



Eternal Egypt: Art and Architecture

Join long-time LinR lecturer Dr. Eric Weichel for a lecture series surveying art and architecture in Ancient Egypt, from the predynastic period to the age of the Ptolemies. Images and short film clips relating to visual and material culture in Egypt will be juxtaposed with short reports of some of the most recent and exciting archaeological discoveries. The series will include attention to the cultural, technological and political achievements of the “golden age” of the 4th Dynasty Pharaohs, as well as biographical details of the most important and influential Pharaohs.

Week 1: Egyptian Mythology

Eternal Egypt: the phrase conjures up a bewildering array of animal-headed deities, archaic rituals, massive temples and monumental art and statuary, all linked by pictorial conventions of extreme antiquity. But who really were the Gods of Egypt, and how might any modern viewer make sense of the complicated iconographies and sets of symbols that identified Egyptian concepts of the soul, the afterlife, and the body? In this section, participants survey some of the most influential of Egypt's spiritual figures, ranging from the cat-headed Bast, a perennial favourite, and the cow-horned Hathor, mistress of music, pleasure, and sex, to the multi-faceted worship of the Sun in its three major aspects, the falcon god Horus, associated with the living Pharaoh, and the green-skinned Osiris, Lord of the Dead, and yet giver of life through the abundant vegetation that came from his underworld.

- Julien d’Huy. New evidence for a closeness between the Abu Râ’s shelter (Eastern Sahara) and Ancient Egyptian beliefs.. *Sahara : preistoria e storia del Sahara prehistory and history of the Sahara*, Segrate : Pyramids, 2009, pp.125-126.
- Revez, Jean. "Looking at history through the prism of mythology: can the Osirian myth shed any light on Ancient Egyptian royal succession patterns?." *Journal of Egyptian History* 3, no. 1 (2010): 47-71.
- Gillam, Robyn A. "Priestesses of Hathor: their function, decline and disappearance." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 32 (1995): 211-237.

- Prof. Scott B.Noegel, "Apollonius' Argonautika and Egyptian Solar Mythology.", *The Classical World* 97/2 (2004), 123-136.
- Kampakoglou, Alexandros. "Danaus βουγενής: Greco-Egyptian Mythology and Ptolemaic Kingship." *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 56, no. 1 (2015): 111-139.

Week 2: Predynastic and Old Kingdom

In this section, participants explore the interconnection between the rise of socially-stratified farming communities along the Nile and the formation of civic cults which transformed Egypt into the world's first imperial state, one backed by unprecedented control over resources, both labour and material. Specific topics and works under consideration include recent research on indigenous cosmology in the Sahara, pottery and grave goods from Naqada, the emergence of heirloom prestige items, such as the famous Narmer Palette, which were used as dynastic props in ritual and display, and the splendid technical and artistic achievements of the Old Kingdom, including statues of the divine Kings (Khafre enthroned), the imposing monumentality of the Giza Pyramids, and the wonderful alabaster statue, and delightful inscriptions, of the child-king Pepi II.

- Williams, Bruce, Thomas J. Logan, and William J. Murnane. "The Metropolitan Museum knife handle and aspects of pharaonic imagery before Narmer." *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 46, no. 4 (1987): 245-285.
- Wengrow, David. "Rethinking 'cattle cults' in early Egypt: towards a prehistoric perspective on the Narmer palette." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 11, no. 1 (2001): 91-104.
- Hendrickx, Stan, and Frank Förster. "Early Dynastic art and iconography." *A Companion to Ancient Egypt* 2 (2010): 826-852.

Week 3: Middle Kingdom

If the Old Kingdom's collapse into over a century of civil strife became a proverbial metaphor for social decay, both for the Ancient Egyptians themselves and for contemporary political worldviews, the First Intermediate Period was a time of cultural recapitulation in Egypt, where new artistic conventions and social structures set the framework for the daunting achievements of the Middle Kingdom Pharaohs. In this unit, we examine some of the magnificent jewelry found in the tombs of royal women, explore the highly personal style of sculpture patronized by the Pharaohs Amenemhat II and Senusret III, and survey a few of the intricately detailed models of domestic households that suggest something of daily life in this much under-studied period. We close with a look at some of the tantalizing recent discoveries from northern Egypt,

where new material and epigraphic evidence suggests a reappraisal of the enigmatic "Hyksos" is long over-due.

- Willems, Harco. "The First Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom." *A Companion to Ancient Egypt 1* (2010): 81-100.
- El-Khadragy, Mahmoud, Jochem Kahl, and Eva-Maria Engel. "The First Intermediate Period Tombs at Asyut Revisited." *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* (2004): 233-243.
- Arnold, Dorothea. "Amenemhat I and the early Twelfth Dynasty at Thebes." *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 26 (1991): 5-48.
- Markowitz, Yvonne J. "The Allure of Ancient Egyptian Jewelry." *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt 2* (2018): 138-149.

