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# A Note on Ancient Fashions

## Four Early Egyptian Dresses in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

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From the evidence provided by the monuments — sculpture in the round, reliefs, and paintings — it would seem that the entire history of Egyptian dress might easily be written, but that evidence, abundant as it is and meticulously faithful to detail as it seems to be, does not tell the whole story. Most of the works of art which have survived to our time come from tombs and they often picture Egyptians in the festive apparel they aspired to wear in eternity rather than in their usual dress. Moreover, the garments that have apparently been so faithfully represented by the ancient artists do not always lend themselves to exact interpretation; we are frequently at a loss to determine exactly how they were cut or adjusted to the body of the wearer.

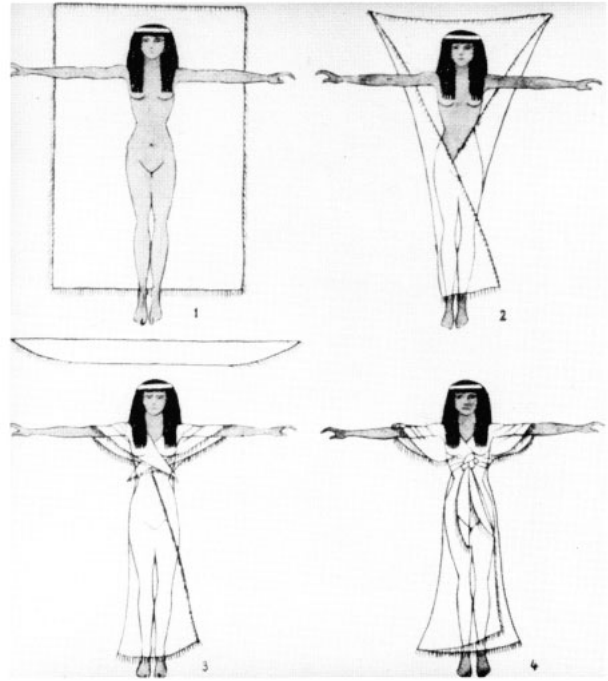
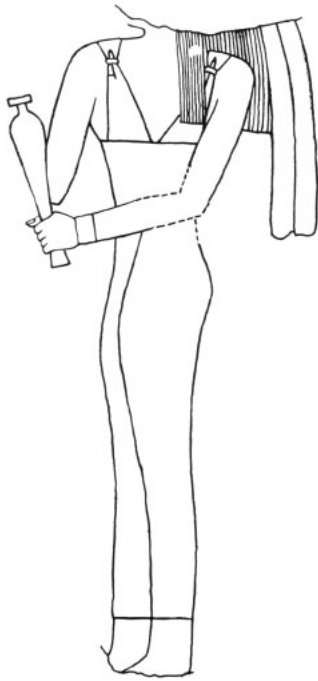
As might be expected from the perishable nature of the materials from which clothes were made, very few actual garments have survived from the elaborate trousseaux well-to-do Egyptians took to their graves for use in the future life. While tattered fragments of what once was clothing have been found in burials from the Predynastic Period onward, complete garments are rare indeed, and most of those which have survived can be dated to the late Eighteenth Dynasty, roughly after 1300 B.C. It is accordingly somewhat of a surprise to find in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, four elaborately pleated dresses with long sleeves (Fig. 1) of a type earlier than any complete garments hitherto found in Egypt and nowhere represented in ancient art.<sup>1</sup>

These dresses come from an excavation conducted in 1902-1903 by George A. Reisner at a cemetery of Naga-ed-Dêr in Middle Egypt, about a hundred miles south of Cairo. The results of this excavation have never been fully published, and the records are unfortunately incomplete, but they clearly indicate that the Boston dresses came from Tomb N 94, which contained the body of an unnamed woman who was provided with twelve such dresses, in one of which she was clothed, as well as with a quantity of household linen, all packed neatly into her rough wooden coffin. The exact date of her burial is difficult to determine, but it must have occurred during the First Intermediate Period, in the half century or so between the end of Dynasty 6 and the rise of Dynasty 11, let us say in round figures in the neighborhood of 2150 B.C.<sup>2</sup>

It seems obvious from a casual examination of Egyptian sculpture and painting that most Egyptian clothing was draped, not tailored. That is, it consisted of pieces of cloth which were adjusted to the body without cutting to make them conform to the



1. One of four pleated dresses in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. 34.56.



2. Old Kingdom shift with attached shoulder straps. After relief, Dynasty 5, in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. 58.321.

