
Journey Down the Nile

Introduction

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Journey Down the Nile

- In this session we are going to take a journey down the Nile beginning at the Aswan Dam and moving north.
- This is the route those of us who are going on the tour will take. However, we will not travel all the way to the Delta.
- Many of the sites we mention in this session will be sites we visit on the tour. This will serve as an introduction to the sites.
- Along our journey we will be placing the temples, archaeological discoveries, etc. within the historical timeline of ancient Egypt. We will explore this timeline in more detail in coming weeks, but a brief intro will help set the framework for us here.
- We will also be mentioning an number of Egyptian deities. Again, we will explore this more completely in a future session, but a brief intro is in order for our purposes in this "trip."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynasties_of_ancient_Egypt

Egyptian Kingdom Periods

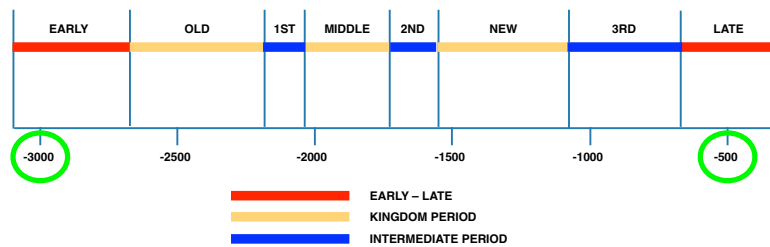
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Egyptian Kingdom Periods

- In ancient Egyptian history, dynasties are series of rulers sharing a common origin, traditionally divided into 30-33 pharaonic dynasties.
- These dynasties are commonly grouped by modern scholars into "kingdoms" and "intermediate periods."
- The kingdom periods are characterized by a strong centralized government while the intermediate periods are characterized by weak central government, the rise of competing regional rulers.
- Some dynasties only ruled part of Egypt and existed concurrently with other dynasties based in other cities.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynasties_of_ancient_Egypt

Egyptian Kingdom Periods



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynasties_of_ancient_Egypt

Egyptian Deities

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Egyptian Religion

- Egyptian gods were an integral part of ancient Egyptian religion and permeated all aspects of their daily lives.
- The Egyptian pantheon of gods was complex. They controlled various aspects of the world, and the ancient Egyptians sought their favor through rituals, offerings, and prayers.
- The pantheon of gods developed over time with some of the localized gods gaining prominence over time.
- Each god had a specific role and associated symbols that helped the people identify the god, their characteristics, attributes, spheres of influence and roles in the cosmic order.
- Gods ruled over:
 - *natural phenomena* such as Ptah (creator god)
 - *social phenomena* such as Hathor (goddess of love and joy)
 - *abstract concepts* such as Thoth (god of wisdom and writing).

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/facts-about-egyptian-gods/>

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Egyptian Religion

- Many gods were associated animal qualities and were depicted with animal heads or had animal forms.
- Sobek, a god of the Nile, was depicted with the head of a crocodile, symbolizing the ferocity and power of the Nile.
- Prominent gods included Ra (the sun god) and Anubis (underworld guide).
- Many gods were arranged into families, the most well-known being Osiris (ruler of the underworld), his sister-wife Isis (magic, fertility), and son Horus (kingship).
- Temples were considered the dwelling places of the gods who lived within their images.
- They were constructed with intricate architectural designs and decorations and home to elaborate rituals and ceremonies performed by priests.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/facts-about-egyptian-gods/>



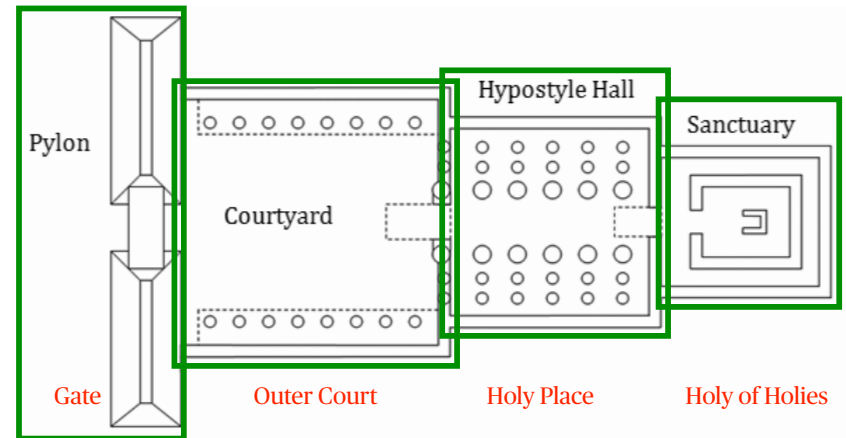
Egyptian God Family Tree

by Korean Briggs

Egyptian Temple Structure

Temple Design

- A temple was a house for one or more deities who were believed to live within their statues in the temple's shrine. Within these sacred spaces, the priests served the gods.
- Designed to reflect and maintain the universe, their decoration presented the world as they understood it. Floors symbolized primeval marsh. Columns represented swamp plants like palm, papyrus and lotus. Ceilings reflected a canopy of stars. Reliefs showed the king conducting rituals and worshipping the gods.
- In temples cultural knowledge was stored and curated. Each temple had a library of ritual papyri where texts were compiled and copied.
- As powerful economic institutions, temple estates controlled huge amounts of land and wealth. Many complexes were like small towns, the temple itself surrounded by workshops, storage areas, and living quarters for staff.
- Temples evolved from smaller organic structures into large stone monuments. No two are the same, but most share a similar set of features.





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The Pylon

- The pylon is a monumental gate formed of two towers joined by a central doorway. It probably symbolizes the horizon, since it resembles the horizon hieroglyph and the doorway is sometimes decorated with solar imagery.
- The exterior of the pylon was decorated with flagpoles and images of the king smiting his enemies. Smiting scenes communicated the power of the Pharaoh while repelling chaotic forces away from the temple.
- Pictured is the pylon of the temple of Horus at Edfu. The recesses are for flagpoles.

<https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>



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The Open Court

- The open court follows the pylon and is where certain festivals and ritual activities took place.
- This may be as far as non-priests were allowed to enter.
- Pictured is the open court at Edfu.

<https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>



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The Hypostyle Hall

- Between the open court and the inner sanctuary is the hypostyle hall, a roofed space filled with columns which are often shaped like papyrus plants.
- These columns might evoke the mythological marshes said to surround the 'mound of creation', the first land to rise from the primordial waters at the beginning of time.
- Pictured here are columns from the hypostyle hall in the temple of Khnum at Esna.

<https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>



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The Sanctuary

- The sanctuary contained the shrine that housed the deity's statue. This was the darkest, most enclosed part of the temple, with the highest floor level. These conditions protected the god's statue while also recreating the mound of creation, on which the temple's god or goddess now stands.
- Pictured is inside the sanctuary at Edfu.

<https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>

The Sacred Lake

- Many temples had a sacred lake where the priests bathed so they would be pure for serving the deity.

