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This article is about the country. For other uses, see Spain (disambiguation).

Kingdom of Spain
Reino de España

Flag Coat of arms
Motto: “Plus Ultra” (Latin)
Anthem: “Marcha Real” (Spanish)[note 1]

Location of Spain (dark green) – on the European continent (light green & dark grey)
– in the European Union (light green) — [Legend]

Capital
and largest city) Madrid
40°26′N 3°42′W / 40.433°N 3.7°W / 40.433; -3.7

Official language(s) Spanish[note 2]
Recognised regional languages Aranese, Basque, Catalan/Valencian and Galician
Ethnic groups 87.8% Spanish, 12.2% (Romanian, Moroccan, Ecuadorian) other (2010)[1]

Demonym Spanish, Spaniard
Government Parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy
– King Juan Carlos I
– Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero (PSOE)
Formation 15th century
– Dynastic 1479
– de facto 1516
– de jure 1716
– Constitutional democracy 1978
EU accession 1 January 1986

Area
Spain (pronounced /ˈspeɪn/ (listen); Spanish: España, pronounced [esˈpaɲa] (listen)), officially the Kingdom of Spain (Spanish: Reino de España), is a member state of the European Union located in southwestern Europe on the Iberian Peninsula.[note 6] Its mainland is bordered to the south and east by the Mediterranean Sea except for a small land boundary with the British Overseas Territory of Gibraltar; to the north by France, Andorra, and the Bay of Biscay; and to the northwest and west by the Atlantic Ocean and Portugal.

Spanish territory also includes the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands in the Atlantic Ocean off the African coast, and two autonomous cities in North Africa, Ceuta and Melilla, that border Morocco. With an area of 504,030 km², Spain is the second largest country in Western Europe and the European Union after France. Since January 1, 2010, Spain has held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Because of its location, the territory of Spain was subject to many external influences, often simultaneously, since prehistoric times and through the dawn of Spain as a country. Conversely, the country itself has been an important source of influence to other regions, chiefly during the Modern Era, when it became a global empire that has left a legacy of over 400 million Spanish speakers today, making it the world's second most spoken first language.

Spain is a democracy organised in the form of a parliamentary government under a constitutional monarchy. It is a developed country with the ninth or tenth largest economy in the world by nominal GDP, and very high living standards (15th highest Human Development Index), including the seventeenth-highest quality of life index rating in the world.[citation needed] It is a member of the United Nations, European Union, NATO, OECD, and WTO.

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The true origins of the name España and its cognates “Spain” and “Spanish” are disputed. The ancient Roman name for Iberia, Hispania, may derive from poetic use of the term Hesperia to refer to Spain, reflecting Greek perception of Italy as a “western land” or “land of the setting sun” (Hesperia) and Spain, being still further west, as Hesperia ultima.[5]

It may also be a derivation of the Punic Ispanihad meaning “land of rabbits” or “edge”, a reference to Spain’s location at the end of the Mediterranean; Roman coins struck in the region from the reign of Hadrian show a female figure with a rabbit at her feet.[6] There are also claims that España derives from the Basque word Ezpanna meaning “edge” or “border”, another reference to the fact that the Iberian peninsula constitutes the southwest of the European continent.[5]

The humanist Antonio de Nebrija proposed that the word Hispania evolved from the Iberian word Hispalis, meaning “city of the western world”. According to a new research by Jesús Luis Cunchillos published in 2000 with the name of Gramática fenicia elemental (Basic phoenician grammar), the root of the term span is spy, meaning “to forge metals”. Therefore i-spn-ya would mean “the land where metals are forged”. [7]

Spain’s climatic areas. Due to Spain’s geographical situation and orographic conditions, the climate is extremely diverse; discounting the mountain climate, it can be roughly divided into five areas:

A Continental Mediterranean climate in the inland areas of the Peninsula (largest city, Madrid).

An Oceanic climate in Galicia and the coastal strip near the Bay of Biscay or (largest city, Bilbao). This area is often called Green Spain.

A Semiarid climate or arid Mediterranean in the southeast (largest city, Murcia).

A Mediterranean climate region extends from the Andalusian plain along the southern and eastern coasts up to the Pyrenees, on the seaward side of the mountain ranges that run near the coast. Also in Ceuta and Melilla (largest city, Barcelona). Localized Subtropical climate areas exist in the coasts of Granada and Málaga (Costa Tropical).

A Subtropical climate in the Canary Islands (largest city, Las Palmas).

The rain in Spain does not stay mainly in the plain. It falls mainly in the northern mountains.[8]
After a long and hard conquest, the Iberian Peninsula became a region of the Roman Empire known as Hispania. During the early Middle Ages it came under Germanic rule but later was conquered by Muslim invaders. Through a very long and difficult process, the Christian kingdoms in the north gradually rolled back Muslim rule, finally extinguishing its last remnant in Granada in 1492, the same year Columbus reached the Americas. A global empire began which saw Spain become the strongest kingdom in Europe and the leading world power in the 16th century and first half of the 17th century.

Continued wars and other problems however, eventually led to a diminished status. The French invasion of Spain in the early 19th century led to chaos, triggering independence movements that tore apart most of the empire and left the country politically unstable. In the 20th century it suffered a devastating civil war and came under the rule of an authoritarian government, leading to years of stagnation, but finishing in an impressive economic surge. Democracy was restored in 1978 in the form of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. In 1986, Spain joined the European Union; experiencing a cultural renaissance and steady economic growth.

Prehistory and pre-Roman peoples

Main article: Prehistoric Iberia

Archaeological and genetic evidence strongly suggests that the Iberian Peninsula acted as one of three major refugia from which northern Europe was repopulated following the end of the last ice age.

The two main historical peoples of the peninsula were the Iberians and the Celts, the former inhabiting the Mediterranean side from the northeast to the southwest, the latter inhabiting the Atlantic side, in the north and northwest part of the peninsula. In the inner part of the peninsula, where both groups were in contact, a mixed, distinctive culture—known as Celtiberian—was present. In addition, Basques occupied the western area of the Pyrenees mountains. Other ethnic groups existed along the southern coastal areas of present day Andalusia.

Among these southern groups there grew the earliest urban culture in the Iberian Peninsula, that of the semi-mythical southern city of Tartessos (perhaps pre-1100 BC) in the location of present-day triangle between Seville, Huelva and Jerez. The flourishing trade in gold and silver between the people of Tartessos and Phoenicians and Greeks is documented in the history of Strabo and in the biblical book of king Solomon. Between about 500 BC and 300 BC, the seafaring Phoenicians and Greeks founded trading colonies all along the Spanish Mediterranean coast. It should also be mentioned that according to John Koch [12] Cunliffe, Karl, Wodtko and other highly respected scholars, Celtic culture may well have developed first in far Southern Portugal and Southwestern Spain, approximately 500 years prior to anything recorded in Central Europe.[13][14] The Tartessian language from the southwest of Spain, which John T. Koch has been able to readily translate, is being accepted by a growing number of philologists and other linguists as the first Celtic language. [12][15][16]

Carthaginians briefly took control of much of the Mediterranean coast in the course of the Punic Wars, until they were eventually defeated and replaced by the Romans.[17]

Roman Empire and the Gothic Kingdom

Main article: Hispania

Roman Theatre of Mérida, in Badajoz

During the Second Punic War, an expanding Roman Empire captured Carthaginian trading colonies along the Mediterranean coast from roughly 210 BC to 205 BC, leading to eventual Roman control of nearly the entire Iberian Peninsula; this lasted over 500 years, bound together by law, language, and the Roman road.[18]

Cathedral of the Holy Saviour, in Asturias

The base Celt and Iberian population remained in various stages of Romanisation, and local leaders were admitted into the Roman aristocratic class.[note 7][17] Hispania served as a granary for the Roman market, and its harbors exported gold, wool, olive oil, and wine. Agricultural production increased with the introduction of irrigation projects, some of which remain in use. Emperors Trajan, Theodosius I, and the philosopher Seneca were born in Hispania.[note 8]

Christianity was introduced into Hispania in the 1st century CE and it became popular in the cities in the 2nd century CE.[17] Most of Spain's present languages and religion, and the basis of its laws, originate from this period.[18] Rome's loss of jurisdiction in Hispania began in 409, when the Germanic Suevi and Vandals, together with the Sarmatian Alans crossed the Rhine and ravaged Gaul until the Visigoths drove them into Iberia that same year. The Suevi established a kingdom in what is today modern Galicia and northern Portugal.

The Alans' allies, the Hasdingi Vandals, established a kingdom in Gallaecia, too, occupying largely the same region but extending farther south to the Duero river. The Silingi Vandals occupied the region that still bears a form of their name—Vandalusia, modern Andalusia, in Spain. The Byzantines established an enclave, Spain, in the south, with the intention of reviving the Roman empire throughout Iberia. Eventually, however, Hispania was reunited under Visigothic rule.

Muslim Iberia

Main article: Al-Andalus

The Alhambra palace complex, in Granada.

In the 8th century, nearly all of the Iberian Peninsula was conquered (711–718) by Muslim armies (see Moors) from North Africa. These conquests were part of the expansion of the Umayyad Islamic Empire.[note 9] Only a number of areas in the mountainous north of the Iberian Peninsula managed to resist the initial invasion and they were the starters of the Reconquista. These
The unification of the crowns of Aragon and Castile laid the basis for modern Spain and the Spanish Empire.

Imperial Spain

The Spanish Empire was a world power from the 15th to the 18th centuries. It was established after the marriage of Isabella I of Castile and Ferdinand II of Aragon in 1469. The crowns of Aragon and Castile were united, and this union formed the basis of modern Spain.

As Renaissance New Monarchs, Isabella and Ferdinand centralized royal power at the expense of local nobility, and the word España, whose root is the ancient name Hispania, began to be commonly used to designate the whole of the two kingdoms. With their wide-ranging political, legal, religious and military reforms, Spain emerged as the first world power.

During the Spanish Inquisition, large Moorish populations were expelled from Spain from the 15th to the 17th centuries. The Inquisitors, who were primarily Spanish and Portuguese, were led by a Spanish Bishop. The Inquisition was a religious institution that was established in Spain in the 15th century and was in operation until 1834.

The domestic economy of the Spanish Empire was diverse and included agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. The Empire had a large population of Muslims and Jews, who were granted religious freedom and were encouraged to convert to Christianity or face expulsion. However, under the Catholic Monarchs, the Inquisition was established and began to restrict the freedoms of the Muslim and Jewish communities.

By the 17th century, the Empire faced a number of challenges, including the decline of its military power and the rise of other European powers such as France and England. The Empire began to weaken and was eventually replaced by a series of smaller kingdoms and nations.

Spanish Empire

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Spanish Empire.[29] Spain was Europe's leading power throughout the 16th century and most of the 17th century, a position reinforced by trade and wealth from colonial possessions. Spain reached its apogee during the reigns of the first two Spanish Habsburgs – Charles I (1516–1556) and Philip II (1556–1598). This period also saw the Italian Wars, the revolt of the comuneros, the Dutch revolt, the Morisco revolt, clashes with the Ottomans, the Anglo-Spanish war and wars with France.[30]

The Spanish Empire expanded to include great parts of the Americas, islands in the Asia-Pacific area, areas of Italy, cities in Northern Africa, as well as parts of what are now France, Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. It was the first empire about which it was said that the sun never set.

This was an age of discovery, with daring explorations by sea and by land, the opening-up of new trade routes across oceans, conquests and the beginnings of European colonialism. Along with the arrival of precious metals,[note 14] spices, luxuries, and new agricultural plants, Spanish and other brought back knowledge from the New World, playing a leading part in transforming European understanding of the globe.[31] The cultural efflorescence witnessed is now referred to as the Spanish Golden Age. The rise of humanism, the Protestant Reformation and new geographical discoveries raised issues addressed by the influential intellectual movement now known as the School of Salamanca.

A 16th century galleon. In the late 16th century and first half of the 17th century, Spain was confronted by unrelenting challenges from all sides. Barbary pirates under the aegis of the rapidly growing Ottoman empire, disrupted life in many coastal areas through their slave raids and renewed the threat of an Islamic invasion.[note 15] This at a time when Spain was often at war with France in Italy and elsewhere.

The Protestant Reformation schism from the Catholic Church dragged the kingdom ever more deeply into the mire of religiously charged wars. The result was a country forced into ever expanding military efforts across Europe and in the Mediterranean.[32]

By the middle decades of a war- and plague-ridden 17th century Europe the Spanish Habsburgs had enmeshed the country in the continent-wide religious-political conflicts. These conflicts drained it of resources and undermined the European economy generally. Spain managed to hold on to most of the scattered Habsburg empire, and help the imperial forces of the Holy Roman Empire reverse a large part of the advances made by Protestant forces, but it was finally forced to recognise the separation of Portugal (with whom it had been united in a personal union of the crowns from 1580 to 1640) and the Netherlands, and eventually suffered some serious military reverses to France in the latter stages of the immensely destructive, Europe-wide Thirty Years War.[33]

El Escorial, built in Philip II’s reign, near Madrid. In the latter half of the 17th century, Spain went into a gradual relative decline, during which it surrendered a number of small territories to France. However Spain maintained and enlarged its vast overseas empire, which remained intact until the beginning of the 19th century.

