

Dj vu: an analysis of early egyptian art through the prism of art development and...

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Section Déjà vu: An Analysis of Early Egyptian Art through the Prism of Art Development and History Oftentimes the realm of art and artistry is open to a degree of egoism with regards to the fact that artists and scholars alike consider the changes in art experienced within the past several hundred years are somehow unique from the evolution that art has taken in prior thousands of years of human history and development. However, this is indeed not the case. The article in question, Souren Melikian's " Art Review: The Roots of Art in Ancient Egypt", helps to display an alternate conceptualization of the means by which art developed in the ancient world and seeks to back up such an interpretation via an analysis of key early Egyptian art that has recently come to be on display at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. In this way, this brief analysis will consider the means by which some forms of " ancient" art can indeed represent trends that the reader/researcher/student might otherwise mis-categorize as somehow uniquely modern.

One of the cases in point that the author utilizes is the description of early pottery and vase painting as it was exhibited in artifacts that were recovered from just north of Luxor that date back to around 3300 BCE. These artifacts reveal what can only be described as a type of " proto surrealism" in the way that they depict the native animals of the ancient Egyptian environment by reducing these animals to their most basic and oftentimes comical interpretations (Melikian 1). Further evidence of the ways and the manner in which early Egyptian art has distinctly mirrored art develops that some may think of as distinctly Western and recent, has helped this student to come to the realization that one must guard against a form of intellectual arrogance

when analyzing early art as a function of the historical development of art and the convenient ways in which this is oftentimes incorrectly categorized. Moreover, the article brings to mind key concepts that have been learned throughout the other material and coursework which has been reviewed within the class. Furthermore, it is incumbent upon the art researcher to understand that although a great body of knowledge exists with reference to the art development and differentiations that have taken place within the comparatively recent past, it should not be assumed that these diversifications and developments within art are somehow new and unique. Rather, as the article demonstrates, such conventions are oftentimes expressed in different ways hundreds, even thousands, of years prior to their recapitulation within the art world of geographically and culturally distant places. In this way, the reader becomes acutely aware that the level of caution one should take when naming art or classifying it within categories such as "ancient", "Egyptian", or any other type of nomenclature should be done with a great deal of care as one risks missing out on key components of the artwork that would otherwise go unnoticed.

Work Cited

Melikian, Souren. "ART REVIEW; The Roots of Art in Ancient Egypt." *The New York Times*. The New York Times, 16 June 2012. Web. 05 Dec. 2012.