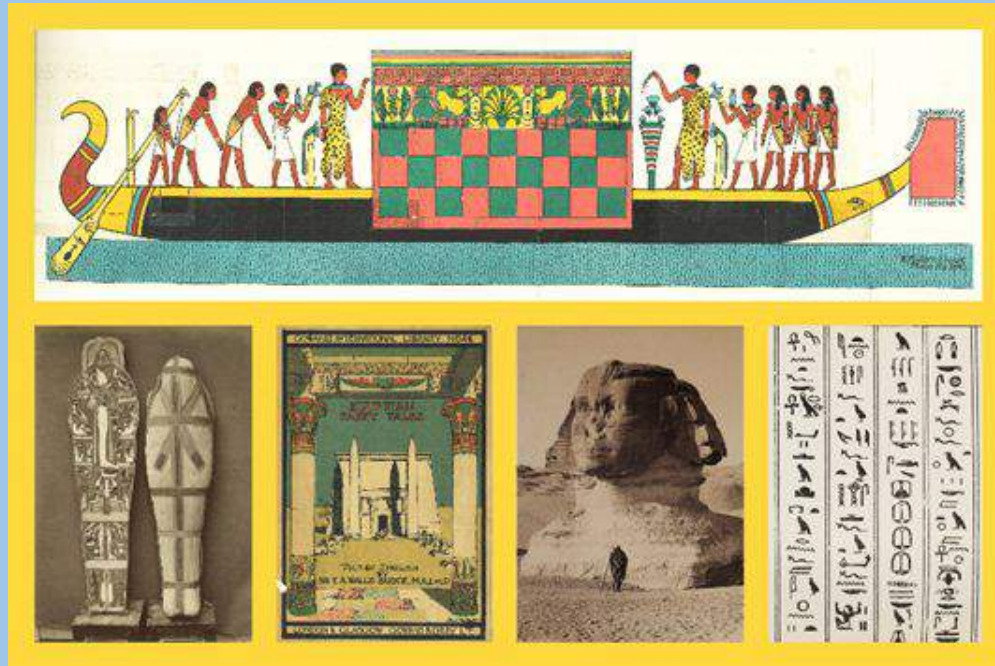


Egyptomania:

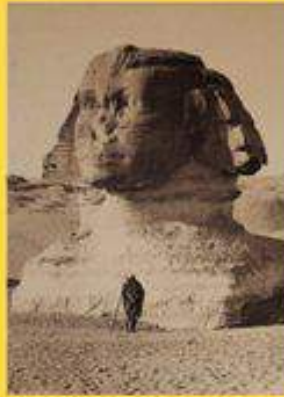
The Western Fascination with Egypt





In 1891, Pequot Library founder Virginia Marquand Monroe traveled to Egypt. She returned with photographs and objects that the library still holds today. You will see some of these items on the following slides.

