

# Temples of Ancient Egypt

Temple of Philae, Aswan, Egypt



There were many temples in ancient Egypt – features:

- Square building, large limestone blocks, granite roof, alabaster floors
- Some attached to pyramids for burial rites and worship

- *Trabeated construction* →

- *Hypostyle hall* →

# Temples Were Built With *Trabeated* Construction

**TRABEATED** construction uses a “post and lintel” system

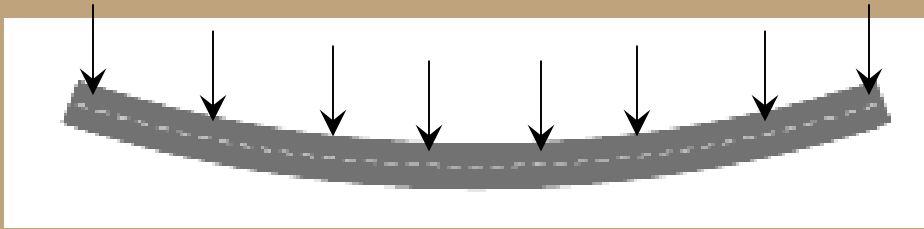
- Vertical - post (or column)
- Horizontal – lintel (or beam)



Lintel or Beam

Post or Column

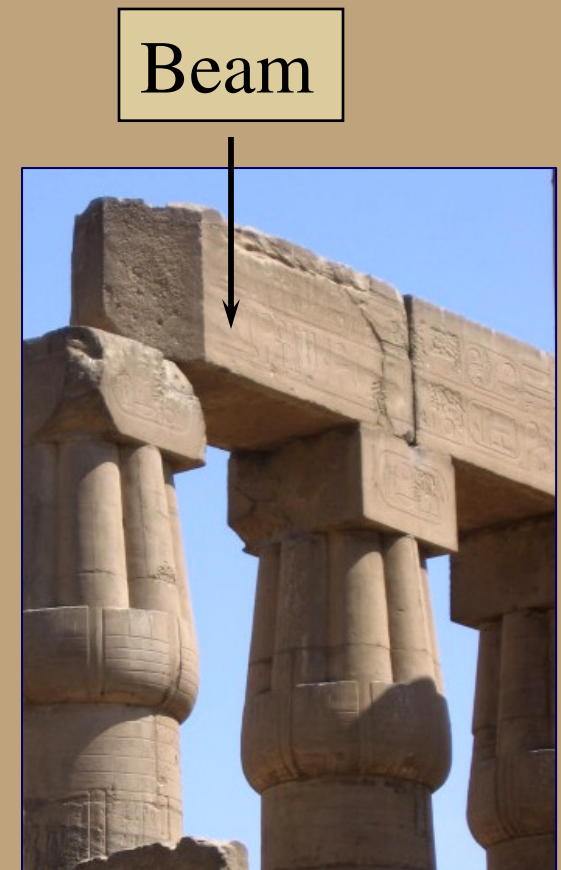
# Trabeated Construction



Note that there are **many columns** close together...

- This is necessary because:
  - Stone is strong but gravity pulls down
  - If span is too wide the stone will crack
- So *trabeated* construction requires many columns close together