3. Diagram of draped dress of New Kingdom. After B. Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh*, 1937).

figure and with a minimum of sewing or none at all. For example a narrow shift worn by women in the Old Kingdom and persisting in art almost to the end of ancient Egyptian history was a rectangle with a single seam (or perhaps simply a wrap-around), reaching from breast to ankle and supported by attached shoulder straps (Fig. 2). A more ample woman's dress, often pleated in vertical pleats, which appears in the New Kingdom, seems to have been a draped rectangle requiring no sewing whatever (Figs. 3-4). A man's kilt, universally worn by rich and poor, is also basically a rectangle folded around the loins and held in place by ties or a girdle (Fig. 5); and cloaks worn by both men and women were most frequently rectangular shawls thrown around the shoulders.

Probably some of the pieces of linen found in burials from quite early periods onwards were actually used for draped garments, but there is rarely any way of distinguishing them as such, and excavators quite understandably usually list them as "sheets" or lump them together as "household linen."

In contrast to the simple draped garments most frequently worn, the dresses at the Museum of Fine Arts represent an early attempt at tailoring. They are rather clumsy garments made of closely and evenly woven linen of varying fineness but on the

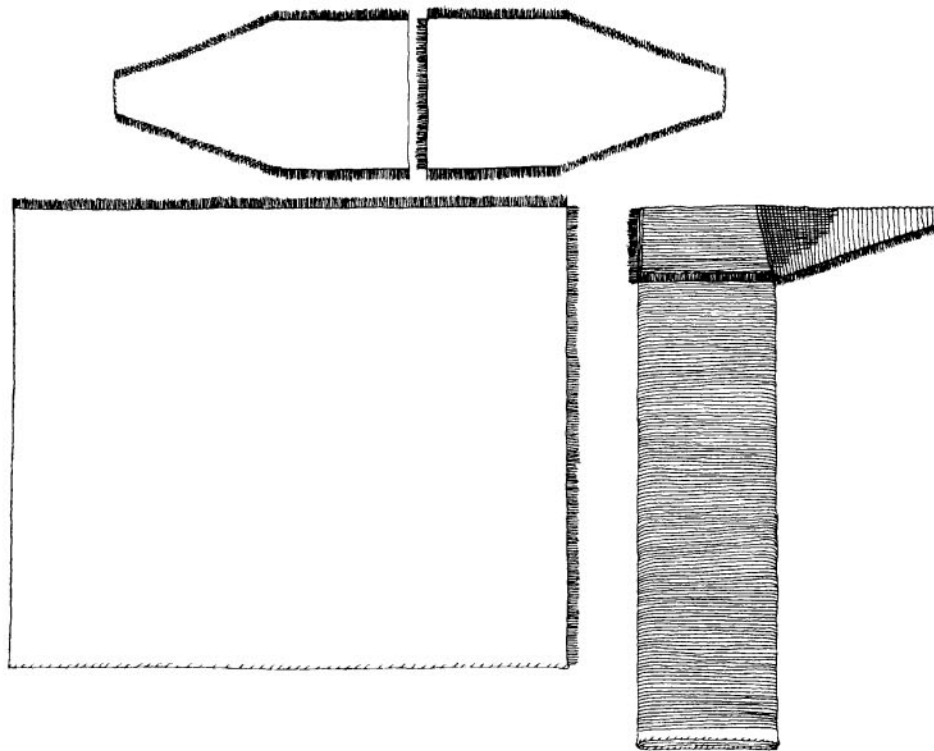


4. Doll in dress draped according to the diagram in Figure 3.

5. Fragmentary slate triad of Mycerinus showing pleated kilt, Dynasty 4. Harvard University – Museum of Fine Arts Egyptian Expedition. 11.3147.

whole fairly coarse.<sup>3</sup> Each consists of three separate pieces, two of them used to form a yoke with long sleeves and the third, a straight skirt with a seam up one side (Fig. 6). The two parts of the yoke, each perhaps shaped on the loom and not by cutting, are attached to the skirt at or just below the breast line with rather coarse stitching in heavy linen thread in such a manner as to form a deep V, front and back, for the head to pass through. This V is fringed at one side, and each sleeve has a fringed fin on the outside of its single, underarm seam. The skirt shows a neatly rolled hem and its single seam is finished on the inside by a fringe and a selvage. It was obviously pleated horizontally after having been folded in four, with the result that it seems at first glance to consist of four separate panels, in which the pleats are alternately turned upwards and downwards. The two parts forming yoke and sleeves are also pleated horizontally across the body, but the pleats make a rather awkward transition to the vertical at the shoulder and become wider and more irregular as they approach the wrist, where the opening is so narrow as to admit the passage of only a rather small hand.