Virginia Marquand Monroe in Egypt, ca. 1891
Pequot Library Special Collections



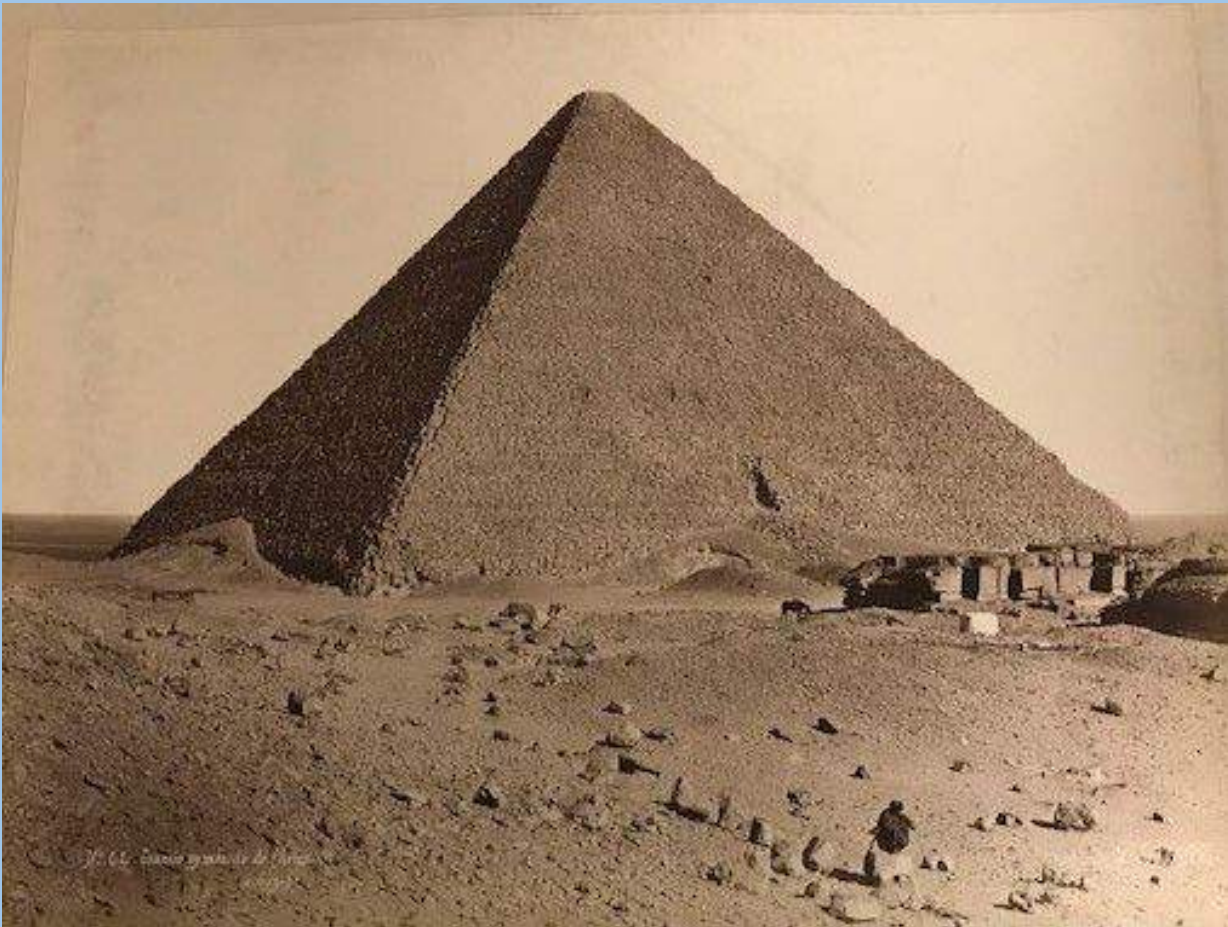
The images you will see are examples of the kinds of things that sparked a wave of fascination with Ancient Egypt in the west during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This fascination is known as **“Egyptomania”**.

Egyptian motifs were reflected through art, architecture, and culture in the United States and Europe. You will see some of these examples as well.

Questions

As you observe the images on the following slides, consider these questions:

- Based on what you've learned about Ancient Egypt, do you think the images in the photographs and illustrations accurately reflect the Egyptian landscape, culture, and people?
- How does the perspective of the photographer or artist influence the ways in which images of Egypt are portrayed?
- When you look at these images, what types of words come to mind that would describe Ancient Egypt?
- What might these images convey to people in the U.S. and Europe about Egypt? How might they influence western perceptions of Egypt?



Great Pyramid at Giza

Albumen print

Artist: P. Sebah, Turkish, active ca.
1823-1886

Pyramids were built as tombs for
Egypt's pharaohs.

The Great Pyramid at Giza is the
oldest and largest of the 3
pyramids at Giza. It is also one of
the seven wonders of the world.



