

Research paper on ancient near east and ancient egypt

[Art & Culture](#), [Painting](#)



Task

Introduction

Every artistic work entails creativity and innovation in order to bring out an informative and impressive piece of art. However, the message contained in every piece of art is brought out clearly through the use of forms, elements of arts and more importantly principles of design. It is through the skills in arts elements that an artist is in a position to produce impressive and well-balanced art work. Additionally, art elements help the artists in formulating their expressions. While some artists express their creativity through realism other expresses their creativity through impressionism. Of note is that the artist's expressions in any given piece of art are enhanced through art elements which are line, shape, color, form, texture, value and space. It is essential to note that art elements help the artist in showing his/her creative and visual ideas.

Elements of Art in the Mask of Warka

The Warka head is a painting from the ancient near east that dates back from between 3100 and 3300 BC. It is perceived to be a symbol of Inanna who was a goddess of fertility, warfare, sexuality and love (Stokstad, 134). The head is made of marble and it the earliest symbol of human head. The eyes as presented as presented in the mask are hollowed while the eyebrows hold traces of a prehistoric inlay which most probably encompasses lapis lazuli and shell. It is perceived that the artifact portrays Inanna. The eyes in the image are large and the eyebrows are deeply recessed. The grove on the head represents a wig while the hair strands are

carved in a metal fell which are also present in the forehead.

However, in order to bring out the actual meaning of the painting, the artist employed several elements of art in this painting. Line is the first art element that is evident in this painting. Several types of lines have extensively been used to bring out the shape of the woman head. They have also been used to identify the boundaries of the form (Digolo & Mazrui, 2). From the head we are able to identify short curved lines which are used to bring out the boundary between the face and the head. Long curved lines are also used on the head and they run from the forehead to the back of the head. Of note is that contour lines are also used on the eyebrows, the eyes, and the mouth whereby they are used in order to bring out the shape of the lips. Precisely, curved lines are predominately used in this painting in order to bring out the intended shapes and form of the artifact.

Shape on the other hand defines the width and the height of the artifact. Of note is that the shapes are mostly organic as opposed to geometric shapes. This is because the object represents an organic object. The shape in this particular artifact is irregular and they have been used to represent a two dimension object, put forward the movement as well as express feelings, notions and imagination. The shapes have differing texture which has been used to produce visual harmony amid the shape, space and form.

The artist had a well transition between rough and smooth textures. From the image, the texture is basically rough but the eyes and eyebrows have a smooth texture (Digolo & Mazrui, 9). On the other hand, the value of the image is light and it has been enhanced by the color of the material used.

The image has some tints of white which has helped in bringing out the light

value of the object. It is important to note that value is used to generate atmospheric effects as well in create delusion of depth. Finally the artist superlatively used the combination of negative and positive space in order to create an effect whereby he employed minimum application of lines.

Sesostris III from the 12th Dynasty

Sesostris III artifact is a painting from the ancient Egypt. It is a rounded sculpture that depicts Sesostris with outstanding, heavy- lidded eyes which noticeably have pouches at the bottom. The mouth is curved with shallow lines located at the corners (Stokstad, 334). The cheeks are protruded and the chin is circular while the ears are flaring and large. The nose is creased at the bridge and the brow has a horizontal crease hence making the face appear unlined.

It is important to note that the painting has a historical background and it represents Sesostris III. Sesostris III was a most influential pharaoh who ruled Egypt through weakening the authority of the regional nobles. He played a predominant role in emergence of the middle class in Egypt. He is a remembered king who ruled Egypt as the fifth pharaoh in the twelfth dynasty. Of note is that he governed the country for over thirty seven years. His statues display profound eye-lids which have lined continence. The statue of Senusret III represented the change in the king ideology as well as a change in the role of art in the society. (Stokstad, 334) It is evident that the statue is made of organic shapes which are an excellent representation of human characteristics. However, it is worth noting that this particular artifact shows a sense of tension and age and it portrays a less powerful king

contrary to what other older art works portrayed. The King in this artifact is portrayed as a simple ruler as opposed to a god. In order to make this work of art very impressive, the artists evidently applied the formal elements of art which include form, shape, value, line among others.

The art elements are the building blocks that are combined together in efforts of bringing out an impressive piece of art work. Lines have greatly been utilized in this artifact. This includes vertical, horizontal, diagonal and contour lines (Digolo & Mazrui, 2). Of note is that lines are the predominant elements of art which actually helps in expressing various expressions as far as an artifact is concerned. However, in this perspective, lines are used to formulate compositions of the work of art. This means that lines shows the shape of the components of the art work, suggest movements as well as defines the shapes involved in a particular composition.

