectly curved shape is an incredible feat of technology. I cannot imagine how it was carved to perfection—perfectly round and smooth to the touch. (See [plate 2](#) of the color insert.)

The most striking aspect of this granite pillar, besides its perfect shape and smoothness, is that three surfaces—two flat surfaces and one curved—come together at its base. Next to this granite marvel lies a square pillar inscribed with hieroglyphs and another piece of curved, smooth granite. Built on a smaller scale than the pyramids and carved with elegance, the buildings from which these pieces came must have been for human occupancy or use.



*Fig. 1.6. Granite and limestone rubble field on the south side of the second pyramid*



*Fig. 1.7. Curved granite object within a few hundred feet east of the middle pyramid*



Fig. 1.8. Close-up view from the north

There is nothing left of the structure or structures of which these unique granite artifacts were once part. Like the casing stones of the pyramids, the buildings near the pyramids offered easy access to already finished granite. Close to the ground, they were likely the first structures to be disassembled and carried away to be used as building materials elsewhere.

## THE SPHINX AND VALLEY TEMPLES

In front of the Sphinx, Giza's builders erected two temples. The northern temple is known as the Sphinx temple and the other, the Valley Temple. Like the area surrounding the middle and third pyramids, the area surrounding the Sphinx complex, particularly in the Valley Temple's east yard, is littered with granite rubble.

Although the Sphinx Temple was at one time faced with granite, all that remains is its inner limestone core. However, much of the Valley Temple's granite is still in place. The Valley Temple's front side (east) is lined with megalithic granite blocks, each nearly six feet tall. (See [plates 3 and 4](#) of the color insert.) The granite pillars and lintels that make up the temple's interior are also largely still intact. A puzzling feature of the corners of the Valley Temple is their strange construction. (See [plate 5](#) of the color insert.)

A more exquisite example of technical know-how rests on the south side of the Valley Temple and is perhaps the most precise granite carving in Lower Egypt. Although what this broken block of granite was used for is unknown, it was obviously sculpted for decorative purposes.

The face of the granite block was carved in the shape of the letter S (figure 1.9), and at the end of the rolling S curve, the granite squares off to form a squared face. Its surface is still smooth to the touch.

My guide assured me that this unique granite block *was carved by hand* but did not comment on exactly how it was carved by hand or what tools were used. Considering that this ornate block is nearly four feet tall and six feet long, weighing many tons, and was part of a much larger piece, the idea that it was carved into a perfect S shape by hand defies common sense, in my opinion, given the simple hand tools available to the ancient Egyptians.

Further west along the Valley Temple there lies a second block of granite with its face also curved in an S shape. Although this second block is not a mate to the first block, its appearance is similar; it may have been used for the same purpose as the first block. One possible use for this style of block is as decorative trimming on the top of the temple wall, such as is found in the temples of Esna and Edfu in Upper Egypt.



*Fig. 1.9. Ornate granite block on the south side of the Valley Temple*



*Fig. 1.10. Ornate granite viewed on end from the west*



*Fig. 1.11. Ornate granite viewed on end from the east*

Walking west past the Valley Temple, east of the middle pyramid, and south of the causeway, there is a maze of rock-cut tombs and crypts built into the small rolling hills of the plateau. Rock, sand, ancient brick structures, and modern restorations all blur together. It is a desolate site. The rock which these tombs are carved is the same yellow limestone formation from which the Sphinx was carved. (See [plate 6](#) of the color insert.) For some reason, the guides call this area “the Sphinx Museum.”

I followed my guide through this long-abandoned cemetery, which resembles the no-man’s-land that one might see in an old World War I film. Almost everything of interest has been moved to the Cairo Museum. The only statues that remain are those carved into walls or so broken that there is little need to pay someone to move them.

What is very noticeable is that the tombs in the area were hand cut with chisels, and the statues were well finished. Chisel marks are well defined in tunnels and chambers throughout the area. In a few crypts, doorposts and headers were finished and inscribed with hieroglyphs. But nowhere in this area does anything resemble the magnificence and the precision of the pyramids or the granite pillars of the

Valley Temple. Then, out of the corner of my eye, far to the south, I noticed four dark-red pillars lightly coated with Saharan dust.

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Fig. 1.12. Second granite block ornately carved in an S shape

### ***Giza's Unknown Temple***

Standing at the far southern edge of this no-man's-land of rock-cut tombs is a place not featured on any Giza map, at least the maps I have seen. Yet even from a distance it is easy to see, once you crest the cemetery's final dune. Four red pillars stand erect in front of what appears to be a rock shelter, one pillar taller than the rest. It's an unusual scene for the area. The dark-red pillars stand out against the background of Sahara yellow. Beyond these giant pillars of granite the land flattens out into a cordoned area reserved for archaeologists currently working on the plateau. There, behind barbed wire, ten huge granite blocks lie neatly in a row. Armed guards are on station at various strategic points, overhead on the rocks above as well as in the distance at the area's perimeter. Most likely this is an important site, since it is also off limits.

I visited the so-called Sphinx Museum twice, each visit separated by a week. The second time a man dressed in a long blue tunic stopped my friend and me and would not let us pass into the area of the giant pillars, the point where I took the photo in figure 1.14. I desperately wanted another look. Nonetheless, the man in the blue tunic looked serious as he walked toward us with outstretched hands. My friend tried to snap a photo, but the man waved his hands in an attempt to spoil his picture. Whatever he was saying in Arabic, my Sphinx Museum guide that day understood and quickly turned us back.

I asked why and received the answer I was expecting. The area below, where the red granite pillars were, was a restricted area. Ironically, the man who turned us back had been *my guide* the previous week! And a week ago he took me wherever I wanted to go, including to the red granite pillars of the unknown temple. He spoke English quite well and without a doubt was the most cordial guide I encountered.

The week before I received a close-up view of the giant pillars. Like the Valley Temple, they were made from solid granite. But these pillars are very different. Fluted along their vertical axis and inscribed with hieroglyphs, they must have held a simple yet powerful beauty for the temple builders (figures 1.16 and 1.17). Although the structure these stones are from no longer exists, they must have been a part of the building's exterior. I wonder: Do the hieroglyphs tell of a king or queen? Or do they pay tribute to a god? Perhaps they tell of neither and are simply a testament to the knowledge and skill of the civilization that created them.



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