Chapter Guide #3: Egypt Under the Pharaohs

**CONTEXT:**

**The Nile River was, and still is, the source of life for Egypt. The Egyptians believed in everything for the afterlife. They built tombs and temples with massive stones from the Libyan and Arabian deserts to sustain the Ka for a chance at timelessness. Egypt’s grand golden treasures, sarcophagi, and countless statues of their immortal god-kings have intrigued the world since the medieval times to present.**

1. Isolated geographic location, which makes it easily defendable and creates a homogeneous culture  18 dynasties rule

2. The Nile River provides a huge amount of agricultural sustainability and prosperity.

3. Pharaoh is the “god-king”  Hierarchical Scale

4. Geology: large amount of diorite and limestone = Megalith architectures  permanence=timelessness

5. Strong belief in the afterlife: Elaborate funerary traditions, objects and tomb architecture.

**CONCEPTS:**

1 Why did Egyptian architects choose the pyramidal shape for tombs?

2: How is the concept of hierarchy expressed in the design of New Kingdom temples ?

3: Why is there very little change (of style) in Egyptian art and architecture (except Amarna period)?

4: Why did Egyptian craftsmen adhere to a “canon of proportion” and strict conventions of representing the human figure in Egyptian painting, relief and sculpture?

5: Understand how contextual issues relate to the function of Egyptian painting, sculpture and architecture.

6: Understand how the function of Egyptian painting and tomb sculpture determines style

7: Why did Egyptian painters concentrates on conceptual reality rather than presenting an optical reality?

**ART WORK CARDS: 3D (Yellow), 2D (Red), Architecture (Green)**

* Palette of Narmer (3D)
* Stepped pyramids of King Djoser (Architecture)
* Pyramids of Giza (Architecture)
* Khafre Enthroned(3D)
* Menkaure and his Bride (3D)
* Seated Scribe (3D)
* Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatshepsut (Architecture)
* Sculptures of Hatshepsut (3D)
* Temple of Ramses II (Architecture)
* Temple of Amen-Re at Karnak (Architecture)
* Wall paintings of Tomb of Nebamun (2D)
* Akhenaton (3D)
* Death masks of Tutankhamen (3D)

**VOCABULARY:**

ka

hierarchy of scale

Imhotep

diorite

granite

slate

canon

atlantid

fresco secco

pyramidal

Akhenaton

monotheism

iconoclast

obelisk

fetish stone/ben-ben

**ARCHITECTUAL VOCABULARY:**

mastaba

sphinx

living rock

corbelled arch

clerestory

hypostyle hall

colonnade

pylon

engaged columns

post & lintel

plan/elevation

**STYLISTIC ANAYLSIS:**

***“The artist uses the* conceptual approach *rather than the* optical*, representing what is known to be true of the object, instead of some random view of it, and showing it’s most characteristic parts at right angles to the line of vision”***

**EGYPTIAN WALL PAINTINGS: Conventions of Representing the Human Figure**

1: Twisted Perspective: used – two points of view combined into the representation of a single figure

2: Canon of proportion: always used in representing figures

3: Formalization of anatomy and stance: = rigidity, lack of a sense of movement

4: Hierarchical organization of figures: within a composition (relief and painting, but also sculpture groups)

5: Little or no depth within composition: registers used to organize figures

6: Literal presentation of information: conceptual ordering of symbols, motifs, hieroglyphics, patterns

**EGYPTIAN SCULPTURE: Conventions of Representing the Human Figure**

1: Idealized: flawless body (youth), perfect facial feature (prime of life), no emotion, serenity

2: Timelessness: figure compact, without gesture, with no protruding breakable parts, carved in diorite (hardest stone available), to last for all time

3: Power and Authority: iconography reflects kingship and religious power and the divinity of pharaoh.

4: Stereotypical Poses: figures carved according to a canon of proportion and gestures, following established conventions

**CONTEXT CARDS: Blue**

* Predynastic Egyptian
* Old Kingdom Egyptian
* New Kingdom Egyptian
* Armarna Period

**TIMELINE:**

2500 BCE Old Kingdom

1500 BCE New Kingdom

1333 BCE Amarna Period

2649 BCE Union of Upper and Lower Egypt

2511-2472 BCE Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure build the Great Pyramids

2520 BCE Great Sphinx, Gizeh

2150 BCE The Old Kingdom collapses as Egypt divides into rival kingdoms

2030 BCE Middle Kingdom Capital moves to Thebes

1473 BCE Hatshepsut rules (New Kingdom)

1350 BCE Akhenaten rules

1333 BCE Tutankhamen rules

525 BCE Persia conquers Egypt