

- ❖ Ancient Egypt (3100BCE-30BCE): Evolved slowly, protected and isolated on each side.
- ❖ Embraced stability, not change. Eventually lead to rigidity.

Geography: The Nile Valley- convergence of the White and Blue Nile- wealth of Egypt depended on the Nile.

- ❖ Reliance of predictable flooding, alluvial soil deposits for crops.
- ❖ Led to extensive irrigation (oasis known as FAIYUM- 3rd largest settlement)
- ❖ Nile used for transportation system for trade and goods. Also transported building materials
- ❖ Nile flowed into Mediterranean, Egypt's major outlet for trade

Desert: (Western and Eastern Desert)

- ❖ Protected Egypt from invasion (aided to isolation)
- ❖ Important sources of minerals and building supplies. Aided in mummification process

The Rise of Egypt as a Nation: prior to 3100BCE= upper and lower Egypt (united red and white crowns)

The Old Kingdom: (2960-2150BCE): 4th Dynasty rulers (akin to gods) acquired tremendous wealth by mining copper and trading (timber, wine and oil) - Built the Pyramids at Giza

- ❖ Imhotep- genius and right hand man to Djoser. Founder of medicine, architect designed world's first stone building and first pyramid (step pyramid)

The Middle Kingdom: (1991-1700BCE) – Civil wars thrust Egypt into 150 years of anarchy.

- ❖ Theban Kings eventually ruled for next 250 years. (ruled at Thebes then Memphis)
- ❖ Rise of god Amon and then sun god Re who became Amon-Re
- ❖ Social mobility was encouraged through promotion of middle class.
- ❖ Local princes curbed their ambitions. Resulted in 2 centuries of peace and stability
- ❖ Hyksos Invasion- Egyptians lagged behind in technological development. Bronze weapons , chariots, bows, etc. of Hyksos (Syria/Palestine) superior to copper weapons
- ❖ 150 years, Hyksos ruled Egypt but overcome by Egyptians eventually

Trade: vast trading network centered on the Med Sea but encompassed Northern Europe , Africa and Near East. Egyptians acquired tin, amber beads, glass, ivory, pottery and bronze. Trade brought new ideas in mathematics, artistic expression, technology and building methods

Politics: Concept of God-King. Pharaoh was believed to be reincarnation of Horus, son of Amon-Re. The king was expected to govern according to rules of Ma'at. Pharaohs tradition bound and removed from subjects.

Succession: Pharaoh passed throne to eldest son born to principal wife. Legitimize claim by marrying his sister or possibly, his mother.

Pharaoh owned all the land in Egypt, the land, the people and all possessions. Hierarchy of government advised him, enforced laws, pleased gods, oversaw construction, sought trade opportunities and collected taxes.

Viziers, scribes, minor officials aided the king. Often wealthy themselves.

Legal traditions: Egyptian laws governed by religious principals. Laws were believed to be infused into the world by gods at the time of creation. The goddess Ma'at represented truth, righteousness and justice. Goal of the people was to find and maintain correct balance and order in the universe. Seeking harmony and stability in life.

Egyptian laws were fair and humane. Applied equally to all people. Law emphasized protecting children and family. No codified laws- based on precedent laws. Punishments were harsh, however. Two principles guided Egyptians: severe punishment would act as a deterrent and disgrace was more effective than death.

Economics: Incorporated traditional, market and command economy. Annual production of staple foods plus complex system of trade developed. Pharaoh had absolute control .

- ❖ Relied on abundant harvests and ability to manage food supplies
- ❖ Enough food for both living and dead essential
- ❖ Surplus was used in trade with neighbouring people. Barter system implemented
- ❖ Egyptians sold goods, paid salaries, collected taxes, charged interest through bartering
- ❖ Enormous amount of labour required to construct public buildings such as temples, royal tombs and pyramids. Majority of labour came from Egypt's poor not nobility or ruling class.
- ❖ Class of serfs emerged rather than slaves (unlike Mesopotamia)

Passing of specialized skills from Father to son contributed to stability. Complex system of artisans who rarely worked independently. Under a master artisan or tradesman

Hatsheptut: One of four women to rule Egypt. When Tutmosis II died, she declared herself female King of Egypt (rather than her young stepson) She expanded trade, built her own massive tomb at Deir alObahari and 2 huge obelisks at Karnak. Speculation that she was murdered by her stepson when he eventually ascended to the throne.

Tutmosis III: He was referred to as Napoleon of Egypt. Successful military campaigns that increased Egypt's wealth which is evident in the burst of public and private building activity.

Akhenaton : Amonhotep IV changed his name to Akhenaton- reformed Egyptian religion. God-Aton replaced Amon-Re. First Monotheist.

Tutankhamun: Known as the boy-king. Arranged marriage between his half-sister, Ankhesenpaton. Responsible for bringing back old gods. Restored the priest and returned capital to Thebes. Met an untimely death. Laid to rest in a nearly completed tomb. Tomb discovered in 1922 by Howard Carter. Grave was left intact and contained incredible riches.

Ramses II: Egypt was well into decline. He built more building and colossal statues. Egypt was invaded and fell to foreigners. During the next 1000 years, Nubians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans would govern Egypt.