The exterior shape of the artifact has been well defined through lines and so are the interior shapes. Curved lines in this particular artifact are used to create the boundary between the head and the face. On the other hand, horizontal lines are used to enhance the texture of the robe. The artist combined both thin and thick lines which have greatly helped in bringing out the shape, form and more importantly the texture of the artifact (Digolo & Mazrui, 2). Several shapes have been combined in order to portray the form of the artifact. As indicated earlier, the artifact contains organic shapes which extensively define the nature of the art work.

Of note is that the work of art is a man-made shape which provides a clear view of a human form. The artists also combined a both rough and smooth texture in order to give quality which has been enhanced through the use of

shading and line. The robe on the King's head has been convincingly marked with a rough texture. The surface seems hard and the value of the painting is balanced, depicts some shades of darkness and lightness, and it helps in generating atmospheric standpoint.

It is obvious that the artist had used the organic category of shape which contained no thickness. In addition, the artist had used the light and shading methods which brought out the form of this piece of art (Digolo & Mazrui, 14). However, the masterpiece has some shades of white and black which indicates the value. Its value is not too light nor is it too dark. Additionally, it is evident that the space in the painting has been created superlatively in order to express depth in this particular art of work. Notably the artist applied all the art elements which subsequently helped him in bringing out a high-quality structure.

Comparison between Sesostris III of 12th Dynasty and the Mask of Warka Head

The two paintings, the Warka head and the Sesostris III artifact have some similarities as well as discrepancies. Of note is that they are prehistoric artifacts which hold significance meaning both in artistic work as well as in their places of origin. While the mask of the Warka head signifies the goddess of fertility, sexuality and love the Sesostris III represents a king as a leader and not as a god as he used to be viewed in the order days. It is imperative to note that the two art work utilizes the elements of arts but in different capacities.

Notably, both artifacts employ similar shapes, organic shapes which signify human form. The texture is similarly applied in the two artifacts and so is

form. While in Warka head contour lines have predominately been used, the Sesostris III made use of horizontal line as well as curved lines. The color of the two paintings is depicted by the type of material used for the art work. All in all, they are prehistoric artifacts which show the ancient artistic works and creativity while at the same time presents different themes from two different cultures of the ancient times.

Architecture from Ancient Egypt

Pyramids of Giza

The Giza Pyramids are found in Cairo Egypt. They were constructed in the town of Giza. They include the Cheops and Khufu Pyramids and it is worth noting that they were constructed during the fourth dynasty (Stokstad, 234). Their main intention was to give evidence to the pharaonic state and religion which was believed to be so influential. The pyramids were finished between 2532 and 2580 BC and they form the largest and the oldest pyramids. The pyramids are a site of attraction and the manner in which they are constructed intrigues people.

One of the most notable arts elements from these pyramids include line, shape, form and texture if one considers a closer look at the pyramids (Digolo & Mazrui, 2). The line has clearly been used reasonably to bring out the form of the pyramids which subsequently enhances the different types of shapes. Horizontal, diagonal and vertical lines can be seen clearly on the architecture which has helped in bringing out the shape of the building. Particularly, vertical lines have been used to create a sense of height due to the actuality that these lines are positioned perpendicularly on the earth.

On the other hand, the horizontal lines which forms the rectangular shapes expresses the idea of rest since the lines are located in a way that they cannot meet. From all indications geometric shapes have been utilized in this construction whereby geometric shapes which include triangles and rectangles have been used (Digolo & Mazrui, 4). The texture on the other hand is rough and it has been made so by the type of building materials used. It is apparent that stones were used in construction of these pyramids and without proper finishing on the exterior as we can witness, the texture remain rough. It is ascertained that the ancient people of Egypt believed that they could create one identity through building a shape and symbolizes a mountain. It is important to note that the pyramids remained the globe tallest building during the ancient times.

Ziggurat Architecture from the Ancient Near East

Ziggurat is a religious building that was built over 4000 year ago. It is a tower with scores of platform which contains several stair cases leading to a temple that is constructed at the topmost of the building. It was believed to be a place of worship for gods who guards the cities. Of note is that this elegant prehistoric building is made of mid brick which are still useful in Iraq until the present time. It is constructed in a significance historic area of Ur (Stokstad, 164). It is has a height of 70 feet. The building is well preserved by the people of Iraq.

