

Ancient Egyptian civilization rose in the Nile valley. The latter pharaohs were buried, not in pyramids, but in rock tombs. It protected the land and its inhabitants by organising defences to keep out the raiding war-bands which sometimes attacked the country from the desert. It was the ancient Egyptians' feelings and beliefs about the pharaoh that provided the strongest unifying force of all. With all this treasure going into the ground instead of being invested, it was no surprise that eventually the pharaohs proved to be the major cause behind the decline and fall of ancient Egyptian economy, and therefore of its civilization. The pyramids, therefore, were designed as eternal dwelling places for the god-kings from where the dead pharaoh would continue their magic work for their beloved land. But bonding the together of men developed much further in Egypt. Many of the Egyptians were traditional, that is to say, they had grown up gradually, over the centuries but the pharaoh could make new laws and did so, whenever he thought it necessary. In countless ways, then, the Egyptians derived great benefits from their system of national government. A divine ruler who had magic control over the weather and the Nile, and who alone brought safety, prosperity and happiness to the nation. Yet the contents of the tombs remained as extravagant as before. When Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 it proved to contain the most incredible burial treasure ever found. As in Sumer, the need for irrigation system first led farmers to join together and cooperate. The preserving of internal peace was another of the pharaoh's tasks.