

New Kingdom Architecture

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

Many historical events led to the rise of the New Kingdom. In this lesson, you will explore influential rulers of this time as well as elements associated with New Kingdom architecture. More specifically, this lesson covers:



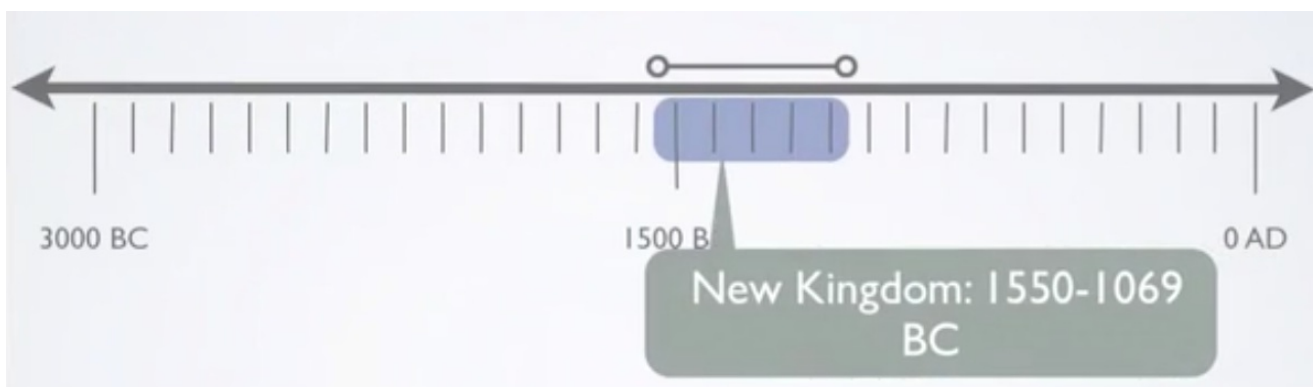
BIG IDEA

The New Kingdom in ancient Egypt marked the final expulsion of the Hyksos and the introduction of new architectural elements.

1. Time Period and Location: The New Kingdom

The New Kingdom Period, the time covered in this lesson, begins with Pharaoh Ahmose I in 1550 BC and ends in 1069 BC. Thebes is the geographical area of focus for this lesson.

In the timeline below, the New Kingdom is highlighted.



2. From The Old Kingdom to The New Kingdom

The Old and New Kingdoms of ancient Egypt are separated by the Middle Kingdom, as well as a few intermediary periods of disorder within ancient Egypt.

IN CONTEXT

One of these periods was a time of rule by non-native Egyptians, a band of people from the near Middle East called Hyksos, or shepherd kings. This assortment of people from Syrian and Mesopotamian uplands eventually rose to power and ruled Egypt for a short period of time. About the 15th dynasty is attributed to these Hyksos rulers.

In addition to some innovations in weaponry, these non-native Egyptians introduced the horse to ancient Egypt. But their hold on Egypt was short lived. The last of them was finally dispatched around 1555 when Amos I, the first ruler of the 18th dynasty, finally rid Egypt of the Hyksos and non-native Egyptians, restoring native Egyptian rule.

Below is a picture of Ahmose I.



Ahmose I

First ruler of the 18th dynasty

Finally drove out the remaining Hyksos, restoring native Egyptian rule.

With the start of the New Kingdom came a location change for the capital of the Egyptian kingdom to Thebes. This change resulted in some religious changes as well.

The patron god of Thebes was Amun, or Ammon, who, along with his wife, Mut, and their son, Khonsu, quickly became principal deities throughout the kingdom. In fact, Amun also became known as the king of the gods and eventually melded with the sun god Ra to become Amun-Ra.



DID YOU KNOW

This blending of gods isn't unique to Egypt. It was a practice that we tend to see throughout history as cultures merge.

3. Queen Hatshepsut

Queen Hatshepsut was a notable figure during the New Kingdom. She reigned from around 1479 to 1458 BC.