All four dresses are exceptionally well preserved; and they are identical in style, the only variation they show being a slight difference in size.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps their style is



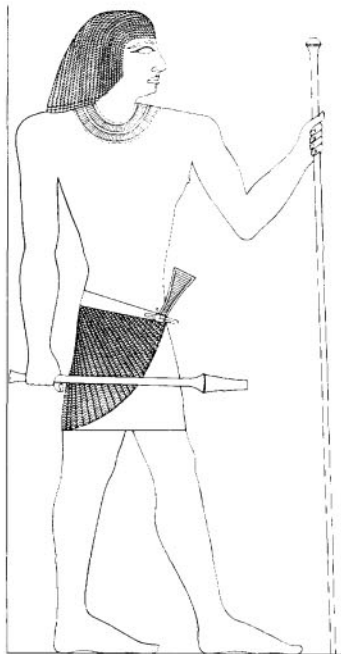
6. Diagram of pleated dresses in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

not as surprisingly new as it seems to be at first glance, for the dresses are basically the familiar shift, with the shoulder straps developed into a yoke with long sleeves. The result is not a particularly happy one. It would seem that the horizontal pleating would not only be bound to sag from the weight of the linen but would make the garments trying for any figure. Frankly, the dresses are clumsy and very ugly, but they, like the shift from which they are derived, might have been transmuted into grace by the idealizing touch of the ancient artist if he had ever bothered to represent them on the slim and youthful bodies he loved to picture.

That pleating was used from the Third Dynasty onward is very evident from the testimony of the monuments. During the Old Kingdom, however, it seems to have been confined almost entirely to the kilts worn by kings and nobles, which were partially or entirely pleated in vertical (or very rarely horizontal) pleats and sometimes in pleats of a complicated herringbone pattern (Fig. 7). Only two or three representations of women in pleated dresses are known from the Old Kingdom, and in these the pleats are vertical.<sup>5</sup> In the Middle Kingdom, the period immediately following

that in which the Boston dresses were made, pleated clothing for women seems to have been equally rare. I have come across only two examples: a sculpture in the Cairo Museum showing a woman in a shift with vertical pleats arranged in groups of four, and a small ivory torso in the Louvre representing a woman in an identical garment.<sup>6</sup> That pleating was probably extensively practiced in the Middle Kingdom is indicated, however, by fragments of pleated stuff found in tombs of Dynasties 11 and 12.

How was the ancient pleating produced and how was it made so permanent that it has endured to the present day? The pleats in the cloth that has survived are so regular and in some cases so fine and so complicated as to indicate that a mechanical means must have been employed to produce them. As was long ago suggested by Erman and more recently by Elisabeth Staehelin<sup>7</sup> it is possible that some such device as the enigmatic corrugated wooden board preserved in the Archaeological Museum at Florence may have served as a substitute for a gauffering iron, although the use of so simple an instrument by no means solves the problem of the intricate pattern-pleating sometimes produced. Whatever the instrument employed a fixative must have been used to give the pleats their permanency. Miss Staehelin has suggested a gelatinous substance similar to that used at the present day for the sizing of fabrics and believes that the use of such a substance may possibly account for the yellow tint sometimes employed by Egyptian artists in picturing pleated portions of kilts. A



7. Kem-Nefert in kilt with herringbone pleating. After relief in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. 04.1761.

sizing may also be responsible for the very even darkening of the dresses in the Museum of Fine Arts, which are of a deep and fairly uniform brown in color; but on the other hand, as many pieces of ancient linen testify, such darkening of the fabric may be merely an accident of age.

Although the Naga-ed-Dêr cemetery in which the dresses were found has remained largely unpublished and the garments from Tomb N 94 in the Museum of Fine Arts have aroused little interest, they have not entirely escaped notice. In 1935 the late William Stevenson Smith illustrated and briefly discussed one of them in an article, "The Old Kingdom Linen List," and I illustrated another in a monograph published in 1944.<sup>8</sup> In the latter publication I indicated in passing that the Boston tunics were not unique. Now, to be more specific, I can point to an identical garment in the Louvre, the only salvageable one of several (the number unspecified) found in 1903 at Asyût in an anonymous burial of Dynasty 9-10,<sup>9</sup> and to another, assigned to Dynasty 11 and now in Cairo (JE 43684), which comes from excavations of Said Bey Kashaba at Meir in 1912, and was described by Spiegelberg in 1927.<sup>10</sup> Seven dresses of identical style but unpleated were discovered in 1897 by Petrie at Deshasheh in a woman's burial (148 b) which he dated to Dynasty 5, but which was subsequently and more plausibly dated by Borchardt to "Dynasty 6 or later."<sup>11</sup> While the coffin and the body it contained went to the Cairo Museum, I do not know the present location of the dresses, if indeed they could be preserved.