“Trabeated” comes from the Latin “*trabs*” = beam



Many Columns

Note how center section is raised with high windows on each side



## *Hypostyle Hall*

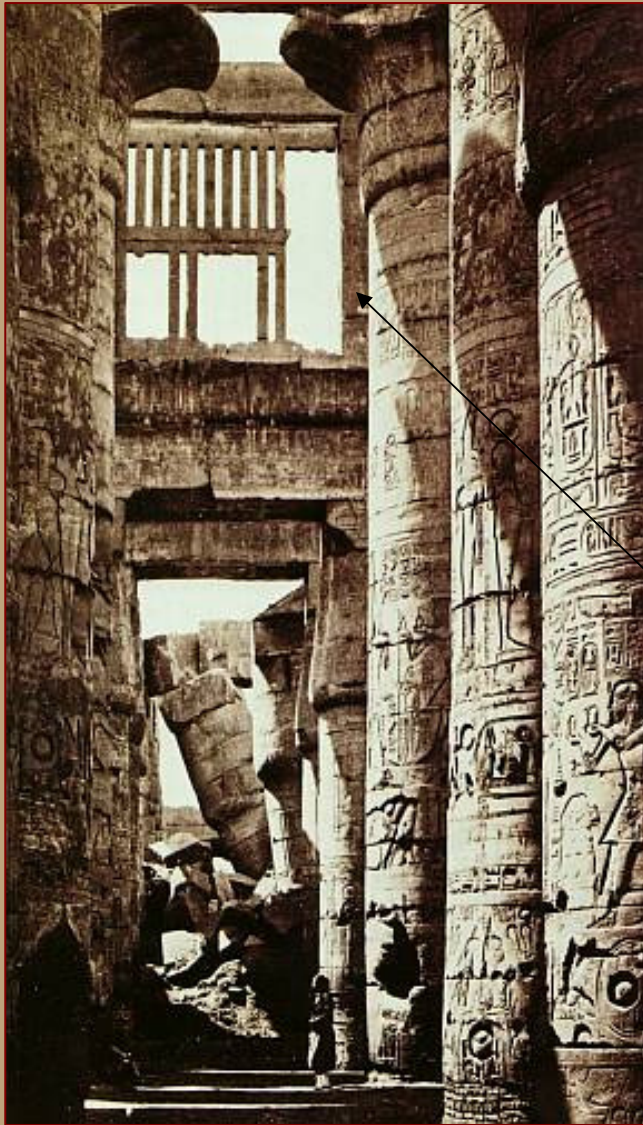
From Greek words: *hypo* = “underneath” and *stulos* = “column”

The term indicates a construction in which:

- A roof is supported by many columns set close together



# Window Grilles

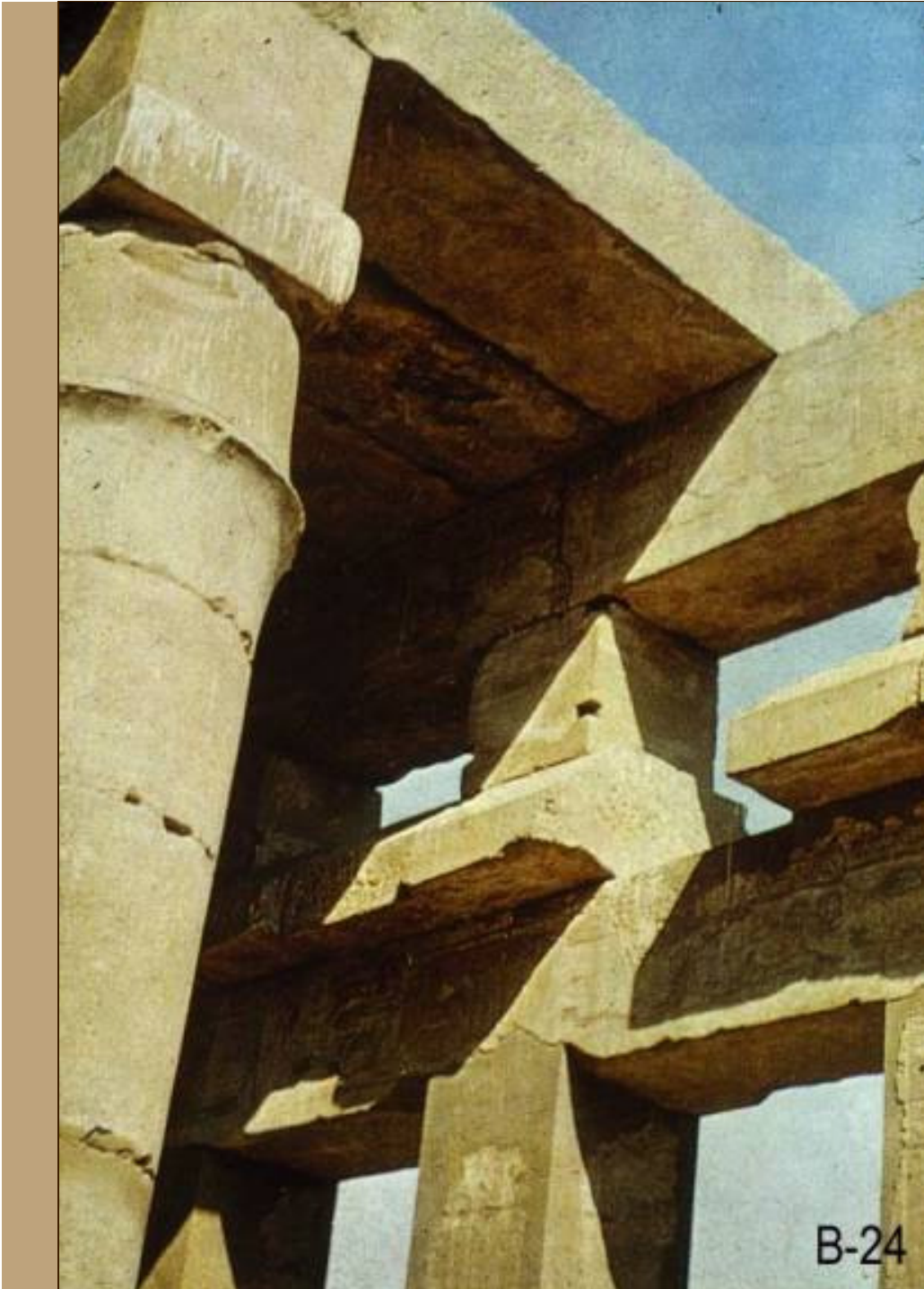


Great Hypostyle Hall, Temple of Amon,  
Karnak Dynasty, XIX, 1318-1237 B.C.

Overhead openings allow  
narrow shafts of light



- High “clerestory” windows
- Clerestory = window near top of a wall, above an adjacent roof
  - Inset with stone grilles
  - Limited light
  - Interior dark, mysterious

