

Section

4

The Civilization of Kush

Guide to Reading

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

In Sections 1, 2, and 3, you learned about the rise and fall of civilizations in ancient Egypt. Another civilization in early Africa was Kush. It was located near Egypt and was very similar.

Focusing on the **Main Ideas**

- To the south of Egypt, the Nubians settled in farming villages and became strong warriors. (page 188)
- The people of Kush devoted themselves to ironworking and grew wealthy from trade. (page 189)

Locating Places

Nubia (NOO•bee•uh)

Kush (KUHSH)

Kerma (KAR•muh)

Napata (NA•puh•tuh)

Meroë (MEHR•oh•ee)

Meeting People

Kashta (KAHSH•tuh)

Piye (PY)

Content Vocabulary

savanna (suh•VA•nuh)

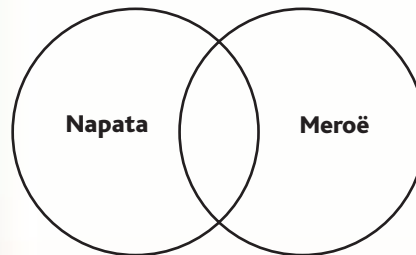
Academic Vocabulary

collapse (kuh•LAPS)

decline (dih•KLYN)

Reading Strategy

Compare and Contrast Use a Venn diagram like the one below to show the similarities and differences between Napata and Meroë.



History Social Science Standards

WH6.2 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Where & When?



800 B.C.

700 B.C.

600 B.C.

500 B.C.

c. 750 B.C.

Kashta of Kush conquers part of Egypt

728 B.C.

Piye of Kush defeats Egyptians

c. 540 B.C.

Kush moves capital to Meroë



Nubia

Main Idea To the south of Egypt, the Nubians settled in farming villages and became strong warriors.

Reading Connection Are you on good terms with your neighbors? It's not always easy—for individuals or countries. Read on to find out about the Egyptians' neighbors to the south and the ways the two civilizations mixed.

The Egyptians were not alone in settling along the Nile River. Farther south, in present-day Sudan, another strong civilization arose. This was in a region called **Nubia** (NOO•bee•uh), later known as **Kush** (KUHSH).

Historians do not know exactly when people arrived in Nubia. Evidence suggests that cattle herders arrived in about 2000 B.C. They grazed their herds on the **savannas** (suh•VA•nuhs), or grassy plains, that stretch across Africa south of the Sahara. Later, people settled in farming villages in Nubia. They

grew crops, but they were also excellent hunters, skilled at using the bow and arrow. Soon the Nubians began forming armies known for their fighting skills.

The Kingdom of Kerma The more powerful Nubian villages gradually took over the weaker ones and created the kingdom of **Kerma** (KAR•muh). Kerma developed close ties with Egypt to the north. The Egyptians were happy to trade for Kerma's cattle, gold, ivory, and enslaved people. They also admired Nubian skills in warfare and hired Nubian warriors to fight in their armies.

Kerma became a wealthy kingdom. Its artisans made fine pottery, jewelry, and metal goods. Like Egyptian pharaohs, the kings of Kerma were buried in tombs that held precious stones, gold, jewelry, and pottery. These items were as splendid as those found in Egypt during the same period.



▲ In this wall painting, four Nubian princes offer rings and gold to an Egyptian ruler.
What kingdom was formed when more powerful Nubian villages took over weaker ones?



WH6.2.6 Describe the role of Egyptian trade in the eastern Mediterranean and Nile valley.

WH6.2.8 Identify the location of the Kush civilization and describe its political, commercial, and cultural relations with Egypt.

Why Did Egypt Invade Nubia? As you learned earlier, the Egyptian pharaoh Thutmose III sent his armies into Nubia in the 1400s B.C. After a 50-year war, the kingdom of Kerma **collapsed**, and the Egyptians took control of much of Nubia. They ruled the Nubians for the next 700 years.

During this time, the people of Nubia adopted many Egyptian ways. They began to worship Egyptian gods and goddesses along with their own. They learned how to work copper and bronze and changed Egyptian hieroglyphs to fit their own language. As people and goods continued to pass between Nubia and Egypt, the two cultures mixed.

Reading Check Identify Where was Kush located in relation to Egypt?

