



## GREAT CITIES OF AFRICA

# THE ANCIENT CITY OF THEBES



The Ancient Egypt was located in north-eastern Africa along the longest river in the world named the Nile River and was established by 3100 BC. Early Egypt had been divided into two regions namely Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. Upper Egypt was located just north of Nubia next to the Nile River and had as its capital, the city of Nekhen. Lower Egypt was located in the northern part of Africa again next to the Nile River and had as its capital, the city of Memphis. The creation of Ancient Egypt can be credited to the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt into a single kingdom by the African King Narmer. The city of Thebes was located on either side of the Nile River in located in the middle section of Upper Egypt. The city was developed by the Egyptians and populated from 3200 BC. The city covered a territory of approximately 36 square miles. The city was also known as Wase or Wo'se (the city) and Usast or Waset (the southern city) the main city was located on the east bank of the Nile and a large necropolis to the west. The population reached to

over 40,000 inhabitants which was second only to another Egyptian city called Memphis which was the largest city on the planet at that time. More than 60 annual festivals were celebrated within the city including “ The Festival of Shemu” and “ The Beautiful Feast of Opet”. Thebes also served as a royal capital and a place of worship with palaces and gardens being developed. The city was also named in the Christian holy book the Bible and referenced in Jeremiah Chapter 46 Verse 25 and Nahum Chapter 3 Verse 8. Originally a center of trade the city grew in affluence and prosperity and eventually in 2055 BC the Temple of Karnak complex was developed there which included chapels and temples. Later in 1570 BC the city of Thebes became the capital of Ancient Egypt. By 1479 BC the African queen named Hatshepsut rose to power and increased the wealth of the city under her leadership. The economy of the city grew due to the renewed trade via the Red Sea with the Africans in Land of Punt located in modern-day Somalia