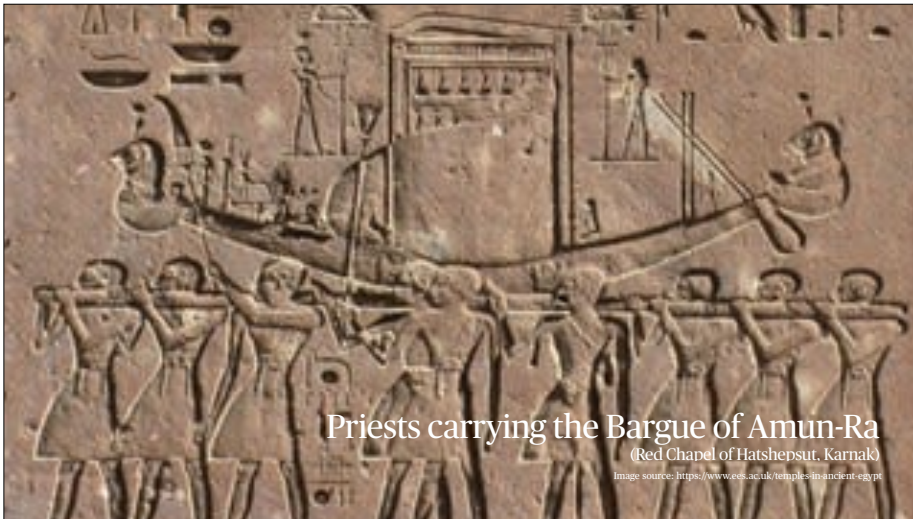


<https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>

Rituals and Festivals

- Each temple had its own rituals and festivals. However, common to all was the daily ritual that included waking, feeding and dressing the divine statue.
- Acting on behalf of the pharaoh, in the morning, the high priest opened the shrine and greeted the statue with bowing and hymns. Incense was lit and the statue was brought out to be dressed in fine textiles and jewelry. After being presented with food offerings, the statue was returned to its shrine.
- The priest then left the room, sweeping away any footprints. Leftover offerings were divided among the priests as part of their wages.
- Festivals were another important aspect of temple ritual. Priests carried the divine statue out of the sanctuary in a *barque*, a portable shrine in the shape of a boat. This presented an opportunity for the priests to catch a glimpse of the god or goddess, and to ask them questions. If the *barque* rocked forward the answer was yes, if backwards the answer was no.

<https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>



Priests carrying the Barque of Amun-Ra
(Red Chapel of Hatshepsut, Karnak)

Image source: <https://www.ees.ac.uk/temples-in-ancient-egypt>

Journey Down the Nile

Prominent Sites

Aswan Dams

Lake Nasaar



Aswan Dam

Aswan Dam

Aswan Dam

Image source: <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/85992/aswan-high-dam>



Aswan Dam

- The Aswan Dam, or more specifically since the 1980s, the Aswan High Dam, is one of the world's largest embankment dams, which was built across the Nile in Aswan, Egypt, between 1960 and 1970.
- Its significance largely upstaged the previous Aswan Low Dam initially completed in 1902 downstream. Construction of the High Dam became a key objective of the government following the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, the brainchild of Gamal Abdel Nasser.
- The dam construction required the resettlement of 90,000 people and buried thousands of ancient monuments. 40 technical missions from five continents came together to relocate 22 monuments.
- With its ability to better control flooding, provide increased water storage for irrigation and generate hydroelectricity, the dam was seen as pivotal to Egypt's planned industrialization.



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Temple Philae

Location and Construction

- Philae Temple, also known as the Temple of Isis, is located on Philae Island (also called Agilkia island) in the reservoir of the Aswan Low Dam, near the modern city of Aswan in southern Egypt.
- Situated on the Nile River, its island location adds to its picturesque and mystical appeal.
- The original Philae Temple dates back to the Ptolemaic period (4th century BCE). However, the complex underwent significant additions and modifications during the Roman era.
- Construction of the Old Aswan Dam in 1902, caused the Island and temple to be flooded for the majority of the year. When the 1954 plans for the second dam were presented, it became clear that the island would cease to exist.
- In 1960 UNESCO launched an international campaign to save the monuments. In 1968 a decision was made to dismantle, move and rebuild the temple complex. The island of Agilkia located 1/3 mile away was selected as the new location of the Philae Temple.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-philae-egypt/>

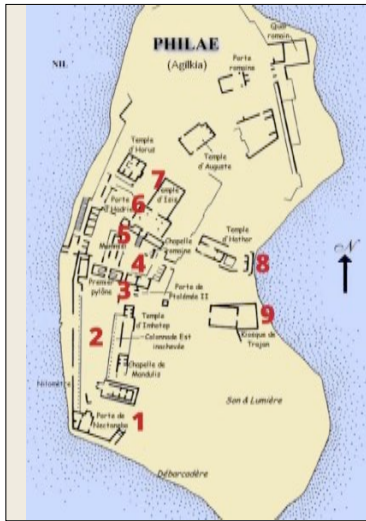
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Temple Philae

Builders and Layout

- The temple complex was constructed and modified by various Ptolemaic and Roman rulers. It's most famously associated with the worship of the goddess Isis, who was revered as a powerful deity with attributes of fertility, magic, and motherhood.
- Philae Temple boasts a stunning ensemble of structures spread across the island. The complex features various courtyards, pylons, halls, and sanctuaries. Due to the island's limited space, the temple's layout is somewhat compact, but it still manages to exude a sense of grandeur and charm.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-philae-egypt/>



Temple Philae Layout

1. The Vestibule of Nectanebo I
2. The Outercourt and the Colonnades of the Temple of Philae
3. The First Pylon of the Temple of Philae Complex
4. The Forecourt of the Temple of Philae and the Birth House (Mammisi)
5. The Second Pylon
6. The Vestibule of the Temple of Philae
7. The Sanctuary of the Temple of Isis
8. The Temple of Hathor
9. The Kiosk of Trajan (Pharaoh's Bed)

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/must-see-things-egyptian-museum-cairo/>

Temple Philae

Highlights

- The temple complex includes a variety of sanctuaries and halls dedicated to different deities and purposes. These areas are adorned with intricate carvings and inscriptions.
- The vestibule of Nectanebo I is a beautiful structure consisting of columns connected with screen walls.
- The western tower has the famous relief of Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos, grasping a bunch of the enemies by their hair and raising his staff to strike them.
- On the west side is the Birth House (Mammisi) dedicated to goddess Isis in honor of the birth of her son Horus. Inside are many reliefs representing the scenes from Horus' childhood.
- The Kiosk of Trajan or Pharaoh's Bed consists of 14 massive columns connected with screen walls. The columns have beautifully carved floral capitals.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-philae-egypt/>



Famine Stele

Location and Construction

- On Sehel Island near Aswan is a natural granite block whose surface was cut into the rectangular shape of a stele.
- The inscription is written in hieroglyphs and contains 42 columns. It describes a famine that took place during the reign of Pharaoh Djoser (3rd Dynasty c. 2650-2575 BCE).
- The top part of the stele depicts three Egyptian deities: Khnum, Satis and Anuket. Djoser faces them, carrying offerings in his outstretched hands.
- The text tells how the king is upset and worried as the land has been in the grip of a drought and famine for seven years, during which time the Nile has not flooded the farmlands.
- The Egyptians are suffering as a result of the drought and they are desperate and breaking the laws of the land.
- Although dating to well beyond the Genesis account of the seven-year famine in Genesis 41, it indicates that seven-year famines were known in Egypt in ancient times.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Famine_Stela

Nile Cataracts

Rough Waters

Nile Cataracts

Egypt Cataract

- The Cataracts of the Nile are shallow lengths of the Nile River, between Khartoum and Aswan, where the surface of the water is broken by many small boulders and stones jutting out of the river bed, as well as many rocky islets.
- The first cataract is in Egypt, the other five in Sudan
- The First Cataract cuts through Aswan (24.08°N 32.88°E).
- Its former location was selected for the construction of Aswan Low Dam, the first dam built across the Nile.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memphis,_Egypt

Nile Cataracts

Sudan Cataracts

- The Second Cataract (or Great Cataract) was in Nubia and is now submerged under Lake Nasser. (21.48°N 30.97°E)
- The Third Cataract is at Tombos/Hannek. (19.76°N 30.37°E)
- The Fourth Cataract is in the Manasir Desert, and since 2008, is submerged under the reservoir of Merowe Dam. (18.91°N 32.36°E)
- The Fifth Cataract is near the confluence of the Nile and Atbarah Rivers. (17.68°N 33.97°E)
- The Sixth Cataract is where the Nile cuts through the Sabaluka pluton, close to Bagrawiyah. (16.29°N 32.67°E)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cataracts_of_the_Nile#:~:text=In%20Egypt%3A,dam%20built%20across%20the%20Nile.



