AP Art History

Unit 2A: Ancient Near East and Egypt

Unit Readings

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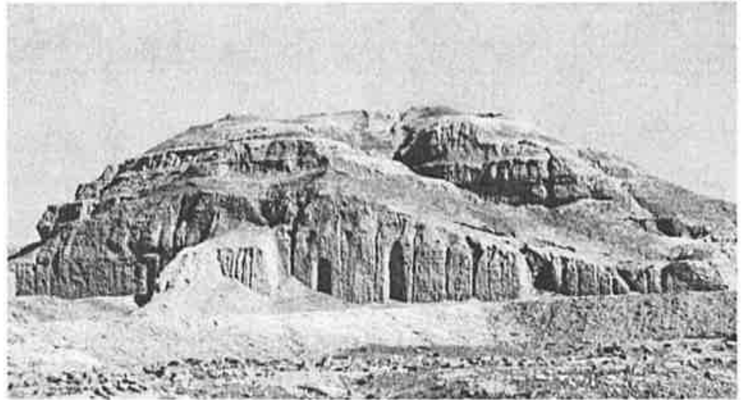
12. White Temple and its ziggurat.

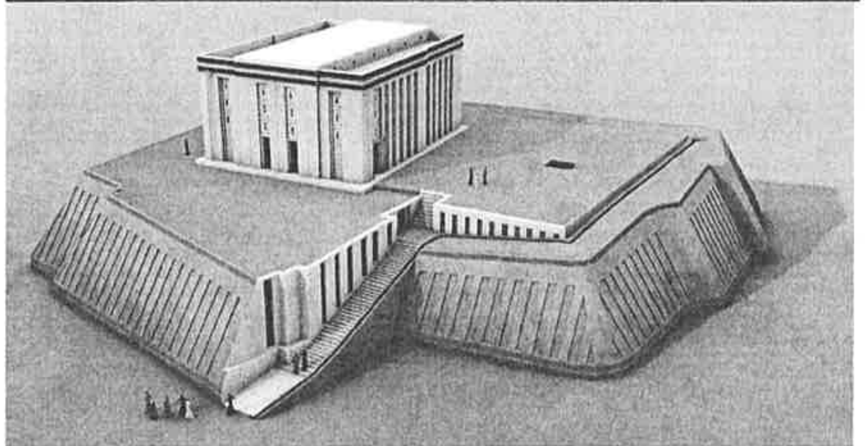
Uruk (modern Warka, Iraq). Sumerian. c. 3500–3000 B.C.E. Mud brick.
G15, 33-34
G14, 33-34
S5, 28-30
A3, 57
KA
Pin Image from list(Is it backwards?) Higher res image I flipped horizontally Reconstruction drawing



https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/ancient-near-east1/sumerian/a/white-temple-and-ziggurat-uruk

Archaeological site at Uruk (modern Warka) in Iraq (photo: SAC Andy Holmes (RAF)/MOD, Open Government License v1.0)

Visible from a great distance: Uruk (modern Warka in Iraq)—where city life began more than five thousand years ago and where the first writing emerged—was clearly one of the most important places in southern Mesopotamia. Within Uruk, the greatest monument was the Anu Ziggurat on which the White Temple was built. Dating to the late 4th millennium B.C.E. (the Late Uruk Period, or Uruk III) and dedicated to the sky god Anu, this temple would have towered well above (approximately 40 feet) the flat plain of Uruk, and been visible from a great distance—even over the defensive walls of the city.



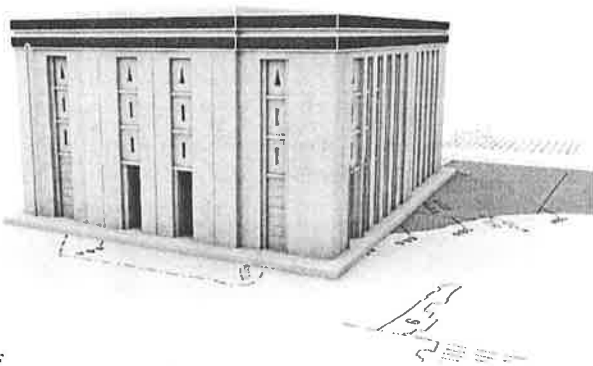
Digital reconstruction of the White Temple and ziggurat, Uruk (modern Warka), c. 3517-3358 B.C.E. © artefacts-berlin.de; scientific material: German Archaeological Institute

Ziggurats: A ziggurat is a built raised platform with four sloping sides—like a chopped-off pyramid. Ziggurats are made of mud-bricks—the building material of choice in the Near East, as stone is rare. Ziggurats were not only a visual focal point of the city, they were a symbolic one, as well—they were at the heart of the theocratic political system (a theocracy is a type of government where a god is recognized as the ruler, and the state officials operate on the god's behalf). So, seeing the ziggurat towering

above the city, one made a visual connection to the god or goddess honored there, but also recognized that deity's political authority.

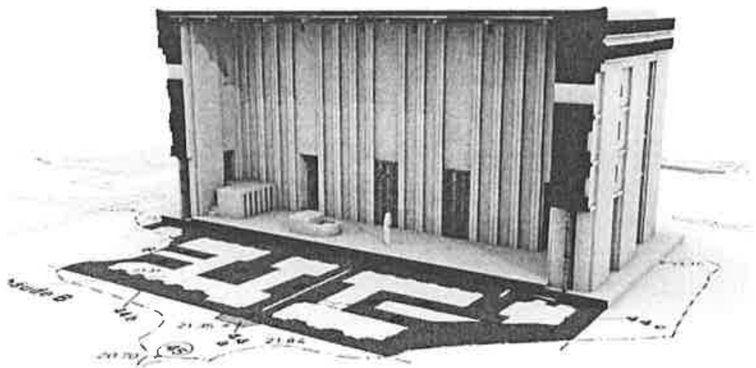
Remains of the Anu Ziggurat, Uruk (modern Warka), c. 3517-3358 B.C.E. (photo: Geoff Emberling, by permission)

Excavators of the White Temple estimate that it would have taken 1500 laborers working on average ten hours per day for about five years to build the last major revetment (stone facing) of its massive underlying terrace (the open areas surrounding the White Temple at the top of the ziggurat). Although religious belief may have inspired participation in such a project, no doubt some sort of force (*corvée* labor—unpaid labor coerced by the state/slavery) was involved as well.



Digital reconstruction of the two-story version of the White Temple, Uruk (modern Warka), c, 3517-3358 B.C.E. © artefacts-berlin.de; scientific material: German Archaeological Institute

The sides of the ziggurat were very broad and sloping but broken up by recessed stripes or bands from top to bottom (see digital reconstruction, above), which would have made a stunning pattern in morning or afternoon sunlight. The only way up to the top of the ziggurat was via a steep stairway that led to a ramp that wrapped around the north end of the Ziggurat and brought one to the temple entrance. The flat top of the ziggurat was coated with bitumen (asphalt—a tar or pitch-like material similar to what is used for road paving) and overlaid with brick, for a firm and waterproof foundation for the White temple. The temple gets its name for the fact that it was entirely white washed inside and out, which would have given it a dazzling brightness in strong sunlight.



Section through the central hall of the "White Temple," digital reconstruction of the interior of the two-story version White Temple, Uruk (modern Warka), c, 3517-3358 B.C.E. © artefacts-berlin.de; scientific material: German Archaeological Institute

The White Temple: The White temple was rectangular, measuring 17.5 x 22.3 meters and, at its corners, oriented to the cardinal points. It is a typical Uruk "high temple (*Hochtempel*)" type with a tri-partite plan: a long rectangular central hall with rooms on either side (plan).
The White Temple had three entrances, none of which faced the ziggurat ramp directly. Visitors would have

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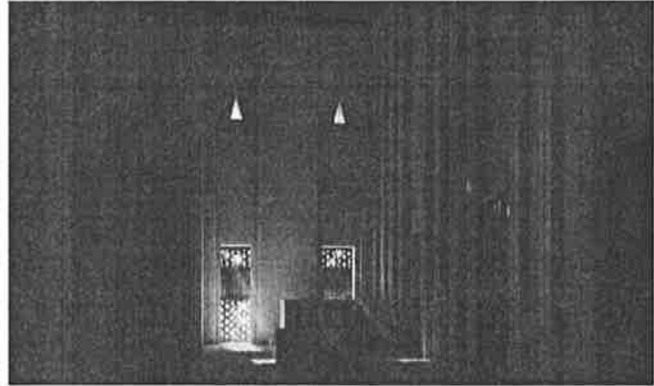
needed to walk around the temple, appreciating its bright façade and the powerful view, and likely gained access to the interior in a "bent axis" approach (where one would have to turn 90 degrees to face the altar), a typical arrangement for Ancient Near Eastern temples.



Interior view of the two-story version of the "White Temple," Digital reconstruction of the White Temple, Uruk (modern Warka), c, 3517-3358 B.C.E. © artefacts-berlin.de; scientific material: German Archaeological Institute

The northwest and east corner chambers of the building contained staircases (unfinished in the case of the one at the north end). Chambers in the middle of the northeast room suite appear to have been equipped with wooden shelves in the walls and displayed cavities for setting in pivot stones which might imply a solid door was fitted in these spaces. The north end of the central hall had a podium accessible by means of a small staircase and an altar with a fire-stained surface. Very few objects were found inside the White Temple, although what has been found is very interesting. Archaeologists uncovered some 19 tablets of gypsum on the floor of the temple—all of which had cylinder seal impressions and reflected temple accounting.
Also, archaeologists uncovered a foundation deposit of the bones of a leopard and a lion in the eastern corner of the Temple (foundation deposits, ritually buried objects and bones, are not uncommon in ancient architecture).

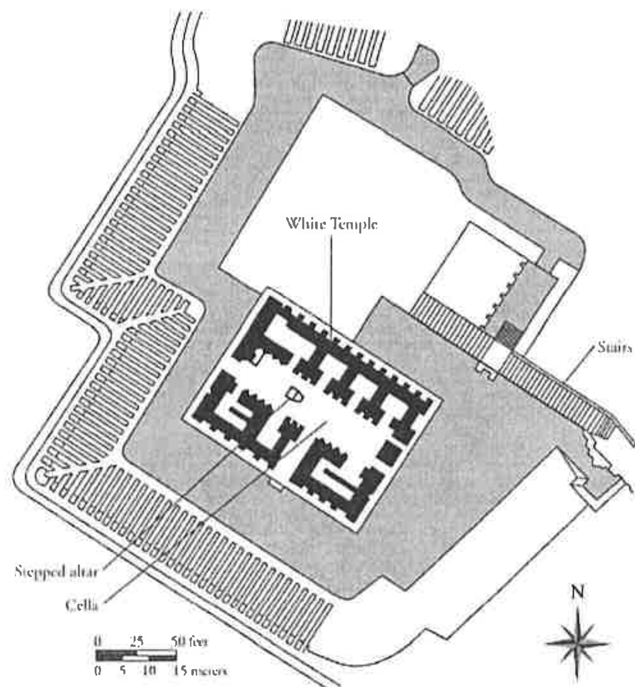
To the north of the White Temple there was a broad flat terrace, at the center of which archaeologists found a huge pit with traces of fire (2.2 x 2.7m) and a loop cut from a massive boulder. Most interestingly, a system of shallow bitumen-coated conduits were discovered. These ran from the southeast and southwest of the terrace edges and entered the temple through the southeast and southwest doors. Archaeologists conjecture that liquids would have flowed from the terrace to collect in a pit in the center hall of the temple.

Essay by Dr. Senta German

Kleiner, Fred. *Gardner's Art Through the Ages,* 13th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2011, pp. 33-34.

WHITE TEMPLE, URUK The layout of Sumerian cities reflected the central role of the gods in daily life. The main temple to each state's chief god formed the city's monumental nucleus. In fact, the temple complex was a kind of city within a city, where a staff of priests and scribes carried on official administrative and commercial business, as well as oversaw all religious functions.

The outstanding preserved example of early Sumerian temple architecture is the 5,000-year-old White Temple at Uruk, a city that in the late fourth millennium BCE had a population of about 40,000. Usually only the foundations of early Mesopotamian temples can still be recognized. The White Temple is a



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14. Statues of votive figures, from the Square Temple at Eshnunna (modern Tell Asmar, Iraq).

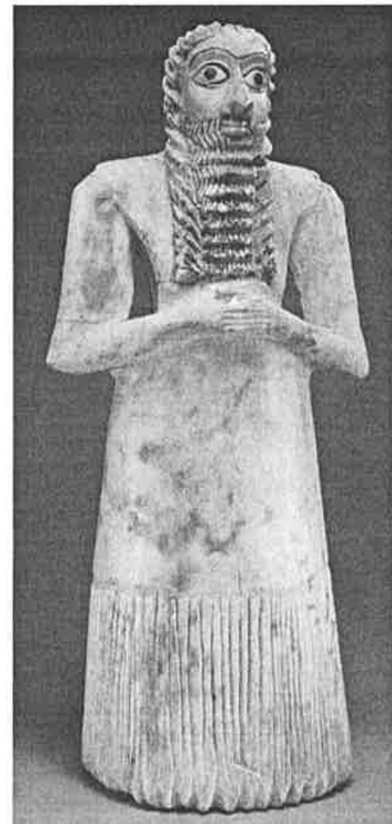
Sumerian. c. 2700 B.C.E. Gypsum inlaid with shell and black limestone.
G14, 35-36
S5, 31, 34, 37, 38
SH
Pin Image

Art of the Ancient Near East: A Resource for Educators, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2010

Standing Male Figure

Early Dynastic I–II period, ca. 2900–2600 B.C.E.
Mesopotamia, excavated at Eshnunna (modern Tell Asmar)
Gypsum, shell, black limestone, and bitumen; H. 11 5/ * in. (29.5 cm) Fletcher Fund, 1940 (40.156)

In the ancient Near East, the common person's relationship to gods and goddesses was distant and formal. Deities were believed to inhabit **cult statues** housed in temples, and contact with them could only be achieved through **votive** offerings and the elaborate rituals of an intermediary priest. During the Early Dynastic period a special type of votive sculpture like this male figure became popular for this purpose.



This figure, with clasped hands and wide-eyed staring gaze, was found ritually buried along with eleven others in a temple. All twelve are thought to originally have been set up as representations of worshippers in perpetual prayer before their deity. His large head has prominent eyes inlaid with shell and black limestone; a continuous arching brow incised across the forehead was also inlaid, perhaps with **bitumen**. Stylized tresses fall on either side of a rectangular beard and both hair and beard show traces of the bitumen that originally coated them. The figure is bare-chested and wears a skirt with a single row of long fringe at the bottom.

A composite of geometric volumes, the figure illustrates an abstract style of sculpture. Except for the figure's beard and the vertical lines of the robe, details have been eliminated and the body has been conceived as a conical shape from which angular arms project. Their triangular forms are repeated in the shape of the nose and in the patterns of the beard. This abstract sculptural style existed alongside a more realistic one during this period, likely indicating that this sculpture's form was a purposeful choice rather than lack of ability on the part of the craftsperson.

