

**THE TRUE STORY OF THE EXODUS  
OF ISRAEL; TOGETHER WITH A  
BRIEF VIEW OF THE HISTORY OF  
MONUMENTAL EGYPT**

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The true story of the exodus of Israel; together with a brief view of the history of monumental Egypt by Henry Brugsch-Bey & Francis H. Underwood

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**HENRY BRUGSCH-BEY & FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD**

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OF THE  
EXODUS OF ISRAEL

TOGETHER WITH A BRIEF VIEW OF  
THE HISTORY OF MONUMENTAL EGYPT

COMPILED FROM THE WORK OF  
DR. HENRY BRUGSCH-BEY

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
AND NOTES  
By FRANCIS H. UNDERWOOD

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## INTRODUCTION.

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“EGYPT under the Pharaohs,” by Dr. Henry Brugsch-Bey, is prominent among the ablest works upon the history and antiquities of the dead mother of arts. The author, under the patronage of the Egyptian government, spent thirty years in exploration and in the study of inscriptions, mostly in company with the distinguished French *savant*, Mons. Mariette-Bey, whose numerous discoveries have been fortunately complemented by the profound knowledge and the far-reaching deductions of his associate.

The most important fact established by their labors is the verification (in the main) of the chronological tables of Manetho, and the proof of the high antiquity of the kingdom. This antiquity, beside which the origin of every other historic nation is modern, is made clear by many independent proofs, sometimes jarring as against each other, but agreeing in general tendency. The Turin papyrus, an enormous list of pharaohs, unfortunately



much dilapidated and illegible in places; the Table of Abydos, a smaller list of kings; a well-authenticated chart of genealogies of court architects; the various inscriptions upon temple walls; the portrait statues; and the cartouches of kings (like coats-of-arms) sculptured upon contemporary monuments, — these are the chief sources of the evidence which fixes the age of Mena, founder of the monarchy, between forty-four and fifty-seven centuries before the Christian era, and which shows a succession of pharaohs down to the time of Alexander the Great, (B. C. 332.) The architectural remains in Asia and in Central America may be older than the pyramids, but there are no inscriptions, and the date of Indian and of Aztec temples is wholly conjectural.

The antiquity of Egypt, however, is not its only claim upon the veneration of men: literature, the arts, and the ideas of morality and religion, so far as we know, had their birth in the Nile valley. The alphabet, if it was constructed in Phœnicia, was conceived in Egypt, or developed from Egyptian characters. Language, doubtless, is as old as man, but the visible symbols of speech were first formulated from the hieroglyphic figures.

The early architecture of the Greeks, the Doric, is a development of the Egyptian. Their vases, ewers, jewelry, and other ornamental works, are

copied from the household luxury of the pharaohs. The peculiar genius of Egypt, however, appears to be repulsive to gay and lively people like the French, and the critics of Paris do scant justice to the colossal works of the elder pharaohs. Edmund About says: "The contemporaries of Sesostris were miraculous constructors rather than great architects, skilful and expeditious workmen rather than remarkable sculptors. From the time of Moses to the epoch of the Ptolemies, all the fine arts of the country, such as architecture, sculpture, and painting, have struck us by their solidity and harshness, by the spirit of tradition pushed to the extreme, rather than by their originality of genius. It is necessary to go back to the first dynasties to meet pure and ingenious talent, that hieratic regulations were soon to paralyze. A few specimens, well executed, are found here and there; but one could search the whole of Egypt from one end to the other, without finding a work to be compared to the Temple of Thèseus, or to the Venus of Milo. The enormous is not the great; knowledge and facility bear no relation to genius."

There is a singular mixture of truth and error in this shrewd paragraph. 'Sesostris,' or Ramses the Great, was not long before Moses, but the art of Egypt culminated in the reign of Thutmes III.,

in the dynasty preceding. The art of the Greeks did not reach its perfection until long after the decadence of Egypt. In the time of the Ptolemies Egypt was a Greek province. The great works of Egypt, as About says, were not the latest; neither were they the earliest. The same is true of Greek and of Roman art. In no country has the growth of art been continuous and uninterrupted. In Egypt, as in Greece, the period of greatness was comparatively ancient. The most truthful statement in the passage quoted is that which mentions the influence of the priests in preventing the development of art in sculpture and painting, by requiring the use of certain formal and conventional outlines. After all, the appreciation of one or another kind of art is greatly owing to inherited traits, and to the distinctive quality of race. The exquisite perfection of a Greek temple will most delight the beauty-loving Latin races; the monumental grandeur of Karnac will most strongly affect the Germans, the English, and other Gothic peoples. It is the sombre magnificence of a Gothic minster against the tawdry splendors of the opera house; it is the glory of Handel's *Messiah*, or of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, against the elegance of *La Dame Blanche*, or the gayety of *La Belle Hélène*, of Offenbach. Surely M. About can have his choice.