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Amenhotep II Stele

- On Elephantine Island is a monumental stone inscription with accompanying artwork that records the campaign of Amenhotep II to Canaan in which he claims to have brought back over 101,128 captives to be used as slaves.
- Pharaoh Amenhotep II reigned over Egypt beginning in about 1450 BCE, during the powerful 18th Dynasty of the New Kingdom.
- Matching chronological information from Egyptian king lists to the Bible, Amenhotep II was probably the pharaoh of the Exodus, which occurred approximately 1446 BCE.

Caprimondo, CC BY-SA 3.0 - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stele_of_Amenhotep_II, via Wikimedia Commons

Titus Kennedy, Unearthing the Bible, (Eugene OR, Harvest House, 2020), pp. 56-57

Amenhotep II Stele

Location and Construction

- His monuments and inscriptions indicate that he was a boastful pharaoh, claiming feats like rowing a ship by himself faster and farther than 200 Egyptian sailors, or singlehandedly killing seven prince warriors of Kadesh.
- So supposedly conducting the largest ever slave raid in Egyptian history was probably an extreme exaggeration. Other Egyptian military campaigns of the period brought back nowhere near the amount of captives, with the largest total being half the number he claimed.
- While earlier in the 18th Dynasty the Egyptians had a powerful military, especially during the reign of Thutmose III, who conducted 17 known military campaigns, after the beginning of the reign of Amenhotep II there was a steep decline.
- Amenhotep II had only two confirmed campaigns during his reign: the first taking place prior to the Exodus, and the second being primarily a slave raid that occurred soon after the Exodus which recorded on the Elephantine Stele.

Titus Kennedy, *Unearthing the Bible*, (Eugene OR, Harvest House, 2020), pp. 56-57

Amenhotep II Stele

Location and Construction

- Because this happened right after the Exodus, perhaps it indicates an urgent need to replace the lost slave population in Egypt, or purely propaganda to make it appear that the pharaoh had recovered or replenished slaves lost during the Hebrew exodus.
- As such, it provides anecdotal extra-biblical evidence for the destruction of the Egyptian army as recorded in Exodus.

Titus Kennedy, *Unearthing the Bible*, (Eugene OR, Harvest House, 2020), pp. 56-57

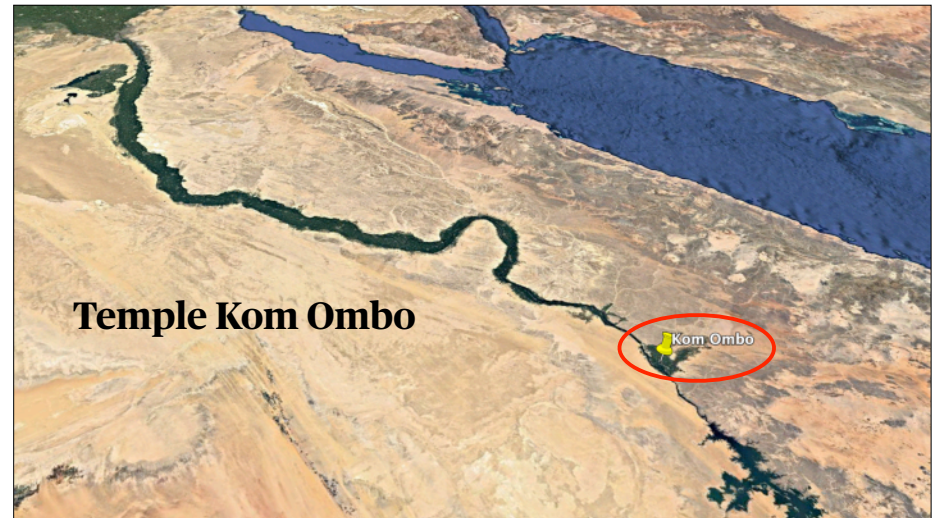


Mausoleum of Aga Khan

Location and Construction

- Located atop a hill on the outskirts of Aswan, overlooking the Nile, sits the Aga Khan Mausoleum, an austere structure with a dome and crenellated walls.
- Built in rose granite, with the tomb itself in white Carrara marble, the mausoleum is a fitting monument to the man who was once supreme leader of the Shia Muslim Ismaili sect, Sir Sultan Muhammed Shah, who died in 1957.
- The construction of the mausoleum began in 1956 and ended in 1960 and initially accepted tourists inside; however, the interior was closed off to the public in 1997.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mausoleum_of_Aga_Khan



Temple Kom Ombo

Location and Construction

- Temple Kom Ombo is situated in the town of Kom Ombo, which is located along the Nile River in Upper Egypt, about 30 miles north of the city of Aswan, between Aswan and Edfu.
- It stands on a promontory at a bend in the Nile, at the north end of a large area of agricultural land. Situated on a plateau cut by two long dry streams which isolate the site, it provides one of the most spectacular settings of any of Egypt's river temples.
- Later, it was situated at the terminus of two caravan routes, one running westward through the Kurkur Oasis to Tomas in Nubia, while the other ran from Daraw through the Eastern Desert, regaining the Nile at Berber.
- The construction of Kom Ombo Temple dates back to the Ptolemaic period of ancient Egypt, around the 2nd century BCE. It was later expanded and modified during the Roman era, showcasing a blend of architectural styles from these periods.

<https://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/komombo2.htm>

Temple Kom Ombo

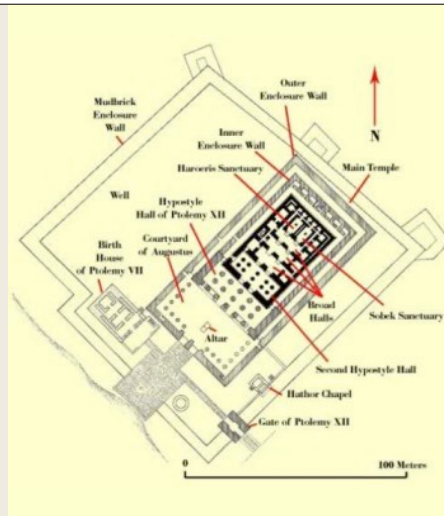
Builders and Layout

- The earliest king named in the temple at Kom Ombo is Ptolemy VI Philometor, though most of the decoration was completed by Ptolemy XII Neos Dionysos. In the early Roman Period the forecourt was decorated and the outer corridor added.
- Unfortunately, most of the temple's original structures are gone. The majority were either destroyed by either natural forces or by humans who used the temple's materials for the construction of other buildings. And, just as almost in every temple, a lot of reliefs were defaced by Copts.

<https://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/komombo2.htm> and <https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-kom-ombo-egypt/>

Temple Kom Ombo

- The temple is oriented east to west according to the "local north" determined by the river, and today the temple is entered through the remains of the Ptolemaic portal at the southwest of the precinct.
- The temple is unique in that it's a double temple, essentially two temples in one complex. Each half is dedicated to one of the deities, Sobek and Horus. The two sections are symmetrical and mirror each other in layout and design. This layout reflects the dualistic nature of the temple's purpose and its alignment with the beliefs of the time.