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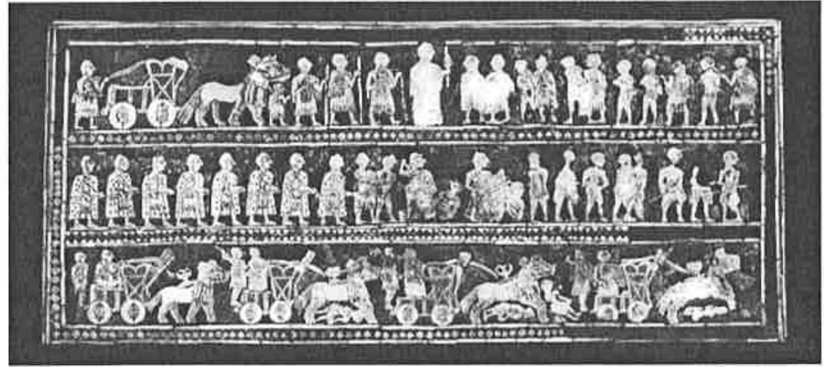

16. Standard of Ur from the Royal Tombs at Ur (modern Tell el-Muqayyar, Iraq). Sumerian. c. 2600–2400 B.C.E. Wood inlaid with shell, lapis lazuli, and red limestone, 8" x 1'7". British Museum, London, England.
G15, 36-38; G14, 30-31, 37-38
GW, 298-299
KA
Pins Image 1 Image 2 Bkgrd Video Bkgrd video 2 Audio

Gardner's Art through the Ages, 13th edition, pp 36-38

STANDARD OF UR Agriculture and trade brought considerable wealth to some of the city-states of ancient Sumer. Nowhere is this clearer than in the so-called Royal Cemetery at Ur, the city that was home to the biblical Abraham. In the third millennium BCE, the leading families of Ur buried their dead in chambers beneath the earth. Scholars still debate whether these deceased were true kings and queens or simply aristocrats and priests, but the Sumerians laid them to rest in regal fashion. Archaeologists exploring the Ur cemetery uncovered gold helmets and daggers with handles of lapis lazuli (a rich azure-blue stone imported from Afghanistan), golden beakers and bowls, jewelry of gold and lapis, musical instruments, chariots, and other luxurious items. Dozens of bodies were also found in the richest tombs. A retinue of musicians, servants, charioteers, and soldiers was sacrificed in order to accompany the "kings and queens" into the afterlife. (Comparable rituals are documented in other societies, for example, in ancient America.) Not the costliest object found in the "royal" graves, but probably the most significant from the viewpoint of the history of art, is the so-called Standard of Ur. This rectangular box of uncertain function has sloping sides inlaid with shell, lapis lazuli, and red limestone. The excavator, Leonard Woolley, thought the object was originally mounted on a pole, and he considered it a kind of military standard—hence its nickname. Art historians usually refer to the two long sides of the box as the "war side" and "peace side," but the two sides may represent the first and second parts of a single narrative. The artist divided each into three horizontal bands. The narrative reads from left to right and bottom to top. On the war side, four ass-drawn four-wheeled war chariots mow down enemies, whose bodies appear on the ground in front of and beneath the animals. The gait of the asses accelerates along the band from left to right. Above, foot soldiers gather up and lead away captured foes. In the uppermost register, soldiers present bound captives (who have been stripped naked to degrade them) to a kinglike figure, who has stepped out of his chariot. His central place in the composition and his greater stature (his head breaks through the border at the top) set him apart from all the other figures.

In the lowest band on the peace side, men carry provisions, possibly war booty, on their backs. Above, attendants bring animals, perhaps also spoils of war, and fish for the great banquet depicted in the uppermost register. There, seated dignitaries and a larger-than-life "king" (third from the left) feast, while a lyre player and singer entertain the group. Art historians have interpreted the scene both as a victory celebration and as a banquet in connection with cult ritual. The two are not necessarily incompatible. The absence of an inscription prevents connecting the scenes with a specific event or person, but the Standard of Ur undoubtedly is another early example of historical narrative.

Image caption: Using a mosaic-like technique, this Sumerian artist depicted a battlefield victory in three registers. In the top band, soldiers present bound captives to a kinglike figure who is larger than everyone else.

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Image caption: The feast on the peace side of the Standard of Ur may be a victory celebration. The narrative again reads from bottom to top, and the size of the figures varies with their importance in Sumerian society.

https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/ancient-near-east1/sumerian/a/standard-of-ur-and-other-objects-from-the-royal-graves

A STREET SCENE AT UR IN THE LEVEL OF THE ABRAHAMIC PERIOD, 2000—1900 B. C.

The city of Ur

Known today as Tell el-Muqayyar, the "Mound of Pitch," the site was occupied from around 5000 B.C.E. to 300 B.C.E. Although Ur is famous as the home of the Old Testament patriarch Abraham (Genesis 11:29-32), there is no actual proof that Tell el-Muqayyar was identical with "Ur of the Chaldees." In antiquity the city was known as Urim.

The main excavations at Ur were undertaken from 1922-34 by a joint expedition of The British Museum and the University Museum, Pennsylvania, led by Leonard Woolley. At the center of the settlement were mud brick temples dating back to the fourth millennium B.C.E. At the edge of the sacred area a cemetery grew up which included burials known today as the Royal Graves. An area of ordinary people's houses was excavated in which a number of street corners have small shrines. But the largest surviving religious buildings, dedicated to the moon god Nanna, also include one of the best preserved ziggurats, and were founded in the period 2100-1800 B.C.E. For some of this time Ur was the capital of an empire stretching across southern Mesopotamia. Rulers of the later Kassite and Neo-Babylonian empires continued to build and rebuild at Ur. Changes in both the flow of the River Euphrates (now some ten miles to the east) and trade routes led to the eventual abandonment of the site.

The royal graves of Ur

Close to temple buildings at the center of the city of Ur, sat a rubbish dump built up over centuries. Unable to use the area for building, the people of Ur started to bury their dead there. The cemetery was used between about 2600-2000 B.C.E. and hundreds of burials were made in pits. Many of these contained very rich materials.

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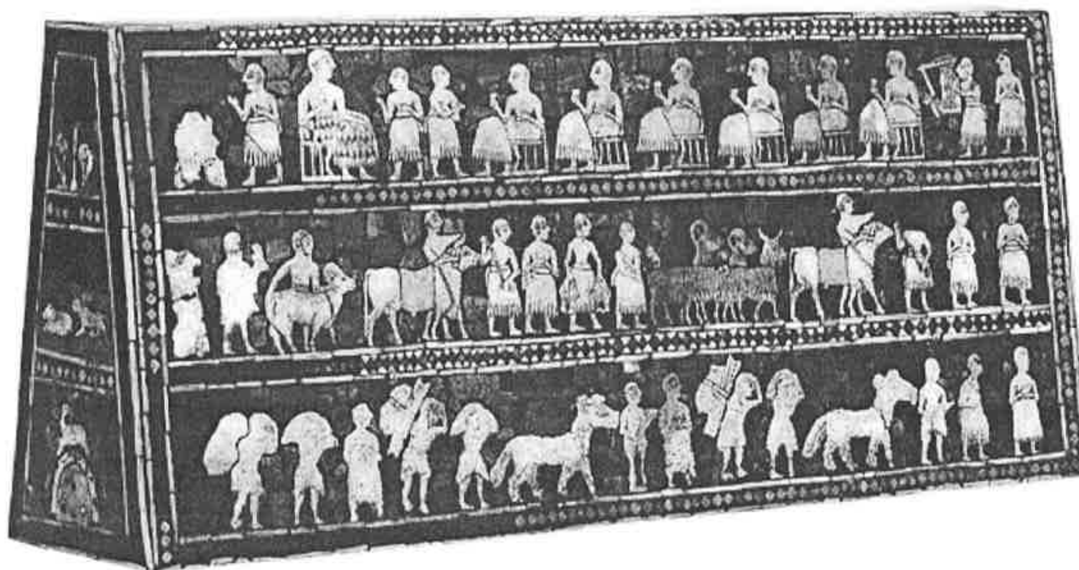
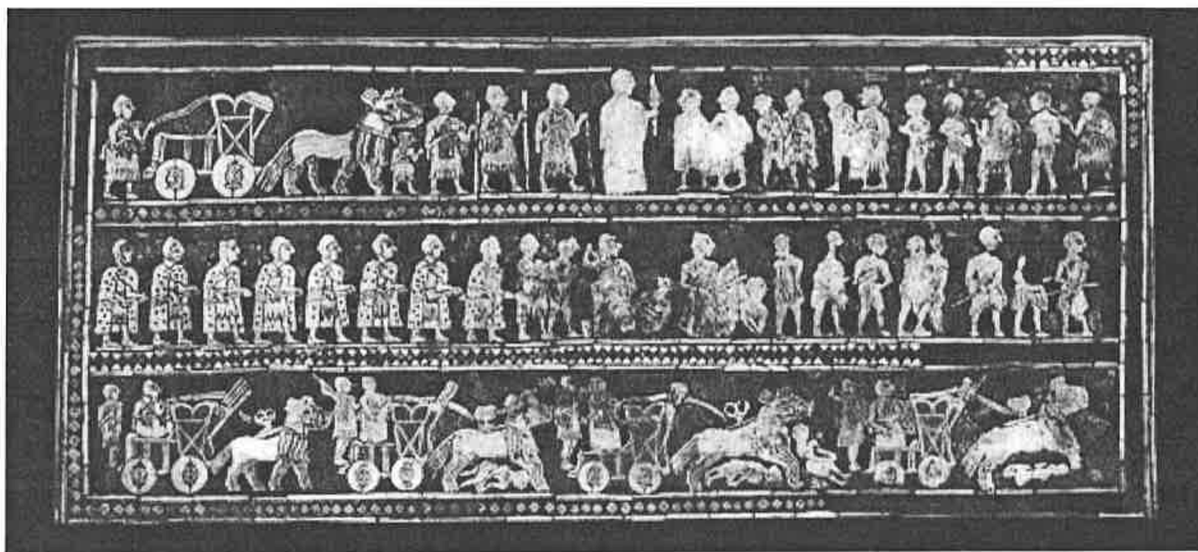
In one area of the cemetery a group of sixteen graves was dated to the mid-third millennium. These large, shaft graves were distinct from the surrounding burials and consisted of a tomb, made of stone, rubble and bricks, built at the bottom of a pit. The layout of the tombs varied, some occupied the entire floor of the pit and had multiple chambers. The most complete tomb discovered belonged to a lady identified as Pu-abi from the name carved on a cylinder seal found with the burial.

The majority of graves had been robbed in antiquity but where evidence survived the main burial was surrounded by many human bodies. One grave had up to seventy-four such sacrificial victims. It is evident that elaborate ceremonies took place as the pits were filled in that included more human burials and offerings of food and objects. The excavator, Leonard Woolley thought the graves belonged to kings and queens. Another suggestion is that they belonged to the high priestesses of Ur.



The *Standard of Ur*
This object was found in one of the largest graves in the Royal Cemetery at Ur, lying in the corner of a chamber above the right shoulder of a man. Its original function is not yet understood.

Leonard Woolley, the excavator at Ur, imagined that it was carried on a pole as a standard, hence its common name. Another theory suggests that it formed the sound box of a musical instrument.



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When found, the original wooden frame for the mosaic of shell, red limestone and lapis lazuli had decayed, and the two main panels had been crushed together by the weight of the soil. The bitumen acting as glue had disintegrated and the end panels were broken. As a result, the present restoration is only a best guess as to how it originally appeared.

The main panels are known as "War" and "Peace." "War" shows one of the earliest representations of a Sumerian army. Chariots, each pulled by four donkeys, trample enemies; infantry with cloaks carry spears; enemy soldiers are killed with axes, others are paraded naked and presented to the king who holds a spear.

The "Peace" panel depicts animals, fish and other goods brought in procession to a banquet. Seated figures, wearing woolen fleeces or fringed skirts, drink to the accompaniment of a musician playing a lyre. Banquet scenes such as this are common on cylinder seals of the period, such as on the seal of the "Queen" Pu-abi, also in the British Museum (see image above).

https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/the-standard-of-ur/7gGnYlXZRuvAAA (from the British Museum)
The Standard of Ur is a wonderful example of Mesopotamian artistic achievement that reveals a wealth of information about one of the world's great ancient civilizations. This object was discovered by the archaeologist C. Leonard Woolley during excavations at ancient Ur (modern Tell al-Muqayyar), in southern Mesopotamia (south Iraq). The most spectacular discoveries at Ur were made within a cemetery of the Early Dynastic III period (c. 2600–2300 BC), that Woolley named 'The Royal Cemetery'. Here, among hundreds of more modest burials, were sixteen graves that he distinguished as 'Royal Tombs' because of their construction, abundance of grave goods and evidence of elaborate burial rituals and human sacrifice. The Standard was discovered in the corner of one of the tomb chambers of a Royal Tomb (PG 779) that had been thoroughly robbed in antiquity.

It was named at the time of its discovery by Leonard Woolley who initially proposed that it may have been carried on a pole like a battle standard, but its original function is unknown. The two rectangular panels of engraved shell figures and mosaic tesserae of lapis lazuli, red limestone, and shell were originally attached to wood that did not survive being buried in a tomb for thousands of years. These two panels which are sometimes referred to as 'War' and 'Peace' were discovered lying back-to-back and crushed, with some of the pieces displaced. The shape of the wooden mount that these panels are fixed on today is based on Woolley's suggestion that there were also two truncated triangular shaped end panels. However, the arrangement of the inlays on the end panels is speculative.

The Standard is an excellent example of Mesopotamian narrative art; the scenes illustrate a story or a sequence of events. It is almost certain that what is shown on the two main panels of the Standard are consecutive episodes of the same story - the end of a victorious battle of a king of Ur and the banquet or ritual celebrations after the battle.

https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/ancient-near-east1/sumerian/v/standard-of-ur-c-2600-2400-b-c-e

Video Transcript

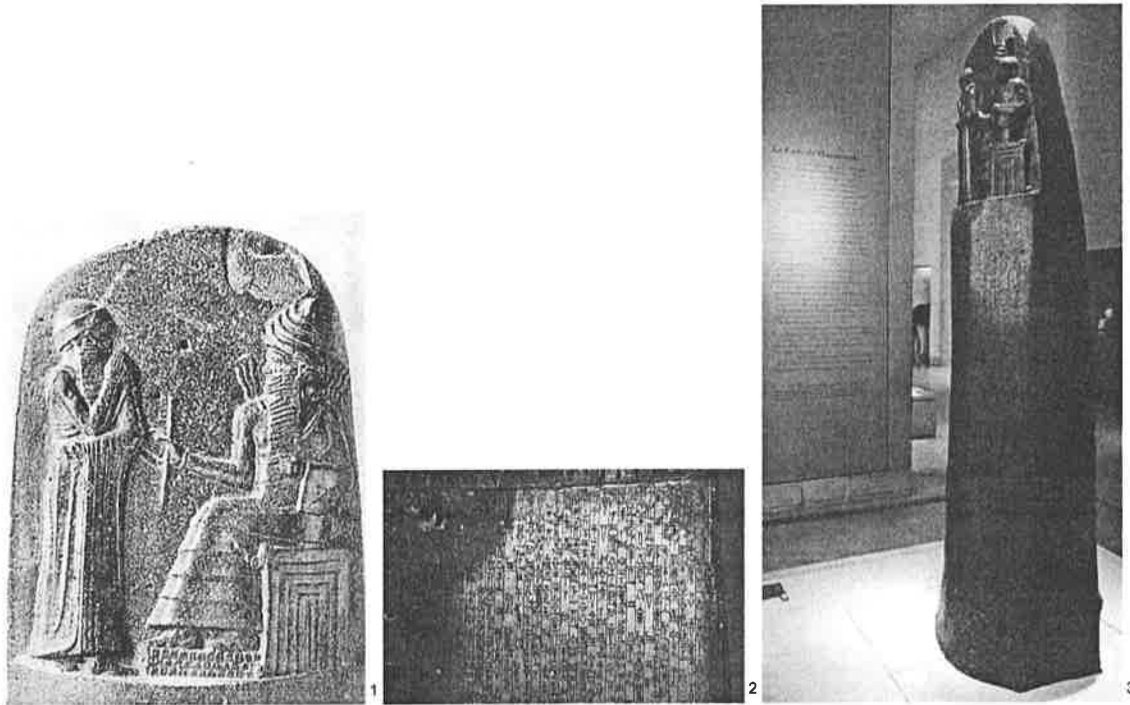
DR. STEVEN ZUCKER: On the back of the US dollar bill, there is an emblem of an eagle. In its talons you have arrows, of course, a symbol of war. But on the other side, you have an olive branch, a symbol of peace.

DR. BETH HARRIS: That's not so different than this object that we're looking at that's nearly 4,500 years old, an object known is the Standard of Ur, which comes from the city-state of Ur, which is now in present day Iraq.

DR. STEVEN ZUCKER: In Mesopotamia, really the birthplace of civilization, and Ur is one of the great early cities. The word standard is a little misleading because a standard is really a flag that's often brought into battle. And

Avram Todd Schlesinger
Horace Mann School, Bronx, NY

19. The Code of Hammurabi. Babylon (modern Iran). Susian. c. 1792–1750 B.C.E. Basalt.
G14, 43-44
S5, 34, 37, 39
GW, 528
SH
Pin Image Detail



Law code of Hammurabi VIDEO[4]

The Code itself: http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/hammurabi.htm

The Law Code of Hammurabi is the emblem of the Mesopotamian civilization. This high basalt stele erected by the king of Babylon in the 18th century BC is a work of art, history and literature, and the most complete legal compendium of Antiquity, dating back to earlier than the Biblical laws. Carried there by a prince from the neighboring country of Elam in Iran in the 12th century BC, the monument was exhibited on the Susa acropolis among other prestigious Mesopotamian masterpieces.