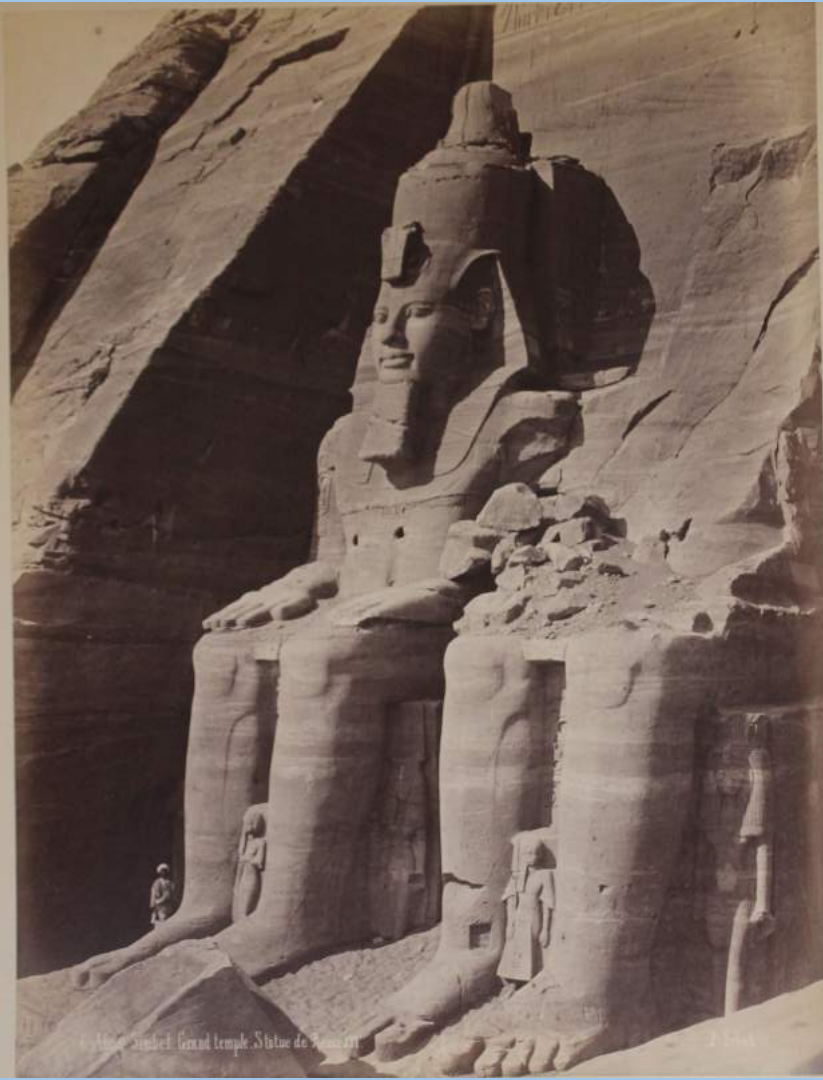
The Sphinx Armachis at Giza

Albumen print

Artist: P. Sebah, Turkish, active
ca. 1823-1886

In Ancient Egypt, a Sphinx is an imaginary creature that has the head of a man and the body of a lion.

The Great Sphinx of Giza is the oldest known monumental sculpture in Egypt.



**Abou-Simbel. Grand Temple.
Statue de Ramses II.**

Albumen print

Artist: P. Sebah, Turkish, active
ca. 1823-1886

Abu Simbel is the site of a
temple complex built by the
Egyptian king Ramses II.



Colosse de Memnon. Vue d'Est

Albumen print

Artist: P. Sebah, Turkish, active ca. 1823-1886

The Colosse de Memnon are a pair of monumental statues representing Amenhotep III (1386-1353 BCE).

Ancient Greek writers referred to the complex regularly as the *Memnonium*, after the Greek hero Memnon.

On some mornings, one of the statues could be heard letting out a high pitch sound. When the Greeks, who also explored Ancient Egypt, heard the sound, they named the monuments for Memnon in association with the figure's mother, who cried for him each morning after he died. (The sounds may actually have been created after an earthquake caused some destruction to part of the statue - rising heat and humidity playing off cracked stone caused a high pitch sound on some mornings.



Temple of Isis at Philae

Heliogravure

Egypt. Heliogravures After Original Views
by R.M. Junghaendel, with a preface by
C.G. Rawlinson

Berlin: Cosmos Art Publishing Co. Ltd.,
1893

Temples were built for the worship
of Egyptian gods.

Inside this temple is a hall, with a
central open space. There are
colored pictures on its walls and
columns. The paintings represent
hieroglyphs and images of the gods.



This is an illustration of a hall inside the Temple of Karnak. Temples were painted in vibrant colors, with images that reflected the flora and fauna found along the Nile, such as papyrus, lotus flowers, animals and birds.

Temple decoration is an important resource for understanding Ancient Egypt, because of the stories they told about Egyptian life, nature, and religion. We can “read” these stories through symbols, colors, and even the temple structures themselves, such as the towering columns you see here.



This is an illustration of temple column decoration. The book was written in the 1800s. The images were created by a European artist.

What do you see that reflects nature? What colors do you notice? What do you think they symbolize?



Great Temple at Karnak

Heliogravure

Egypt. Heliogravures After Original Views
by R.M. Junghaendel, with a preface by C.G.
Rawlinson

Berlin: Cosmos Art Publishing Co. Ltd., 1893

Hieroglyphs were inscribed on temple walls and columns. The hieroglyphs had religious meaning to the Egyptians and were tributes to the gods.