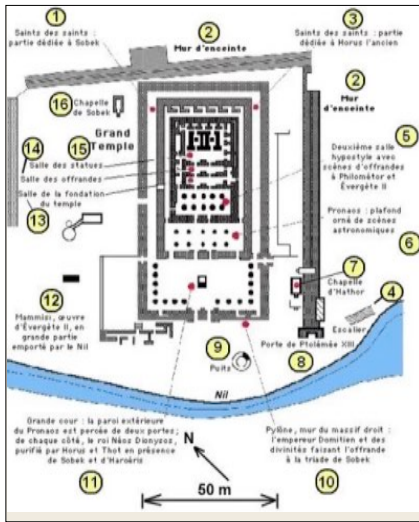
<https://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/komombo2.htm>

Temple Kom Ombo

Dedication

- The Temple of Kom Ombo is one of the most beautiful double temples dedicated to two triads of deities:
- The western side of the temple is assigned to a second group consisting of the falcon god Haroeris (Horus the Elder) - god of the sky and protector of the king, his wife Tasenetnofret, and their child Panebtawy.
- The eastern half of the temple is devoted to the first triad consisting of the crocodile god Sobek - god of the Nile and creator of the world, his wife Hathor, and their son Khonsu.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-kom-ombo-egypt/>



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Kom Ombo Highlights

1. The Sanctuary of Sobek
2. The Wall surrounding the Temple of Kom Ombo
3. The Sanctuary of Horus
4. The Staircase
5. The Hypostyle hall
6. Pronaos
7. The Chapel of Hathor
8. The Gate of Ptolemy XII Auletes
9. The Well
10. Pylon
11. The Great Court with the Altar
12. Mammisi (Birth House)
13. Hall of the Temple's Foundation
14. Hall of victims
15. Hall of statues
16. The Chapel of Sobek

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-kom-ombo-egypt/>

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Temple Kom Ombo

Highlights

- The temple's most distinctive feature is its dual design, with two parallel sanctuaries, each containing a separate set of halls, chambers, and shrines dedicated to Sobek and Horus.
- The sculpture has deeply carved sunken reliefs on the exterior walls and columns, and fine quality bas-relief on the interior walls. In many places the thin plaster layer of color survives. Decorations depict Ptolemy VI, Ptolemy VII, Cleopatra II and Cleopatra III.
- Adjacent to the temple, there is a museum that displays mummified crocodiles, highlighting the reverence and significance of Sobek in the region.
- Near the entrance, there's a well-preserved Nilometer, an ancient device used to measure the Nile River's water levels, crucial for predicting harvests and agricultural cycles.

ChatGPT

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Temple Kom Ombo

Highlights

- The Hypostyle halls have two rows of five free-standing columns. The capitals of the columns are beautifully decorated with hieroglyphs with the symbol of life (ankh). Beautiful reliefs run throughout the halls.
- On one of the outer enclosure walls is the relief of the ancient Egyptian calendar representing a yearly schedule of events specifically related to the Temple of Kom Ombo. The calendar acted as a schedule for organizing the services and rituals.
- One interesting relief shows women using birthing chairs. Next to the women is an engraving of medical and surgical instruments, thought to be the first historical representation of medically related instruments.
- Near the entrance, there's a well-preserved Nilometer, an ancient device used to measure the Nile River's water levels, crucial for predicting harvests and agricultural cycles.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/things-see-temple-kom-ombo-egypt/>

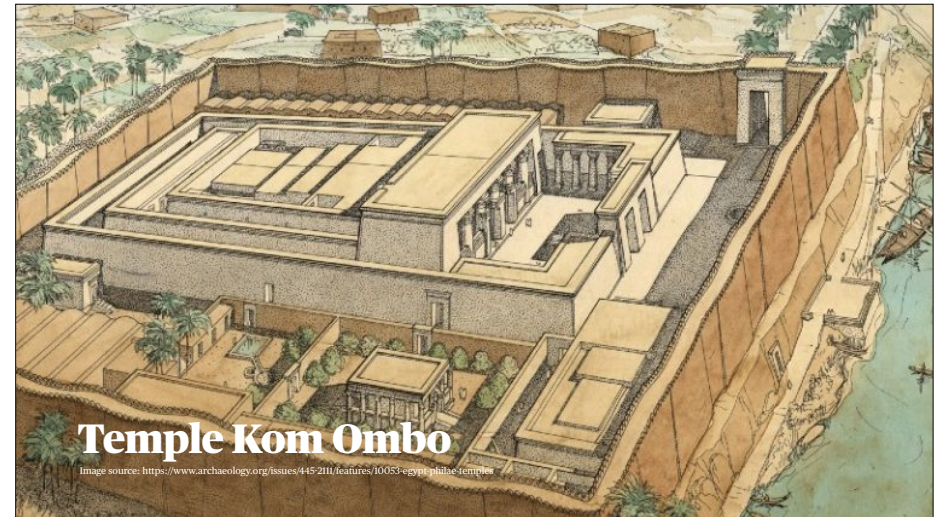
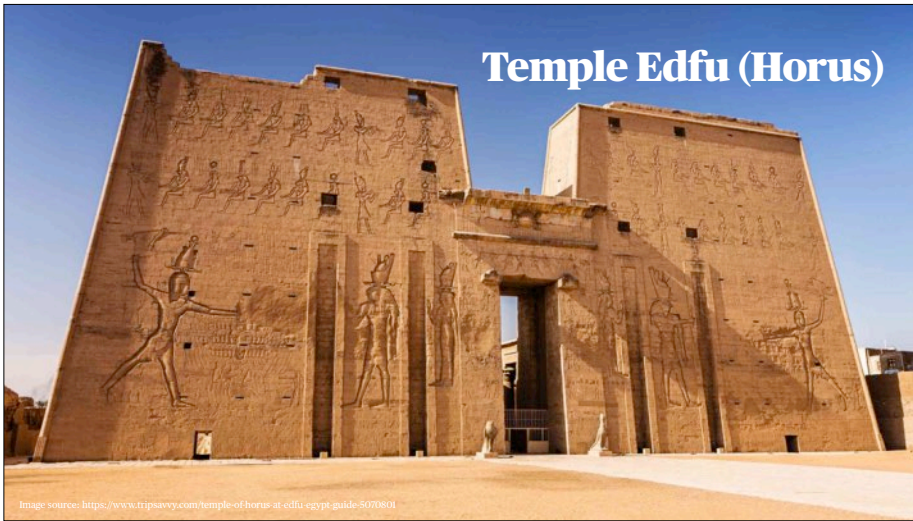


Image source: <https://www.archaeology.org/issues/445-211/features/10053-egypt-philae-temples>



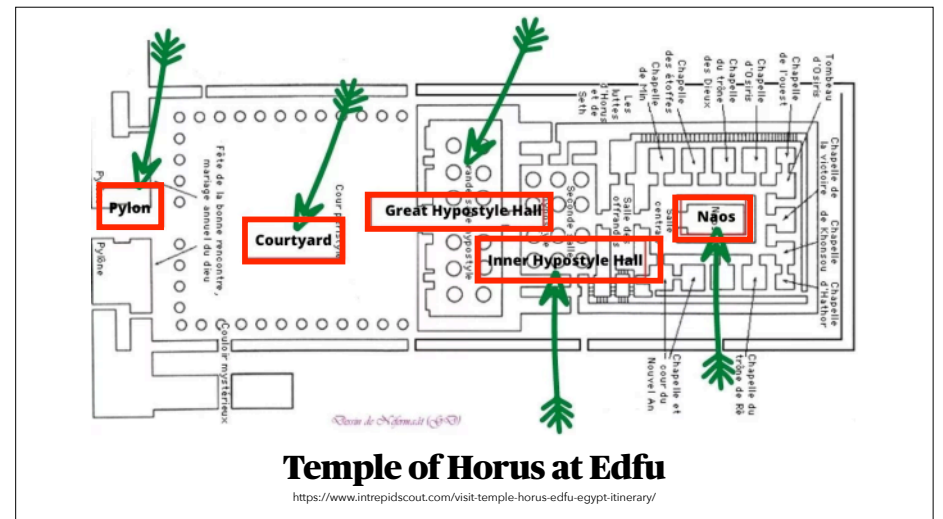
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Temple Edfu

Location and Construction

- Edfu Temple, also known as the Temple of Horus, is located in the city of Edfu, which lies on the west bank of the Nile River in Upper Egypt, between Luxor and Aswan.
- Edfu Temple is a Ptolemaic temple begun during the reign of Ptolemy III Euergetes in 237 BCE and completed much later, during the reign of Ptolemy XII Auletes in 57 BCE.
- It is considered to be the most complete and the best preserved ancient temple structure in Egypt and is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/visit-temple-horus-edfu-egypt-itinerary/>



Temple Edfu

Dedication

- The temple was constructed in honor of the god Horus. Ancient Egyptians believed the temple was built on top of the location where the mythological battle between Horus and his uncle Seth took place. The battle symbolized the eternal struggle between good and evil.
- Horus was often depicted as a falcon or as a falcon-headed man, symbolizing his association with the sky and his role as a protector of the pharaoh. He was the divine embodiment of kingship, power, and protection.
- One of the highlights of visiting the Edfu Temple is the reenactment of the "Feast of the Beautiful Meeting," a festival that commemorates the mythical marriage between Horus and the goddess Hathor.
- This event includes colorful processions, music, and performances, giving visitors a unique glimpse into ancient religious ceremonies.

