Name: _____ Date: _____

Study Guide #7 **Invasion and Empire in Egypt**

The Hyksos Invasion and Conquest. Although they initially lived peacefully among the Egyptians, by 1650 the Hyksos, a Semitic-speaking people who had migrated from the northeast, had overthrown the Egyptian dynasty. The Hyksos were successful because of their superior war technology, including the horse-drawn war chariot and bronze weapons and tools, which were harder than the copper onesthat Egyptians used. Although the Hyksos rulers adopted much of the Egyptian way of life, they were still considered unwelcome outsiders. They were only able to control the region around the Nile Delta. The rest of the Nile valley was divided between two other kingdoms— Thebes and a kingdom ruled by Nubian princes. Under the leadership of Kamose, the Thebans mastered Hyksos war techniques and began a war of liberation. Kamose's brother, Ahmose, finally drove the Hyksos out around 1570 B.C.

The New Kingdom in Egypt. Conquest by the Hyksos convinced Egyptians that they could not ignore the outside world. Ahmose established what has come to be called the **New Kingdom** of Egypt, a civilization that was characterized by imperial expansion and a rich culture. Believing that creating an empire was the best way to prevent another invasion, the pharaohs established a standing army. This army expanded Egyptian territory as far as Asia Minor. Conquest greatly enhanced Egypt's wealth while also exposing its citizens to a variety of different cultures. A new style of Egyptian art celebrated the imperial glory of the New Kingdom. Rulers such as Hatshepsut sent commercial expeditions into the Red Sea, refurbished temples, and undertook public works projects.

Exposure to foreign ideas and customs had its greatest impact in the realm of religion. In 1380 B.C., Pharaoh Amenhotep IV attempted to convert Egypt to a new religion devoted to one supreme god, Aton, the god of the sun. Defying the priests of the old god Amon-Re, Amenhotep renamed himself Akhenaton and replaced Amon-Re's name with Aton's on all public buildings. He also built a new capital city, Akhetaton. Akhenaton's actions challenged both traditional religious beliefs and the power of the priests. In addition, by moving the government he also challenged the power of the nobles, who were closely linked to the priests. Akhenaton, however, eventually lost the struggle for power. Egyptians returned to their traditional religious ideas and priests pressured Akhenaton's successor, Tutankhaten, to reject Aton and restore Amon-Re's name to public buildings.

Egyptian Decline. During the religious struggle, Akhenaton neglected Egypt's defenses. Rival powers, such as the Hittites, took advantage of the situation and attacked the Egyptian empire. In 1288 B.C., the Egyptians and the Hittites fought a great battle at Kadesh. The battle ended in a draw; but the Egyptians were soon subjected to a new threat from invaders, whom they called the "Sea Peoples." Their attacks forced the Egyptians to abandon their empire and retreat into the confines of the Nile Valley. Meanwhile, by around 1200 B.C., the Libyans invaded from the west and by the mid-900s B.C. had conquered Egypt,

where they ruled for the next 200 years. In response to these invasions, Egyptians began to lose their sense of security, and in turn Egyptian culture began to change. Religion became more focused on magic rituals than morality, and Egyptians came to feel less loyalty to the state.

As Egypt recovered from the invasions, the kingdom of Kush began to advance down the Nile. Kush had once been controlled by Egypt, and their culture combined Egyptian gods, hieroglyphics, and architectural techniques with the cultural traditions of African peoples. By 730 B.C. the Kushites had grown strong enough to invade Egypt. They created the **Nubian Dynasty**, which reunited Egypt for about 50 years, but which was not strong enough to hold the kingdom together.

Answer the questions below in your own words and in complete sentence. Highlight your evidence.

1. How did the Hyksos conquer Egypt?

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2. Why did the rulers of the New Kingdom decide to expand Egypt's borders?

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3. Why did Akhenaton's religious beliefs arouse such violent opposition?

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4. How did the religious struggle over Akhenaton's beliefs affect the Egyptian Empire?

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5. How did Egyptian conquest affect civilization in Kush?

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6. What did the Nubian Dynasty accomplish?

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