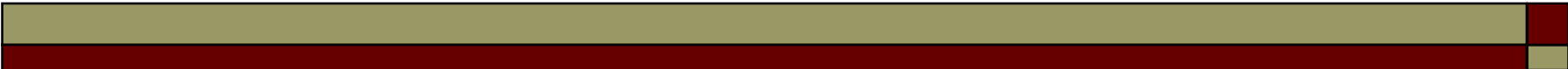


A1a: Week1, Tues Introduction: Ancient Egyptian Art? – Ancient Egyptian Art!

HPAH5086/6086 - Art and Ancient Egypt 4000BC to the
2020ies: Exhibiting artistic representations

Dr. Katharina Zinn

Associate Professor in Egyptian Archaeology and
Heritage, UWTSD



Additional Reading

- ❑ Robins, G. (1994). *Proportion and Style in Egyptian Art*. Austin: Univ. of Texas Pr.
- ❑ Robins, G. (2008). *Egyptian Painting and Relief*. (Shire Egyptology). Colchester: Shire.
- ❑ Arnold, D. (2002). *The Encyclopaedia of Ancient Egyptian Architecture*. London: Tauris.
- ❑ Arnold, D. (1997). *Building in Egypt: Pharaonic Stone Masonry*. New York: Oxford Univ. Pr.
- ❑ Whitney, D. (1989). *The Canonical Tradition in Ancient Egyptian Art*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- ❑ Whitney, D. (1992). *Masking the Blow: The Scene of Representation in Late Prehistoric Egyptian Art*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- ❑ Whitney, D. (1976). "The Origins of Register Composition in Predynastic Egyptian Art," In: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 96 (1976), 404-18.

Learn to see!

You have to look at thousands of objects to start to recognise...

Stela of Montuwoser, MET



Senwosret III
MET New York



Seated statue of
Hatshepsut, MET



TT96 Sennefer, Mayor of Thebes (18th dyn.)



Whip Handle in the Shape of a Horse (MMA 26.7.1293)



Pectoral and Necklace of Sithathoryunet with the Name of Senwosret II (MMA16.1.3a, b)



Modell of a river boat





Architecture

Should / could be part of it, but
will not specifically looked at in
this module

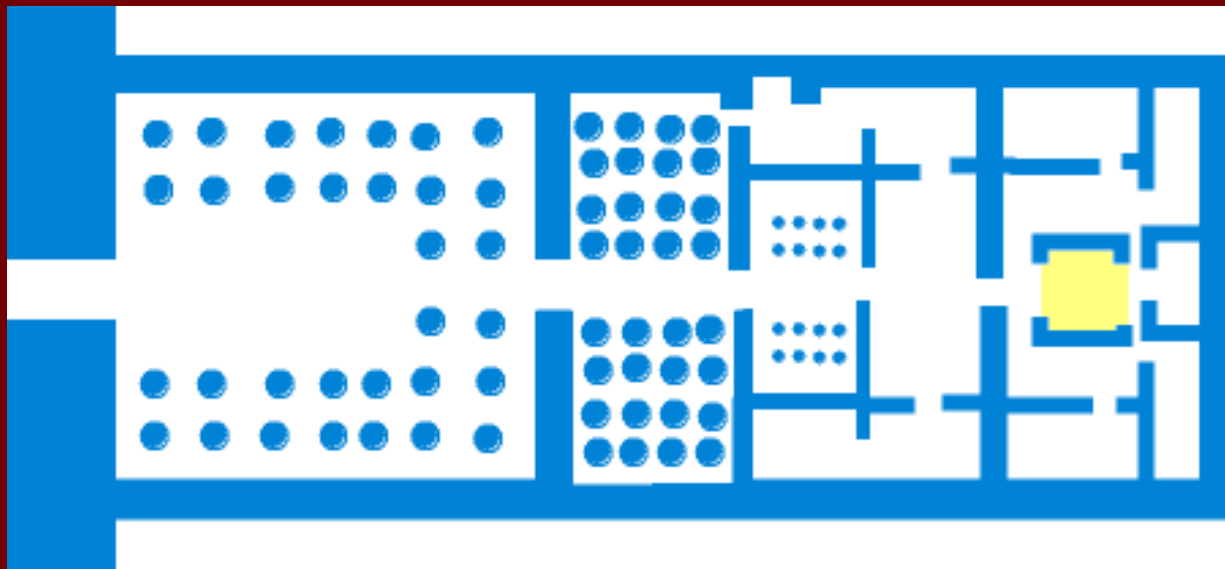
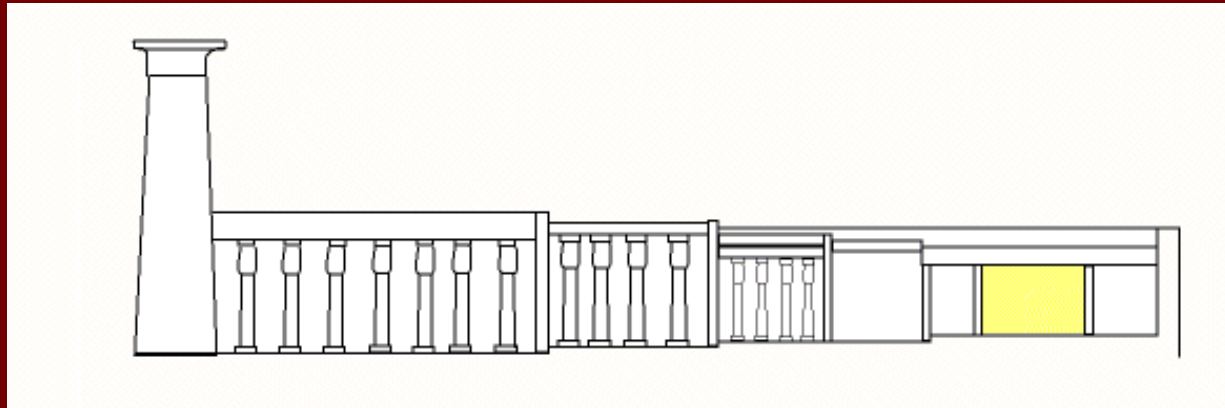
Mastaba of Perneb, MET New York