The decline culminated in a controversy over succession to the throne which consumed the first years of the 18th century. The War of Spanish Succession, a wide ranging international conflict combined with a civil war, cost Spain its European possessions and its position as one of the leading powers on the Continent.[34]

During this war, a new dynasty originating in France, the Bourbons, was installed. Long united only by the Crown, a true Spanish state was established when the first Bourbon king, Philip V of Spain, united the crowns of Castile and Aragon into a single state, abolishing many of the regional privileges and laws (fueros).[35]

The 18th century saw a gradual recovery and an increase in prosperity through much of the empire. The new Bourbon monarchy drew on the French system of modernising the administration and the economy. Enlightenment ideas began to gain ground among some of the kingdom’s elite and monarchy. Military assistance for the rebellious British colonies in the American War of Independence improved Spain’s international standing.[36]

Napoleonic rule and its consequences

Main article: Mid-nineteenth century Spain

Second of May, 1808: the people revolt against the Bonapartist regime In 1793, Spain went to war against the new French Republic, which had overthrown and executed its Bourbon king, Louis XVI. The war polarised the country in an apparent reaction against the gallicised elites. Defeated in the field, Spain made peace with France in 1795 and effectively became a client state of that country; the following year, the secret treaty of Fontainebleau between Napoleon and Godoy led to a declaration of war against Britain and Portugal. French troops began to enter the peninsula, supposedly to invade Portugal, but instead, they began to occupy Spanish fortresses. This surprise invasion led to the abdication of the Spanish king in favour of Napoleon’s brother, Joseph Bonaparte.

This foreign puppet monarch was widely regarded with scorn. The 2nd of May 1808 revolt was one of many nationalist uprisings against the Napoleonic regime across the country.[37] These revolts marked the beginning of what is known to the Spanish as the War of Independence, and to the British as the Peninsular War.[38]

Napoleon was forced to intervene personally, defeating several badly coordinated Spanish armies and forcing a British army to retreat. However, further military action by Spanish guerrillas, armies and Wellington's British-Portuguese forces, combined with Napoleon's disastrous invasion of Russia, led to the outing of the French imperial armies from Spain in 1814, and the return of King Ferdinand VII.[39]

The French invasion proved disastrous for Spain’s economy, and left a deeply divided country that was prone to political instability for more than a century. The power struggles of the early 19th century led to the loss of all of Spain’s colonies in the Americas (from today’s south west USA to Patagonia), with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

Spanish–American War
Main article: Spanish–American War

Amid the instability and economic crisis that afflicted Spain in the 19th century there arose nationalist movements in the Philippines and Cuba. Wars of independence ensued in those colonies and eventually the United States became involved. Despite the commitment and ability shown by some military units, they were so mismanaged by the highest levels of command that the Spanish–American War, fought in the Spring of 1898, did not last long. “El Desastre” (The Disaster), as the war became known in Spain, helped give impetus to the Generation of 98 who were already conducting much critical analysis concerning the country. It also weakened the stability that had been established during Alfonso XII’s reign.

20th century

The 20th century brought little peace; Spain played a minor part in the scramble for Africa, with the colonisation of Western Sahara, Spanish Morocco and Equatorial Guinea. The heavy losses suffered during the Rif war in Morocco helped to undermine the monarchy. A period of authoritarian rule under General Miguel Primo de Rivera (1923–1931) ended with the establishment of the Second Spanish Republic. The Republic offered political autonomy to the Basque Country, Catalonia and Galicia and gave voting rights to women.

Evacuees give the republican salute. The Spanish Civil War (1936–39) ensued. Three years later the Nationalist forces, led by General Francisco Franco, emerged victorious with the support of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. The Republican side was supported by the Soviet Union and Mexico and International Brigades, including the American Abraham Lincoln Brigade, but it was not supported officially by the Western powers due to the British-led policy of Non-Intervention.

The Spanish Civil War has been called the first battle of the Second World War; under Franco, Spain was neutral in the Second World War though sympathetic to the Axis.[note 16] The Civil War claimed the lives of over 500,000 people[40] and caused the flight of up to a half-million citizens.[41]

The only legal party under Franco’s regime was the Falange española tradicionalista y de las JONS, formed in 1937; the party emphasised anti-Communism, Catholicism and nationalism. Nonetheless, since Franco’s anti-democratic ideology was opposed to the idea of political parties, the new party was renamed officially a National Movement (Movimiento Nacional) in 1949.

After World War II, Spain was politically and economically isolated, and was kept out of the United Nations until 1955, when due to the Cold War it became strategically important for the U.S. to create a military presence on the Iberian peninsula, next to the Mediterranean Sea and the Strait of Gibraltar, in order to protect southern Europe. In the 1960s, Spain registered an unprecedented economic growth in what was called the Spanish miracle, which rapidly resumed the long interrupted transition towards a modern industrial economy with a thriving tourism sector and a high degree of human development.

Spanish Constitution of 1978

With Franco’s death in November 1975, Juan Carlos assumed the position of King of Spain and head of state in accordance with the law. With the approval of the new Spanish Constitution of 1978 and the arrival of democracy, the State devolved autonomy to the regions and created an internal organization based on autonomous communities. In the Basque Country, moderate Basque nationalism coexisted with a radical nationalism supportive of the separatist group ETA, which was formed during Franco’s rule.

On 23 February 1981, rebel elements among the security forces seized the Cortes and tried to impose a military-backed government. However, the great majority of the military forces remained loyal to King Juan Carlos, who used his personal authority and addressed the usurpers via national TV as commander in chief to put down the bloodless coup attempt.

On 30 May 1982, NATO gained a new member when, following a referendum, the newly democratic Spain joined the alliance. Also in 1982, the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) came to power, representing the democratic ideology was opposed to the idea of political parties, the new party was renamed officially a National Movement (Movimiento Nacional) in 1949.

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The Government of Spain has been involved in a long-running campaign against the separatist and terrorist organization ETA (“Basque Homeland and Freedom”), founded in 1959 in opposition to Franco and dedicated to promoting Basque independence through violent means. They consider themselves a guerrilla organization while they are listed as a terrorist organization by both the European Union and the United States on their respective watchlists. The current Basque Autonomous government does not endorse ETA’s nationalist violence, which has caused over 800 deaths in the past 40 years.

21st century

Further information: Spanish society after the democratic transition

A Spanish issued euro

On 1 January 2002, Spain ceased to use the peseta as currency replacing it with the euro, which it shares with 15 other countries in the Eurozone. Spain has also seen strong economic growth, well above the EU average, but well publicised concerns issued by many economic commentators at the height of the boom that the extraordinary property prices and high foreign trade deficits of the boom were likely to lead to a painful economic collapse were confirmed by a severe property led recession that struck the country in 2008/9.[42]

A series of bombs exploded in commuter trains in Madrid, Spain on 11 March 2004. After a five month trial in 2007 it was concluded the bombings were perpetrated by a local Islamist militant group inspired by al-Qaeda. [43] The bombings killed 191 people and wounded more than 1800, and the intention of the perpetrators may have been to influence the outcome of the Spanish general election, held three days later.[44]

Though initial suspicions focused on the Basque group ETA, evidence soon emerged indicating possible
Islamist involvement. Because of the proximity of the election, the issue of responsibility quickly became a political controversy, with the main competing parties PP and PSOE exchanging accusations over the handling of the aftermath.[45] At the 14 March elections, PSOE, led by José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, obtained a large plurality, enough to form a new cabinet with Rodríguez Zapatero as the new Presidente del Gobierno or prime minister of Spain, thus succeeding the former PP administration.[46]

Government
Main article: Politics of Spain

Main article: Spanish Constitution of 1978

King Juan Carlos I
José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, President of the Government. The Spanish Constitution of 1978 is the culmination of the Spanish transition to democracy. The constitutional history of Spain dates back to the constitution of 1812. Impatient with the pace of democratic political reforms in 1976 and 1977, Spain's new King Juan Carlos, known for his formidable personality, dismissed Carlos Arias Navarro and appointed the reformer Adolfo Suárez as President of the Government.[47][48] The resulting general election in 1977 convened the Constituent Cortes (the Spanish Parliament, in its capacity as a constitutional assembly) for the purpose of drafting and approving the constitution of 1978.[49] After a national referendum on 6 December 1978, 88% of voters approved of the new constitution.

As a result, Spain is now composed of 17 autonomous communities and two autonomous cities with varying degrees of autonomy thanks to its Constitution, which nevertheless explicitly states the indivisible unity of the Spanish nation as well as that Spain has today no official religion but all are free to practice and believe as they wish.

Branches of government
Spain is a constitutional monarchy, with a hereditary monarch and a bicameral parliament, the Cortes Generales. The executive branch consists of a Council of Ministers presided over by the President of Government (comparable to a prime minister), nominated and appointed by the monarch and confirmed by the Congress of Deputies following legislative elections. By political custom established by King Juan Carlos since the ratification of the 1978 Constitution, the king's nominees have all been from parties who maintain a plurality of seats in the Congress.

The legislative branch is made up of the Congress of Deputies (Congreso de los Diputados) with 350 members, elected by popular vote on block lists by proportional representation to serve four-year terms, and a Senate (Senado) with 259 seats of which 208 are directly elected by popular vote and the other 51 appointed by the regional legislatures to also serve four-year terms.

Head of State
King Juan Carlos I, since 22 November 1975

Head of Government
President of the Government: José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, elected 14 March 2004.
First Vice President and Minister of Presidency: María Teresa Fernández de la Vega.
Second Vice President and Minister of Economy and Finance: Elena Salgado.
Third Vice President and Minister of Territorial Policy: Manuel Chaves.

Cabinet
Council of Ministers (Spanish Consejo de Ministros) designated by the president.

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Gender equality in Government
As of November 2009, the Government of Spain keeps a balanced gender equality ratio. Nine out of the 18 members of the Government are women. Under the administration of José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Spain has been described as being "at the vanguard" in gender equality issues and also that "[n]o older modern, democratic, administration outside Scandinavia has taken more steps to place gender issues at the centre of government".[51] The Spanish administration has also promoted gender-based positive discrimination by approving gender equality legislation in 2007 aimed to provide equality between genders in the Spanish political and economic life (Gender Equality Act).[52][53] However, in the legislative branch, only 127 out of the 350 members of the Congress are women (36.3%). Nowadays, it positions Spain as the 13th country with more women in its lower house. In the Senate, the ratio is even lower, since there are only 79 women out of 263 (30.0%).[54] The Gender Empowerment Measure of Spain in the United Nations Human Development Report is 0.794, the 12th in the world.[55]

Administrative divisions
Galicia Navarre Madrid La Rioja Aragon Catalonia Valencia Castilla La Mancha Extremadura Portugal Castilla y León Asturias Cantabria Basque Country Murcia Andalusia Ceuta Melilla France Balearic Islands Canary Islands Mediterranean Sea Bay of Biscay Atlantic
However, the Spanish claim handles in a different way the Rock and the city of Gibraltar, ceded by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, in which Spain ceded the territory in perpetuity to the British Crown stating that, should the British abandon this post, it would be returned to Spain. Ever since the 1940s Spain has called for the return of Gibraltar.

The legal situation concerning Gibraltar was settled in 1713 by the Treaty of Utrecht, in which Spain ceded the territory in perpetuity to the British Crown, stating that, should the British abandon this post, it would be returned to Spain. Ever since the 1940s Spain has called for the return of Gibraltar.

The overwhelming majority of Gibraltarians strongly oppose this, along with any proposal of shared sovereignty.

The United Nations (UN) has offered to Spain first. The UN resolutions made to the region. Spain claims Gibraltar, a 6 square km Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom in the southernmost part of the Iberian Peninsula. Then a Spanish town, it was conquered by an Anglo-Dutch force in 1704 during the War of the Spanish Succession on behalf of the Archduke Charles, pretender to the Spanish throne.

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Spain claims the sovereignty over the Perejil Island, a small, uninhabited rocky islet located in the South shore of the Strait of Gibraltar. The island lies 250 meters just off the coast of Morocco, 8 km from Ceuta and 13.5 km from mainland Spain. Its sovereignty is disputed between Spain and Morocco. It was the subject of an armed incident between the two countries in 2002. The incident ended when both countries agreed to return to the status quo ante which existed prior to the Moroccan occupation of the island. The islet is now deserted and without any sign of sovereignty.

Spanish territories claimed by other countries

Morocco claims the Spanish cities of Ceuta and Melilla and the plazas de soberanía islets off the northern coast of Africa. Portugal does not recognise Spain's sovereignty over the territory of Olivenza.

Emblem of Spanish Armed Forces

Military

Main article: Spanish Armed Forces

The armed forces of Spain are known as the Spanish Armed Forces (Spanish: Fuerzas Armadas Españolas). Their Commander-in-chief is the King of Spain, Juan Carlos I.[70]

The Spanish Armed Forces are divided into three branches:[71]

Army (Ejército de Tierra)
Navy (Armada)
Air Force (Ejército del Aire)

Economy

Main articles: Economy of Spain and Renewable energy in Spain

Madrid: Cuatro Torres Business Area (left) and AZCA (right)
Barcelona: finance center

The city of Valencia

Zaragoza on the Ebro, at sunset.

