

Chapter 3: Early Africa and Egypt: 3-5 Chapter Review  
Book Title: World Civilizations  
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## 3-5 Chapter Review

### 3-5a Summary

The Nile Valley produced a civilized society as early as any in the world, thanks to an unusual combination of favorable climate and geography. Even before the emergence of a central government under a god-king called a pharaoh, the farmers along the river had devised an intricate system of irrigated fields that gave Egypt an enviable surplus of food. The villages were unified around 3100 B.C.E., giving rise to the highly centralized civilization of the Old Kingdom and its awesome monuments celebrating the linkage of Egypt and the protective gods. Aside from the abnormal collapse of central government in the brief Intermediate Periods, the rulers of Egypt were uniquely successful, maintaining 2000 years of prosperity and isolation from contact with others, except on their own terms. This success allowed the reigning group to assume a superiority that, although originally justified, gradually became a clinging to tradition for its own sake. When the misguided attempt at empire failed, Egypt faced the challenge of repeated foreign invasions after about 1000 B.C.E. The divine kings lost their stature, and the static civilization of the Nile fell under the sway of once-disdained aliens from the east and south. The Persian conquest in 525 B.C.E. completed the decline of the pharaohs' state into dependency.

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