Being a religious building, Ziggurat was believed to be a dwelling place of the god of sin as well as the god of moon. The nature of the building which entails the structure of a mountain was maintained due to the fact that the

people of Mesopotamia believed that their creator dwelled in the mountains (Stokstad, 180). This was the reason why they decided to build a high building in order for the gods to protect their cities. Additionally, the placement of this memorable building in the city of Ur was triggered by the belief that Ur was a notable place where prophet Ibrahim was born. The architects of this particular building employed a number of art elements which with no doubt helped them in bringing out an elegant building. Its shape is that of a mountain and the stairway was quite intriguing due to the fact that they were beautifully and creatively made. Let us consider the lines which are the first and most significant arts elements. The lines have noticeably helped in bringing out an elegant structure (Digolo & Mazrui, 2). Vertical, horizontal as well as diagonal lines have prominently featured in this particular building. The application of the lines has helped in bringing out several geometric shapes which include rectangular shapes and more significantly triangles which subsequently enhances the form of the building. However, it is important to note that the shapes contained in this structure are regular due to the actuality that there are geometric shapes. From this notion, the form of the building has been defined through depth, width and more essentially the height. The texture of the building is rough owing to the fact that there is no notable finishing done on the bricks that were used in the making of this building (Digolo & Mazrui, 8). The color remains that which is promoted by the materials of construction and it is evident that no painting was done and in this regard, the building takes its natural color. The value of the building is balanced and we can ascertain that value has been enhanced by the original color of the building materials. The spacing is

superlative and it has helped in creating some sense of depth in the building. Both the positive and the negative space have been excellently utilized thereby giving a positive effect of the structure.

Comparison between Ziggurat and Giza Pyramids

The two structures, Ziggurat from the ancient Near East and the Giza pyramids from the ancient Egypt are creative and memorable prehistoric structures which hold different themes depending on the cultures they represent. Ziggurat is a religious building which was built for religious purpose while the pyramids of Giza represents cultural values of the people of Egypt who wanted to be identified with the mountains. In this regard, Ziggurat holds some religious aspect while the pyramids of Giza hold both cultural and religious aspects. However, they are both prehistoric structures which apart from representing different aspects, portrays the architectural value in the art history of the two cultures. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the two structures make use of element of art in a similar manner whereby these elements have been equally utilized in building of the structures.

Sculptures from Ancient Egypt: The Ankhhaf Sculpture

The sculpture of the Prince Ankhhaf is remarkable Egyptian art of the ancient centuries. It was made between 2520 and 2494 BC (Stokstad, 145) It shows an actual human being which depicts the true resemblance and nature of people. The sculpture is made of limestone which is evidently painted to give the sculpture an attractive finishing. The limestone is covered with a plaster which has helped in bringing out a smooth texture as well as value. The

artist painted the sculpture using the red color which brings out the masculinity of this piece of art. The eyelids are dropped while the lips are creatively structured. From all indications, the artist behind this work did an excellent job of creating a realism structure.

The shapes contained in the piece of art are irregular hence organic as they present the nature of human beings (Digolo & Mazrui, 2). Contour lines have been superlatively in creating boundaries between shapes and the artist utilized the space considerably in order to bring out a rational sculpture. Nevertheless, it is of the essence to note that the sculpture had some political aspect due to the actuality that it represents a prince, a figure in political leadership as well as cultural heritage.

Sculpture from the Ancient Near East: Standing Female with Clasped Hands

The sculpture was made between 2600 and 2500 BC. It has a height of 24.9 cm and it originated from Mesopotamia (Stokstad, 432). Just like the Warka Head, this sculpture is made up of shell, lazuli and limestone. It represents the abundance goddess. We can confirm that this sculpture has made use of elements of arts and more especially the lines. Two incising lines are evident on the lady's garment. The hair is beautifully made of wavy lines which have helped in bringing out a feminist aspect in the sculpture. The legs and the toes are well-built and their placement on the flat cubic surface gives the sculpture a sense of value and depth.

Nevertheless, several lines have been used which have helped in creating the organic shape in this sculpture. Curved and straight lines which are perpendicular have been used to give the form and a sense of height in this

piece of art work. Of note is that a horizontal line is evident across the woman's chest which expresses the stability of the sculpture. The horizontal line also makes the boundary between the body and the garment (Digolo & Mazrui, 13). The texture is well-balanced, both rough and smooth, and the value is neither light nor dark. Moreover, the artists employed excellent use of space an aspect that helps in formulating visual perspective. Both negative and positive space has been used in the most appropriate manner hence offering a sense of depth.

Comparison between the Sculptures: Ankhhaf Sculpture and Standing Female with Clasped Hands

The two sculptures, Ankhhaf Sculpture and Standing Female with Clasped Hands from Ancient Egypt and Ancient Near East respectively represent realism of human beings. In this regard, irregular shapes have been applied in their formation while lines and other components of art have equally been used but in different capacities. The two represents two different themes from the different culture whereby the Ankhhaf is politically instigated while the female sculpture holds some religious aspect. However, they all portray cultural heritage as well as represent art in the earliest centuries.

Work Cited

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