Like the Boston dresses, those from Deshasheh, as illustrated in a line drawing in the Petrie publication, consist of a yoke in two separate parts, each with a long sleeve, and an attached skirt, but they are of extraordinary length, measuring five feet or more from shoulder to hem and thus implying a wearer of some six feet in height. Since the average female Egyptian was little over five feet tall, a six-foot woman would indeed have been a monstrosity. Dr. Smith, in his article on the linen lists mentioned above, very sensibly suggested that the Deshasheh dresses were destined to be pleated. Although the three parts of the Boston garments must certainly have been pleated before they were assembled, and it is difficult to see how the pleating could have been done afterward, it seems possible that Petrie's over-long dresses may have been hastily stitched up at the time of the woman's burial, to await pleating in a better world.

Borchardt, in his description of the coffin and body from burial 148 b at Deshasheh, notes that the body is clothed in a finely pleated fabric and supports his statement with an excellent photograph. Petrie unaccountably failed to notice this or, if he did, failed to record it in his report. He did record, however, another Deshasheh burial (117) which contained much clothing "rotted dark brown and almost too tender to lift." This included "a mass of kilted stuff" with "another piece of kilted stuff on the body," and thus might well have suggested to him some explanation for the excessive length of the unpleated dresses he found so puzzling.

Petrie, noting that garments similar to those he had found in Tomb 148 b were nowhere depicted on the monuments, took them to be evidence of a "time lag," stating that the "monumental dress" must already have become obsolete by Dynasty



5, the date to which he had assigned the dresses. Bonnet, writing in 1917,<sup>12</sup> dismissed this theory rather rudely, holding that the monuments always faithfully represented the dress of their period. On this, he was to a certain extent right, but he did not take into account the archaizing tendency, which, more apparent in periods of stress or radical political change, is always present in Egyptian art. Bonnet identified the Petrie garments and the similar pleated dress from Asyût as nightshirts, worn by both men and women, and presumably as such not represented in art. He gave no authority for the use of such refinements as nightshirts by the ancient Egyptians, and I doubt if any could be cited. Bonnet also assumed from the presence of a battle-axe in the Asyût tomb-chamber where the dresses were found that the garments belonged to a man, but since that chamber contained four anonymous burials and the sex of none of the skeletal remains was determined, his assumption must be considered as nothing more than guesswork. The battle-axe, of a type usually assigned to the First Intermediate Period,<sup>13</sup> is nevertheless of use in confirming the approximate date of the Asyût dresses, which, like all the others in the group, seem to have been made in the brief period between Dynasties 6 and 11.

Spiegelberg suggested that the Meir dress must have been destined for funerary use; but he pointed out that it showed signs of wear, and this would seem to indicate that it must have been a garment worn in life and reused for burial. I feel, moreover, that the large number of such dresses found in the well-recorded burials and also the fact that it was the obvious aim of the Egyptians to provide themselves as nearly as possible with goods most treasured in this world for use in the world beyond the grave would make it seem unlikely that the elaborately pleated garments were merely shrouds.

The Naga-ed-Dêr and Deshasheh dresses were found in the burials of women, and I see no reason to doubt that they and also the pleated garments from Meir and Asyût were clothing worn in life solely by women. Their very style, developed, as I have suggested, from the Old Kingdom shift with shoulder straps, makes it evident they were not made for the use of men; indeed, prior to the somewhat effeminate tendencies of the late New Kingdom, the line between masculine and feminine fashions was sharply drawn and unmistakable, and nowhere have even remotely comparable garments been depicted in art as men's clothing.

The group of dresses to which the Boston garments belong all come from provincial cemeteries of Middle Egypt. They are all from early excavations, when the chronology and the archaeology of the First Intermediate Period were even less known than they are today, but the objects found with them, when recorded, tend to confirm a date in that period. In the case of the Boston dresses, the burial of the woman to whom they belonged included a mirror and a wooden box on a stand containing fragments of stone vessels and pottery. None of these was of very distinguished workmanship, and all could plausibly be assigned to the end of the Old Kingdom "or later." On the body was a remnant of a bead necklace with a pendant stamp seal of a "foreign" type characteristic of the First Intermediate Period. In the chamber where the Asyût dresses were discovered was a rather fine female wooden

figure and the battle-axe previously noted to be of the type usually ascribed to the First Intermediate Period. Petrie's Tomb 117 at Deshasheh, which contained that "mass of kilted stuff," also included beads and amulets which could well have been made in the First Intermediate Period.

Since all the dresses were found in uninscribed and undecorated tombs and what seem to be relatively humble burials, it is impossible to determine the social status of their wearers. It must be remembered that the First Intermediate Period was a time of social chaos. As the Old Kingdom tottered to its fall, Egypt was torn by civil wars in which petty claimants struggled for the throne. The country was ravaged by plundering soldiers, fields were left unsown, crops unharvested, and hungry mobs joined the troops in looting and angry destruction. Foreigners from east and west took advantage of the chaotic situation to penetrate the Delta, and Nubian tribes harassed the southern borders. While a few of the governors of Middle Egypt managed to maintain a degree of order within the limited bounds of their own provinces, most Egyptians lived their brief lives in the uncertainty of civil war and revolution.