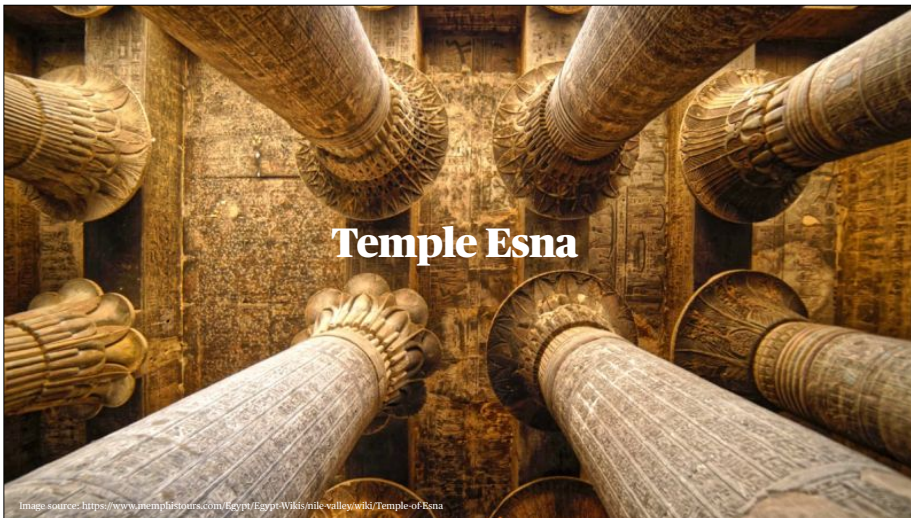
<https://www.intrepidscout.com/visit-temple-horus-edfu-egypt-itinerary/>

Temple Edfu

Highlights

- The pylon twin towers feature mirror images of Ptolemy XII defeating his enemies. The back side has reliefs depicting the aforementioned feast.
- The courtyard is surrounded on three sides by a covered colonnade of thirty-two columns.
- The majestic Great Hypostyle Hall is made up of twelve columns arranged in two rows. The columns feature amazing floral capitals and the ceiling adorned with astronomical imagery.
- One very interesting side room was used to make the perfumes used in rituals. The walls of this room are covered with detailed instructions for obtaining different scents.
- The temple includes sanctuaries dedicated to Horus and other deities. The innermost sanctuary houses the sacred barque (ceremonial boat) of Horus, a used during processions.
- The temple also features a nilometer used to measure the Nile River's water levels, which were crucial for predicting agricultural cycles.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/visit-temple-horus-edfu-egypt-itinerary/>



Temple Esna

Location and Construction

- Esna Temple, also known as the Temple of Khnum, is located in the modern city of Esna, situated on the west bank of the Nile River in Upper Egypt, between Luxor and Edfu.
- The construction of Esna Temple dates back to the Ptolemaic period, around the 3rd century BCE. However, much of the surviving structure, including its well-preserved hypostyle hall, was added during the Roman era.

Temple Esna

Builders and Layout

- The gradual growth and expansion of the city of Esna eventually led to the temple becoming buried beneath the layers of construction and debris.
- Esna Temple is unique due to its partly submerged state.
- In the mid-19th century, during an archaeological expedition in Esna, the remains of the buried temple were uncovered.
- The floor of the temple is situated several yards below the present-day street level. This subterranean design provides a sense of entering a hidden sanctuary.

Temple Esna

Dedication

- The temple is dedicated to Khnum, a creator deity with strong associations to fertility. Khnum was also associated with the Nile's annual inundation and the fertility it brought to the land.
- Khnum was also the god of craftsmanship. He was believed to be the creator and molder of human beings on his potter's wheel.
- Khnum was often depicted with a ram's head, symbolizing his power to shape and create life.

Temple Esna

Highlights

- The temple's grand hypostyle hall is its most impressive feature. It consists of 24 impressive columns arranged in six rows. The lotus leaf capitals of the columns are elaborate and exquisitely decorated. The back wall of the hall has reliefs depicting the god Khnum.
- One of the most famous features of the temple is the Zodiac ceiling depicting a circular representation of the zodiac signs along with Egyptian deities, a rare example of ancient astrological art.
- The temple complex includes a courtyard and a series of chambers, some of which are dedicated to deities other than Khnum, showcasing the multi-faceted religious practices of the time.
- The temple's inscriptions are not limited to hieroglyphics, but also include Greek and Latin, a testament to the temple's use during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods.

Esna Lock

Navigating the Nile

- Esna Lock was constructed to control the flow of Nile water, to store the water for agriculture, and to improve navigation in the river Nile.
- When a boat enters the lock, the gates are closed behind it, and the water level in the lock is adjusted to match the river level downstream.
- Once the water level is equalized, the gates on the downstream side of the lock are opened, and the boat can continue its journey down the river.
- Esna Lock was built with an elevation difference of 26 feet.
- It was started during the Ptolemaic era and has been modified and updated over the time.
- The Old Esna lock was built in 1908 and was renovated and reopened in 1996.

<https://www.private toursinegypt.com/Esna-Lock-attraction40>

Thebes

Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom Capital City

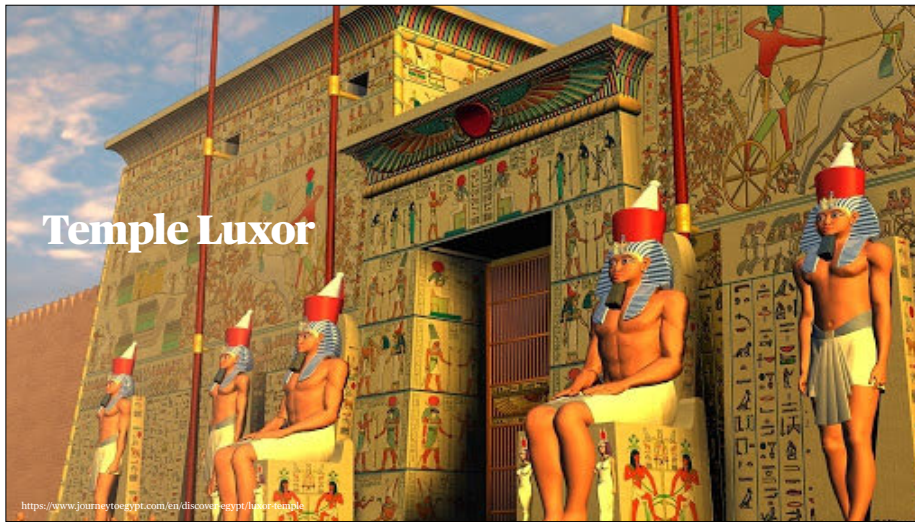
Thebes

Location and Significance

- Thebes, known to the ancient Egyptians as *Waset*, was an ancient Egyptian city located along the Nile about 500 mi south of the Mediterranean.
- Thebes was capital of Egypt for long periods during the Middle Kingdom and New Kingdom eras.
- It was close to Nubia and the Eastern Desert, with its valuable mineral resources and trade routes.
- The site of Thebes includes areas on both the eastern bank of the Nile, where the temples of Karnak and Luxor stand and where the city was situated; and the western bank, where a necropolis of large private and royal cemeteries and funerary complexes can be found.
- In 1979, the ruins of ancient Thebes were classified by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thebes,_Egypt





Temple Luxor

Location and Construction

- The Temple of Luxor is located in the city of Luxor in Upper Egypt. It stands on the east bank of the Nile River known as Thebes.
- It was one of the two primary temples on the east bank, the other being Karnak.
- The construction of Luxor Temple spans multiple periods, with its origins dating back to around 1400 BCE and the reign of Amenhotep III during the New Kingdom.
- Subsequent pharaohs, including Tutankhamun, Horemheb, Ramses II, and Alexander the Great, contributed to its expansion and renovation.

