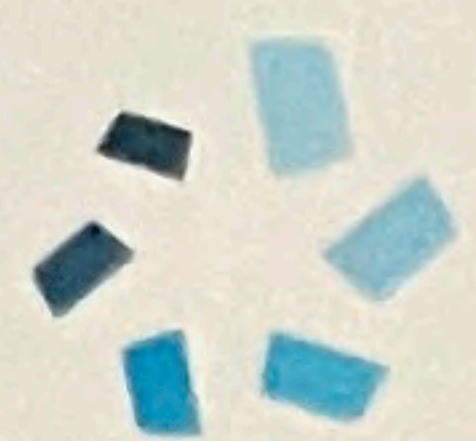




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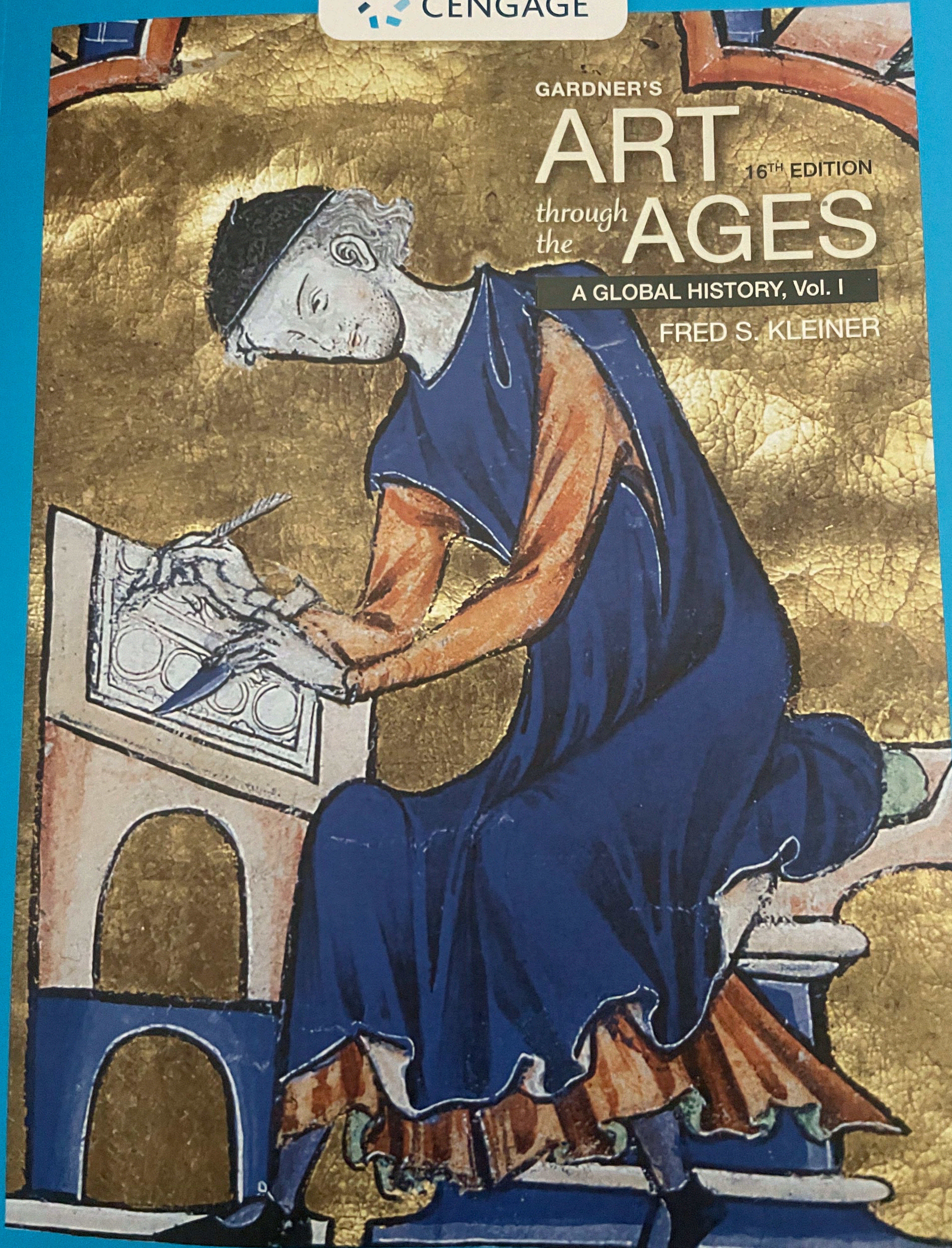
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A GLOBAL HISTORY, Vol. I

FRED S. KLEINER



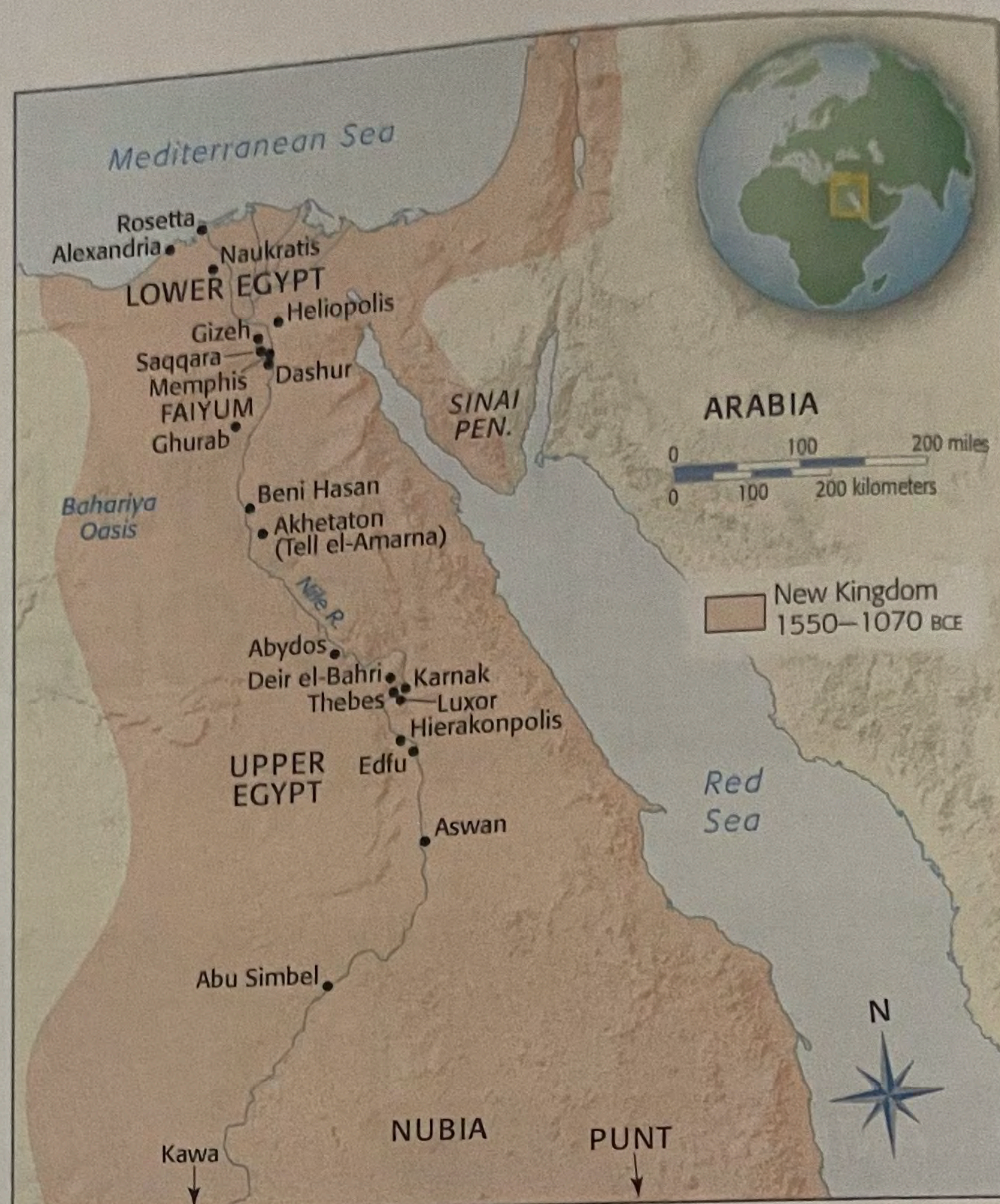
EGYPT AND EGYPTOLOGY

The backbone of Egypt was, and still is, the Nile River, which, through its annual floods, supported all life in that ancient land (MAP 3-1). Even more so than the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers of Mesopotamia (MAP 2-1), the Nile defined the cultures that developed along its banks. Originating deep in Africa, the world's longest river flows through regions that may not receive a single drop of rainfall in a decade. Yet crops thrive from the rich soil that the Nile brings thousands of miles from the African hills. In antiquity, the land bordering the Nile consisted of marshes dotted with island ridges. Amphibious animals swarmed in the marshes, where the Egyptians hunted them through tall forests of papyrus and rushes (FIGS. 3-15 and 3-28A). The fertility of Egypt was famous. When the Kingdom of the Nile became a province of the Roman Empire after the death of Queen Cleopatra (r. 51–30 BCE), it served as the granary of the Mediterranean world.

During the Middle Ages, the detailed knowledge that the Romans possessed about the Egyptians and their gods was largely forgotten (see “The Gods and Goddesses of Egypt,” page 60). With the Enlightenment of the 18th century, scholars began to piece together Egypt's history from references in the Bible, from the fifth-century BCE Greek historian Herodotus and other Greco-Roman authors, and from preserved portions of a third-century BCE history of Egypt written in Greek by Manetho, an Egyptian high priest. Manetho described the succession of Egyptian rulers, dividing them into the still-useful groups called dynasties, based on a line of hereditary rulers or the changing location of the royal residence. Unfortunately, Manetho's chronology is inaccurate, and today historians still do not agree on the absolute dates of the kings. The chronologies that scholars have proposed for the earliest Egyptian dynasties can vary by as much as two centuries. Only after 664 BCE (26th Dynasty) are the exact years of individual reigns certain.¹

The modern discipline of Egyptology dates to the late 18th century, when archaeological exploration of the land of the Nile began in earnest. In 1799, on a military expedition to Egypt, Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) took with him a large team of scholars, linguists, antiquarians, and artists. In 1804, they published *Description of Egypt*, a groundbreaking collaborative work based on the massive amount of data that the scientific expedition collected.

Rosetta Stone. Most noteworthy was the chance discovery of the famed *Rosetta Stone*, now in the British Museum, which provided the key to deciphering Egyptian hieroglyphic writing. The stone bears an inscription in three sections: one in Greek, which Napoleon's team easily read; one in *demotic* (Late Egyptian); and one in formal hieroglyphic. On the assumption that the text



MAP 3-1 Ancient Egypt.

was the same in all three sections, Jean-François Champollion (1790–1832) and other scholars attempted to decipher the two non-Greek sections. Eventually, they deduced that the hieroglyphs were not simply pictographs but the signs of a once-spoken language whose traces survived in Coptic, the language of Christian Egypt. The ability to read hieroglyphic inscriptions revolutionized the study of Egyptian civilization and art.

PREDYNASTIC AND EARLY DYNASTIC PERIODS

The prehistoric beginnings of Egyptian civilization predate writing and are consequently obscure. Nevertheless, tantalizing remains of tombs, paintings, pottery, and other artifacts attest to the existence of a sophisticated culture on the banks of the Nile around 3500 BCE. Egyptologists refer to this era as the Predynastic period.

EGYPT FROM NARMER TO CLEOPATRA

3500–2575 BCE

Predynastic and Early Dynastic

- Egyptians produce narrative reliefs and paintings, including some of the earliest preserved labeled historical artworks, such as the Narmer palette
- Imhotep, the first artist whose name is recorded, builds the stepped pyramid and funerary complex of King Djoser

2575–2134 BCE

Old Kingdom

- Sculptors formulate the canonical Egyptian statuary types expressing the eternal nature of divine kingship
- Workers quarry millions of blocks of stone for the construction of the three Fourth Dynasty pyramids at Gizeh

2040–1640 BCE

Middle Kingdom

- Egyptian sculptors introduce a new, more realistic and emotional, kind of royal portrait
- Rock-cut tombs become the preferred form of Egyptian burial monument for wealthy private patrons

1550–1070 BCE

New Kingdom

- Architects construct grandiose pylon temples featuring hypostyle halls with clerestory lighting
- Akhenaton introduces a new religion and new art forms during the short-lived religious and artistic revolution of the Amarna period

1000–30 BCE

First Millennium BCE

- Traditional modes of Egyptian art and architecture continue under foreign (Kushite and Greek) rule

Painting and Sculpture

In Predynastic times, Egypt was divided geographically and politically into Upper Egypt (the southern, upstream part of the Nile Valley), a narrow tract of grassland that encouraged hunting, and Lower (northern) Egypt, where the rich soil of the Nile Delta islands promoted agriculture and animal husbandry. The major

finds of Predynastic art come from Upper Egypt, especially Abydos and Hierakonpolis, where archaeologists discovered a tomb dating between 3500 and 3200 BCE that boasts the most extensive preserved series of early Egyptian mural paintings (FIG. 3-1A).



FIG. 3-1A Tomb 100, Hierakonpolis, ca. 3500–3200 BCE.

Palette of King Narmer. The Predynastic period ended with the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt, which historians once thought occurred during the First Dynasty kingship of Menes,

identified by some Egyptologists with Narmer, by others with Aha. King Narmer's image and name appear on both sides of a ceremonial *palette* (stone slab with a circular depression) found at Hierakonpolis. The palette (FIGS. 3-2 and 3-3) is one of the earliest extant historical (versus prehistorical) artworks, but Egyptologists still debate exactly what event(s) it depicts. No longer regarded as commemorating the founding of the first of Egypt's 31 dynasties around 2920 BCE (the last ended in 332 BCE), the scenes probably record selected events that took place during the unification of the two kingdoms. Historians now believe that the formation of the "Kingdom of the Two Lands" occurred over several centuries.

Narmer's palette is an elaborate version of a utilitarian object commonly used in the Predynastic period to prepare eye makeup, which Egyptian men and women used to protect their eyes against irritation and the glare of the sun as well as to enhance their appearance. The palette is important not only as a document marking the transition from the prehistoric to the historical period in ancient Egypt but also as one of the earliest examples of the formula for figure representation that characterized most Egyptian art for 3,000 years. At the top of each side of the palette are two heads of a cow



3-2 Back of the palette of King Narmer, from Hierakonpolis, Egypt, Predynastic, ca. 3000–2920 BCE. Slate, 2' 1" high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

Narmer's palette is one of the earliest labeled historical artworks. On this side, the king, wearing the crown of Upper Egypt, is the largest figure in the composition. He slays a captured Lower Egyptian enemy.



3-3 Front of the palette of King Narmer, from Hierakonpolis, Egypt, Predynastic, ca. 3000–2920 BCE. Slate, 2' 1" high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

Narmer, now wearing the crown of Lower Egypt, reviews beheaded enemy bodies. At the center of the palette, the intertwined animal necks may symbolize the unification of the two kingdoms.

The Gods and Goddesses of Egypt

The worldview of the Egyptians was distinct from the outlook of their neighbors in the ancient Mediterranean, Mesopotamian, and Persian worlds. Egyptians believed that before the beginning of time, the primeval waters, called *Nun*, existed alone in the darkness. At the moment of creation, a mound rose out of the limitless waters—just as muddy mounds emerge from the Nile after the annual flood recedes. On this mound, the creator god, **Amen**, later identified with the god of the sun (**Re**), appeared and brought light to the world. In later times, the Egyptians symbolized the original mound as a pyramidal stone called the *ben-ben*.

Amen, the supreme god, also created the first of the other gods and goddesses of Egypt. According to one version of the myth, the creator masturbated and produced **Shu** and **Tefnut**, the primary male and female forces in the universe. They coupled to give birth to **Geb** (Earth) and **Nut** (Sky), who bore Osiris, Seth, Isis, and Nephthys. The eldest, **Osiris**, was the god of order, whom the Egyptians revered as the king who brought civilization to the Nile valley. His brother, **Seth**, was his evil opposite, the god of chaos. Seth murdered Osiris and cut him into pieces, which he scattered across Egypt. **Isis**, the sister and consort of Osiris, with the help of **Nephthys**, Seth's wife, succeeded in collecting Osiris's body parts, and with her powerful magic brought

him back to life. The resurrected Osiris fathered a son with Isis—**Horus**, who avenged his father's death and displaced Seth as king of Egypt. Osiris then became the lord of the Underworld. The Egyptians identified all their living kings with Horus, then with Osiris after they died. Horus appears in art either as a falcon, considered the noblest bird of the sky, or as a falcon-headed man. (However, the Egyptians did not believe that their gods had composite human-animal forms. The animal-headed images in FIG. 3-1 and elsewhere in Egyptian art are merely pictorial conventions descriptive of the various gods' characteristics.)

Other Egyptian deities include **Mut**, the consort of the sun god Amen, and **Khonsu**, the moon god, who was their son. **Thoth**, another lunar deity and the god of knowledge and writing, appears in art as an ibis, a baboon, or an ibis-headed man crowned with the crescent moon and the moon disk. When Seth tore out Horus's falcon eye (*wedjat*), Thoth restored it. The Egyptians associated Thoth too with rebirth and the afterlife. **Hathor**, daughter of Re, was a divine mother of the Egyptian king, nourishing him with her milk. Egyptian artists represented her as a cow-headed woman or as a (and her predecessor goddess, **Bat**) as a cow-headed woman or as a woman with a cow's horns. **Anubis**, a jackal or jackal-headed deity, was the god of the dead and of embalming. **Maat**, another daughter of Re, was the goddess of truth and justice. Her feather measured the weight of the deceased's heart on Anubis's scales to determine whether the individual would be blessed in the afterlife.

with a woman's face, whom scholars have traditionally identified as the goddess Hathor, the divine mother of all Egyptian kings, but who is probably Hathor's predecessor, the sky goddess Bat. Between the heads is a hieroglyph giving Narmer's name (catfish = *nar*; chisel = *mer*) within a frame representing the royal palace.

On the back (FIG. 3-2) of the palette, the king, wearing the high, white conical crown of Upper Egypt and attended by his official foot washer, who carries his sandals, is shown slaying a captured enemy. The slaying motif closely resembles the group at the lower left of the Hierakonpolis mural (FIG. 3-1A) and became the standard pictorial formula signifying the inevitable triumph of the Egyptian god-kings over their foes (compare FIG. 3-38). Above and to the right, the king appears again in his role as the "Living Horus"—here as a falcon with one human arm. The falcon-king takes captive a man-headed hieroglyph with papyrus plants growing from it, which stands for the king's victory over the land of Lower Egypt. Below the king are two fallen enemies.

On the front (FIG. 3-3), the elongated necks of two felines form the circular depression that would have held eye makeup in an ordinary palette not made for display. The intertwined necks of the animals (a motif common in Mesopotamian art) may be a symbolic reference to Egypt's unification. In the uppermost register, Narmer, now wearing Lower Egypt's red crown topped by its distinctive wiry projection, reviews the beheaded bodies of the enemy. The dead are seen from above, a viewpoint reminiscent of the Paleolithic paintings (FIG. 1-8) on the ceiling of the Altamira cave in Spain representing bison lying on the ground. The Egyptian artist depicted each body with its severed head neatly placed between its legs. By virtue of his superior rank, the king, on both sides of the palette, performs his ritual task alone and towers over

his men and the enemy. In the lowest band, a great bull, symbolizing the king's superhuman strength, knocks down the fortress walls of a rebellious city (also seen in an "aerial view").

