

## **ARCH 271: WORLD ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM**

### **ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ARCHITECTURE c. 3000–500 BCE**

With Mesopotamia, Egypt is considered the “cradle of civilization.” From the Greeks and Romans to Napoleon in 18<sup>th</sup> c., Egyptian civilization has provided a constant fascination and inspiration to Europe and elsewhere. Egyptian civilization is a product of the river Nile, a combination of the desert landscape and the fertile river terrain. The Neolithic period was followed by rise of cities and the consolidation of power. Agriculture was the fodder of Egyptian civilization that led to immense agricultural and irrigation works, and huge administration where writing and documenting were important.

#### **Egyptian Chronology**

<b>Predynastic</b>	<b>5500–3100 BCE</b>
<b>Early Dynastic</b>	<b>3100–2686</b>
<b>Old Kingdom</b>	<b>2686–2181</b>
<b>Middle Kingdom</b>	<b>2055–1650</b>
<b>New Kingdom</b>	<b>1550–1069</b>
<b>Late Period</b>	<b>747–332</b>

Religious belief permeates all work of art. A group of invisible gods ruled the lives of Egyptians who considered the human kings to be links to the gods. Ra was the important sun god, and the kings were considered sons of Ra, and therefore divine. “Ka” is the life-force that lived on after death. The body of kings and other personages were preserved and treated elaborately, and spaces prepared for them. This led to elaborate funerary practice and mortuary architecture.

The art and architecture of Egypt, as a reflection of its civilization, provide many of the architectural norms and methods that are still a common vocabulary. Above all, Egyptian architecture was about the art of permanence. The buildings were consequentially monumental and robust. Architecture was also used consistently in the language and symbolization. Architecture characterized by monumentality, axiality, and processional pathways.

Mastaba, Pyramid, Rock-cut tombs and temple complexes were mostly dedicated to the funerary tradition.

#### **Key Architectural Sites:**

Mastaba of Djoser, Saqqara  
Great Pyramids, Giza  
Temple of Amun, Karnak  
Temple of Amun, Luxor  
Temple of Hatshepsut, Deir el-Bahri  
Temple of Ramses II, Abu Simbel