

# Per-aa Ruled the Land

*Kemet's per-aa led the military, priest, and the government.*



*The per-aa was responsible for the entire country.*

**K**EMITE was governed by the per-aa. Later, outsiders translated the name as pharaoh. PER-AA means, "Great House", which was the name given to the home where the leader lived. Since there were many homes in the land, the leader's was called the "great house". PER-AA was only one of many titles which the PER-AA was given. Other titles were the "Son of God", and the "Ruler of Upper and Lower Kemet".

The PER-AA had many duties. The PER-AA was responsible for ensuring that all disputes were resolved. They were both the final judge, and the head priest. They had to make sure that there was enough food for everyone, and to make sure the army and navy were trained and prepared to defend KEMET from invaders. Because KEMET

had so much wealth (including gold and food), other countries wanted to attack them, and take over the country.

## Second in Command

The PER-AA'S duties were certainly too much for one person to complete by themselves, and the PER-AA had plenty of help. The second most important person in Kemet was the TJATY ("ja-tee"). Anyone could become a TJATY, but it required a tremendous amount of schooling, since they had to be knowledgeable in all areas. You can almost consider the TJATY to be the smartest person in KEMET, although they didn't think of themselves in this way. The TJATY was the most trusted adviser to the PER-AA, and many of the PER-AA'S children served under the tjaty to receive training in governing the country.

In later years, when the population in the country grew, the position was divided into two. There was a TJATY in the north, and one in the south. The TJATIES worked in each areas' capital city. In the north it was Memphis, and in the south it was WOSET (called Thebes by the Greeks). Both TJATIES reported back to the PER-AA. A TJATY might serve for more than

one PER-AA, and in at least one case, the TJATY was appointed PER-AA. **IMHETEP**, and **PTAH-HETEP** were two of the most famous TJATYS.

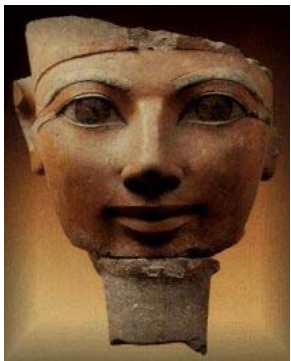
## NARMER Begins the First Dynasty in Kemet

The first PER-AA was **NARMER**. Before PER-AA NARMER the country was divided between the south and the north. PER-AA NARMER fought to unite upper and lower KEMET under one PER-AA. There were many leaders before NARMER, but he was the first to rule the entire country. This began KEMET'S dynastic period, when the country was united under one PER-AA. After NARMER'S victory, Kemet was also referred to as "The Two Lands".

KEMET'S 4,000 years of history is divided into different groups of PER-AAS, called a dynasty. There were about 30 dynasties, and each dynasty is generally divided by families. Thus if a PER-AA was followed by his son, grandson, and great-grandson, this would be considered one dynasty. Some dynasties are very short, barely 20 years, and some lasted over 200 years.

## The PER-AAS Training

PER-AAS began training at a very early age, and received the best



A statue of PER-AA HATSHEPSUT, the greatest female PER-AA.

training available. They received training in religion, architecture, astrology, warfare, governance, sciences, and other subjects. Before becoming the PER-AA, they had to participate in military expeditions and hunting trips.

If KEMET was attacked, the PER-AA had to lead the armies into battle. Some PER-AAS didn't care for warfare and spent most of their time near the temple, letting their generals lead the armies. Others PER-AAS believed it was their duty to lead their armies to battle. Occasionally, a general might become PER-AA, but this happened rarely.

### Who Could Become PER-AA?

The PER-AA was almost always a male, although occasionally, a female served as the PER-AA. Before a PER-AA died, the next PER-AA was already selected. The next PER-AA by tradition was the first born son of the first wife. If the PER-AA died, and his son was too young to serve, the boy's mother would serve until he was old enough.

The greatest female PER-AA was **HATSHEPSUT**, who ruled longer than any other female PER-AA. She ruled for 20 years, and during her time, KEMET'S wealth grew. She established trade relations with more countries, which meant that KEMET sold goods to other countries, and bought goods from these countries. They traded with the Nubians, which had valuable natural resources, such as gold, ebony, and ivory from elephant usks.

Queen TIYE was one of the most respected queen's in Kemet's history.



### The Great Royal Wife

Men and women were seen as equal in Kemet. Although it wasn't until the 18th dynasty that a queen began to have more authority. The queen's title was "Great Royal Wife".

One of the greatest PER-AAS was PER-AA AMEN-HETEP in the 18th dynasty. He married Queen **TIYE** when he was only about 12, and she was about the same age. PER-AA AMEN-HETEP loved his wife very much, and had a palace built for her, as well as an enormous man-made lake.

She was the first queen in KEMET'S history to have her name placed on formal announcements. She was from Nubia, and helped to increase trade to other countries. She was considered the most beautiful woman during her time. After her husband's death, her son, and later grandson became PER-AA, and they sought her advice.

### READING QUESTIONS

1. What does per-aa mean?
2. Describe two duties of the PER-AA.
3. Who was the second most important person in Kemet? Why was the position divided into two?
4. Who was the very first PER-AA? Was he the first ruler in Kemet?
5. What is a dynasty? How many dynasties were there in KEMET?
6. How did a person usually become PER-AA?
7. Describe one way that a woman might become PER-AA? Who was one of the greatest female PER-AAS?
8. What was the queen's title in KEMET?
9. Who was Queen TIYE?