According to the World Bank, Spain’s economy is the ninth largest worldwide and the fifth largest in Europe. It is also the third largest world investor.[72]

The centre-right government of former prime minister José María Aznar had worked successfully to gain admission to the group of countries launching the euro in 1999. Unemployment stood at 7.6% in October 2006, a rate that compared favorably to many other European countries, and especially with the early 1990s when it stood at over 20%. Perennial weak points of Spain’s economy include high inflation,[73] a large underground economy,[74] and an education system which OECD reports place among the poorest for developed countries, together with the United States and UK.[75]

However, the property bubble that had begun building from 1997, fed by historically low interest rates and an immense surge in immigration, imploded in 2008, leading to a rapidly weakening economy and soaring unemployment. By the end of May 2009 unemployment had already reached 18.7% (37% for youths).[76][77]

The Spanish economy had been credited for having avoided the virtual zero growth rate of some of its largest partners in the EU.[78] In fact, the country’s economy had created more than half of all the new jobs in the European Union over the five years ending 2005, a process that is rapidly being reversed.[79] The Spanish economy had been until recently regarded as one of the most dynamic within the EU, attracting significant amounts of foreign investment.[80] During the last four decades the Spanish tourism industry has grown to become the second biggest in the world, worth approximately 40 billion Euros, about 5% of GDP, in 2006.[81][82]

More recently, the Spanish economy had benefited greatly from the global real estate boom, with construction representing an astonishing 16% of GDP and 12% of employment in its final year.[81] According to calculations by the German newspaper Die Welt, Spain had been on course to overtake countries like Germany in per capita income by 2011.[83] However, the downside of the now defunct real estate boom was a corresponding rise in the levels of personal debt; as prospective homeowners had struggled to meet asking prices, the average level of household debt tripled in less than a decade. This placed especially great pressure upon lower to middle income groups; by 2005 the median ratio of indebtedness to income had grown to 125%, due primarily to expensive boom time mortgages that now often exceed the value of the property.[84]

In 2008/2009 the credit crunch and world recession manifested itself in Spain through a massive downturn in the property sector. Fortunately, Spain’s banks and financial services avoided the more severe problems of their counterparts in the USA and UK, due mainly to a stringently enforced conservative financial regulatory regime. The Spanish financial authorities had not forgotten the country’s own banking crisis of 1979 and an earlier real estate precipitated banking crisis of 1993. Indeed, Spain’s largest bank, Banco Santander, took part in the UK government’s bail-out of part of the UK banking sector.[85]

A European Commission forecast had predicted Spain would enter a recession by the end of 2008.[86] According to Spain’s Finance Minister, “Spain faces its deepest recession in half a century”. [87] Spain’s government forecast the unemployment rate would rise to 16% in 2009. The ESADE business school predicts 20%.[88]

Transportation
Spanish road system is mainly centralized, with 6 highways connecting Madrid to Basque Country, Catalonia, Valencia, Andalusia, Extremadura and Galicia. Additionally, there are highways along the Atlantic (Ferrol to Vigo), Cantabrian (Oviedo to San Sebastián) and Mediterranean (Girona to Almería) coasts.

Spain currently has a total of 1272 km of high speed train linking Málaga, Seville, Madrid, Barcelona and Valladolid. Should the aims of the ambitious AVE program (Spanish high speed trains) be met, by 2020 Spain will have 7000 km (4300 mi) of high-speed trains linking almost all provincial cities to Madrid in less than 3 hours and Barcelona within 4 hours.

The busiest airport in Spain is the airport of Madrid (Barajas), with 50,8 million passengers in 2008, being the world's 11th busiest airport. The airport of Barcelona (El prat) is also important with 30 million passengers in 2008. Other airports are located in Zaragoza, Málaga, Valencia, Seville, Asturias (near Avilés) and Bilbao. Spain aims to put 1 million electric cars on the road by 2014 as part of the government's plan to save energy and boost energy efficiency.[89] The Minister of Industry Miguel Sebastian said that "the electric vehicle is the future and the engine of an industrial revolution." [90]

Demographics
Main article: Demographics of Spain
See also: List of Spanish autonomous communities by population
Geographical distribution of the Spanish population in 2008In 2008 the population of Spain officially reached 46 million people, as recorded by the Padrón municipal.[91] Spain's population density, at 91/km² (235/sq mi), is lower than that of most Western European countries and its distribution across the country is very unequal. With the exception of the region surrounding the capital, Madrid, the most populated areas lie around the coast. The population of Spain doubled during the 20th century, principally due to the spectacular demographic boom in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Native Spaniards make up 88% of the total population of Spain. After the birth rate plunged in the 1980s and Spain's population growth rate dropped, the population again trended upward, based initially on the return of many Spaniards who had emigrated to other European countries during the 1970s, and more recently, fuelled by large numbers of immigrants who make up 12% of the population. In order of number: Latin America (39%), North Africa (16%), Eastern Europe (15%), Sub-Saharan Africa (4%).[92] In 2005, Spain instituted a three-month amnesty program through which certain hitherto undocumented aliens were granted legal residency.

A sizeable portion of foreign residents in Spain also comes from other Western and Central European countries. These are mostly British, French, German, Dutch, and Norwegian. These people reside primarily on the Mediterranean costas and Balearic islands, where many are choosing to live their retirement or telework.

Substantial populations descended from Spanish colonists and immigrants exist in other parts of the world, most notably in Latin America. Beginning in the late 15th century, large numbers of Iberian colonists settled in what became Latin America and at present most white Latin Americans (about one-third of the total population) are of Spanish or Portuguese origin. In the 16th century perhaps 240,000 Spaniards emigrated, mostly to Peru and Mexico,[93] They were joined by 450,000 in the next century.[94] Between 1846 and 1932 nearly 5 million Spaniards went to the Americas, especially to Argentina and Brazil.[95] From 1960 to 1975, approximately two million Spaniards migrated to other Western European countries. During the same time period, about 300,000 people left Spain for Latin America.[96]

Metropolitan areas
Map of the main metropolitan areas
The city of Seville.
The city of Girona.
The city of Santiago de Compostela.
The city of Burgos.
The city of Toledo.
The city of Palma of Mallorca.
The city of Alicante.
See also List of metropolitan areas in Spain by population Source: ESPON, 2007[97]

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<th>Pos.</th>
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Main cities
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<td>Madrid Madrid</td>
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Peoples
Main articles: Spanish people and Nationalisms and regionalisms of Spain

The Spanish Constitution of 1978, in its second article, recognises historic entities (“nationalities”, a carefully chosen word in order to avoid the more politically charged “nations”) and regions, within the context of the Spanish nation. For some people, Spain’s identity consists more of an overlap of different regional identities than of a sole Spanish identity. Indeed, some of the regional identities may even conflict with the Spanish one. [clarification needed] Distinct traditional regional identities within Spain include the Basques, Catalans, Galicians and Castilians, among others.[98]

It is this last feature of “shared identity” between the more local level or Autonomous Community and the Spanish level which makes the identity question in Spain complex and far from univocal.

Minority groups

Spain has a number of descendants of populations from former colonies (especially Equatorial Guinea) and immigrants from several Sub-Saharan and Caribbean countries have been recently settling in Spain. There are also sizeable numbers of Asian immigrants, most of whom are of Chinese, Filipino, Middle Eastern, Pakistani and Indian origins; the population of Spaniards of Latin American descent is sizeable as well and a fast growing segment. Other growing groups are Britons, 760,000 in 2006, Germans and other immigrants from the rest of Europe.[99]

The arrival of the Gitanos, a Romani people, began in the 16th century; estimates of the Spanish Gitano population fluctuate around 700,000.[100] The Mercheros (also Quinquis) are a minority group, formerly nomadic, that share a lot of the way of life of Gitanos. Their origin is unclear.

Immigration

Main article: Immigration to Spain

According to the Spanish government there were 4.5 million foreign residents in Spain in 2007; independent estimates put the figure at 4.8 million people, or 11% of the total population.[101] According to residence permit data for 2005, about 500,000 were Moroccan, another 500,000 were Ecuadorian, more than 200,000 were Romanian, and 260,000 were Colombian. Other sizeable foreign communities are British (8%), French (8%), Argentine (6%), German (6%) and Bolivian (3%). Spain has more than 200,000 migrants from West and Central Africa.[102] Since 2000, Spain has experienced high population growth as a result of immigration flows, despite a birth rate that is only half the replacement level. This sudden and ongoing inflow of immigrants, particularly those arriving clandestinely by sea, has caused noticeable social tension.[103]

Within the EU, Spain has the second highest immigration rate in percentage terms after Cyprus, but by a great margin, the highest in absolute numbers.[104] There are a number of reasons for the high level of immigration, including Spain’s cultural ties with Latin America, its geographical position, the porosity of its borders, the large size of its underground economy and the strength of the agricultural and construction sectors, which demand more low cost labour than can be offered by the national workforce.

Another statistically significant factor is the large number of residents of EU origin typically retiring to Spain’s Mediterranean coast. In fact, Spain was Europe’s largest absorber of migrants from 2002 to 2007, with its immigrant population more than doubling as 2.5 million people arrived.[105] According to the Financial Times, Spain is the most favoured destination for West Europeans considering a move from their own country and seeking jobs elsewhere in the EU.[106]

The number of immigrants in Spain has grown up from 500,000 people in 1996 to 5.2 million in 2008 out of a total population of 46 million.[107][108] In 2005 alone, a regularisation programme increased the legal immigrant population by 700,000 people.[109] Unemployment among immigrants has risen 67% in 2007.

Spain’s new Plan of Voluntary Return encourages immigrants to leave Spain for three years and offers up to €25,000, but so far, only 186 Ecuadorians have signed up to return.[110][111] In the program’s first two months last year, just 1,400 immigrants took up the offer.[112]

The languages of Spain (simplified)

Spanish official and spoken all over the country

Catalan/Valencian, co-official
Basque, co-official
Galician, co-official Aranese, co-official (dialect of Occitan)
Asturian, recognised
Aragonese, unofficial
Leonese, unofficial
Extremaduran, unofficial
Fala, unofficial
Languages
Main article: Languages of Spain
Spanish (español or castellano, Castilian) is spoken all over the country and so is the only language with official status nationwide. But a number of regional languages have been declared co-official, along with Spanish, in the constituent communities where they are spoken:

Basque (euskera) (2%) in the Basque Country and Navarre;
Catalan (català) (17%) in Catalonia and the Balearic Islands; Valencian (valencià), a distinct variant of Catalan, is official in the Valencian Community;
Galician (galego) (7%)[113] in Galicia.

There are also some other surviving Romance minority languages such as the Astur-Leonese group, which includes two languages in Spain: Asturian (officially called ‘Bable’) which has protected status in Asturias, and Leonese, which is protected in Castile and León. Aragonese is vaguely recognized in Aragon.[114] Unlike Basque, Catalan/Valencian and Galician, these languages do not have any official status. This might be due to their very small number of speakers, a less significant written tradition in comparison to Catalan or Galician, and lower self-awareness of their speakers which traditionally meant lack of strong popular demand for their recognition in the regions in which they are spoken.[115]

In the North African Spanish city of Melilla, Tarifit is spoken by a significant part of the population. In the tourist areas of the Mediterranean coast and the islands, English and German are widely spoken by tourists, foreign residents, and tourism workers.

Culture
Main article: Culture of Spain and UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Spain
Spain is known for its culturally diverse heritage, having been influenced by many nations and peoples throughout its history. Spanish culture has its origins in the Iberian, Celtiberian, Latin, Visigothic, Roman Catholic, and Islamic cultures.

The definition of a national Spanish culture has been characterized by tension between the centralized state, dominated in recent centuries by Castile, and numerous regions and minority peoples. In addition, the history of the nation and its Mediterranean and Atlantic environment have played strong roles in shaping its culture. After Italy, Spain has the second highest number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the world, with a total of 40.[116]

Religion
Main article: Religion in Spain
Further information: History of the Jews in Spain
Roman Catholicism has long been the main religion of Spain, though it no longer has official status. According to a July 2009 study by the Spanish Center of Sociological Research about 76% of Spaniards self-identify as Catholics, 2% other faith, and about 20% identify with no religion. Most Spaniards do not participate regularly in religious services. This same study shows that of the Spaniards who identify themselves as religious, 58% hardly ever or never go to church, 17% go to church some times a year, 9% some time per month and 15% every Sunday or multiple times per week.[117]

But according to a December 2006 study, 48% of the population declared a belief in a supreme being, while 41% described themselves as atheist or agnostic.[118] Altogether, about 22% of the entire Spanish population attends religious services at least once per month.[119] Though Spanish society has become considerably more secular in recent decades, the influx of Latin American immigrants, who tend to be strong Catholic practitioners, has helped the Catholic Church to recover.

Schools
Main article: Education in Spain
State education in Spain is free and compulsory from the age of 6 to 16. The current education system was
Music

renown. architects like Rafael Moneo, Santiago Calatrava, Ricardo Bofill as well as many others have gained worldwide

Spanish music has produced a number of important architects, of which Gaudí is one. The International style was led by groups

much of the architecture of the 20th century. An influential style centered in Barcelona, known as modernisme, the arrival of Modernism in the academic arena produced an extraordinary flowering of the gothic style that resulted in numerous instances being built throughout the entire territory. The Mudéjar style, from the 12th to 17th centuries, was developed by introducing Arab style motifs, patterns and elements into European architecture. The Moorish heritage in Spain, especially in Andalusia, is still evident today in cities like Córdoba, Seville, and Granada. European influences include Italy, Germany and France, especially during the Baroque and Neoclassical periods.

Art

Artists from Spain have been highly influential in the development of various European artistic movements. Due to historical, geographical and generational diversity, Spanish art has known a great number of influences. The Moorish heritage in Spain, especially in Andalusia, is still evident today in cities like Cordoba, Seville, and Granada. European influences include Italy, Germany and France, especially during the Baroque and Neoclassical periods.

Cinema

Spanish cinema has achieved major international success including Oscars for recent films such as Pan’s Labyrinth and Volver.[127] In the long history of Spanish cinema, the great filmmaker Luis Buñuel was the first to achieve world recognition, followed by Pedro Almodóvar in the 1980s. Spanish cinema has also seen international success over the years with films by directors like Segundo de Chomón, Florián Rey, Luis García Berlanga, Carlos Saura, Julio Medem and Alejandro Amenábar.

Architecture

Spanish architecture refers to architecture carried out during any era in what is now modern-day Spain, and by Spanish architects worldwide. The term includes buildings within the current geographical limits of Spain before his name was given to those territories, whether they were called Hispania, Al-Andalus, or were formed of several Christian kingdoms.

Spanish architecture has drawn from a host of influences. An important provincial city founded by the Romans and with an extensive Roman era infrastructure, Córdoba became the cultural capital, including fine Arabic style architecture, during the time of the Islamic Umayyad dynasty.[128] Later Arab style architecture continued to be developed under successive Islamic dynasties, ending with the Nasrid, which built its famed palace complex in Granada.

