

Overview

Between 2800 and 2200 BC ancient Egypt experienced its first period of plenty. The fertile soil at the Nile's banks gave the Egyptians rich harvests and well fed live stock. Lumber and ore were scarce but the Egyptians, as skilled traders, imported lumber by ship from Palestine to their ports in the delta. Wheat, which Egypt produced in large quantities, and gold, mined in the south, were traded for needed imports.

Egypt had a mighty army able to occupy the ore mines of Sinai as early by the middle of the 3rd millennium BC. Later they conquered Palestine, securing the supply of precious lumber.

The ancient Egyptian empire's wealth is visible today, notably in the great Pyramids, built from granite and limestone, both of which had to be transported to the delta from far away via the Nile.

The *Cheops* historical scenario map closely matches the region's history and geographical features. Each player takes on the role of an Egyptian noble family. Players start by building roads, ships, and settlements. Soon the Pharaoh will demand a pyramid be built. Egypt is rich in wheat and wool produced along the shores of the river Nile and bricks from the south of the empire but lumber and ore have to be imported from abroad. Reaching the ore mines across the Red Sea and conquering Palestine for its lumber will win the Pharaoh's favor. A secure gold supply for trade is another way to gain the resources to further the great pyramid. The player contributing the most stones to the great pyramid will be rewarded by Pharaoh, but the Pharaoh's wrath befalls any who do not provide enough help constructing one of the great wonders of ancient history.

Components

From the base *Settlers* game:

- All settlements, roads, and cities in 3 or 4 colors
- All commodity cards
- All development cards
- The robber
- The 2 dice
- The building cost reference cards

Cheops provides the following additional material:

- 11 each red, yellow, blue, white building stones
- 16 black building stones
- 40 Gold pieces
- 1 **Pharaohs Segen +3VP** (Pharaoh's Blessing)
- 3 **Pharaohs Fluch -2VP** (Pharaoh's Curse)
- 8 ships in each color, or use *Seafarers* ships

Setup

- Give each player 3 gold, and settlements, cities, roads, ships, and building stones of one color.
- Set out commodity and development cards as usual.

- Put the robber on a random desert hex.
- Put the Largest Army, Pharaohs Blessing, and Pharaohs Curse cards near the board.
- The Longest Road card is not used.

Initial Settlements

Each player places 3 settlements in switchback style.

3 Player Sequence:

1 – 2 – 3, 3 – 2 – 1, 1 – 2 – 3.

4 Player Sequence:

1 – 2 – 3 – 4, 4 – 3 – 2 – 1, 1 – 2 – 3 – 4.

Each player takes the commodities adjacent to his or her 3rd settlement.

During setup, settlements can be placed only on the shores of the Nile. These are the orange junctions in the large picture on page 2 of the *Cheops* rules. The rules governing spaces between settlements apply – 2 settlements may not be adjacent. The island in the delta has possible settlement sites. Each settlement placed during Setup has to connect to at least one Nile river water or delta water hex.

New Rules

1. Gold

Settlements and cities on a gold tile produce gold when the tile's number is rolled. Settlements produce 1 gold, cities 2. Gold can be traded 4:1 like any other commodity. At a 3:1 port, 3 gold can be traded for any 1 unit of another commodity. Gold is needed to pay to use another player's port.

2. Ships

Purchase a ship for 1 Lumber + 1 Wool. Ships can cross the Nile and Red Sea, and can be used instead of roads when building along a shore. Ships can cross open sea just as roads cross land. A ship may not be moved once placed – the *Seafarers* rule allowing ship movement does not apply.

Variation: Play strictly according to the *Seafarers* rules if you find those rules preferable.

3. Trade Routes

Contrary to *Seafarers*, ships can connect directly to roads. A settlement is not needed between roads and ships. There is no limit how often changes from ship to road can occur. 2 settlements controlled by opposing players are connected if any players' trade route forms a connection between the 2 settlements.

4. Ports

A player may use other players' ports by paying them 1 gold. One of his or her settlements must be connected with the port's settlement via a trade route, regardless of whose pieces form the route.

Example: (picture on page 2 of the *Cheops* rules) White may use Blue's port to trade 2 Wheat because there is a trade route between White's settlement and Blue's wheat port.

5. Pyramid Building

Construction starts when the 1st settlement is built in the pyramid's building site neighborhood: any violet junction in the picture (*Cheops* rules page 2). Before that no stones can be placed on the building site.

A building stone costs 1 Brick + 1 Ore. The pyramid is built level by level as shown. 1st level consists of 16 building stones; level 2 has 9 stones, level 3 has 4 stones. The last level is made from just 1 stone.

Anyone with a settlement or city adjacent to the building site can help build the pyramid. Someone with no settlement (or city) adjacent to the site can use another player's settlement if one of their settlements connects via trade route to a settlement adjacent to the building site, for a cost of 1 gold paid to the other player for each pyramid stone added.

6. Rolling 7

Proceed as in standard *Settlers* with the following exceptions. Gold doesn't count towards commodity hand size limit. When 7 is rolled Pharaoh takes part in pyramid building, but only *after* the 1st settlement adjacent to the building site is built. Thence each time a 7 is rolled a black pyramid building stone is added.

7. Pharaohs Blessing & Pharaohs Curse

Builder of the 1st pyramid stone gets *Pharaohs Segen* (Pharaoh's Blessing), gaining 3VP. Then assign *Pharaohs Fluch* (Pharaoh's Curse) to all players with the least building stones placed. Because no one else has built any stones yet, all others get Pharaoh's Curse and lose 2VP. A player loses the curse once they no longer have built the least stones. A new player who builds the most takes Pharaohs Blessing.

Game End

- When any player reaches 12VP
- When Pharaoh has used his last black building stone
- When the pyramid is finished.

Strategy Tip

Utilize trade routes! Often they are the only way to get scarce commodities even though they use opposing player's ports. If there are no more

chris conboy 2008-08

available settlement sites adjacent to the pyramid building site, such a trade route is the only way to take part in constructing the pyramid.