PLATE 27

ADDRESS OF THE GOVERNOR OF THEBES TO THE KING.

H.V.S.

Hieroglyphs are a form of ancient writing in which a picture, character or symbol represents a certain idea.



The cow in this hieroglyph represents Hathor, a major sky goddess in ancient Egyptian religion. She is often shown as a cow or a woman wearing a headdress of cow horns and a sun disk.

She served as the symbolic mother of the pharaohs.



Obelisks are some of the most recognizable monuments in Egypt.

In Ancient Egyptian culture, they represented many things: creation, tribute to the sun god Ra, and memorials to the pharaohs, who were living representations of the gods.

They were inscribed with hieroglyphs that provided information about the pharaoh for whom it was built.



Chameliers du Sinai

Translation: Camel Drivers in Sinai
Albumen print

Artist: P. Sebah, Turkish, active ca.
1823-1886

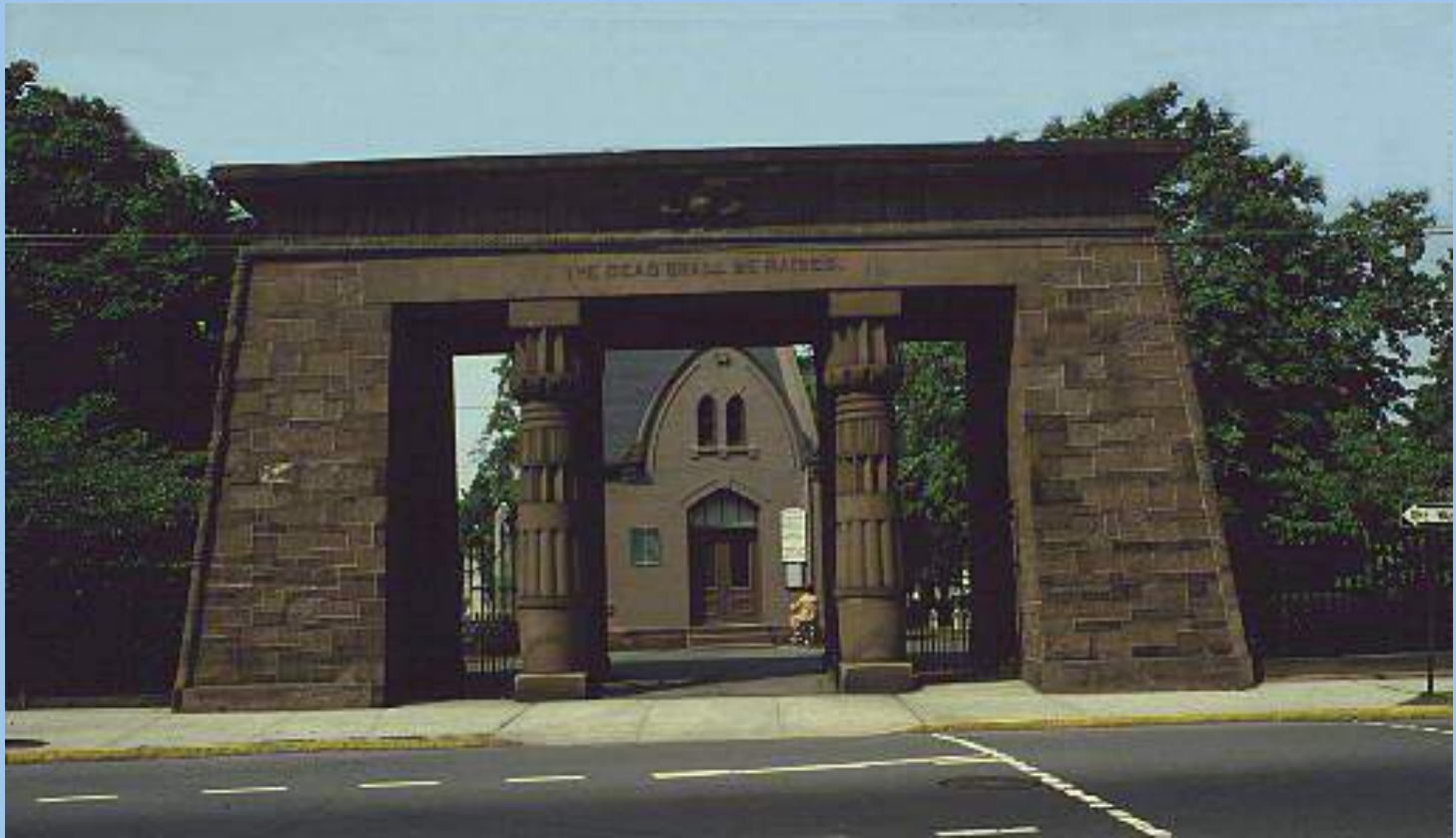
Nineteenth-century tourist photography not only included landscapes and depictions of historical monuments, but also scenes that fulfilled Western fantasies of the “exotic” lifestyles of regional peoples. Photographers created their tableaux by posing models of musicians, craftsmen, merchants, and other local people. Here, Bedouin camel drivers are depicted traversing the Nile in traditional dress.