As in Mesopotamian art (compare, for example, FIGS. 2-7 and 2-8), the Egyptian artist's portrayal of Narmer combines profile views of his head, legs, and arms with frontal views of his eye and torso. Although the proportions of the human figure would vary over the centuries, this composite representation of the body's parts became standard in Egyptian art as well. In the Hierakonpolis painting (FIG. 3-1A), the artist scattered the figures across the wall more or less haphazardly. On Narmer's palette, the sculptor subdivided the surface into registers and inserted the pictorial elements into their organized setting in a neat and orderly way. The horizontal lines separating the narratives also define the ground supporting the figures. This was the preferred mode for narrative art in Mesopotamia as well. Narmer's palette and other Predynastic works established this compositional scheme as the norm in Egypt for millennia. Egyptian artists who departed from this convention did so deliberately, usually to express the absence of order, as in a chaotic battle scene (for example, FIG. 3-35).

Architecture

Narmer's palette is a commemorative artwork. Far more typical of Egyptian art is the Predynastic mural (FIG. 3-1A) from tomb 100 at Hierakonpolis. In fact, the contents of Egyptian tombs provide the principal, if not the exclusive, evidence for reconstructing Egyptian culture. The majority of monuments that the Egyptians left behind were dedicated to ensuring safety and happiness in the next life (see "Mummification and Immortality," page 61).

Mummification and Immortality

The Egyptians did not make the sharp distinction between body and soul that is basic to many religions. Rather, they believed that from birth a person possessed a kind of other self—the *ka*—which, on the death of the body, could inhabit the corpse and live on. For the *ka* to live securely, however, the body had to remain as nearly intact as possible. To ensure that it did, the Egyptians developed the technique of embalming (*mummification*) to a high art. Although they believed that the god Anubis invented embalming to preserve the body of the murdered Osiris (see “The Gods and Goddesses of Egypt,” page 60, and FIG. 7-60A), Egyptians did not practice mummification systematically until the Fourth Dynasty, when they also buried their dead in underground chambers beneath large brick or stone tombs (FIG. 3-4).

The details of the 70-day mummification process developed and changed over time, but the essential elements remained constant. The first step was the surgical removal of the lungs, liver, stomach, and intestines through an incision in the left flank. The Egyptians thought that these organs were most subject to decay, and wrapped them individually and placed them in four containers known as *canopic jars* for eventual deposit in the burial chamber with the corpse. (The jars take their name from the port of Canopus, where the Greeks believed that the Egyptians worshiped human-headed jars as personifications of Osiris. Those jars were not, however, used in embalming.) Egyptian surgeons extracted the brain through the nostrils and then discarded it because they did not attach any special significance to that organ. But they left in place the heart, necessary for life and also regarded as the seat of intelligence. (In FIG. 3-1, Hunefer’s heart is weighed against Maat’s feather to determine whether he is worthy of eternal life.)

Next, the body was treated for 40 days with natron, a naturally occurring salt compound that dehydrated the body. Then the embalmers filled the corpse with resin-soaked linens, and closed and covered the incision with a representation of the wedjat eye of Horus, a powerful *amulet* (a device to ward off evil and promote rebirth). Finally, they

treated the body with lotions and resins and wrapped it tightly with hundreds of yards of linen bandages to maintain its shape. The Egyptians often placed other amulets within the bandages or on the corpse. The most important were heart *scarabs* (gems in the shape of beetles), which bore spells to ensure that the heart would not tip the scales against the deceased at judgment time (FIG. 3-1). Masks (FIG. 3-34) usually covered the faces of the deceased.

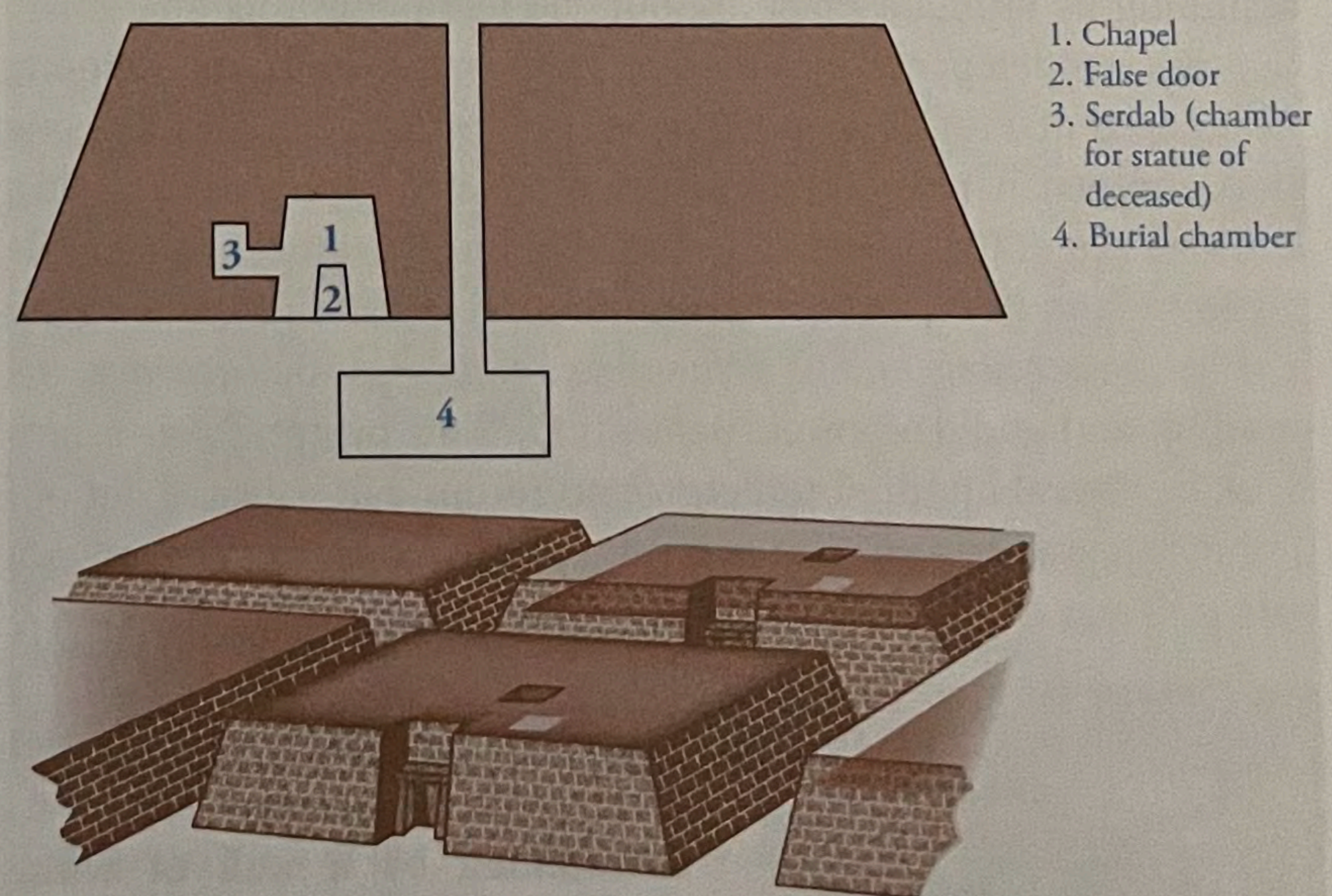
The Egyptian practice of mummification endured for thousands of years, even under Greek and Roman rule. Roman *mummies* with painted portraits (FIGS. 7-60A, 7-61, and 7-61A) have been popular attractions in museums worldwide for a long time, but the discovery in 1996 of a cemetery at Bahariya Oasis in the desert southwest of Cairo greatly expanded their number. The site, which archaeologists call the Valley of the Golden Mummies, extends for at least four square miles. The largest tomb found to date contained 32 mummies, but another held 43, some stacked on top of others because the tomb was used for generations and space ran out.

Preserving the deceased’s body by mummification was only the first requirement for immortality in ancient Egypt. Food and drink also had to be provided, as did clothing, utensils, and furniture. Nothing that had been enjoyed on Earth was to be lacking. The Egyptians also placed statuettes called *ushabtis* (Arabic, “answerers”) in the tomb. These figurines performed any labor required of the deceased in the afterlife, answering whenever his or her name was called.

Beginning in the third millennium BCE, the Egyptians also set up statues of the dead (for example, FIGS. 3-13A, 3-14, 3-14A, and 3-14B) in their tombs. The statues were meant to guarantee the permanence of the person’s identity by providing substitute dwelling places for the *ka* in case the mummy disintegrated. Wall paintings and reliefs (for example, FIGS. 3-15, 3-16, 3-28, and 3-28A) recorded the recurring round of human activities. The Egyptians hoped and expected that the images and inventory of life, collected and set up within the protective stone walls of the tomb, would ensure immortality.

Mastabas. The standard tomb type in early Egypt was the *mastaba* (Arabic, “bench”), a rectangular brick or stone structure with sloping sides erected over an underground burial chamber (FIG. 3-4). The form probably developed from earthen mounds that had covered even earlier burials. Although mastabas originally housed single burials, as in FIG. 3-4, they later became increasingly complex in order to accommodate members of several families. The main feature of these tombs, other than the burial chamber itself, was the chapel, which had a false door through which the *ka* could join the world of the living and partake in the meals placed on an offering table. Some mastabas also had a *serdab*, a small room housing a statue of the deceased.

Imhotep and Djoser. One of the most renowned figures in Egyptian history was IMHOTEP, master builder for King Djoser (r. 2630–2611 BCE) of the Third Dynasty. Imhotep’s is the first recorded name of an artist anywhere in the world. A man of legendary talent, Imhotep also served as Djoser’s official seal bearer and as high priest of the sun god Re. After his death, the Egyptians deified Imhotep as the son of the god Ptah and in time probably inflated

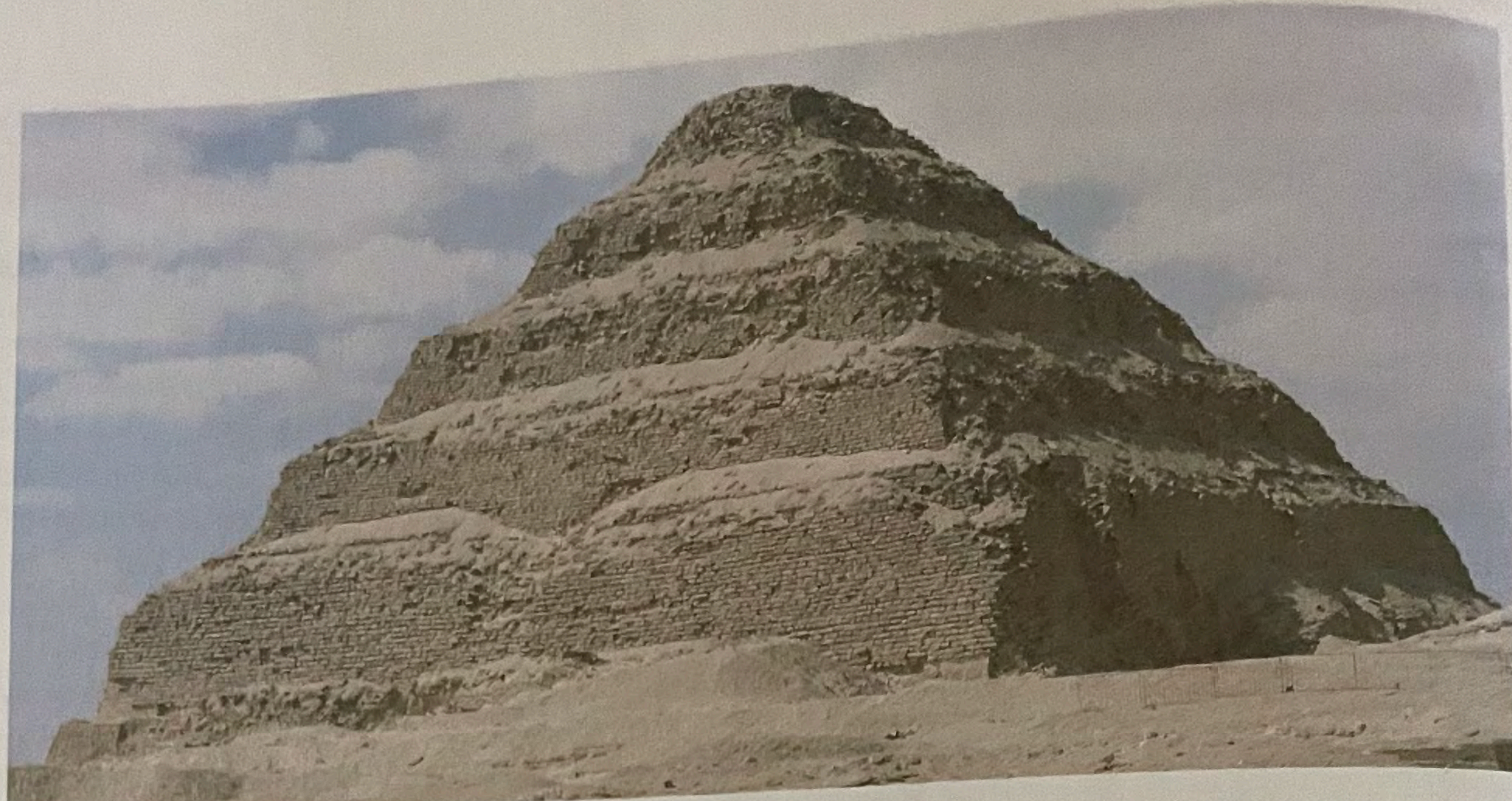


3-4 Section (top) and restored view (bottom) of typical Egyptian mastaba tombs.

Egyptian mastabas had underground chambers, which housed the mummified body, portrait statues, and offerings to the deceased. Scenes of daily life often decorated the interior walls.

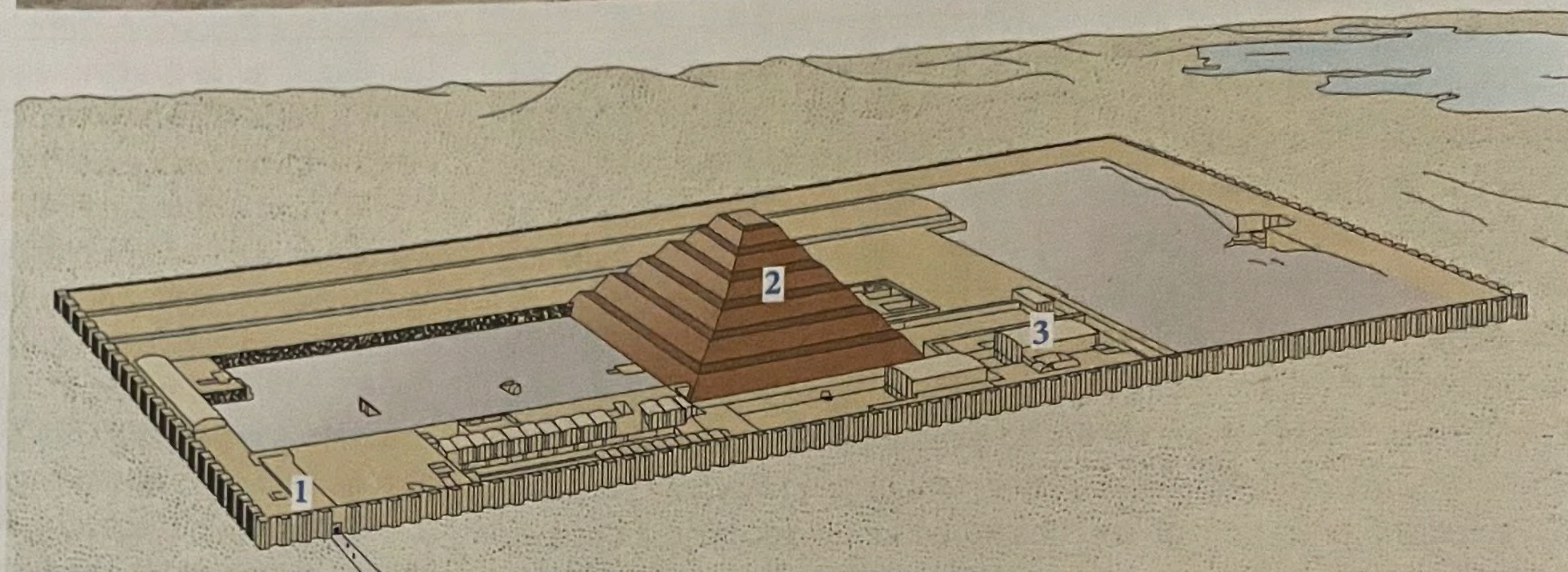
3-5 IMHOTEP, stepped pyramid (looking northwest) of Djoser, Saqqara, Egypt, Third Dynasty, ca. 2630–2611 BCE.

Imhotep, the first artist whose name is recorded, built the first stone pyramid during the Third Dynasty for King Djoser. The god-king's pyramid resembles a series of stacked mastabas of diminishing size.



3-6 Restored view of the mortuary precinct of Djoser, Saqqara, Egypt, Third Dynasty, ca. 2630–2611 BCE. (1) entrance hall, (2) stepped pyramid, (3) north palace.

Djoser's pyramid was the centerpiece of an immense funerary complex that included buildings connected with his funerary cult. Underground galleries resembling a palace were the king's home in the afterlife.



the list of his achievements. Nonetheless, architectural historians accept Manetho's attribution to Imhotep of the stepped pyramid (FIG. 3-5) of Djoser at Saqqara. Saqqara was the ancient *necropolis* (Greek, "city of the dead") of Memphis, Egypt's capital at the time. Built before 2600 BCE, Djoser's pyramid is one of the oldest stone structures in Egypt and the first stone pyramid. Begun as a large mastaba with each of its faces oriented toward one of the cardinal points of the compass, the tomb was enlarged at least twice before assuming its ultimate shape. About 200 feet high in its final form, Djoser's stepped pyramid is the first truly grandiose Egyptian tomb. Composed of a series of mastabas of diminishing size, stacked one atop another, it resembles a Mesopotamian ziggurat (FIG. 2-15). Unlike a ziggurat, however, Djoser's pyramid is a tomb, not a temple platform, and its dual function was to protect the mummified king and his possessions and to symbolize, by its gigantic presence, his absolute and godlike power. Beneath Djoser's pyramid was a network of several hundred underground rooms and galleries cut out of the Saqqara bedrock. The vast subterranean complex resembles a palace. It was to be the king's home in the afterlife.



3-6A Entrance hall, Djoser precinct, Saqqara, ca. 2630–2611 BCE.