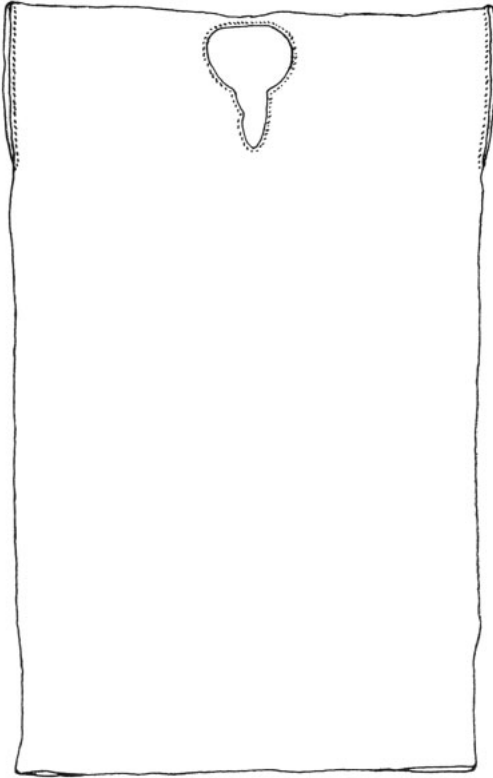
An often quoted record of this period was made by a sage named Ipuwer, who is thought by some scholars to have been an eyewitness of the events he describes. I choose at random a few sentences from his long and repetitious (and perhaps somewhat exaggerated) lament.<sup>14</sup>

"The plunderer is everywhere. Gates, columns, and walls are consumed by fire. Grain has perished on every side. No craftsmen work. The poor have become rich and the possessor of property has become nothing. Squalor is throughout the land. There are none whose clothes are white in these times. They that were in the Pure Place [the cemetery] are cast out upon the ground. Many dead men are buried in the river."

Saddest of all, Ipuwer records that "laughter has perished."

His pessimistic picture is to a considerable extent supported by archaeological evidence. While there have survived a number of large and richly decorated tombs in the oases of peace maintained by provincial governors, and the paintings in such tombs frequently show a freshness of invention and a new vigor of execution, much of the art of the period is crude and unskilled, a nostalgic repetition of forms and motifs established in the happier days of ordered government. The greater number of known tombs are of careless construction and the burials in them often give evidence of haste. None of the coffins in which were found the pleated dresses or fragments of what were presumably such dresses was identified by the name or rank of the owner, so there is no way of telling whether the garments were worn by ladies of the old aristocracy or of the new rich or merely by middle-class women aping some otherwise unrecorded fashion of a provincial court.

That the horizontally pleated dresses failed to enter the repertory of the ancient artist may be because their vogue was so brief or so limited, possibly never spreading beyond the confines of Middle Egypt, even, perhaps, because they proved to be impractical and aesthetically unappealing. Nevertheless, the garments deserve a place in the history of dress, not merely as the earliest complete articles of clothing



8. Diagram of a typical bag-tunic.

9. Ptah-Kenuwi with his wife, who wears a V-necked shift, Dynasty 5. Harvard University – Museum of Fine Arts Egyptian Expedition. 06.1876.

known to have survived from the past but also — and this seems historically more important — as presenting the first recorded example of the sleeve. We do not meet with the long sleeve again until late in Dynasty 18, and then it appears in different form as an appendage of the bag-tunic.

The bag-tunic, as its name implies, is simply an inverted bag formed by a long rectangle which is folded over and stitched up the sides, with an opening left at the top of each side for the arms and another cut at or near the fold for the head to pass through (Fig. 8). The tunic may vary in length from knee to ankle and it is made sufficiently wide to be easily put on or taken off. Thus it covers the upper arms; but it inevitably falls into rather clumsy folds under the armpits and if it is not held in at the waist by a sash or girdle, it is bound to sag at the seams.

One of the simplest of all garments, the bag-tunic has been at home in many countries and at many times. So has a tunic, probably derived from it, that has come to be known as the dalmatic. The dalmatic is shaped by simple cutting to form a

dress with “kimono” sleeves, thus eliminating much of the underarm fullness of the bag-tunic. While I know of no evidence, pictorial or other, for the use of the bag-tunic in Egypt prior to the Middle Kingdom, what might possibly be a dalmatic appears on a stela of a woman named Sehefnepher who lived in Dynasty 2.<sup>15</sup> Dr. Smith thought that the row of garments pictured on this stela might be ancestors of the Boston pleated dresses, but the representation is so schematic as to make both his and my guess equally hazardous.