A legal tradition

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[1] <http://www.astralis.es/articulos/partes/partes2/10%20Hammurabi%20-2000.jpg>
[2] <https://www.college.columbia.edu/core/sites/core/files/SteleofHam_0.jpg>
[3] <https://traveltoeat.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/wpid-Photo-Jun-20-2012-356-PM.jpg>
[4] "Learn Law code of Hammurabi | Babylonian | Khan Academy." 2014. 30 Jul. 2015 <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/ancient-near-east1/babylonian/v/law-code-stele-of-king-hammurabi-792-1750-b-c-e>

This basalt stele was erected by King Hammurabi of Babylon (1792–1750 BC) probably at Sippar, city of the sun god Shamash, god of justice. Other monuments of this type belonging to a similar tradition were placed in the towns of his kingdom. Two Sumerian legal documents drawn up by Ur-Namma, king of Ur (c. 2100 BC) and Lipit-Ishtar of Isin (c.1930 BC), precede the Law Code of Hammurabi. The Hammurabi Code—the most important legal compendium of the ancient Near East, drafted earlier than the Biblical laws—found its sources in these essays. The text, which occupies most of the stele, constitutes the raison d'être of the monument. The principal scene depicted shows the king receiving his investiture from Shamash. Remarkable for its legal content, this work is also an exceptional source of information about the society, religion, economy, and history of this period.

The content of the Code

The text is written in cuneiform script and the Akkadian language. It is divided into three parts: a historical prologue relating the investiture of King Hammurabi in his role as "protector of the weak and oppressed," and the formation of his empire and achievements; a lyrical epilogue summing up his legal work and preparing its perpetuation in the future; these two literary passages frame a text describing almost three hundred laws and legal decisions governing daily life in the kingdom of Babylon. The legal part of the text uses everyday language and is here simplified, for the king wanted it to be understood by all. However, the legal decisions are all constructed in the same manner: a phrase in the conditional sets out a problem of law or social order; it is followed by a response in the future tense, in the form of the sanction for the guilty party or the settlement of a situation: "Should an individual do such and such a thing, such and such a thing will happen to him or her."
Grouped together in chapters, the issues addressed cover criminal and civil laws. The principal subjects are family law, slavery, and professional, commercial, agricultural and administrative law. Economic measures set prices and salaries. The longest chapter concerns the family, which formed the basis of Babylonian society. It deals with engagement, marriage and divorce, adultery and incest, children, adoption and inheritance, and the duties of children's nurses. Every aspect of each case is addressed, enabling the greatest number of observations to be made.

The significance of the monument

The Law Code of Hammurabi is valuable first and foremost as a model, being a treatise on the exercise of judiciary power in the context of Mesopotamian science, in which the particular never governs the general. The observation of several similar cases does not establish a general and universal principle, or law. It is not a code of laws in the sense that we understand it today, but rather a compendium of legal precedents. Contradictions and illogicalities (two similar cases causing different results) can be found in the Code, because it deals with particular judgements, from which the most personal elements (the names of the protagonists, for example) have been removed. Because justice was a royal prerogative in Mesopotamia, Hammurabi here sets out a selection of the wisest legal decisions that he had to take or ratify.

This stele was, however, more than an educational tool. It was a code of the rules and prescriptions established by a sovereign authority, and therefore a code of laws. Not only does it contain a list of judicial rulings, but also a catalogue of the towns and territories annexed to the kingdom of Babylon. The stele of the Babylonian king Hammurabi constitutes a summary of one of the most prestigious reigns of ancient Mesopotamia. Executed in the last years of the sovereign's life, it was a political testament aimed at future princes, for whom it offered a model of wisdom and equity. The Code also served as a literary model for the schools of scribes, who were to copy it for over one thousand years. [5]

[5] "Law Code of Hammurabi, king of Babylon | Louvre Museum ..." 2011. 30 Jul. 2015 <http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/law-code-hammurabi-king-babylon>

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25. Lamassu from the citadel of Sargon II, Dur Sharrukin (modern Khorsabad, Iraq). Neo-Assyrian. c. 720–705 B.C.E. Alabaster.

G14, 45-46
S5, 41-43
A3, 69-72
(*Lamassu* from Ashurbanipal II's palace in Nimrud, GW, 29-300)
SH
Pin Image Louvre discussion British Museum discussion Article

Art of the Ancient Near East: A Resource for Educators, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2010, pp, 90-91.

This figure of a winged lion, a symbol f cosmic powers in the ancient Near East, originally stood in Ashurnasirpal II's palace at Nimrud. The **cuneiform** inscription running horizontally across the figure states: "Beasts of the mountains and seas which I had fashioned out of fine white limestone and alabaster, I had set in its gates. I made the palace fittingly imposing." The text goes on to describe Ashurnasirpal's great deeds and powers.

The Assyrians erected enormous stone statues of winged beasts at the entrances and in the doorways to their palaces. Composite creatures, frequently found in ancient Near Eastern art, represented supernatural spirits, which could be either protective or harmful (see "Communicating with the Divine," pp. 39 – 42). In this case, their function was to protect the king from evil and to impress all those who entered. As transitions between two separate areas, doorways were considered special spaces in need of protection from evil spirits.

This winged lion and a winged bull flank the entrance to the large gallery in the Museum that has been set up to evoke an audience hall in Ashurnasirpal's palace.

These beasts seem to be divine creatures; their human heads are crowned with horned caps, the exclusive headgear of deities throughout the ancient Near East. Their human faces and stylized beards resemble the images of Ashurnasirpal depicted on the palace walls. The Assyrian sculptors skillfully contrasted areas of dense patterning with large, plain, and clearly outlined forms. The lion has five legs so that from the front it appears to stand firmly in place, but is striding forward when viewed from the side. This artistic convention makes the lion seem complete whether viewed from the front or the side, thereby displaying its supernatural and protective powers from both points of view.

http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/winged-human-headed-bull

Winged human-headed bull

Human-headed winged bulls were protective genies called shedu or lamassu, and were placed as guardians at certain gates or doorways of the city and the palace. Symbols combining man, bull, and bird, they offered protection against enemies.

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A protective genie to guard the city

When in around 713 BC Sargon II founded his capital, Dur Sharrukin, present-day Khorsabad, he enclosed it, together with several palaces, within a great wall of unbaked brick pierced by seven gates. Protective genies were placed on either side of these entrances to act as guardians. They also had a strictly architectural function, as they bore some of the weight of the arch above. The excavations undertaken by Paul Botta, beginning in 1843, saw the site cleared and revealed some of the works, which were sent to the Louvre. The drawings and meticulous surveys done then by Eugène Flandin, to be complemented a decade later by the work of Victor Place, indicate the original position of these winged bulls. This one formed the left jamb of Door K in the palace.

A monumental sculpture

Carved from a single block, it stands more than 4 meters high by 4 meters wide and is a meter in depth. The head is sculpted in the round, the rest of the body in high relief. High relief was much prized in the time of Sargon II, when modeling became more marked.

The head, the only human element, whose ears are those of a bull, has a man's bearded face with very precisely modeled features. The eyes are expressive, the thick eyebrows meet above a prominent nose. The kindly mouth is surmounted by a thin mustache. A curly beard covers the jaw and chin, while the hair falls down to the shoulders, framing the face. This human head wears a starred tiara, flanked by pairs of horns and topped by a row of feathers.

The body, its anatomy very precisely rendered, is that of a bull: the beast has not four but five legs, so that it looks as if standing still when seen from the front, and as if walking when seen from the side. From the shoulders spring the wings of a bird of prey, only one being visible, curving above the back; broad panels of curls cover the breast, belly, back, and rump. The tail is very long and curly at the end. An inscription on two panels between the hind legs of the bull praises the ruler by rehearsing his virtues and calls down a curse on whomever should seek to harm the edifice.

These bulls are motifs of Syrian inspiration and one of the characteristic features of the decoration of Assyrian palaces. They make their first appearance at Nimrud in the reign of Ashurnasirpal II, to disappear again after the reign of Ashurbanipal.

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https://oi.uchicago.edu/research/projects/excavations-khorsabad

Excavations At Khorsabad

In the early spring of 1920, James Henry Breasted visited the site of Khorsabad, Iraq, for the first time. There he confirmed the impression he had gained from reading French archaeologists' publications of their mid-19th century excavations of the mound - that there was still a great deal of archaeological work to be done in the capital city of King Sargon II (721-705 B.C.). Breasted came away determined that The Oriental Institute would excavate the site.

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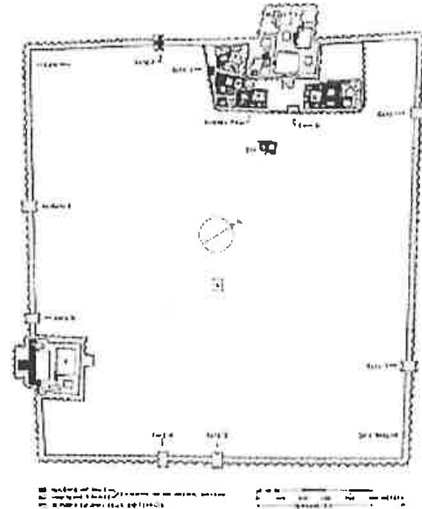
Some years later, Professor Edward Chiera, newly appointed to the University of Chicago, also visited Khorsabad. On his arrival, the villagers uncovered for him a fragment of relief showing two magnificent horses' heads, thus confirming the presence of treasures lying just beneath the surface.

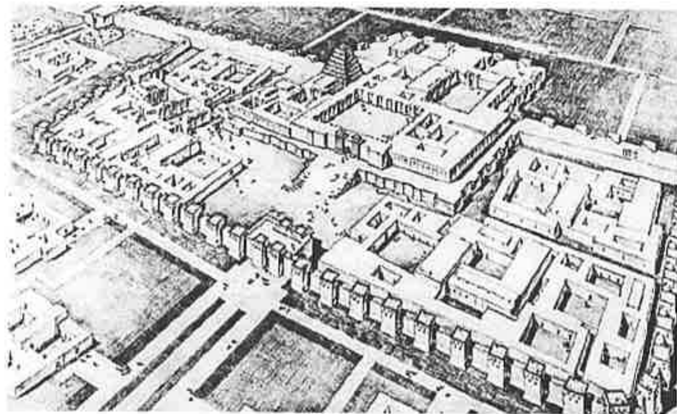
As a result of these visits, the Oriental Institute obtained a concession for the site and conducted seven seasons of excavation at Khorsabad from 1928 to 1935.



Plan of Khorsabad, showing city wall, the inner city area, and the citadel

Khorsabad takes its name from a modern Iraqi village that stands on the ruins of an ancient city called Dur-Sharrukin. Dur-Sharrukin ("Fort Sargon") was constructed as a new capital city by the Assyrian king Sargon II shortly after he came to the throne in 721 B.C. The city had not been completed when Sargon died in 705 B.C. His son and successor, Sennacherib, moved the capital to the old established city of Nineveh, about 15 miles to the south, and Dur-Sharrukin appears to have been largely abandoned.

Because much of Sargon's new capital had never been finished - or perhaps even inhabited - and because it was abandoned in a leisurely manner, there were few small finds discovered during any season. However, Oriental Institute archaeologists uncovered a wealth of information about the architecture of the city. Their work elucidated the construction methods, floor plans, and techniques of architectural decoration of those public buildings that had been the first to be built at the site - the city wall, the palace, the residences of the highest officials of the realm, and the temples of the most important gods.



The citadel, restored. Bird's-eye view from the east. In the lower left is Residence Z; in the upper left, Town Gate 7

The work of The Oriental Institute was concentrated primarily in the royal palace and the immediately adjacent area of the city, shown here in a reconstructed view and a plan.

During the first season, the expedition worked primarily within the palace, which had been richly decorated with relief-carved stone slabs. Many of these, including the fragments of a complete human-headed winged bull that once guarded an entrance to the throne room (VII), were donated to The Oriental Institute by the Department of Antiquities of Iraq and installed in The Oriental Institute Museum.

During subsequent seasons, work in the palace continued, leading to the discovery of the throne room (VII) and the identification of the temples of the major Neo-Assyrian gods (around courtyards XXVI, XXVII, XXXI). In addition, careful excavation of the area immediately south and east of Sargon's palace revealed that this part of the city was surrounded by its own wall, forming a kind of citadel with the

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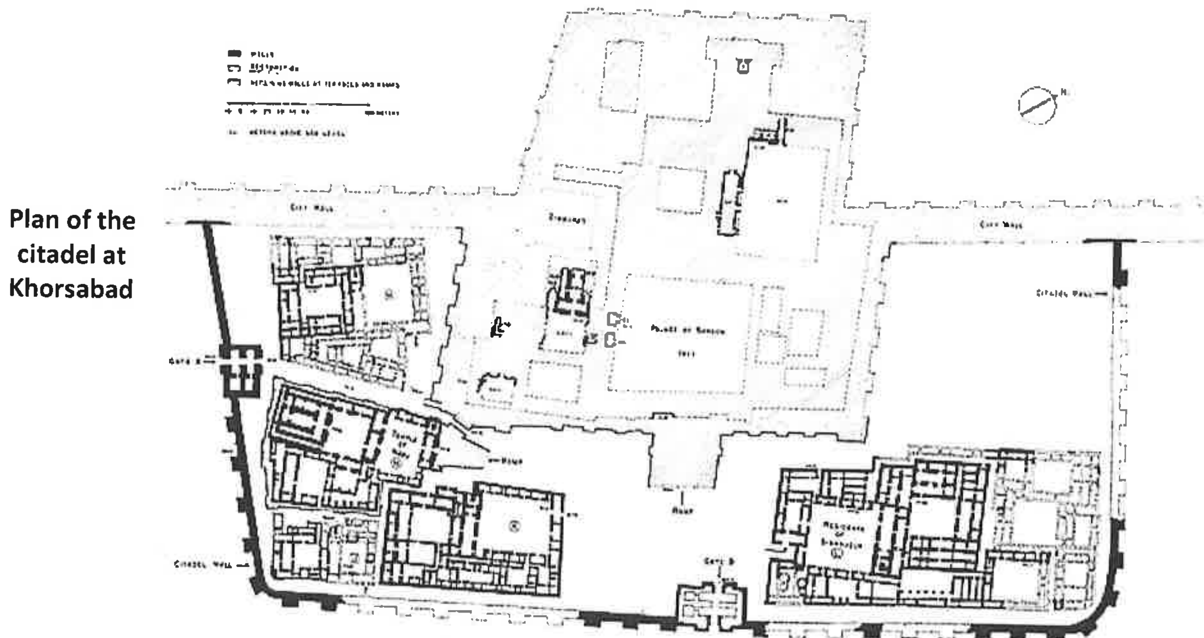
palace itself. Within this wall, standing on its own platform, was the Nabu Temple, which was surrounded in turn by what must have been the residences of Sargon's highest officials, labeled simply by the excavators "Residences K, L, J, and M." Only the owner of residence L could be identified: Sinahusur, Sargon's brother and grand vizier.

Plan of the citadel at Khorsabad



DISCOVERY OF THE ASSYRIAN BULL

Early in April of 1929, workmen excavating outside what would later prove to be the throne room of King Sargon II uncovered fragments of a colossal human-headed winged bull. The sculpture had fallen face downward onto the pavement, had then been covered with the debris of the falling building, and was thus perfectly preserved, although broken into a number of pieces. The expedition's field director, Edward Chiera, was uncertain what to do with this new discovery and immediately cabled Breasted:

> "FOUND WINGED BULL FIVE METERS BY FIVE FACE TURNING SIDE WAYS GOOD CONDITION STOP SHIPPING POSSIBLE MONTH MAY ONLY STOP COST TRANSPORTATION ABOUT TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS STOP DIVISION APRIL TWENTY SIXTH STOP SHALL WE ASK FOR BULL."