Giza - Plateau

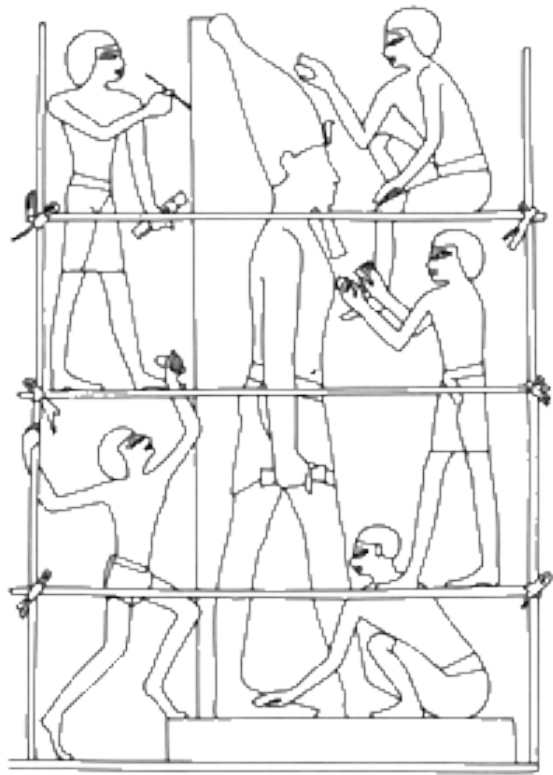


Typical NK temple



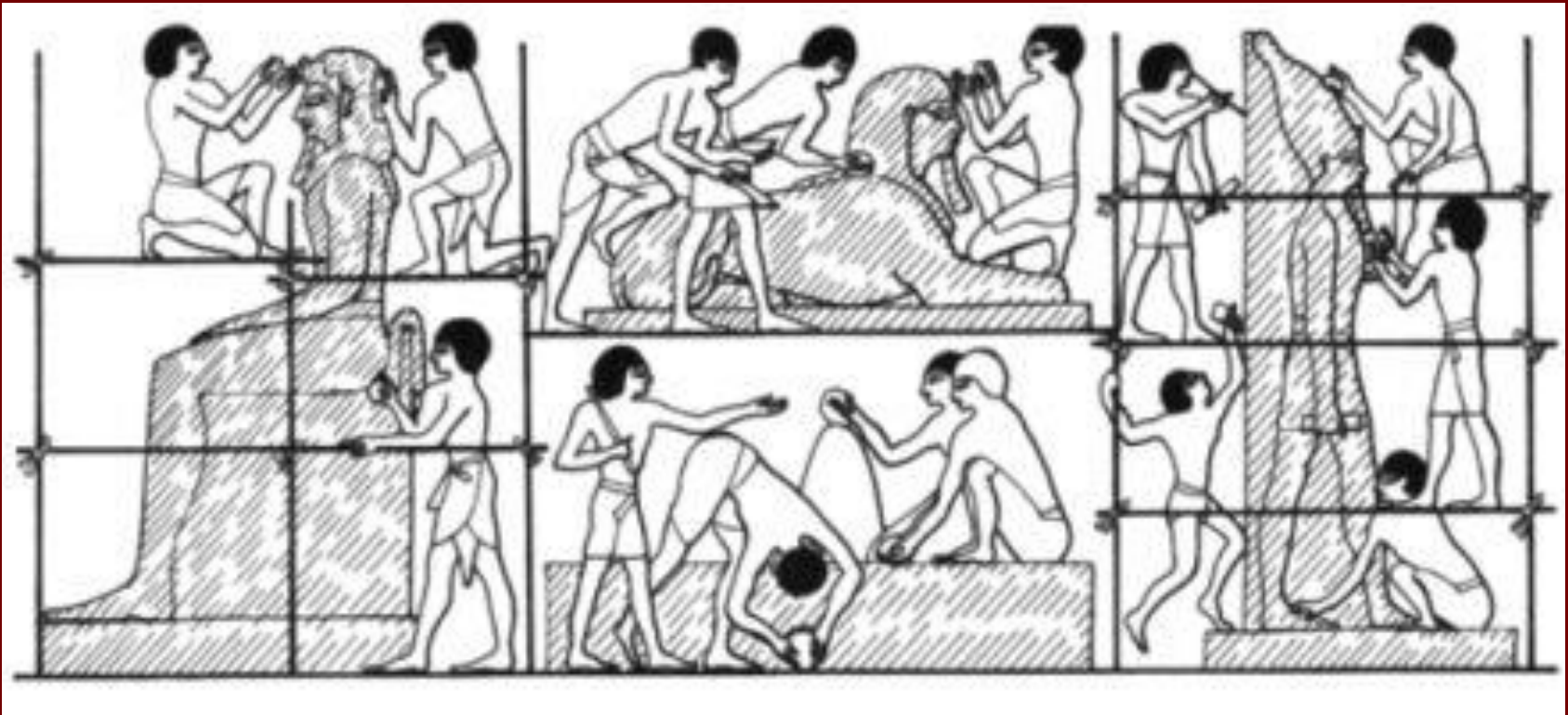
Artists, craftsmen and their techniques

Sculptures workshop



- ❑ Sculptors polishing a colossal statue of Thutmosis III (NK) and a scribe drawing outlines for inscriptions to be carved on the back pillar.
Line drawing after a painting in the tomb of vizier Rekhmire (TT100 - NK).

Workshop of sculptures (Rekhmire TT100)





Workshop of sculptures (Rekhmire TT100)



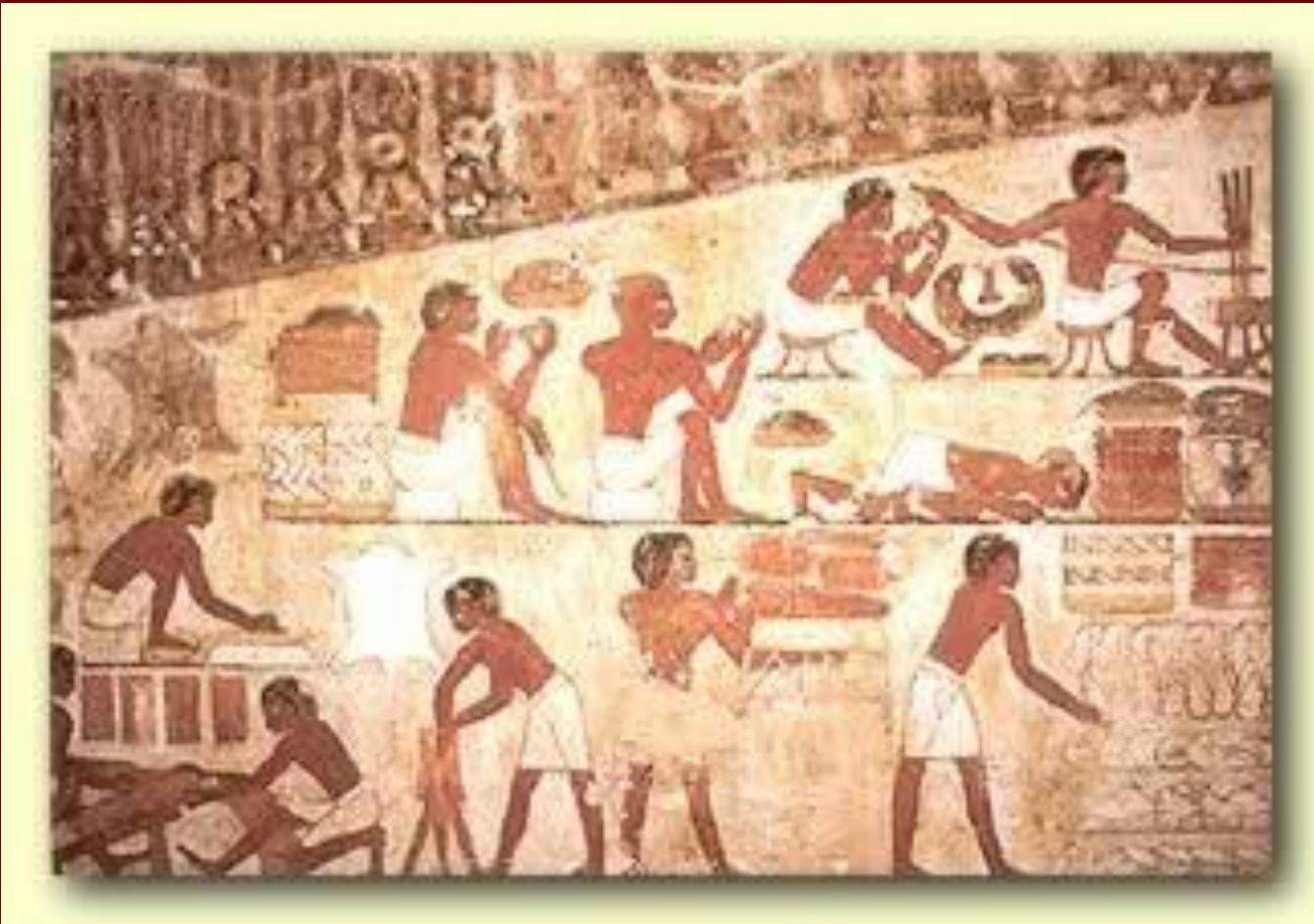
Workshop of sculptures (Rekhmire TT100)





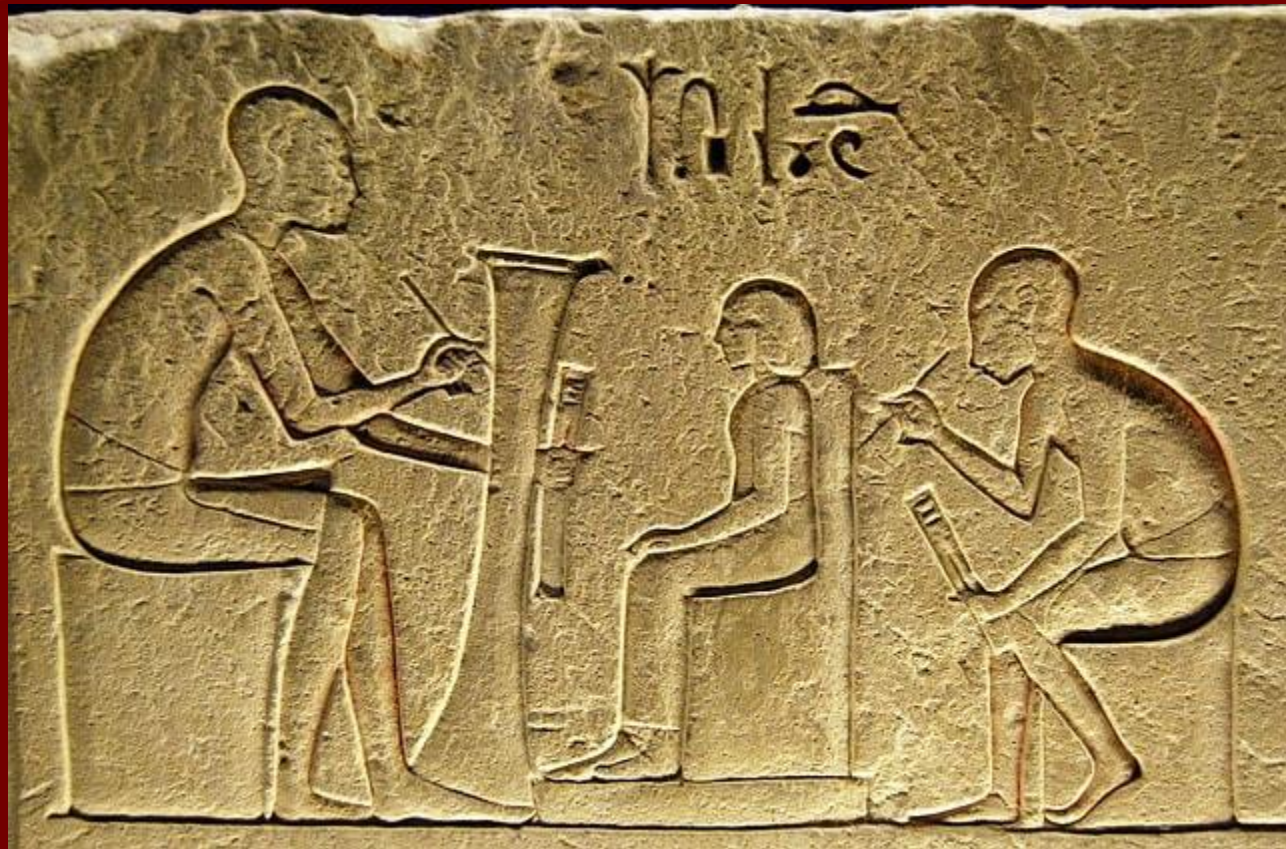
TT100: Rekhmire

Workshop for the Temple of Amun



TT100: Rekhmire Workshop for the Temple of Amun





Mastaba Ti, Saqqara, 5th dyn.

