

Analyze the ap art history essay

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Assyrian king, Sargon II gained tremendous power in a coup against his brother. In celebration of his victory, and in a shameless promotion of his power, he erected or rather commissioned a massive citadel with seven gates in the city of Dur Sharrukin (modern-day Khorsabad, Iraq).

Each gate was guarded by a pair of alabaster Lamassu, a creature with the body of a bull, wings of a bird of prey, legs of a lion, and the face of Sargon II himself.

Over two centuries prior, the greywacke Palette of King Narmer was in circulation around a newly unified Egypt. Both works were created in celebration of a monarch's power but did so ways exemplary of their respective culture.

The Palette of King Narmer uses extensive symbolism to represent the power he had at the time. In Egypt, the power of a ruler was directly tied to the gods, which brings up the first symbol used on the palette, two cows in the top register of either side.

Cows are the symbol of the goddess Hathor, the principal deity of joy, music, and motherhood. Between the cows is the hieroglyph for Narmer. All of this together strongly suggests that Narmer was implying a familial relation to Hathor, and thus giving him the status and power of a god.

Other symbols include the hedjet of upper Egypt that he wears on the front; the deshret of lower Egypt that he wears on the back; Narmer as a bull, a symbol of power used for centuries, destroying a fortified city; and feline

creatures with long, intertwined necks being tamed representing the unification of upper and lower Egypt.

All in all, the use of symbolism in the Palette of King Narmer seems to heavily insinuate that he had dominion over all of Egypt, that he could defeat any foe, and that he was directly connected to the gods, which are all notions of the power of the Pharaoh that have been perpetuated throughout all of ancient Egyptian history.

The Lamassu, from the citadel of Sargon II, also uses a fair amount of symbolism. First of all, the head is topped with horns, a symbol of gods. Secondly, the body is a bull, which, as previously mentioned, is a symbol of power. The other creatures grafted together to make the Lamassu, the bird of prey and lion, were added to show that Sargon II was fierce and powerful and to scare those wishing to enter the citadel.

Not only is the Lamassu a hybrid creature, but it is also depicted in composite style, meaning it is a hybrid of viewpoints.

From the front, it appears to be standing nobly and from the side, it is taking a stride. This illusion is accomplished by the addition of a fifth leg that you can't see from the front and one of the front legs you can't see from the side.

Inscriptions on the Lamassu praise Sargon II and curse any who would wish to harm him. This representation of Sargon II is typical of Assyrian art depicting a leader; powerful as a bull, fierce as a lion, cunning and swift as a bird of prey. They viewed their leaders as being equal to the gods in power.

In contrast, Egyptians viewed their leaders as gods themselves, while Mesopotamians saw them only as equal to gods.

Visually, they could not differ more; one is a massive alabaster statue, and the other is a small greywacke makeup palette.

However, they are very similar in the way that they represent power through symbols. The bull is a symbol of power used in both works. Both works have depictions remnant of their respective gods, no doubt to compare the leaders in the works to a god.

Both works celebrated a conquest of sorts, but the Palette of King Narmer was commissioned in small scale for personal use, and the Lamassu was commissioned as a large scale ornamentation. It is clear that both cultures held tied to power deep in their religion.