Breasted promptly cabled Chiera to ask for the piece during the division and to make all necessary arrangements to transport the bull to Chicago, even though he had no money in his budget with which to foot the bill. Pierre Delougaz was placed in charge of the transportation, which proved to be an extremely arduous task.

http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/c/colossal_winged_bull.aspx

Colossal winged bull from the Palace of Sargon II Khorsabad, northern Iraq, Neo-Assyrian, about 710-705 BC

One of the heaviest objects in the Museum This is one of a pair of colossal human-headed winged bulls, magical figures which once guarded an entrance to the citadel of the Assyrian king Sargon II (721-705 BC). Late in his reign Sargon built himself a new capital city, which he called Dur-Sharrukin ('the fortress of Sargon'), known today as Khorsabad. Among the buildings was a magnificently sculptured palace, which was discovered by the French archaeologist Paul-Emile Botta between 1842 and 1844.

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When the French abandoned the site they left behind the pair of bulls because they were too heavy to move. In 1849 Henry Rawlinson, the British Resident in Baghdad, bought them from the French consul, and resolved the problem of their weight - about sixteen tons of alabaster each - by having them sawn into several bits.

The building of entrances in ancient Assyria was accompanied by elaborate ceremonies and they were given names as good omens to ward off evil. As additional protection small figures were buried under entrances.

Between the legs of the winged bull there is a long cuneiform inscription listing Sargon's titles, ancestry and achievements. Roughly scratched on the plinth is a grid for the 'Game of Twenty Squares', a descendant of the Royal Game of Ur. This may have been scratched in by palace guards, or people waiting to enter.

J.E. Reade, *Assyrian sculpture-1* (London, The British Museum Press, 1998)
D. Collon, *Ancient Near Eastern art* (London, The British Museum Press, 1995)

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/32.143.2

Human–headed winged lion (lamassu), 883–859 B.C.; Neo–Assyrian period, reign of Ashurnasirpal II. Excavated at Nimrud (ancient Kalhu), northern Mesopotamia Alabaster (gypsum); H. 10 ft. 3 1/2 in. (313.7 cm).

From the ninth to the seventh century B.C., the kings of Assyria ruled over a vast empire centered in northern Iraq. The first great Assyrian king was Ashurnasirpal II (r. 883–859 B.C.), who undertook a vast building program at Nimrud, ancient Kalhu. Until it became the capital city under Ashurnasirpal, Nimrud had been no more than a provincial town.

The new capital occupied an area of about 900 acres, around which Ashurnasirpal constructed a mud-brick wall 120 feet thick, 42 feet high, and 5 miles long. In the southwest corner of this enclosure was the acropolis, where the temples, palaces, and administrative offices of the empire were located. In 879 B.C. Ashurnasirpal held a festival for 69,574 people to celebrate the construction of the new capital, and the event was documented by an inscription that read: "the happy people of all the lands together with the people of Kalhu—for ten days I feasted, wined, bathed, and honored them and sent them back to their home in peace and joy."

Ashurnasirpal's palace is described in the so-called Standard Inscription that ran across the surface of most of the reliefs: "I built thereon [a palace with] halls of cedar, cypress, juniper, boxwood, teak, terebinth, and tamarisk[?] as my royal dwelling and for the enduring leisure life of my lordship." The inscription continues: "Beasts of the mountains and the seas, which I had fashioned out of white limestone and alabaster, I had set up in its gates. I made it [the palace] fittingly imposing." Such limestone beasts are the human-headed, winged bull and lion pictured here. The horned cap attests to their divinity, and the belt signifies their power. The sculptor gave these guardian figures five legs so that they appear to be standing firmly when viewed from the front but striding forward when seen from the side. These lamassi protected and supported important doorways in Assyrian palaces.

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13. Palette of King Narmer.

Predynastic Egypt. c. 3000–2920 B.C.E.
Greywacke, height 25". Egyptian Museum, Cairo, Egypt.
G15, 57-58; G14, 54, 55, 57-58, 66
S5, 51-53
A3, 84-86
GW, 526-527
APAP, 48-49
KA
Pin Image Video

http://www.ancient-egypt.org/history/early-dynastic-period/1st-dynasty/horus-narmer/narmer-artefacts/narmer-palette.html

The Narmer Palette © Jacques Kinnaer

The Narmer palette is a finely decorated plate of schist of about 64 cm high. It was found in a deposit in Hierakonpolis, a Predynastic capital located in the South of Egypt, during the excavation season of 1897/98. Its size, weight and the fact that it was decorated on both sides show that it was a ceremonial, commemorative rather than an actual cosmetic palette intended for daily use. It is a key piece in the identification of Menes, the almost legendary first king to have ruled over the whole of Egypt.

The deposit where it was found also contained other artifacts stemming from the early beginnings of Ancient Egypt's recorded history: fragments of a ceremonial mace head belonging to Narmer and other mace head fragments inscribed with the name of king Scorpion, one of Narmer's alleged predecessors. The exact finding circumstances of these artifact have, however, not been noted in the survey report.

Decoration: The top of the palette is decorated in a similar manner on both sides: the name of the king is inscribed in a so-called serekh between two bovine heads. The animals' heads are drawn from the front, which is rather uncharacteristic of later Egyptian art. In most publications, these heads have been described as cows' heads, which is usually interpreted as an early reference to the cow-goddess, Bat or perhaps Hathor. It is, however, equally possible that the animals are bulls and that they refer to the bull-like vigor of the king, a symbolism that occurs in the scene at the bottom of the palette front as well.

Palette back: Most of the palette's back side is decorated with a scene showing the king about to strike down a foe, whom he grabs by the hair. This is the oldest known example of a type of scene that would continue to be used until the end of the pharaonic culture, even by kings who do not seem to have waged any wars at all. As such, the historical value of this type of scene can be doubted.

The king wears a short skirt decorated with bovine heads and an animal's tail. He also wears the White Crown which is usually associated with Upper Egypt. It is, however, not certain whether in Narmer's time, this crown already had its traditional geographical significance, or whether it was associated more with a specific part of the king's overall responsibilities.

Narmer's victim is shown kneeling in front of him, the upper part of his arms close to his body, as if to indicate that he was bound. Apart from a girdle, he is represented naked. The contrast between the naked victim and the clad king perhaps denotes that the victim was considered as barbaric.

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The signs of a harpoon and a lake behind his head have sometimes been interpreted as the name of the victim: Washi. This interpretation is, however, very doubtful, as it was unusual for official documents to actually provide the name of an enemy. Comparing the Narmer Palette to the Label of Den, which shows a similar scene, makes it more likely that the harpoon is to be read as the 'number one' and the lake as 'water', indicating that this was Narmer's first victory in a watery area such as a lake or a marshland.

The images above the victim's head may seem to support the latter interpretation: a falcon, without a doubt a symbol of the king, is perched on top of some papyrus plants that sprout from a marshland. The left side of this marshland is decorated with a man's head that is quite similar to that of the fallen foe. The hook with which the falcon appears to be pulling at the personified marshland's nose, symbolizes the breath of life that it takes out of the fallen land.

The mention of a marshland on the palette has very often been seen as a reference to the marshy lands of the Nile Delta, Lower Egypt. Indeed, in traditional times, Lower Egypt would be symbolized by a hieroglyph that represents a marshland. It is however equally likely that the marshland on the palette represents just that: a marshland, which could have been part of the Nile Delta, but it could also have been the Fayum oasis, for instance, or just an area that happened to be flooded at the time.

Behind the king an apparently bald person holds a pair of sandals in his left hand and a basket in his right. Of the two hieroglyphic signs that are written behind the man's head, the lower one can be read as 'servant'. The top sign, the asterisk or floral element, also appears on the Scorpion Macehead, right before the sign of the scorpion that identifies the king. It may thus perhaps have been a sign to write the word 'king' and if this is the case, then the bald man following Narmer on his palette, was a 'servant of the king'. The fact that the king is represented as barefooted and followed by a sandal-bearer perhaps suggests a ritual nature for the scene depicted on the palette.

Below this central scene, underneath the king's feet, lie two overthrown, naked enemies. One of their arms is raised up, the other is drawn behind their backs. Their legs are sprawling and their entire posture indicates that they are fallen enemies. To the left of each victim, a hieroglyphic sign is drawn, the left-most representing a wall and the other some sort of knot. Both signs are usually interpreted as names of places that have been captured by Narmer. Their reading is unknown so even if they do denote names of places, we do not know which places they are.

Palette front: In the top scene of the palette's front, the second figure from the left, identified by the two signs in front of him as Narmer, is represented wearing the Red Crown, that is usually associated with Lower Egypt. As is the case with the White Crow, it is not certain whether in Narmer's time, the Red Crown already had its traditional geographical significance, or whether it was associated more with a specific part of the king's

overall responsibilities.

The king holds a mace in his left hand, while his right arm is bent over his chest, holding some kind of flail. He is followed by the same bald figure that holds sandals in his left hand and some kind of basket in his right. A rectangle above this sandal-bearer's head contains a sign of uncertain meaning.

Narmer is preceded by a long-haired person who holds an emblem in his hands. The signs accompanying this figure could be read as Tshet yet their meaning is unknown. A person similarly designed and with the same hieroglyphs, can also be found on the ceremonial maceheads of both Narmer and 'Scorpion'. His role is normally interpreted as that of a 'shaman' and is not paralleled in later sources.

Four standard bearers are represented in front of the Tshet person. The left-most standard represents some kind of animal skin, the second a dog and the next two a falcon. These standards might be the emblems of the royal house of Narmer, or of the regions that already belonged to his kingdom.

The object of this procession is made clear on the right hand side of the scene: 10 decapitated corpses are shown lying on the ground, their heads thrown between their legs. Above the victims, a ship with a harpoon and a falcon in it, are drawn. These signs are often interpreted as the name of the conquered region. If this name has remained the same throughout the history of Ancient Egypt, then the region conquered by Narmer was the Mareotis region, the 7th Lower-Egyptian province.
The two signs in front of the probable name of the region, the wing of a door and a sparrow are thought to mean 'create' or 'found'. The entire group could thus be interpreted that on the occasion of the conquest of the Mareotis region, Narmer founded a new province, whose name was written by the ship, the harpoon and the falcon.

The central scene on the palette's front represents two men tying together the stretched necks of two fabulous animals. Between the animal's necks, a circular area is a bit deeper than the palette's surface. This lower circular area indicates the place where a cosmetic would be put if this were not a ceremonial palette.

The tying together of the necks of the two animals has often been interpreted as a symbol for the tying together of Upper and Lower Egypt. Nothing, however, indicates that the animals are to be seen as the symbols of Upper or Lower Egypt. This is a unique image and no later parallels are known. It is not impossible that they have just been used to create a circular area in the centre of the palette. In addition, ceremonial palettes often represent the theme of taming wild animals, one of the traditional tasks of the king.

The scene at the bottom of the palette's front face continues the imagery of conquest and victory. A bull, almost certainly a symbol of the king's vigor and strength, tramples a fallen foe and attacks the walls of a city or fortress with its horns. The name of the city or fortress attacked by the bull is written within the walls, but its reading is unknown.

Meaning: The overall military symbolism on the palette is clear. Using different types of imagery, the king is shown again and again as victorious over his enemies. He is shown striking down a kneeling

enemy, whilst stepping on the bodies of some other foes on the palette's back. On the front of the palette, he is represented overlooking the decapitated corpses of his foes or as a bull vigorously trampling an enemy and breaking down the walls of a city or a fortress.

The fact that Narmer is shown wearing the White Crown on one side and the Red Crown on the other, has often been forwarded as proof that it was he who united Upper and Lower Egypt. This was based on the assumption that both crowns have always had their traditional geographical significance, but even if this were correct, the palette doesn't prove that Narmer didn't already wear the Red Crown before.

Some Egyptologists have doubted the historicity of the events portrayed on the palette, forwarding the hypothesis that it served a ritual purpose rather than recording a historical event. Indeed, several instances of the scene where a king strikes down his foes do not seem to have been based on actual fact but were part of the royal propaganda that portrays the kings as the protector of the country. This type of scene is also very common on entrances to temples, where they were intended to ward off any evil that might want to enter the temple.

Against this, it must be pointed out that the palette does mention three names of cities or fortresses that were overthrown. The palette also refers to the founding of a region indicated by the signs ship-harpoon-falcon, a group of signs that at least in later times would be used to denote the 7th Lower Egyptian province located in the eastern Nile Delta.

In addition, a label found in 1998 during excavations in Abydos, does seem to confirm the historicity of the palette. On this label, a catfish strikes down a fallen enemy. The enemy's headgear consists of 3 papyrus plants, a reference to a marshland that is very similar to the personified marshland on the Narmer Palette. It is not unlikely that both sources actually do refer to the same event: a battle in a marshland, probably located in the eastern Nile Delta, which resulted in a victory for Narmer and the probable founding of the 7th Lower Egyptian province.

http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/narmerspalette.htm

The decorative palettes of the late fourth millennium

A few tens of palettes have been found in pre-dynastic assemblages. They are made of soft sedimentary stone which can be shaped easily. Their original purpose was probably to serve as surfaces on which substances could be ground. It is generally assumed that these were minerals used in the preparation of cosmetics.

The more interesting examples of palettes seem to have lost this primary purpose and served commemorative or decorative functions. They were often given animal forms and decorated with animal carvings.

The depictions of successful hunts or victories in battles on these palettes are sometimes interpreted as the fulfillment of the Egyptian wish for order, *maat*, but like many interpretations of ancient Egyptian behavior this too is rather speculative.

Many of these palettes have been found at Hierakonpolis, the political centre of Upper Egypt during the pre-dynastic period. The subsequent dynastic period witnessed the unification of the country, the shift of power downstream to Memphis and the complete disappearance of the decorative palettes from tomb assemblages. [See link for photos and information about several examples.]

https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/egypt-art/predynastic-old-kingdom/a/palette-of-king-narmer

Vitally important, but difficult to interpret: Some artifacts are of such vital importance to our understanding of ancient cultures that they are truly unique and utterly irreplaceable. The gold mask of Tutankhamen was allowed to leave Egypt for display overseas; the *Narmer Palette*, on the other hand, is so valuable that it has never been permitted to leave the country.

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15. Seated scribe. Saqqara, Egypt. Old Kingdom, Fourth Dynasty. c. 2620–2500 B.C.E. Painted limestone, height 21". Museé du Louvre, Paris, France.
G15, 65-66; G14, 65-66
S5, 60
KA
Pins Frontal view Right side Left side Louvre Louvre text

http://www.louvre.fr/en/oeuvre-notices/seated-scribe
The Seated Scribe. Authors: Labbé-Toutée Sophie, Ziegler Christiane. Almost everyone has seen this image of the Seated Scribe. Located on the upper floor of the Department of Egyptian Antiquities, this is the most famous of unknown figures. We know nothing about the person portrayed: neither his name, nor title, nor even the exact period during which he lived. Nevertheless, this statue never fails to impress visitors discovering it for the first time.

A specific posture: The Louvre's scribe, known as the "Seated Scribe", is indeed sitting cross-legged, his right leg crossed in front of his left. The white kilt, stretched over his knees, serves as a support. He is holding a partially rolled papyrus scroll in his left hand. His right hand must have held a brush, now missing. The most striking aspect of this sculpture is the face, particularly the elaborately inlaid eyes: they consist of a piece of red-veined white magnesite, in which a piece of slightly truncated rock crystal was placed. The front part of the crystal was carefully polished. The back side was covered with a layer of organic material, creating the color of the iris and also probably serving as an adhesive. The entire eye was then held in the socket by two large copper clips welded on the back. A line of black paint defines the eyebrows. The hands, fingers, and fingernails are sculpted with a remarkable delicacy. His chest is broad and the nipples are marked by two wooden dowels. The statue was cleaned in 1998, although the process merely reduced the wax overpainting. This restoration brought out the well-conserved ancient polychromy.