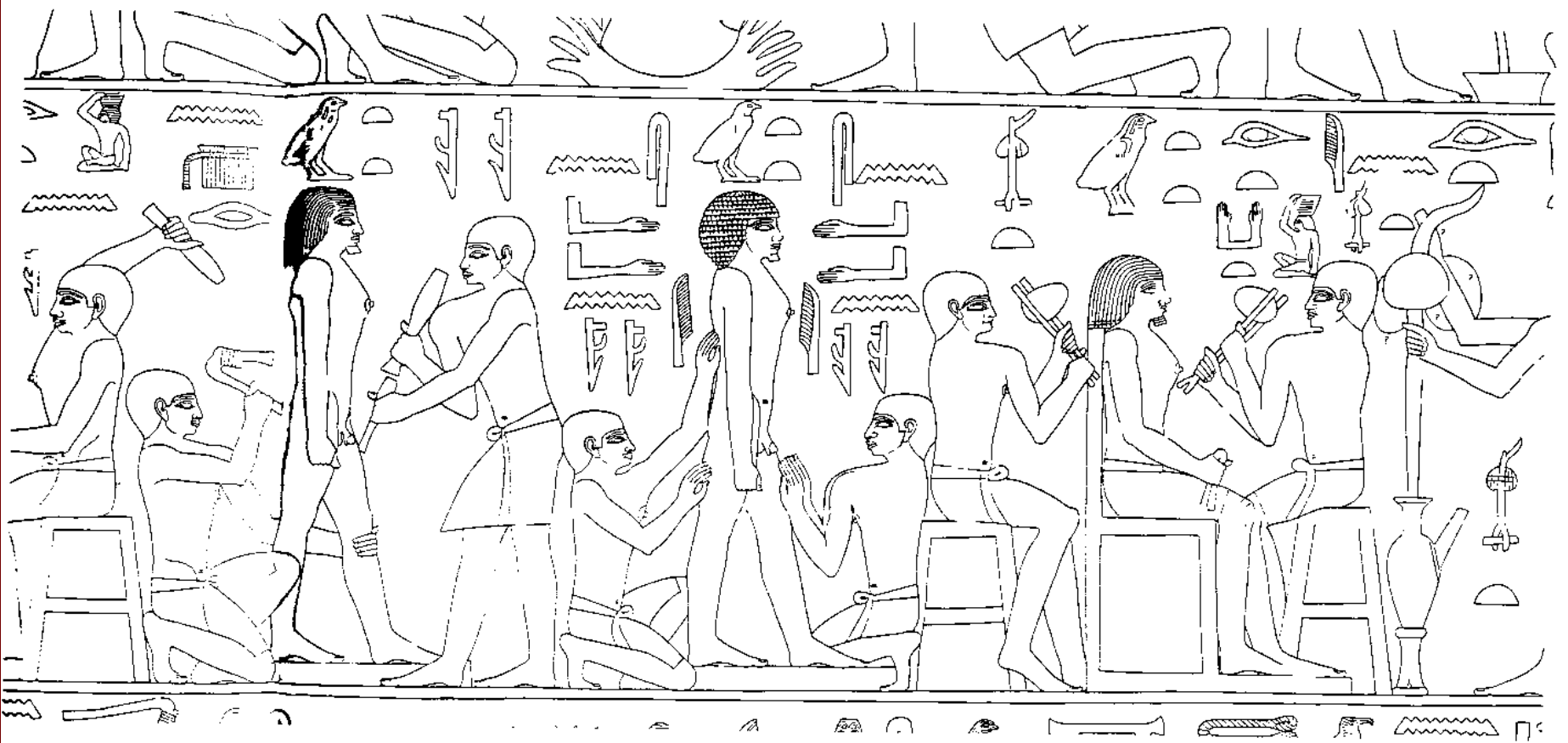
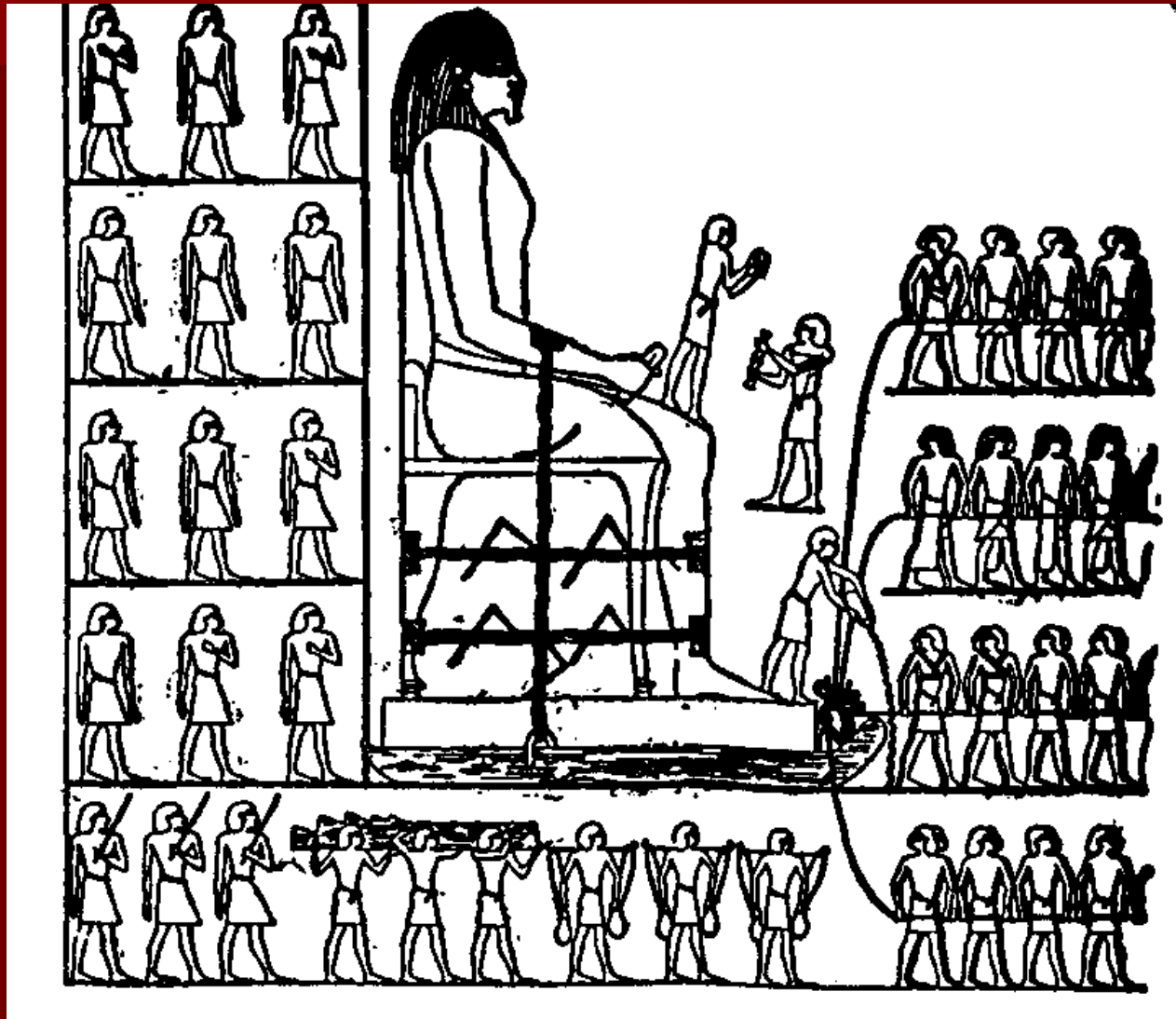


