of beer production. In some areas, these workshops were later replaced by domestic buildings. Materials and construction methods, including those of installations such as wells, bread ovens, silos and tree emplacements, are discussed in the final chapter.

The presentation of the material is excellent. It is ordered chronologically and by area as the extensive Roman trenching in many cases destroyed archaeological relationships across the site. Each phase is illustrated with detailed plans and black and white photographs, sections are published where they were deemed informative and many additional details and diagrams are given in figures in the text. A general plan showing the relationship of the site to the temple enclosures at Karnak would have been useful for reference, although a contour plan and photographs of the area are given in Karnak-Nord V (pls. I-VI).

This is a fascinating volume which, in addition to situating the treasury within its historical context, provides valuable information on subsidiary shrines and ancillary structures in the region of Karnak, and on periods of activity otherwise poorly attested in the archaeological record. We look forward to the publication of Helen Jacquet-Gordon’s Karnak-Nord VIII which will deal with the epigraphic material from the excavations and which may shed additional light on the archaeological remains from the site.

Kate SPENCE
Faculty of Oriental Studies
Cambridge University


With the appearance of this new edition and exhaustive study of “the Great Harris Papyrus,” justice has finally been done to the tremendous importance of this text for the study of New Kingdom Egypt. The two impressive volumes are the result of over ten years of work, the starting point of which was a thesis submitted at the University of Paris IV-Sorbonne in 1983 (vol. 1, p. vii). There can be no doubt that Egyptology owes a great debt of gratitude to the author of this substantial work which, moreover, is the first edition that includes photographs of the papyrus.

The first volume contains a general commentary (with six appendixes) and a translation of the text. The second volume contains a philological commentary spread over 974 notes to the translation, some of them quite lengthy. Together, these notes have become a true thesaurus of information on the language and content of P. Harris I and related aspects. The second volume also includes indexes of Egyptian vocabulary, proper names, geographical and ethnic names, language and writing, textual sources referred to in the commentary, and topics of special interest. The volume closes with eighty photographs which, although reduced to a scale of 1:2.5, are of a very fine quality. The photographs are accompanied by line drawings indicating the contours of the papyrus sheets and rendering the lines of hieratic text by means of strips.

P. Harris I is the longest of all hieratic texts extant. It is dated officially to the last regnal year of Ramesses III (1151 B.C.), and has been written on one single scroll of papyrus. This scroll, which was originally about 42 metres long, has been cut into eighty sections by Charles Anthony Harris, who purchased the document in Luxor in February 1855. The “pages” thus obtained each contain one or two columns of text, or a vignette; one is entirely blank. The text, written in a majestic uncial hieratic, combines addresses by the deceased King Ramesses III to the main gods and to the people of Egypt with long and detailed lists of the King’s benefactions to a number of Egyptian temples, mainly to his own new temple foundations and their economic provisions. Together, these might be considered a political
and religious “testament” of Ramesses III. As the pharaoh is explicitly presented in the text as a dead king, and because his son and successor Ramesses IV figures prominently in the document, it would seem that P. Harris I was composed at least partly in order to support the latter’s claims as the rightful heir to the throne.

The importance of the papyrus was realised by Harris and other Egyptologists from the moment of its acquisition, and the number of studies devoted to the text is considerable. The earliest discussion is that published by August Eisenlohr in 1872, which concentrated on the historical information offered by the document (Der große Papyrus Harris. Ein wichtiger Beitrag zur ägyptischen Geschichte, ein 2000 Jahr altes Zeugniß für die mosaische Religionsstiftung enthaltend, Leipzig). In the same year, the text was acquired by the British Museum, and Samuel Birch published it in facsimile and translation by order of the trustees of the museum in 1876. Another translation by James Henry Breasted followed in 1906 (in: Ancient Records of Egypt IV, Chicago), and a hieroglyphic transcription was published by W. Erichsen in 1933 (BAe V). These publications have remained the standard reference editions to the present day.

Meanwhile, interest had developed in the wealth of economic data provided in the lists of P. Harris I. In 1904, Adolf Erman published an essay in which he attempted to explain the text as a whole, and its lists in particular. An even more significant study was made by Herbert Schaedel in 1936 (Schaedel, Listen des pHarris). Since then, only a few scattered notes have been published on the economic significance of P. Harris I, including one by Gardiner (JEA 27 (1941), pp. 72 and 73), who did not pay particular attention to the text in any other of his publications. Since the work by Schaedel, no monograph has been devoted to the papyrus, and so it was time for an integral description and interpretation of this text to make its appearance.

Grandet painstakingly describes the structure, redaction, and contents of the text (vol. 1, pp. 19-84). He has replaced the traditional names, which have been given by Erman to the sections, by a different set of terms. Instead of a linear sequence of sections concluded by an historical retrospect of the reign of Ramesses III (“historischer Abschnitt”), which is traditionally given almost the status of an appendix, the author sees a hierarchical structure in which the basic division is the one between this historical retrospect (now called “discours aux humaines,” pages 75-79 of the text) and the four preceding addresses to the gods (“discours aux dieux,” pages 2-74). These two main sections are preceded by a “sommaire” (page 1; Erman: “Einleitung”). Apart from these terms, and the emphasis laid on the hierarchical structure of the text, the titles given to the sections remain more or less the same. The five sections that essentially make up the “discours aux dieux” deal with the main cult centres Thebes, Heliopolis and Memphis, the lesser (“small”) temples, each of them including an address to the gods and lists of gifts and revenues, and the lists of grand totals for all temples together (“état récapitulatif des listes”).

Grandet proceeds with a reconstruction of the process of writing and editing the text, as well as of the final assembly of the papyrus. When studying the hieratic text, Erman recognized the hands of at least three different scribes, one of them being the scribe who wrote the Theban section, as well as the lists of the “small temples” and the grand totals. According to Möller (Paläographie II, pp. 12 and 13), the lists of the small temples and the grand totals were actually made by a different scribe (though with handwriting quite similar to that of the “Theban scribe”), which makes a total of four scribes, and this is followed by Grandet. However, although it may be an established fact that at least four different scribes were involved (and possibly even a fifth person, who made the vignettes), we know next to nothing about the order in which they wrote the sections assigned to them. Nor can we draw any definite conclusions with regard to amount of time actually required for the creation of the entire document, as the author wants us to believe (vol. 1, pp. 23 and 27, table 7; pp. 151-155, appendix 1). It is difficult to say what kind of “simulation” has enabled Grandet to assess that it takes approximately five minutes to write one metre of text (vol. 1, p. 151). It may actually be possible to calculate the amount of time needed by Egyptian scribes to write