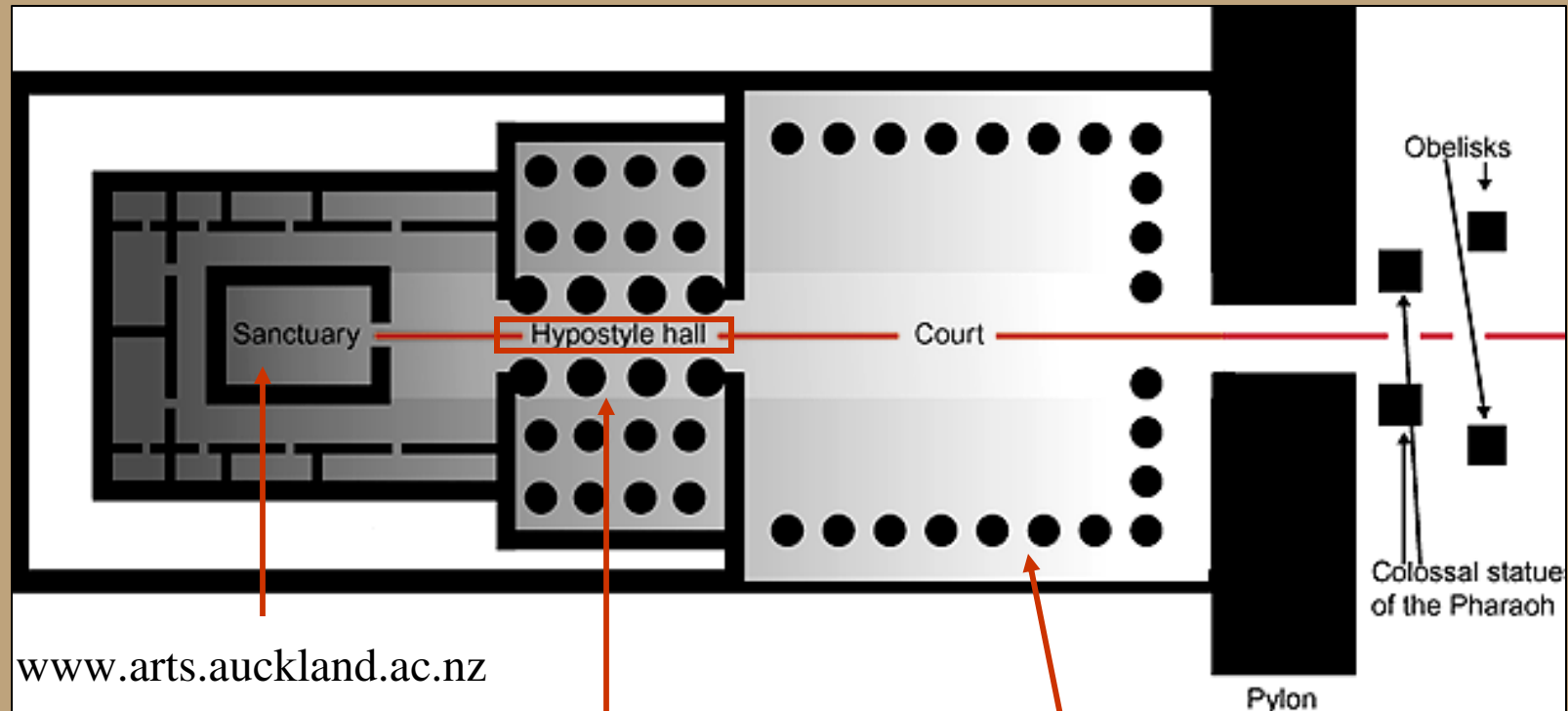


# Light Slits



B-24

# Temples of Ancient Egypt



Temples had 3 parts:

1. Open courtyard with columns (“collonnaded”)
2. Hypostyle hall
3. Small dark sanctuary
  - Note how each space is darker

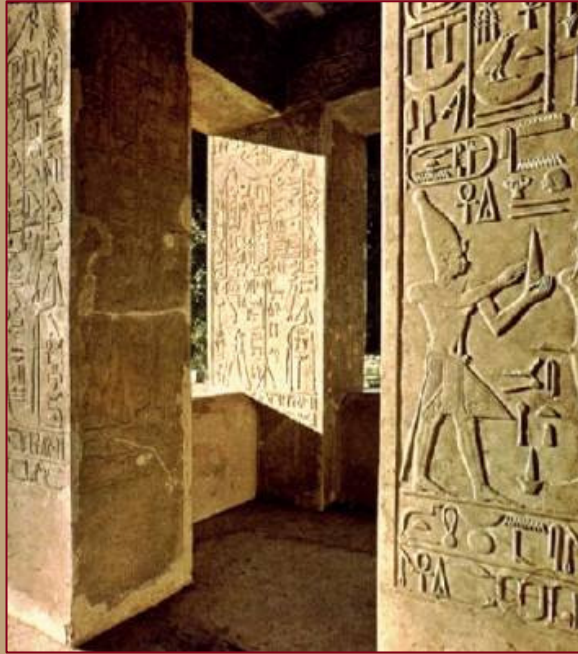
# Egyptian Hypostyle Hall



Temple of Rameses II, Luxor, Egypt.