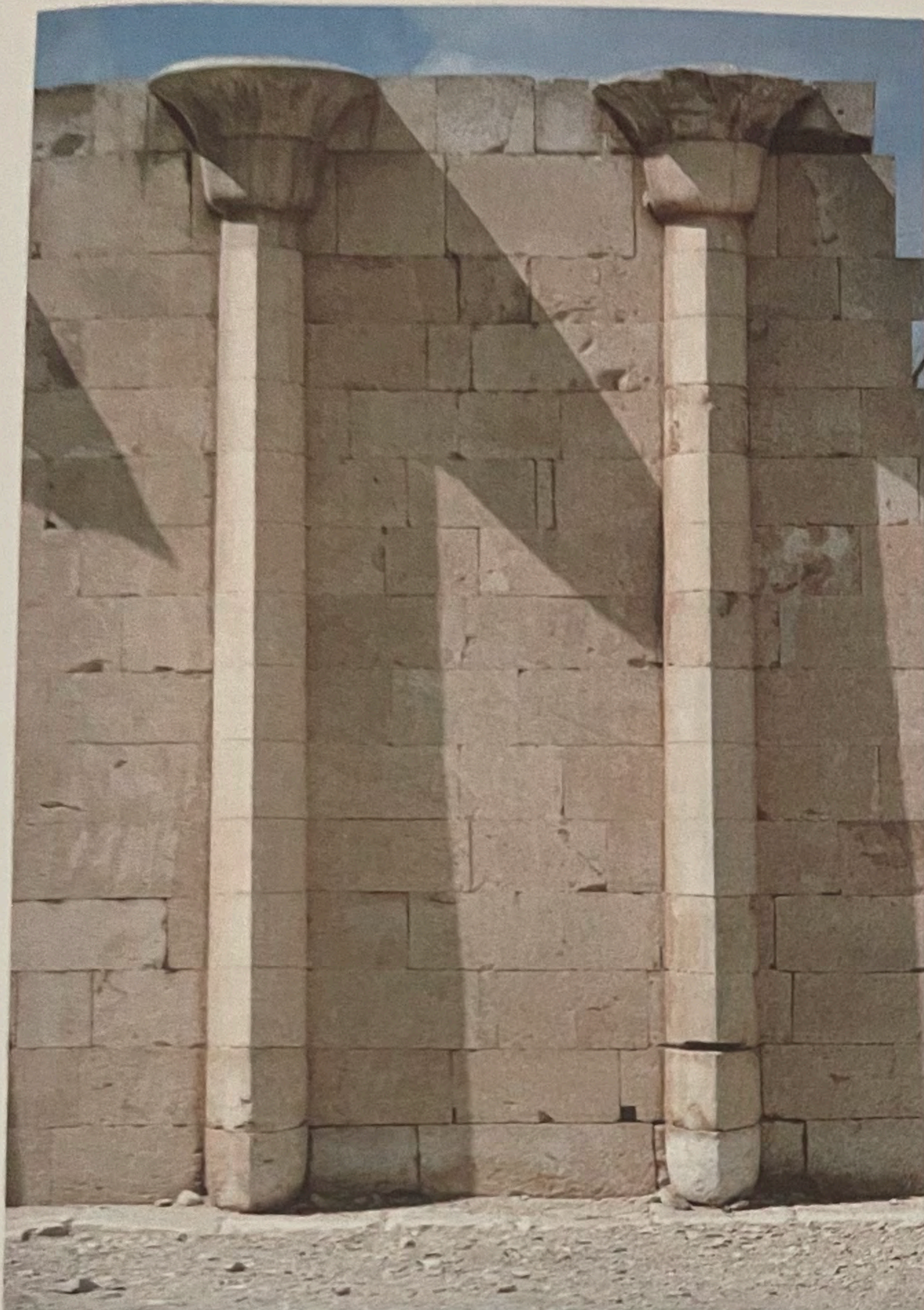
Djoser's pyramid stands near the center of an immense (37-acre) rectangular enclosure (FIG. 3-6) surrounded by a wall of white limestone 34 feet high and 5,400 feet long. The huge precinct, with its protective walls and tightly regulated access (FIGS. 3-6, no. 1, and 3-6A), stands in sharp contrast to the roughly contemporaneous

Sumerian Royal Cemetery at Ur, where no barriers kept people away from the burial area. Nor did the Mesopotamian cemetery have a temple for the worship of the deified dead. At Saqqara, a funerary temple stands against the northern face of Djoser's pyramid (FIG. 3-6, no. 2) so that after his death, the divine king could join with the northern star. Priests performed daily rituals at the temple in celebration of the immortal ruler.

Djoser's funerary temple was but one of many buildings arranged around several courts. Most of the others were dummy structures with stone walls enclosing fills of rubble, sand, or gravel. The buildings imitated in stone various types of temporary structures made of plant stems and mats erected in Upper and Lower Egypt to celebrate the Jubilee Festival, which perpetually reaffirmed the royal existence in the hereafter. The translation into stone of structural forms previously made out of plants may be seen in the columns (FIG. 3-7) of the north palace (FIG. 3-6, no. 3) of Djoser's funerary precinct. The columns end in *capitals* that take the form of the papyrus blossoms of Lower Egypt. The column shafts resemble papyrus stalks. Djoser's columns are not freestanding, as are most later columns. They are *engaged columns* (that is, attached to walls), but are nonetheless the earliest known stone columns in the history of architecture.

OLD KINGDOM

The Old Kingdom is the first of the three great periods of Egyptian history, called the Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms, respectively. Many Egyptologists now begin the Old Kingdom with Sneferu (r. 2575–2551 BCE), the first king of the Fourth Dynasty, although



3-7 Detail of the facade of the north palace (FIG. 3-6, no. 3) of the mortuary precinct of Djoser, Saqqara, Egypt, Third Dynasty, ca. 2630–2611 BCE.

The earliest known stone columns are in Djoser's funerary precinct. Those on the north palace facade are engaged (attached) to the walls and have shafts and capitals resembling papyrus plants.

the traditional division of kingdoms places Djoser and the Third Dynasty in the Old Kingdom. It ended with the breakup of the Eighth Dynasty around 2134 BCE.

Architecture

The divine rulers of the Old Kingdom amassed great wealth and expended it on grandiose architectural projects, of which the most spectacular were the Fourth Dynasty pyramids of Gizeh, the oldest of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world (see "Babylon, City of Wonders," page 50). The prerequisites for membership in the elite club of Wonders were colossal size and enormous cost.

Gizeh. The Egyptians constructed the three major pyramids (FIG. 3-8) at Gizeh over the course of about 75 years (see "Building the Pyramids of Gizeh," page 64) to serve as the tombs of the Fourth Dynasty kings Khufu (r. 2551–2528 BCE; FIG. 3-9), Khafre (r. 2520–2494 BCE), and Menkaure (r. 2490–2472 BCE). They represent the culmination of an architectural evolution that began with

the mastaba (FIG. 3-4), but the classic pyramid form is not simply a refinement of the stepped pyramid (FIG. 3-5). The new tomb shape probably reflects the influence of Heliopolis, the seat of the powerful cult of Re, whose emblem was a pyramidal stone, the ben-ben (see "The Gods and Goddesses of Egypt," page 60). The pyramids are symbols of the sun. The Pyramid Texts, inscribed on the burial chamber walls of royal pyramids beginning with the Fifth Dynasty pyramid of Unas (r. 2356–2323 BCE), refer to the sun's rays as the ladder that the god-king uses to ascend to the heavens.

Ho, Unas! You have not gone away dead: You have gone away alive.²

So, you shall go forth, Unas, to the sky and step up on it in this its identity of the ladder.³

[Unas] has flown . . . to the sky amidst his brothers the gods. . . .

Unas's seat is with you, Sun.⁴

The pyramids were where Egyptian kings were reborn in the after-life, just as the sun is reborn each day at dawn.



3-8 Aerial view of the Fourth Dynasty pyramids (looking north), Gizeh, Egypt. *From bottom:* pyramid of Menkaure, ca. 2490–2472 BCE; pyramid of Khafre, ca. 2520–2494 BCE; and Great Pyramid of Khufu, ca. 2551–2528 BCE.

The three pyramids of Gizeh took the shape of the ben-ben, the emblem of the sun god Re. The sun's rays were the ramp that the Egyptian kings used to ascend to the heavens after their death and rebirth.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

Building the Pyramids of Gizeh

The Fourth Dynasty pyramids (FIG. 3-8) across the Nile from modern Cairo are on every list of Wonders of the ancient world. How did the Egyptians solve the myriad problems they encountered in constructing these colossal tombs?

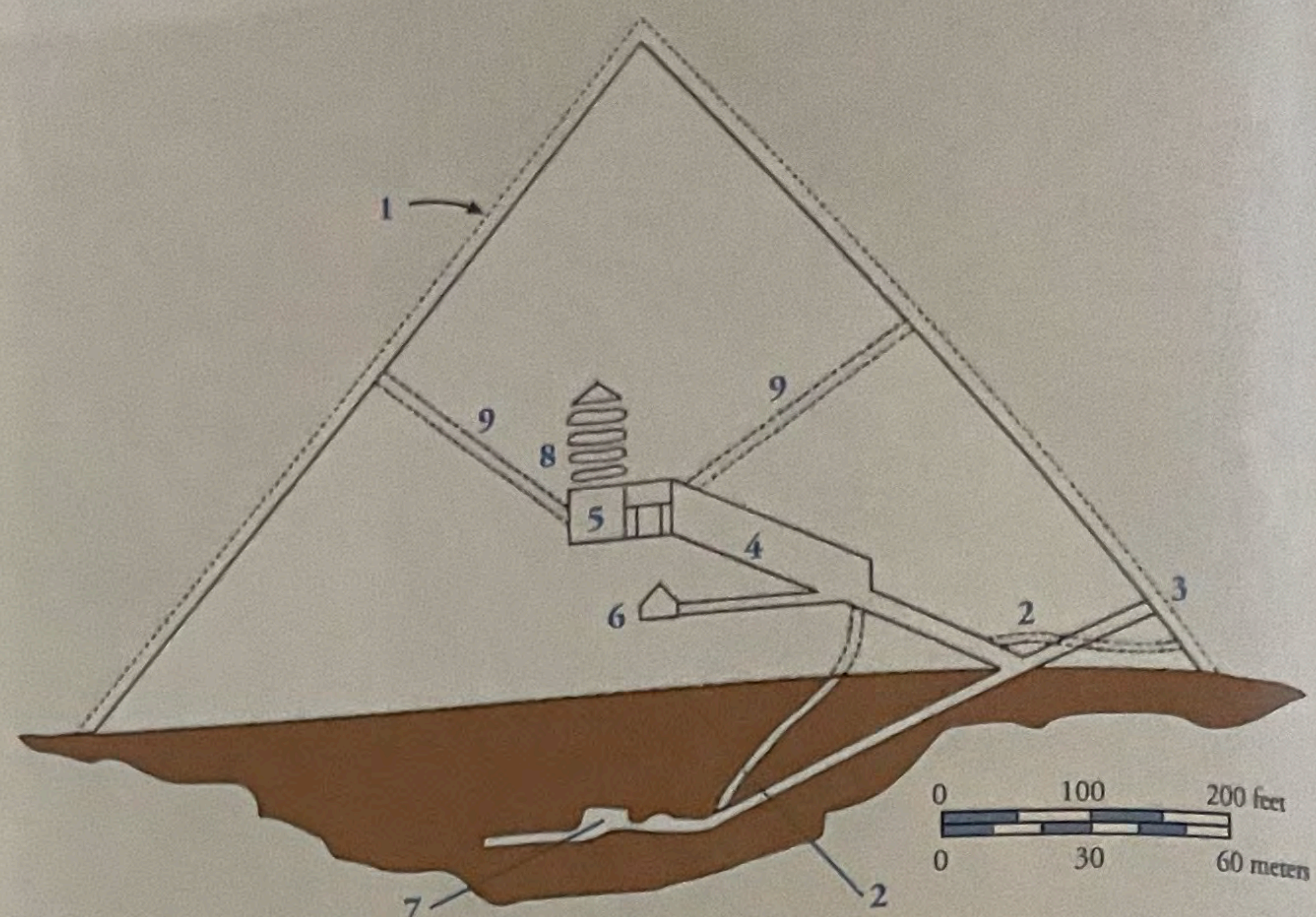
As with all building projects of this type, the erection of the Gizeh pyramids was a complex process that began with surveying and leveling the construction site. Next, skilled masons had to quarry the millions of stone blocks needed—in this case, primarily from the Gizeh limestone plateau itself. Teams of workers had to cut into the rock and remove large blocks of roughly equal size using stone or copper chisels and wood mallets and wedges. Often, the artisans had to cut deep tunnels to find high-quality stone free of cracks and other flaws. To remove a block, the stonemasons cut channels by pounding diorite balls against the rock on the sides and partly underneath. Then they pried the stones free from the bedrock with wood levers. New tools for this difficult work had to be manufactured constantly because the chisels and mallets broke or became dull very quickly.

After workers liberated the stones, the rough blocks had to be transported to the building site. There, the Egyptian stonemasons shaped the blocks to the exact dimensions required, with smooth faces (*dressed masonry*) for a perfect fit. Small blocks could be carried on a man's shoulders or on the back of a donkey, but the Egyptians moved the massive blocks for the pyramids using wood sleds. The artisans dressed the blocks by chiseling and pounding the surfaces and, in the last stage, by rubbing and grinding the surfaces with fine polishing stones. Architectural historians call this kind of construction *ashlar masonry*—carefully cut and regularly shaped blocks of stone piled in successive horizontal rows, or *courses*.

To set the ashlar blocks in place, workers under the direction of master builders such as Hemiunu (FIG. 3-14B), who supervised the construction of Khufu's pyramid (FIG. 3-9), erected rubble ramps against the core of the pyramid. They adjusted the ramps' size and slope as work progressed and the tomb grew in height. Scholars debate whether the Egyptians used simple linear ramps inclined at a right angle to one face of the pyramid, or zigzag or spiral ramps akin to staircases. Linear ramps would have had the advantage of simplicity and would have left three sides of the pyramid unobstructed. But zigzag ramps placed against one side of the structure or spiral ramps winding around the pyramid would have greatly reduced the slope of the incline and would have made dragging the blocks easier. Some scholars also have suggested a combination of straight and spiral ramps, and one recent theory posits a system of spiral ramps within, instead of outside, the pyramid.

The Egyptians used ropes and levers both to lift and to lower the stones, guiding each block into its designated place. Finally, the pyramid received a casing of white limestone blocks (FIG. 3-9, no. 1), cut so

precisely that the eye could scarcely detect the joints. The reflection of sunlight on the facing would have been dazzling, underscoring the pyramid's solar symbolism. Some casing stones are still in place at the peak of the pyramid of Khafre (FIG. 3-11).



1. Silhouette with original facing stone
2. Thieves' tunnels
3. Entrance
4. Grand gallery
5. King's chamber

6. So-called Queen's chamber
7. False tomb chamber
8. Relieving blocks
9. Air shafts(?)

3-9 Section of the Great Pyramid of Khufu, Gizeh, Egypt, Fourth Dynasty, ca. 2551–2528 BCE.

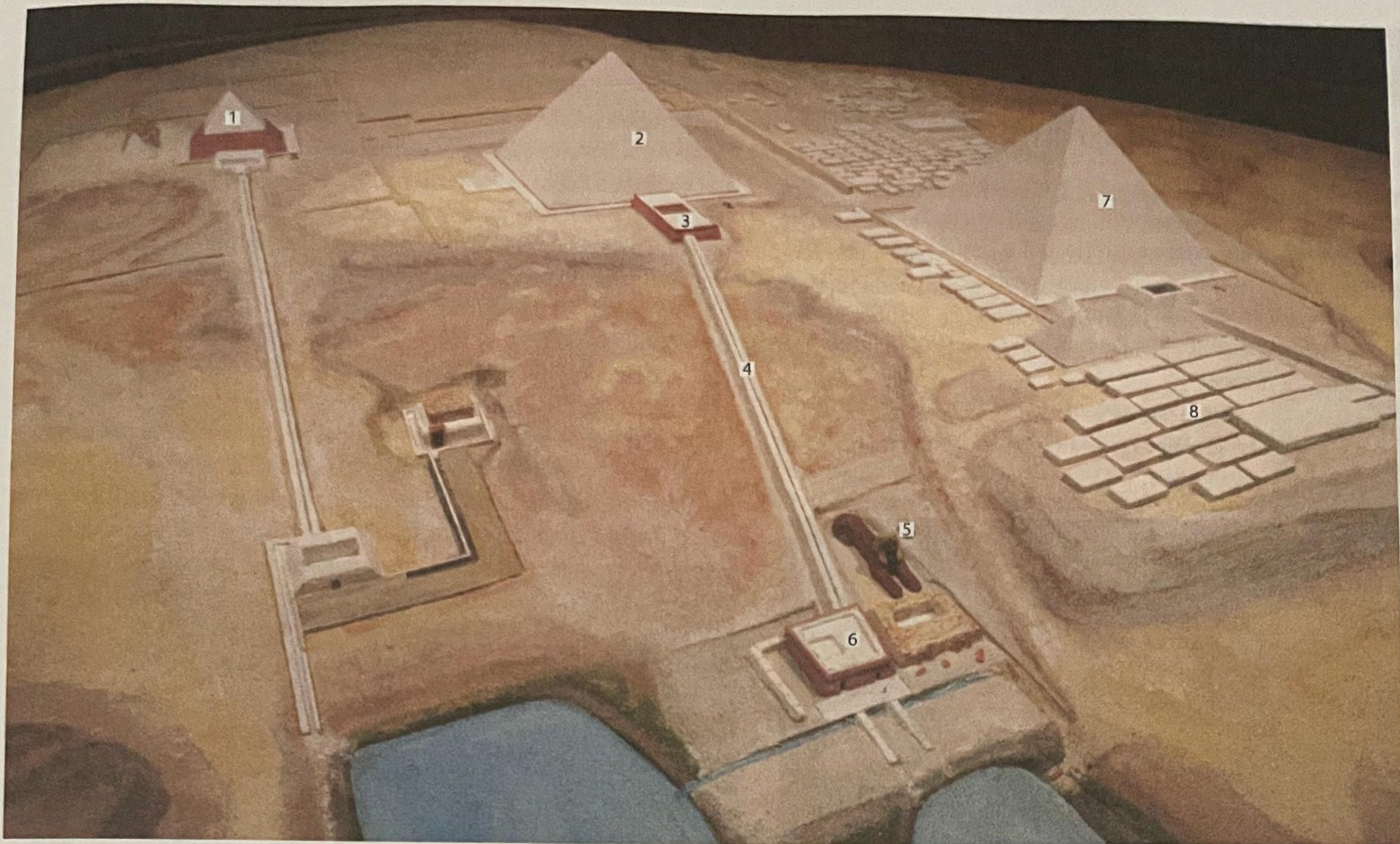
Khufu's pyramid is the largest at Gizeh. Constructed of roughly 2.3 million blocks of stone weighing an average of 2.5 tons, the structure is an almost solid mass of stone quarried from the Gizeh plateau itself.

precisely that the eye could scarcely detect the joints. The reflection of sunlight on the facing would have been dazzling, underscoring the pyramid's solar symbolism. Some casing stones are still in place at the peak of the pyramid of Khafre (FIG. 3-11).

Of the three Fourth Dynasty pyramids at Gizeh, the tomb of Khufu (FIGS. 3-9 and 3-10, no. 7), known as the Great Pyramid, is the oldest and largest. Except for the galleries and burial chamber, it is an almost solid mass of limestone masonry. At the base, the length of one side of Khufu's tomb is approximately 775 feet, and its area is some 13 acres. Its present height is about 450 feet (originally 480 feet). Roughly 2.3 million blocks of stone, each weighing an average of 2.5 tons, make up the fabric of the aptly named Great Pyramid. Some of the stones at the base weigh about 15 tons.

The three immense Gizeh pyramids attest to the extraordinary engineering and mathematical expertise of the Egyptians of the mid-third millennium BCE as well as to the Old Kingdom builders' mastery of masonry construction and ability to mobilize, direct, house, and feed a huge workforce engaged in one of the most labor-intensive enterprises ever undertaken.