Simultaneously, the Christian kingdoms gradually emerged and developed their own styles; developing a pre-Romanesque style when for a while isolated from contemporary mainstream European architectural influences during the earlier Middle Ages, they later integrated the Romanesque and Gothic streams. There was then an extraordinary flowering of the gothic style that resulted in numerous instances being built throughout the entire territory. The Mudéjar style, from the 12th to 17th centuries, was developed by introducing Arab style motifs, patterns and elements into European architecture.

Art

The Museo Guggenheim in Bilbao

Main article: Spanish art

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The Plaza de Cibeles in Madrid

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Nativity facade of the Sagrada Familia Temple in Barcelona

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Miguel de Cervantes’ Don Quixote is considered to be the first modern novel.[125] Literature

Main article: Spanish literature

The term Spanish literature refers to literature written in the Spanish language, including literature composed in Spanish by writers not necessarily from Spain. For Spanish American literature specifically, see Latin American literature. Due to historic, geographic and generational diversity, Spanish literature has known a great number of influences and it is very diverse. Some major literary movements can be identified within it.

Miguel de Cervantes is probably Spain’s most famous author and his Don Quixote is considered the most emblematic work in the canon of Spanish literature and a founding classic of Western literature.[125]

Institut d’Estudis Catalans

Main article: Institut d’Estudis Catalans

The Institut d’Estudis Catalans (Institute for Catalan Studies, or IEC, in Catalan) is an academic institution which seeks to undertake research and study into “all elements of Catalan culture.” The IEC is known principally for its work in standardizing the Catalan language. The IEC is based in Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia. Officially the IEC provides standards for Catalonia proper, Northern Catalonia (located in France), the Balearic Islands, and the Principality of Andorra (the only country where Catalan is the sole official language). The Valencian Region south of Catalonia has its own language academy, the Acadèmia Valenciana de la Llengua. In an area known as the Franja de Ponent, the eastern edge of Aragon adjacent to Catalonia where Catalan is spoken, the rules are used de facto although Catalan is not an official language.

Real Academia Española

Main article: Real Academia Española

The Real Academia Española (Spanish for “Royal Spanish Academy”; RAE) is the institution responsible for regulating the Spanish language. It is based in Madrid, but is affiliated with national language academies in 21 Spanish-speaking nations through the Association of Spanish Language Academies. Its emblem is a fiery crucible, and its motto is Limpia, fija y da esplendor (“It cleans, sets, and gives splendor”).[126]

Art

Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao

Main article: Spanish art

Artists from Spain have been highly influential in the development of various European artistic movements. Due to historical, geographical and generational diversity, Spanish art has known a great number of influences. The Moorish heritage in Spain, especially in Andalusia, is still evident today in cities like Córdoba, Seville, and Granada. European influences include Italy, Germany and France, especially during the Baroque and Neoclassical periods.

Cinema

Main article: Cinema of Spain

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El Capricho, in the rural town of Comillas, Cantabria

The arrival of Modernism in the academic arena produced much of the architecture of the 20th century. An influential style centered in Barcelona, known as modernisme, produced a number of important architects, of which Gaudí is one. The International style was led by groups like GATEPAC. Spain is currently experiencing a revolution in contemporary architecture and Spanish architects like Rafael Moneo, Santiago Calatrava, Ricardo Bofill as well as many others have gained worldwide renown.

Music

Main article: Music of Spain

Established by an educational law of 1990, Ley Orgánica de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo – Law on the General Organization of the Educational System[124]
Spanish music is often considered abroad to be synonymous with flamenco, an Andalusian musical genre, which, contrary to popular belief, is not widespread outside that region. Various regional styles of folk music abound in Aragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Castile, the Basque Country, Galicia and Asturias. Pop, rock, hip hop and heavy metal are also popular.

In the field of classical music, Spain has produced a number of noted composers such as Isaac Albéniz, Manuel de Falla and Enrique Granados and singers and performers such as José Carreras, Montserrat Caballé, Plácido Domingo, Alicia de Larrocha, Alfredo Kraus, Pau Casals, Ricardo Viñes, José Iturbi, Pablo de Sarasate, Jordi Savall and Teresa Berganza. In Spain there are over forty professional orchestras, including the Orquesta Sinfónica de Barcelona, Orquesta Nacional de España and the Orquesta Sinfónica de Madrid. Major opera houses include the Teatro Real, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, Teatro Arriaga and the El Palau de les Arts Reina Sofia.

Thousands of music fans also travel to Spain each year for internationally recognised summer music festivals Sonar which often features the top up and coming pop and techno acts, and Benicassim which tends to feature alternative rock and dance acts. Both festivals mark Spain as an international music presence and reflect the tastes of young people in the country.

Cuisine
Main article: Spanish cuisine

The paella, dish originated in the Land of Valencia. Spanish cuisine consists of a great variety of dishes which stem from differences in geography, culture and climate. It is heavily influenced by seafood available from the waters that surround the country, and reflects the country's deep Mediterranean roots. Spain's extensive history with many cultural influences has led to a unique cuisine. In particular, three main divisions are easily identified:

Mediterranean Spain – all such coastal regions, from Catalonia to Andalusia: heavy use of seafood, such as pescado frito. Several cold soups like gazpacho and also many rice-based dishes like paella and arroz negro.
Inner Spain – Castile and Madrid: hot, thick soups such as the bread and garlic-based Castilian soup, along with substantial stews such as cocido madrileño. Food is traditionally conserved by salting, like Spanish ham, or immersed in olive oil, like Manchego cheese.

The Churros are famous desserts, usually eaten alongside hot chocolate. Atlantic Spain – the whole Northern coast, from Galicia to Navarre: vegetable and fish-based stews like pote gallego and marmitako. Also, the lightly cured lacón ham.

Sport
Main article: Sport in Spain

Sport in Spain has been dominated by football since the early 20th century. Basketball, tennis, cycling, handball, motocycling and, lately, Formula One are also important due to presence of Spanish champions in all these disciplines. Today, Spain is a major world sports power, especially since the 1992 Summer Olympics that were hosted in Barcelona and promoted a great variety of sports in the country. The tourism industry has led to an improvement in sports infrastructure, especially for water sports, golf and skiing.

Public holidays
Main article: Public holidays in Spain

Public holidays celebrated in Spain include a mix of religious (Roman Catholic), national and regional observances. Each municipality is allowed to declare a maximum of 14 public holidays per year; up to nine of these are chosen by the national government and at least two are chosen locally.

The city of San Sebastián

See also
Spain portal
Main article: Outline of Spain
List of Spain-related topics
Notes
^ Also serves as the Royal anthem
^ In some autonomous communities, Aranese (Occitan), Basque, Catalan/Valencian, and Galician are co-official languages. Bable and Leonese are officially recognised
^ Except in the Canary Islands, which are in the WET time zone (UTC, UTC+1 in summer).
^ The .eu domain is also used, as it is shared with other European Union member states. Also, the .cat domain is used in Catalan-speaking territories.
^ The Spanish constitution does not establish any official denomination of the country, even though España (Spain), Estado español (Spanish State) and Nación española (Spanish Nation) are used interchangeably. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in an Ordinance published in 1984, declared that “denominations “Spain” and “Kingdom of Spain” are equally valid to designate the Spain in international treaties…”
^ The latifundia (sing., latifundium), large estates controlled by the aristocracy, were superimposed on the existing Iberian landholding system.
^ The poets Martial, Quintilian and Lucan were also born in Hispania.
^ The Moorish armies continued northwards until they were defeated in central France at the Battle of Tours in 732.
^ The Berbers soon gave up attempting to settle the harsh lands in the north of the Meseta Central handed to them by the Arab rulers.
^ It was not until the 13th century that western medieval Christendom began reaching comparable levels of sophistication, and this was due in a great extent to the stimulus coming from Muslim Al-Andalus.
^ Initially, as the Reconquista advanced south, different religions were respected and several Castilian kings in subsequent years (Ferdinand III, Alfonso X, Peter I) named themselves 'king of the three peoples' or 'king of the
three religions'. Only rarely mosques and synagogues were converted into churches before 1492, and some areas of Christian Spain had large Muslim and Jewish populations that were a substantial component in the economic activity. Indeed they brought many of the Moorish influences in art, architecture and food with them.

For the related expulsions that followed see Morisco.

* By the late 16th century American silver accounted for one-fifth of Spanish government's total revenue (the most came mainly from taxes in Spain, especially Castile) [1]. From Europe, American silver was shipped to India, Levant and the Ottoman Empire. The silver was used to purchase goods, as European manufactured goods were not in demand in Asia and the Middle East. From the mid-17th century around 28 million kilograms of silver was imported to China. The Manila Galleon brought in far more silver directly from South American mines to China than the overland Silk Road, or even European trade routes in the Indian Ocean could.

* The coastal villages and towns of Spain were frequently attacked by Barbary pirates from North Africa, who were under the aegis of the Ottoman empire. The Formentera was even temporarily left by its population and long stretches of the Spanish and Italian coasts were almost completely abandoned by their inhabitants. In 1514, 1515 and 1521 coasts of the Balearic Islands and the Spanish mainland were raided by the Turkish privateer and Ottoman admiral Hayreddin Barbarossa. According to Robert Davis between 1 million and 1.25 million Europeans were captured by North African pirates and sold as slaves during the 16th and 17th centuries. These slaves were captured mainly from seaside villages in Spain, Italy and Portugal.

* Over a hundred thousand Spanish Civil War veterans were to give both sides the benefit of their experience throughout the Second World War in Europe, the Eastern Front and North Africa. Many in the French Resistance and French Foreign Legion were Spanish as was the 9th Armoured Company that spearheaded General Leclerc's 2nd Armoured Division's liberation of Paris. On the other side, some 47,000 Spaniards fought against the Soviet Union in the Wehrmacht's Blue Division (División Azul).

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Abkhazia1 · 5 · Albania · Andorra · Armenia2 · Austria · Azerbaijan1 · Belarus · Belgium · Bosnia and Herzegovina · Bulgaria · Croatia · Cyprus2 · Czech Republic · Denmark3 · Estonia · Finland · France1 · Georgia1 · Germany · Greece · Hungary · Iceland · Ireland · Italy1 · Kazakhstan1 · Kosovo5 · Latvia · Liechtenstein · Lithuania · Luxembourg · Macedonia · Malta · Moldova · Monaco · Montenegro · Netherlands3 · Nagorno-Karabakh2-5 · Northern Cyprus2-5 · Norway3 · Poland · Portugal3 · Romania · Russia1 · San Marino · Serbia · Slovakia · Slovenia · South Ossetia1-5 · Spain1 · Sweden · Switzerland · Transnistria5 · Turkey1 · Ukraine · United Kingdom3 · Vatican City

1 Has part of its territory outside Europe. 2 Entirely in Western Asia but having socio-political connections with Europe. 3 Has dependencies or similar territories outside Europe. 4 Name disputed by Greece; see Macedonia naming dispute. 5 Is a state with limited international recognition.

gshow•d • eCountries and territories bordering the Mediterranean Sea

Albania · Algeria · Bosnia and Herzegovina · Croatia · Cyprus · Egypt · France · Gibraltar · Greece · Israel · Italy · Lebanon · Libya · Malta · Monaco · Montenegro · Morocco · Palestinian Authority · Slovenia · Spain · Syria · Tunisia · Turkey · Akrotiri / Dhekelia

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Subnational Ghana Ashanti · Dagbon

Malaysia Johor · Kelantan · Negeri Sembilan · Pahang · Perak · Perlis · Selangor · Terengganu

Nigeria Ibadan · Ni · Kano · Sokoto Caliphate · Lagos

Uganda Ankole · Buganda · Bunyoro · Busoga · Rwenzururu · Toro

United Arab Emirates Abu Dhabi · Ajman · Dubai · Fujairah · Ras al-Khaimah · Sharjah · Umm al-Qawain

Wallis and Futuna Alo · Sigave · Uvea

Others Māori (New Zealand) · Yogyakarta (Indonesia) · Zulu Kingdom (South Africa) · Kanongesha-Lunda (Zambia) · Barotseland (Zambia)

Italics indicate Commonwealth realms, which each share the same person as head of state.