An unknown figure: The semicircular base on which the figure sits must have originally fit into a larger base that carried his name and titles, such as the base for the statue of Prince Setka, exhibited in room 22 of the Louvre. This base is missing, and the context of the discovery does not provide any additional information. According to the archeologist Auguste Mariette, who found the work, the statue of the scribe was apparently discovered in Saqqara on 19 November 1850, to the north of the Serapeum's line of sphinxes. But the precise location is not known; unfortunately, the documents concerning these excavations were published posthumously, the excavation journals had been lost, and the archives were scattered between France and Egypt. Furthermore, the site had been pillaged and ransacked, and no information concerning the figure's identity could be provided. Some historians have tried to link it to one of the owners of the statues discovered at the same time. The most convincing of these associates the scribe to Pehernefer. Certain stylistic criteria, such as the thin lips, which was unusual, the form of the torso, and the broad chest could support this theory. The statue of Pehernefer dates from the 4th Dynasty. This is an additional argument in favor of an earlier dating for this statue, which has sometimes been dated to the 6th Dynasty. Another argument supporting this date is that "writing" scribes were mostly created in the 4th and early 5th Dynasties; after this period, most scribes were portrayed in "reading" poses.

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A scribe at work: The scribe is portrayed at work, which is unusual in Egyptian statuary. Although no king was ever portrayed in this pose, it seems that it was originally used for members of the royal family, such as the king's sons or grandsons, as was the case for the sons of Didufri (4th Dynasty), who were represented in this position.

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http://musee.louvre.fr/oal/scribe/indexEN.html [Note: Go to this link for audio and lush illustration.]

A Closer Look at The Seated Scribe

A justly famous statue: Like all Egyptian statues, the Scribe needs to be admired from the front. The expressiveness of the statue is immediately striking. The figure sits upright and alert. An extraordinarily keen gaze animates the tense face. The fine-boned face forms a striking contrast to the rather plump body that of a middle-aged man, whose age is indicated by subtle details such as the lax back muscles.

The Scribe was carved from fine limestone, and embellished with bright colors that are surprisingly well preserved :

- red ocher for the flesh tints;
- black for the hair;
- white for the kilt.

The statue is 53.7 centimeters tall, a height close to the Egyptian unit of measure known as a cubit. Unlike most Old Kingdom statues, however, the volume of the figure, on its semi-circular base, does not correspond to a cube. Viewed from the front, the statue forms a triangle.

Let's take a closer look at the Seated Scribe. He is sitting cross-legged a common position in the East and is shown in the process of writing. His only item of clothing, a kilt, serves as a support for the partially unrolled papyrus scroll that he is holding in his left hand. In his right hand, he must once have held a writing instrument no doubt a reed pen but this is now lost. He is broad-shouldered. A fine line indicates his collarbones. His torso is plump, with a broad chest and raised nipples; there is a roll of fat at his belly. There is a clear groove down the middle of his back. His thick waist is accentuated by two rolls of fat at the hips.

His arms are held loosely away from his body; their musculature is barely suggested. His hands are finely carved, with great attention to detail. The fingers on the right hand are slender; the flat nails are deep set, and accentuated by a fold of skin. The more roughly carved legs are clearly distinct from the mass of the base, and the hollowing-out of the kilt gives them an apparent freedom of movement. The right foot, which is turned toward the viewer, features a rare detail: the artist chose to show only three toes, the others being hidden under the rest of the foot.

The tools of the scribe: The hieroglyph for the word "scribe" shows the tools of the trade in a single image:

- a reed pen holder;
- a water jar, to dilute the ink;
- and a palette, with two cakes of ink.

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18. King Menkaura and queen. Old Kingdom, Fourth Dynasty. c. 2490–2472 B.C.E. Greywacke.
G14, 64-65
S5, 59
GW, 556-567
Pin Image

Smart History Essay

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At twilight on January 10, 1910, a young boy beckoned George Reisner to the Menkaura Valley Temple. There, emerging from a robbers' pit into which they had been discarded were the tops of two heads, perfectly preserved and nearly life-size. This was the modern world's first glimpse of one of humankind's artistic masterworks, the statue of Menkaura and queen.

The two figures stand side-by-side, gazing into eternity. He represents the epitome of kingship and the ideal human male form. She is the ideal female. He wears the nemes on his head, a long artificial beard, and a wraparound kilt with central tab, all of which identify him as king. In his hand he clasps what may be abbreviated forms of the symbols of his office. His high cheekbones, bulbous nose, slight furrows running diagonally from his nose to the corners of his mouth, and lower lip thrust out in a slight pout, may be seen on her as well, although her face has a feminine fleshiness, which his lacks. Traces of red paint remain on his face and black paint on her wig.

His broad shoulders, taut torso, and muscular arms and legs, all modeled with subtlety and restraint, convey a latent strength. In contrast, her narrow shoulders and slim body, whose contours are apparent under her tight-fitting sheath dress, represent the Egyptian ideal of femininity. As is standard for sculptures of Egyptian men, his left foot is advanced, although all his weight remains on the right foot. Typically, Egyptian females are shown with both feet together, but here, the left foot is shown slightly forward. Although they stand together sharing a common base and back slab, and she embraces him, they remain aloof and share no emotion, either with the viewer or each other.

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Who is represented here? The base of the statue which is usually inscribed with the names and titles of the subject represented, was left unfinished and never received the final polish of most of the rest of the statue. Because it was found in Menkaura's Valley Temple and because it resembles other statues from the same findspot bearing his name, there is no doubt that the male figure is King Menkaura. Reisner suggested that the woman was Queen Kamerernebty II, the only of Menkaura's queens known by name. She, however, had only a mastaba tomb, while two unidentified queens of Menkaura had small pyramids. Others have suggested that she represents the goddess Hathor, although she exhibits no divine attributes. Because later kings are often shown with their mothers, still other scholars have suggested that the woman by Menkaura's side may be his mother. However, in private sculptures when a man and woman are shown together and their relationship is indicated, they are most often husband and wife. Because private sculpture is modeled after royal examples, this suggests that she is indeed one of Menkaura's queens, but ultimately, the name of the woman represented in this splendid sculpture may never be known.
from: Museum of FIne Arts Boston
http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/king-menkaura-mycerinus-and-queen-230

The Mystery of the Menkaure Dyad -- BFA Museum Educator's Pack

In January 1910, during the excavation of a temple belonging to the funerary complex of King Menkaure, archeologists discovered a hole under the temple floor. In this hole was a group of beautiful, well-preserved statues. While the hole in which they were found dates to the Middle Ages, the statues were far older; they were carved during the reign of King Menkaure (c.2490-2472 BC), builder of the third and smallest pyramid at Giza. All of the statues found portrayed King Menkaure, often with one or two women. While each statue is beautiful and unique in its own right, one dyad, or pair statue, has drawn the most attention. The dyad shows King Menkaure standing next to a woman, who wraps her arms around him affectionately or protectively. In a break with Egyptian artistic tradition, the woman is roughly the same size as Menkaure and stands with one foot forward, as if she is walking. In most Egyptian art, women are rarely shown to be the same size as the king, who was considered divine. Further, the onefoot-forward, or striding, pose is generally reserved for men; women in statues usually stood with their feet together. While the woman's size and pose suggest that she was unusually powerful, there is unfortunately no clear answer to the question of who she was. Despite the statue's fine carving and careful polishing on the top half, the base is rough and unfinished, lacking any inscription that might identify the woman. There are three major theories about the identity of the woman. The first suggests that she is Khamerernebty II, a queen of Menkaure's, or another of Menkaure's wives. While George Reisner originally identified the woman as Khamerernebty II, that queen's relatively small grave suggests that she did not occupy a very powerful position at Menkaure's court. The second theory identifies the woman as Menkaure's mother, Khamererneby I. Evidence for this interpretation includes the woman's body shape; instead of the idealized young body that most Egyptian images of women have, this woman has a slightly saggy belly, suggesting that she has given birth. Although she looks very young otherwise, this could indicate that the woman represents Menkaure's mother. This possibility also makes the apparent power of the woman less mysterious; as the mother of the king, Khamerernebty I would have been the most powerful woman in Egypt. King Menkaure and queen. Detail of the woman. The third suggested possibility is that the woman is a goddess. The goddess Hathor appears in several other statues of Menkaure. Hathor was a mother goddess, and was important in the Egyptian afterlife, which was seen as a rebirth. However, the woman is lacking certain aspects of conventional portrayals of Hathor, most notably the cow horns extending from the goddess's head in nearly every image. Without inscriptions, it is impossible to determine exactly who this woman was. Was she a wife of Menkaure, presenting him to the world as her husband? Was she the king's mother, ushering him into his role as the most powerful man in Egypt? Was she the goddess Hathor, guiding the king to his afterlife? It has even been suggested that the woman is a combination of Khamerernebty I, Menkaure's mother, and Hathor, giving Menkaure a very literal rebirth into the afterlife. If you can visit the Museum, find some statues of Hathor. Can you see any resemblance between Hathor and the woman in the picture? Or does the woman seem to be mortal? If you think she is a mortal, does she seem more like the king's wife or mother?

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http://educators.mfa.org/sites/educators.mfa.dev/files/related_file_362.pdf

Compare to:

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<td>Jan van Eyck, Arnolfini Portait, 1434 oil on oak

This work is a portrait of Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife, but is not intended as a record of their wedding. His wife is not pregnant, as is often thought, but holding up her full-skirted dress in the contemporary fashion. Arnolfini was a member of a merchant family from Lucca living in Bruges. The couple are shown in a well-appointed interior.

The ornate Latin signature translates as 'Jan van Eyck was here 1434'. The similarity to modern graffiti is not accidental. Van Eyck often inscribed his pictures in a witty way. The mirror reflects two figures in the doorway. One may be the painter himself. Arnolfini raises his right hand as he faces them, perhaps as a greeting.

Van Eyck was intensely interested in the effects of light: oil paint allowed him to depict it with great subtlety in this picture, notably on the gleaming brass chandelier.

http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-the-arnolfini-portrait/*/key-facts

Panofsky on Arnolfini Wedding.
http://monoskop.org/images/1/1d/Jan_van_Eycs_Arnol</td>
<td>Seated Couple, 16th–19th century Mali; Dogon peoples Wood, metal; H. 28 3/4 in. (73 cm)

This sculpture gives eloquent expression to the shared and symmetrical responsibilities of men and women in Dogon society. The virtually identical forms of the male and female protagonists in this visual commentary accentuate the parity of their subtly distinctive roles. The two figures share lucid, graphic, and repeated elongated vertical elements with only infrequent differences. For example, on the male figure, a beard extends the chin while the female figure wears a labret, an ornament in the lip. Additionally, where he has a smooth torso, she has elongated breasts that droop from the suckling of multiple children. On the reverse side, the female figure carries a baby on her back, the male a quiver. She is responsible for child care, he for providing sustenance. He has one hand on his genitals and the other protectively draped across her shoulders and resting on her breast. This emphasizes their mutual roles in procreation and nurturing. Male and female are connected to one another by his gesture, but additionally are articulated as discrete units. This approach reflects Dogon attitudes toward marriage as a</td>
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fini_Portrait.pdf	partnership of independent equals. This balanced duality is also a central tenet of Dogon mythology. The small, crudely depicted figures at the base of the stool may represent the supportive role the ancestors play in the lives of the living. Their rough angularity contrasts with the elegance and stature of the elongated figures above. The particularly high level of finish of the work as a whole, its smooth surfaces, intricate detailing in the face and hair, and lack of sacrificial material indicate that this sculpture was not intended for an ancestral shrine, but rather was displayed at funerals. This interpretation is supported by the presence of iron ornamentation in the hair, ears, and on the wrists of the figures, since iron adornment is historically worn or placed next to the dead during Dogon funerals. This work's scale and complexity have led scholars to suggest that it may have been created for display at the funerals of influential Dogon men. The graphic composition constitutes an eloquent statement concerning the distinct and yet complementary roles of male and female partners as a unit of life. With understated elegance and an economy of details, the artistic distills man and woman to a perfectly integrated and harmonious union. One of the most striking aspects of the representation is the degree of bilateral symmetry that describes man and woman as reflections of each other with delicate and subtle departures that indicate their distinct identities. The figures' elongated bodies are depicted as a series of parallel vertical lines traversed by horizontals that draw them together. On the reverse side a small child clinging to the female's back is balanced by a quiver on the back of the male. That concluding pair of features distinguishes their respective role as nurturer and provider joined together to procreate and sustain life. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/1977.394.15

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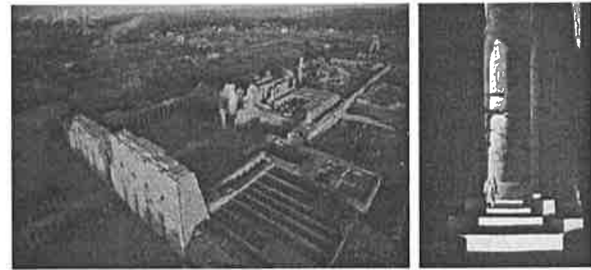
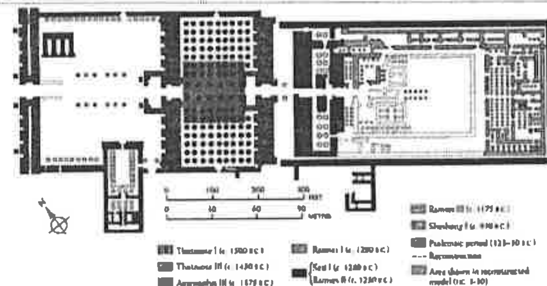


20. Temple of Amun-Re and Hypostyle Hall.

Karnak, near Luxor, Egypt. New Kingdom, 18th and 19th Dynasties. Temple: c. 1550 B.C.E.; hall: c. 1250 B.C.E. Cut sandstone and mud brick.

G14,72-73
S5, 66-67, 71, 76
A3, 100-102
GW, 130, 278
Pins Image 1 from list Image 2 from list Hypostyle Hall Reconstruction drawing Reconstruction drawing 2 Plan Video Clerestory animation Article Article

http://dlib.etc.ucla.edu/projects/Karnak/assets/media/resources/IntroductionToTheTempleOfKarnak/guide.pdf



Introduction to the Temple of Karnak

The general layout and pylons

A number of important ancient cities and temples are known from ancient Egypt. One of the most famous cities is Thebes, a major religious center and the burial place of the kings of the New Kingdom. The city's tombs, including the Valley of the Kings and Queens, are located on the west bank of the river Nile, in the area's limestone cliffs. The mortuary temples of many of the New Kingdom kings edge the flood plain of the Nile.

The houses and workshops of the ancient Thebans were located on the river's east bank. Little remains of the ancient city, as it is covered by the modern city of Luxor. A series of important temples, composing the religious heart of Thebes, are most of what remains today. To the south, close to the banks of the Nile, lies the temple of Luxor. To the north and connected by the sphinx alleyway, stand the temples of Karnak. Karnak can be divided into four sections: south Karnak, with its temple of the goddess Mut, east Karnak, the location of a temple to the Aten, north Karnak, the site of the temple of the god Montu, and central Karnak, with its temple to the god Amun.

The Temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak

The temple of Amun at Karnak is made up of a series of separate structures and features that combine to form one huge building complex.

Arriving at the temple, the worshiper passed the ceremonial tribune and proceeded down a sphinx-lined alleyway. Extending out from the west side of the temple towards the Nile, this would have been the main temple entrance from the 22nd Dynasty onwards.

Before entering the temple, one passed through a monumental stone pylon. This structure, called the first pylon, was actually the last one built at the temple. The temple was divided into sections by a series of nine more pylons, ten in total, creating an east/west axis, as well as a north/south axis. The pylons today are counted from the west to the east (pylons 1-6) and then from the north to the south (pylons 7-10). This numbering system does not represent the order of construction, as the earliest temple buildings are located behind the sixth pylon, and the temple expanded outward through time from this core area.

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Once past the first pylon, the visitor stood in one of the temple courtyards. This open-air court, which includes a colonnade and encloses a number of smaller structures, is called the "first court."

The first court led through the second pylon and into the hypostyle hall. The hall has a central raised nave and is supported by a veritable forest of sandstone columns. Its rear wall originally stood independently as the third pylon.

Moving into the heart of the temple, one passed a series of tall stone obelisks. Each of these four-sided columns was carved from a single piece of granite and placed at various important areas within and outside the temple.

The heart of Karnak lies in its sanctuary. It is here, in the central-most part of the building, where the statue of the god Amun-Ra would have been housed and where the temple's "daily ritual" took place. The god's image was stored within a stone naos or shrine. The surrounding sanctuary would have also held rooms for the storage of important and valuable cult equipment.

Karnak's sacred lake graces the southern side of the temple. This pool supplied water for cult purposes and served as the location for special rituals with the god's bark.