# Temple Decoration



## Walls:

1. Bas-relief carving
2. Painted

- Images of gods, people, nature
- Hieroglyphics (Egyptian writing)

Bas-relief is deep carving



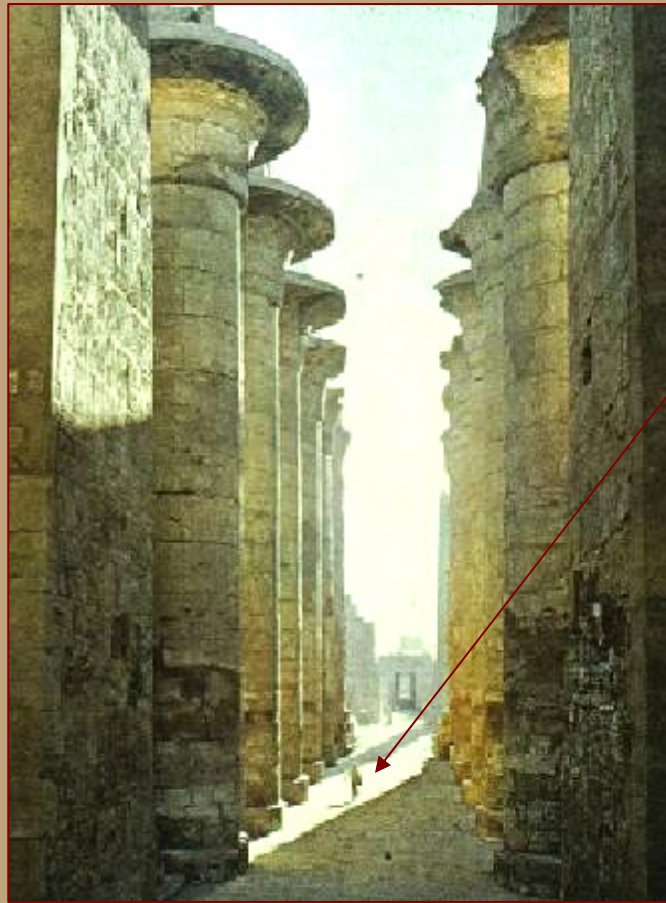
Bas-relief at mortuary temple of Ramesses III

Bright Colors  
Used to Decorate  
Interiors



# Egyptian Temples

**MEGALITHIC**



**You are here...**



# “Peristyle” Courtyard

Temple of Amon, Luxor, Dynasty XVIII, c. 1400-1360 B.C.



Artist's idea of a restored temple courtyard.

– “*peri*” = around and “*stulos*” = column

A “peristyle” is a colonnade surrounding a building or a court



# Columns = Papyrus Bundle



The first columns were created from bundles of reeds

Later, this was copied in stone – as seen above

Nature was copied in many architectural forms

# Egyptian Columns

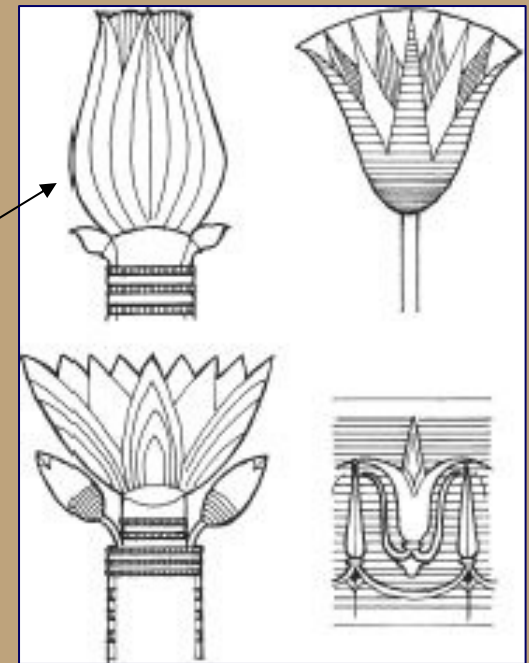
“**CAPITAL**” on top of the column = plant forms