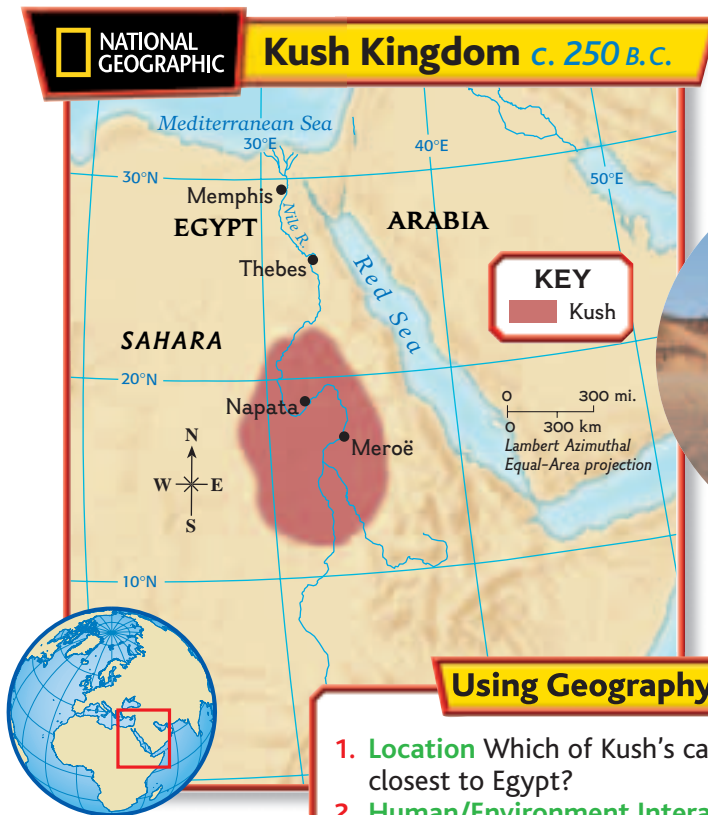
The Rise of Kush

Main Idea The people of Kush devoted themselves to ironworking and grew wealthy from trade.

Reading Connection Do you and your friends ever trade video games or CDs? Trading may be a casual activity for you, but it was essential to ancient peoples. Read to find how Kush took advantage of its location along an important trade route.

As Egypt **declined** at the end of the New Kingdom, Nubians saw their chance to break away. By 850 B.C., a Nubian group had formed the independent kingdom of Kush. For the next few centuries, powerful Kushite kings ruled from the city of **Napata** (NA•puh•tuh).

Napata was in a favorable location. It stood along the upper Nile where trade caravans crossed the river. Caravans soon carried gold, ivory, valuable woods, and other goods from Kush to Egypt.



▲ These Kushite pyramids were much smaller and had more steeply sloped sides than Egyptian pyramids. **How else was Meroë rebuilt to look like an Egyptian city?**

Using Geography Skills

- Location** Which of Kush's capital cities was closest to Egypt?
- Human/Environment Interaction** Based on its location, where might trade that passed through Kush have come from?



Primary Source

Selecting a New King

When their king died, the Kushites asked the god Amon-Re to appoint a new leader. “[The Kushite officials said] ‘We have come to you, O Amon-Re . . . that you might give to us a lord. . . . That beneficent office [helpful task]

is in your hands—may you give it to your son whom you love!’

Then they offered the king’s brothers before this god, but he did not take one of them. For a second time there was offered the king’s brother . . . Aspalta . . .

[Amon-Re said] ‘He is your king.’”

—author unknown, c. 600 B.C., “The Selection of Aspalta as King of Kush”



▲ Lion statue in honor of King Aspalta

DBQ Document-Based Question

Do you think Aspalta was qualified to be king? Why or why not?

In time, Kush became rich enough and strong enough to take control of Egypt. About 750 B.C., a Kushite king named **Kashta** (KAHSH•tuh) headed north with a powerful army. His soldiers began the conquest of Egypt that his son **Piye** (PY) completed in 728 B.C. Piye founded the Twenty-fifth Dynasty that ruled both Egypt and Kush from Napata.

The kings of Kush greatly admired Egyptian culture. In Napata they built white sandstone temples and monuments similar to those of the Egyptians. The Kushites also built small pyramids in which

to bury their kings. The ruins of these pyramids can still be seen today.