The earliest bag-tunic I know of is an actual garment of the late Eleventh Dynasty preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. There also, and scattered in a number of other museums, are bag-tunics found in tombs of the New Kingdom. While I cannot pretend to have examined all the evidence offered by the monuments, I have found no certain representation of either the bag-tunic or the dalmatic prior to the latter period. It is possible that a woman’s dress originating in the Old Kingdom and serving as alternate to the shift with shoulder straps is basically a bag-tunic. It seems usually to have been made in one piece with the neck cut into a deep V and the arms and the tips of the shoulders left bare, but it is difficult to judge from the representations just how it was fashioned (Fig. 9). The ancient artists picture it as form-fitting and very narrow — so narrow as to have made movement practically impossible unless the dress had been provided with deep slits at the sides. Reisner found part of such a garment in a Giza burial, but it was only a roughly cut dummy — the front half of a shift laid over a woman’s body and giving no clue as to what the complete garment may have been.<sup>16</sup>

In Dynasty 18 and later, the bag-tunic appears very frequently in Egyptian art, but since painters and sculptors often avoided picturing its inevitable bagginess, the garment is not always easily recognizable. As worn by men, it is invariably shown in combination with a kilt or a wide kiltlike sash, usually pleated, which is wound tight around the buttocks, and doubled over in front like an Ascot tie. To judge from the monuments, the bag-tunic was always made of fine linen, sheer and clinging, but it is evident from surviving examples that such tunics were often made of heavy, close-woven, and consequently bulky weaves. As for the dalmatic, I know of no actual garment of this type prior to the Coptic Period, from which time its line can be traced down to the present, when it survives chiefly in ecclesiastical vestments. Nevertheless I guess at its use in the New Kingdom on the basis of representations of shirts with wide, elbow-length sleeves bordered with bands of horizontal pleating. I do not see how such a border could have been produced along the arm-slits of a bag-tunic unless the pleating had been extended down the sides of the garment, and for this the ancient artists provide no evidence.

One of the relatively few unmistakable representations of women dressed in bag-tunics comes from the tomb of Mose (N 254) at Thebes.<sup>17</sup> Here, the underarm folds are clearly shown on voluminous, long garments worn by two women carrying, respectively, a basket and a jar (Fig. 10). These garments are fitted at the arm-slits with long, pleated sleeves. Two harvesters in the same scene wear very tight dresses with similar sleeves, and I believe that they and also the flax gatherer in the Theban



10. Women in bag-tunics with long, pleated sleeves. Drawing of scene in the Theban tomb of Mose. *Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art.*

11. Harvester in long-sleeved bag-tunic. After painting in the tomb of Nekht at Thebes.



tomb of Nakht (No. 52),<sup>18</sup> who appears in a comparably tight dress with long sleeves (Fig. 11), are also clad in bag-tunics, although in these examples, as in a number of others, the ancient artist could not resist molding the dresses to the slender forms of the wearers. Since there is no evidence for the use of the button or the hook-and-eye (or, needless to say, the zipper!) in ancient Egypt, it is difficult to see how the girls could have put on their working clothes, which would at best have been impractical for agricultural labor anywhere save perhaps in the fields of the blessed dead. Actually, save for their extreme tightness, which I believe to have been a fantasy of the artist, the pictured dresses could have been no more unsuitable than those which Egyptian peasant women trail through the dust of today.

That the bag-tunic was not merely a current dress for men and women of the New Kingdom but was also a part of royal regalia seems clear from a number of such garments found in the tomb of Tutankhamun.<sup>19</sup> These tunics, elaborately patterned in richly colored tapestry weave, enhanced by embroidery, and in some cases decorated with glittering bracteates or beadwork, were, to judge from their sumptuousness and the frequently symbolic nature of their ornament, intended for ceremonial use, perhaps in connection with the king's coronation, and preserved for the recurrent anniversaries of that occasion, which Tutankhamun, dead so young, could hope to celebrate only in a future life. The royal tunics varied from knee- to ankle-length and were, as was customary, wide enough to have covered the upper arm. At least one of them was provided with long, close-fitting pleated sleeves made of plain linen which was somewhat finer than that of the tunic itself.

There is some ground for believing that in the New Kingdom the sleeve (and perhaps also the patterned tapestry weave) came into Egypt from the East. While the Egyptians were never as isolated from the great ancient civilizations of western Asia as we have sometimes been led to believe, with the eastward expansion of empire during the New Kingdom oriental influence became increasingly apparent in all aspects of Egyptian social life. It seeped into language and literature; it filtered into religion; it brought new methods and equipment to warfare; it gave a freshness of inspiration, new motifs, and more than a hint of naturalism to art; and it showed itself in an extravagance of manners and of dress undreamed of in previous periods.