From the remains surrounding the pyramid of Khafre at Gizeh, archaeologists have been able to reconstruct an entire funerary complex (FIG. 3-10). The complex included the pyramid itself, with the god-king's burial chamber; the *mortuary temple* adjoining the pyramid on the east side, where priests made offerings to the deceased and stored cloth, food, and ceremonial vessels; the roofed *causeway* (raised road) leading to the mortuary temple; and the *valley temple*



3-10 Model of the pyramid complex, Gizeh, Egypt. Harvard University Semitic Museum, Cambridge. (1) pyramid of Menkaure, (2) pyramid of Khafre, (3) mortuary temple of Khafre, (4) causeway, (5) Great Sphinx, (6) valley temple of Khafre, (7) Great Pyramid of Khufu, (8) pyramids of the royal family and mastabas of nobles.

Like Djoser's pyramid (FIG. 3-6), the Gizeh pyramids were not isolated tombs but parts of funerary complexes with a valley temple, a covered causeway, and a mortuary temple adjoining the tomb.

at the edge of the floodplain. Many Egyptologists believe that the complex served not only as the king's tomb and temple but also as his palace in the afterlife.

Great Sphinx. Beside the causeway and dominating the valley temple of Khafre rises the Great Sphinx (FIG. 3-11). Carved from a spur of rock in the Gizeh quarry, the colossal statue—the largest in Egypt, Mesopotamia, or Persia—is probably an image of Khafre (originally complete with the king's ceremonial beard and *nemes* headdress with *uraeus* cobra), although some scholars think that it portrays Khufu and predates the construction of Khafre's complex. Whomever it portrays, the *sphinx*—a lion with a human head—was an appropriate image for a king. The composite form suggests that the Egyptian king combined human intelligence with the fearsome strength and authority of the king of beasts.



3-11 Great Sphinx (with pyramid of Khafre in the background), Gizeh, Egypt, Fourth Dynasty, ca. 2520–2494 BCE. Sandstone, 65' high.

Carved out of the Gizeh stone quarry, the Great Sphinx is of colossal size. The sphinx has the body of a lion and the head of a king (probably Khafre) and is associated with the sun god.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

How to Portray a God-King

The Egyptian kings were divine beings, not mortal rulers, and the sculptors of the Old Kingdom needed to formulate a distinctive way to portray them in order to differentiate them from other men—beyond simply representing them wearing royal regalia. The solution they devised proved so satisfactory that, with the exception of some Middle and New Kingdom portraits discussed later in this chapter (FIGS. 3-17 and 3-29), the formula persisted for millennia.

In the portrait (FIG. 3-12) from his valley temple at Gizeh, King Khafre wears a simple kilt and sits rigidly upright on a throne formed of

two stylized lions' bodies. Intertwined lotus and papyrus plants—symbolic of the united Egypt—appear between the throne's legs. Khafre has the royal false beard fastened to his chin and wears the royal linen head-dress. The headdress covers his forehead and falls in pleated folds over his shoulders. Behind Khafre's head is the falcon (compare FIG. 3-2) that identifies the king as the "Living Horus."

As befitting a divine ruler, the sculptor portrayed Khafre with a well-developed, flawless body and a perfect face, regardless of his real age and appearance. Khafre's portrait is not a true likeness and was not intended to be. The purpose of Egyptian royal portraiture was not to reproduce the distinctive shapes of bodies or to record individual features, as was the case, for example, in Republican Rome (FIG. 7-8). Old Kingdom sculptors sought to create idealized images that communicated the divine nature of Egyptian kingship. Nevertheless, each king's portraits incorporated enough distinctive facial traits to enable his ka to know where to reside.

The enthroned Khafre radiates serenity. The sculptor created this effect in part by giving the figure great compactness and solidity, with few projecting, breakable parts. The form of the statue expresses its purpose: to last for eternity. Khafre's body is one with the simple slab that forms the back of the king's throne. His arms follow the bend of his body and rest on his thighs, and his legs are close together. Part of the original stone block still connects the king's legs to his chair. Khafre's pose is frontal and, except for the hands, *bilaterally symmetrical* (the same on either side of an axis, in this case the vertical axis). The sculptor suppressed all movement and with it the notion of time, creating an aura of eternal stillness.

Some extant reliefs and paintings (FIG. 3-12A) show Egyptian sculptors at work and provide detailed information about the successive stages of carving a statue. To produce Khafre's statue, the artist first drew the front, back, and two profile views of the seated king on the four vertical faces of the stone block. Next, apprentices chiseled away the excess stone on each side. Finally, the master sculpted the parts of Khafre's body, the falcon, and so forth. The polished surface was achieved by *abrasion* (rubbing or grinding). This method



3-12A Sculptors at work, Thebes, ca. 1425 BCE.

of creating statuary accounts in large part for the blocklike look of the standard Egyptian statue, but that is not the necessary result of this carving method. Other sculptors, both ancient and modern, with different aims, have transformed stone blocks into dynamic, twisting human forms (for example, FIGS. 1-16 and 5-85).

Khafre. Perhaps the finest example of Old Kingdom royal portraiture (see "How to Portray a God-King," above) is the seated statue of Khafre illustrated here (FIG. 3-12), one of a series of similar statues carved for the god-king's valley temple (FIG. 3-10, no. 6) near the Great Sphinx. The stone is diorite, an exceptionally hard dark stone brought some 400 miles down the Nile from royal quarries in the south. (The Neo-Sumerian ruler Gudea [see "Gudea of Lagash," page 43, and FIG. 2-16] so admired diorite that he imported it to faraway Girsu.)



3-12 Khafre enthroned, from Gizeh, Egypt, Fourth Dynasty, ca. 2520–2494 BCE. Diorite, 5' 6" high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

This portrait from his pyramid complex depicts Khafre as an enthroned divine ruler with a perfect body. The formality of the pose creates an aura of eternal stillness, appropriate for the timeless afterlife.

Sculpture

Old Kingdom sculptors were called upon to produce statues in significant numbers because they fulfilled an important function in Egyptian tombs as substitute abodes for the ka if the embalmed corpse deteriorated (see "Mummification and Immortality," page 61). Egyptian sculptors worked with wood, clay, and other materials, but most of the many preserved funerary statues are of stone.

Menkaure. The seated statue, although a popular choice for royal portraits, is one of only a small number of standard types that Old Kingdom sculptors employed to represent the human figure. Another is the image of a person or deity standing, either alone or in a group—for example, the two-figure group (FIG. 3-13) of Menkaure and a female figure, usually identified as one of his wives, probably the queen Khamerernebty, but perhaps the goddess Hathor. The statue once stood in the valley temple of Menkaure's pyramid complex at Gizeh. Here, too, the figures remain wedded in part to the stone block. In many Old Kingdom portraits, the stone backdrop is as high and wide as the figures and the back of the statue is an unarticulated slab. Those portraits could be classified as *high-relief* sculptures rather than freestanding statues.

Menkaure's pose—duplicated in countless other Egyptian statues—is rigidly frontal with the arms hanging straight down and close to his well-built body. He clenches his hands into fists with

the thumbs forward and advances his left leg slightly. But no shift occurs in the angle of the hips to correspond to the uneven distribution of weight. Khamerernebty(?) stands in a similar position. Her right arm, however, circles the king's waist, and her left hand gently rests on his left arm. This frozen stereotypical gesture indicates their marital status or, if king and goddess, their shared divinity. The two figures show no other sign of affection or emotion and look not at each other but out into space. As in the seated statue of Khafre (FIG. 3-12), the artist's aim was not to portray vibrant living figures but to suggest the timeless nature of the stone statue that might need to serve as an eternal substitute home for the ka.

Seated Scribe. Traces of paint remain on the portrait of Menkaure. Egyptian artists painted most of their statues, although sometimes sculptors left the natural color of the stone exposed, enhancing the sense of abstraction and timelessness. Striking examples of painted sculpture are the seated statues of Rahotep and Nofret (FIG. 3-13A) and the statue found at Saqqara portraying a Fourth Dynasty scribe (FIG. 3-14). Despite the stiff upright postures of all these statues and the frontality of head and body, the coloration lends a lifelike quality to the stone images.

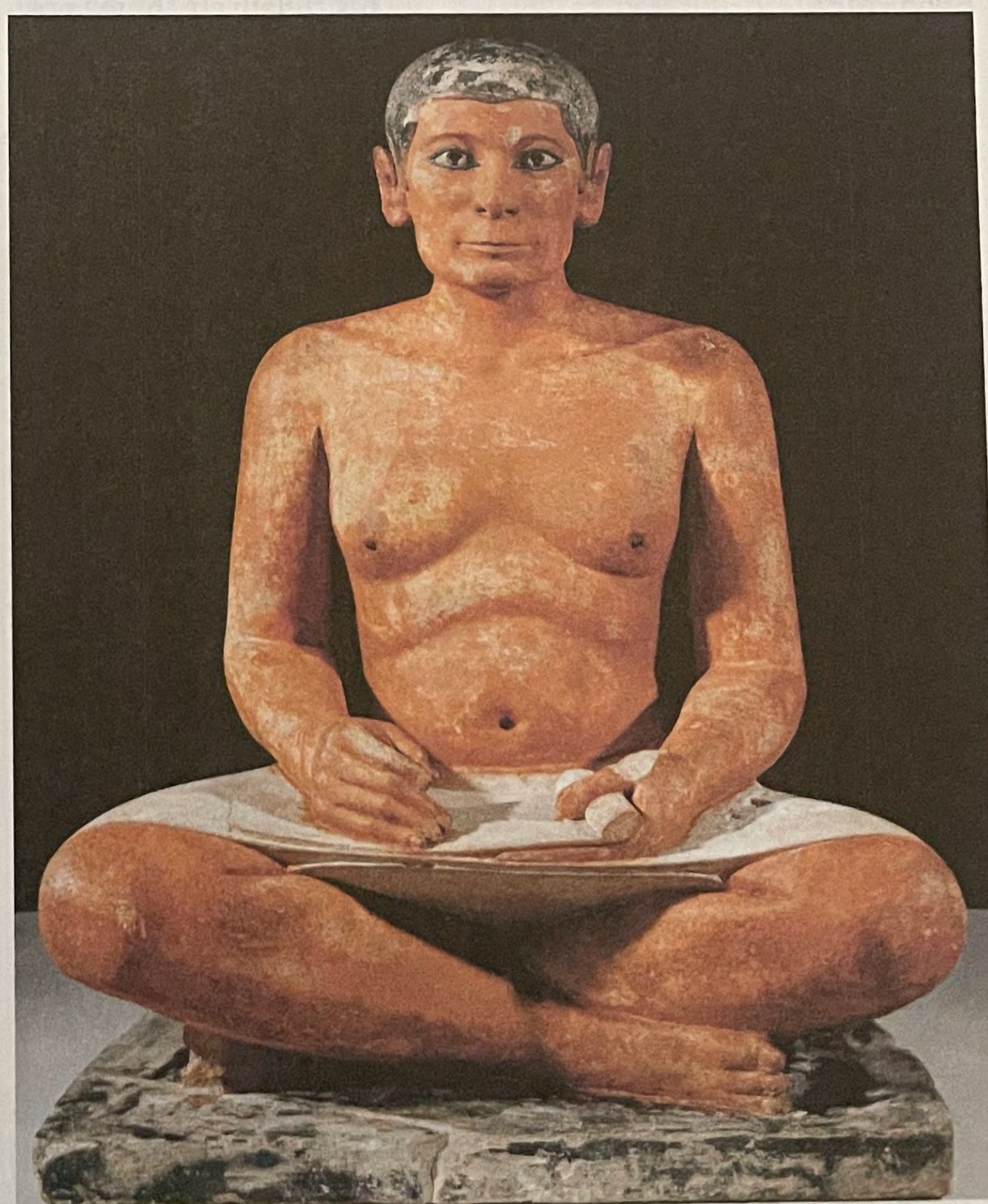


3-13A Rahotep and Nofret, Maidum, ca. 2575–2550 BCE.



3-13 Menkaure and Khamerernebty(?), from Gizeh, Egypt, Fourth Dynasty, ca. 2490–2472 BCE. Graywacke, 4' 6½" high. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

The statue of Menkaure and his wife (or Hathor?) displays the conventional postures used for Old Kingdom royal statues. The formalized embrace denotes the close association of the two figures.



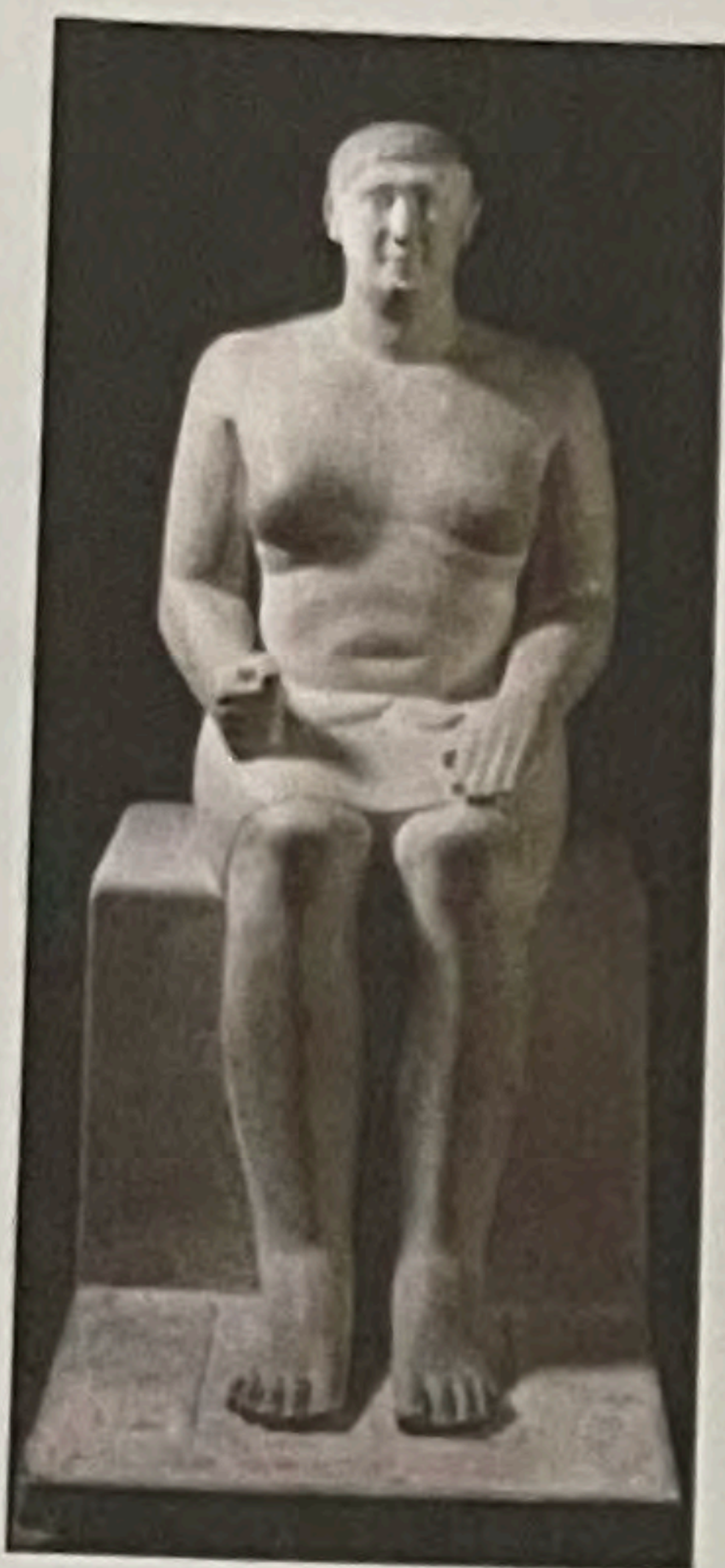
3-14 Seated scribe, from Saqqara, Egypt, Fourth Dynasty, ca. 2500 BCE. Painted limestone, 1' 9" high. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

The idealism that characterizes the portraiture of the Egyptian god-kings did not extend to the depiction of non-elite individuals. The sculptor portrayed this seated scribe with clear signs of aging.

The head of the Saqqara scribe displays an extraordinary sensitivity. With a penetration and sympathy seldom achieved at this early date, the sculptor conveyed the personality of a sharply intelligent and alert individual. The scribe sits directly on the ground, not on a throne or even on a chair. Although he occupied a position of honor in a largely illiterate society and performed a variety of official duties, the scribe was not as exalted a figure in the Egyptian hierarchy as the king, whose divinity made him superhuman. Consequently, his portrait is not idealized. Quite the contrary. For example, the sculptor reproduced the scribe's sagging chest muscles and protruding belly. These signs of age would have been disrespectful and wholly inappropriate in a depiction of an Egyptian



3-14A Kaaper, Saqqara, ca. 2450–2350 BCE.



3-14B Hemionu, Gizeh, ca. 2550–2530 BCE.

god-king or members of his family (see “How to Portray a God-King,” page 66). But the statue of the scribe is not a true portrait either. Rather, it is a composite of conventional types. Obesity, for example, characterizes many nonroyal Old Kingdom male portraits (for example, FIGS. 3-14A and especially 3-14B), perhaps because it attested to the comfortable life of the person represented and his relatively high position in society.

Tomb of Ti. In Old Kingdom tombs, images of the deceased also frequently appear in relief sculpture and in mural painting, sometimes singly (FIG. I-15), sometimes in a narrative context. The painted limestone relief scenes decorating the walls of the mastaba of a Fifth Dynasty official named Ti typify the subjects that Old Kingdom patrons favored for the adornment of their final resting places. Depictions of the deceased at his funerary meal and scenes of agriculture and hunting fill Ti's tomb. The Egyptians associated farming and hunting as well as dining with providing nourishment for the ka in the hereafter, but the subjects also had powerful symbolic overtones. In ancient Egypt, success in the hunt, for example, was a metaphor for triumph over the forces of evil.

