

## KINSHIP AND FAMILY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

In this interdisciplinary study, Leire Olabarria examines ancient Egyptian society through the notion of kinship. Drawing on methods from archaeology and sociocultural anthropology, she provides an emic characterisation of ancient kinship that relies on performative aspects of social interaction. Olabarria uses memorial stelae of the First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom (ca 2150–1650 BCE) as her primary evidence. Contextualising these monuments within their social and physical landscapes, she proposes a dynamic way to explore kin groups through sources that have been considered static. The volume offers three case studies of kin groups at the beginning, peak and decline of their developmental cycles respectively. They demonstrate how ancient Egyptian evidence can be used for cross-cultural comparison of key anthropological topics, such as group formation, patronage and rites of passage.

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# KINSHIP AND FAMILY IN ANCIENT EGYPT

ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
ANTHROPOLOGY IN DIALOGUE

LEIRE OLABARRIA

University of Birmingham



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For Iñaki

*Thank you for being there, now and always.*

*When I try to define this asset which has been mine now for years, I tell myself that such a privilege, however rare it may be, is surely not unique; that in the whole adventure of bringing a book successfully to its conclusion, or even in the entire life of some fortunate writers, there must have been sometime, in the background, perhaps, someone who will not let pass the weak or inaccurate sentence which we ourselves would retain, out of fatigue; someone who would re-read with us for the twentieth time, if need be, a questionable page; someone who takes down for us from the library shelves the heavy tomes in which we may find a helpful suggestion, and who persists in continuing to peruse them long after weariness has made us give up; someone who bolsters our courage and approves, or sometimes disputes, our ideas; who shares with us, and with equal fervor, the joys of art and of living, the endless work which both require, never easy but never dull; someone who is neither our shadow nor our reflection, nor even our complement, but simply himself; someone who leaves us ideally free, but who nevertheless obliges us to be fully what we are*

Marguerite Yourcenar, *Reflections on the Composition of Memoirs of Hadrian*, 285

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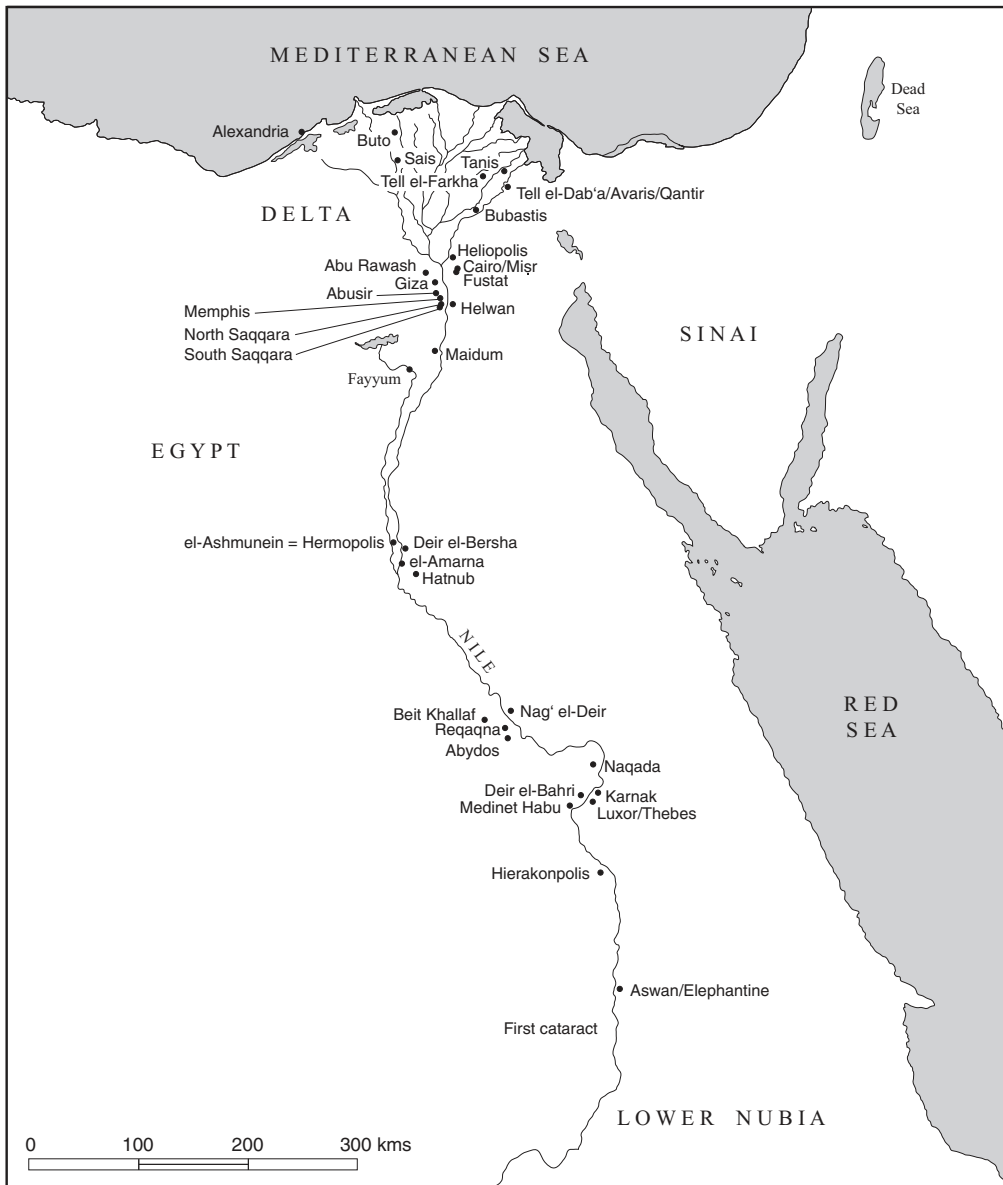
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Map of Egypt