

# THE MIDDLE AND NEW KINGDOMS



# The Middle Kingdom

- The Old Kingdom ended with the pharaohs in debt. Ambitious nobles serving in government positions managed to take power from the pharaohs and rule Egypt for nearly 160 years.
- Finally, a powerful pharaoh regained control of Egypt around 2050 BC and started a peaceful period of rule.
- This era was called the **Middle Kingdom** and lasted until Southwest Asian invaders conquered Lower Egypt around 1750 BC.

# The New Kingdom

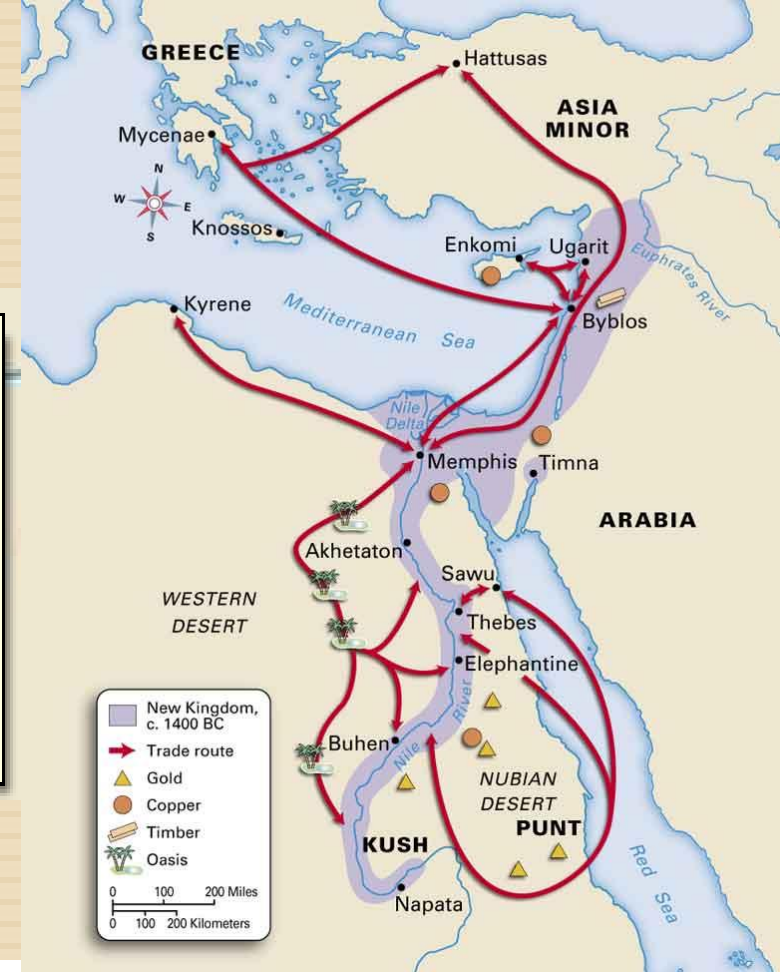
- When an Egyptian named Ahmose (AHM-ohs) drove away the invaders and declared himself king of Egypt in 1550 BC, he ushered in Egypt's eighteenth dynasty and the start of the **New Kingdom**.

# Military Power

- Responding to invasions, Egypt took control of possible invasion routes and quickly became the leading military power in the region, with an empire extending from the Euphrates River in the northeast to Nubia in the south.



Map: Egyptian trade c.1400 BC: This map shows where goods were plentiful and the trade routes. Most of the gold was found between the Red Sea and the Nile River. The copper was spread out from the north to the south along the Nile. Timber was found near Byblos which was in the northern part of the New Kingdom which ran from the Euphrates River along the Nile south towards Napata. The Oasis were dominant to the west of the Nile. The trade routes ran along the Nile and around the Mediterranean Sea. Inset is



# Egyptian Trade 1400 BC

# Trade Routes

- These conquests also made Egypt rich, through gifts and vastly expanded **trade routes**.
- One ruler in particular, **Queen Hatshepsut**, was active in establishing new paths for traders.



Hatshepsut was married to the pharaoh Thutmose II, her half-brother. He died young, leaving the throne to Thutmose III, his son by another woman. Because Thutmose III was still very young, Hatshepsut took over power. Many people did not think women should rule, but Hatshepsut dressed as a man and called herself king. After she died, her stepson took back power and vandalized all the monuments she had built.

## Queen Hatshepsut

Ruled 1503-1482 BC

# Ramses the Great

- Despite the strong leadership of **Ramses the Great**, a tide of invasions from Southwest Asia and from the west eventually reduced Egypt to violence and disorder.



Many people consider Ramses the last great Egyptian pharaoh. He accomplished great things, but the pharaohs who followed could not maintain them. Both a great warrior and a great builder, he is known largely for the massive monuments he built. The temples at Karnak, Luxor, and Abu Simbel stand as 3,000-year-old symbols of the great pharaoh's power.

# Work and Daily Life

- During the Middle and New Kingdoms, Egypt's population continued to grow and become more complex.
- Professional and skilled workers like scribes, artisans, artists, and architects were honored.
- These roles in society were usually passed on in families, with young boys learning a trade from their fathers.



Queen Nefertiti, shown here, and other Egyptian queens wore makeup, jewelry, and perfume.



Most Egyptians spent their days in the fields, plowing and harvesting their crops.



This jar probably held perfume, a valuable trade item.



Servants worked for Egypt's rulers and nobles and did many jobs, like preparing food.

## Daily Life in Egypt

# Farmers and Peasants

- For farmers and peasants, who made up the vast majority of the population, life never changed.
- In addition to hard work on the land, they were required to pay taxes and were subject to special labor duty at any time.
- Only slaves were beneath them in social status.



# Families

- Most Egyptian families lived in their own homes.
  - ▣ Boys were expected to marry young and start their own families.
  - ▣ Women focused on the home, but many also had jobs outside the home. Egyptian women had the legal rights to own property, make contracts, and divorce their husbands.