1 Monarchy is constitutional by law, but remains absolute in practice.

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Austria · Belgium · Bulgaria · Cyprus · Czech Republic · Denmark · Estonia · Finland · France · Germany · Greece · Hungary · Ireland · Italy · Latvia · Lithuania · Luxembourg · Malta · Netherlands · Poland · Portugal · Romania · Slovakia · Slovenia · Spain · Sweden · United Kingdom

Member states by: political system · GDP

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Observer Canada · Israel · Japan · Mexico · United States · Vatican City


1 Provisionally referred to by the Council of Europe as "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"; see Macedonia naming dispute.

gshow•d • eMembers of the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Albania · Angola · Antigua and Barbuda · Argentina · Armenia · Australia · Bahrain · Bangladesh · Barbados · Belize · Benin · Bolivia · Botswana · Brazil · Brunei · Burkina Faso · Burundi · Cambodia · Cameroon · Canada · Cape Verde · Central African Republic · Chad · Chile · PR China · Colombia · Democratic Republic of the Congo · Republic of the Congo · Costa Rica · Côte d'Ivoire · Croatia · Cuba · Djibouti · Dominica · Dominican Republic · Ecuador · Egypt · El Salvador · European Union1 · Fiji · Gabon · The Gambia · Georgia · Ghana · Grenada · Guatemala · Guinea · Guinea-Bissau · Guyana · Haiti · Honduras · Hong Kong2 · Iceland · India · Indonesia · Israel · Jamaica · Japan · Jordan · Kenya · South Korea · Kuwait · Kyrgyzstan · Lesotho ·
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2+2=4
4+4=8

type some sums u don’t know

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Ancient Egypt was an ancient civilization of eastern North Africa, concentrated along the lower reaches of the Nile River in what is now the modern country of Egypt. The civilization coalesced around 3150 BC\[1\] with the political unification of Upper and Lower Egypt under the first pharaoh, and it developed over the next three millennia.[2] Its history occurred in a series of stable Kingdoms, separated by periods of relative instability known as Intermediate Periods. Ancient Egypt reached its pinnacle during the New Kingdom, after which it
entered a period of slow decline. Egypt was conquered by a succession of foreign powers in this late period, and the rule of the pharaohs officially ended in 31 BC when the early Roman Empire conquered Egypt and made it a province. [3]

The success of ancient Egyptian civilization stemmed partly from its ability to adapt to the conditions of the Nile River Valley. The predictable flooding and controlled irrigation of the fertile valley produced surplus crops, which fueled social development and culture. With resources to spare, the administration sponsored mineral exploitation of the valley and surrounding desert regions, the early development of an independent writing system, the organization of collective construction and agricultural projects, trade with surrounding regions, and a military intended to defeat foreign enemies and assert Egyptian dominance. Motivating and organizing these activities was a bureaucracy of elite scribes, religious leaders, and administrators under the control of a pharaoh who ensured the cooperation and unity of the Egyptian people in the context of an elaborate system of religious beliefs. [4][5]

The many achievements of the ancient Egyptians include the quarrying, surveying and construction techniques that facilitated the building of monumental pyramids, temples, and obelisks; a system of mathematics, a practical and effective system of medicine, irrigation systems and agricultural production techniques, the first known ships. [6] Egyptian faience and glass technology, new forms of literature, and the earliest known peace treaty. [7] Egypt left a lasting legacy. Its art and architecture were widely copied, and its antiquities carried off to far corners of the world. Its monumental ruins have inspired the imaginations of travellers and writers for centuries. A newfound respect for antiquities and excavations in the early modern period led to the scientific investigation of Egyptian civilization and a greater appreciation of its cultural legacy, for Egypt and the world. [8]

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By the late Paleolithic period, the arid climate of Northern Africa became increasingly hot and dry, forcing the populations of the area to concentrate along the Nile valley, and since nomadic modern hunter-gatherers began living in the region through the end of the Middle Pleistocene some 120 thousand years ago, the Nile has been the lifeline of Egypt. The fertile floodplain of the Nile gave humans the opportunity to develop a settled agricultural economy and a more sophisticated, centralized society that became a cornerstone in the history of human civilization.

Predynastic period

In Predynastic and Early Dynastic times, the Egyptian climate was much less arid than it is today. Large regions of Egypt were covered in treed savanna and traversed by herds of grazing ungulates. Foliage and fauna were far more prolific in all environs and the Nile region supported large populations of waterfowl. Hunting would have been common for Egyptians and this is also the period during which many animals would have been first domesticated.

A typical Naqada II jar decorated with gazelles. (Predynastic Period) By about 5500 BC, small tribes living in the Nile valley had developed into a series of cultures demonstrating firm control of agriculture and animal husbandry, and identifiable by their pottery and personal items, such as combs, bracelets, and beads. The largest of these early cultures in upper Egypt, the Badari, was known for its high quality ceramics, stone tools, and its use of copper.

In Northern Egypt, the Badari was followed by Amratian and Gerzian cultures which showed a number of technological improvements. In Gerzian times, early evidence exists of contact with Canaan and the Byblos coast.

In southern Egypt, the Naqada culture, similar to the Badari, began to expand along the Nile by about 4000 BC. As early as the Naqada I Period, predynastic Egyptians imported obsidian from Ethiopia, used to shape blades and other objects from flakes. Over a period of about 1000 years, the Naqada culture developed from a few small farming communities into a powerful civilization whose leaders were in complete control of the people and resources of the Nile valley. Establihing a power center at Hierakonpolis, and later at Abydos, Naqada III leaders expanded their control of Egypt northwards along the Nile. They also traded with Nubia to the south, the oases of the western desert to the west, and the cultures of the eastern Mediterranean to the east.

The Naqada culture manufactured a diverse array of material goods, reflective of the increasing power and wealth of the elite, which included painted pottery, high quality decorative stone vases, cosmetic palettes, and jewelry made of gold, lapis, and ivory. They also developed a ceramic glaze known as faience which was used well into the Roman Period to decorate cups, amulets, and figurines. During the last predynastic phase, the Naqada culture began using written symbols which would eventually evolve into a full system of hieroglyphs for writing the ancient Egyptian language.

Early Dynastic Period

The Narmer Palette depicts the unification of the Two Lands. The third century BC Egyptian priest Manetho grouped the long line of pharaohs from Menes to his own time into 30 dynasties, a system still in use today. He chose to begin his official history with the king named "Meni" (or Menes in Greek) who was then believed to have united the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt (around 3200 BC). The transition to a unified state actually happened more gradually than the ancient Egyptian writers would have us believe, and there is no contemporary record of Menes. Some scholars now believe, however, that the mythical Menes may have actually been the pharaoh Narmer, who is depicted wearing royal regalia on the ceremonial Narmer Palette in a symbolic act of unification.

In the Early Dynastic Period about 3150 BC, the first of the Dynastic pharaohs solidified their control over lower Egypt by establishing a capital at Memphis, from which they could control the labor force and agriculture of the fertile delta region as well as the lucrative and critical trade routes to the Levant. The increasing power and wealth of the pharaohs during the early dynastic period was reflected in their elaborate mastaba tombs and mortuary cult structures at Abydos, which were used to celebrate the deified pharaoh after his death. The strong institution of kingship developed by the pharaohs served to legitimize state control over the land, labor, and resources that were essential to the survival and growth of ancient Egyptian civilization.
The maximum territorial extent of Ancient Egypt (15th century BC) New Kingdom

The Near East. As the power of the pharaoh diminished, regional governors called nomarchs began to challenge the supremacy of the pharaoh.

First Intermediate Period
Main article: First Intermediate Period of Egypt

After Egypt's central government collapsed at the end of the Old Kingdom, the administration could no longer support or stabilize the country's economy. Regional governors could not rely on the king for help in times of crisis, and the ensuing food shortages and political disputes escalated into famines and small-scale civil wars. Yet despite difficult problems, local leaders, owing no tribute to the pharaoh, used their newfound independence to establish a thriving culture in the provinces. Once in control of their own resources, the provinces became economically richer — a fact demonstrated by larger and better burials among all social classes.

Middle Kingdom
Main article: Middle Kingdom of Egypt

Amenemhat III, the last great ruler of the Middle Kingdom, restored the country's prosperity and stability, thereby stimulating a resurgence of art, literature, and monumental building projects. Mentuhotep II and his 11th Dynasty successors ruled from Thebes, but the vizier Amenemhat I, upon assuming kingship at the beginning of the 12th Dynasty around 1985 BC, shifted the nation's capital to the city of Ijtawy located in Faiyum. From Ijtawy, the pharaohs of the 12th Dynasty undertook a far-sighted land reclamation and irrigation scheme to increase agricultural output in the region. Moreover, the military reconquered territory in Nubia rich in quarries and gold mines, while laborers built a defensive structure in the Eastern Delta, called the "Walls-of-the-Ruler," to defend against foreign attack.

Having secured military and political security and vast agricultural and mineral wealth, the nation's population, arts, and religion flourished. In contrast to elitist Old Kingdom attitudes towards the gods, the Middle Kingdom experienced an increase in expressions of personal piety and what could be called a democratization of the afterlife, in which all people possessed a soul and could be welcomed into the company of the gods after death.

Second Intermediate Period and the Hyksos
Main article: Second Intermediate Period of Egypt

Around 1650 BC, as the power of the Middle Kingdom pharaohs weakened, Asiatic immigrants living in the Eastern Delta town of Avaris seized control of the region and forced the central government to retreat to Thebes, where the pharaoh was treated as a vassal and expected to pay tribute. The Hyksos ("foreign rulers") imitated Egyptian models of government and portrayed themselves as pharaohs, thus integrating Egyptian elements into their Middle Bronze Age culture.

After their retreat, the Theban kings found themselves trapped between the Hyksos to the north and the Hyksos' Nubian allies, the Kushites, to the south. Nearly 100 years of tenuous inaction followed, and it was not until 1555 BC that the Theban forces gathered enough strength to challenge the Hyksos in a conflict that would last more than 30 years. The pharaohs Seqenenre Tao II and Kamose were ultimately able to defeat the Nubians, but it was Kamose's successor, Ahmose I, who successfully waged a series of campaigns that permanently eradicated the Hyksos' presence in Egypt. In the New Kingdom that followed, the military became a central priority for the pharaohs seeking to expand Egypt's borders and secure her complete dominance of the Near East.
The New Kingdom pharaohs established a period of unprecedented prosperity by securing their borders and strengthening diplomatic ties with their neighbors. Military campaigns waged under Tuthmosis I and his grandson Tuthmosis III extended the influence of the pharaohs into Syria and Nubia, cementing loyalties and opening access to critical imports such as bronze and wood [43].

The New Kingdom pharaohs began a large-scale building campaign to promote the god Amun, whose growing cult was based in Karnak. They also constructed monuments to glorify their own achievements, both real and imagined. The female pharaoh Hatshepsut used such propaganda to legitimize her claim to the throne.[44] Her successful reign was marked by trading expeditions to Punt, an elegant mortuary temple, a colossal pair of obelisks and a chapel at Karnak.

Despite her achievements, Hatshepsut’s nephew-stepson Tuthmosis III sought to erase her legacy near the end of his reign, possibly in retaliation for usurping his throne.[45]

Four colossal statues of Ramesses II flank the entrance of his temple Abu Simbel. Around 1350 BC, the stability of the New Kingdom was threatened when Amenhotep IV ascended the throne and instituted a series of radical and chaotic reforms. Changing his name to Akhenaten, he touted the previously obscure sun god Aten as the supreme deity, suppressed the worship of other deities, and attacked the power of the priestly establishment.

[46] Moving the capital to the new city of Akhetaten (modern-day Amarna), Akhenaten turned a deaf ear to foreign affairs and absorbed himself in his new religion and artistic style. After his death, the cult of the Aten was quickly abandoned, and the subsequent pharaohs Tutankhamun, Ay, and Horemheb erased all mention of Akhenaten’s heresy, now known as the Amarna Period.[47]

Around 1279 BC, Ramesses II, also known as Ramesses the Great, ascended the throne, and went on to build more temples, erect more statues and obelisks, and sire more children than any other pharaoh in history.[48] A bold military leader, Ramesses II led his army against the Hittites in the Battle of Kadesh and, after fighting to a stalemate, finally agreed to the first recorded peace treaty around 1258 BC.[49] Egypt’s wealth, however, made it a tempting target for invasion, particularly by the Libyans and the Sea Peoples. Initially, the army was able to repel these invasions, but Egypt eventually lost control of Syria and Palestine. The impact of external threats was exacerbated by internal problems such as corruption, tomb robbery and civil unrest. The high priests at the temple of Amun in Thebes threatened the country during the Third Intermediate Period.[50]

Around 730 BC Libyans from the west fractured the political unity of the country. Third Intermediate Period

Main article: Third Intermediate Period of Egypt

Following the death of Ramesses XI in 1078 BC, Smendes assumed authority over the northern part of Egypt, ruling from the city of Tanis. The south was effectively controlled by the High Priests of Amun at Thebes, who recognized Smendes in name only.[51] During this time, Libyans had been settling in the western delta, and chieftains of these settlers began increasing their autonomy. Libyan princes took control of the delta under Shoshenq I in 945 BC, founding the so-called Libyan or Bubastite dynasty that would rule for some 200 years.

Shoshenq also gained control of southern Egypt by placing his family members in important priestly positions. Libyan control began to erode as a rival dynasty in the delta arose in Leontopolis, and Kushites threatened from the south. Around 727 BC the Kushite king Piye invaded northward, seizing control of Thebes and eventually the Delta.[52]

Egypt’s far-reaching prestige declined considerably toward the end of the Third Intermediate Period. Its foreign allies had fallen under the Assyrian sphere of influence, and by 700 BC war between the two states became inevitable. Between 671 and 667 BC the Assyrians began their attack on Egypt. The reigns of both Kushite kings Taharqa and his successor, Tanutamun, were filled with constant conflict with the Assyrians, against whom the Nubian rulers enjoyed several victories.[53] Ultimately, the Assyrians pushed the Kushites back into Nubia, occupied Memphis, and sacked the temples of Thebes.[54]

Late Period

Main article: Late Period of ancient Egypt

With no permanent plans for conquest, the Assyrians left control of Egypt to a series of vassals who became known as the Saite kings of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty. By 653 BC, the Saite king Psamtik I was able to oust the Assyrians with the help of Greek mercenaries, who were recruited to form Egypt’s first navy. Greek influence expanded greatly as the city of Naukratis became the home of Greeks in the delta. The Saite kings based in the new capital of Sais witnessed a brief but spirited resurgence in the economy and culture, but in 525 BC, the powerful Persians, led by Cambyses II, began their conquest of Egypt, eventually capturing the pharaoh Psamtik III at the battle of Pelusium. Cambyses II then assumed the formal title of pharaoh, but ruled Egypt from his home of Susa, leaving Egypt under the control of a satrapy. A few successful revolts against the Persians marked the 5th century BC, but Egypt was never able to permanently overthrow the Persians.[55]

Following its annexation by Persia, Egypt was joined with Cyprus and Phoenicia in the sixth satrapy of the Achaemenid Persian Empire. This first period of Persian rule over Egypt, also known as the Twenty-Seventh dynasty, ended in 402 BC, and from 380–343 BC the Thirtieth Dynasty ruled as the last native royal house of dynastic Egypt, which ended with the kingship of Nectanebo II. A brief restoration of Persian rule, sometimes known as the Thirty-First Dynasty, began in 343 BC, but shortly after, in 332 BC, the Persian ruler Mazaces handed Egypt over to Alexander the Great without a fight.[56]

Ptolemaic Dynasty

Main articles: History of Ptolemaic Egypt and Ptolemaic dynasty

In 332 BC, Alexander the Great conquered Egypt with little resistance from the Persians and was welcomed by the Egyptians as a deliverer. The administration established by Alexander’s successors, the Ptolemies, was based on an Egyptian model and based in the new capital city of Alexandria. The city was to showcase the power and prestige of Greek rule, and became a seat of learning and culture, centered at the famous Library of Alexandria.[57] The Lighthouse of Alexandria lit the way for the many ships which kept trade flowing through...
Greek culture did not supplant native Egyptian culture, as the Ptolemies supported time-honored traditions in an effort to secure the loyalty of the populace. They built new temples in Egyptian style, supported traditional cults, and portrayed themselves as pharaohs. Some traditions merged, as Greek and Egyptian gods were syncretized into composite deities, such as Serapis, and classical Greek forms of sculpture influenced traditional Egyptian motifs. Despite their efforts to appease the Egyptians, the Ptolemies were challenged by native rebellion, bitter family rivalries, and the powerful mob of Alexandria which had formed following the death of Ptolemy IV. In addition, as Rome relied more heavily on imports of grain from Egypt, the Romans took great interest in the political situation in the country. Continued Egyptian revolts, ambitious politicians, and powerful Syrian opponents made this situation unstable, leading Rome to send forces to secure the country as a province of its empire.