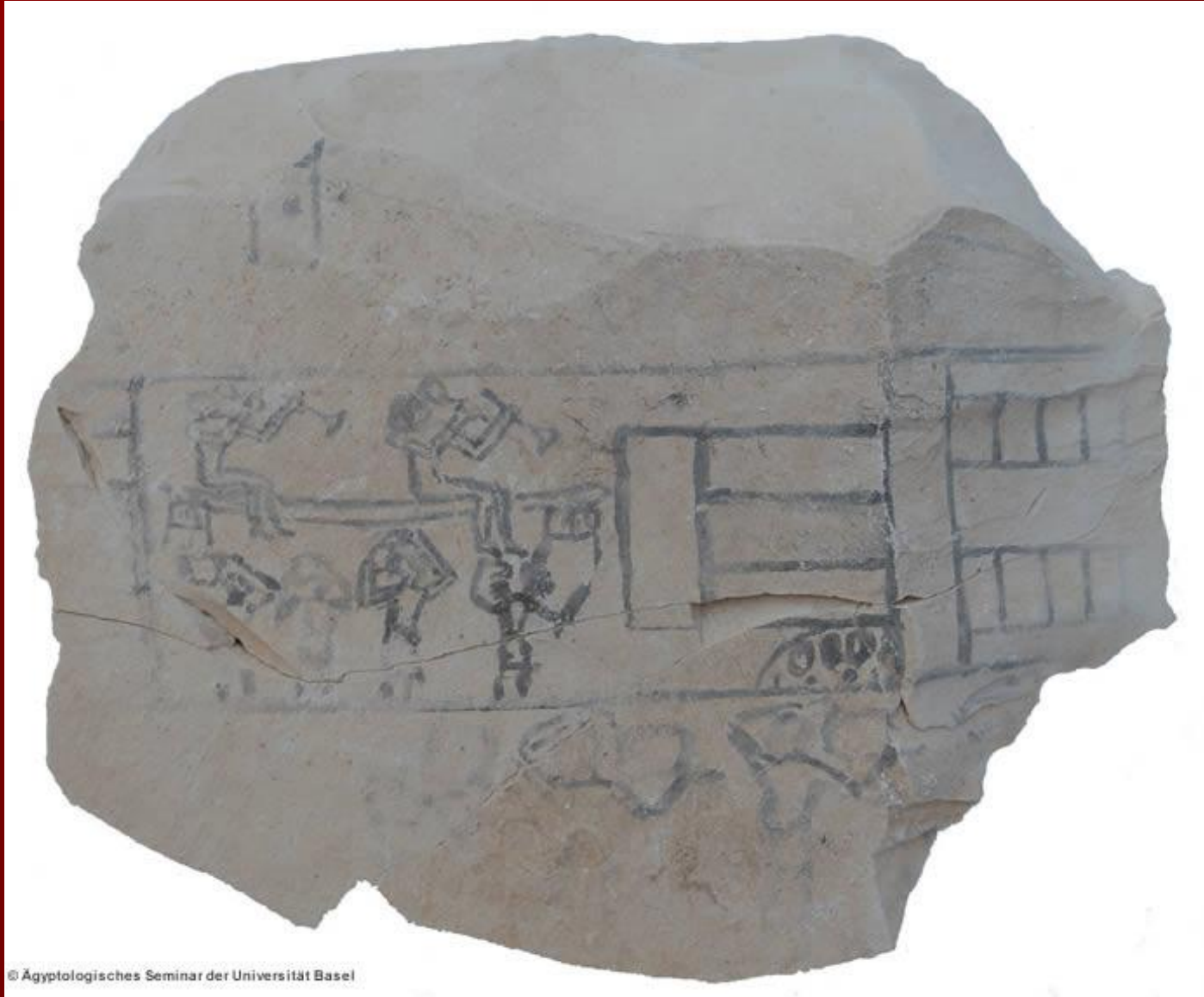
Abb. 26: Herstellung einer Statue aus dem Grab des Ti, Saqqarah (nach: Epron - Wild, Tombeau de Ti, Tafel CLXXIII, Ausschnitt)

Tomb of Djehuty-hotep, Deir el-Bersha

Scene of moving a large statue



Ostrakon with a scetch showing workers (stone masons, painters) building a royal tomb



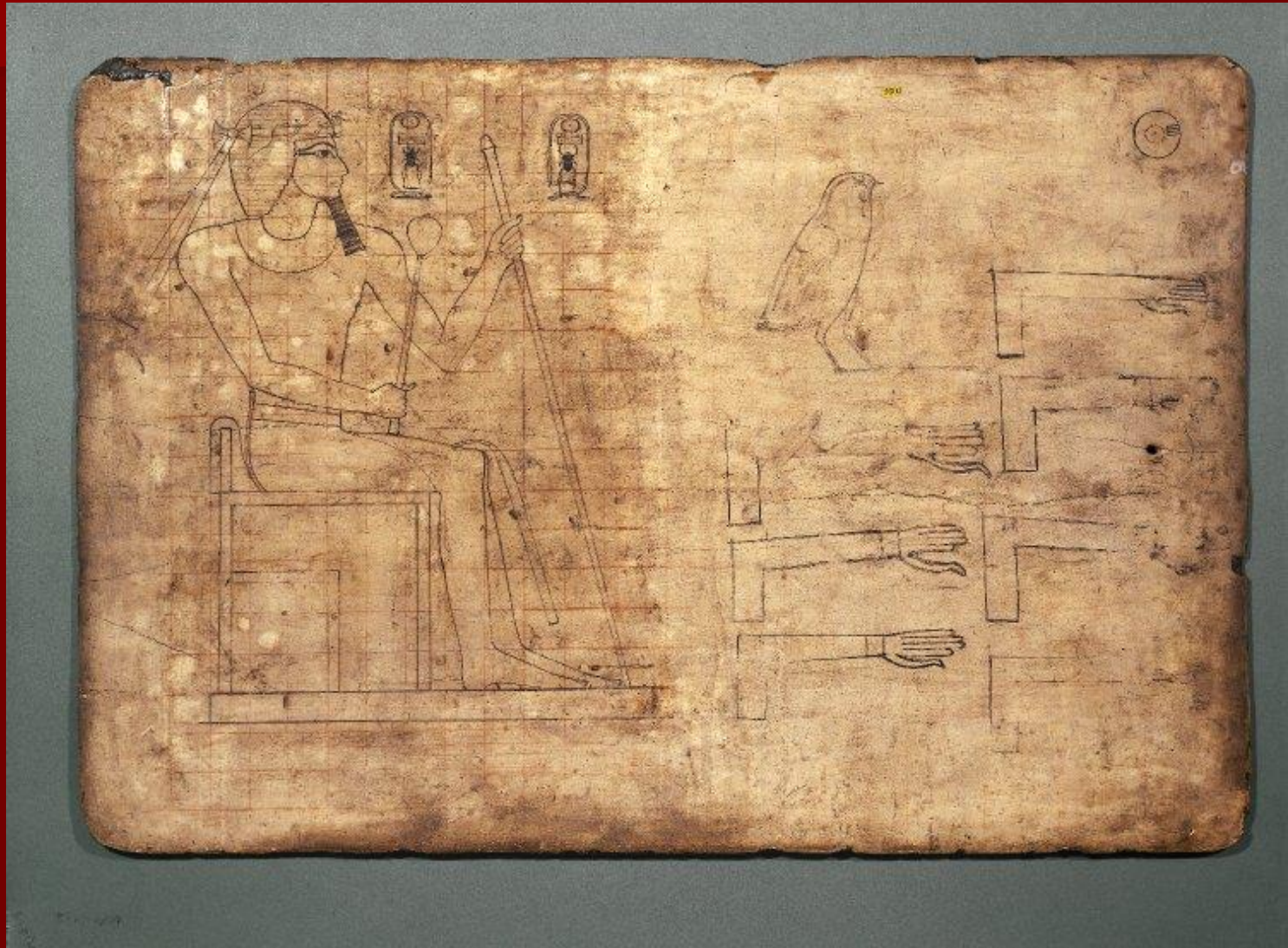
Artist's sketches of Senenmut,

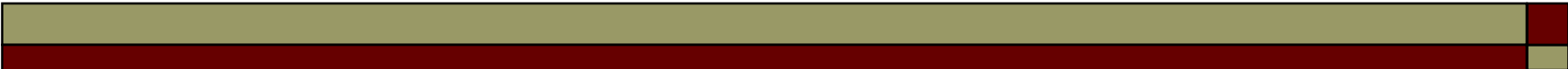
New Kingdom, early co-reign of Thutmose III and Hatshepsut, ca.
1479–1423 B.C., From western Thebes (Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, below
TT71)



drawing-board (BM 5601 - NK)

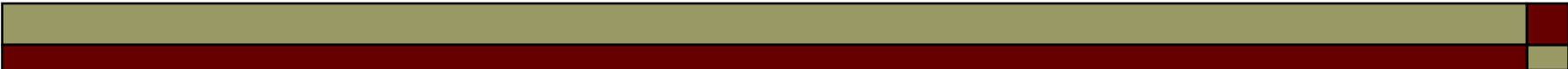
© The Trustees of the British Museum





Painting a scene

- ❑ colour applied with coarse brushes made from bundle of palm fibres which are doubled together and lashed together to a handle (scene sometimes carved before painted – incised with sharp tool)
- ❑ Smaller brushes chewed or bitten (like reeds for writing)
- ❑ Redrawing outlines and then fill in colour inside with narrow brushes
- ❑ Usage of dry pigment: crushed (mortar or grinding palette) and mixed with water-soluble gum or egg white to make a paste

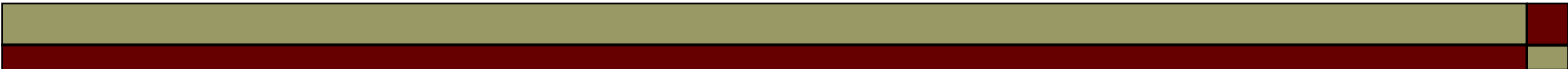


Colours

- ❑ Red and yellow – ochre = natural clay mineral: gives yellow, brown and red
- ❑ White – gypsum (calcium sulphate) or calcium carbonate (natural in Egypt)
- ❑ Blue – azurite (carbonate of copper from Sinai and Eastern desert) OR compound of silica, copper and calcium
- ❑ Green – malachite (copper carbonate also found in Sinai and Eastern desert)
- ❑ Black - soot

Raised relief
– bas relief
(TT192,
Kheruef,
steward of
queen Tiye)
walls of the west
pylon, and on the
south wall of the
passage leading to
the courtyard