To the south, the Karnak pylons create another main route to the temple. This is its southern axis. This axis was important for the temple's participation in festivals and processions. This route led to the temple of the goddess Mut in south Karnak, and it also connects Karnak with the temple of Luxor.

Surrounding the temple and its many secondary buildings and shrines is an enclosure wall. Made of layer upon layer of mud brick, the wall defined and protected the sacred space from the profane.

Huge stone gateways puncture the enclosure at a number of places along the wall. These gates provided access to the different axis routes and temples within the Karnak precinct. Gates would have been equipped with wooden doors, controlling the access to different parts of the precinct and the temple proper. Many areas of the temple would have been open only to temple priests.

The Function of the Temple and the Gods Amun, Mut, and Khonsu

Temple Function

In the Egyptian language, the Temple of Amun is usually referred to as PerAmun, or "the house of Amun." In many ways, the temple indeed played the role of the god's abode on earth. Here, the god's statue was provided daily with food, drink, and sweet smelling incense and oils. On special occasions, including many annual festivals, a god's statue would leave his or her "house" and travel to visit cult temples in other locations. At Karnak, this included a number of festivals linking the temples of Amun, Mut, and Khonsu with Luxor on the east bank and Medinat Habu, Deir el-Bahiri, and other temples dedicated to the cults of the pharaohs on the west side of the river.

But the god's house was much more than a mere dwelling; it also included an estate – both around the temple and in other parts of the country – that supplied it with resources. While much of the land around the Karnak temples has not yet been excavated, storehouses, aviaries, production centers for food and drink, animal slaughter areas, and homes for priests have been uncovered, showing that the temples managed a system of production and consumption for its own goods and services. Documents from a variety of periods show that the Amun temple was also involved in a larger, regional network of land ownership and taxation that brought in a substantial amount of wealth to the temple.

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The gods Amun, Mut, and Khonsu

Egyptian deities, who were imagined as adult male, adult female, and child gods, were often associated into small "families" of three. The god Amun, the god to whom much of central Karnak was dedicated, was linked in the Egyptian pantheon with the goddess Mut and their son, the god Khonsu. Mut, whose name in the Hieroglyphic alphabet was spelled with a sign for the vulture, was often depicted wearing a distinctive headdress with the vulture's wings covering her hair. She was also commonly shown with the "double-crown" of Egypt – a crown linking the symbols of Upper and Lower Egypt into one headgear. Khonsu, associated with the moon, usually wore a crown with a crescent and moon disk. He could be depicted both as a child, wearing the side ponytail that marked childhood in Egyptian society, or he could alternatively appear with the head of a falcon. Amun, the "hidden one," most often wore a fl at-topped headdress with two tall plumes. However, he was also combined, or syncretized, with other Egyptian gods, such as Ra-Horakhty (as Amun-Ra) or Min (as Amun-Min), and in these cases, Amun can be shown with many of the visual markers of those gods.

The role of the king at the temple

The king was the most important person in all of Egypt. Not only did he command the country as its administrative and military leader, but he also acted as the official head of state religion. The king maintained this special position with the gods and their temples for good reason – he was considered the link between the world of man and the divine. He governed Egypt in early history as the son of the god, but from the First Intermediate Period onwards increasingly as the chosen representative of the gods on earth.54 Visually, this was expressed through statuary and relief by depicting the king in poses of close contact with the gods – where the king is shown being embraced or touched, making offerings, and receiving symbols of divine support. The king was envisioned in religious texts as becoming divine after his death, joining the other Egyptian gods in their cycles of rejuvenation and daily rebirth.55 Because of his special connection with the gods and his latent divinity, the pharaoh served as the hypothetical "high priest" in every cult of the land. He portrayed himself in this role on the walls of the temples that he commissioned or decorated. In theory, the king would have served the god during the many rituals performed for his or her statue in the cult temple each day. In actuality, priests of each temple filled in for the king, performing his role all over the country.

http://web0.memphis.edu/hypostyle/meaningandfunction1.htm

Meaning and Function of the Great Hypostyle Hall

Mansions of the Gods: Egyptian Temple Design

Egyptians called their temples "mansions of the gods" and considered them the deities' houses. Like other Egyptian homes, most temples shared a three-part design consisting of:

- An outer courtyard
- A central public room
- Private inner chambers

Visitors entered the house through a doorway in its walled outer courtyard that might have a portico porch at one end resting on columns. Opposite the main entrance was a second doorway leading to a roofed public room where homeowners received visitors and carried out important family activities such as worship of the household's deities. Even in modest houses, this public room had a high roof supported by at least one pillar and small windows set high in the walls to admit sunlight. Behind this public room lay the family's private quarters.

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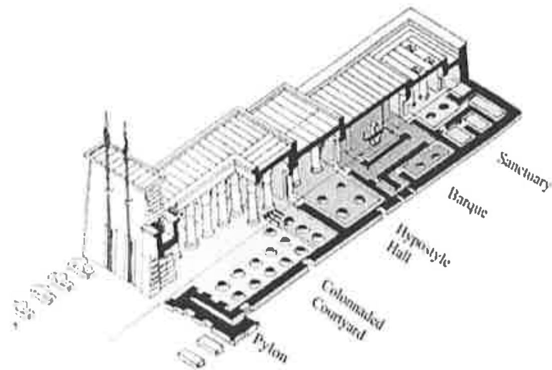
Hypostyle Halls

Most Ancient Egyptian temples possessed a hypostyle hall. Hypostyle is an Ancient Greek term denoting a building having rows of columns supporting its roof. As befitting a "divine mansion," Egyptian temples were imposing structures often built of stone on a large scale. Some even had two or more hypostyles. Rather than one or two modest wooden pillars, temple hypostyles usually boasted at least four stone columns. Usually, temple columns mimicked the appearance of papyrus reed stalks, their capitals resembling either closed floral buds or massive bell-shaped papyrus flowers in full bloom. Larger hypostyles might be populated with a dozen or more columns.
Columns along the central axis were built taller than the rest to support a higher roof in the central nave. The difference between the height of the nave and the side aisles resulted in a design similar to ancient Roman basilicas and medieval Gothic cathedrals and, like these structures, allowed their builders to insert windows in an attic space called a clerestory.

A Model of the Universe

Ancient Egyptian temples were not just homes for the gods, they were also replicas of the universe at the moment of creation. In Egyptian mythology, the universe emerged from a vast cosmic ocean of nothingness. For countless eons, the creator-sun god Atum had drifted asleep in this primordial sea which the Egyptians called Nun. Eventually, the creator god awoke and willed a small island to emerge from out of the cosmic sea. From atop this hill, which the Egyptians called the mound of the "First Event," Atum proceeded to call all things into existence starting with the male god Shu (the air) and the goddess Tefnut (moisture). Next came a third generation of deities in the form of the male earth god Geb and the sky goddess Nut. After further generations, every feature of nature was born, each with a god or goddess to govern it.



Egyptian temples were replicas of this early universe with inner sanctuaries representing the primeval hill. As visitors moved from the outer courts, through the hypostyle hall and into the holy of holies, the floor level gradually rose while the ceilings became lower. It also became darker as the open roofed courts and the hypostyle halls with their clerestory windows gave way to dark inner chambers with just one small light shaft in the inner chapel to illuminate the god's cult statue. This confined and shadowy atmosphere transported the visitors privileged enough to see the god in his home back to the very beginning of time—but just a few priests and Pharaoh himself could enter this holy of holies. Within this sacred model of space and time, a hypostyle hall mimicked a thicket of papyrus reeds that grew in the swampy edges of the primeval mound.

The Name of the Hypostyle Hall

Ancient Egyptian pharaohs always bestowed grand sounding names on their monuments, and Sety I was no exception. Compounding it with his own royal name, the pharaoh dedicated it as "The Divine Mansion (called): Sety-Beloved-of-Amun-is-Effective-in-the-Estate-of-Amun." In fact, this was just one of a parallel set of Sety's temple foundations sharing comparable titles. Just across the Nile River from Karnak lie the ruins of Sety I's memorial temple at Gurnah. During the New Kingdom, each pharaoh dedicated his royal memorial temple on the west bank of Thebes to his personal godhood and funerary cult, and simultaneously, to his close association with

The name of the Hypostyle Hall in hieroglyphs: "Effective is Sety-beloved-of-Amun in the estate of Amun."

Amun-Re. Gurnah Temple bears almost the identical name as the Great Hypostyle Hall of Karnak, but with the added qualification "On-the-West-of-Thebes." Like other royal memorial temples, Sety I's Gurnah shrine operated as a satellite of Amun's main Karnak residence.

At Karnak, Sety emblazoned the Hall's official sobriquet at several points throughout the building. It turns up on the north gateway and in long dedicatory inscriptions on the architrave beams atop columns in the central nave, and in religious scenes on the walls and columns, various gods are said to dwell within the so-named building.

Amun-Re and the Theban Triad

Amun was the chief god of ancient Thebes, and Karnak Temple was the most important of several temples in the city dedicated to his worship. During the New Kingdom period (ca. 1550-1100 BCE), Amun was the most important deity in the Egyptian pantheon. His name means "The Hidden One" and prior to the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2055-1650 BCE), he was relatively obscure. To mark his new prominence, his identity merged with that of the ancient and prestigious sun god Re of Heliopolis in the north. The composite god Amun-Re then became "King of the Gods," "Lord of Heaven" and "Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands" to give only three of his many impressive titles.

Amun-Re appeared in two humanlike forms. In one he wears the typical costume of male deity with a knee-length kilt and a corselet supported by shoulder straps. From the top of his helmet-like crown emerge a pair of tall feathers, while a long red ribbon dangles behind it. As with most gods, he grips a staff in one hand and an ankh symbolizing his life-giving powers in the other. Amun's skin could be red, although by the end of the Eighteenth Dynasty (about 1300 BCE), it was usually blue and sometimes black; to the Egyptians, both colors symbolized the abundant fertility of the Nile Valley's rich soil.

In his alternate form, Amun closely resembles the fertility god Min. Like Min, he appears wrapped in a tight fitting white garment and resembles a mummy. Both gods personify masculine sexual potency. Reflecting his procreative aura, this fertile avatar is often entitled Amun-Kamutef, meaning "Amun-the-Bull-of-His-Mother." In other words, he is the self-created god who metaphorically impregnated his own mother!

Projecting from his wrappings, his erect penis is Amun's most unique attribute in this incarnation, underlining his fertility. Resembling a mummy, his legs and feet are bound so closely together that he seems to have just one. Amun-Kamutef holds one arm aloft, which in two-dimensional wall scenes appears to be raised behind his head; in reality, he extends it to his right side as three-dimensional sculptures make clear. His hand points straight up, balancing a flail-scepter on his fingertips. His headdress is identical to that of his alter ego, with tall plumes as its defining feature. Sometimes he lacks the helmet crown and has a skullcap. A headband then secures the quills of his tall plumes to his head, fashioned from the same long ribbon that dangles behind him. ...

Festivals and the Royal Cult

Sety I receiving jubilees from Re-Horakhty and Weret-Hekau.

Like the public room in any house, the Great Hypostyle Hall provided a venue for an assortment of activities. Dedication texts on the architraves provide us with terms the Ancient Egyptians used to describe the Hall and its function. Although the main sanctuary buildings pertaining to the cult of Amun-Re—mostly dating to the

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Eighteenth Dynasty—lay further to the east, the Ramesside kings considered the Great Hall to be a "divine mansion," or temple, in its own right. What, then, was its purpose? The Great Hypostyle belonged to a class of temples the Egyptians called "Mansions of Millions of Years." In such buildings they celebrated not just the cult of gods like Amun-Re, but that of the pharaoh deified.

Ramesses II censing before the divine bark of Amun-Re.

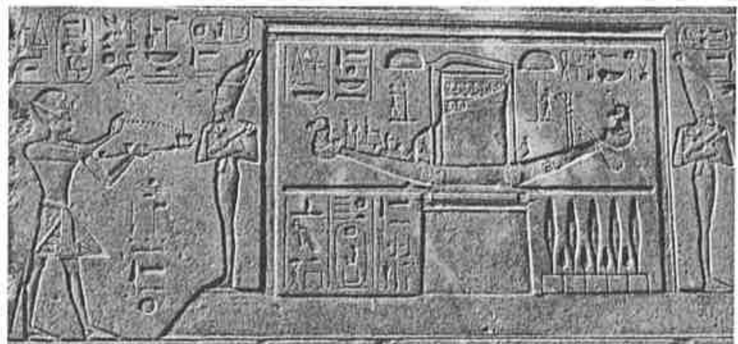
In practice, Egyptian devotion to Amun and Pharaoh were not separate, but intimately linked through complex theology and ritual practice. Annual religious celebrations best exemplify this sacred connection, chief among them "The Beautiful Festival of Opet" and "The Beautiful Festival of the Valley." During both of these grand yearly feasts, Amun, Mut, and Khonsu left Karnak to "visit" nearby shrines.

Sacred Barks and Divine Rest Stations

The procession of Amun-Re's divine bark. Relief from the Red Chapel of Hatshepsut.

Central to these festivals were magnificent processions in which priests transported the golden, bejeweled cult statues of the gods within a type of portable shrine. Taking the form of miniature boats called sacred barks, these model vessels were covered in gold foil and encrusted with precious gemstone inlays of lapis lazuli, turquoise, and carnelian. Each deity had his or her own sacred bark which priests transported over land on platforms with several long carrying poles. Two impressive figureheads at the prow and stern of each bark identified its owner. Amun's bark had ram's head figureheads since that animal was sacred to him, Mut had a woman's head fore and aft, each wearing the Double Crown, and Khonsu had falcon's heads with lunar crescents and disks.

Festival processions departed from the inner sanctum of Karnak and advanced along sacred avenues towards Luxor Temple or to waiting river barges that conveyed them further upriver to Luxor or across the Nile to the royal memorial temples on the West Bank of Thebes. Occasionally, the gods—not to mention the priests supporting them—needed to rest from the heat and dust of their tiring journeys. Many pharaohs, therefore, kindly provided them with convenient resting shrines along the way. Never missing a chance for self-promotion, the king would name the wayside shelters after himself and would remind the gods of his piety in temple inscriptions and representations describing them. For example, scenes on the "Red Chapel" of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut(ruled ca. 1473-1358 BCE) at Karnak depict several wayside shrines that she erected between the temple complexes of Karnak and Luxor.



Depiction of a wayside shrine built by Hatshepsut. Relief from her Red Chapel.

Egyptian gods and priests were apparently never in a hurry to reach their destinations, nor did they pass up any opportunity for taking advantage of these resting areas. Scarcely had Amun-Re left his sanctum when he came to rest from his exertions on his very own front doorstep.

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The great First Court of Karnak possesses at least three resting shrines built by the pharaohs Sety II (late 19th Dynasty 19), Ramesses III (early 20th Dynasty), and Taharqa (25th Dynasty) for the use of sacred barks and their priestly cortège. The first of these resting shrines both in date and location was built by Sety I, who intended that his Great Hypostyle Hall should grant Amun-Re a rest stop before he had even left his own "living room." Architrave dedication texts in its nave describe the Hall as "a resting place" and a "place of appearance for the Lord of the Gods (i.e. Amun), with Mut and Khonsu following him, to rest in his monument." Sety claims he built it as "a beautiful resting-place for the Divine Conclave in which Amun may repose and as a place of appearance for the Lord of the Gods during his yearly festival." Inscriptions such as these emphasize the key role the Great Hypostyle Hall played in the grand sacred promenades at the heart of major celebrations like the Opet and Valley Festivals.

The Royal Bark

Accompanying the sacred barks of the Theban Triad on these festival outings was a fourth shoulder-borne model vessel consecrated to the reigning king. Pharaoh himself possessed an indwelling divine spirit closely linked to Amun-Re who, it was believed, had actually fathered him. Although every pharaoh was considered Amun-Re's progeny, this mythology was articulated most explicitly in the "Divine Birth" inscriptions of King Amenhotep III(ruled ca. 1390-1352 BCE) at Luxor Temple and those of Queen Hatshepsut in her memorial temple at Deir el-Bahari in Western Thebes. As with the gods themselves, perambulation of the king's cult statue in his sacred bark was integral to the Opet Festival and Valley Festival, both of which celebrated the mystical connection between Amun-Re and the king. At Luxor Temple during Opet, their spirits temporarily melded as one, recharging both of their mystical energies for another year.