The Importance of Iron Kush’s rule in Egypt did not last long. During the 600s B.C., the Assyrians invaded Egypt. Armed with iron weapons, they drove the Kushites back to their homeland in the south.

Despite their losses, the Kushites gained something from the Assyrians—the secret of making iron. The Kushites became the first Africans to devote themselves to iron-working. Soon, farmers in Kush were using iron for their hoes and plows instead of copper or stone. With these superior tools, they were able to grow large amounts of grain and other crops.

Kush’s warriors also began using iron spears and swords, increasing their military power. Meanwhile, traders from Kush transported iron products and enslaved people as far away as Arabia, India, and China. In return, they brought back cotton, textiles, and other goods.

A New Capital About 540 B.C., Kush’s rulers left Napata and moved farther south to be out of the Assyrians’ reach. In the city of **Meroë** (MEHR•oh•ee), they set up a royal court. Like Napata, the new capital had access to the Nile River for trade and transportation. The rocky desert east of Meroë, however, contained rich deposits of iron ore. As a result, Meroë became not only a trading city but also a center for making iron.

With their growing wealth, Kush’s kings rebuilt Meroë to look like an Egyptian city. Small pyramids stood in the royal graveyard. A huge temple sat at the end of a grand avenue lined with sculptures of rams. Sandstone palaces and red-brick houses had walls decorated with paintings or blue and yellow tiles.



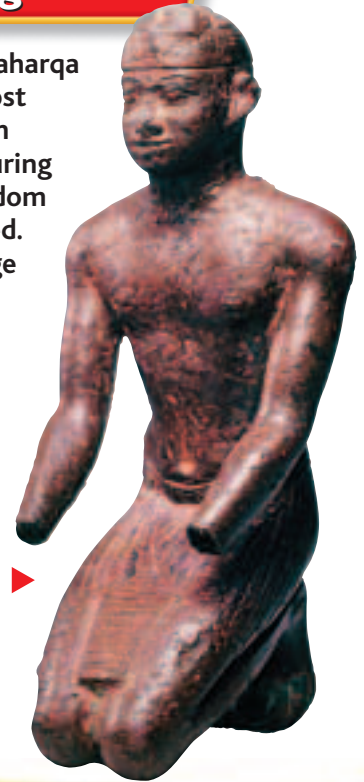
Building a Profitable Trade Meroë became the core, or center of a huge trading network that stretched north to Egypt’s border and south into central Africa. Kush’s traders received leopard skins and valuable woods from the interior of Africa. They traded these goods, along with enslaved workers and iron products, to people throughout the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean area.

Kush remained a great trading power for some 600 years. By the A.D. 200s, though, the kingdom began to weaken. As Kush declined, another kingdom rose to take its place. The kingdom is called Axum and was located in what is today the country of Ethiopia. Around A.D. 350, the armies of Axum burned Meroë to the ground. You will read more about the kingdom of Axum when you study Africa.

Reading Check Explain How did Kush become a wealthy kingdom?

Kushite King

The Kushite king Taharqa was one of the most powerful leaders in Nubian history. During his reign, the kingdom grew and prospered. He built many large temples in and around Egypt and Kush. **What kingdom replaced Kush?**



Kushite king
Taharqa

History Online

Study Central Need help with the kingdom of Kush? Visit ca.hss.glencoe.com and click on Study Central.

Section 4 Review

Reading Summary

Review the Main Ideas

- In the Nile Valley to the south of Egypt, the Nubians founded the kingdom of Kerma and traded with the Egyptians.
- The Kushites set up a capital at Meroë that became a center for ironmaking and the base of a huge trading network.

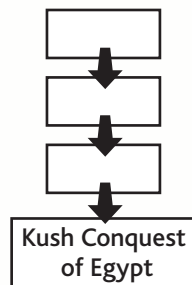
What Did You Learn?

1. Who were the Nubians?
2. What were the Kushites’ most important economic activities?

Critical Thinking

3. **Sequencing** Draw a diagram to show events that led up to the Kushite conquest of Egypt.

CA 6RC2.4



4. **Geography Skills** Why was Napata’s location beneficial? CA CS3.
5. **The Big Ideas** How did Egypt’s culture affect Kush? CA 6RC2.0
6. **Compare** How were Kush and Egypt similar? CA 6RC2.2
7. **Analysis Posing Questions** If you wanted to learn more about Kush, what questions would you ask? Write three questions and exchange them with a classmate. Research each other’s questions and write a summary of your findings. CA HRI.