Most common are the following:

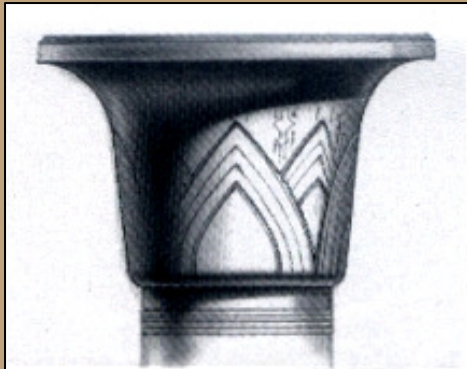
1. Lotus (closed or open)
2. Papyrus (symbol of the delta)
3. Palmette – palm tree

**Closed lotus bud**

**Open lotus flower**



# The Lotus Capital



Lotus Capital (open)



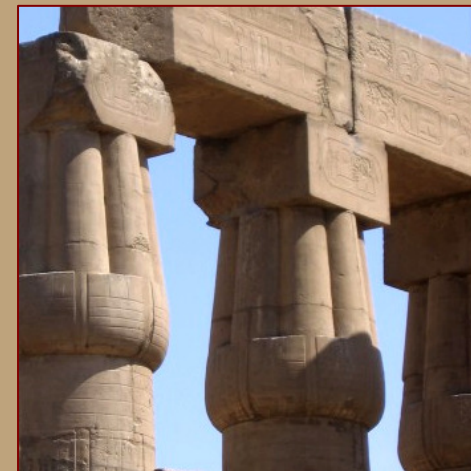
Open lotus flower



Closed lotus bud



Lotus Capital (closed)





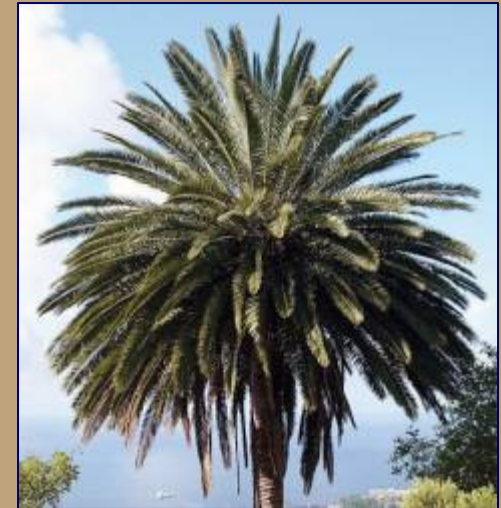
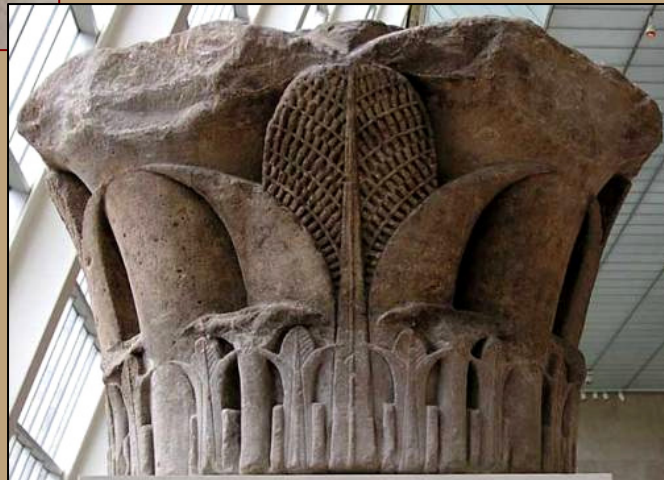
# The Papyrus Capital



Temple of Isis at Philae







# The Palm or Palmette Capital

[www.buffaloah.com/a/archsty/egypt/tc.jpg](http://www.buffaloah.com/a/archsty/egypt/tc.jpg)

Palm Tree