Egyptian Civilization

• The Gift of the Nile
• People lived in relative security.

• **Scattered tribes** that shared the river **merged into villages** instead of fighting amongst themselves.

• **Co-operation:** the villages learned to co-operate in controlling the river’s flood.

• **Organization:** it was the gift of organization that enabled Egypt to erect a dominant, enduring state.

• First important move **around 3100 B.C.**: Egyptian people, hitherto divided into two lands—**UPPER EGYPT & LOWER EGYPT** and found themselves under a single monarch.
Ancient Egypt

- app. 10,000 sq. miles
- the same as Sumer and Akkad
- radically different in shape
- a ribbon of fertile land 600 miles long
  - half a dozen miles wide for most of its length
- compared to 165 miles in Mesopotamia
• River Nile – longest river of the world
• White Nile -- Lake Albert, Uganda
• Blue Nile -- Ethiopia
• Meet at Khartoum
• Annual flooding – snow melting – Ethiopia
• East – Red Sea
• Delta – Mediterranean Sea
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Egypt, con’t

• more arid and more fertile than Mesopotamia
• divided into two parts
• the Delta (Lower Egypt) and
• the Upper Nile
Nile Valley cliffs provided a rich assortment of building stone and varieties include sandstone, granite, and alluvial clay for bricks.

Egyptians commonly imitated nature in their architecture.

Egyptians were obsessed with the afterlife and the dead and these beliefs had a great impact on the culture and its architecture.
Types of column:

- Open palm
- Closed palm
- Lotus
- Hathors head

Column Types:
- Fluted
- Palmiform
- Lotiform
- Papyriform
- Coniform
- Tent pole
- Composite
- Hathor
Egyptian Architecture – Capitals & Columns

[Diagram showing various types of Egyptian column capitals and bases]

[Image of ancient Egyptian temple with tall columns]
Pilasters and pillars

Pilasters imitating plant shapes first appeared under the IIIrd dynasty. The opening papyrus (campaniform) shape (1) was to be much used again during the New Kingdom. Free-standing pillars in plant forms – open palm (2), closed palm (3) and lotus (4) – are not found until the Vth dynasty.

1. Opening Papyrus – Campaniform
2. Open Palm
3. Closed Palm
4. Lotus
• Acropolis – City of the living – East
• Necropolis – City of the Dead – West

• Book of the Dead
• Spirit Soul - Ba or Ka -
• TOMBS (Funerary Architecture)
• 1. Mastabas
• 2. Royal Pyramids
• 3. Rock-cut Tombs

• Located – West Bank - Necropolis
Mastabas — meaning bench

“The mastaba was the typical form of Egyptian tomb for the great and famous. It consisted of a building of rectangular shape with sloping walls and was constructed of brick or stone. Richly decorated rooms were arranged in the upper parts, in particular a chapel (with a false door for the tomb’s occupant and a table for offerings), and a room in which statues of the dead person were placed. A shaft, filled in after the funeral service, led to the subterranean vault, which contained the grave goods and the mummy in its sarcophagus.”
The Stepped Pyramid is the rectangular monument in the centre of the Enormous funerary complex **BUILT BY THE GREAT KING ZOSER** in 2750 B.C.

**DESIGNED BY IMHOTEP**, the first recorded architect in history and later considered a god by the Egyptians.
Stepped Pyramid, Saqqara

- 6 levels
- Ascend – 200ft.
- Casing – Tura limestone
EVOLUTION OF A TOMB  Around 2660 BC, Djoser, the second pharaoh of the 3rd dynasty, and his architect Imhotep devised a new style of royal tomb in the form of a stairway to the heavens. The original tomb was simply a large mastaba. Then more layers were added to create a four-step pyramid. This was further enlarged as the six-step pyramid surviving today.
Old Kingdom Architecture: Pyramids at Giza

• The trio of large pyramids at Giza (2550-2460 B.C) are the works of the 4th dynasty pharaohs known as KHUFU, KHAFRE & MENKAURE (or Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus in Greek transliteration)

• The largest of the three that of Khufu, was built first and planned from the start to be a true pyramid of unprecedented proportions.

• The smallest of the Giza trio belonged to Menkaure, a son of Khafre.
Site plan of the pyramids, Giza, Egypt, ca. 2550–2460 BCE.

Khufu’s pyramid in particular has a large number of subsidiary tombs located to the west of it, including smaller pyramids and mastabas for members of the court. Khufu’s pyramid has the best preserved valley temple and causeway. Note the position of the Sphinx to the north of the causeway leading to Khafre’s pyramid.
Ent. North side, 55’ above ground

Ascending corridor - 60’ long
Kings Chamber - 17’2” N-S

34’4” long
19’0” high
The Great Pyramids, Giza

Cheops - 756’ x 480’ ht

Chephren ---
705’ x 470’ Ht

Mycerinus – 354’ 
 x 203’ Ht
Funeral Barges make up a royal cortege as the dead Pharaoh is borne up a canal from the Nile towards his Great Pyramid.
TIPPING a block: a team of quarry workers eases the stone onto log rollers. Whichever surface of the granite block was to be moved face down was finished beforehand so that it would slide smoothly to the ramp.
At the Ramp’s end workmen load a granite block onto a wooden sledge. By using rollers, ramps and sledges, gangs were able to haul blocks weighing up to 15 tons from the quarry to barges waiting on the Nile hundreds of yards away.
Terracing the hill, workers use levers, to dislodge blocks while others drag rocks away on sledge.

