

Essay 2

Compare and contrast the *Head of an Akkadian Ruler*, c. 2250 - 2200 BCE with the statue of Gudea from the Temple of Geshtinanna, c. 2100 BCE. Consider the materials used to create these works, as well as their subject matter. What shapes are repeated and avoided in these figures? What do the figures' poses and facial expressions suggest?

Discuss the issue of idealization vs. naturalism, anatomical proportions, size, and stylization in relationship to the function and purpose of the object. Were the subjects depicted naturalistically, reflecting their real-life appearance, or in an idealized manner, to suggest a divine power? How did this depiction serve the function and purpose of the object? What meaning is conveyed?

- or -

Compare and contrast the *Victory Stele of Naram-Sin*, 2254 - 2218 with the stele depicting the laws of Hammurabi, from Susa, Iran, c. 1780. Consider the materials used, the compositional formats, and the size of the figures relative to each other, as well as to the size of the object itself.

Discuss the treatment of divine figures and the concept of sacred ground. How do these sculpted works communicate power and authority? To whom is this message addressed? What meaning is conveyed?

- or -

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?