Analyzing Primary Sources



WH6.2.7 Understand the significance of Queen Hatshepsut and Ramses the Great. **WH6.2.8** Identify the location of the Kush civilization and describe its political, commercial, and cultural relations with Egypt.

The Mighty Pharaohs

In Egypt and Kush, rulers were greatly respected. The Egyptians believed that their pharaohs were the sons of the sun god, Re. Because of these beliefs, the pharaoh had enormous power. His word had to be followed without question.

Read the passages and study the image that follows. Then answer the questions on page 193.



Tutankhamen's gold mask ▶

Reader's Dictionary

Re (RAY): god of sun

begat (bih•GAT): fathered

spake: spoke

Osiris (oh•SY•ruhs): a god, king of the Afterworld

stele (STEE•lee): a vertical, engraved stone slab

remnant (REHM•nuhnt): remainder

Amon (A•muhn): god of Thebes; important Egyptian god

Ramses II Rebuilds

Ramses II, one of the great pharaohs of Egypt, ruled from 1279–1213 B.C. Ramses II undertook a large-scale building project. The following passage comes from an inscription describing his order to finish building his father's tomb.

"I came forth from **Re**, although ye say, from [Seti I], who brought me up. . . . When my father appeared to the public, . . . [h]e said concerning me: 'Crown him as king, that I may see his beauty while I live with him.' . . . My mighty deeds for my father as a child, I will now complete, being Lord of the Two Lands; I will construct them in the

proper way . . . I will lay the walls in the temple of him that **begat** me. . . . I will cover its house, I will erect its columns, I will set stones in the places of the lower foundation, making monument upon monuments." . . .

Then **spake** the royal companions, and they answered the Good God: "Thou art Re, thy body is his body. There has been no ruler like thee, (for) thou art unique, like the son of **Osiris**, thou hast achieved the like of his designs."

—Anonymous, "Ramses II Finds the Necropolis Buildings in Ruins"



A Kushite Warrior-King

Around 728 B.C., the Kushite king Piye finished his conquest of Egypt. He was angry to discover that some of the enemy had not been destroyed. The following description appears on Piye's victory *stele*.

Then his majesty was enraged thereat like a panther (saying): "Have they allowed a **remnant** of the army of the Northland to remain? . . . Not causing their death, in order to destroy the last of them? I swear: as Re loves me! As my father **Amon** favors me! I will myself go northward, that I may destroy that which he has done, that I may make him turn back from fighting, forever."

—Anonymous, "The Nubian Invasion"

A Sphinx of Kush

The people of Kush adopted many Egyptian ways, especially while they ruled Egypt. This granite sphinx is of the daughter of King Piye from about 660 B.C. Egyptians believed that sphinx statues had magical powers to guard tombs and temples.

- ▼ This sphinx has the face of King Piye's daughter. It guards a sacred offering vessel. The vessel was filled with gifts to the god Amon. These offerings were protected by the sphinx, which held the vessel in its hands so no one could steal it.



DBQ Document-Based Questions

Ramses II Rebuilds

1. Who does Ramses say is his father?
2. Why does Ramses want to finish Seti's tomb?
3. Ramses's royal companions say that he is Re, the sun god. Why do you think they say this?

A Kushite Warrior-King

4. Why is Piye so angry?
5. According to Piye, what is his relationship with the Egyptian gods Re and Amon? Why is this relationship important?

A Sphinx of Kush

6. The Egyptians were known for creating sphinxes, yet this sphinx was made for a daughter of a king of Kush. Why do you think this is so?
7. Compare this sphinx to the images of the Great Sphinx on pages 152 and 166. How are they alike? How are they different?

Read to Write

8. Reread the two passages, as well as the information about the sphinx. What do these primary sources tell you about the role of religion in the lives of Egyptian rulers? How do they demonstrate the power of pharaohs?