Temple Luxor

Builders and Layout

- Luxor Temple is an expansive complex covering an area of approximately 62 acres.
- The temple and includes a wide range of structures, such as pylons, courtyards, halls, obelisks, and shrines.
- The temple's most notable feature is the Avenue of Sphinxes, originally connected to the Karnak Temple, located about 1.5 miles away. The avenue was lined with over 1,000 sphinxes.

Temple Luxor

Dedication

- Luxor Temple was dedicated to the Theban triad of gods: Amun, his consort Mut, and their son Khonsu. The temple was seen as a center of religious and political significance, with Amun being one of the most prominent and revered deities in the Egyptian pantheon.
- Luxor Temple was a site of religious ceremonies and festivals in ancient times. The Opet Festival, during which a cult statue of Amun was paraded down the Nile from nearby Karnak Temple, celebrated the rejuvenation of the king's strength.

Temple Luxor

Highlights

- The Luxor Temple is considered one of the most significant ancient Egyptian temples. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- The main entrance is through a 70-foot high pylon, which leads to a courtyard surrounded by colonnades with large columns decorated with scenes of pharaohs, gods, and offerings.
- Two granite obelisks erected by Ramses II stood in front flanked the entrance. One still stands, the other is in France.
- A pair of colossal statues represent Pharaoh Ramses II either sitting on his throne or in a standing position.
- A hypostyle hall with 32 columns leads to the inner sanctuary, and statues of the gods..



Temple Karnak

Location and Construction

- Temple Karnak is located on the eastern bank of the Nile River. The complex is a part of the monumental ancient city of Thebes, which was the capital of Egypt during the New Kingdom period.
- The Karnak Temple complex is one of the most impressive and largest ancient Egyptian temple sites. It contains smaller temples, sanctuaries, endless halls, a sacred lake, pylons, colossi, and obelisks. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Built and expanded over a span of more than a thousand years, its construction began during the Middle Kingdom around 2000 BCE and continued well into the Ptolemaic period.
- While initiated during the Middle Kingdom, the most significant constructions occurred during the New Kingdom under the rule of various pharaohs, including Amenhotep III, Seti I, and Rameses II, a collaborative effort by many rulers and generations of builders.

Temple Karnak

Builders and Layout

- Karnak Temple is one of the largest religious complexes ever constructed. Its size is so immense that it could easily accommodate the great cathedrals of Europe within its bounds.
- The complex spans an area of around 200 acres and is divided into several precincts, each with its own set of temples, pylons, and other structures.

Temple Karnak

Dedication

- The largest precinct located in the center is the temple complex and it was principally dedicated to the god Amun.
- The second-largest precinct is located in the southern area of the complex. It was dedicated to the goddess Mut, wife of Amun.
- The smallest precinct is located in the northern section of the temple complex and it was dedicated to the god Montu, the god of war.
- Amun, Mut, and their son, Khonsu, were members of the sacred family known as the Theban Triad.
- The temple complex played a vital role in the religious life of ancient Egypt, serving as a place for various rituals, ceremonies, and festivals dedicated to Amun-Ra and other deities.

Temple Karnak

Highlights

- This 50,000 sq. ft. Hypostyle Hall contains 134 massive columns, some of which reach heights of over 70 feet and weigh up to 70 tons. The scale and grandeur of this space are truly breathtaking.
- A long avenue lined with sphinxes (sphinx statues with ram's heads) connects Karnak Temple with Luxor Temple, creating a ceremonial pathway used during important processions.
- The Sacred Lake, located in the southeastern part of the temple complex, was constructed during the reign of Tuthmosis III and used by priests for purification ceremonies.
- Next to the Sacred Lake is the statue of the scarab.
- Several obelisks can be found within the complex, including the famous obelisk of Hatshepsut and the twin obelisks of Thutmosis I.



Temple Hatshepsut

Location and Construction

- The Temple of Hatshepsut, also known as the Djoser-Djeseru (Holy of Hoiles), is an ancient Egyptian mortuary temple located on the west bank of the Nile River near the city of Luxor.
- The Temple of Hatshepsut is considered one of the most important and impressive ancient Egyptian temples and is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- The temple was built during the New Kingdom period (around 1479 BCE - 1458 BCE) and was dedicated to the goddess Hathor and the pharaoh Hatshepsut.
- Hatshepsut was one of the most successful and influential pharaohs of ancient Egypt, and her temple was designed to not only honor her but also to solidify her place in history and legitimize her reign.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-temples/>

Temple Hatshepsut

Female Pharaoh

- Hatshepsut was born c. 1507 BCE, daughter of Thutmose I.
- She became the queen of Egypt when she married her half-brother Thutmose II.
- Upon his death she was supposed to control the affairs of the state until Thutmose III was to come of age.
- However, around 1473 BCE, Hatshepsut broke with the tradition and had herself crowned as the pharaoh of Egypt becoming a co-ruler of Egypt with Thutmose III.
- Hatshepsut ruled for almost 20 years. She died about 1458 BCE. How and why she died is still a mystery. What we know, is that Thutmose III had her name and image almost completely erased. She remained forgotten for centuries.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-temples/>

Temple Hatshepsut

Builders and Layout

- The Temple of Hatshepsut is one of the most impressive ancient Egyptian temples, and it is considered a masterpiece of architecture and engineering.
- The temple complex consists of several structures, including three terraces, a hypostyle hall, several shrines, and various other buildings.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-temples/>

Temple Hatshepsut

Highlights

- The main feature of the temple is the three-tiered terrace, built into the side of a cliff and connected by ramps and stairs, with impressive colonnades and statues of Hatshepsut herself.
- The southern colonnade features a scene showing two obelisks being transported by water on the decks of the large barges and a parade of the troops as a part of the festivities held to celebrate the arrival of the obelisks at the Karnak Temple.
- The Punt Colonnade documents Hatshepsut's major accomplishment opening and expanding the trade routes to the land of Punt, showing the ships that sailed to it and inhabitants of the fairway land.
- The Sanctuary of Amun features a stunning astronomical ceiling and includes an image of Hatshepsut depicted as a male pharaoh giving offerings to Horus.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/temple-hatshepsut-things-to-see/>



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Temple Hathor

Location and Construction

- The Hathor Temple, also known as the Dendera Temple complex, is located in the town of Dendera on the west bank of the Nile River in Upper Egypt, 37 miles north of Luxor. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site
- The original construction of the Dendera Temple dates back to the late Ptolemaic period, around the 1st century BCE, but the temple complex underwent various renovations and additions during the Roman period.
- The site has one of the best-preserved ancient Egyptian temple complexes, and provides a significant insight into the architecture of the Ptolemaic and Roman eras.
- The complex consists of several structures, including a large main temple, a hypostyle hall, sanctuaries, chambers and an outer hypostyle hall with columns adorned with remarkable preserved intricate reliefs and intricate reliefs and depictions of Hathor.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-temples/>

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Temple Hathor

Dedication

- The temple is dedicated to the goddess Hathor, associated with music, dance, love, motherhood, and the cosmos. Hathor was often depicted as a cow or as a woman with cow ears. She was also associated with the night sky and often connected to the goddess of the sky, Nut.
- Dendera's main temple is dedicated to Hathor and features a sanctuary that housed the statue of the goddess.
- Several smaller shrines are dedicated to other deities, including Isis, Osiris, and Horus.
- The temple was the site of various religious festivals and celebrations, including those dedicated to Hathor's cult. These events often involved music, dance, and festivities that mirrored the joyful and vibrant essence of Hathor herself.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-temples/>