Egyptian Influence in Western Art and Architecture

Questions

As you observe the images on the following slides, consider these questions:

- Which Egyptian images do you see?
- What are some of the ways in which western interpretations of Egyptian culture have been reflected in art, architecture, and culture?
- If you were to design a building, decorative object, article of clothing, or something else inspired by Ancient Egypt, what would it look like?
- If you were to write a song or poem inspired by Ancient Egypt, what would it say?



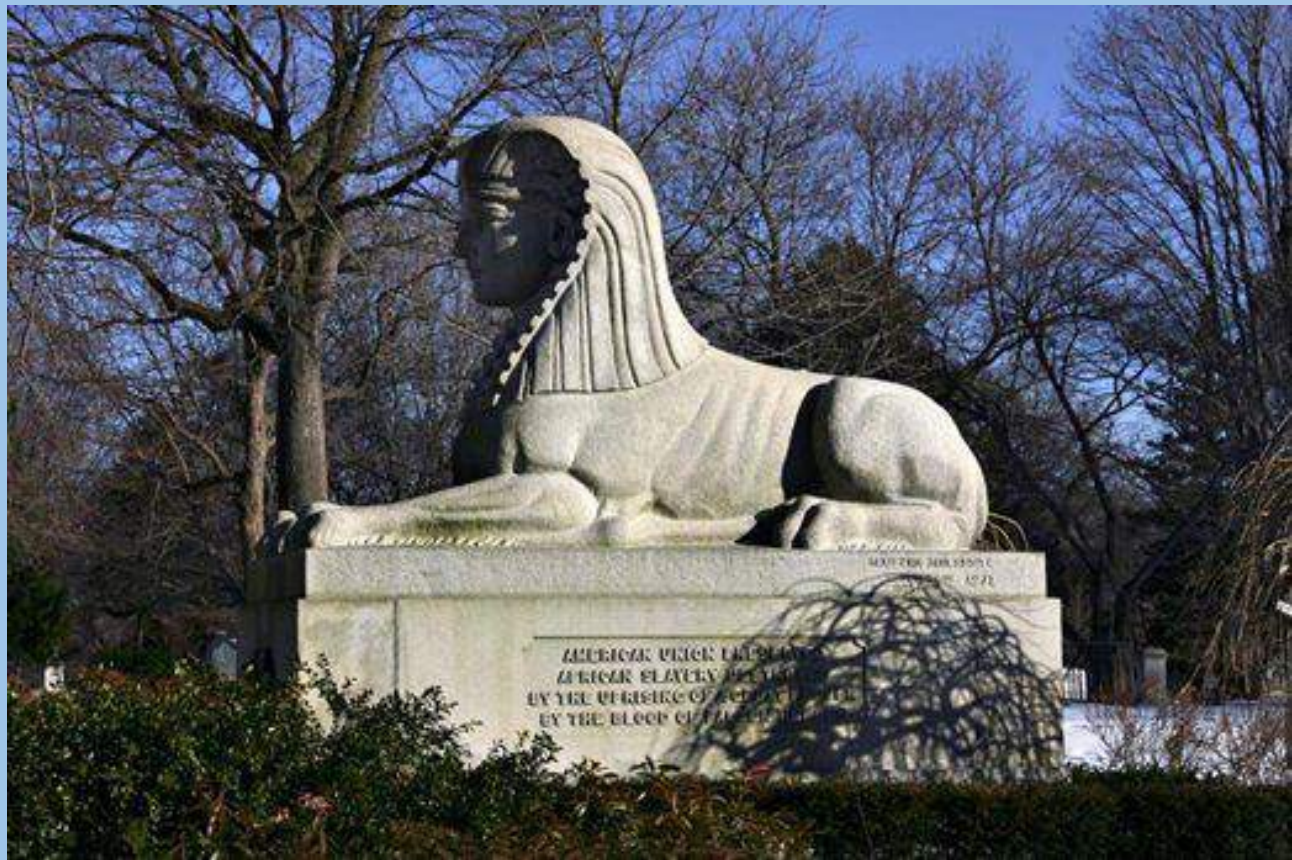
Grove Street Cemetery Entrance (1845)
New Haven, CT