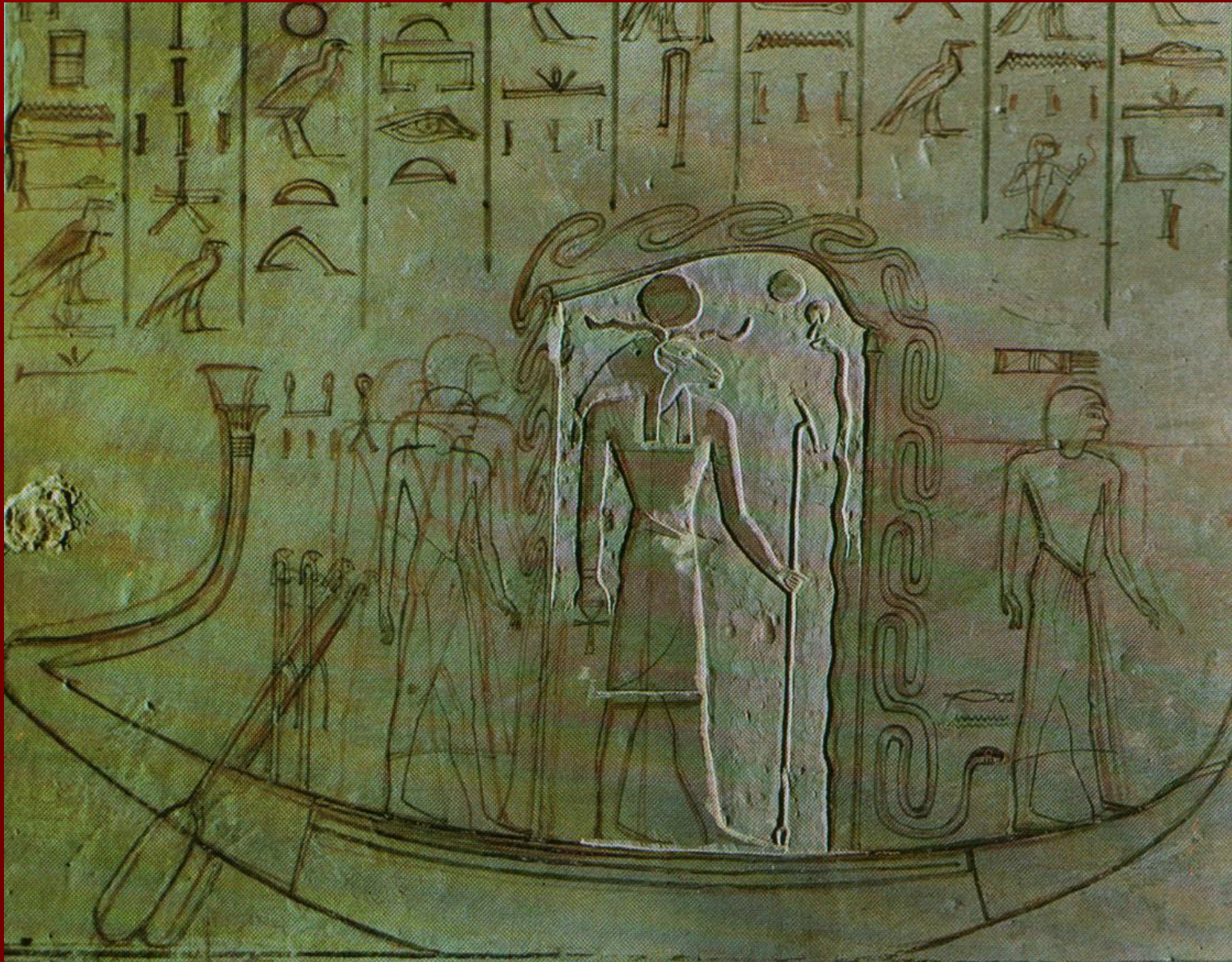




Reliefs:

- Raised relief (bas relief):
 - background was cut back leaving figures standing out
 - Scenes within temple

Royal Tomb of Horemhab (KV 57)



Sunken relief

(TT192, Kheruef, steward of queen Tiye)



Reliefs:

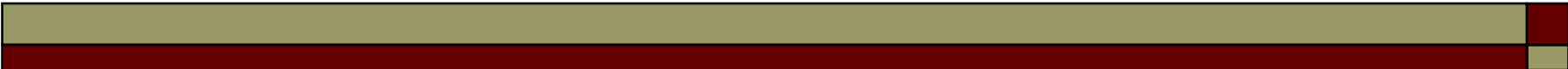
- Raised relief (bas relief):
 - background was cut back leaving figures standing out
 - Scenes within temple
- Sunken relief (intaglio):
 - Surface of figure is cut into stone
 - Preferred for hard stone (less work)
 - Outside walls of temples (bright sunshine, shadows flatten contours)

Sunken relief

(TT192, Kheruef, steward of queen Tiye)

hieroglyphs filled with blue, cut
into white base colour of wall





plaster

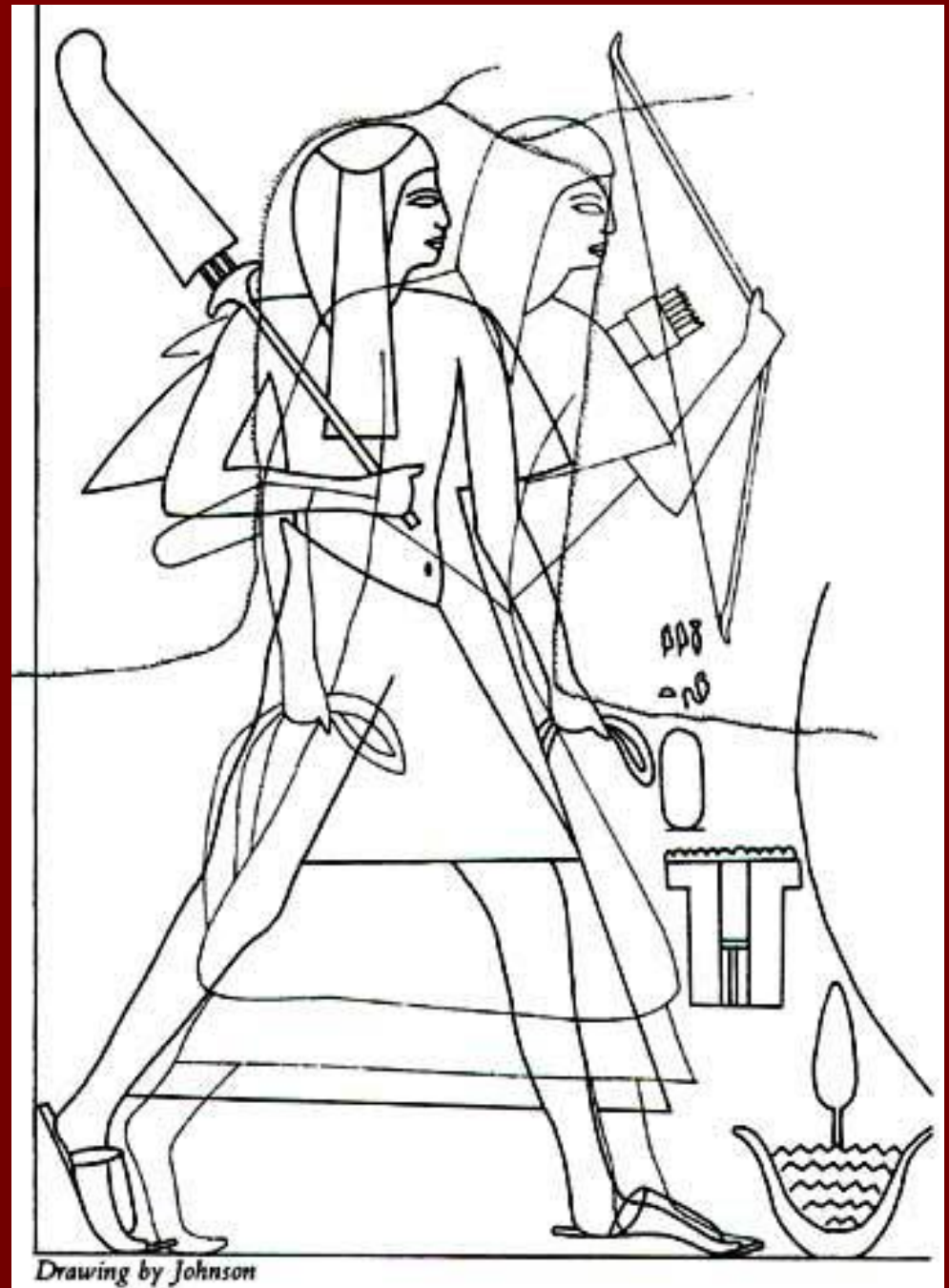
- ❑ Reliefs very often covered in thin layer with plaster
- ❑ Background and figures were painted

Application
of plaster
on relief
(TT192,
Kheruef,
steward of
queen
Tiye)



