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Sommario/riassunto	Africa may have given rise to the first humans, and Egypt probably gave rise to the first great civilizations, which continue to fascinate modern societies across the globe nearly 5,000 years later. From the Library and Lighthouse of Alexandria to the Great Pyramid at Giza, the Ancient Egyptians produced several wonders of the world, revolutionized architecture and construction, created some of the world's first systems of mathematics and medicine, and established language and art that spread across the known world. With world-famous leaders like King Tut and Cleopatra, it's no wonder that today's world has so many Egyptologists. Given the abundance of funerary artifacts that have been found within the sands of Egypt, it sometimes seems as though the Ancient Egyptians were more concerned with the matters of the afterlife than they were with matters of the life they experienced from day to day. One of the most abundant sources of these funerary artifacts is the Valley of the Kings, a royal necropolis located on the west bank of the Nile at Thebes. Here, pharaohs of the New Kingdom Period were buried in elaborate, treasure-filled tombs that were cut deep into the cliffs that walled the Nile Valley. In many of the royal tombs in the Valley of the Kings, intricate reliefs were painted on the walls that depicted the sun god and the dead king on their nightly journey through the underworld, which was known in Egyptian as the Duat

(Wilkinson 2003, 82). These scenes, which vary slightly from tomb to tomb, are known collectively by modern scholars as The Book of Gates because they depict the sun god's journey through 12 gates or pylons, one for each hour of the night (Wilkinson 2003, 81). As the sun god and the dead king travel through the night, they have to contend with various demons and a giant snake known as Apophis (Lesko 1991, 119). The Egyptians believed this journey was cyclical, as they viewed time itself, so it took place daily (Lesko 1991, 119). Though these tombs have been extensively plundered, they still stand as gateways to the afterlife that provide a murky window into the past of a fascinating civilization. Most importantly, the relatively untouched tomb of the young King Tutankhamun offered clear insight. Many of the objects that were discovered in Tutankhamun's tomb were clearly made specifically for him and his burial, such as the coffins, funerary masks, canopic equipment and statues. Other objects, such as the furniture, clothing, and chariots, were obviously items that had been used during Tutankhamun's lifetime. The motifs found upon many of his possessions depicted him in triumph over his enemies. For example, a painted wooden chest bears a fine example of such a scene; the king is shown in his chariot, followed by his troops, attacking a group of Nubians. Scenes depicting aggression and triumph over Egypt's enemies by Egypt's king are classical examples of Egyptian kingship.