On one wall (FIG. 3-15) of his tomb, Ti, his men, and his boats move slowly through the marshes, hunting hippopotami and birds in a dense growth of towering papyrus. The sculptor delineated the reedy stems of the plants with repeated fine grooves that fan out gracefully at the top into a commotion of frightened birds and stalking foxes. The water beneath the boats, signified by a pattern of wavy lines, is crowded with hippopotami and fish. Ti's men seem frantically busy with their spears, whereas Ti, depicted twice their size, stands aloof. The

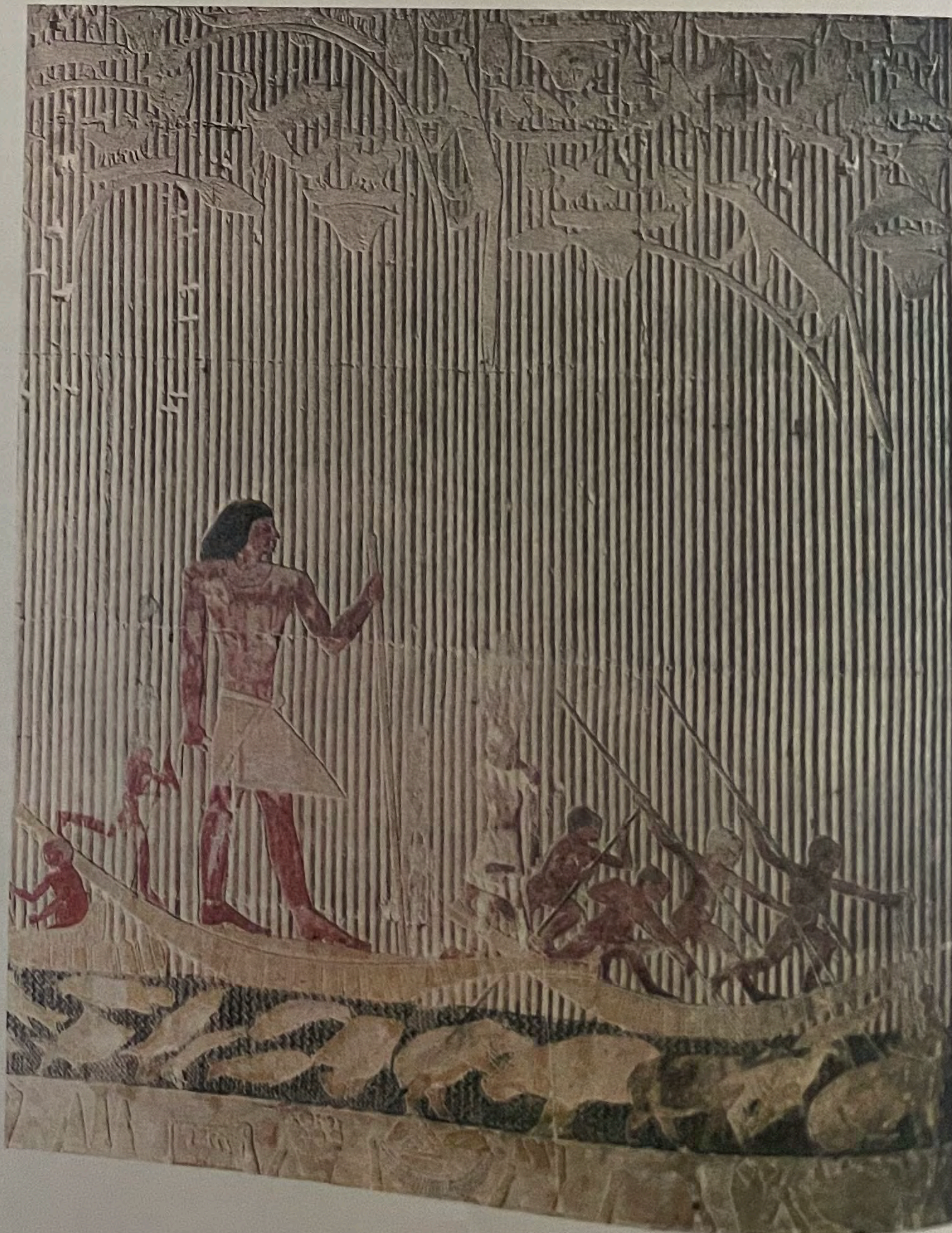
3-15 Ti watching a hippopotamus hunt, relief in the mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, Egypt, Fifth Dynasty, ca. 2450–2350 BCE. Painted limestone, 4' high.

In Egypt, a successful hunt was a metaphor for the triumph over evil. In this painted tomb relief, the deceased stands aloof from the hunters busily spearing hippopotami. Ti's size reflects his high rank.

basic conventions of Egyptian figure representation—used a half-millennium earlier for the palette of King Narmer (FIG. 3-2)—appear again here. As in the Predynastic work, the artist exaggerated the size of Ti to announce his rank, and combined frontal and profile views of Ti's body to show its most characteristic parts clearly. This approach to representation was well suited for Egyptian funerary art because it emphasizes the essential nature of the deceased, not his accidental appearance. Ti's conventional pose contrasts with the realistically rendered activities of his tiny servants and with the naturalistically carved and painted birds and animals among the papyrus buds. Ti's immobility suggests that he is not an actor in the hunt. He does not *do* anything. He simply *is*, a figure apart from time and an impassive observer of life, like his ka.

The idealized image of Ti is typical of Egyptian relief sculpture. Egyptian artists regularly ignored the endless variations in body types of real human beings. Painters and sculptors did not sketch their subjects from life but applied a strict *canon*, or system of proportions, to the human figure. They first drew a grid on the wall. Then they placed various human body parts at specific points on the network of squares. The height of a figure, for example, was a fixed number of squares, and the head, shoulders, waist, knees, and other parts of the body also had a predetermined size and place within the scheme. This approach to design continued for more than 2,500 years. Specific proportions might vary from workshop to workshop and change over time, but the principle of the canon persisted.

On another wall (FIG. 3-16) of Ti's mastaba, goats tread in seeds in the upper register, and, below, cattle ford a canal in the Nile. Here too, the scenes should be interpreted on a symbolic as well as a literal level. The fording of the Nile, for example, was a





3-16 Goats treading seed and cattle fording a canal, painted limestone reliefs in the mastaba of Ti, Saqqara, Egypt, Fifth Dynasty, ca. 2450–2350 BCE.

The fording of the Nile was a metaphor for the passage to the afterlife. These reliefs combine stereotypical poses for humans and animals with unconventional postures and anecdotal details.

metaphor for the deceased's passage from life to the hereafter. Ti is absent from the scenes, and all the men and animals participate in the narrative. Despite the sculptor's repeated use of similar poses for most of the human and animal figures, the reliefs are full of anecdotal details. Especially charming is the group at the lower right. A youth, depicted in a complex unconventional posture, carries a calf on his back. The animal, not a little afraid, turns its head back a full 180 degrees (compare FIG. 1-7) to seek reassurance from its mother, who returns the calf's gaze. Scenes such as this demonstrate that Egyptian artists could be close observers of daily life. The suppression of the anecdotal (that is, of the time-bound) from their representations of the deceased both in relief and in the round was a deliberate choice. Egyptian artists' primary purpose was not storytelling but to suggest the deceased's eternal existence in the afterlife as a reflection of his life on earth.

MIDDLE KINGDOM

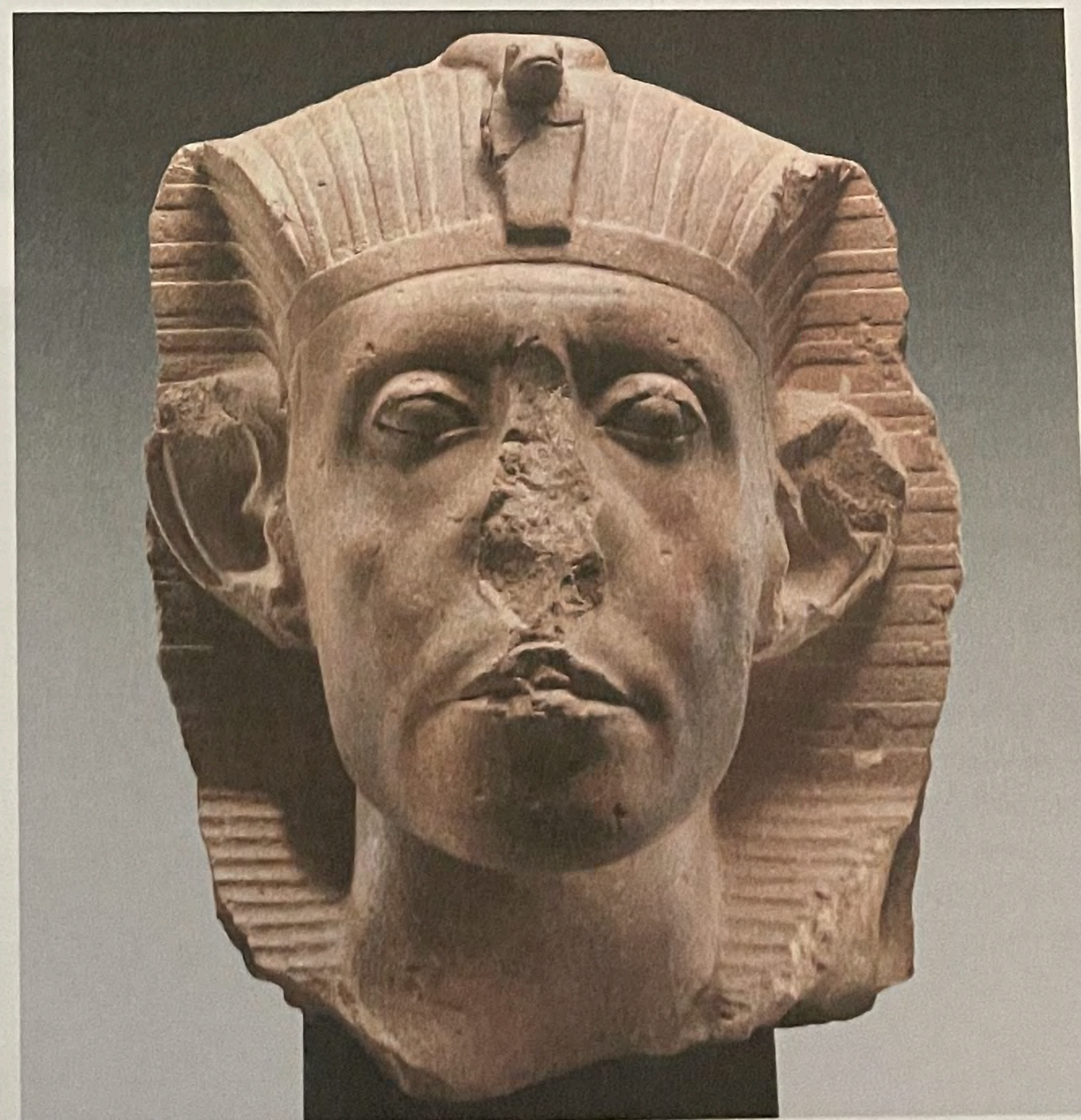
About 2150 BCE, the Egyptians challenged the power of the weak kings of the Sixth Dynasty, and for more than a century the land was in a state of civil unrest and near anarchy. But in 2040 BCE, the king of Upper Egypt, Mentuhotep II (r. 2050–1998 BCE), managed to unite Egypt again under a single ruler and established the Middle Kingdom (11th to 14th Dynasties), which lasted 400 years.

Sculpture

Although in most respects Middle Kingdom sculptors adhered to the conventions established during the Old Kingdom, portraying both men and women in the familiar seated (FIG. 3-16A) and standing poses, there were some notable innovations.



3-16A Lady Sennuwy, Kerma, ca. 1960–1916 BCE.



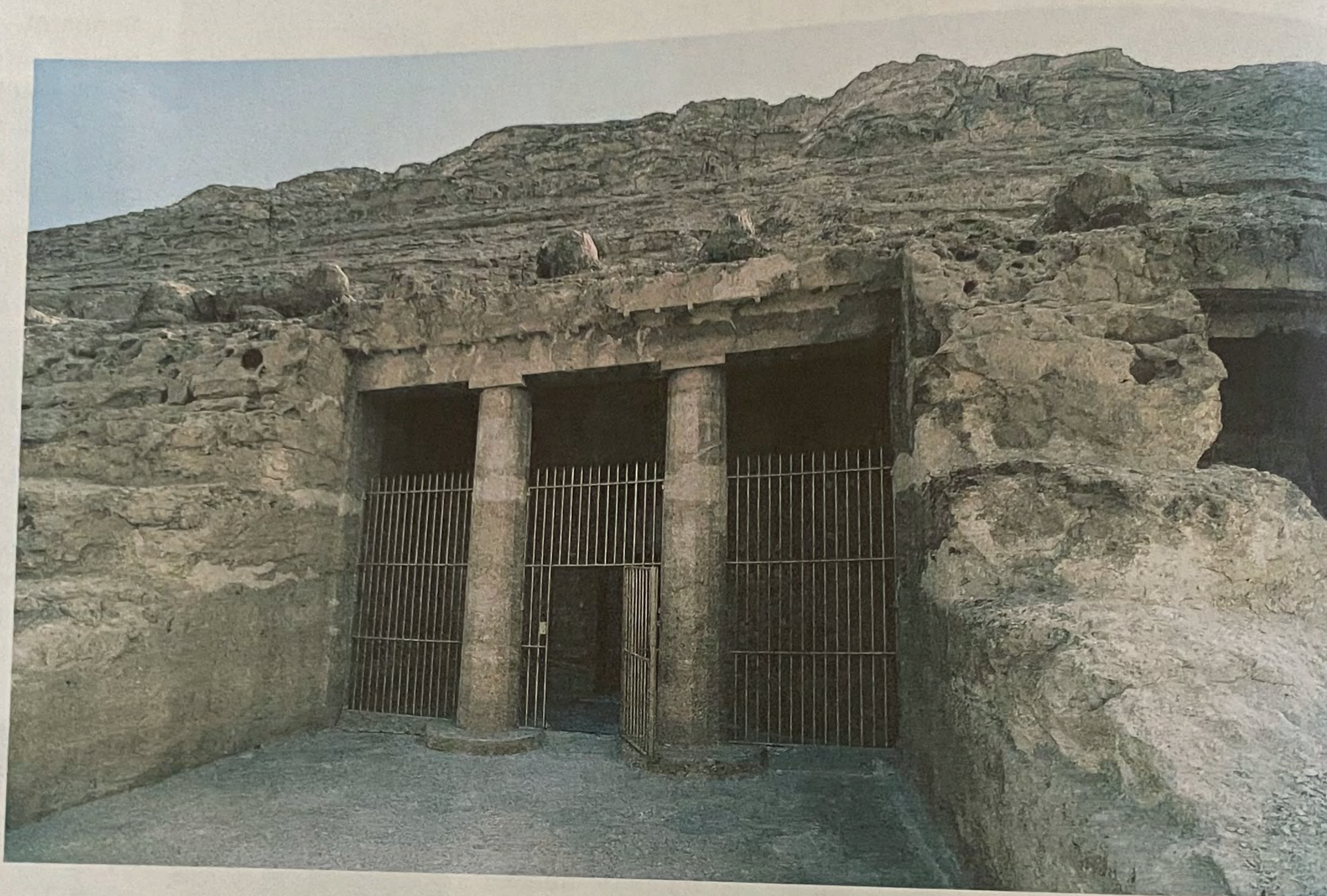
3-17 Head of Senusret III, 12th Dynasty, ca. 1860–1850 BCE. Red quartzite, 1' 5 ³/₄" high. Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City (William Rockhill Nelson Trust purchase).

Senusret III's portraits exhibit an unprecedented realism. The king's brooding expression reflects the mood of the time and contrasts sharply with the impassive faces of Old Kingdom pharaohs.

as a mature man with protruding ears; round eyes with heavy lids; a lined forehead; loose, aging flesh; and a downturned mouth. His pessimistic expression reflects the dominant mood of the time, echoed in Middle Kingdom literature. The portrait is very different in kind from the typically impassive faces of the Old Kingdom, and some art historians have interpreted the signs of age and emotion as projecting weakness. However, the intended message was probably that the king is old and wise—but possessing youthful physical vigor. This combination of older head and younger body, with a similar composite message, also characterizes many portraits of the Roman Republic (FIG. 7-9).

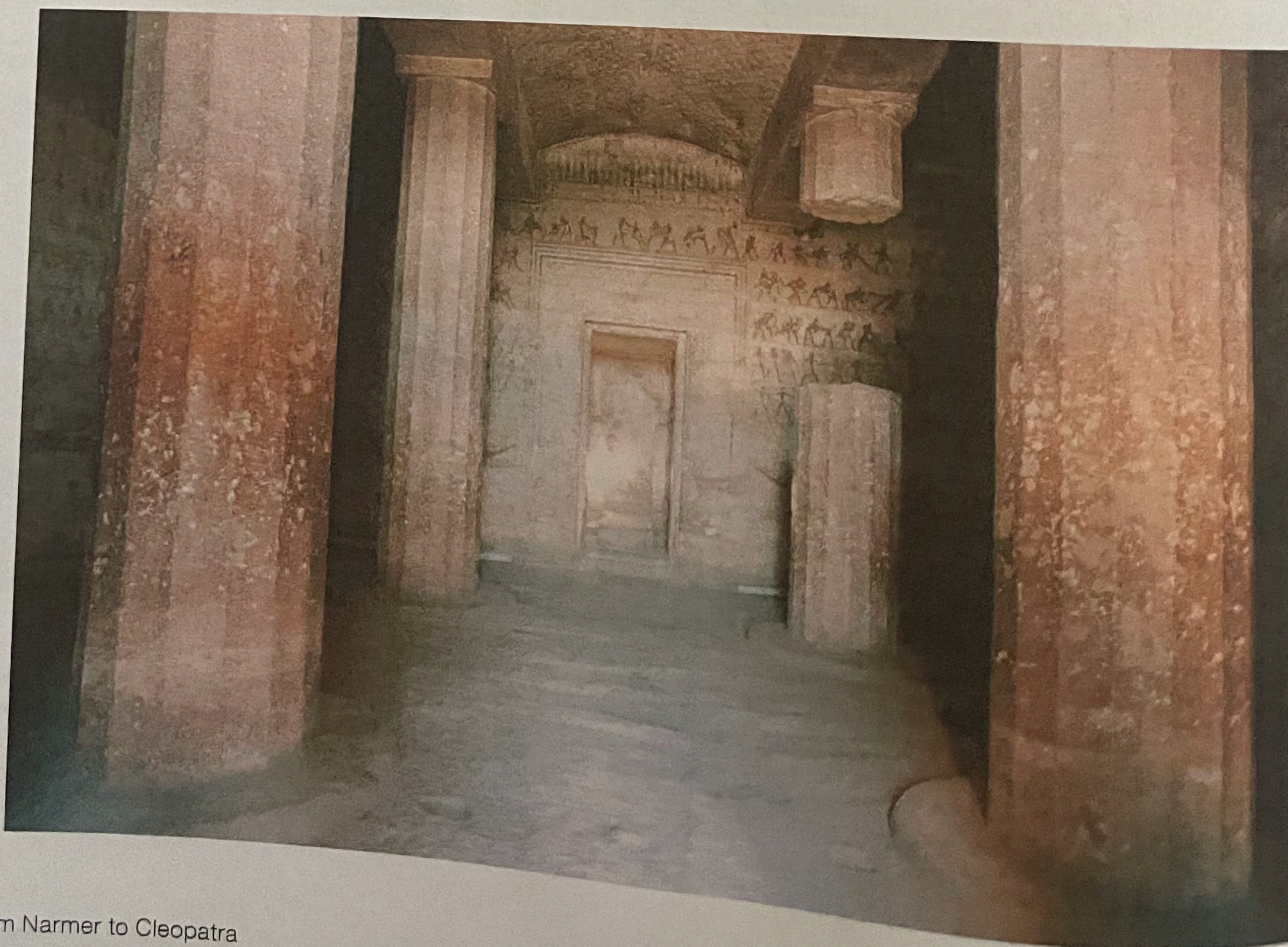
3-18 Tomb of Khnum-hotep II (tomb 3), Beni Hasan, Egypt, 12th Dynasty, ca. 1900–1880 BCE.

The tombs of Beni Hasan are characteristic of the Middle Kingdom. Hollowed out of the cliffs, these nonroyal tombs often have a shallow columnar porch, which leads into a columned hall and burial chamber.



3-19 Interior hall of the rock-cut tomb of Amenemhet (tomb 2), Beni Hasan, Egypt, 12th Dynasty, ca. 1900–1880 BCE.

Stonemasons carved the columnar hall of Amenemhet's tomb out of the living rock, which explains the suspended broken column at the rear. The shafts have flutes, a form that Greek architects later emulated.



Architecture

Senusret III's tomb, at Dashur, is a mud-brick pyramid, the preferred form for royal burials. More characteristic of Middle Kingdom funerary architecture are the rock-cut tombs of wealthy private patrons. This kind of tomb, documented also in the Old Kingdom, largely replaced the mastaba as the standard Egyptian tomb type.