Week 4: The New Kingdom: the 18th Dynasty

Egypt's economic, political and cultural achievements reached new heights under the 18th-Dynasty Pharaohs, whose homeland in Thebes became the staging ground for successively more spectacular building programmes. The great temples at Karnak and Luxor, the labyrinthine rock-cut tombs of the Valley of the Kings, and the military conquests in Syria-Palestine and naval expeditions to Punt all date largely from this period. But Egypt also saw complex revolutions in norms of gender and power, which came to a dizzying head under the rule of the heretic Pharaoh Akhenaten, whose new religion and new capital city were a startling deviation from Egypt's ancient and sacred traditions. If the Amarna period, with its association with emotive, highly expressive and innovative art, and with the life and death of Akhenaten's eventual successor, Tutankamun, have made it famous in our own day, in Egypt itself the return to canonical forms of aesthetic and religious expression under the 19th Dynasty appears to have been widely celebrated. Specific works under consideration in this unit include the Colossi of Memnon, the Osiride Statuary of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, the Amarna stelae, the fascinating and sensual sculptures of Nefertiti and her daughters, and the gleaming, gilded treasures of King Tut, whose funerary equipment provides a poignant glimpse at the personal histories of these well-known historical figures.

- Güner, Serdar, and Daniel Druckman. "Identification of a princess under incomplete information: an Amarna story." *Theory and Decision* 48, no. 4 (2000): 383-407.
- Johnson, W. Raymond. "Amenhotep III and Amarna: Some new considerations." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 82, no. 1 (1996): 65-82.

- Panagiotopoulos, Diamantis. "Foreigners in Egypt in the Time of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III." (2006): 370-412.

Week 5: The New Kingdom: Ramesside Period and the Late Period

"She for who the Sun Shines": Queen Nefertari, first and most significant wife the great Pharaoh Rameses II, was the possessor of one of the finest and most splendidly-decorated tombs of any royal woman in the Bronze Age. The programme of religious painting lining the walls of Nefertari's tomb contains a wealth of information about Ancient Egyptian spiritual belief systems in the New Kingdom, including highly complex understandings of the sun, resurrection, justice, fertility, and wisdom. Rameses II himself, while he does not figure in his wife's tomb (at least directly), left a more monumental legacy of towering colossi, imposing temples (such as those at Abu Simbel, cut piece-by-piece from their original location near the Nile in 1965 and reassembled safely away from the rising waters of Lake Nasser), and the dubious association with the biblical Pharaoh in Exodus, thus featuring in many 20th-century filmic depictions of Egypt. However, for all Rameses' famed power, in the century after his death Rameses III would be forced to resist the incoming hordes of the Sea Peoples, who sacked much of the Eastern Mediterranean, bringing an end to the Bronze Age and ushering in a so-called "Dark Age" that would last for four centuries. In these turbulent times, Egypt fell under foreign dominion, first by the Libyans from the West, then by the Nubians from the south, and eventually by the Assyrians and the Persians to the East. Alexander of Macedon, arriving in 332 BCE, was widely hailed as a liberator. Yet this "Late" period of Egyptian cultural life is marked by a splendid Renaissance in Egypt's artistic traditions, where sculptors, painters, carvers and decorators used Old Kingdom precedents for inspiration, reinvigorating aesthetic practices that were, by this point, already several millenia old.

- Hollis, S.T., 2009. Hathor and Isis in Byblos in the second and first millennia BCE. *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections*, 1(2), pp.1-8.
- McCarthy, Heather Lee, and Heather McCarthy. "The Osiris Nefertari: A Case Study of Decorum, Gender, and Regeneration." *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 39 (2002): 173-195.
- Dodson, Aidan. "The problem of Amenirdis II and the heirs to the office of God's wife of Amun during the twenty-sixth dynasty." *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 88, no. 1 (2002): 179-186.
- Teeter, Emily. "Celibacy and Adoption among God's Wives of Amun and Singers in the Temple of Amun: A Re-examination of the Evidence." *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente* (1999): 405-414.

- Ayad, M. F. "On the identity and role of the God's wife of Amun in rites of royal and divine dominion." *J. Soc. Study Egypt. Antiq* 34 (2007): 1-13.
- Morkot, Robert. "Egypt and Nubia." *Cambridge University Press*, 2001.

Week 6: Greco-Roman Egypt

As its magnificent cortege travelled from Babylon, Alexander's body was seized by his general Ptolemy, who put it on display in the new coastal city of Alexandria, thus ushering in three centuries of Greek rule over Egypt. Alexandria became the second city of the Mediterranean world, a splendid cultural capital marked by a rich scientific and intellectual legacy, where the Great Pharos or Lighthouse and the Great Library were major centers of economic and cultural life. New religions, such as the cult of Serapis, were purpose-built by the Ptolemaic Pharaohs, who thus synthesized the ancient legacy of Egyptian cult with the new anthropomorphic focus of Greek spirituality. Cleopatra, the last of these Pharaohs, has become, in some ways, the face of Egypt itself, representing a feminized, Orientalized view of Egyptian culture and history. However, the Faiyum mummy portraits, the evocative Apis-Osiris statues of the Emperor Hadrian's lover Antinous, and the conventions of Early Christian painting in Byzantine Egypt all reflect the enduring legacy of Ancient Egyptian art in the Roman world, where Egypt, and its visual arts, proved truly Eternal.

- Erskine, Andrew. "Culture and power in ptolemaic Egypt: The Museum and Library of Alexandria." *Greece & Rome* 42, no. 1 (1995): 38-48.
- Moyer, Ian S. "Court, chora, and culture in late Ptolemaic Egypt." *American Journal of Philology* 132, no. 1 (2011): 15-44.
- Pfeiffer, Stefan. "THE GOD SERAPIS, HIS CULT AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE RULER CULT IN PTOLEMAIC EGYPT." *Ptolemy II Philadelphus and his world* (2008): 387 - 408.
- McCoskey, Denise Eileen. "Race before "whiteness": studying identity in Ptolemaic Egypt." *Critical Sociology* 28, no. 1-2 (2002): 13-39.