While an admittedly cursory examination of works of art from the Third Millennium in western Asia has yielded me no clear picture of the existence of the sleeve in the dress of that region either before or during the years in which the Boston dresses were made, Egyptian paintings of the New Kingdom almost invariably show Asiatics in long-sleeved garments strikingly like the *galabiyeh*, the fitted dress with dolman sleeves which was almost universally worn by Egyptian and other men of the Near East until a few years past and which is still frequently met with today. It is possible that the Egyptian painter, as was his custom, made the clothing of the Easterners more form-fitting than it actually was and that what they wore was simply the bag-tunic with attached long sleeves. Nevertheless, the Asiatics pictured in scenes of the Middle Kingdom, a period closer in time to the dresses in the Museum of Fine Arts, wear no such sleeved garments but are usually clad in draped rectangles

fastened on one shoulder, which are exactly similar in everything save their bright geometric patterns to those worn by many Egyptians from very early times onward.

Thus, until some new evidence is found, the Museum's sleeved dresses must be held to belong to a small group unique in the history of dress, one that apparently has neither ancestors nor direct descendants. Their chief claim to fame is their antiquity, for, as I have previously noted, they seem to be the earliest complete Egyptian garments known to have survived to our own time. Their brief vogue may have been due in part to the fact that they were impractical and unattractive. For us who live today they may serve as one of the less extreme examples of the fantastical and unbecoming clothing that has been inflicted on men and women during the long history of changing fashions.

#### NOTES

1. I am greatly indebted to the late Dr. William Stevenson Smith, former Curator of the Department of Egyptian Art of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and to Mr. Dows Dunham, Curator Emeritus of that department, for permitting me to examine the dresses here described and for putting at my disposal the records of the Naga-ed Dêr excavation from which they come. While I must be held responsible for the text of this article, Miss Chapman has collaborated with me, not only by providing many of the illustrations but also by pointing out details of the construction of the dresses, which might otherwise have escaped my notice. In fact, the entire department has come to my assistance: Miss Mary B. Cairns has patiently typed and retyped my untidy manuscript; Mrs. Ruth Hodnick has checked my references; and Dr. E. L. B. Terrace, formerly Associate Curator, hunted in the archives of the Cairo Museum to provide details about the excavation from which the Meir dress described by Spiegelberg was found.

All of the drawings illustrating this article, with the exception of those in Figures 3 and 10 were made by Miss Chapman, who also dressed the doll illustrated in Figure 4. Figure 3 has been reproduced from Bernard Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el Médineh* (1934-1935), Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, Fouilles, vol. 15, Cairo, 1937. Fig. 10, as stated in note 17, is from a drawing by Lindsley Hall now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Figure 11 was drawn by Miss Chapman after the color plate in Mekhitarian's *Egyptian Painting* (see note 18).

2. While some Egyptologists have formerly given this period a span of two hundred years or over, recent research has whittled it down to little more than a lifetime. See William C. Hayes "Chronology" in *Cambridge Ancient History*, rev. ed., 1962, vol. I, ch. 6, pp. 3-12.
3. The following thread counts were kindly made by Mrs. Benjamin Markell and Mr. Larry Salmon of the Department of Textiles of the Museum of Fine Arts. No count could be made of the fourth dress (34.56) as it was on exhibition and difficult of access. The weave of all the garments is a tabby weave, over one, under one, and the warp was believed to run up and down in the separate parts of the three dresses examined. Right and left are those of the viewer.

#### 13.3966A

- 1) near end of right sleeve  
17/cm weft count  
24/cm warp count
- 2) right sleeve near shoulder  
15/cm weft count  
26/cm warp count
- 3) center of left sleeve  
16/cm weft count  
23/cm warp count
- 4) yoke edge of skirt  
15/cm weft count  
23/cm warp count

#### 13.3966B

- 1) left sleeve  
11/cm weft count  
17/cm warp count
- 2) yoke back  
11/cm weft count  
14/cm warp count
- 3) right sleeve  
10/cm weft count  
15/cm warp count
- 4) skirt hem  
9/cm weft count  
16/cm warp count

#### 13.3966C

- 1) back side of yoke  
11/cm weft count  
19/cm warp count
- 2) right sleeve  
10/cm weft count  
20/cm warp count
- 3) left sleeve  
10/cm weft count  
19/cm warp count

4. Measurements in centimeters are as follows:

	13.3966A	13.3966B	13.3966C	34.56
Length shoulder to hem	76	72	81	74
Width of skirt	54	44	47	43
Depth of yoke from shoulder	13	12	19	13
Width of yoke at shoulder from neck opening to wrist	54	43	49	42
Circumference of wrist opening	16	11	13	12