IN CONTEXT

The 18th dynasty pharaoh Thutmose II was married to Queen Hatshepsut. They had a son and heir to the throne named Thutmose III. Upon the death of Thutmose II, Hatshepsut became queen regnant due to the young age of Thutmose III.

When she eventually declared herself pharaoh, it marked the first time in recorded history that a female ruled absolutely. She wasn't just a regnant; she was the pharaoh in charge.

During her reign, which lasted approximately 22 years, she rebuilt some of the major trade routes that had been damaged during the time of the Hyksos. She also commissioned some major construction projects.



Statue of Hatshepsut with offering jars

1479-1458 BC

Red Granite

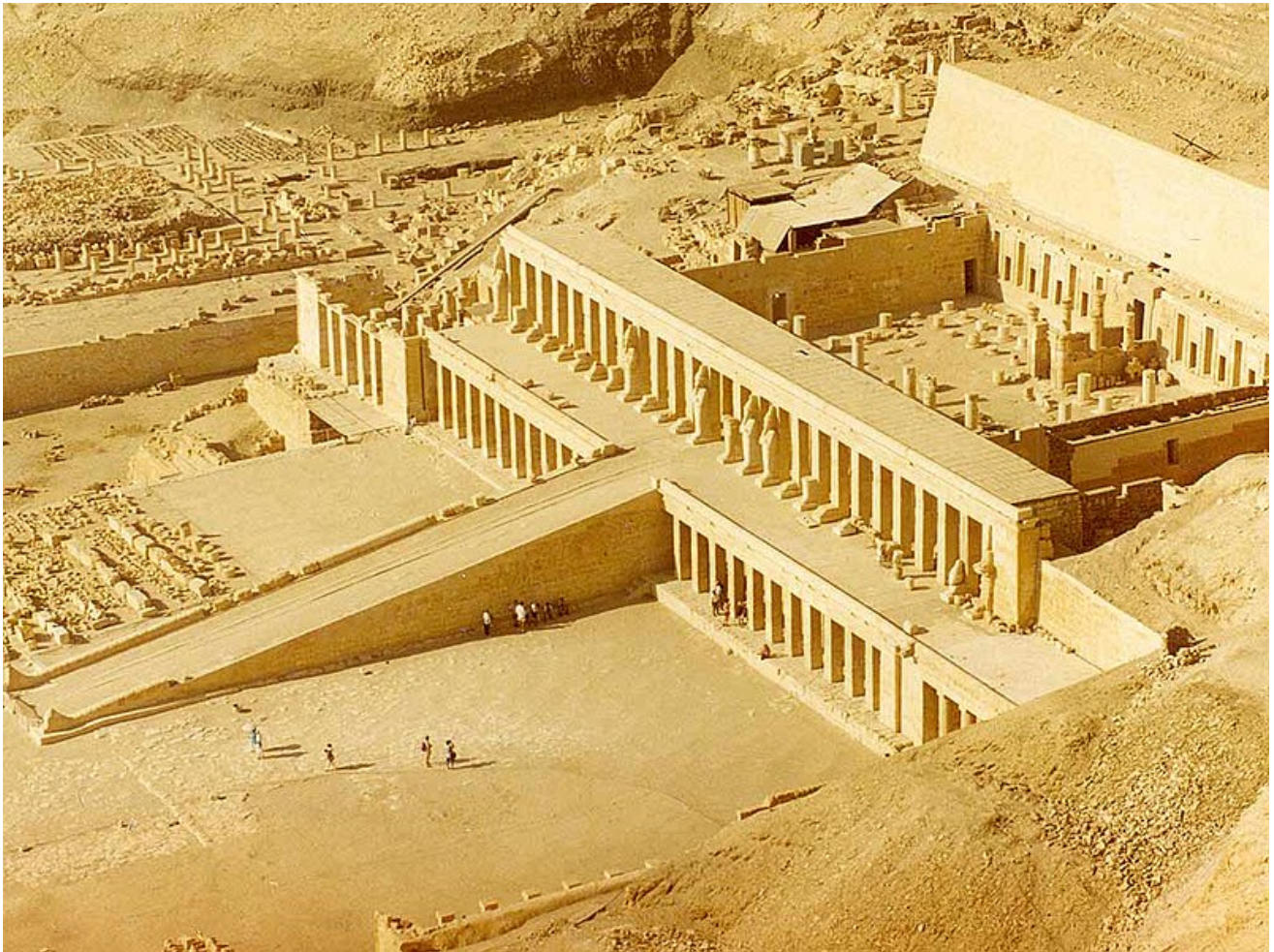


DID YOU KNOW

Queen Hatshepsut claimed her husband Thutmos II had intended to pass succession to her. This may be

a reason why she's dressed as a male pharaoh complete with the headdress and, originally, the false beard, which looks like it was broken up. There are also inscriptions calling her *his* majesty, as opposed to *her* majesty.

Queen Hatshepsut's mortuary temple is a beautiful example of a royal funerary complex. Below is an image of it.



Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut

1473-1458 BC

Egypt

Notice in the above image that the colonnades, as well as the access ramps that run along the central axis in the temple, are clearly visible. What can't be seen are the reliefs showing important moments from her life, such as her divine birth and her crowning, which would have served to help legitimize her ascent or her keeping her hold on the throne of Egypt.

4. New Kingdom Architecture

Across the river from Hatshepsut's mortuary temple on the eastern side of the Nile, near Thebes, is the temple city of Luxor. The surviving temple of Amun-Mut-Khonsu remains one of the best-preserved examples of New Kingdom architecture. It was a large structure laid out on an **axial plan**.

The temple of Amun-Mut-Khonsu is seen here.



Temple of Amun-Mut-Khonsu

1400 BC

One example of architecture in the New Kingdom is the **pylon temple**. Pylons are the tower shapes on either side of the opening. In addition to creating a gateway and processional pathway, the pylons would be adorned with historical reliefs from Egypt's past. The tall structure in the front is called an obelisk, an important architectural element that has been used throughout time.