Beni Hasan. Some of the best-preserved Middle Kingdom tombs are those of local officials at Beni Hasan. Hollowed out of the cliffs, the most elaborate examples, such as the 12th Dynasty tomb of

Khnumhotep II (FIG. 3-18), have a shallow columnar porch, which leads into a columned hall and then into a burial chamber featuring rock-cut statues of the deceased in niches, and paintings and painted reliefs on the walls. In the neighboring tomb of Amenemhet (FIG. 3-19), the columns in the hall serve no supporting function because, like the porch columns, they are continuous parts of the rock fabric. (Note the broken column in the rear suspended from the ceiling like an icicle.) The column shafts have *flutes*, like those in the entrance corridor (FIG. 3-6A) of Djoser's mortuary precinct at Saqqara. The Beni Hasan columns are more refined versions of Imhotep's earlier columns, which still look like bundles of reeds. The Middle Kingdom columns closely resemble later Greek columns of the Doric order (FIG. 5-13, *left*), and there is no doubt that the Greeks knew about and emulated many aspects of Egyptian architecture. Archaeologists believe that the kind of *fluting* used for the Beni Hasan column shafts derived from the carving of softwood trunks with the rounded cutting edge of the adze.

NEW KINGDOM

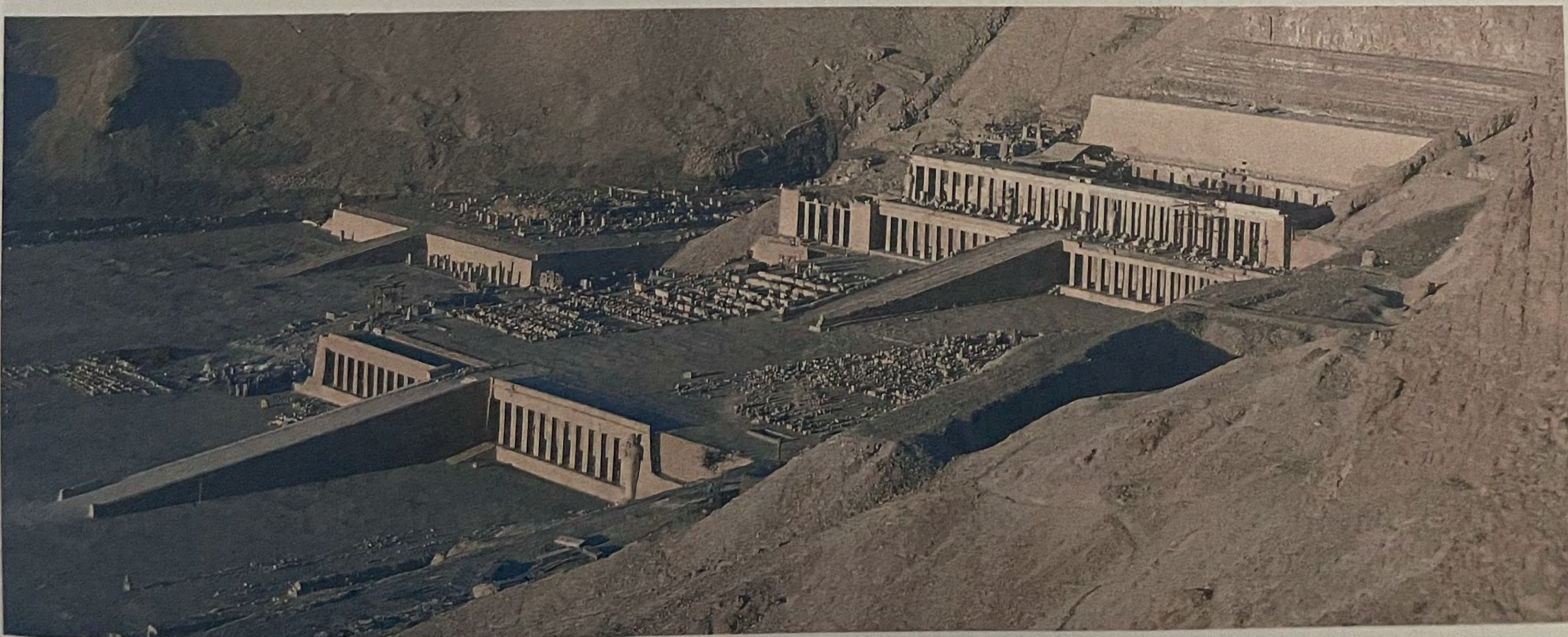
The Middle Kingdom collapsed when the Hyksos descended on Egypt from the Syrian and Mesopotamian uplands. They ruled the Nile Delta and Lower Egypt during what historians call the Second Intermediate Period until, in the mid-16th century, native Egyptian kings of the 17th Dynasty rose up in revolt. Ahmose I (r. 1550–1525 BCE), final conqueror of the Hyksos and first king of the 18th Dynasty, ushered in the New Kingdom, the most glorious period in Egypt's long history, when the Egyptian kings became known as *pharaohs*, the term commonly, if incorrectly, used to refer to Egyptian rulers of all periods. During the New Kingdom, Egypt extended its borders by conquest from the Euphrates River in the northeast deep into Nubia to the south (MAP 3-1). The capital remained at Memphis, but Thebes in Upper Egypt rose to prominence in large part due to the growing importance of the god worshiped there—Amen-Re. Thebes became a great metropolis with magnificent palaces, tombs, and temples along both banks of the Nile.

Architecture

If the most impressive monuments of the Old Kingdom are its pyramids, those of the New Kingdom are its grandiose temples. Some of these temples were built to worship the state gods, but others were mortuary temples, which provided the pharaohs with a place for worshiping their patron gods during their lifetimes and then served as temples in their own honor after their death. The greatest mortuary temples arose along the Nile in the Thebes district during the 18th and 19th Dynasties.

Deir el-Bahri. The most distinctive New Kingdom royal mortuary temple (FIG. 3-20) is at Deir el-Bahri, erected by and for the female pharaoh Hatshepsut, one of the most remarkable women of the ancient world (see “Hatshepsut, the Woman Who Would Be King,” page 72). Some Egyptologists attribute the temple to SENENMUT (FIG. 3-27), Hatshepsut's chancellor, described in two inscriptions as the queen's architect. His association with this project is uncertain, however. Hatshepsut's temple rises from the valley floor in three column-lined terraces connected by ramps on the central axis. It is striking how well Senenmut(?) designed the complex to complement its natural setting. The long horizontals and verticals of the *colonnades* and their rhythm of light and dark repeat the pattern of the limestone cliffs above.

As imposing as it is today, Hatshepsut's mortuary temple was once part of an even larger complex with a causeway connecting it to a now-lost valley temple. The multilevel funerary temple proper incorporated shrines to Hathor, Anubis, and the most important state god of the New Kingdom, the composite Amen-Re, as well as to Hatshepsut and her father, Thutmose I. As many as 200 statues in the round portraying the queen in various guises were on display throughout the vast complex. On the lowest terrace, to either side of the processional way, statues repeatedly represented Hatshepsut as a sphinx. On the uppermost level, the royal sculptors depicted the female pharaoh standing, seated, and as Osiris (compare FIG. 3-23A). At least eight colossal kneeling statues in red granite lined the way to the entrance of the Amen-Re sanctuary. The



3-20 Mortuary temple of Hatshepsut (looking southwest), Deir el-Bahri, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1473–1458 BCE.

Hatshepsut was the first great female monarch whose name is recorded. Her immense funerary temple incorporated shrines to Amen-Re, whom she claimed was her father, and to Hathor and Anubis.

Hatshepsut, the Woman Who Would Be King

In 1479 BCE, Thutmose II, the fourth pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty (r. 1492–1479 BCE), died. His principal wife (and half sister), Queen Hatshepsut (r. 1473–1458 BCE), had not given birth to any sons who survived, so the title of king went to Thutmose III, son of Thutmose II by another of his wives. Hatshepsut became regent for the boy-king. Within a few years, however, the queen proclaimed herself pharaoh and insisted that her father, Thutmose I, had chosen her as his successor during his lifetime. Underscoring her claim, one of the reliefs decorating Hatshepsut's enormous funerary complex (FIG. 3-20) depicts Thutmose I crowning his daughter as king in the presence of the Egyptian gods. Other reliefs (FIG. 3-22) represent her many achievements during her reign.

Hatshepsut is the first great female monarch whose name has been recorded. (In the 12th Dynasty, Sobekneferu was crowned king of Egypt, but she reigned for only a few years.) As pharaoh for two decades, Hatshepsut ruled what was then the most powerful and prosperous empire in the world.

Hatshepsut commissioned numerous building projects, and sculptors produced portraits of the female pharaoh in great numbers for display in those complexes. Unfortunately, Thutmose III (r. 1458–1425 BCE), for reasons still not fully understood, late in his reign ordered Hatshepsut's portraits destroyed. Her surviving portraits are of two types. In those carved before she consolidated power, Hatshepsut appears as a woman with delicate features, a slender frame, and breasts. In her latest portraits, such as the one illustrated here (FIG. 3-21), Hatshepsut uniformly wears the costume of the male pharaohs, with royal headdress and kilt, and in some cases even a false ceremonial beard. Inscriptions of this time refer to Hatshepsut as "*His Majesty*."

3-21 Hatshepsut with offering jars, from the upper court of her mortuary temple, Deir el-Bahri, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1473–1458 BCE. Red granite, 8' 6" high. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Hatshepsut's successor destroyed many of her portraits. Conservators reassembled this one, which depicts the queen as a male pharaoh, consistent with inscriptions calling her "*His Majesty*."

statue reproduced here (FIG. 3-21) suffered the same fate as most of Hatshepsut's portraits during the reign of Thutmose III. Vandals smashed it and threw the pieces in a dump, but conservators skillfully reassembled the portrait. Hatshepsut holds a globular offering jar in each hand as she takes part in a ritual in honor of the gods. (A king kneels only before a god, never a mortal.) She wears the royal male nemes headdress and the pharaoh's ceremonial beard (compare FIGS. 3-12, 3-13, and 3-34). The agents of Thutmose III hacked off the uraeus cobra that once adorned the front of the headdress. The figure is also anatomically male, consistent with the queen's formal assumption of the title of king and with the many inscriptions addressing her as a man (see "Hatshepsut," above).

Complementing the array of portrait statues was an extensive series of reliefs glorifying Hatshepsut and her reign—the first



great tribute to a woman's achievements in the history of art. In the middle colonnade of the second level, for example, painted limestone reliefs commemorated Hatshepsut's divine birth. Hatshepsut claimed to be the daughter of Amen-Re, who had assumed the form of the pharaoh Thutmose I in order to impregnate her mother, the king's principal wife. Other reliefs depicted the impressive engineering feat of transporting huge granite obelisks (tall monolithic—one-piece—pillars with pyramidal tops, symbols of the sun god Re) from the Aswan quarries to the temple of Amen-Re (FIG. 3-24) at Karnak. (Several Roman emperors later transported many of the Egyptian obelisks to Rome, where they remain prominent landmarks in the modern city; FIGS. 7-49, 24-4, and 24-7.) The relief illustrated here (FIG. 3-22) is one of those documenting Hatshepsut's successful expedition to Punt, famed for its gold.

1 in.
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3-22 King and queen of Punt and attendants, relief from the mortuary temple of Hatshepsut, Deir el-Bahri, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1473–1458 BCE. Painted limestone, 1' 3" high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

Painted limestone reliefs throughout Hatshepsut's mortuary temple complex celebrated her reign, her divine birth, and her successful expedition to the kingdom of Punt on the Red Sea.

myrrh, and other exotic natural resources. The reliefs record the sea journey, the precious cargo of gold and frankincense trees that the Egyptians brought back with them, as well as the people, animals, and houses that the Egyptians found in Punt. In this detail, bare-chested men carry the local goods that Hatshepsut's men will load onto their ships. Leading the procession are two figures that art historians traditionally identify as the king and queen of Punt. The Egyptian sculptor depicted the queen as an obese and misshapen woman. Scholars debate whether this is an accurate portrayal or an exaggeration designed to underscore the foreignness of the Punt queen.

Abu Simbel. The sheer size of Hatshepsut's mortuary temple never fails to impress visitors, and this is no less true of the immense rock-cut temple (FIG. 3-23) of Ramses II (r. 1290–1224 BCE) at Abu

Simbel in Nubia, territory that Ahmose I acquired after his victory over the Hyksos. The temple was dedicated to the worship of the pharaoh's divine essence and the three chief gods of that era—Amen-Re, Ptah, and Re-Horakhty—and was carefully designed so that at the summer and winter solstices, the rising sun illuminates the king's image inside. The temple has a remarkable modern history. In 1968, to save the Nubian monument from submersion in the Aswan High Dam reservoir, engineers cut the temple into sections and reassembled it nearly 700 feet away, resting against a new artificial mountain they had constructed—an amazing achievement in its own right.

Ramses, Egypt's last great warrior pharaoh, ruled for two-thirds of a century, an extraordinary accomplishment even in peacetime in an era when life expectancy was far shorter than it is today. The king, proud of his many campaigns to restore the

10 ft.
I



3-23 Facade of the temple of Ramses II, Abu Simbel, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, ca. 1290–1224 BCE. Sandstone, colossi 65' high.

Four rock-cut images of Ramses II dominate the facade of this New Kingdom temple at Abu Simbel in Nubia. The colossal portraits are a dozen times the height of a man, even though the pharaoh is seated.

empire, proclaimed his greatness by placing four colossal images of himself on the temple facade. The portraits are 65 feet tall—almost a dozen times the height of an ancient Egyptian, even though the pharaoh is seated. They face toward Nubia and served to intimidate the Egyptian's southern neighbor. Spectacular as Ramses's colossi are, the rock-cut statues nonetheless lack the refinement of earlier periods, because the sculptors sacrificed detailed carving to overwhelming size. This trade-off is characteristic of colossal statuary of every period and every place (compare FIG. 16-16). The immense rock-cut interior (FIG. 3-23A) of the Abu Simbel temple also makes an indelible impression.

Ramses, like other pharaohs, had many wives, and he fathered scores of sons. The pharaoh honored the most important members of his family with grandiose monuments of their own. At Abu Simbel, for example, north of his temple, Ramses ordered the construction of a temple for his principal wife, Nefer-tari. Huge rock-cut statues—four standing images of the king and two of the queen—dominate the temple's facade. For his sons, Ramses constructed an enormous underground tomb complex in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes, which an American team rediscovered in 1987. Robbers looted the tomb within a half century of its construction, but archaeologists have yet to find the royal burial chambers in the complex, so the tomb may yet yield important artworks.

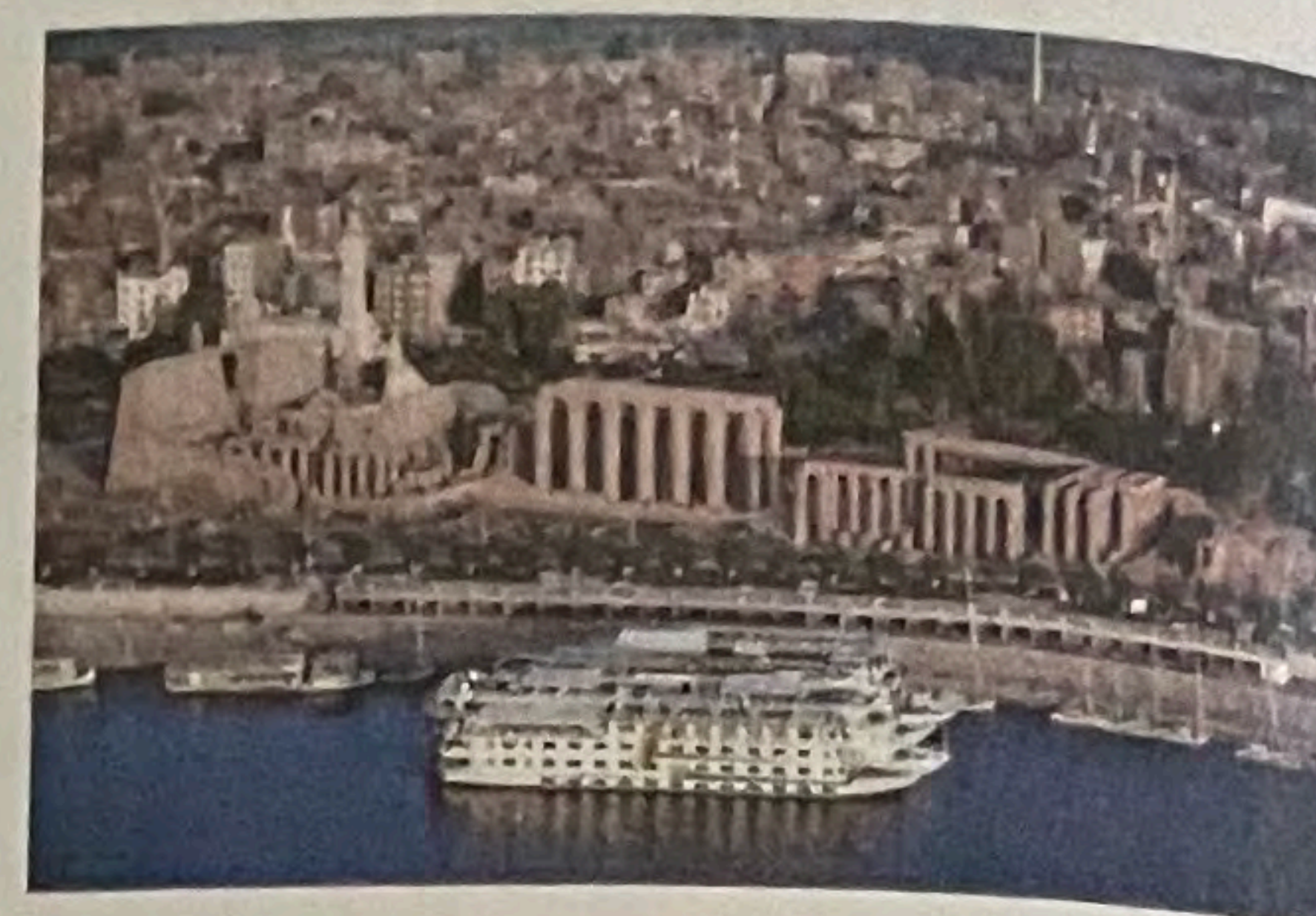
Karnak. Distinct from the New Kingdom temples that primarily honor pharaohs and queens are the edifices built for the worship of one or more of the gods. Successive kings often added to these sanctuaries until they reached gigantic size. The temple of Amen-Re (FIG. 3-24) at Karnak, for example, begun during the Middle Kingdom, was largely the work of 18th Dynasty pharaohs, including Thutmose I and III and Hatshepsut, but Ramses II (19th

Dynasty) also contributed sections, and other pharaohs added chapels to the complex at least as late as the fourth century BCE. Enclosing the 247-acre complex and shutting it off from the outside world was a perimeter wall 39 feet high and 26 feet thick. Inside, next to the temple proper, was an artificial sacred lake (FIG. 3-24, center)—a reference to the primeval waters before creation (see “The Gods and Goddesses of Egypt,” page 60). The temple of Amen-Re rises from the earth as the original sacred mound rose from the waters at the beginning of time.