5. Elisabeth Staehelin, *Untersuchungen zur ägyptischen Tracht im Alten Reich*, Münchner ägyptologische Studien, 8, Berlin, Hessling, 1966, p. 169.
6. For the Cairo statue, see H. G. Evers, *Staat aus dem Stein*, Munich, Bruckmann, 1929, vol. I, pl. 51; for the ivory in the Louvre, see Jacques Vandier, *Manuel d'archéologie égyptienne*, vol. III, Paris, Picard, 1958, p. 253, pl. 89.2.  
A fragment of linen pleated in exactly the same fashion as that represented on these sculptures was found by De Morgan at Dashur; it is reproduced in A. C. Mace and H. E. Winlock, *The Tomb of Senebtisi at Lisht*, Metropolitan Museum of Art: Egyptian Expedition, vol. I, New York [The Gillis Press], 1916, p. 42, note 1.
7. Adolf Erman, *Life in Ancient Egypt*, trans. H. M. Tirard, London, Macmillan, 1894, p. 218; also E. Staehelin, pp. 14 ff.
8. W. S. Smith, "The Old Kingdom Linen List," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 71 (1935), pp. 134–149, esp. pp. 137–138 and fig. 1; also Elizabeth Riefstahl, *Patterned Textiles in Pharaonic Egypt*, Brooklyn, Brooklyn Museum, 1944, p. 8, fig. 7. Another dress from Tomb N 94, exactly similar to those now in Boston, is in the Cairo Museum. It is illustrated in Vivi Laurent-Täckholm, *Faraos blomster*, Copenhagen, Natur og Kultur Dansk Forlag, 1952, p. 255. Photographic evidence indicates that one or more additional tombs in the burial ground of Naga-ed-Dêr may have also contained pleated dresses similar to those found in Tomb N 94, but in these cases the records are incomplete.
9. Émile Chassinat and Charles Palanque, *Une campagne de fouilles dans la nécropole d'Assiout*, Mémoires de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire, vol. 24, Cairo, 1911, pp. 162–164, pl. 33.
10. W. Spiegelberg, "Altägyptische gefältelte (plissierte) Leinwandstoffe," *Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte* 27 (1927), pp. 154–156, especially pt. A. "Ein Totenhemd des Mittleren Reiches," pp. 154–155, pl. 1. The dimensions of this dress as given by Spiegelberg are length (apparently from shoulder) 103 cm.; width, including sleeves, 128 cm.; width at waist, 90 cm. It is accordingly larger than any of the Boston dresses.
11. W. M. F. Petrie and F. Ll. Griffith, *Deshasheh*, London, Egyptian Exploration Fund, 1898, pp. 31–32, pl. 35, fig. 148; also L. Borchardt, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches im Museum von Kairo, nr. 1295–1808*, vol. II, Catalogue générale des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Cairo, 1964, no. 1791. The lid of the coffin in Tomb 148b bore a rudely incised hieroglyphic inscription, which is unintelligible to the philologists to whom I have shown it.
12. Hans Bonnet, *Die ägyptische Tracht bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches*, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens, VIII, pt. 2, Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1917, p. 61.
13. Hans Bonnet, *Die Waffen der Völker des alten Orients*, Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1926, pp. 24–26, pl. 12h. Also W. Wolf, *Die Bewaffnung des altägyptischen Heeres*, Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1926, pp. 20 ff.
14. A translation of Ipuwer's lament has recently become available in a paperback edition, with an excellent introduction and notes by William Kelly Simpson: Adolf Erman, *The Ancient Egyptians: A Source Book of their Writings*, translated from the German by Aylward M. Blackman, New York, Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1966, pp. 92–108; see also pp. xxix–xxx of Professor Simpson's introduction.
15. J. E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara (1912–1914)*, vol. VI, *Archaic Mastabas*, Cairo, Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 1923, no. 2146 E. pls. 26–27. Plate 27 is also discussed in W. S. Smith, "The Old Kingdom Linen List," p. 137.



16. G. A. Reisner, *A History of the Giza Necropolis*, vol. 1, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1942, p. 452, pl. 42.
17. Miss Nora E. Scott, Associate Curator of the Department of Egyptian Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, has kindly drawn my attention to this example of bag-tunics and has furnished the copy of a drawing made of the scene in the tomb of Mose by Lindsley Hall, which is reproduced in Fig. 10 of this article. Photographic negatives of this scene are also preserved in the Metropolitan Museum.
18. For a reproduction in color of the drawing in Fig. 11, see Arpag Mekhitarian, *Egyptian Painting*, trans. S. Gilbert, New York, Skira, 1954, p. 75.
19. Howard Carter, *The Tomb of Tut-ankh-Amen III*, London, Cassell, 1933, pp. 124–125; also G. M. Crowfoot and Norman de Garis Davies, "The Tunic of Tut'ankhamun," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 27 (1941), pp. 113–130; and R. Pfister, "Les textiles du tombeau de Toutankhamon," *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 11 (1937), pp. 207–218.