Sety I and Ramesses II commanded elaborate scenes to be added to the Hypostyle Hall's walls depicting the journey of the divine and royal sacred barks during these festivals. Accompanying them are hieroglyphic captions describing their royal piety in carrying Amun's bark on their own shoulders during processions and in constructing the Hypostyle Hall as monumental infrastructure for these festivities.

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21. Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut. Near Luxor, Egypt. New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty. c. 1473–1458 B.C.E. Sandstone, partially carved into a rock cliff, and red granite.

G14, 69-70
S5, 68-69
A3, 103-104

Pins Temple Reconstruction drawing Plan Statue Article Article Article on statue

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/egypt/dispatches/990310.html

The Queen Who Would Be King

by Peter Tyson, March 10, 1999

The view from the summit of the mountain known as Meret Seger, or "Lover of Silence," which I climbed yesterday, is magnificent in almost every direction. To the north and west spread the high, desiccated hills of the Valley of the Kings, the tombs of numerous New Kingdom pharaohs punched into them. Far below to the east, a god's lawn of fields stretches to the Nile, a procession of funerary temples marching south along their bursting-green edges.

The most intriguing part of the view, however, lies due east. Directly below you—so direct that a misstep could send you hurtling several hundred feet down onto its upper terrace—stands the mortuary temple of the pharaoh Hatshepsut, one of the great obelisk-raisers. From our perch on the barren, flint-strewn summit, the temple's long entrance ramps appear to point toward the rising sun, and if you followed the line they suggested across those green fields and over the Nile, your eye on a clear day would fall on Karnak Temple, the St. Peter's of the New Kingdom.

This is exactly what Hatshepsut intended. It was all part of a master plan of monument raising designed in large measure to impress the priests and populace of Thebes.

Why would a pharaoh have to impress his people? For one thing, Hatshepsut had wrested the throne from its designated owner, Tuthmosis III, a boy when he inherited the post upon the death of his father, Tuthmosis II. For another, despite being the self-proclaimed King, Hatshepsut happened to be a woman. She was the daughter of the first Tuthmosis, husband of the second, and aunt and stepmother of the third, so she wasn't a nobody. But she knew it was dicey pushing aside her young nephew at the beginning of the 15th century B.C.

To placate the powers that be, she went on a building spree, throwing up temples throughout Egypt and Nubia to honor various and sundry local deities. At Thebes, she ordered up the palatial mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari.

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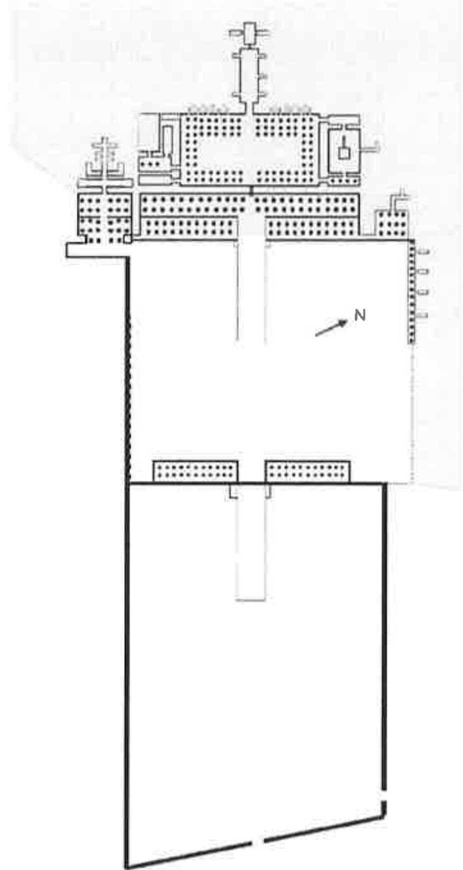

Carved into the eroded cliffs below the Lover of Silence, the triple-colonnaded temple is at once one of the masterpieces of ancient Egyptian architecture and utterly unlike any other building in the canon. For our team's purposes, Hatshepsut's most important contributions to Thebes took place at Karnak, where she put up, among many other monuments, no fewer than four obelisks.

"The King himself [sic] erected two large obelisks for her father Amun-Re before the august columned hall, wrought very much with electrum," Hatshepsut declares on a block from her red quartzite shrine at Karnak. (Electrum is a natural alloy of gold and silver.) "Their heights pierce the sky and make illumination for the Two Lands like the sun-disk...."

To a significant degree, historians owe what little they know of obelisk raising from archaic sources to Hatshepsut. (When I asked how to pronounce her name, our avuncular driver Hagag smiled and said, "Just say 'hot chicken soup.' and you'll be close.") In an inscription at the base of her standing obelisk at Karnak, Hatshepsut describes how long it took to quarry, ship, and uplift the second pair of obelisks she raised there: "My Majesty began work on them in Year 15, second month of Winter, day 1, continuing until Year 16, fourth month of Summer, day 30, making seven months in cutting [them] from the mountain." Scholars don't necessarily believe her claim—seven months seems exaggeratedly brief—but it's the only such reference known.

We must thank Hatshepsut, too, for giving us the only insight we have on how the pharaohs transported their obelisks. Our NOVA team specifically went to Hatshepsut's temple yesterday to see the so-called "Obelisk Colonnade." Here, high on a wall of fragmentary plaster that still retains traces of yellow and red paint, I could just make out a relief depicting two obelisks laid end to end on a barge. To the right, an estimated 30 boats, with crews thought to total more than 1,000 men, tow the barge down the Nile. When we get to Aswan, we will try our hand at loading and transporting a two-ton obelisk aboard a similar kind of barge, to get an approximation of the difficulties Hatshepsut's boat builders faced.

Unfortunately for Hatshepsut, Tuthmosis III, after reassuming his long-lost post and reigning for many years, systematically defaced her image and chipped away her name wherever they appeared at Karnak and Deir el-Bahari. (It appears to have been not so much vengeance as to put the official record straight to ensure proper succession.) Nevertheless, as I could see so clearly from our aerial view atop the Lover of Silence, she had achieved one of her main goals: to raise memorable monuments to Amun, "His Majesty who placed the kingship of Egypt, the deserts, and all foreign lands under my sandals."

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http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/544448?rpp=20&pg=1&ft=hatshepsut&pos=3

Large Kneeling Statue of Hatshepsut Note: this is not the same statue on the list

In her temple at Deir el-Bahri there were at least ten over-life-sized kneeling statues of Hatshepsut. She is shown as a male king wearing a kilt, a false beard, and either the white crown of Upper Egypt, or the nemes head cloth (see 29.3.1 and 29.3.2). In her hands she holds round offering vessels and the inscription on the base of each statue identifies the offering she makes to the god Amun. These huge statues flanked the processional way along which the Amun's image was carried toward the temple's main sanctuary. They were probably placed in the temple's second court.

This statue represents Hatshepsut wearing the white crown of Upper Egypt (the south), so it was probably located on the southern side of the processional way. On the base, Hatshepsut is said to be offering fresh plants to Amun. On the back pillar, she is identified by her Horus name, Wosretkau, which is written in a rectangular device called a serekh. One also finds fragments of her throne name, Maatkare, and her personal name, Hatshepsut, both of which are written in cartouches.

In 1930, the Museum's Egyptian Expedition found the body fragments of this statue buried in an area called the "Hatshepsut Hole." Some eighty years earlier, the head had been found and taken to Berlin by Egyptologist Richard Lepsius. The pieces of the statue were reunited in an exchange organized by Herbert Winlock, director of the Museum's excavations at Thebes. This and other exchanges were made possible by the generosity of the Egyptian Antiquities Service, which ceded many fragmentary statues to the Metropolitan Museum in the division of finds.

The following excerpts were compiled by Douglas Darracott, Plano West Senior High School, Plano, TX.

Senmut. Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut (Deir-el Bahri), c. 1473-1458 BCE

1. "After the instability of the Second Intermediate Period, during which the so-called Hyksos invasion occurred, Egypt once again recovered its political equilibrium. The pharaohs of the New Kingdom re-established control of the entire country and reasserted their power" (Adams, *Art Across Time* 95). **Thutmose I** (reigned c. 1504-1492 BCE) was the first Egyptian pharaoh buried in a rock-cut tomb carved out of a cliff face in the Valley of the Kings, which is across the Nile from Luxor and Karnak" (97). "The Eighteenth Dynasty is also notable for its female pharaoh, **Hatshepsut** (reigned c. 1479-1458 BCE). She was the wife and half-sister of Thutmose I's son, Thutmose II. When Thutmose II died, his son by a minor queen, Thutmose III, was under age. Around 1479 BCE Hatshepsut became regent for her stepson/nephew, but exerted her right to succeed her father and was crowned King of Egypt in 1473 BCE. Although female rulers of Egypt were not unprecedented, Hatshepsut's assumption of specifically male aspects of her office- such as the title of king- was a departure from tradition. Despite her successor's attempts to obliterate her monuments, many of them survive to document her productive reign" (97). "The main architectural innovation of Hatshepsut's reign was the terraced mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri. The primary function of the Egyptian mortuary temple, which was usually constructed from a pylon plan, was twofold: first, to worship the king's patron deity during his lifetime, and, second, to worship the king himself after his death. The function of the Deir el-Bahri complex as a mortuary temple for both Hatshepsut and her father reinforced her image as her successor. At the same time, the major deities Amon, Hathor, and Anubis were worshiped in shrines within the temple complex. On the exterior, terraces with rectangular supports and polygonal columns blended impressively with the vast

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22. Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and three daughters. New Kingdom (Amarna), 18th Dynasty. c. 1353–1335 B.C.E. Limestone.

G14, 78
S5, 69-73
GW, 525
SH
Pin Image[1]

Video Here

This small stele, probably used as a home altar, gives an seldom opportunity to view a scene from the private live of the king and queen. Akhenaton and Nefertiti are shown with the three oldest of their five daughter. While the daughters are being held and caressed by their parents the placement of the god Aten in the centre of the scene reminds of the official monotheistic religion in the Amarna period. Aten is represented as a sundisc with sunrays ending in hands proffering 'ank'-signs (life-signs) to the royal couple.

- Only through the intercession of Nefertiti and Akhenaton could ordinary people partake in the divine salvation.
- The body forms shown on the relief, the overlong proportions, wide hips, thin legs and the forward curved necks, are typical of the early Amarna artistic style.

Like his father before him, Amenhotep IV marries a commoner, Nefertiti, whose preserved portraits do justice in every respect to her name "the beautiful one has come". Before long they decide to build a new residence in Middle Egypt and there Amenhotep IV changes his name to Akhenaten ("Aten is pleased") and gives homage together with his wife to the single god Aten, depicted as a sun disc with hands dangling at the ends of sunrays, holding symbols of life to the noses of the royal couple. A large number of craftsmen and artists settled in the new town in order to implement the new style of art propounded by the king. After a regency of just 17 years Akhenaten died, his town was abandoned and Egypt returned to its former gods.[2]

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[1] <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/ba/5d/75/ba5d75427a8f8cc308251bbf015fbdda.jpg>

[2] e.V., V. (2015). *Amarna Period: (Society for the Promotion of the Egyptian Museum Berlin). Egyptian-museum-berlin.com.* Retrieved 1 August 2015, from http://www.egyptian-museum-berlin.com/c52.php

FAMILY OF AKHENATON A sunken relief stele (FIG. 3-33), perhaps from a private shrine, provides a rare look at this royal family. The style is familiar from the colossus of Akhenaton (FIG. 3-30) and the portrait head of Nefertiti (FIG. 3-31). Undulating curves have replaced rigid lines, and the figures possess the prominent bellies that characterize figures of the Amarna period. The pharaoh, his wife, and three of their daughters bask in the life-giving rays of Aton, the sun disk. The mood is informal and anecdotal. Akhenaton lifts one of his daughters in order to kiss her. Another daughter sits on Nefertiti's lap and gestures toward her father, while the youngest daughter reaches out to touch a pendant on her mother's crown. This kind of intimate portrayal of the pharaoh and his family is unprecedented in Egyptian art. Matching the political and religious revolution under Akhenaton was an equally radical upheaval in art.[3]

Sunken relief of Akhenaten, Nefertiti and their daughters ca. 1440 BCE[4]

Some of the many reasons why this sunken relief carving is considered such an iconic artifact from the Amarna Period include the lack of size hierarchy between Akhenaton and his queen, the monotheistic blessings being bestowed upon the family by the sun god Aten, the intimate tenderness that the pharaoh displays toward his daughter, and, of course, the unusually floppy noodle anatomy. This pharaoh, who seems to have chosen to portray himself as funny looking and soft rather than cut, never-the-less moved his intensely traditional society in dramatic directions. Not only did he decree a new religion, which in itself caused major social and economic upheaval, but he also relocated the capital city of Egypt, redesigned the style of imperial art, and offered a new model for pharaoh and royal family alike. All of this upheaval took place in a short period of time, especially considering the length of Egypt's cultural legacy. Faced with the challenge of making entirely new art and architecture, the Amarna era sculptors chose the softest stones to work with in order to accommodate the overall volume of things being requested of them. Similarly, the architects came up with the idea of building with small manageable blocks similar to bricks in order to create a city that could accommodate over 30,000 people in just two years. This sunken relief carving, for example, is made out of sandstone, an easy stone to carve. Sunken, as opposed to bas relief was probably chosen not only because less material must be removed, but also because sunken relif carvings withstand erosion and the passage of time better than bas relief ones do. A keen awareness for the passage of time is in evidence throughout Egyptian society, and recent discoveries are suggesting that timing had everything to do with Akhenaton's seemingly strange moves. It has been acknowledged for some time that Egypt was enjoying a time of peace and prosperity to the extent that they could afford an upheaval, but there is more to it than this. Akhenaton came to power roughly 1300 years after the great pyramids of Giza were built. It has taken modern scholars a long time to realize it, but the location of Egyptian cities, temples, and pyramids seem to coincide not only with the alignment of the stars, but also with the Earth's axial shifts. Like a spinning

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[3] Google Books
Google Books,. (2015). Gardner's Art through the Ages: The Western Perspective. Retrieved 1 August 2015, from https://books.google.com/books?id=rvJtCQAAQBAJ&pg=PT96&dq=gardner%27s+art+through+the+ages+nefertiti&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAGoVChMI0s-iqK-IxwIVx8k-Ch0Prwnf#v=onepage&q&f=false

[4] Bwildeman.com
Bwildeman.com,. 2015. 'Brian Wildeman'. Accessed August 1 2015. http://www.bwildeman.com/.

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top, the earth wobbles a little on its axis. The wobble takes an elliptical pattern; imagine the lines a tip would make on a table surface if it were first dipped in ink. The ancient Egyptians, who were avid astronomers, discovered and recorded this phenomena long before modern astronomers did. One of earth's axial rotations takes about 3000 years to complete. Akhenaton would have been keenly aware that he came into power precisely half way through one of the elliptical cycles relative to when the pyramids where made, and it is likely that he literally saw a new destiny in the stars or at least used the stars as a rationale for change. The pyramids themselves align with the constellation Orin's Belt when viewed from Cairo, and they line up perfectly precisely at the peak of the elliptical cycle. This understanding of the stars implies, rather incredibly, that the Egyptians had already been carefully tracking and recording these astrological phenomena for thousands of years prior even to the Old Kingdom.

COMPARE TO:

[5]

The Belelli Family, Edgar Degas, 1858-67

Video

Between the ages of 22 and 26, Edgar Degas completed his training in Italy, where part of his familly lived. Here he painted his father's sister, Laure, with her husband, the baron Bellelli (1812-1864) and her two daughters, Giula and Giovanna.

