

The Egyptian Empire

The New Kingdom

Expanding the Empire

When Hatshepsut died, her nephew, Thutmose III (thoot•MOH•suh), became pharaoh. Thutmose's armies expanded Egypt's borders north to the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia. His troops also moved south and regained control of _____, which had broken free from Egypt earlier.

Thutmose's empire grew rich from trade and tribute. In addition to claiming gold, copper, ivory, and other valuable goods from conquered peoples, Egypt enslaved many prisoners of war. These unfortunate captives were put to work rebuilding Thebes. They filled the city with beautiful palaces, _____, and monuments.

Slavery had not been widespread in Egypt before. During the New Kingdom, however, it became common. Enslaved people did have some rights. They could own land, marry, and eventually be granted their _____.

Legacies of Two Pharaohs

About 1370 B.C., Amenhotep IV (AH •muhn •HOH• TEHP) came to the throne. With the help of his wife, Nefertiti (NEHF • uhr • TEET • ee), Amenhotep tried to lead Egypt in a _____ direction.

A Religious Reformer

Amenhotep realized that Egypt's priests were gaining power at the expense of the pharaohs. In an attempt to maintain his own power, Amenhotep introduced a new religion that swept away the old gods and goddesses. Instead, only one god, called _____ (AH•tuhn), was to be worshiped.

When Egypt's priests resisted these changes, Amenhotep removed many from their positions, seized their lands, and closed temples. He then changed his name to Akhenaton (AHK •NAH• tuhn), which means "_____ of Aton." He began ruling Egypt from a new city far from Thebes.

To most Egyptians, Akhenaton's attacks on the gods seemed to be an attack on Egypt itself. They refused to accept Aton as the only _____.

Meanwhile, Akhenaton became so devoted to his new religion that he neglected his duties as pharaoh. The administrators he appointed were not as experienced as the priests they replaced, and Akhenaton took no action when the Hittites, enemies from what is now Turkey, attacked Egypt. As a result, Egypt lost most of its lands in western _____, greatly shrinking the empire.

The Boy King

When Akhenaton died, his son-in-law inherited the _____. The new pharaoh, Tutankhamen (TOO • TANG • KAH • muhn), was a boy about 10 years old. He relied on help from palace

officials and priests, who convinced him to restore the old religion. After ruling for only nine years, Tutankhamen died unexpectedly. He may have suffered a fall or been murdered; no one is sure.

What is certain is that “King Tut,” as he is nicknamed, played only a small role in Egypt’s history. Why, then, is he the most famous of all pharaohs? The boy king captured people’s imaginations after a British archaeologist, Howard Carter, found his tomb in A.D. 1922.

The tomb contained the king’s mummy and incredible treasures, including a brilliant gold mask of the young pharaoh’s face. Carter’s find was a thrilling discovery, because most royal tombs in Egypt were looted by _____ long ago.

The End of the New Kingdom

During the 1200s B.C., pharaohs worked to make Egypt great again. The most effective of these pharaohs was Ramses II (RAM • SEEZ). He reigned for a remarkable 66 years, from 1279 B.C. to 1213

B.C. During this time, Egyptian armies regained lands in western Asia and rebuilt the empire. Ramses also launched an ambitious building program, constructing several major new temples.

Why Were Temples Built?

Under Ramses II and other New Kingdom rulers, scores of new temples rose throughout Egypt. Many were built by enslaved people captured in war. The most magnificent was _____ at Thebes. Its huge columned hall decorated with colorful paintings still impresses visitors today.

Unlike modern churches, temples, and mosques, Egyptian temples did not hold regular religious services. Instead, most Egyptians prayed at home. They considered the temples as houses for the gods and goddesses. Priests and priestesses, however, performed daily temple _____, washing statues of the deities and bringing them food.

The temples also served as banks. Egyptians used them to store valuable items, such as gold jewelry, sweet-smelling _____, and finely woven cloth.

Egypt’s Decline and Fall

After Ramses II, Egypt’s power began to fade. Later pharaohs had trouble keeping neighboring countries under Egyptian control. Groups from the eastern Mediterranean attacked Egypt by sea, using strong iron weapons. The Egyptians had similar arms, but they paid dearly for them because Egypt lacked _____ ore.

By 1150 B.C., the Egyptians had lost their empire and controlled only the Nile delta. Beginning in the 900s B.C., Egypt came under the rule of one outside group after another. The first conquerors were the Libyans from the west. Then, about 750 B.C., the people of Kush, a land to the south, began to conquer Egypt. Finally, in 670 B.C., Egypt was taken over by the _____, a powerful society from the north.