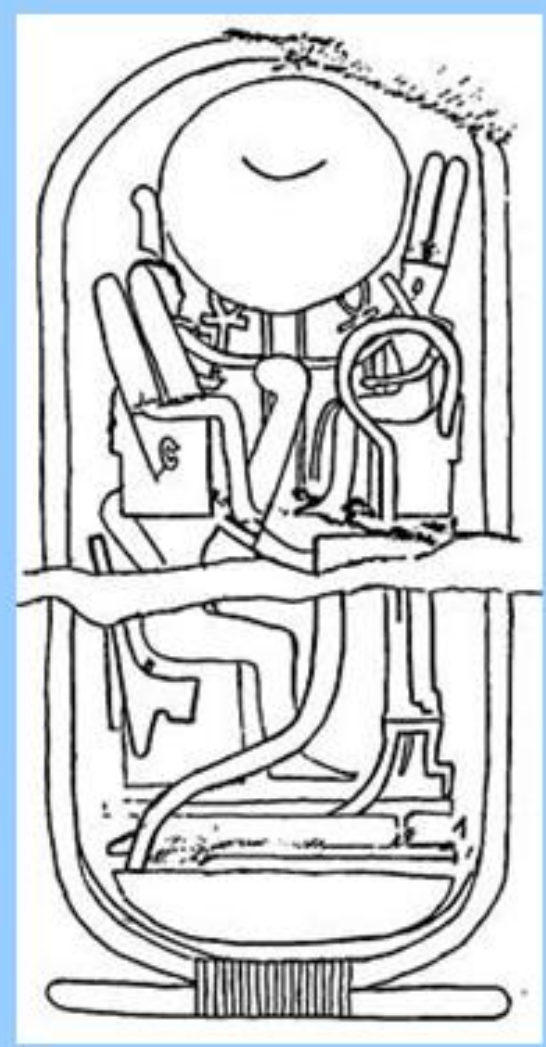
Rework of reliefs

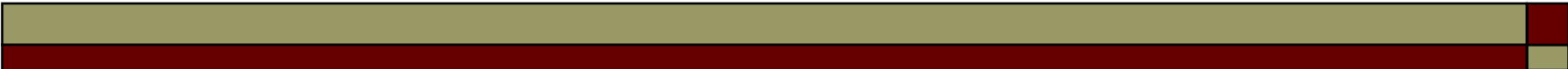
The Epigraphic Survey's (Karnak Hypostyle Project) drawing of a relief showing the military officer Mehy. Ramesses II later replaced the image with one of himself as Crown Prince



Three names in one cartouche (Hypostyle Hall Karnak)

- Cartouche Ramses IV
- R IV changed "spelling" of his own name
- R VI usurped cartouche
- Note plaster on either side of the large sun disk in the feathers of the god Amen – right – and Maat – left – rest of the plaster used to hide these changes has fallen out





Sculptures:

- Several steps!
 - Block delivered
 - General outline with red grid net in red
 - Apprentices roughly cut block (saw, chisel)
 - Experienced stonemasons – define the shape
 - Fine picks – adding details
 - Final polishing and painting
- Tools: bronze chisels, saws, drills, stone pounders (bronze since first millenium BC)

Royal Head, Ptolemaic Period

München, Staatliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst



B014274



Photo Scala, Florence/BPK, Bildagentur fuer Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte, B

Code: B014274

Artist: *****

Title: Bildhauermodell einer Sphinx. 664 - 332 v. Chr.

Location: Aegyptisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

City: Berlin

Country: Germany

Period/Style: Not available

Genre: Not available

Note: Kalkstein (Spätzeit). Objektmaß 26,7 x 19 cm. Inventar-Nr.: ÄM 22445. Foto: Margarete Büsing

Credits: Photo Scala, Florence/BPK, Bildagentur fuer Kunst, Kultur und Geschichte, Berlin

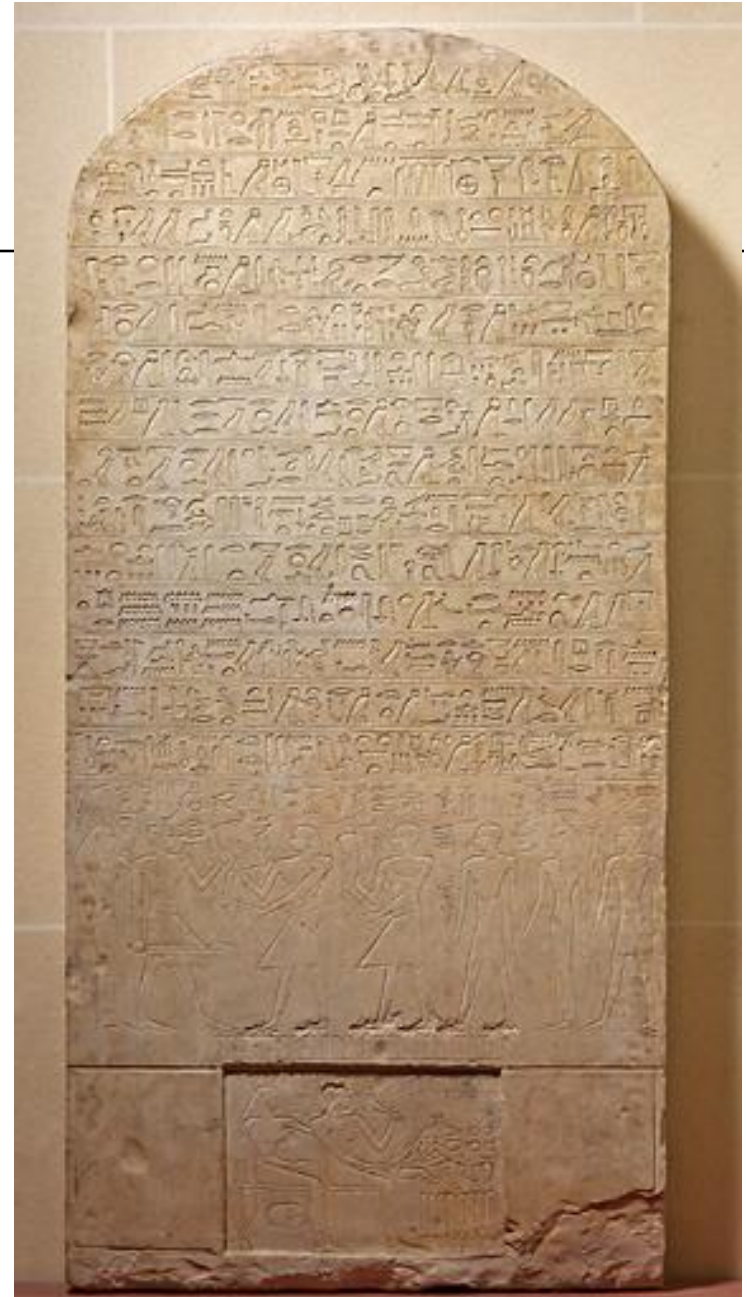
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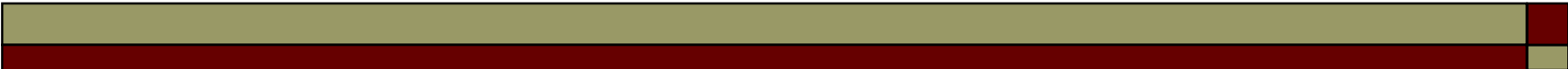
Louvre C14 – Stele of Irtysen

- sculptor and chief craftsman
- chapel at Abydos (sacred city of the god Osiris)
- unique inscription is of exceptional interest:
 - records proudly various skills: writing, drawing, and all manner of artistic techniques
 - claims knowledge of secret production methods, only revealed to his son
 - Irtysen hoped to be read and recognized in Abydos (national pilgrimage site)



Louvre C14: Irtysen's multiple skills

- *"I know the secret of the divine word [i.e. of hieroglyphs], the composition of ceremonial rituals; I have acquired mastery over all the magical formulae, and there is nothing I don't know about them. Moreover I am a craftsman who excels at his art and has a superior level of knowledge; I know how to estimate dimensions, recut and fit until an element is in place. I know the posture of the male statue and the appearance of the female, the attitude of the eleven birds of prey, the convulsion of the isolated prisoner, how to portray a squint, the enemies' expression of terror, the arm movements of a hippopotamus hunter and the leg movements of a running man."*

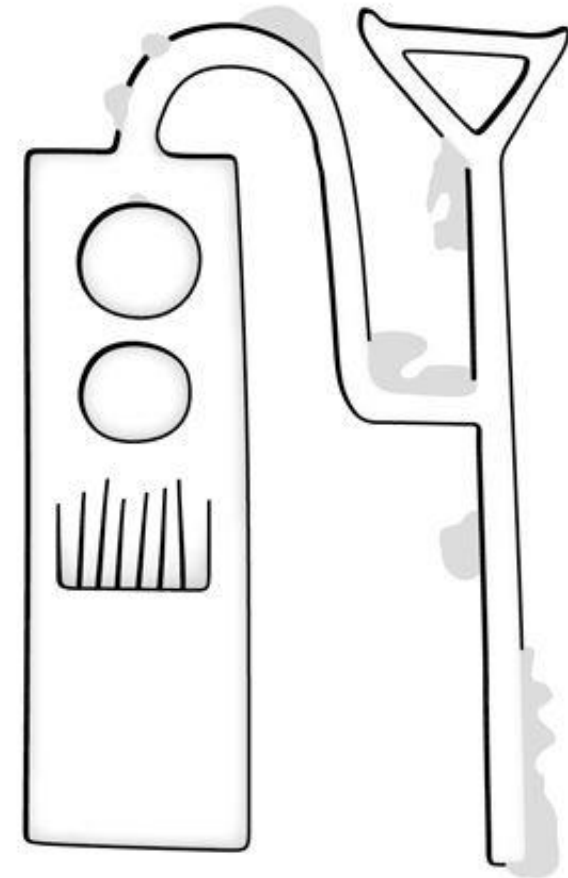


Louvre C14: Manufacturing secrets

- *"I know how to make pigments, and products that melt without fire burning them and are moreover insoluble in water. Nobody will know of this except me and my eldest son, the god having ordered that he become an initiate, as I have noticed his ability to oversee works in all the precious materials from silver and gold to ivory and ebony."*