The Karnak temple and similar New Kingdom temples, such as the equally huge one at nearby Luxor (FIG. 3-24A), all had similar *axial plans*. A typical *pylon temple* (the name derives from the sanctuaries' simple and massive gateways, or *pylons*, with sloping walls forming two wings flanking a central doorway) is bilaterally symmetrical along a single axis that runs from an approaching avenue through a colonnaded court and hall and then into the sanctuary proper. Axial plans are characteristic of much of Egyptian architecture. Narrow corridors on the longitudinal axis are also the approaches to the Gizeh pyramids (FIG. 3-10) and to Hatshepsut's multilevel mortuary temple (FIG. 3-20). Marking the end of the statuary-lined approach to a New Kingdom temple was the monumental facade of the pylon (FIG. 3-24, right). The pylon faced the Nile, from which festival processions arrived by boat, and served as a symbolic barrier between the chaotic world and the sacred ordered precinct within. New Kingdom sculptors routinely covered pylons with reliefs glorifying their rulers (FIG. 3-38), especially in their role as defenders of order who defeat all who pose a threat to Egypt's stability. Beyond the pylon was an open court with columns on two or more sides, followed by a hall (FIG. 3-24, center) between the court and sanctuary, its long axis placed at a right angle to the corridor of the entire building complex. Only the pharaohs and the priests could enter the mysterious dark inner shrine



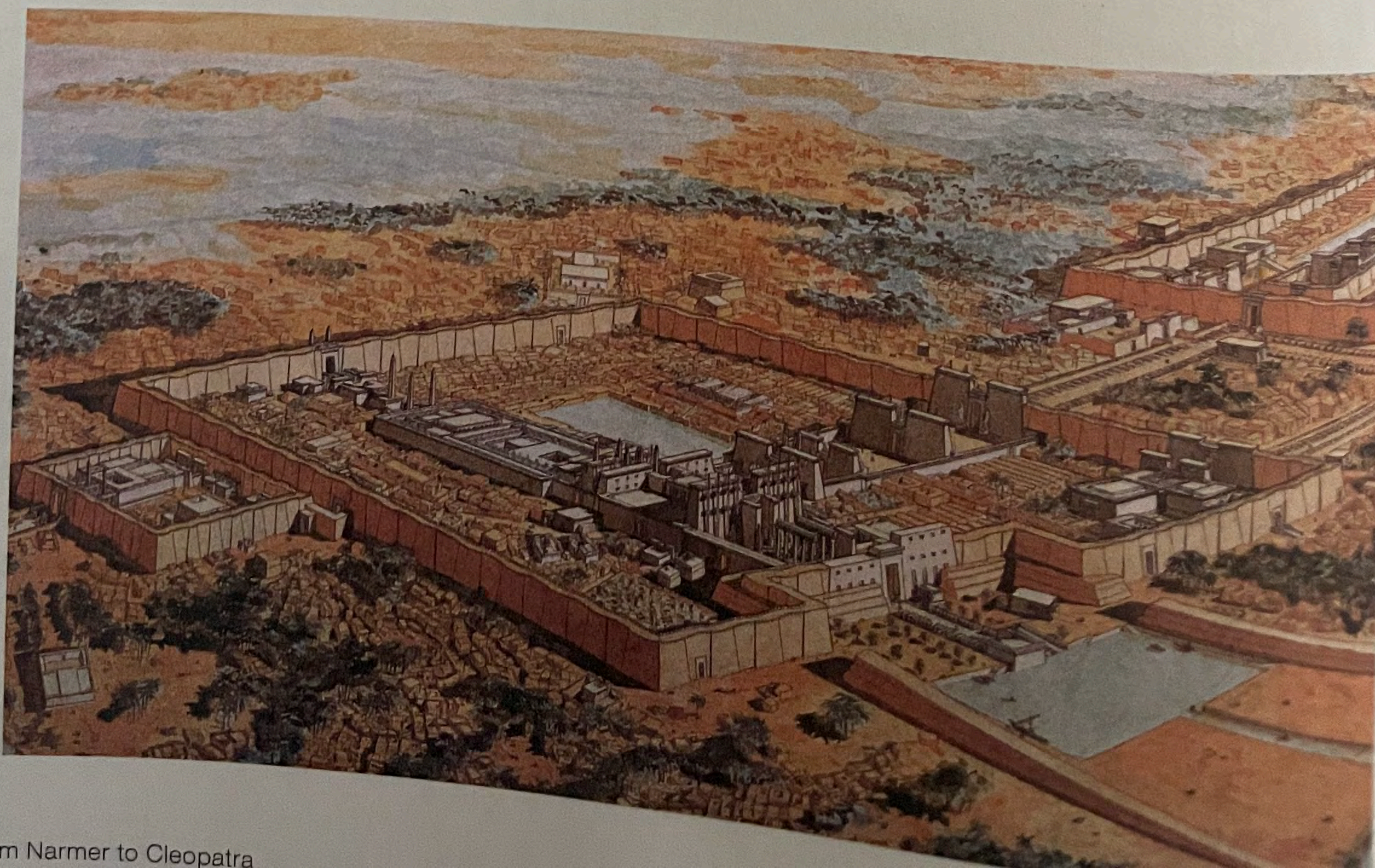
3-23A Interior of temple of Ramses II, Abu Simbel, ca. 1290–1224 BCE.



3-24A Temple of Amen-Re, Luxor, begun early 14th century BCE.

3-24 Restored view of the temple of Amen-Re (looking southeast), Karnak, Egypt, major construction 15th–13th centuries BCE (Jean Claude Golvin).

The vast Karnak temple complex contains a pylon temple with a bilaterally symmetrical axial plan and an artificial lake associated with the primeval waters of the Egyptian creation myth.



Illuminating Buildings before Lightbulbs

Until the invention of the electric lightbulb, one of the central problems all architects had to confront was how to illuminate a roofed interior without depending solely on torches and lamps, which were fire hazards. As early as the Old Kingdom, in the valley temple of Khafre at Gizeh, Egyptian architects experimented with a way to admit natural light using a device called the *clerestory*. One of the most effective examples of clerestory lighting is in the hypostyle hall (FIGS. 3-25 and 3-26) of the New Kingdom pylon temple at Karnak (FIG. 3-24).

Filling Karnak's gigantic (58,000-square-foot) hypostyle hall are massive columns, which support a roof of stone slabs carried on lintels. The 134 sandstone columns have bud-cluster or bell-shaped capitals resembling lotus or papyrus, the plants symbolizing Upper and Lower Egypt. The 12 central columns are 75 feet high, and the capitals are 22 feet in diameter at the top, large enough to hold a hundred people. The Egyptians, who used no mortar, depended on precise cutting of the joints and the weight of the huge stone blocks to hold the columns in place. The two central rows of columns are taller than those at the sides. The purpose of raising the roof's central section was to create a clerestory, an elevated additional story with openings enabling sunlight



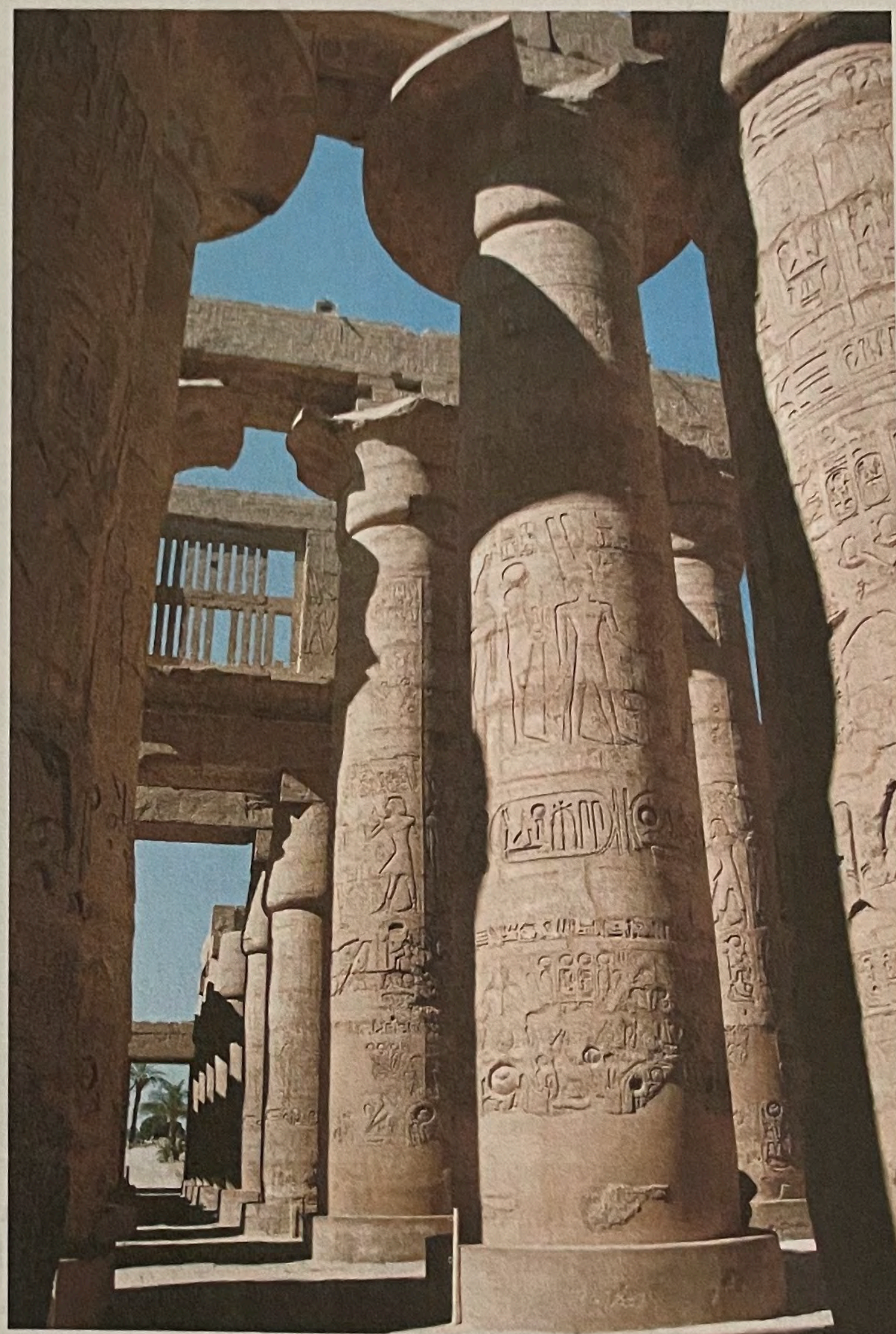
3-25 Model of the hypostyle hall, temple of Amen-Re, Karnak, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, ca. 1290–1224 BCE. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The two central rows of columns of Karnak's hypostyle hall are taller than the rest. Raising the roof's central section created a clerestory that admitted light through windows with stone grilles.

at the culmination of the sacred path. The darkness called to mind the moment of creation out of the primeval waters. A chosen few were admitted to the great columnar *hypostyle hall* (a hall with a roof resting on columns; FIGS. 3-25 and 3-26), shrouded in semi-darkness but with light admitted through a *clerestory* illuminating the axial corridor (see "Illuminating Buildings before Lightbulbs," above). The majority of the people could proceed only as far as the sun-drenched open court.

to filter into the interior, although the Karnak hall's stone grilles (FIG. 3-26) would have blocked much of the light.

The clerestory is evidently an Egyptian innovation, and its significance cannot be overstated. Clerestories played a key role in the history of architecture until very recently.



3-26 Columns and clerestory of the hypostyle hall of the temple of Amen-Re, Karnak, Egypt, 19th Dynasty, ca. 1290–1224 BCE.

Columns crowd the hypostyle hall of the Amen-Re temple. The tallest are 66 feet high and have capitals that are 22 feet in diameter. The columns support a roof of stone slabs carried on lintels.

Sculpture and Painting

Although the Egyptians lavishly decorated the great temple complexes of the New Kingdom with statues and painted reliefs, many of the finest examples of statuary and mural painting adorned tombs, as in the Old and Middle Kingdoms.

Senenmut and Nefrura. *Block statues* were popular during the New Kingdom because their large flat surfaces were well suited for



3-27 Senenmut with Princess Nefrura, from Thebes, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1470–1460 BCE. Granite, 3' $\frac{1}{2}$ " high. Ägyptisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Hatshepsut's chancellor holds the queen's daughter in his "lap" and envelops her in his cloak. New Kingdom block statues exhibit a radical simplification of form and are well suited for lengthy inscriptions.

lengthy inscriptions and because their simple shapes were easier to carve and less susceptible to damage. These works display an even more radical simplification of form than was common in Old Kingdom statuary, but they performed the same function—the provision of an eternal home for the deceased's ka. In the statue illustrated here (FIG. 3-27) depicting Senenmut, Hatshepsut's chancellor and possible lover, with her daughter, Nefrura, the streamlined

design concentrates attention on the head. The sculptor treated the two bodies as a single polished cubic block with smoothly rounded corners. Senenmut holds the pharaoh's daughter by Thutmose II in his "lap" and envelops the girl in his cloak. The work is one of many surviving statues depicting Senenmut with the princess, which enhanced the chancellor's stature through his association with the pharaoh's daughter (he was her tutor) and, by implication, with Hatshepsut herself.

Tomb of Nebamun. Some of the best-preserved mural paintings of the New Kingdom come from the Theban tomb of Nebamun (FIGS. 3-28 and 3-28A). The painting technique, also employed in earlier Egyptian tombs, is *fresco secco* (dry fresco), in which artists let the plaster dry before painting on it. This procedure, in contrast to true fresco painting on wet plaster (see "Fresco Painting," page 428), enabled slower and more meticulous work than painting on fresh plaster, which had to be completed before the plaster dried. As the many third- and fourth-millennium BCE Egyptian murals attest, *fresco secco* is a very durable medium, even though, unlike in true fresco painting, the colors do not fuse with the wall surface.

Nebamun, whose official titles were "scribe and counter of grain," was a wealthy man who could afford to hire highly skilled painters to decorate his tomb. One of the preserved fresco fragments (FIG. 3-28) from Nebamun's tomb shows noblewomen watching and apparently participating in a musical performance in which two nimble and almost nude girls dance in front of the guests at a commemorative funerary ceremony. At these banquets, the guests consumed great quantities of wine and beer to enable them, in their drunken state, to commune with the dead. (The painter took care to include the ample supply of wine jars at the right.) Stylistically, the fresco is significant in showing that New Kingdom artists did not always adhere to the old norms for figural representation. Nebamun's painter recorded the dancers' overlapping figures, their facing in opposite directions, and their rather complicated gyrations, producing a pleasing intertwined motif at the same time. The profile view of the dancers is consistent with their lower stature in the Egyptian hierarchy. The New Kingdom



3-28A Fowling scene, tomb of Nebamun, Thebes, ca. 1400–1350 BCE.

3-28 Musicians and dancers, detail of a mural from the tomb of Nebamun, Thebes, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1400–1350 BCE. *Fresco secco*, 1' x 2' 3". British Museum, London.

This fresco in Nebamun's tomb represents entertainers at a funerary banquet. The artist experimented with frontal views of faces and bodies—a relaxation of the Old Kingdom's strict rules of representation.



Akhenaton

When the 18th Dynasty pharaoh Akhenaton instituted his overhaul of Egyptian religion in the mid-14th century BCE, he deleted the name of Amen from all inscriptions and even from his own name and that of his father, Amenhotep III (r. 1390–1352 BCE). He emptied the traditional temples, enraged the priests, and moved his court downriver from Thebes to present-day Amarna, a site he named Akhetaton (Horizon of Aton). The pharaoh claimed to be both the son and sole prophet of Aton. To him alone did the god reveal himself. Moreover, in stark contrast to earlier practice, painters and sculptors represented Akhenaton's god neither in animal nor in human form (nor in composite human-animal form; compare FIG. 3-1) but simply as the sun disk emitting life-giving rays (FIG. 3-32).

The pharaohs who followed Akhenaton reestablished the Theban cult and priesthood of Amen at Karnak (FIG. 3-24) and elsewhere, and they restored Amen's temples and inscriptions. Akhenaton's brief religious revolution was soon undone, and his new city largely abandoned.

During the brief heretical episode of Akhenaton, profound changes also occurred in Egyptian art. A colossal statue (FIG. 3-29) of Akhenaton, one of several from Karnak toppled and buried after his death, retains the standard frontal pose of traditional Egyptian royal portraits. But the effeminate body, with its curving contours, and the long face with full lips and heavy-lidded eyes are a far cry indeed from the heroically proportioned figures of the pharaoh's predecessors (compare FIG. 3-13). Akhenaton's body is curiously misshapen, with weak arms, a narrow waist, protruding belly, wide hips, and fatty thighs.

What is the explanation for this new royal imagery? Many Egyptologists have turned to modern physicians for the answer. The doctors have tried to explain Akhenaton's physique by attributing a variety of illnesses to the pharaoh, but they have been unable to agree on a diagnosis. And their premise—that the statue is a faithful depiction of a physical deformity—is probably faulty, just as the misshapen body of the queen of Punt (FIG. 3-22) may be an artistic convention and not anatomically accurate. Some art historians have expressed a second opinion.



3-29 Akhenaton, colossal statue from the temple of Aton, Karnak, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1353–1335 BCE. Sandstone, 13' high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

Akhenaton initiated both religious and artistic revolutions. This androgynous figure is a deliberate reaction against tradition. It may be an attempt to portray the pharaoh as Aton, the sexless sun disk.

They think that Akhenaton's portrait is a deliberate artistic reaction against the established style, paralleling the suppression of traditional religion. They argue that because Akhenaton was the child and image of Aton on earth, his artists tried to formulate a new androgynous image of the pharaoh as the manifestation of Aton, the sexless sun disk. Confirmation for this view can be found in the representation of other members of the royal family (FIG. 3-32), whose body types also break sharply with tradition.

artist reserved the composite view for Nebamun and his family. Of the four seated women, the two at the left are represented conventionally, but the other two face the observer in what is a rarely attempted frontal pose. They clap and beat time to the dance, while one of them plays the reeds. The painter took careful note of the soles of their feet as they sit cross-legged, and suggested the movement of the women's heads by the loose arrangement of their hair strands. This informality also constitutes a relaxation of the Old Kingdom's strict rules of representation.

The frescoes in Nebamun's tomb testify to the luxurious life of the Egyptian nobility, filled with good food and drink, fine musicians, lithe dancers, and leisure time to hunt and fish in the marshes (FIG. 3-28A). Still, as in the earlier tomb of Ti, the scenes should be read both literally and allegorically. Although Nebamun enjoys himself in the afterlife, the artist symbolically asked viewers to recall how he got there. Hunting scenes reminded Egyptians of Horus, the son of Osiris, hunting down his father's murderer, Seth, the god of disorder (see "The Gods and Goddesses of Egypt," page 60). Successful hunts were metaphors for triumphing over

death and disorder, ensuring a happy existence in the afterlife. Music and dance were sacred to Hathor, who aided the dead in their passage to the other world. The sensual women at the banquet are a reference to fertility, rebirth, and regeneration.

Akhenaton and the Amarna Period

Not long after his family laid Nebamun to rest in his tomb at Thebes, a revolution occurred in Egyptian religion and society. In the mid-14th century BCE, Amenhotep IV, later known as Akhenaton (r. 1353–1335 BCE), abandoned the worship of most of the Egyptian gods in favor of Aton, identified with the sun disk, whom the pharaoh declared to be the universal and only god (see "Akhenaton," above).

Nefertiti and Tiye. Akhenaton's religious revolution was accompanied by a break with artistic tradition, seen both in portraiture (FIGS. 3-29, 3-30, and 3-31) and relief sculpture (FIG. 3-32). The new

1 in.



