**The history of Ancient Egypt**

The more than 3000 year long history of Ancient Egypt has been divided into 8 or 9 periods, sometimes called Kingdoms. This modern-day division is somewhat arbitrarily based on the country's unity and wealth and the power of the central government. The Ancient Egyptians themselves did not group their rulers according to such criteria. They rather seem to have developed the notion of dynasties throughout their history. The Palermo Stone simply lists the kings one after the other, without any apparent need of grouping them. The Turin Kinglist, which is more recent, has grouped the kings according to their descendance or origin. Thus, Amenemhat I and his descendants, are described as the kings of Itj-Tawi, the capital whence they ruled. We owe the division into 30 dynasties as we use it now to Manetho, an Egyptian priest who lived at the beginning of the Ptolemaic Era. In many cases, however, it is not clear why Manetho has grouped some kings into one dynasty and other kings into another. The 18th Dynasty, for instance, starts with Ahmose, a brother of the last king in Manetho's 17th Dynasty. Theoritically, Ahmose and Kamose should thus have been grouped in the same dynasty. Thutmosis I, on the other hand, does not appear to have been related to his predecessor, Amenhotep I, but still both kings are grouped in the 18th Dynasty.

Some Egyptologists have attempted to abandon the notions of Kingdoms and dynasties, but for the sake of conformity with most publications dealing with Ancient Egypt, this site will continue using both notions. Visitors may, however, notice that the timeline below and the timescale used throughout The Ancient Egypt Site may be somewhat different from some of the other books or web-sites they have consulted.

Visitors should also be aware that, as is the case with any publication dealing with Ancient Egypt, dates are approximations and should not be taken literally. In many cases it is not known just how long a king may have ruled. Comparing different publications on the hisory and chronology of Ancient Egypt, visitors may notice that one king may be credited with a fairly short reign in one publication and a fairly long in another. This impacts the absolute chronology, that is to say, Egyptian history using our year numbering.

In The Ancient Egypt Site, some dates will be proposed but again, they should only be seen as approximations and not as absolutes. A discussion on the length of the reign of a king may follow and this discussion may show the likelihood that this king reigned longer or shorter than the dates linked to his reign.

It can thus not be stressed enough that the provided dates are just a frame of reference helping readers to gain insight in the sequence of events and occurences and to have an approximate idea of the age of certain monuments and artefacts.