Stela of Irtyesen

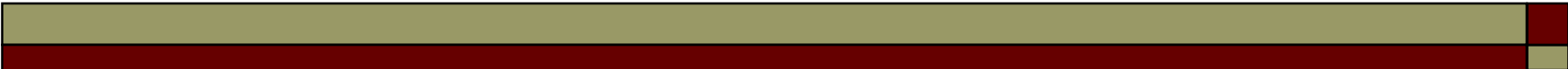
- Unusual form for hieroglyph Gardiner list Y3 marking the title of *sš* - scribe
- Common: as seen in tomb chapel of Raemkai (MMA 08.201.1e)
- Irtyesen: immediately recognizable, subtle yet significant change → evidence of his skill in rendering shapes and forms



The Nature of Sources and Art Theory

or

**How do we know what we know
(or not know)?**



Yoko Ono:

- “the spirit of art is to express the truth”
- But is this always true?



art definition



Web

Images

Videos

News

Shopping

Maps

Books

About 400,000,000 results

Any country

Country: the UK

Any time

Past hour

Past 24 hours

Past week

Past month

Past year

All results

Verbatim

art¹ /ɑ:t/

noun

1. the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.
2. the various branches of creative activity, such as painting, music, literature, and dance.
3. subjects of study primarily concerned with human creativity and social life, such as languages, literature, and history (as contrasted with scientific or technical subjects).
4. a skill at doing a specified thing, typically one acquired through practice.

art² /ɑ:t/

archaic or dialect second person singular present of be.

art.

abbreviation

article.

ART -

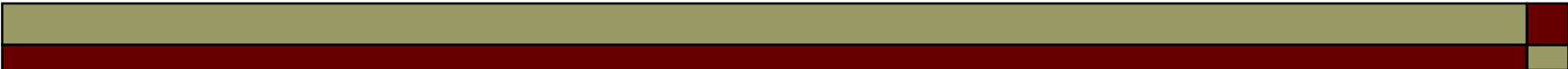
<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/art>

□ **noun**

- The expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.

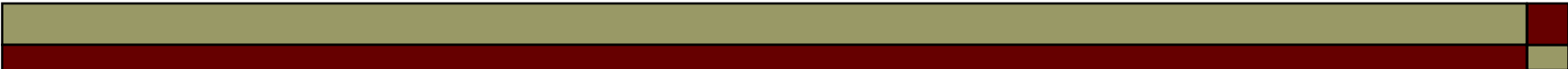
Art theory and Ancient Egypt?

If we ask what a theory of art is, then both terms of our question seem problematic. What counts as a *theory*, whether it be of natural phenomenon – such as a theory of optics or perception – or of cultural changes such as forms of visual representation or artistic styles, depends not only on the nature of the subject matter, but also on the questions asked and the methods used in searching for answers. And in the case of *art* we are asking about a complex web of historical and not easily bounded set of practices, interweaving with different social interests and values in a variety of ways. We also recognize that theoretical and practical activities are very different, each with their own social and intellectual purposes and contexts as well as, of course, different linguistic or material identities. Whereas a theory is a linguistic construct which abstracts from experience and *generalizes* over the particular, art requires *particular* judgement within a sensible medium. Yet art and theory cannot be examined independently of one another – for how the modern concept of art is understood and used has much to do with the ways in which the practices of art have been theorized. Art in the modern sense is practice informed by theory, a practice with a particularly self-conscious sense of its own history. But a theoretical account of art does not



Art – Fine Art?

Fine art is not eternal and constant but culturally dependent. As such it has been produced, described and explained in different ways. Antiquity did not have the concept of Fine Art. Not until the eighteenth century was there such a concept to distinguish Fine Art from other human activities, such as craft or science, and their products. Before that, there were no artistic concepts and no language to describe, explain and interpret the production and uses of works of art in a modern sense. But, of course, people have always made paintings and sculptures, played music and danced, told stories and dramatized them in various ways. But these modes of activity have served in vastly different kinds of situations and have been characterized and understood in many ways, not only as works of art.



Possible purposes of art

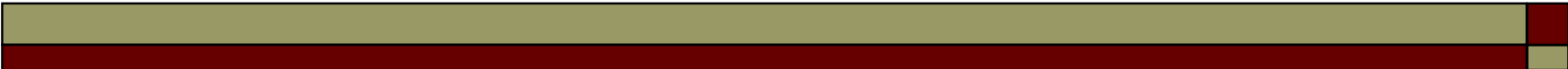
Ceremonial - ritual, celebration, artworks created to support worship ceremonies

Artistic expression - artwork to express or communicate emotions, ideas, feelings or to beautify objects

Narrative - artworks that tell stories, describe and illustrate experiences

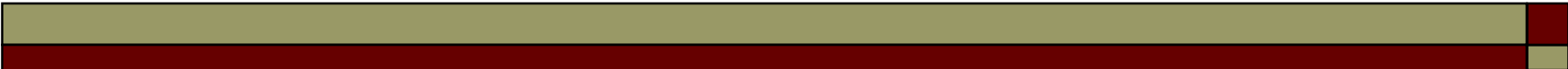
Functional - artistic objects used in everyday life that serve an actual purpose

Persuasive - artworks that promote ideas, philosophies, or products



Egyptian art and Art Theory

- ❑ Aspective Egyptian Art = product of the collective perceptual attitude and creative solutions to the various problems present in representing three-dimensional images
- ❑ Egyptian artisan bound by conventions and the client
- ❑ BUT once mastered rules = free to bend rules to his vision
- ❑ Egyptian art = portrayal of Egyptian cultural idea of the world with its own sense of time and space and its own realism

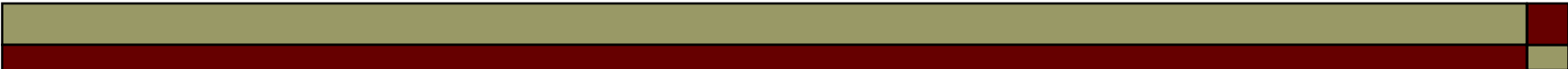


Sources

Ancient Egypt

- ❑ been studied primarily through written but mostly artistic sources that survived
- ❑ reveal an ancient Egypt directly experienced by Egyptians themselves
- ❑ BUT: Only tiny proportion of sources survived, never covered the full spectrum of experience
- ❑ Egyptians seems to be limited in their reflections on their own behaviour and society
- ❑ Art: strongly guided by conventions and propriety





Sources available

- ❑ Architecture
- ❑ Art
 - What is art?
 - Are all images art?
 - What is the symbolism behind the images?
 - Tomb texts
 - Stela

Paris, Louvre 290



Paris, Louvre 290

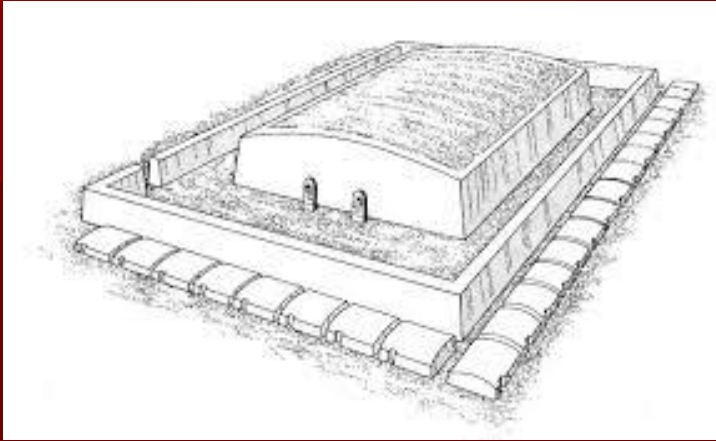
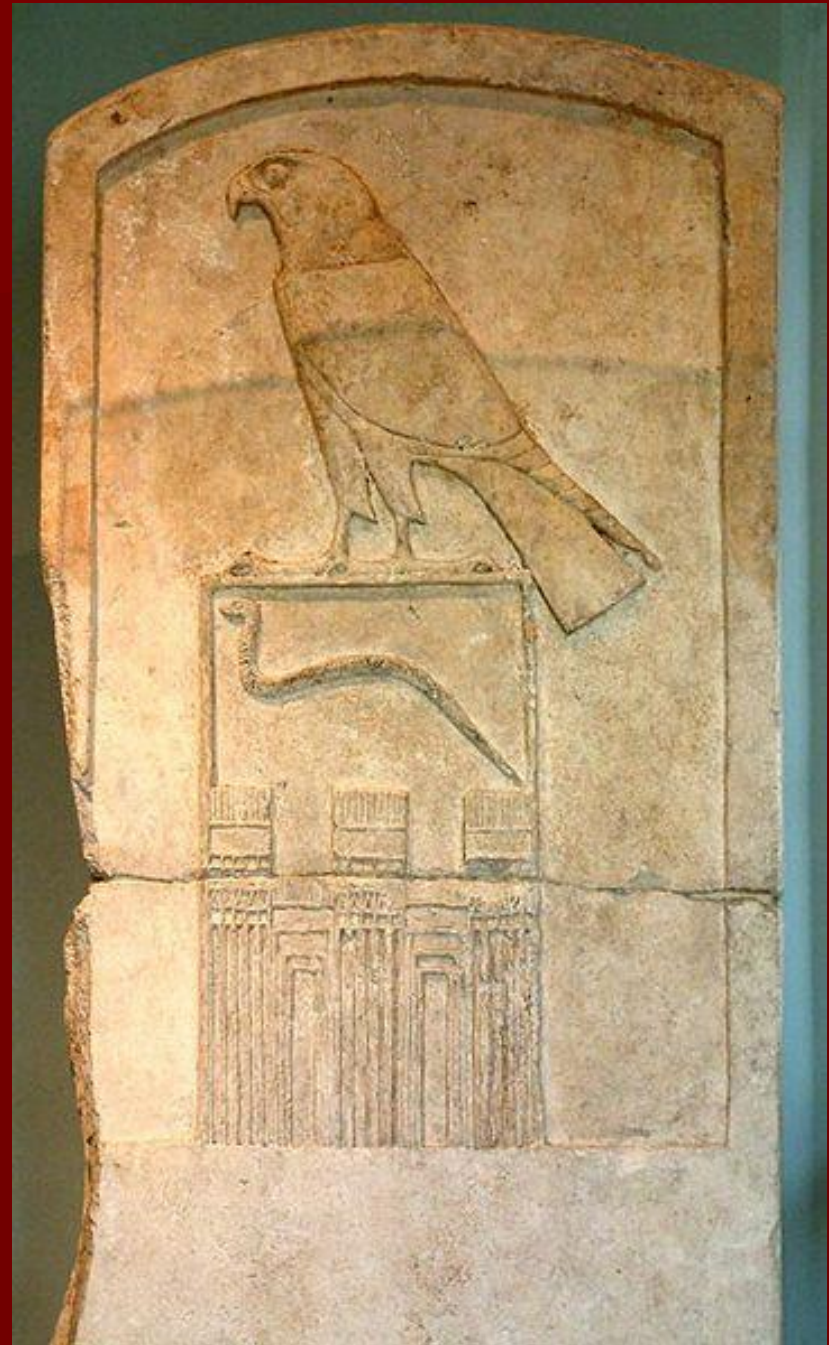
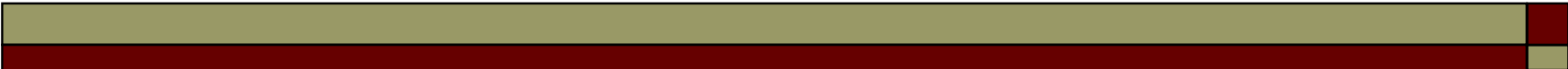