Temple Hathor

Highlights

- The temple's hypostyle halls are adorned with intricate reliefs and beautifully carved columns, showcasing scenes from various religious rituals, myths, and offerings.
- One of the most famous features of the temple is the depiction of the Dendera Zodiac on the ceiling of the pronaos. This celestial map illustrates the constellations and has garnered significant attention for its astronomical and historical significance.
- The temple complex includes a large sacred lake, used for purification rituals and as a symbolic representation of the primeval waters.
- A unique feature of Dendera Temple is a birth house, known as the Mammisi, which commemorates the divine birth of the temple's deity, Hathor.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-temples/>

Amarna

Pharaoh Akhenaten's City

Amarna

Location and Significance

- Amarna was the capital city of the late 18th Dynasty. It was established in 1346 BCE, built at the direction of the Pharaoh Akhenaten.
- The site is on the east bank of the Nile River, 194 miles south Cairo, and 250 miles north of ancient Thebes.
- It is significant in Egyptian history because it was constructed to support the worship of a single god the Aten.
- The city is also significant for a discovery of the Amarna letters. In 1887, a local woman uncovered a cache of over 300 cuneiform tablets that recorded diplomatic correspondence between the Pharaoh and his representatives in Canaan and Amurru, or neighboring kingdom leaders.
- They are unusual in Egyptological research, because they are mostly written in Akkadian cuneiform, the writing system of ancient Mesopotamia, rather than that of ancient Egypt.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amarna_letters



Amarna

Location and Significance

- In addition to shedding light on Egyptian relations with Babylonia, Assyria, Syria, Canaan, and Cyprus as well as the Mitanni, and Hittites, they are significant for biblical studies since they describe the culture and language of the Canaanite peoples.
- They also contain the first mention of a Near Eastern group known as the *Habiru*, whose possible connection with the Hebrews—due to the similarity of the words and their geographic location—remains debated.
- “It is possible that the Hebrews were regarded in the same light as the Habiru in the period before the establishment of the Israelite monarchy... Most of the Biblical uses of the term Hebrew appear in contexts in which Israelites identify themselves to other people, or in which other peoples discuss the Israelites.... While all Habiru were not Hebrews, the Israelites were regarded as Habiru by the people among whom they lived.” (Pfeiffer, *Wycliffe Dictionary of Biblical Archaeology*, 273; Lemche, “Habiru/Hapiru,” 6-10.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amarna_letters

Al Mina

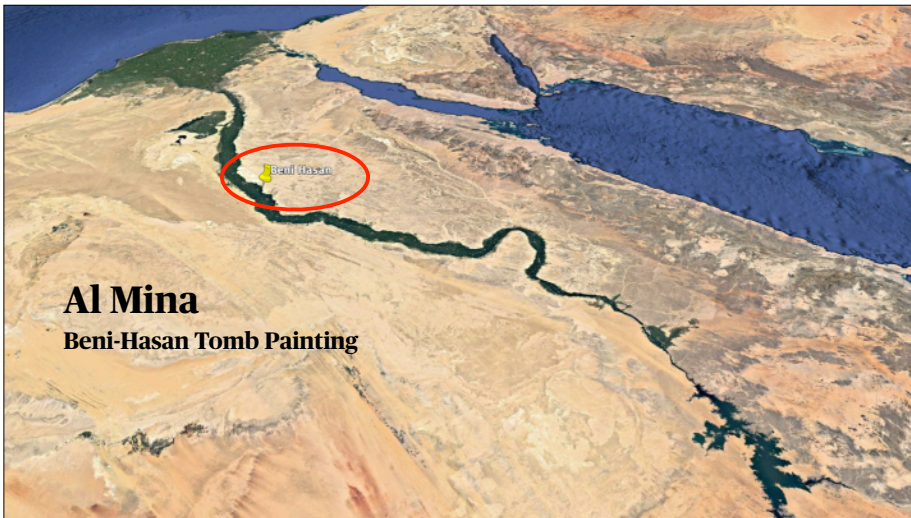
The Beni-Hasan Tomb Painting

Beni-Hasan Tomb Painting

Evidence of Patriarchal Migration

- Beni-Hasan is located 12 miles south of modern-day Minya between Asyut and Memphis.
- A mural from the tomb of Khnumhotep III, painted during the reign of Sesostri II (c 1892 BCE), was discovered there, showing 37 nomads from Canaan traveling to Egypt.

Titus Kennedy, Unearthing the Bible, (Eugene OR, Harvest House, 2020), pp. 36-37



Beni-Hasan Tomb Painting

Evidence of Patriarchal Migration



- On the panel, a multicolored tunic, a fashionable and expensive piece of clothing from Canaan, is also showcased, reminiscent of Joseph's "coat of many colors" from his father.

- Though not a painting of Joseph's family, it reveals the appearance of semi-nomadic Hebrew patriarchs from Genesis, and confirms that they traveled to Egypt in the same way as Abraham, Isaac, and his family did.

Titus Kennedy, *Unearthing the Bible*, (Eugene OR, Harvest House, 2020), pp. 36-37

Beni-Hasan Tomb Painting

Evidence of Patriarchal Migration

- Men, women, children and animals are depicted, giving insight into the look and style of people in the time of the Patriarchs.

Then Jacob set out from Beersheba. The sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons that Pharaoh had sent to carry him. They also took their livestock and their goods, which they had gained in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob and all his offspring with him... (Genesis 46:5-6 ESV)

Notable Egyptians in the Bible (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Biblical_Egypt)

Memphis

Early Dynastic and Old Kingdom Capital City





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Bent Pyramid

- The Bent Pyramid was constructed for Pharaoh Sneferu, who ruled during the Old Kingdom.
- The pyramid gets its name from its odd bent shape, which changes angle around midway up, giving it an unbalanced appearance. The pyramid's lower section was built at a steep angle of 54 degrees, whereas the upper section was built at a gentler inclination of 43 degrees.
- The cause for this shift in angle is unknown, however the steep angle may have posed structural issues during construction.

<https://www.intrepidscout.com/must-see-things-egyptian-museum-cairo/>



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Red Pyramid

- The Red Pyramid was constructed for Pharaoh Sneferu, who ruled during the Old Kingdom.
- It is famous for its largely undamaged outside casing of smooth red limestone, giving it a stunning and unusual appearance.
- Roughly 340 ft tall with a 22 ft foundation, it is Egypt's third-largest pyramid.
- The Red Pyramid is regarded as an amazing engineering and design feat, noted for its comparatively basic and efficient construction procedures.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-pyramids/>



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The Black Pyramid

- The Black Pyramid of Amenemhat III was erected during the Middle Kingdom.
- The pyramid is 245 ft tall and has a base of nearly 345 ft and is composed of mud brick and limestone.
- Its one-of-a-kind design incorporates complex internal structures with numerous rooms and corridors.
- The King's Chamber contains a red granite sarcophagus. Other rooms and corridors in the pyramid include a subterranean chamber and a mortuary temple.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-pyramids/>

Saqqara Pyramids

Location and Significance

- Saqqara boasts a complex of structures that include several smaller pyramids and temples.
- Best known are the Step Pyramid of the Third Dynasty, Egypt's oldest pyramid and the Pyramid of Unas, a Fifth Dynasty structure renowned for the the Pyramid Texts, which were inscribed on the inner chamber walls and provided instructions for the pharaoh's trip into the afterlife.
- Several smaller pyramids include:
 - The Pyramid of Userkaf (Fifth Dynasty)
 - The Pyramid of Pepi II (Sixth Dynasty)
 - The Pyramid of Teti (Sixth Dynasty)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memphis,_Egypt



The Step Pyramid

- The Step Pyramid of Djoser was constructed approximately 2630 BCE for Pharaoh Djoser during the Third Dynasty of the Old Kingdom.
- It is Egypt's oldest pyramid and one of the world's first examples of monumental stone masonry.
- Legendary architect Imhotep created the pyramid, which is made up of six stacked mastabas, which are flat-roofed tombs.
- The pyramid marked a considerable change from preceding Egyptian tombs and established the standard for succeeding pyramids.