The baron was an Italian patriot, banned from Naples, who lived an exile in Florence. His wife is in mourning for her father, Hilaire, who died recently and whose portrait appears on the framed redline painting close to his daughter's face. In 1860, the two granddaughters, Giovanna and Giula, are 7 and 10. The mother is impressively dignified and affirms a slightly severe authority, contrasting with the relative aloofness of the father. This family portrait evokes those of Flemish painters, van Dyck in particular. Masterpiece of Degas's early years, this portrait evokes the family tensions isolating each member of the family. The imposing dimensions, the sober colours, the structured games of open perspectives (doors and mirrors), all converge in strengthening a climate of oppression. All the more so as suggestions of escape appear, such as this curious little dog split by the frame. The almost

[5] <http://totallyhistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/The-Bellelli-Family-by-Edgar-Degas.jpg>

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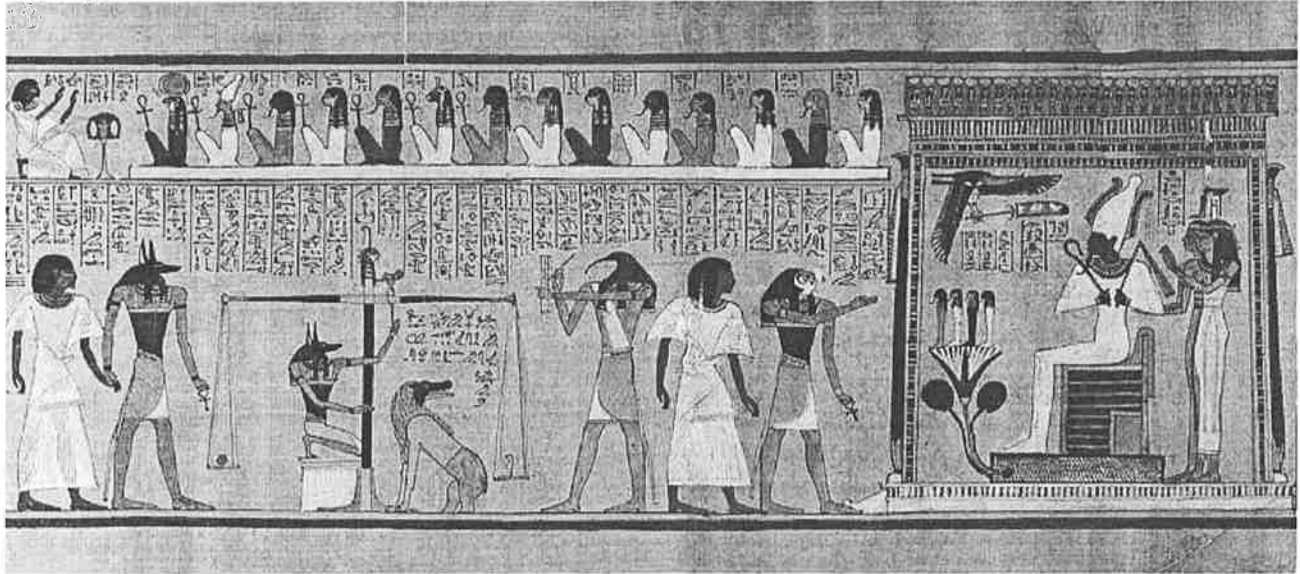
24. Last judgment of Hu-Nefer, from his tomb (page from the *Book of the Dead*). New Kingdom, 19th Dynasty. c. 1275 B.C.E. Painted papyrus scroll.

G14, 80
S5, 77
GW, 492
SH
Pin Image Video Video Article Article Article



What is a Book of the Dead?

John Taylor, British Museum September 22, 2010 • 11:53 am

I'm the curator of the exhibition Journey through the afterlife: ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead, which opens at the British Museum on 4 November 2010. The exhibition is the result of years of work behind the scenes in planning, preparation and research. It's exciting to be able to focus on these special documents and to have the rare opportunity to display such a variety of them.

'Book of the Dead' is a modern term for a collection of magical spells that the Egyptians used to help them get into the afterlife. They imagined the afterlife as a kind of journey you had to make to get to paradise – but it was quite a hazardous journey so you'd need magical help along the way.

The Book of the Dead isn't a finite text – it's not like the Bible, it's not a collection of doctrine or a statement of faith or anything like that – it's a practical guide to the next world, with spells that would help you on your journey.

The 'book' is usually a roll of papyrus with lots and lots of spells written on it in hieroglyphic script. They usually have beautiful colored illustrations as well. They would have been quite expensive so only wealthy, high-status people would have had them. Depending on how rich you were, you could either go along and buy a ready-made papyrus which would have blank spaces for your name to be written in, or you could spend a bit more and probably choose which spells you wanted.

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Some of the spells are to make sure you can control your own body after death. The ancient Egyptians believed that a person was made up of different elements: body, spirit, name, heart, they're all embodiments of a person, and they were afraid that these elements would disperse when you died. So there are a lot of spells to make sure you don't lose your head or your heart, that your body doesn't decay, as well as other spells about keeping alive by breathing air, having water to drink, having food to eat.

There are also spells about protecting yourself because the ancient Egyptians expected to be attacked on the journey to the afterlife by snakes, crocodiles, insects – an idea very much based on the threats they knew in real life only much more frightening and much more dangerous.

As well as the animals, you could be attacked by gods or demons who served the gods. In the next world there are a lot of gods who are guarding gateways that you have to get through, and if you don't give the right answers to their questions at the gates, they can attack you because they have knives and snakes in their hands.

Without the correct spells to protect you, you could be punished in a variety of ways: you could be put on to the slaughter block, you could be decapitated, or you could be turned upside down (which meant your digestive process worked in reverse so you had to eat feces and drink urine forever!).

The worst thing that can happen is what is called the second death. This meant you were killed and your spirit couldn't come back and so you would have no afterlife at all.

It was a world of great fear that they believed they were going into, and the Book of the Dead provided guidance and protection on this journey.

Over the next few weeks, I'll be writing regularly about the aspects of the exhibition that I'm most excited about – and there'll also be updates from some of the many people working on the exhibition behind the scenes here at the British Museum.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-reviews/8117119/Egyptian-Book-of-the-Dead-at-British-Museum-Seven-magazine-review.html

Egyptian Book of the Dead, at British Museum, Seven magazine review

An absorbing exhibition shows the Ancient Egyptians were not obsessed with death – they just wanted to live forever. Rating * * * *

The Weighing of the Heart scene from 'The Book of the Dead of Ani' (c.1275BC)

By Alastair Smart
12:59PM GMT 08 Nov 2010

Nodjmet wasn't a lady to cross lightly. As wife of the High Priest of Amun, she was among the most powerful women in 11th-century BC Egypt. With the New Kingdom collapsing, this was a critically unstable time, and in a chilling letter now kept in Berlin,

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Nodjmet is implicated in the murder of two seditious policemen. 'Have them killed, placed in baskets and thrown into the river at night,' it reads.

As luck would have it, Nodjmet also features in the British Museum's new exhibition, Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead. Produced on papyrus rolls and interred with the mummified corpse, the Book of the Dead was a kind of manual to the afterlife: a set of spells and prayers (in text form with accompanying illustrations) designed to guide the deceased through the dangers of the underworld to paradise.

Each individual's Book was different - its length, lavishness and number of spells dependent on its owner's wealth - and the BM has the largest collection in the world, including the *Book of Nodjmet*. It depicts her encounter with Osiris, god of the underworld, in which she brazen-facedly declares she led a decent life on Earth and deserves eternal entry to the blissful Field of Reeds. In flowing white robes, she looks like butter wouldn't melt, yet we know she secretly has two murders on her conscience.

Nodjmet's all-too-human tale serves to collapse much of the distance between us and Ancient Egypt, and this is clearly an aim of the exhibition as a whole: to re-humanize the Egyptians.

What with their tombs, mummies, curses and necropolises, they've long been stereotyped as a death-obsessed civilization. Hieroglyphic text died out in the fourth century AD, not being decoded again until the 1820s, and the 1,500 years in between helped create the image of a remote, occult society that still persists.

The exhibition sets out to prove, though, that Egyptians weren't such a morbid bunch, after all. They just had a recognizable desire to live forever. Observing the cyclical patterns of natural phenomena about them – sun, moon, vegetation, flooding of the Nile – they assumed that humans, too, would come again after death.

Scenes of a deceased who's reached the Field of Reeds, like that in the *Book of Anhai*, are particularly interesting. It presents a paradise that's a familiar, only slightly idealized, version of everyday Egypt: a place of azure waterways and abundant fields, where the priestess Anhai is reunited with her dead parents. Paradise is said to be a place for 'reaping and eating, drinking and copulating'. Far from being terrified by death, the Egyptians, it seems, saw it as a chance to indulge their earthly appetites anew.

Everyone's inner-child associates Egypt with mummies, but the curators are keen to stress that mummification was but the first, most eye-catching step in the Egyptians' bid for eternal life. Next came the funeral, in which a priest re-awoke one's senses; and then, after burial, one's *ba*(spirit) started roaming the underworld, while the body remained in the tomb.

It was here that the Book of the Dead came in. Only after absorbing its spells could the *ba* get past all the hellish beasts and demons – whether by placating them, fending them off, or transforming into a heron and flying away.

The show follows this vaguely chronological order, via mummy masks and coffins, before focusing on the Book of the Dead itself. This focus is richly rewarding but also rather risky: unlike, say, Tutankhamun's tomb, scraps of papyri with fading pigments aren't really blockbuster material.

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The Book of the Dead evolved from Egypt's earliest funerary literature, written for the king on his pyramid walls from 2400BC onwards. Within a few centuries, governors and high-ranking officials started to include similar inscriptions on their coffins, and these in turn inspired the Book of Dead papyri for an even broader ownership from 1500 BC (until the first centuries AD).

Still only 10 per cent of the population could afford a scribe's fees, though. Most people were simply wrapped in a shroud and dumped in a pit in the desert, so we shouldn't draw too many conclusions about Egyptian society as a whole from these papyri. Were the 90 per cent majority denied an afterlife completely, or did they simply have to fend for themselves there? We just don't know.

Another obstacle to true understanding is that most Books were found in a 19th-century age of smash-and-grab, with little regard for archaeological provenance. Nodjmet's is a rare case where we know any biographical material about the owner.

There are still fascinating insights, though: from the Judgment scene, for example, the final and most critical junction on the deceased's journey. Here, one stood before the gods in the Hall of Justice and had one's heart weighed against the Feather of Truth. If unburdened by sin, the heart would balance the feather, ensuring progress to the Field of Reeds. If not, one was tossed to a hybrid, Cerberus-like creature called The Devourer (part-crocodile, part-lion, part-hippo).

The Egyptians were hardly unique in transposing the model of a human law court in this world to a divine one in the next, but one particular spell offers an intriguing twist. It kept one's heart light during the act of weighing, regardless of the sins one had committed on Earth: 'O my heart, don't stand as a witness against me in the tribunal'.

Was this an example of the Egyptians at their most pragmatic, aware that we all make mistakes and don't necessarily deserve to be devoured for them? Or was it, rather, a cynical equivalent of buying Church pardons, permitting the wealthy any evil on Earth, as it could be atoned for later by dashing off a spell?

The stiff stylization of Egyptian art can grow tiresome after a while - with its flattened perspective and awkward profile-meets-frontal poses - but do save some energy for the show's final hurrah, the *Book of Nesitanebisheru*. Belonging to a high priest's daughter, at 37 meters and 80 spells, it's the world's longest Book of the Dead.

Arcing halfway around the BM Reading Room, it's being displayed in its entirety for the first time ever. The detail and draughtsmanship over so long a papyrus is hugely impressive, yet close inspection reveals that a number of spells are duplicated, and also that illustrations and text often don't match. Such sloppiness is perhaps the ultimate proof that the Egyptians were human after all.

http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/30.3.31
Archaeologists found this papyrus in the burial of Nany, a woman in her seventies. She was a chantress (ritual singer) of the god Amun-Re and is referred to as "king's daughter," probably meaning she was the daughter of Painedjem I, high priest of Amun and titular king. As was customary during the Third Intermediate Period, her coffin and boxes of shawabtis (servant figures) were accompanied by a hollow wooden Osiris figure, which

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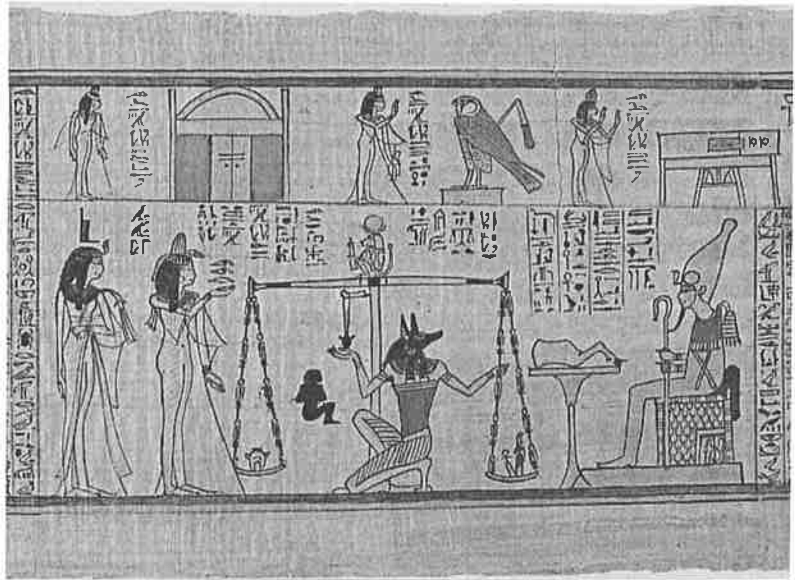
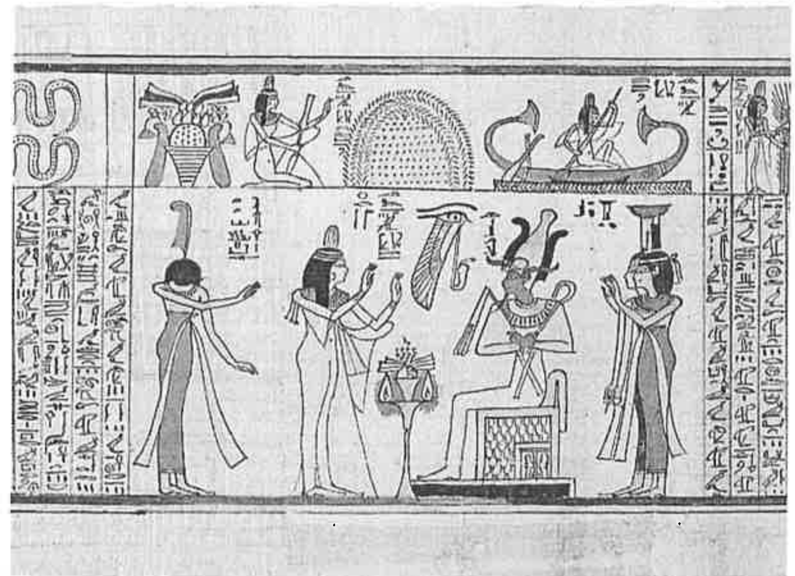
contained a papyrus scroll inscribed with a collection of texts from the Book of the Dead, known to the Egyptians as the "Book of Coming Forth by Day." It is more than seventeen feet long when unrolled.





Section from the "Book of the Dead" of Nany, Third Intermediate Period, Dynasty 21, reigns of Psensennes I–II, ca. 1040–945 B.C. Egyptian; Western Thebes

Painted and inscribed papyrus; H. of illustrated section 13 3/4 in. (34.9 cm)
Rogers Fund, 1930 (30.3.31)
SEE COMPLETE RECORD.

The scene depicted here shows the climax of the journey to the afterlife. Nany is in the Hall of Judgment. Holding her mouth and eyes in her hand, she stands to the left of a large scale. Her heart is being weighed against Maat, the goddess of justice and truth, who is represented as a tiny figure wearing her symbol, a single large feather, in her headband. On the right, Osiris, god of the underworld and rebirth, presides over the scene. He wears the white crown of Upper Egypt and the curving beard of a god. His body is wrapped like a mummy except for his hands, which clasp a crook. On the table before him is an offering of a joint of beef. Canine-headed Anubis, overseer of mummification, adjusts the scales, while a baboon—symbolizing Thoth, the god of wisdom and writing—sits on the balance beam and prepares to write down the result. Behind Nany stands the goddess Isis, both wife and sister of Osiris. She is identified by the hieroglyph above her head.

In this scene, Nany has been found truthful and therefore worthy of entering the afterlife. Anubis says to Osiris, "Her heart is an accurate witness," and Osiris replies, "Give her her eyes and her mouth, since her heart is an accurate witness." In the horizontal register above the judgment scene, Nany appears in three episodes: worshipping the divine palette with which all is written, praising a statue of Horus in his falcon form, and standing by her own tomb.