Roman domination.
Main article: History of Roman Egypt

The Fayum mummy portraits epitomize the meeting of Egyptian and Roman cultures. Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire in 30 BC, following the defeat of Marc Antony and Ptolemaic Queen Cleopatra VII by Octavian (later Emperor Augustus) in the Battle of Actium. The Romans relied heavily on grain shipments from Egypt, and the Roman army, under the control of a prefect appointed by the Emperor, quelled rebellions, strictly enforced the collection of heavy taxes, and prevented attacks by bandits, which had become a notorious problem during the period. Alexandria became an increasingly important center on the trade route with the orient, as exotic luxuries were in high demand in Rome.

Although the Romans had a more hostile attitude than the Greeks towards the Egyptians, some traditions such as mummification and worship of the traditional gods continued. The art of mummy portraiture flourished, and some of the Roman emperors had themselves depicted as pharaohs, though not to the extent that the Ptolemies had. The former lived outside Egypt and did not perform the ceremonial functions of Egyptian kingship. Local administration became Roman in style and closed to native Egyptians.

From the mid-first century AD, Christianity took root in Alexandria as it was seen as another cult that could be accepted. However, it was an uncompromising religion that sought to win converts from paganism and threatened the popular religious traditions. This led to persecution of converts to Christianity, culminating in the great purges of Diocletian starting in 303 AD, but eventually Christianity won out. In 391 AD the Christian Emperor Theodosius introduced legislation that banned pagan rites and closed temples. Alexandria became the scene of great anti-pagan riots with public and private religious imagery destroyed. As a consequence, Egypt’s pagan culture was continually in decline. While the native population continued to speak their language, the ability to read hieroglyphic writing slowly disappeared as the role of the Egyptian temple priests and priestesses diminished. The temples themselves were sometimes converted to churches or abandoned to the desert.

Government and economy

Administration and commerce

The pharaoh was usually depicted wearing symbols of royalty and power. The pharaoh was the absolute monarch of the country and, at least in theory, wielded complete control of the land and its resources. The king was the supreme military commander and head of the government, who relied on a bureaucracy of officials to manage his affairs. In charge of the administration was his second in command, the vizier, who acted as the king’s representative and coordinated land surveys, the treasury, building projects, the legal system, and the archives. At a regional level, the country was divided into as many as 42 administrative regions called nomes each governed by a nomarch, who was accountable to the vizier for his jurisdiction. The temples formed the backbone of the economy. Not only were they houses of worship, but were also responsible for collecting and storing the nation’s wealth in a system of granaries and treasuries administered by overseers, who redistributed grain and goods.

Much of the economy was centrally organized and strictly controlled. Although the ancient Egyptians did not use coinage until the Late period, they did use a type of money-barter system, with standard sacks of grain and the deben, a weight of roughly 91 grams (3 oz) of copper or silver, forming a common denominator. Workers were paid in grain; a simple laborer might earn 5½ sacks (200 kg or 400 lb) of grain per month, while a foreman might earn 7½ sacks (250 kg or 550 lb). Prices were fixed across the country and recorded in lists to facilitate trading; for example a shirt cost five copper deben, while a cow cost 140 deben. Grain could be traded for other goods, according to the fixed price list. During the 5th century BC coined money was introduced into Egypt from abroad. At first the coins were used as standardized pieces of precious metal rather than true money, but in the following centuries international traders came to rely on coinage.

Social status

Egyptian society was highly stratified, and social status was expressly displayed. Farmers made up the bulk of the population, but agricultural produce was owned directly by the state, temple, or noble family that owned the land. Farmers were also subject to a labor tax and were required to work on irrigation or construction projects in a corvée system. Artists and craftsmen were of higher status than farmers, but they were also under state control, working in the shops attached to the temples and paid directly from the state treasury. Scribes and officials formed the upper class in ancient Egypt, the so-called “white kilt class” in reference to the bleached linen garments that served as a mark of their rank. The upper class prominently displayed their social status in art and literature. Below the nobility were the priests, physicians, and engineers with specialized training in their field. Slavery was known in ancient Egypt, but the extent and prevalence of its practice are unclear.
The ancient Egyptians viewed men and women, including people from all social classes except slaves, as essentially equal under the law, and even the lowliest peasant was entitled to petition the vizier and his court for redress.[77] Both men and women had the right to own and sell property, make contracts, marry and divorce, receive inheritance, and pursue legal disputes in court. Married couples could own property jointly and protect themselves from divorce by agreeing to marriage contracts, which stipulated the financial obligations of the husband to his wife and children should the marriage end. Compared with their counterparts in ancient Greece, Rome, and even more modern places around the world, ancient Egyptian women had a greater range of personal choices and opportunities for achievement. Women such as Hatshepsut and Cleopatra even became pharaohs, while others wielded power as Divine Wives of Amun. Despite these freedoms, ancient Egyptian women did not take part in official roles in the administration, served only secondary roles in the temples, and were not as likely to be as educated as men.[77]

Scribes were elite and well educated. They assessed taxes, kept records, and were responsible for administration. Legal system

The head of the legal system was officially the pharaoh, who was responsible for enacting laws, delivering justice, and maintaining law and order, a concept the ancient Egyptians referred to as Ma'at.[68] Although no legal codes from ancient Egypt survive, court documents show that Egyptian law was based on a common-sense view of right and wrong that emphasized reaching agreements and resolving conflicts rather than strictly adhering to a complicated set of statutes.[77] Local councils of elders, known as Kenbet in the New Kingdom, were responsible for ruling in court cases involving small claims and minor disputes.[88] More serious cases involving murder, major land transactions, and tomb robbery were referred to the Great Kenbet, over which the vizier or pharaoh presided. Plaintiffs and defendants were expected to represent themselves and were required to swear an oath that they had told the truth. In some cases, the state took on both the role of prosecutor and judge, and it could torture the accused with beatings to obtain a confession and the names of any co-conspirators. Whether the charges were trivial or serious, court scribes documented the complaint, testimony, and verdict of the case for future reference.[78]

Punishment for minor crimes involved either imposition of fines, beatings, facial mutilation, or exile, depending on the severity of the offense. Serious crimes such as murder and tomb robbery were punished by execution, carried out by decapitation, drowning, or impaling the criminal on a stake. Punishment could also be extended to the criminal’s family.[68] Beginning in the New Kingdom, oracles played a major role in the legal system, dispensing justice in both civil and criminal cases. The procedure was to ask the god a “yes” or “no” question concerning the right or wrong of an issue. The god, carried by a number of priests, rendered judgment by choosing one of the other, moving forward or backward, or pointing to one of the answers written on a piece of papyrus or an ostracon.[79]

Agriculture

See also: Ancient Egyptian cuisine

A tomb relief depicts workers plowing the fields, harvesting the crops, and threshing the grain under the direction of an overseer. A combination of favorable geographical features contributed to the success of ancient Egyptian culture, the most important of which was the rich fertile soil resulting from annual inundations of the Nile River. The ancient Egyptians were thus able to produce an abundance of food, allowing the population to devote more time and resources to cultural, technological, and artistic pursuits. Land management was crucial in ancient Egypt because taxes were assessed based on the amount of land a person owned.[80]

Farming in Egypt was dependent on the cycle of the Nile River. The Egyptians recognized three seasons: Akhet (flooding), Peret (planting), and Shemu (harvesting). The flooding season lasted from June to September, depositing on the river’s banks a layer of mineral-rich silt ideal for growing crops. After the floodwaters had receded, the growing season lasted from October to February. Farmers plowed and planted seeds in the fields, which were irrigated with ditches and canals. Egypt received little rainfall, so farmers relied on the Nile to water their crops.[81] From March to May, farmers used sickles to harvest their crops, which were then threshed with a flail to separate the straw from the grain. Winnowing removed the chaff from the grain, and the grain was then ground into flour, brewed to make beer, or stored for later use.[82]

The ancient Egyptians cultivated emmer and barley, and several other cereal grains, all of which were used to make the two main food staples of bread and beer.[83] Flax plants, uprooted before they started flowering, were grown for the fibers of their stems. These fibers were split along their length and spun into thread, which was used to weave sheets of linen and to make clothing. Papyrus growing on the banks of the Nile River was used to make paper. Vegetables and fruits were grown in garden plots, close to habitations and on higher ground, and had to be watered by hand. Vegetables included leeks, garlic, melons, squashes, pulses, lettuce, and other crops, in addition to grapes that were made into wine.[84]

Sennedjem plows his fields with a pair of oxen, used as beasts of burden and a source of food. Animals

The Egyptians believed that a balanced relationship between people and animals was an essential element of the cosmic order; thus humans, animals and plants were believed to be members of a single whole.[85] Animals, both domesticated and wild, were therefore a critical source of spirituality, companionship, and sustenance to the ancient Egyptians. Cattle were the most important livestock; the administration collected taxes on livestock in regular censuses, and the size of a herd reflected the prestige and importance of the estate or temple that owned them. In addition to cattle, the ancient Egyptians kept sheep, goats, and pigs. Poultry such as ducks, geese, and pigeons were captured in nets and bred on farms, where they were force-fed with dough to fatten them.[86] The Nile provided a plentiful source of fish. Bees were also domesticated from at least the Old Kingdom, and they provided both honey and wax.[87]

The ancient Egyptians used donkeys and oxen as beasts of burden, and they were responsible for plowing the fields and trampling seed into the soil. The slaughter of a fattened ox was also a central part of an offering ritual.[88] Horses were introduced by the Hyksos in the Second Intermediate Period, and the camel, although
Adjectives are derived from nouns through a process that Egyptologists call nisbation because of its similarity to the process of changing nouns to adjectives in Semitic languages. If the subject is a noun, suffixes are not added to the verb: 'ęd m=f ‘he hears’.

Suffixes are added to form words. The verb conjugation corresponds to the person. For example, the root 'ęd-m-t' is the semantic core of the word ‘hear’; its basic conjugation is 'ęd m=f ‘he hears’. If the subject is a noun, suffixes are not added to the verb: 'ęd m=f ‘he hears’.

Natural resources

Further information: Mining in Egypt

Egypt is rich in building and decorative stone, copper and lead ores, gold, and semiprecious stones. These natural resources allowed the ancient Egyptians to build monuments, sculpt statues, make tools, and fashion jewelry. Embalmers used salts from the Wadi Natrun for mumification, which also provided the gypsum needed to make plaster. Ore-bearing rock formations were found in distant, inhospitable wadis in the eastern desert and the Sinai, requiring large, state-controlled expeditions to obtain natural resources found there. There were extensive gold mines in Nubia, and one of the first maps known is of a gold mine in this region. The Wadi Hammamat was a notable source of granite, greywacke, and gold. Flint was the first mineral collected and used to make tools, and flint handaxes are the earliest pieces of evidence of habitation in the Nile valley. Nodules of the mineral were carefully flaked to make blades and arrowheads of moderate hardness and durability even after copper was adopted for this purpose.

The Egyptians worked deposits of the lead ore galena at Gebel Rosas to make net sinkers, plumb bobs, and small figurines. Copper was the most important metal for toolmaking in ancient Egypt and was smelted in furnaces from malachite ore mined in the Sinai. Workers collected gold by washing the nuggets out of sediment in alluvial deposits, or by the more labor-intensive process of grinding and washing gold-bearing quartzite. Iron deposits found in upper Egypt were utilized in the Late Period. High-quality building stones were abundant in Egypt; the ancient Egyptians quarried limestone all along the Nile valley, granite from Aswan, and basalt and sandstone from the wadis of the eastern desert. Deposits of decorative stones such as porphyry, greywacke, alabaster, and carnelian dotted the eastern desert and were collected even before the First Dynasty. In the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods, miners worked deposits of emeralds in Wadi Sikait and amethyst in Wadi el-Hudi.

Trade

The ancient Egyptians engaged in trade with their foreign neighbors to obtain rare, exotic goods not found in Egypt. In the Predynastic Period, they established trade with Nubia to obtain gold and incense. They also established trade with Palestine, as evidenced by Palestinian-style oil jugs found in the burials of the First Dynasty pharaohs. An Egyptian colony stationed in southern Canaan dates to slightly before the First Dynasty. Narmer had Egyptian pottery produced in Canaan and exported back to Egypt.

