

Ancient Egypt

H201 - World History

Mr. Mantei

October 12, 2018

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”

(Mandela). Ancient Egypt had many innovative inventions that allowed the civilization to thrive for millennia. Religion, technology, geography, and social are the components that will be addressed, in regards to ancient Egypt. Ancient Egypt is a complex society with innovations that are still perplexing to scholars.

Egyptian religion is complex with many deities. According to the creation story Atum was the first god, and made Shu, Tefnut. Shu and Tefnut made Geb and Nut along with the other gods. “Atum made his son by spitting him out and named him Shu the god of the air. Atum’s vomited his daughter and named her Tefnut and made her the goddess of mist and moisture.[...] Shu and Tefnut made Geb and Nut” (The Egyptian Creation Myth). After the New Kingdom the book of the dead became popular. Most people had them because it helped guide you through the afterlife. “They could have as few or as many spells in their books as they could afford. Bunson writes, “The individual could decide the number of chapters to be included, the types of illustrations, and the quality of the papyrus used. The individual was limited only by his or her financial resources.” (Mark) “Having a Book of the Dead in one's tomb would be the equivalent of a student in the modern day getting their hands on all the test answers they would ever need in every grade of school.[...] The popularity of the Osiris Myth in the period of the New Kingdom made people believe the spells were indispensable because Osiris featured so prominently in the soul's judgment in the afterlife.” (Mark) Ancient Egypt’s religion was complex; however, they had other complexities and advancements.

Most of our technology and tools we can thank the Ancient Egyptians. Ancient Egyptian openly accepted new technology, such as the sickle sword, from other people. Ancient Egyptians were able to make bronze weapons and became commonly used in the 18th dynasty. “Even so,

the bronze Middle Kingdom arrowheads may have been imported from the Middle East and their production in Egypt became common only in the time of the 18th dynasty.[...] The military accepted new technologies” (Military.com's DefenseTech Blog). Ancient Egyptians were one of the first people to write and keep track of what happened in their lives. (Ancient Egyptian Technology) “The earliest form of writing was in the form of hieroglyphics, which, simply put, we're drawings that portrayed a story” (Ancient Egyptian Technology). Ancient Egyptians first durable paper was made from papyrus. “Papyrus was the first form of durable sheets of paper to write on, and the ancient Egyptians were the ones to develop it” (Ancient Egyptian Technology). Ancient Egyptians invented black ink along with other colors with such expertise you can still see them with their brilliant hues of the color even though it has been thousands of years. “One of the inventions in Egypt was, surprisingly, black ink. The Egyptian people were very talented at creating not only black ink, but many multi-colored types of ink and dye. The process and depth of color utilized in the Egyptian invention of ink and dye was so marvelous that these brilliant hued colors can still be seen today, thousands of years later.” (Ancient Egyptian Technology) Ancient Egyptians made their calendar to go with the flooding of the Nile; then, they noticed that the flooding wasn't the same time every year. Ancient Egyptians then found out that out then they started their calendar to go with the rising of the star Sirius. “They grouped the months into three seasons of four months that seemed to coincide with the Nile River.[...] Therefore, after noticing that the river's flooding and rising coincided with the heliacal rising of the star Sirius, they based their year on the cycle of this star's reappearance, effectively applying astronomy principles to develop a more accurate calendar by which to track the days of the year.” (Ancient Egyptian Technology) Ancient Egyptians made clocks or timekeeping devices such as: sundials, shadow clocks, merkhets and obelisks, and water clocks. “Ancient Egyptians

were also one of the first groups of people to divide days into equal parts through the use of timekeeping devices. Some of the earliest forms of clocks were sundials, shadow clocks, merkhet and obelisks.[...] There is even evidence of water clocks in ancient Egypt.” (Ancient Egyptian Technology) Ancient Egyptians utilized many methods to construct pyramids, such as:

- (1) organized labor - the magnitude was immense because it took about several decades to build one ;
- (2) Simple Machines - to be able to get stone to where they were building which made everything easier to make the pyramid. “When one takes into consideration that the construction of just one pyramid often lasted several decades, the magnitude of the organized labor required becomes enormous.[...] Part of what made it possible for the Egyptians to build some of the great buildings and monuments that they did was the employ of certain simple machines that they invented to assist them in the process. The ramp and the lever were a couple of the most famous construction inventions that the ancient Egyptians developed, and the principles that guide them are still widely used in construction today.” (Ancient Egyptian Technology) Since trade was important in ancient culture, having ships was important in Ancient Egypt. “Trade was an important part of ancient cultures, so having working ships was extremely important.” (Ancient Egyptian Technology) Ancient Egyptian used ox-drawn plows to help with farming. “Trade was an important part of ancient cultures, so having working ships was extremely important.”

(Ancient Egyptian Technology) Ancient Egyptians made systems using hydraulic engineering to get water to their crops since there wasn't always rain such when there's a drought. “Therefore, the ancient Egyptians developed irrigation systems using hydraulic engineering principles. Such systems were designed to replace rainfall during periods of drought.” (Ancient Egyptian Technology) We can thank the ancient Egyptians for a great deal of things we use today, but they could do this because they did not get attacked since they were basically protected by their area.

Most of Egypt is desert, but they have the Nile River which has nutrient rich black dirt. The world's longest river is the Nile, by being 4,100 miles long. "The Nile River is the longest river in the world. It is over 4,100 miles long" (Ancient Egypt). Since their land is so fertile the ancient Egyptians could grow wheat, flax, and papyrus. "The most important thing the Nile provided to the Ancient Egyptians was fertile land. Most of Egypt is desert, but along the Nile River the soil is rich and good for growing crops. The three most important crops were wheat, flax, and papyrus." (Ancient Egypt) They just weren't advanced in their technology, they were also advanced in their social standards. Even though their society was long ago, the men and women had more equal rights than the 1800s. Most men were in agriculture, along commerce and trade. "A large section of Egyptian society was involved in agriculture, like all traditional societies, while many ancient Egyptian men also had roles in trade and commerce" (Ancient Egyptian Men). There were two types of school: one that was for the common people; the other, for royalty kids, kids from priests, etc. "Education of Egyptian boys was normally carried out in village schools which had a clearly defined curriculum. Subjects like mathematics, geography, history, and medicine were taught in these schools. After the age of about 14, most students adopted the professions of their fathers. However, some of the students also opted to go for specialised studies in various disciplines. For the children of Egyptian men of nobility, special schools called 'the schools of the prince' were established. It was also customary to receive advanced theological education called 'Instruction of Wisdom'." (Ancient Egyptian Men) Ancient Egypt was so advanced that they could do all this with no major issues.

Ancient Egyptians had invented most of what we use to this day and were advanced at the time. Scholars are perplexed about ancient Egypt's complex society Ancient Egypt's complexity and innovations were illustrated in the four components addressed, which are:

religion, technology, geography, and social. Ancient Egypt had many ingenious advancements that allowed their society to thrive. After Alexander the Great conquered Egypt, the innovations and advancement of the ancient society would eventually be lost.

Mandela, N. (2018). Nelson Mandela Quotes. Retrieved from https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/nelson_mandela_157855

References

1. Mandela, N. (2018). Nelson Mandela Quotes. Retrieved from https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/nelson_mandela_157855
2. Mark, J. J. (2018). *Egyptian Book of the Dead*. Retrieved from https://www.ancient.eu/Egyptian_Book_of_the_Dead/
3. *Ancient Egypt*. (2018). Retrieved from https://www.ducksters.com/history/ancient_egypt/geography_nile_river.php
4. *Ancient Egyptian Men*. (2018). Retrieved from <http://www.legendsandchronicles.com/ancient-civilizations/ancient-egypt/ancient-egyptian-men/>
5. *Ancient Egyptian Technology*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.ancient-egypt-online.com/ancient-egypt-technology.html>
6. *Military.com's DefenseTech Blog*. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.military.com/defensetech>
7. *The Egyptian Creation Myth*. (2011). Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/uTy49JlgJZE>