

## Lecture 3: Ancient Egypt

WC 22-35 PP 32-38: *Instruction of Ptah-Hotep*

### Chronology:

10,000-3100	Predynastic	Star Terms:
3100	Egyptian basin unified	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Palette of Narmer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• mastaba</li> <li>• Imhotep</li> <li>• Horus</li> <li>• <i>ka</i></li> <li>• <i>ma'at</i></li> </ul>
3100-2686	Archaic Period	Pyramid Texts
2686-2160	Old Kingdom	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Great Pyramids built</li> </ul>	Geog. Terms:
2160-2055	First Intermediate Period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– collapse of central government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upper Egypt</li> <li>• Lower Egypt</li> <li>• Nile River</li> <li>• Sinai Peninsula</li> <li>• Red Sea</li> <li>• Mediterranean</li> <li>• Kush</li> </ul>
2055-1650	Middle Kingdom	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– revival</li> </ul>	
1650-1550	2 <sup>nd</sup> Intermediate Period	
1550-1075	New Kingdom	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Battle of Megiddo (1456 BCE)</li> <li>○ reign of Akhenaten (1352-1336 BCE)</li> <li>○ Battle of Kadesh (1274 BCE)</li> </ul>	

### A. *The Palette of King Narmer, c. 3100-3000 BCE, slate*



- Unification of Lower and Upper Egypt
- red and white crown
- hierarchical proportion
- Horus (a human-armed falcon), Seth, Osiris, Isis and Hathor
- ceremonial use of mace

Decorated in low relief on both sides of the palette is large scene... is depicting the unification of Egypt. King Narmer (thought to be Menes, the first pharaoh) is the biggest figure- his size and central position denote his importance. His composite pose, in which head and legs are rendered in profile view with eye and upper torso in frontal view, is an Egyptian convention.

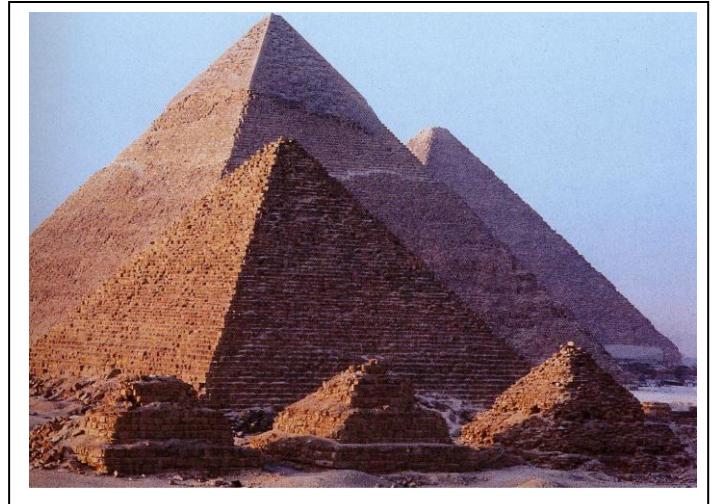
This is a conceptual, rather than a naturalistic, approach to the human figure, for the body parts are arranged as they are understood, and not as they are seen in nature. The entire body is flat, as is the kilt, with certain details such as the knee caps rendered as stylizations, rather than as underlying organic structure.

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### B. The Great Pyramids at Giza, 2600-2475 BCE

- Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure
- Re
- celestial orientation

Of the eighty-odd pyramids known to exist, the three outstanding examples were built by, and for, three Old Kingdom pharaohs of the Fourth dynasty: the pyramid of Khufu (the largest, known as the Great Pyramid); the pyramid of his son Khafre, 22 feet shorter and 15 percent smaller in volume; and the pyramid of Khafre's son Menkaure, only 10 percent of



the size of Khufu's. All three are near Cairo at Giza, on the west bank of the Nile, facing the direction of sunset (symbolizing death), as was customary. Although the Giza monuments have been surrounded by desert since antiquity, recent archaeological excavations suggest that the site was once a river harbor. Each of the pyramids was connected by a causeway (or elevated road) to its own valley temple at the edge of the original flood plain of the Nile. Upon the death of the king, his body was transported across the Nile by boat to the valley temple. It was then carried along the causeway to its own funerary temple, where it was presented with offerings of food and drink

### C. Statue of Akhenaton at Temple of Amen-Re (Karnak), c. 1353-1335 BCE, sandstone

Akhenaton and Nefertiti/ cult of Aton/ curvilinear lines and increased naturalistic rendering/ image of androgynous "spiritual beauty," the Amarna style

By the Twelfth Dynasty, **Amon** had superseded Ra in the Eighteenth Dynasty, but Amenhotep IV adopted a new, and unpopular, religious system that was relatively monotheistic. His primary god was **Aten**, the sun disk, and Amenhotep accordingly changed his name to **Akhenaten** (meaning 'servant of the Aten'). He effaced the names and images of the other gods. Presumably to escape the influence of the priests, he moved the capital down the Nile (i.e. north) from the major cult center of Thebes to Akhetaten (now known as **Tel el-Amarna**, from which the term for the period is derived). Akhenaten chose the site and name for his new capital because the sun rising over the horizon at that point resembled the hieroglyph for sunrise. Nothing is known of the origin of his ideas, which greatly influenced artistic style during his reign. Statues of Akhenaten and his family differ dramatically from those of traditional pharaohs. He looks as if he had unusual, if not deformed, physical features