By the Second Dynasty at latest, ancient Egyptian trade with Byblos yielded a critical source of quality timber not found in Egypt. By the Fifth Dynasty, trade with Punt provided gold, aromatic resins, ebony, ivory, and wild animals such as monkeys and baboons. Egypt relied on trade with Anatolia for essential quantities of tin as well as supplementary supplies of copper, both metals being necessary for the manufacture of bronze. The ancient Egyptians prized the blue stone lapis lazuli, which had to be imported from far-away Afghanistan. Egypt’s Mediterranean trade partners also included Greece and Crete, which provided, among other goods, supplies of olive oil. In exchange for its luxury imports and raw materials, Egypt mainly exported grain, gold, linen, and papyrus, in addition to other finished goods including glass and stone objects.

Language

Main article: Egyptian language

Historical development

Egyptian language’ in hieroglyphs

The Egyptian language is a northern Afro-Asiatic language closely related to the Berber and Semitic languages. It has the longest history of any language, having been written from c. 3200 BC to the Middle Ages and remaining as a spoken language for longer. The phases of Ancient Egyptian are Old Egyptian, Middle Egyptian (Classical Egyptian), Late Egyptian, Demotic and Coptic. Egyptian writings do not show dialect differences before Coptic, but it was probably spoken in regional dialects around Memphis and later Thebes.

Ancient Egyptian was a synthetic language, but it became more analytic later on. Late Egyptian develops preflxal definite and indefinite articles, which replace the older inflectional suffixes. There is a change from the older Verb Subject Object word order to Subject Verb Object. The Egyptian hieroglyphic, hieratic, and demotic scripts were eventually replaced by the more phonetic Coptic alphabet. Coptic is still used in the liturgy of the Egyptian Orthodox Church, and traces of it are found in modern Egyptian Arabic.

Sounds and grammar

Ancient Egyptian has 25 consonants similar to those of other Afro-Asiatic languages. These include pharyngeal and emphatic consonants, voiced and voiceless stops, voiceless fricatives and voiced and voiceless affricates. It has three long and three short vowels, which expanded in Later Egyptian to about nine. The basic word in Egyptian, similar to Semitic and Berber, is a triliteral or biliteral root of consonants and semiconsonants. Suffixes are added to form words. The verb conjugation corresponds to the person. For example, the root 'ęd-m-t' is the semantic core of the word 'hear'; its basic conjugation is 'ęd m=f ‘he hears’.

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Music and dance were popular entertainments for those who could afford them. Early instruments such as dates and figs. Wine and meat were enjoyed by all on feast days while the upper classes indulged on a

The staple diet consisted of bread and beer, supplemented with vegetables such as onions and garlic, and fruit.

The ancient Egyptians were farmers tied to the land. Their dwellings were restricted to

Towards the end of the New Kingdom, the vernacular language was more often employed to write popular
topics such as Gods and the mystery of love.

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Statues depicting lower-class Ancient Egyptian occupations.

The ancient Egyptians maintained a rich cultural heritage complete with feasts and festivals accompanied by
music and dance. Most ancient Egyptians were farmers tied to the land. Their dwellings were restricted to
immediate family members, and were constructed of mud-brick designed to remain cool in the heat of the day.

Each home had a kitchen with an open roof, which contained a grindstone for milling flour and a small oven for
baking bread. Walls were painted white and could be covered with dyed linen wall hangings. Floors were
covered with reed mats, while wooden stools, beds raised from the floor and individual tables comprised the
furniture.

The ancient Egyptians placed great value on hygiene and appearance. Most bathed in the Nile and used a
pasty soap made from animal fat and chalk. Men shaved their entire bodies for cleanliness, and aromatic
perfumes and ointments covered bad odors and softened skin. Clothing was made from simple linen sheets that were bleached white, and both men and women of the upper classes wore wigs, jewelry, and cosmetics. Children went without clothing until maturity, at about age 12, and at this age males were
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Music and dance were popular entertainments for those who could afford them. Early instruments included flutes and harps, while instruments similar to trumpets, oboes, and pipes developed later and became

The Rosetta stone enabled linguists to begin the process of hieroglyph decipherment.

Hieroglyphic writing dates to c. 3200 BC, and is composed of some 500 symbols. A hieroglyph can
represent a word, a sound, or a silent determinative; and the same symbol can serve different purposes in
different contexts. Hieroglyphs were a formal script, used on stone monuments and in tombs, that could be as
detailed as individual works of art. In day-to-day writing, scribes used a cursive form of writing, called hieratic,
which was quicker and easier. While formal hieroglyphs may be read in rows or columns in either direction
typically written from right to left), hieratic was always written from right to left, usually in horizontal rows. A new form of writing, Demotic, became the prevalent writing style, and it is this form of writing — along with formal hieroglyphs — that accompany the Greek text on the Rosetta Stone.

Around the 1st century AD, the Coptic alphabet started to be used alongside the Demotic script. Coptic is a
modified Greek alphabet with the addition of some Demotic signs. Although formal hieroglyphs were used in
a ceremonial role until the 4th century AD, towards the end only a handful of priests could still read
them. As the traditional religious establishments were disbanded, knowledge of hieroglyphic writing was mostly
lost. Attempts to decipher them date to the Byzantine and Islamic periods in Egypt, but only in 1822, after the
discovery of the Rosetta stone and years of research by Thomas Young and Jean-François Champollion, were hieroglyphs almost fully deciphered.

The Edwin Smith surgical papyrus describes anatomy and medical treatments and is written in hieratic. Writing first appeared in association with kingship on labels and tags for items found in royal
tombs. It was primarily an occupation of the scribes, who worked out of the Per Ankh institution or the House of Life. The latter comprised offices, libraries (called House of Books), laboratories and observatories. Some of the best-known pieces of ancient Egyptian literature, such as the Pyramid and Coffin Texts, were written in
Classical Egyptian, which continued to be the language of writing until about 1300 BC. Later Egyptian was spoken from the New Kingdom onward and is represented in Ramesside administrative documents, love
tales, and tales, as well as in Demotic and Coptic texts. During this period, the tradition of writing had evolved
to the tomb autobiography, such as those of Harkhuf and Weni. The genre known as Sebayt (Instructions)
was developed to communicate teachings and guidance from famous nobles; the Ipuwer papyrus, a poem of
lamentations describing natural disasters and social upheaval, is a famous example.

The Story of Sinuhe, written in Middle Egyptian, might be the classic of Egyptian literature. Also written at
this time was the Westcar Papyrus, a set of stories told to Khufu by his sons relating the marvels performed by
priests. The Instruction of Amenemope is considered a masterpiece of near-eastern literature.
Towards the end of the New Kingdom, the vernacular language was more often employed to write popular
pieces like the Story of Wenamun and the Instruction of Any. The former tells the story of a noble who is
robbed on his way to buy cedar from Lebanon and of his struggle to return to Egypt. From about 700 BC,
narrative stories and instructions, such as the popular Instructions of Onchsheshonqy, as well as personal and
business documents were written in the demotic script and phase of Egyptian. Many stories written in demotic
during the Graeco-Roman period were set in previous historical eras, when Egypt was an independent nation
ruled by great pharaohs such as Ramesses II.

Culture

Daily life

Statues depicting lower-class Ancient Egyptian occupations.

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The staple diet consisted of bread and beer, supplemented with vegetables such as onions and garlic, and fruit
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more regular basis. Fish, meat, and fowl could be salted or dried, and could be cooked in stews or roasted on a
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included flutes and harps, while instruments similar to trumpets, oboes, and pipes developed later and became
The ancient Egyptians enjoyed a variety of leisure activities, including games and music. Senet, a board game where pieces moved according to random chance, was particularly popular from the earliest times; another similar game was mehen, which had a circular gaming board. Juggling and ball games were popular with children, and wrestling is also documented in a tomb at Beni Hasan.[128] The wealthy members of ancient Egyptian society enjoyed hunting and boating as well.

The excavation of the workers village of Deir el-Madinah has resulted in one of the most thoroughly documented accounts of community life in the ancient world that spans almost four hundred years. There is no comparable site in which the organisation, social interactions, working and living conditions of a community can be studied in such detail.[129]

Karnak temple’s hypostyle halls are constructed with rows of thick columns supporting the roof beams. Architecture

Main article: Ancient Egyptian architecture

The well preserved Temple of Horus at Edfu is an exemplar of Egyptian architecture. The architecture of ancient Egypt includes some of the most famous structures in the world: the Great Pyramids of Giza and the temples at Thebes. Building projects were organized and funded by the state for religious and commemorative purposes, but also to reinforce the power of the pharaoh. The ancient Egyptians were skilled builders; using simple but effective tools and sighting instruments, architects could build large stone structures with accuracy and precision.[130]

The earliest preserved ancient Egyptian temples, such as those at Giza, consist of single, enclosed halls with roof slabs supported by columns. In the New Kingdom, architects added the pylon, the open courtyard, and the enclosed hypostyle hall to the front of the temple’s sanctuary, a style that was standard until the Graeco-Roman period.[132] The earliest and most popular tomb architecture in the Old Kingdom was the mastaba, a flat-roofed rectangular structure of mudbrick or stone built over an underground burial chamber. The step pyramid of Djoser is a series of stone mastabas stacked on top of each other. Pyramids were built during the Old and Middle Kingdoms, but later rulers abandoned them in favor of less conspicuous rock-cut tombs.[133]

Art

The Bust of Nefertiti, by the sculptor Thutmose, is one of the most famous masterpieces of ancient Egyptian art. Main article: Art of Ancient Egypt

The ancient Egyptians produced art to serve functional purposes. For over 3500 years, artists adhered to artistic forms and iconography that were developed during the Old Kingdom, following a strict set of principles that resisted foreign influence and internal change.[134] These artistic standards — simple lines, shapes, and flat areas of color combined with the characteristic flat projection of figures with no indication of spatial depth — created a sense of order and balance within a composition. Images and text were intimately interwoven on tomb and temple walls, coffins, stelae, and even statues. The Narmer Palette, for example, displays figures which may also be read as hieroglyphs.[135] Because of the rigid rules that governed its highly stylized and symbolic appearance, ancient Egyptian art served its political and religious purposes with precision and clarity.[136]

Ancient Egyptian artisans used stone to carve statues and fine reliefs, but used wood as a cheap and easily carved substitute. Paints were obtained from minerals such as iron ores (red and yellow ochres), copper ores (blue and green), soot or charcoal (black), and limestone (white). Paints could be mixed with gum arabic as a binder and pressed into cakes, which could be moistened with water when needed.[137] Pharaohs used reliefs to record victories in battle, royal decrees, and religious scenes. Common citizens had access to pieces of funerary art, such as shabti statues and books of the dead, which they believed would protect them in the afterlife.[138] During the Middle Kingdom, wooden or clay models depicting scenes from everyday life became popular additions to the tomb. In an attempt to duplicate the activities of the living in the afterlife, these models show laborers, houses, boats, and even military formations that are scale representations of the ideal ancient Egyptian afterlife.[139]

Despite the homogeneity of ancient Egyptian art, the styles of particular times and places sometimes reflected changing cultural or political attitudes. After the invasion of the Hyksos in the Second Intermediate Period, Minoan-style frescoes were found in Avaris.[140] The most striking example of a politically driven change in artistic forms comes from the Amarna period, where figures were radically altered to conform to Akhenaten’s revolutionary religious ideas.[141] This style, known as Amarna art, was quickly and thoroughly erased after Akhenaten’s death and replaced by the traditional forms.[142]

Religious beliefs

Main article: Ancient Egyptian religion

The Book of the Dead was a guide to the deceased’s journey in the afterlife. Beliefs in the divine and in the afterlife were ingrained in ancient Egyptian civilization from its inception; pharaonic rule was based on the
The Egyptian military was responsible for defending Egypt against foreign invasion, and for maintaining Egypt's domination in the ancient Near East. The military protected mining expeditions to Nubia and, as a result, they made use of artificial mummification, which involved removing the internal organs, wrapping the body in linen, and burying it in a rectangular stone sarcophagus or wooden coffin.

Beginning in the Fourth Dynasty, some parts were preserved separately in canopic jars.

Anubis was the ancient Egyptian god associated with mummification and burial rituals. He attended to a mummy. By the New Kingdom, the ancient Egyptians had perfected the art of mummification: the best technique took 70 days and involved removing the internal organs, removing the brain through the nose, and desiccating the body in a mixture of salts called natron. The body was then wrapped in linen with protective amulets inserted between layers and placed in a decorated anthropoid coffin. Mummies of the Late Period were also placed in painted cartonnage mummy cases. Actual preservation practices declined during the Ptolemaic and Roman eras, while greater emphasis was placed on the outer appearance of the mummy, which was adorned.

Wealthy Egyptians were buried with larger quantities of luxury items, but all burials, regardless of social status, included goods for the deceased. Beginning in the New Kingdom, books of the dead were included in the grave, along with shabti statues that were believed to perform manual labor for them in the afterlife. Rituals in which the deceased was magically re-animated accompanied burials. After burial, living relatives were expected to occasionally bring food to the tomb and recite prayers on behalf of the deceased.

Military

Main article: Military history of Ancient Egypt

An Egyptian chariot. The ancient Egyptian military was responsible for defending Egypt against foreign invasion, and for maintaining Egypt's domination in the ancient Near East. The military protected mining expeditions to the Sinai during the Old Kingdom and fought civil wars during the First and Second Intermediate Periods. The military was responsible for maintaining fortifications along important trade routes, such as those found at the city of Bubon on the way to Nubia. Forts also were constructed to serve as military bases, such as the fortress at Sile, which was a base of operations for expeditions to the Levant. In the New Kingdom, a series of pharaohs used the standing Egyptian army to attack and conquer Kush and parts of the Levant. In the New Kingdom, mercenaries from Nubia, Kush, and Libya were hired to fight for Egypt.

