

Assignment 2

Although similar in form, the ziggurat and temple architecture of Mesopotamia contrasts a great deal with the mastabas of early dynastic Egypt and the Old Kingdom *Great Pyramids* of Gizeh. What religious purposes did each of these architectural forms (the ziggurat and temple vs. mastabas and pyramids) serve? Requiring exorbitant use of material and labor resources, why were these structures important to the members of their respective societies? What kinds of objects and depictions are found at these architectural sites, and what understandings of the purposes of the structures have we gleaned from their discovery? Given the particular purpose and function of ziggurats and pyramids (including their preceding form, the mastaba) what limitations exist in our understanding of the civilizations that created them? Equally, what ethical considerations must we navigate when these sites are excavated, and associated funerary/ceremonial objects are put on display?

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Describe the formal, representational and iconographic characteristics appearing on the *Palette of King Narmer*, c. 3000 - 2920 BCE that remain conventional in Egyptian two-dimensional art for the following three millennia.

Choose a Pre-Dynastic or Early Kingdom work that is either sculpted or painted, and compare it to a sculpted or painted work made in the Old or New Kingdom. Decipher common glyphs and interpret the meanings of each work. What similarities do these works have in common with the canon of forms demonstrated in the *Palette of King Narmer*? Consider the longevity of the world view expressed in the three works. What geographic, and political circumstances allowed for such consistent and relatively unchallenged visual lexicon?