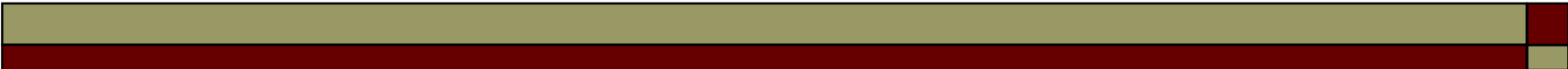
FIGURE 2.7. The stela of Queen Merneith from her tomb at Abydos, as photographed by Petrie outside his excavation house at Abydos (photo courtesy of the Egypt Exploration Society)





Sources available

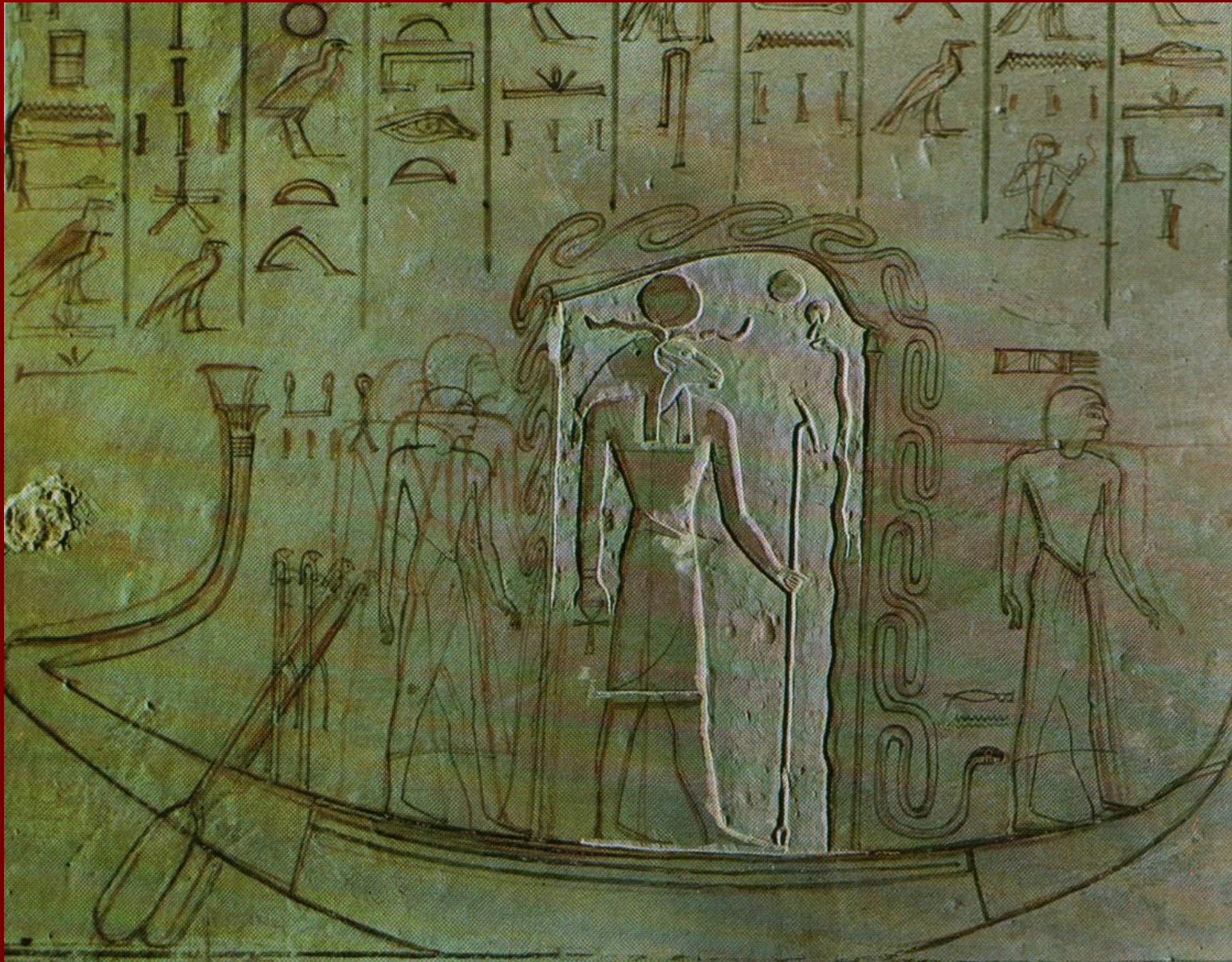
- ❑ Architecture
- ❑ Art
- ❑ Archaeological
 - Finds
 - Archaeological record
 - Materials used for dating

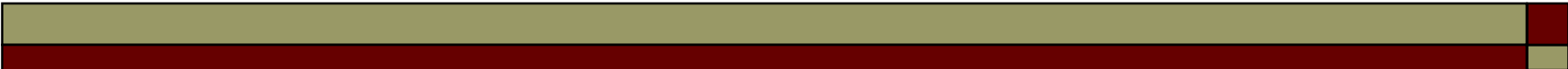


Sources available

- ❑ Architecture
- ❑ Art
- ❑ Archaeological
- ❑ Textual

Royal Tomb of Horemhab (KV 57)



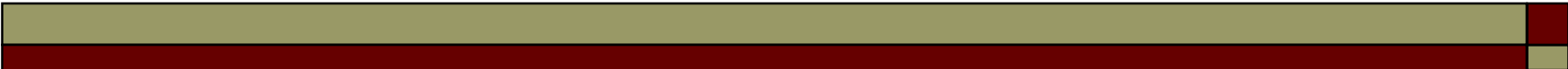


Sources available

- ❑ Architecture
- ❑ Art
- ❑ Archaeological
- ❑ Textual
 - Stela
 - Tomb texts
 - Administrative and legal texts
 - Chronologies

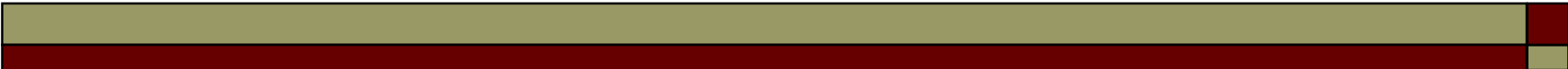
Abydos- Temple Sethos I, King List





Sources available

- ❑ Architecture
- ❑ Art
- ❑ Archaeological
- ❑ Textual
- ❑ Material culture



Material Culture

- ❑ Excavation on settlement sites: large amounts of objects of diverse kinds, usually broken and discarded rather than lost or deliberately buried
- ❑ require skilled examination and recording
- ❑ offer an incomplete picture of the material, but reflect aspects of the lives and activities of people
- ❑ study of material culture needs to consider user's experience of things, how manufactured and how reached user → history of technology and study of distribution networks

Narmer Palette (31st century BC)



Fitzwilliam E.1.2006



- Dimension: length 0.015 m, width 0.011 m, height 0.006 m
- Base: scarab-beetle with exaggerated wings: above beetle two winged uraei in protecting gesture, guarding two Maat-feathers; single line encircles the inscription
- Beetle, uraei and two feathers can be interpreted as equivalent for the sun disc – cryptographic writing for the god Amun(-Re)