CA HR3

Chapter 2 Assessment

Standard WH6.2

Review Content Vocabulary

Match the definitions in the second column to the terms in the first column. Write the letter of each definition.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| — 1. savanna | a. area of fertile soil at the end of a river |
| — 2. tribute | b. reed plant used to make baskets, rafts, and paper |
| — 3. cataract | c. grassy plain |
| — 4. delta | d. rapids |
| — 5. hieroglyphics | e. Egyptian writing system |
| — 6. pharaoh | f. forced payments |
| — 7. papyrus | g. title for Egyptian leaders |

Review the **Main Ideas**

Section 1 • The Nile Valley

- What natural barriers protected Egypt from invasion?
- What two areas of Egypt were united around 3100 B.C.?

Section 2 • Egypt's Old Kingdom

- What were the Egyptians' religious beliefs?
- Where did Egyptians of the Old Kingdom bury their pharaohs?

Section 3 • The Egyptian Empire

- During what period did Egypt reach the height of its power?
- Why are Akhenaton and Tutankhamen well-known?

Section 4 • The Civilization of Kush

- Where did the Nubians live?
- What made the Kushites wealthy?

Critical Thinking

- Describe** Identify the four social groups in ancient Egypt, and explain who belonged to each group. **CA 6RC2.4**
- Synthesize** How do you think religious leaders reacted to Akhenaton's changes? **CA HI2.**
- Analyze** Do you agree that Egyptian civilization can be called "the Gift of the Nile"? Explain. **CA HR2.**
- Compare** In what ways did Meroë look like an Egyptian city? **CA 6RC2.2**

Geography Skills

Study the map below and answer the following questions.

- Location** The Nile River delta empties into what body of water? **CA CS3.**
- Movement** Why would ancient Egyptians find it easier to travel north and south than to travel east and west? **CA CS3.**
- Human/Environment Interaction** Why is Egyptian farming along the Nile? **CA CS3.**



Read to Write

23. **The Big Ideas Expository Writing** Imagine that you are an Egyptian pharaoh. How would you make sure that your empire is stable and strong? Use real-life pharaohs to help you determine what kinds of things you would do. Write an essay describing your policies and what you hope to achieve through them. **CA 6WS1.2**
24. **Using Your FOLDABLES** Use your foldable to write a description of one of the civilizations in this chapter. Include such things as religious life, family life, and contributions. When you are finished, discuss similarities and differences among the civilizations with a classmate. **CA 6WS1.3**

Using Academic Vocabulary

Use the terms below to fill in the blanks in the following sentences.

- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| a. feature | e. structure |
| b. technology | f. principle |
| c. labor | g. restore |
| d. welfare | h. construct |
25. The main ____ of Egyptian pyramids are the enclosed tombs.
26. The shadoof is an example of Egyptian ____.
27. A pyramid is a large ____ made of stone blocks.
28. Pharaohs were in charge of providing for the ____ of their people.
29. Egyptian pharaohs used farmers to help ____ their pyramids.

Reviewing Skills

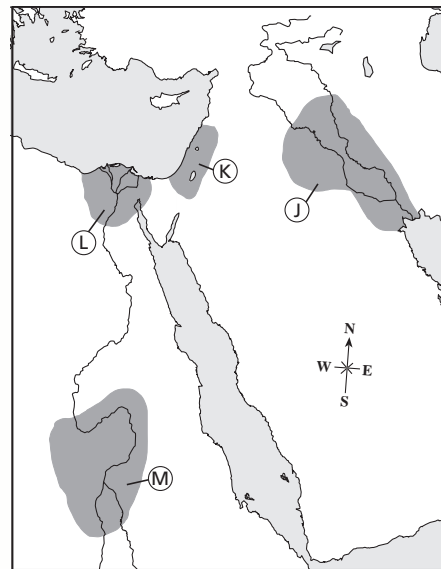
30. **Summarizing** Using information from the text, create a short story about Hatshepsut. Use this writing exercise to summarize life in ancient Egypt during her reign. The story should compare Hatshepsut to other Egyptian rulers and explain the differences in her policies. The events of the story should also show the different social classes in Egypt and explain the problems Hatshepsut faced as a woman pharaoh. **CA 6WA2.1**

31. **Building a Time Line** Take a look back through the chapter. As you go, make a list of each important leader in ancient Egypt. Create a time line of these leaders, placing them in chronological order. For each entry, include a short summary of their reign. Describe their significant accomplishments or mistakes, and how these actions affected Egypt. **CA CS2.**



Standards Practice

Use the map below to answer the following question.



32. Which area on the map was the home of the Kushite kingdom?
- A J
B K
C L
D M