3-30 THUTMOSE, bust of Nefertiti, from Amarna, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1353–1335 BCE. Painted limestone, 1' 8" high. Ägyptisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Found in the sculptor's workshop, Thutmose's bust of Nefertiti portrays Akhenaton's influential wife as an elegant beauty with a thoughtful expression and a long, delicately curved neck.

Amarna style is on display in a painted limestone bust (FIG. 3-30) of Akhenaton's queen, Nefertiti (The Beautiful One Has Come). The portrait exhibits an expression of entranced musing and an almost mannered sensitivity and delicacy of curving contour. Excavators discovered the bust in the Amarna workshop of the sculptor THUTMOSE. It appears to be a deliberately unfinished model very likely by the master's own hand. The left eye socket still lacks the inlaid eye, making the face a kind of before-and-after demonstration piece. With this elegant bust, Thutmose may have been alluding to a heavy flower on its slender stalk by exaggerating the weight of the crowned head and the length of the almost serpentine neck. The sculptor seems to have adjusted the likeness of his subject to meet the era's standard of spiritual beauty.

By contrast, the miniature head (FIG. 3-31) of Queen Tiye, mother of Akhenaton, is a moving portrait of old age. Although not of royal birth, Tiye was the daughter of a high-ranking official and became the chief wife of Amenhotep III. Archaeologists unearthed her portrait, carved of dark yew wood (possibly to match her complexion), at Ghurab with other objects connected with the funerary cult of Amenhotep III. A sculptor probably remodeled the portrait



1 in.

3-31 Portrait of Tiye, from Ghurab, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1353–1335 BCE. Yew wood, gold, silver, alabaster, faience, and lapis lazuli, 8 ⁷/₈" high. Ägyptisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

This portrait of Akhenaton's mother is carved of dark yew wood, possibly to match the queen's complexion. The tall gold crown with the sun disk and cow horns was added during her son's reign.

during her son's reign to eliminate all reference to deities of the old religion. That is when the head acquired the present wig of plaster and linen with small blue beads and the tall crown consisting of cow horns, Aton's sun disk, and a pair of feathers. This type of crown is worn only by goddesses in Egyptian art, and it indicates that Tiye, like Egypt's god-kings, is divine. Nonetheless, Akhenaton's mother appears as an older woman with lines and furrows, consistent with the new relaxation of artistic rules in the Amarna age. The sculptor inlaid her heavy-lidded slanting eyes with alabaster and ebony, and painted the lips red. The earrings (one is hidden by the later wig) are of gold and lapis lazuli. The wig covers what was originally a silver-foil headdress. A gold band still adorns the forehead, and the tall crown is also made of hammered gold.

Both Nefertiti and Tiye figured prominently in the art and life of the Amarna age. Tiye, for example, regularly appeared in art beside her husband during his reign, and she apparently played an important role in his administration as well as her son's. Letters survive from foreign rulers advising the young Akhenaton to seek his mother's counsel in the conduct of international affairs. Nefertiti,

1 in.



too, was an influential woman. She frequently appears in reliefs of this period in which she not only equals her husband in size but also sometimes wears pharaonic headgear.

Family of Akhenaton. A relief stele (FIG. 3-32), perhaps from a private shrine, provides a rare look at this royal family. The style is familiar from the colossus of Akhenaton (FIG. 3-29) and the portrait head of Nefertiti (FIG. 3-30). 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 six daughters bask in the rays of Aton, the sun disk, which end in hands holding the *ankh*, the sign of life. 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, but it typifies the radical upheaval in art that accompanied Akhenaton's religious revolution.

The Akhenaton family portrait is a *sunken relief*. In this technique, the sculptor chisels deep outlines below the stone's surface instead of cutting back the stone around the figures to make them project from the surface. Sunken reliefs are much less subject to damage than high reliefs and, when used on columns, such as those in Karnak's hypostyle hall (FIG. 3-26), have the additional advantage of maintaining the shafts' contours.

The Tomb of Tutankhamen and the Post-Amarna Period

The most famous figure of the Post-Amarna period is Tutankhamen (r. 1333–1323 BCE), who was probably Akhenaton's son by a minor wife. Tutankhamen ruled for a decade and died at age 18. (Although some have speculated foul play, examination of the king's mummy in 2005 ruled out murder.) Tutankhamen was a very unimportant figure in Egyptian history, however. The public remembers him

today solely because in 1922, Howard Carter (1874–1939), a British archaeologist, discovered the boy-king's tomb with its fabulously rich treasure of sculpture, furniture, and jewelry largely intact.

Tutankhamen's Mummy.

The principal item that Carter found in Tutankhamen's tomb was the enshrined body of the pharaoh himself. The royal mummy reposed in the innermost of three coffins, nested one within the other. The innermost coffin (FIG. 3-33) is the most luxurious of the three. Made of beaten gold (about a quarter ton of it) and inlaid with semiprecious stones such as lapis lazuli, turquoise, and carnelian, it is a supreme monument to the sculptor's and goldsmith's crafts. The portrait mask, which covered the king's face, is also made of gold with inlaid semiprecious stones.

3-33 Innermost coffin of Tutankhamen, from his tomb at Thebes, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1323 BCE. Gold with inlay of enamel and semiprecious stones, 6' 1" long. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

The boy-king Tutankhamen owes his fame today to his treasure-laden tomb. His mummy was encased in three nested coffins. The innermost one, made of gold, portrays the pharaoh as Osiris.



1 ft.

3-34 Death mask of Tutankhamen, from the innermost coffin in his tomb at Thebes, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1323 BCE. Gold with inlay of semiprecious stones, 1' 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

The treasures in Tutankhamen's tomb include this mummy mask portraying the teenaged pharaoh with idealized features and wearing the traditional false beard and uraeus cobra headdress.

It is a sensitive portrayal of the serene adolescent king dressed in his official regalia, including the nemes headdress and false beard (FIG. 3-34). The general effect of the mask and the tomb treasures as a whole is one of grandeur and richness expressive of Egyptian power, pride, and limitless wealth.

Tutankhamen at War. Although Tutankhamen died young, recent research suggests that he fought in several wars. But even if he had never commanded an army, his position as king required that artists represent him as a conqueror, and he appears as a victorious general on a painted wood chest deposited in his tomb. The lid panel shows the king as a successful hunter pursuing droves of fleeing animals in the desert. On the side panels, the pharaoh, larger than all other figures, rides in a war chariot pulled by spirited, plumed horses. On the side illustrated here (FIG. 3-35), he draws his bow against a cluster of bearded Asian enemies (he battles Africans on the other side), who fall in confusion before him. (The absence of a ground line in an Egyptian painting or relief often implies chaos and death.) Tutankhamen slays the enemy, like game, in great numbers. Behind him are three tiers of smaller war



3-35 Painted chest, from the tomb of Tutankhamen, Thebes, Egypt, 18th Dynasty, ca. 1333–1323 BCE. Wood, 1' 8" long. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

In this representation of Tutankhamen triumphing over Asian enemies, the artist contrasted the orderly registers of Egyptian chariots with the chaotic pile of foreign soldiers who fall before the king.



chariots, which serve to magnify the king's figure and to increase the count of his warriors. The themes are traditional, but the fluid, curvilinear forms are features reminiscent of the Amarna style.

FIRST MILLENNIUM BCE

During the first millennium BCE, Egypt lost the commanding role it had once played in the ancient world. Egypt's fertile lands and immense riches had long made it desirable territory. Foreign powers invaded and occupied the land, and the empire dwindled away until, beginning in the fourth century BCE, Alexander the Great of Macedon and his Greek successors and, eventually, the emperors of Rome replaced the pharaohs as rulers of the Kingdom of the Nile.

Kingdom of Kush

One of those foreign powers was Egypt's gold-rich neighbor to the south, the kingdom of Kush, part of which is in present-day Sudan. Called Nubia by the Romans, perhaps from the Egyptian word for "gold," Kush appears in Egyptian texts as early as the Old Kingdom. During the New Kingdom, the pharaohs colonized Nubia and appointed a viceroy of Kush to administer the Kushite kingdom, which included Abu Simbel (FIG. 3-23) and controlled the major trade route between Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa. But in the eighth century BCE, the Nubians conquered Egypt and established themselves as the 25th Dynasty.



3-36 Taharqo as a sphinx, from temple T, Kawa, Sudan, 25th Dynasty, ca. 680 BCE. Granite, 1' 4" × 2' 4 3/4". British Museum, London.

The Nubian kings who ruled Egypt during the 25th Dynasty adopted traditional Egyptian statuary types, such as the sphinx, but sculptors incorporated the Kushite pharaohs' distinctly African features.

Taharqo. Around 680 BCE, the Kushite pharaoh Taharqo (r. 690–664 BCE) constructed a temple at Kawa and placed a portrait of himself in it. Emulating traditional Egyptian types, the sculptor portrayed Taharqo as a sphinx (FIG. 3-36; compare FIG. 3-11) with the ears, mane, and body of a lion but with a human face and a headdress featuring two uraeus cobras. The king's name is inscribed on his chest, and his features are distinctly African, although, as in most pharaonic portraits, they record a physiognomic and ethnic type and should not be considered a specific likeness.

Thebes

The Kushite 25th Dynasty fell in turn to the Assyrians, who sacked Thebes in 660 BCE. At this time, a rich and powerful man named Mentuemhet was mayor of the city.

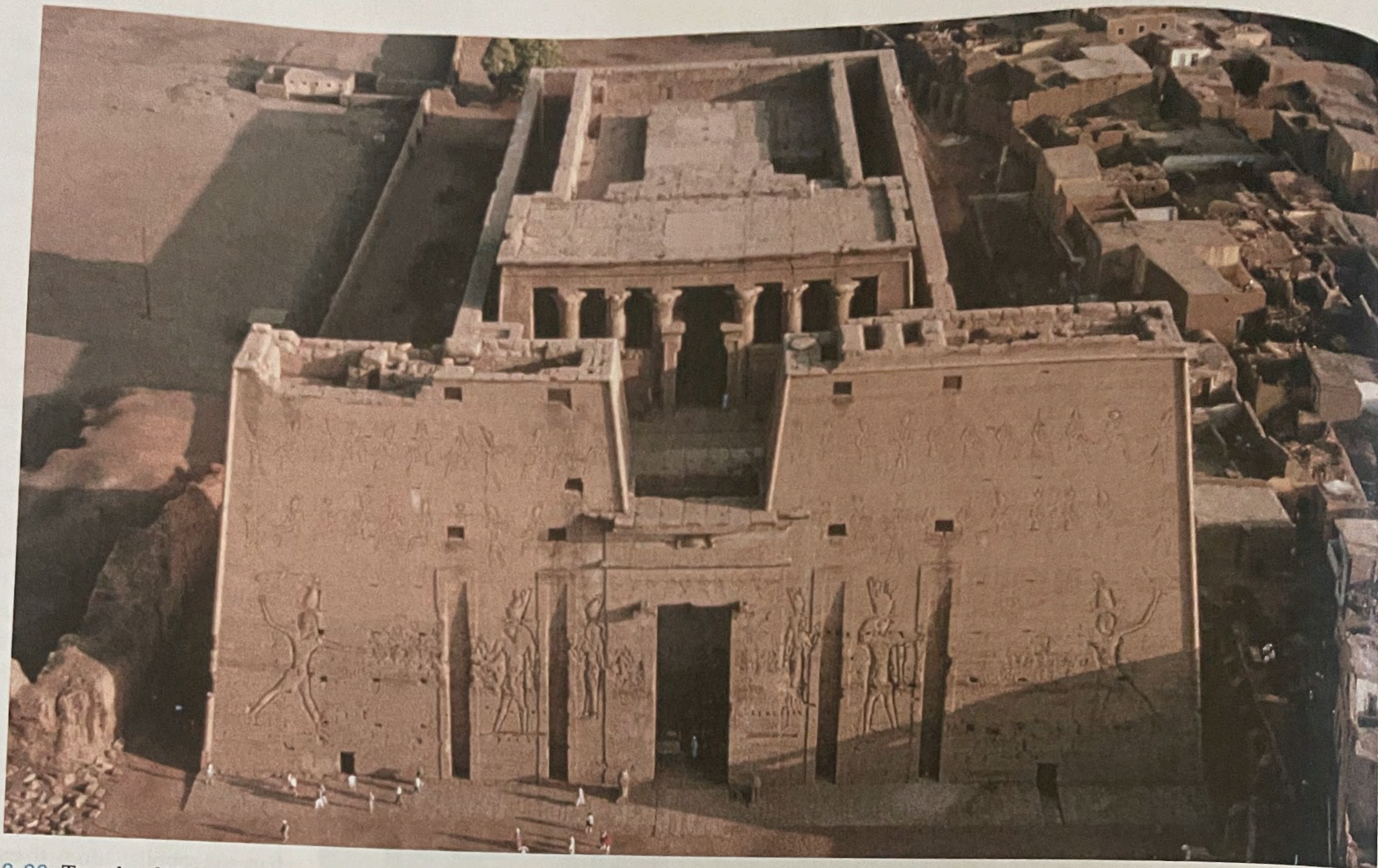
Mentuemhet. In addition to his role as chief magistrate, Mentuemhet was the Fourth Prophet (priest) of Amen, and according to the inscriptions on works that he commissioned, he was respon-

sible for restoring the temples that the Assyrians had razed. Reflecting his wealth and position, Mentuemhet placed numerous portrait statues of himself in those temples and also in the tomb he constructed in a prominent place in the Theban necropolis. More than a dozen of Mentuemhet's portraits survive, including the somewhat under-life-size granite statue illustrated here (FIG. 3-37).



3-37 Portrait statue of Mentuemhet, from Karnak, Egypt, 26th Dynasty, ca. 660–650 BCE. Granite, 4' 5" high. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

This late portrait of the mayor of Thebes combines a realistic face with the idealized body and conventional pose of Old Kingdom statuary, a testimony to the longevity of artistic modes in Egypt.



3-38 Temple of Horus (looking east), Edfu, Egypt, ca. 237–47 BCE.

The pylon temple at Edfu is more than a thousand years later than that at Karnak (FIG. 3-24), but it adheres to the same basic architectural scheme. Egyptian artistic forms tended to have very long lives.

The Theban mayor's portrait statues are typical of Egyptian sculpture at about the time the Greeks first encountered the art of the Nile region. The pose is traditional, and Mentuemhet has the trim, muscular body of a young man characteristic of Old Kingdom royal statues, but he wears a Middle Kingdom kilt and a New Kingdom wig. This eclecticism is typical of later Egyptian art. So too is the treatment of the face, which is much more realistic than most earlier representations of elite men and frankly portrays Mentuemhet's advanced age. The sculptor removed the slab of stone that forms a backdrop to most earlier royal portraits, but left the stone block intact between the arms and the torso and between the legs, an artistic decision that contributes significantly to the immobile look of the statue, so appropriate for a timeless image of the deceased in his eternal afterlife.

After Alexander

As Mentuemhet's portrait demonstrates, Egyptian artistic conventions, once formulated, tended to have very long lives. This is also true of architecture, even after Alexander the Great brought Greek rule and Greek culture to the Kingdom of the Nile.

Temple of Horus, Edfu. The temple of Horus (FIG. 3-38) at Edfu, built during the third, second, and first centuries BCE, still

follows the basic pylon temple scheme that architects worked out more than a thousand years before (compare the New Kingdom temples at Karnak, FIG. 3-24, and Luxor, FIG. 3-24A).

The great entrance pylon at Edfu is especially impressive. The broad surface of its massive facade, with its characteristic sloping walls, is broken only by the doorway and its overshadowing *moldings* at the top and sides, deep channels to hold great flagstaves, and over-lifesize sunken reliefs. The reliefs celebrate King Ptolemy XIII (r. 51–47 BCE), coruler with (and younger brother and husband of) Egypt's last queen, Cleopatra VII (r. 51–30 BCE). Cleopatra, who outlived her brother-husband by nearly two decades, was one of Egypt's most important female pharaohs and patrons of art and architecture.

On the Edfu pylon, Horus and Hathor witness a gigantic Ptolemy XIII smiting diminutive enemies—a motif first used in Egyptian reliefs and paintings in Predynastic times (FIGS. 3-1A and 3-2). The Edfu temple is eloquent testimony to the persistence of age-old Egyptian architectural and pictorial types even under Greek rule.

Indeed, the exceptional longevity of formal traditions in Egypt is one of the marvels of the history of art. It attests to the invention of an artistic vocabulary so satisfactory that it endured in Egypt for millennia. Everywhere else in the ancient Mediterranean world, stylistic change was the only common denominator.

Egypt from Narmer to Cleopatra

Predynastic and Early Dynastic ca. 3500–2575 BCE

- The unification of Upper and Lower Egypt into a single kingdom under the rule of a divine king occurred around 3000–2920 BCE. The palette of King Narmer probably commemorates events from the wars leading to the formation of the "Kingdom of the Two Lands." This and other Predynastic works established the basic principles of most Egyptian representational art for 3,000 years.
- Imhotep, the first artist in history whose name is known, was the earliest master of monumental stone architecture. He designed the funerary complex and stepped pyramid of King Djoser (r. 2630–2611 BCE) at Saqqara.



Palette of King Narmer,
ca. 3000–2920 BCE

Old Kingdom ca. 2575–2134 BCE

- The Old Kingdom was the first golden age of Egyptian art and architecture, the time when three kings of the Fourth Dynasty erected the pyramids at Gizeh, the oldest of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. The pyramids were emblems of the sun on whose rays the god-kings ascended to the heavens when they died.
- Old Kingdom sculptors created seated and standing statuary types in which all movement was suppressed in order to express the eternal nature of divine kingship. These types would dominate Egyptian art for 2,000 years.



Pyramid of Khafre and Great Sphinx,
Gizeh, ca. 2520–2494 BCE

Middle Kingdom ca. 2040–1640 BCE

- After an intermediate period of civil war, Mentuhotep II (r. 2050–1998 BCE) reestablished central rule and founded the Middle Kingdom.
- The major artistic innovation of this period was a new kind of royal portrait with heightened realism and emotional content.
- Rock-cut tombs in which sculptors hewed both the facade and interior chambers out of the living rock replaced the mastaba as the standard Egyptian burial monument.



Senusret III, ca. 1860–1850 BCE

New Kingdom ca. 1550–1070 BCE

- During the New Kingdom, Egypt extended its borders to the Euphrates River in the east and deep into Nubia in the south.
- The most significant architectural innovation of this period was the axially planned pylon temple incorporating an immense gateway, columnar courtyards, and a hypostyle hall with clerestory lighting.
- Powerful pharaohs such as Hatshepsut (r. 1473–1458 BCE) and Ramses II (r. 1290–1224 BCE) erected gigantic temples in honor of their patron gods and themselves.
- Akhenaton (r. 1353–1335 BCE) abandoned the traditional Egyptian religion in favor of Aton, the sun disk, and initiated a short-lived artistic revolution in which undulating curves and anecdotal content replaced the cubic forms and impassive stillness of earlier Egyptian art.



Temple of Ramses II, Abu Simbel,
ca. 1290–1224 BCE

First Millennium BCE 1000–30 BCE

- After the demise of the New Kingdom, Egypt's power in the ancient world declined, and the Nile came under the control of foreigners. These included the Kushite kings of Nubia and, after 332 BCE, Alexander the Great and his Greek successors. In 30 BCE, Egypt became a province of the Roman Empire.
- The traditional forms of Egyptian art and architecture lived on even under foreign rule.



Temple of Horus, Edfu,
ca. 237–47 BCE