DID YOU KNOW

Our own Washington Monument is an obelisk. This monument is a rectangular structure with a pyramid shape on top, and can be symbolic of the rays or ray of the sun.

What's amazing about the construction of the ancient Egyptian architecture is that they didn't use cement, because it had not yet been invented. The strength and stability of the structure came from the precise cutting and interlocking of the stone. The **colonnade**, or row of columns, would have supported a roof. This type of architecture is called a **hypostyle**.

A **clerestory** is a part of the structure that rises above the roofs. These are openings to allow for ventilation and light. They're different from windows in that they aren't intended to provide a view but they do allow in sunlight and air.



TERMS TO KNOW

Axial Plan

The horizontal arrangement of the elements of a building or town along a central axis

Pylon Temple

In architecture, i.e. Egyptian temple, a large opening, doorway or entrance

Colonnade

A series of columns

Hypostyle

A form of architecture that has a roof supported by columns

Clerestory

A part of a building that rises above the roofs—basically windows above eye-level, primarily allowing for light and ventilation



SUMMARY

A series of historical events led to the rise of the New Kingdom. In this lesson, you learned about the **time period and location of the New Kingdom**. Continuing on in this lesson, you navigated the series of events **from the Old Kingdom to the New Kingdom**.

Influential leaders such as **Queen Hatshepsut**, the first female pharaoh, had great influence on this period and architecture. Her mortuary temple is a beautiful example of a royal funerary complex.

Finally, you learned about **New Kingdom architecture**, specifically about elements of architecture from this period, including pylon temples, clerestories, hypostyles, colonnades, and an axial plan.

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TERMS TO KNOW

Axial Plan

The horizontal arrangement of the elements of a building or town along a central axis.

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