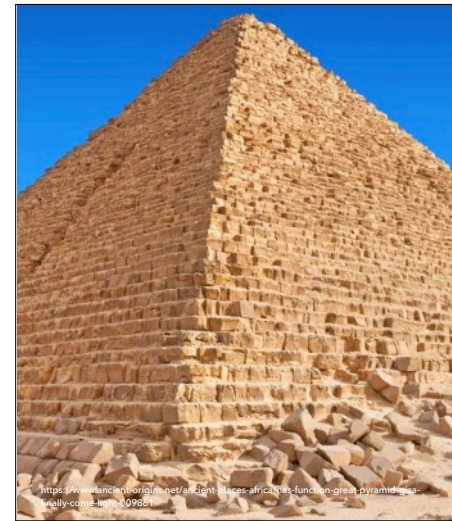
<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-pyramids/>

Giza Pyramids

Location and Significance

- The Giza pyramid complex is home to the Great Pyramid, the Pyramid of Khafre, and the Pyramid of Menkaure, along with their associated pyramid complexes and the Great Sphinx.
- All were built during the Fourth Dynasty of the Old Kingdom, between 2600 and 2500 BCE.
- The site also includes several temples and cemeteries and the remains of a workers' village.
- The site is at the edges of the Western Desert, approximately 5.6 mi west of the Nile River in the city of Giza, and about 8 mi southwest of the city centre of Cairo.
- It forms the northernmost part of the 40,000-acre Pyramid Fields of the Memphis which also includes Saqara and Dahshur.
- Over the millennia, the Nile has changed course. In antiquity it flowed much closer to the pyramids.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giza_pyramid_complex



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Great Pyramid

- The Great Pyramid of Giza, also known as the Pyramid of Khufu, is Egypt's largest and most well-known pyramid. It is one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
- It was commissioned by Pharaoh Khufu and built around 2560 BCE during the Fourth Dynasty of the Old Kingdom of Egypt.
- Made of limestone blocks, weighing an average of 2.5 tons each, it covers an area of 13 acres and was originally 480 ft tall.
- The pyramid is said to have taken a workforce of 100,000 workers 20 years to build.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-pyramids/>



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Pyramid of Khafre

- The Pyramid of Khafre is Egypt's second largest and most well-known pyramid, constructed approximately 2520 BCE for Pharaoh Khafre during the Fourth Dynasty.
- The pyramid is part of a complex that includes the Great Sphinx and numerous lesser pyramids in Giza, on the outskirts of Cairo.
- The remaining casing stones that cover the uppermost portion are one of the pyramid's most distinguishing features. Constructed of high-quality limestone, they were originally polished to a flawless finish, giving them a sparkling appearance in the sunlight.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-pyramids/>



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Pyramid of Menkaure

- The Pyramid of Menkaure is the smallest of the three major pyramids at Giza. It was constructed approximately 2490 BCE for Pharaoh Menkaure during the Fourth Dynasty of the Old Kingdom.
- There are three chambers inside the pyramid: the King's Chamber, the Queen's Chamber, and a subterranean chamber.
- The Menkaure Pyramid is particularly notable for the varied inscriptions and graffiti left by visitors over the years, which provide significant insights on the pyramid's history and use.

<https://www.havefunwithhistory.com/egyptian-pyramids/>

Journey Down the Nile

Delta Cities

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Cairo

Modern Capital City



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Cairo

Location and Significance

- The capital of modern Egypt is Cairo, which is the country's largest city, home to 10 million people.
- Located near the Nile Delta, it was founded under the Fatimid dynasty in 969 CE.
- It superseded Fustat as the main urban centre during the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods (12th-16th centuries).
- Cairo has long been a centre of the region's political and cultural life, and is titled "the city of a thousand minarets" for its preponderance of Islamic architecture.
- Cairo's historic center was awarded World Heritage Site status in 1979.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairo>

Alexandria

Greek and Roman Capital City

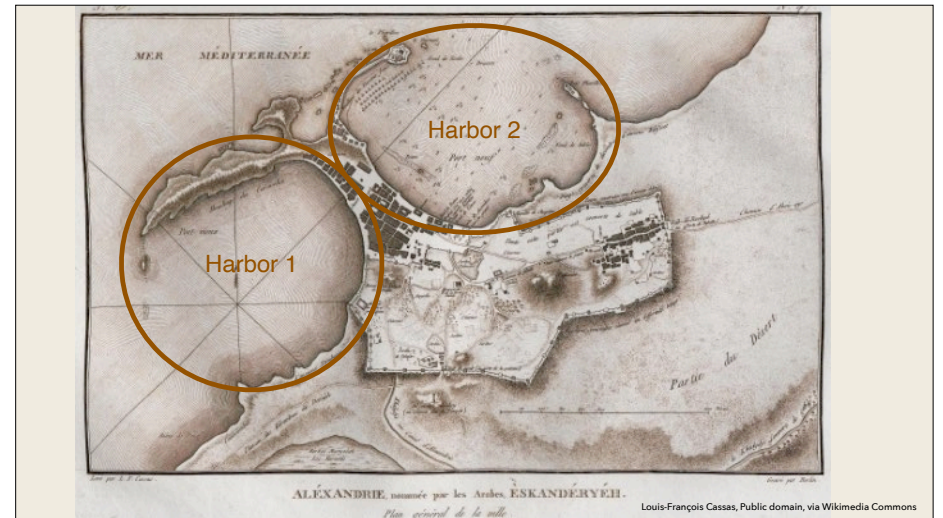


Alexandria

Location and Significance

- Alexandria was founded by Alexander the Great in April 331 BCE. After he captured the Egyptian Satrapy from the Persians, Alexander wanted to build a large Greek city on Egypt's coast that would bear his name.
- He chose the site of Alexandria, envisioning the building of a causeway to the nearby island of Pharos that would generate **two great natural harbors**.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Alexandria



Alexandria

The Great Library of Alexandria

- After its foundation, Alexandria became the seat of the Ptolemaic Kingdom, and quickly grew to be one of the greatest cities of the Hellenistic world, eventually replacing Memphis as Egypt's capital.
- The Great Library of Alexandria Egypt was one of the largest and most significant libraries of the ancient world. It is unknown precisely how many scrolls were housed at any given time, but estimates range from 40,000 to 400,000 at its height.
- Despite the modern belief that the Library was burned once and cataclysmically destroyed, it actually declined gradually over the course of several centuries. The Library, or part of its collection, was accidentally burned by Julius Caesar during his civil war in 48 BCE, but it is unclear how much was actually destroyed and it seems to have either survived or been rebuilt shortly thereafter.
- The Septuagint, a Greek version of the Tanakh, was produced in Alexandria.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_of_Alexandria

Alexandria

History

- The city eventually came under Roman rule and by the time of Augustus, the city grid encompassed an area of 3.9 sq miles and the total population during the Roman principate was around 500,000-600,000.
- On July 21, 365 CE, Alexandria was devastated by a tsunami (365 Crete earthquake), an event annually commemorated years later as a "day of horror".
- The city fell to the Arabs in 641 CE, and a new capital of Egypt, Fustat, was founded. It fell into a long decline, which by the Ottoman period, had been reduced to little more than a small fishing village.
- The French army under Napoleon captured the city in 1798 and the British soon captured it from the French, retaining Alexandria within their sphere of influence for 150 years.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Library_of_Alexandria

Cities in Bible Prophecy

Ezekiel 30

Egyptian Cities in Bible Prophecy

- Ezekiel's "Lament over Egypt" contains the names of several cities. We have already explored the cities of Memphis and Thebes.
- Other cities mentioned include Migdol, Syene, Pathros, Zoan (Tanis), Pelusium, On (Heliopolis), Pi-beseth, and Tehaphnehes.
- We will explore these cities elsewhere in the study.

Journey Down the Nile

Prominent Sites
