

## Nile—Egypt

- unlike Meso—rel/pol more connected given Nile predictability; more isolated provided security; basin irrigation; hieroglyphics not centered around city-states as in Meso but more centralized; flooding of the Nile was predictable every July; more self-sufficient than Mesopotamia & had a more centralized gov't. that controlled the economy

Divided into three eras or kingdoms

- 1. Old Kingdom (2686 – 2181 BCE)**—united around 3100 BCE under Narmer or Menes w/ the lower capitol at Memphis & the upper Nile at Thebes
  - a. pharaoh was descendent of the sun god; ma'at=pharaoh preserved harmony; Egyptian history is divided into 30 dynasties
    - at first all land belonged to pharaoh; no money only barter
  - b. transportation/communication network; canals (basin irrigation)
  - c. hieroglyphics (Rosetta Stone, 1824—also had demotic & Greek)—sacred characters as picture symbols; used papyrus; large bureaucracy to maintain gov't.
  - d. pyramids—Saqqara (first pyramid)—Khufu, Khafre, Menkaure
  - e. polytheistic religion;; priests of Ra grew in power; mastaba - burial mound
    - Osiris (fertility), Isis, Anubis, Seth
    - Later Re, Ra, Amon, Aton=Sun God
    - Horus linked pharaoh & the gods
    - "Book of the Dead" - aided the dead in the afterlife; contains ideas borrowed from outsiders; details how Isis & Nephthys brought Osiris back to life after being killed by his brother Set
    - mummification--ka (life force); ba (soul/personality); ren (name); ib (heart); sheut (shadow)
  - f. Bronze Age from Mesopotamia; Iron came from Kush in the south
  - g. social classes (pharaohs/priests/nobles/merchants/peasants/slaves); women had a major role in society w/ equal legal rights but not career opportunities, & a harsh adultery penalty; few slaves
  - h. over time the pharaoh gave more power to local rulers who became more powerful until the monarchy finally collapsed
- 2. Middle Kingdom (2134–2040 BCE)** followed the period of decline & civil war w/ power transferring to wealthy; pharaoh was no longer absolute but more of a feudal lord w/ an aristocratic class & a provider of public projects & assistance
  - a. conquered Nubia; decline led to the invasion of the Hyksos ("ruler of the foreign lands") (introduced horses, chariots, composite bow, body armor, the wheel)—driven out at the Battle of Tanis—entered Egypt gradually from modern-day Israel & ruled for 108 years--we lack hard evidence of this time period & of the Hyksos
  - b. Due to the humiliation from the Hyksos, Egypt began a period of expansion
- 3. New Kingdom (1551 – 1085 BCE)**—the Empire Period; pharaohs expanded territory & power grew; new class emerged, the professional soldier; conflicts b/t pharaohs & priests
  - a. Thebes (Luxor) made the capitol & wealth poured in giving funds to construct huge temple complexes
  - b. Pharaohs ("Great Man" theory)
    - Hatshepsut (1520-1480)—first female pharaoh
    - Amenhotep IV—single new god, Aton, the sun disk (monotheism); renamed self Akenaton; lost Syria & Palestine; wife was Nefertiti; moved capitol to Amarna
    - Tutankhamen (1358 – 49)—age 9; provided priests of Amun-Ra w/ renewed power to return & moved capitol back to Memphis & Thebes
    - Ramses II the Great (1292 – 1225)—ruled 67 years; defeated by Hittites in 1288 BCE at Kadesh in modern Syria
  - c. peace b/t Egypt, Hittites, & Babylonians brought trade & the period of greatest prosperity
  - d. Dark Ages w/ fragmented kingdoms & foreign pharaohs
  - e. Assyrians finally conquered in 626 BCE & the Persians in 525 BCE
  - f. gradual invasions from the "sea peoples" brought decline starting in 716 & ending w/ the invasion of Alexander the Great in 332 BCE