Typical military equipment included bows and arrows, spears, and round-topped shields made by stretching animal skin over a wooden frame. In the New Kingdom, the military began using chariots that had earlier been introduced by the Hyksos invaders. Weapons and armor continued to improve after the adoption of bronze: shields were now made from solid wood with a bronze buckle, spears were tipped with a bronze point, and the shophone was adopted from Asiatic soldiers. The pharaoh was usually depicted in art and literature riding at the head of the army, and there is evidence that at least a few pharaohs, such as Seqenenre Tao II and his sons, did do so. Soldiers were recruited from the general population, but during, and especially after, the New Kingdom, mercenaries from Nubia, Kush, and Libya were hired to fight for Egypt.
technology, medicine and mathematics, ancient Egypt achieved a relatively high standard of productivity and sophistication. Traditional empiricism, as evidenced by the Edwin Smith and Ebers papyri (c. 1600 BC), is first credited to Egypt, and the roots of the scientific method can also be traced back to the ancient Egyptians.

Mathematics

The earliest attested examples of mathematical calculations date to the predynastic Naqada period, and show a fully developed numeral system.[171] The importance of mathematics to an educated Egyptian is suggested by a New Kingdom fictional letter in which the writer proposes a scholarly competition between himself and another scribe regarding everyday calculation tasks such as accounting of land, labor and grain.[172] Texts

Glassmaking was a highly developed art. Faience and glass

Even before the Old Kingdom, the ancient Egyptians had developed a glassy material known as faience, which they treated as a type of artificial semi-precious stone. Faience is a non-ceramic made of silica, small amounts of lime and soda, and a colorant, typically copper.[157] The material was used to make beads, tiles, figurines, and small wares. Several methods can be used to create faience, but typically production involved application of the powdered materials in the form of a paste over a clay core, which was then fired. By a related technique, the ancient Egyptians produced a pigment known as Egyptian Blue, also called blue frit, which is produced by fusing (or sintering) silica, copper, lime, and an alkali such as natron. The product can be ground up and used as a pigment.[158]

The ancient Egyptians could fabricate a wide variety of objects from glass with great skill, but it is not clear whether they developed the process independently.[159] It is also unclear whether they made their own raw glass or merely imported pre-made ingots, which they melted and finished. However, they did have technical expertise in making objects, as well as adding trace elements to control the color of the finished glass. A range of colors could be produced, including yellow, red, green, blue, purple, and white, and the glass could be made either transparent or opaque.[160]

Medicine

Main article: Ancient Egyptian medicine

Ancient Egyptian medical instruments depicted in a Ptolemaic period inscription on the temple at Kom Ombo. The medical problems of the ancient Egyptians stemmed directly from their environment. Living and working close to the Nile brought hazards from malaria and debilitating schistosomiasis parasites, which caused liver and intestinal damage. Dangerous wildlife such as crocodiles and hippos were also a common threat. The life-long labors of farming and building put stress on the spine and joints, and traumatic injuries from construction and warfare all took a significant toll on the body. The girl and sand from stone-ground flour abraded teeth, leaving them susceptible to abscesses (though caries were rare).[161]

The diets of the wealthy were rich in sugars, which promoted periodontal disease.[162] Despite the flattering physiques portrayed on tomb walls, the overweight mummies of many of the upper class show the effects of a life of overindulgence.[163] Adult life expectancy was about 35 for men and 30 for women, but reaching adulthood was difficult as about one-third of the population died in infancy.[164]

Ancient Egyptian physicians were renowned in the ancient Near East for their healing skills, and some, like Imhotep, remained famous long after their deaths.[165] Herodotus remarked that there was a high degree of specialization among Egyptian physicians, with some treating only the head or the stomach, while others were eye-doctors and dentists.[166] Training of physicians took place at the Per Ankh or “House of Life” institution, most notably those headquartered in Per-Bastet during the New Kingdom and at Abydos and Saïs in the Late period. Medical papyri show empirical knowledge of anatomy, injuries, and practical treatments.[167]

Wounds were treated by bandaging with raw meat, white linen, sutures, nets, pads and swabs soaked with honey to prevent infection,[168] while opium was used to relieve pain. Garlic and onions were used regularly to promote good health and were thought to relieve asthma symptoms. Ancient Egyptian surgeons stitched wounds, set broken bones, and amputated diseased limbs, but they recognized that some injuries were so serious that they could only make the patient comfortable until he died.[169]

Shipbuilding

Main article: Shipbuilding

Early Egyptians knew how to assemble planks of wood into a ship hull as early as 3000 BC. The Archaeological Institute of America reports[6] that the oldest ships yet unearthed, a group of 14 discovered in Abydos, were constructed of wooden planks which were “sewn” together. Discovered by Egyptologist David O’Connor of New York University,[170] woven straps were found to have been used to lash the planks together,[6] and reeds or grass stuffed between the planks helped to seal the seams.[6] Because the ships are all buried together and working close to the Nile brought hazards from malaria and debilitating schistosomiasis parasites, which caused liver and intestinal damage. Dangerous wildlife such as crocodiles and hippos were also a common threat. The life-long labors of farming and building put stress on the spine and joints, and traumatic injuries from construction and warfare all took a significant toll on the body. The girl and sand from stone-ground flour abraded teeth, leaving them susceptible to abscesses (though caries were rare).[161]

The diets of the wealthy were rich in sugars, which promoted periodontal disease.[162] Despite the flattering physiques portrayed on tomb walls, the overweight mummies of many of the upper class show the effects of a life of overindulgence.[163] Adult life expectancy was about 35 for men and 30 for women, but reaching adulthood was difficult as about one-third of the population died in infancy.[164]

Ancient Egyptian physicians were renowned in the ancient Near East for their healing skills, and some, like Imhotep, remained famous long after their deaths.[165] Herodotus remarked that there was a high degree of specialization among Egyptian physicians, with some treating only the head or the stomach, while others were eye-doctors and dentists.[166] Training of physicians took place at the Per Ankh or “House of Life” institution, most notably those headquartered in Per-Bastet during the New Kingdom and at Abydos and Saïs in the Late period. Medical papyri show empirical knowledge of anatomy, injuries, and practical treatments.[167]

Wounds were treated by bandaging with raw meat, white linen, sutures, nets, pads and swabs soaked with honey to prevent infection,[168] while opium was used to relieve pain. Garlic and onions were used regularly to promote good health and were thought to relieve asthma symptoms. Ancient Egyptian surgeons stitched wounds, set broken bones, and amputated diseased limbs, but they recognized that some injuries were so serious that they could only make the patient comfortable until he died.[169]

Glassmaking was a highly developed art. Faience and glass

Even before the Old Kingdom, the ancient Egyptians had developed a glassy material known as faience, which they treated as a type of artificial semi-precious stone. Faience is a non-ceramic made of silica, small amounts of lime and soda, and a colorant, typically copper.[157] The material was used to make beads, tiles, figurines, and small wares. Several methods can be used to create faience, but typically production involved application of the powdered materials in the form of a paste over a clay core, which was then fired. By a related technique, the ancient Egyptians produced a pigment known as Egyptian Blue, also called blue frit, which is produced by fusing (or sintering) silica, copper, lime, and an alkali such as natron. The product can be ground up and used as a pigment.[158]

The ancient Egyptians could fabricate a wide variety of objects from glass with great skill, but it is not clear whether they developed the process independently.[159] It is also unclear whether they made their own raw glass or merely imported pre-made ingots, which they melted and finished. However, they did have technical expertise in making objects, as well as adding trace elements to control the color of the finished glass. A range of colors could be produced, including yellow, red, green, blue, purple, and white, and the glass could be made either transparent or opaque.[160]

Medicine

Main article: Ancient Egyptian medicine

Ancient Egyptian medical instruments depicted in a Ptolemaic period inscription on the temple at Kom Ombo. The medical problems of the ancient Egyptians stemmed directly from their environment. Living and working close to the Nile brought hazards from malaria and debilitating schistosomiasis parasites, which caused liver and intestinal damage. Dangerous wildlife such as crocodiles and hippos were also a common threat. The life-long labors of farming and building put stress on the spine and joints, and traumatic injuries from construction and warfare all took a significant toll on the body. The girl and sand from stone-ground flour abraded teeth, leaving them susceptible to abscesses (though caries were rare).[161]

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such as the Rhind Mathematical Papyrus and the Moscow Mathematical Papyrus show that the ancient Egyptians could perform the four basic mathematical operations — addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division — use fractions, compute the volumes of boxes and pyramids, and calculate the surface areas of rectangles, triangles, circles and even spheres[citation needed]. They understood basic concepts of algebra and geometry, and could solve simple sets of simultaneous equations.[173]

$\frac{2}{3}$

in hieroglyphs

Mathematical notation was decimal, and based on hieroglyphic signs for each power of ten up to one million. Each of these could be written as many times as necessary to add up to the desired number; so to write the number eighty or eight hundred, the symbol for ten or one hundred was written eight times respectively.[174]

Because their methods of calculation could not handle most fractions with a numerator greater than one, ancient Egyptian fractions had to be written as the sum of several fractions. For example, the fraction two-fifths was resolved into the sum of one-third + one-fifteenth; this was facilitated by standard tables of values.[175]

Some common fractions, however, were written with a special glyph; the equivalent of the modern two-thirds is shown on the right.[176]

Ancient Egyptian mathematicians had a grasp of the principles underlying the Pythagorean theorem, knowing, for example, that a triangle had a right angle opposite the hypotenuse when its sides were in a 3–4–5 ratio.[177] They were able to estimate the area of a circle by subtracting one-ninth from its diameter and squaring the result:

\[
\text{Area} = \left(\frac{8}{9}D\right)^2 = \left(\frac{256}{81}\right)r^2 \approx 3.16r^2,
\]

a reasonable approximation of the formula $\pi r^2$.[177][178]

The golden ratio seems to be reflected in many Egyptian constructions, including the pyramids, but its use may have been an unintended consequence of the ancient Egyptian practice of combining the use of knotted ropes with an intuitive sense of proportion and harmony.[179]

Legacy

Dr. Zahi Hawass is the current Secretary General of the Supreme Council of Antiquities. The culture and monuments of ancient Egypt have left a lasting legacy on the world. The cult of the goddess Isis, for example, became popular in the Roman Empire, as obelisks and other relics were transported back to Rome.[180] The Romans also imported building materials from Egypt to erect structures in Egyptian style. Early historians such as Herodotus, Strabo and Diodorus Siculus studied and wrote about the land which became viewed as a place of mystery.[181] During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Egyptian pagan culture was in decline after the rise of Christianity and later Islam, but interest in Egyptian antiquity continued in the writings of medieval scholars such as Dhul-Nun al-Misri and al-Maqrizi.[182]

In the 17th and 18th centuries, European travelers and tourists brought back antiquities and wrote stories of their journeys, leading to a wave of Egyptomania across Europe. This renewed interest sent collectors to Egypt, who took, purchased, or were given many important antiquities.[183] Although the European colonial occupation of Egypt destroyed a significant portion of the country's historical legacy, some foreigners had more positive results. Napoleon, for example, arranged the first studies in Egyptology when he brought some 150 scientists and artists to study and document Egypt's natural history, which was published in the Description de l'Égypte.[184] In the 20th century, the Egyptian Government and archaeologists alike recognized the importance of cultural respect and integrity in excavations. The Supreme Council of Antiquities now approves and oversees all excavations, which are aimed at finding information rather than treasure. The council also supervises museums and monument reconstruction programs designed to preserve the historical legacy of Egypt.

See also

Ancient Egyptian race controversy
Glossary of Ancient Egypt artifacts
Portraiture in Ancient Egypt

Notes


^ Dodson (2004) p. 46

^ Clayton (1994) p. 217

^ James (2005) p. 8


^ Clayton (1994) p. 153

^ James (2005) p. 84

^ Shaw (2002) p. 17


^ Hayes (1964) p. 220

^ Childe, V. Gordon (1953), "New light on the most ancient Near East" (Praeger Publications)

Comment


^ a b Shaw (2002) p. 61


^ Allen (2000) p. 1

^ Robins (1997) p. 32

^ Clayton (1994) p. 6


^ Shaw (2002) p. 70


^ James (2005) p. 40

^ Shaw (2002) p. 102


^ Clayton (1994) p. 69

^ Shaw (2002) p. 120

^ a b Shaw (2002) p. 146

^ Clayton (1994) p. 29


^ Clayton (1994) p. 79

^ Shaw (2002) p. 158


^ Robins (1997) p. 90

^ Shaw (2002) p. 188

^ a b Rhylott (1997) p. 310

^ Shaw (2002) p. 189

^ Shaw (2002) p. 224

^ James (2005) p. 48


^ Clayton (1994) p. 108

^ Aldred (1988) p. 259

^ Cline (2001) p. 273

^ From his two principal wives and large harem, Ramesses II sired more than 100 children. Clayton (1994) p. 146


^ James (2005) p. 54

^ Cerny (1975) p. 645

^ Shaw (2002) p. 345


^ Shaw (2002) p. 358

^ Shaw (2002) p. 363

^ Shaw (2002) p. 385

^ Shaw (2002) p. 405

^ Shaw (2002) p. 411

^ Shaw (2002) p. 418

^ James (2005) p. 62

^ James (2005) p. 63

^ Shaw (2002) p. 426

^ a b Shaw (2002) p. 422

^ Shaw (2003) p. 431


http://goanimate.com/movie/0z_B73fy2n7U/1

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