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EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Throughout all of Ancient Egypt's history, from the beginnings of the Old Kingdom until the end of the New Kingdom, the most powerful person in Egypt was the king and occasionally the queen. The king or queen was known as the Pharaoh. "Pharaoh" is an Egyptian word meaning 'great house'.

Ancient Egypt was one of the only Ancient Civilizations that had female rules with great power.

The Pharaoh had many roles and responsibilities. The Pharaoh:

- Was the political leader.
- He held the title 'Lord of Two Lands' because he ruled both Upper and Lower Egypt.
- He owned all the land in Egypt.
- He made the laws.
- He collected the taxes.
- The pharaoh could lead his people into war if Egypt was attacked or if he wanted to expand his power.
- He was also the religious leader.
- He was the 'High Priest of Every Temple'.
- He represented the Gods on earth.
- He performed rituals and built temples.

Most Egyptians worked in the fields along the banks of the Nile, growing crops for themselves and to pay in taxes. They did not own their land or their house. Everything belonged to the pharaoh. The Egyptians accepted this, for 3000 years, because it was part of their religion. The pharaoh was a god and it was important not to upset the gods.

The wall paintings show Egypt as a peaceful place with men and women working in the fields, people catching wild birds in snares, bakers baking bread, carpenters and shipwrights building ships, goods being transported on the Nile.

The Egyptian pharaoh was expected to be able to lead his people. In order to govern the whole country, the pharaoh had many officials. There were royal officers and sheriffs in every Egyptian town who made sure that everyone paid their taxes and obeyed the Pharaoh.

The most important official was the pharaoh's vizier. There was also a network of mayors, scribes and priests. Some of the tasks of the government were:

- Maintaining a police force to keep the country peaceful;
- Maintaining the courts to give people justice and to punish criminals;
- Maintaining an army;
- Building the royal monuments such as temples;
- Controlling the supply of food; distributing the food.
- Holding a census to count the population in order to collect taxes;
- Collecting the taxes;
- Keeping the state records; everything of importance was written down;
- Maintaining important industries such as ship-building, brick-making and stone quarrying;
- Keeping the annual records of the Nile's water level.

When a pharaoh died, he was usually succeeded (followed) by a son or other relative. If the new pharaoh was a child, the high court officials guided and advised him, but he still had to attend rituals and play the part of a king.

Usually a young prince was well-trained in the skills he needed to become a pharaoh. He was expected to be an expert at sports such as hunting and using a bow and arrow. He needed to be an expert in driving a war chariot and understand how to command an army. These skills were necessary to defend the rich land of Egypt against its enemies. It was then possible for the government to maintain peace at home.

“The government of ancient Egypt was a theocratic monarchy as the king ruled by a mandate from the gods, initially was seen as an **intermediary** between human beings and the divine, and was supposed to represent the gods' will through the laws passed and policies approved.” --https://www.ancient.eu/Egyptian_Government/

intermediary--someone who acts as a link between people in order to bring about an agreement
(synonyms: negotiator, peacemaker, liaison)

Glue Below This Line!