In the fore-ground men carry water in clay pots to fill the connecting ditches which gave the builders a standard level on all sides of the pyramid.
Monumental Construction Job

- Rising Ramps were built in tiers along the four sides of the pyramid, three to go up and one to go down.
- Each ramp began at one corner (outer arrows) and all ended at the topmost level of construction (inner arrows).
- The brown outline shows the path of one ramp.
Toiling thousands on a Monumental Construction Job
Because of its outward size the Great Pyramid was called one of the seven wonders of the Ancient World.

But the interior, with its corridors, passageways, air shafts, Grand Gallery and King’s Chamber, is no less an architectural marvel.
Comparative illustration of the most outstanding pyramids that have survived to the present.
ROCK – Cut Tombs
• Temples – 2 Types –
• 1. Mortuary Temples – ministrations of defied pharaohs.
• 2. Cult Temples – popular worship
• – ancient Gods
• Eg. – Temple of Khons – Karnak,
• Great Temple of Ammon - Karnak
Lower Egypt – Red crown

Upper Egypt – White crown

RA – Sun God

Osiris – God of the underworld

Horus – Falcon head

Isis – love, generating Power

Seth – destruction

Amon – spirit of the universe

Thoth – Baboon head

Anubis – Jackal
The Middle & New Kingdom Architecture: Mortuary Temples

Mortuary Temples

• Followed the decline of the pyramids and the concealment of burial chambers

• Developed into Egypt’s most important monumental form

• Funerary complexes set before the Old Kingdom pyramids are some of the most striking mortuary temples

• Usually comprised of THREE interconnected parts:

  • A temple near the Nile where the king’s body was embalmed
  • A mortuary temple where rituals were performed
  • A long, narrow causeway between thick walls connecting the two temples
TEMPLES —
1. Mortuary Temples.
2. Cult Temples

- Peristyle court
- Open to sky
- Hypostyle hall
- Inner vestibule
- Skylights
Sphinx — Father of fear

71mtrs (230ft) long
20mtrs (65ft) high
Face of Cheops
OBELISK – stood in pairs.

Monolithic square base, tapering to the top – pyramid

12 no – Rome – 9 ft sq, 105 ft ht, 230 tonnes

Istanbul

Paris

London – 8 ft sq – 68’6” high, 180 tonnes
The Middle & New Kingdom Architecture: Mortuary Temples

Queen Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple
The Middle & New Kingdom Architecture: Mortuary Temples

Queen Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple

- View and Plan of Hatshepsut’s mortuary Temple at Deir – el – Bahari, Egypt, c.1473-1458 B.C
Heiroglyphics—inscribed figures and symbols

FROM THE Scribes OF EGYPT

The Egyptians were beginning to develop writing by 3000 BC, perhaps inspired by Sumer. The signs of Egyptian hieroglyphic script were beautifully pictorial and, unlike Sumerian script, remained so over the millennia. By 500 BC, several thousand symbols existed. Knowledge of the script was restricted to the elite—royalty, priests, and scribes.

Like the symbols used in Sumer, hieroglyphs came to represent sounds as well as words. Only the consonants were written: the reader mentally supplied the vowels. When the script reached maturity, it was mainly composed of signs which represented one consonant or sequences of two or three consonants.

Hieroglyphics were used throughout Egyptian history for important records, such as royal inscriptions carved on public monuments and biographies painted or engraved on the walls of tombs. For writing with pen and ink on papyrus, a simplified, cursive (joined together) version developed, known as hieratic script.
GOVERNMENT
• **GOVERNMENT** and **RELIGION** were inseparable in ancient Egypt. The **PHARAOH** was the head of State and the divine representative of the gods on earth.

• Religion and government brought order to society through:
  • The construction of **TEMPLES**
  • The creation of **LAWS**
  • **TAXATION**
  • The **ORGANIZATION OF LABOR**
  • **TRADE** with neighbors
  • The **DEFENCE** of the country’s interests.
Ancient Egypt achieved stability through the co-operation of all levels of the population.

- The **PHARAOH** was at the top of the social hierarchy.
- Next to him, the most powerful officers were the **VIZIERS**, the executive heads of the bureaucracy.
- Under them were the **HIGH PRIESTS**, followed by **ROYAL OVERSEERS** (administrators) who ensured that the 42 **DISTRICT GOVERNORS** carried out the pharaoh's orders.
- At the bottom of the hierarchy were the **SCRIBES, ARTISANS, FARMERS**, and **LABORERS**.
To reinforce their image as powerful divine rulers, the **PHARAOHS** represented themselves in writings and sculptured reliefs on temple walls. They often **DEPICTED THEMSELVES AS WARRIORS** who single-handedly killed scores of enemies and slaughtered a whole pride of lions.
The famed Rosetta Stone. The original is in the British Museum.
Model of the houses used by workers and artists in Deir El-Medina.