



The Origins of Civilisation in Ancient Egypt



By



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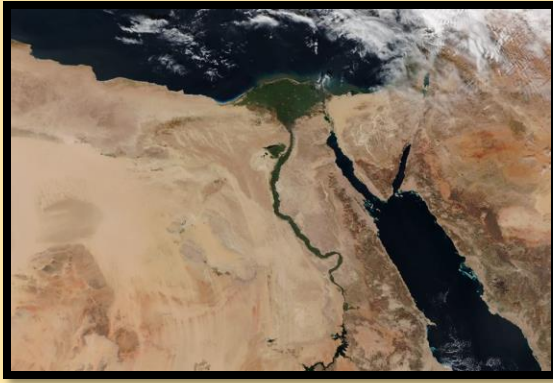


Image of the river Nile, credited to NASA

Heirakonpolis Tomb 100- This mural is crucial to understanding the culture of predynastic Egyptian civilization and is the oldest known tomb mural in Egypt, dating to around 3500 to 3200 BC. The mural features many iconography that would later be carried over into dynastic periods such as the notion of supreme power of the king, which can be seen in the depictions of subjugation with figures brandishing mace like weaponry being seen restraining kneeling people in the bottom left of the mural. This imagery would be carried over into later dynastic palettes such as the Narmer Palette. This suggests great continuity in the iconography that makes up the foundation for civilisation in later Ancient Egyptian periods

The Nile and the Desert surrounding it, the Sahara, provided the ultimate backdrop for the emergence of civilisation. Neolithic peoples had taken up to living alongside the Nile's waters, sharing a way of life that ran from lower Egypt and the Delta to Upper Egypt which was in the southern lands besides the Nile. Neolithic humans first established agricultural settlements as early as 6000 BC along the Nile. These shared yet differing environments around the Nile brought class specialisation into the civilisations that sprung up in the later upper and lower kingdoms of Egypt.



Image credited to the University of Cambridge, Ashmolean Museum

The first unification of Egypt- This was a significant time in Egyptian history where for the first time the separate kingdoms of both upper and lower Egypt were ruled by a single king, King Narmer. Narmer was the originator of the First Dynasty of Egypt, who is believed to have ruled between 3150 BC to 3100 BC and his first dynasty lasted until around 2890 BC. In this picture to the right, it can be seen a relief of the Nile god Hapi tying the papyrus, which represents lower Egypt and reeds, representing upper Egypt together to begin the first great unification which was the result of King Narmer.



Image credited to timelessmyths.com, at the Luxor Temple in Egypt

The Creation of the Great Pyramids of Giza- The Great Pyramids were created in the Old Kingdom, by the Pharaoh Khufu in the Fourth Dynasty of this period between 2600 BC and 2500 BC.

This period between the late 3rd and 6th Dynasty marked a significant increase in the quantity of monumental architecture being commissioned and created across Egypt, another key indicator of a true civilisation being established.

Image credited to Shutterstock, travelhope stock footage



The First Planned City, Amarna- Amarna was the first city in history knowingly planned out and constructed to fit specialisation among the class structure in Ancient Egypt. This is a very significant place to pinpointing the origins of true civilisation in Ancient Egypt despite the city only being inhabited for a short period of time. This is because the city had a defined city grid and territory marked off with boundary stones. The city was built by the Pharaoh Akhenaten in the late 18th Dynasty around 1346 BC. This period the city was built in was known as the New Kingdom, which is the last unified kingdom before the Ptolemaic and Greco-Roman times.



Image of the city Amarna, taken by Kyera Giannini for use in the AWIB (Ancient World Image Bank)