Foire du Caire Building (1828)
Paris, France



The Louvre Pyramid (1989)
Paris, France



Martin Milmore: Sphinx, Mt. Auburn Cemetery (1872)
Cambridge, MA



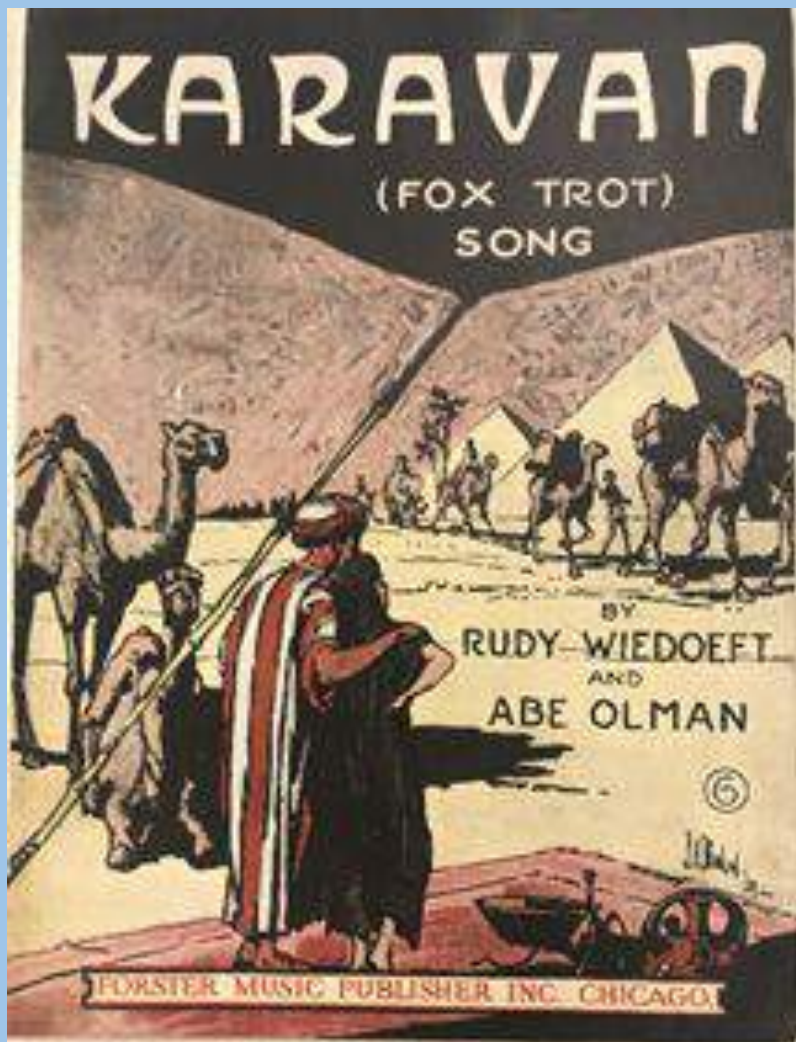
The Washington Monument (1888)
Washington, DC



The Chrysler Building (1930)
New York, NY



Egyptian-inspired dress



Karavan (Fox Trot Song)

by Rudy Wiedoeft and Abe Olman

Chicago: Forster Music Publisher, Inc.,
1919

“There are eyes that are watching for
my karavan

Across the desert sand

They look for me, and seem to say

‘Somebody’s lonely’ ...”

Activity

If you could create something inspired by Ancient Egypt, what would it be? Consider expressing yourself through:

- A work of art
- A poem
- A song
- An idea for a new building design
- A fashion statement
- A decorative object (jewelry box, piece of furniture, etc)

