

Humanities 121

Early Civilizations

Forward

This Humanities 121 textbook introduces the interdisciplinary study of ideas that have defined cultures from the prehistoric to the early medieval era. We will study painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry. Our goal is to encourage students to look critically at the arts and ideas of cultures in the past and to learn to write about what they see and feel. We hope students will think about and answer these questions: How do these art forms make me feel? Why were they created? How does understanding these works of art help me to be part of the human conversation going on around me? How can internalizing works of art from the human past help me to express my creative self?

References for Illustrations Used on Title Pages

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Chapter 1

Prehistory

PREFACE TO THE BIRTH OF THE VISUAL ARTS

The earth is perhaps 4,500,000,000 years old, a figure which is more easily expressed as 4.5 billion years. In *The Language of God*, Francis Collins compressed those years into a single 24-hour day. On his clock:

- The earth was created at 12:01 AM.
- Life appeared at 3:30 AM, and then there was a slow progression to multi-cellular organisms.
- The Cambrian explosion happened at 9:00 PM and mammals started expanding over the earth.
- The dinosaurs became extinct at 11:40 PM.
- The divergence between chimps and humans occurred at 11:58:47.
- Humans appeared at 11:59:57.
- According to Collins, we *homo sapiens* occupy the last millisecond of those 24 hours!

Another way to look at time is from a geological/anthropological perspective. The Pleistocene era, or Ice Age, occurred between 2,588,000 to 11,700 years ago. The latter part of that geological period corresponds with the **Paleolithic Period**, or Old Stone Age (between 35,000 and 10,000 BCE¹), when *homo sapiens* became more dominant. Those dates sound incredibly separated from today's millisecond in the 21st century CE, but according to Collins' clock, that was not really so far in the distant past as a casual reading of science might suggest. So what did those hunter-gatherer nomads, following animal herds and foraging for a few edible berries, possibly have in common with sophisticated *homo sapiens* of today? The environment of the ancients, their historical awareness, their academic traditions and methods differed from ours, but they asked the same questions as we. They, too, had hopes and fears, dreams and stories. Like us, they found it astonishing that we are here at all and wanted to know why. As fellow humans in this "last millisecond," we, too, are seeking meaning through human accomplishment.

Let's examine four human achievements that were made in those early days of caves and stone tools. These accomplishments form the beginnings of **culture** and have become the legacy upon which our individual and communal life is built. In their search for the meaning of life, the accomplishments which our ancestors started will be accumulated and developed over time, to be passed down from one generation to another.

Human accomplishment #1. **Problem Solver**. Achievement is all about creating what does not yet exist. Accomplishments are limited only by the creativity of the human mind. By rethinking the past we change how we see the present, which prompts us in turn to re-imagine the future.

Human accomplishment #2. **Symbolic Thinking**. Symbolic thinking distinguishes *homo sapiens* from all other species, freeing our minds from the restraints of "animalistic" thought to be creative, to enter and imagine other worlds which are infinite in time and space. The vitality and remarkable skill with which Cro-Magnon art was created is evidence of a self-identity and an intentional composition. Concrete expressions of consciousness have led to the multiplicity of today's symbols, such as signs which guide us down the highway, the wedding ring on my finger, and the icons on an iPhone. Only humans create symbols for themselves and for other humans.

Human accomplishment #3. **Creator of Art**. We have been art makers for as long as we have been human. Aesthetic and spiritual expression is basic to human behavior. Even Cro-Magnons cared about how a thing looked. Art shows an aesthetic need: they didn't have a surplus of free time, their creation was not immediately more useful, and their art was not necessary for survival. Visual art is more basic than the written word. People drew pictures before writing was invented; children draw before they can write. Without art we're just primates with car keys. Art is a necessity, not a luxury.

Human accomplishment #4. **Inventor of Ritual** (ceremony). Art is not always a finished, unchanging product. What do a painter, a poet, a dancer and an actor have in common? An artist is one who takes the ordinary and makes it special. One can create a bowl out of mud, but it needn't be left ordinary. The artist can make it special by engraving a pattern or figures on it. The poet takes common words and makes them unforgettable. An artist places the activity of an artifact in a realm different from the everyday. Without the chant, the music, the masks, the dance, the performance and the painting we are left with nothing.

What are the arts of our time? Some examples might include advertising, blockbuster movies and participatory rituals, such as Super Bowl events or Olympic ceremonies. Without a doubt, you can name many more examples.

It is in the Paleolithic era that we have the birth of human accomplishment. In the cave at Lascaux [image 1.1] we witness a statement of self-awareness. They recognized their fragility amidst powerful natural forces, forces which they could identify but over which they had no control. They detected their status as a link in the food chain, and knew that they would lose. They acknowledged the passage of time and their finiteness and mortality. They used their creativity to communicate with each other and with us, symbolically expressing their limitations and powerlessness. And yet, in their struggles against decay, death and time their accomplishments declared, "I am." "I am here." "I am unique." "This is ME."



1.1 Left wall of the *Hall of Bulls*, Lascaux II (replica of the original cave, which is closed to the public). Original cave painted on limestone between c. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.ⁱⁱ

After visiting Lascaux Cave in France and the caves at Altamira in Spain, Picasso reportedly declared, "We have invented nothing!" We should not be surprised. These objects of human creativity are not arcane, obscure or hopelessly out-of-date. They are telling their story, and our story as well. We, too, are seeking the meaning of life through the vehicle of human accomplishment. We owe a debt to these ancient cultures. We cannot disconnect from them any more than they can disconnect from us.

Use this format to cite this document:

Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 1, Prehistoric Civilizations. Preface to the Birth of the Visual Arts." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Dates are signified as BCE "Before the Christian (or common) era," or CE "Christian (or common) era."

ⁱⁱ Public domain at search.commons.org/photos/98d527c0-946b-4b7b-92f4-a02e4b1aed6e

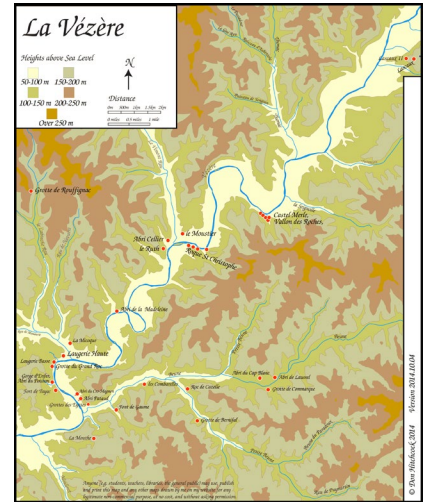
PAINTING IN PALEOLITHIC CULTURE

at Lascaux Cave, Dordogne, France



1.2 Map showing the location of three well-known prehistoric cave painting sites in France and Spain.ⁱ

In the late 1930s a giant pine tree fell in the Dordogne region of south-west France [images 1.2 and 1.3], exposing an enticing hole. On a September afternoon shortly thereafter, Marcel Ravidat, Jacques Marsal, Georges Agnel and Simon Coencas were out exploring in this area with their dog. As “Robot” sniffed around he suddenly slipped into that hole. “Woof. Woof!” Fourteen-year old boys would certainly not abandon Robot.



1.3 Map of sites in the Vézère Valley of France, including Lascaux at the top right of the map.ⁱⁱ

The event was recounted by one of the boys who found the Lascaux Cave on September 12, 1940:

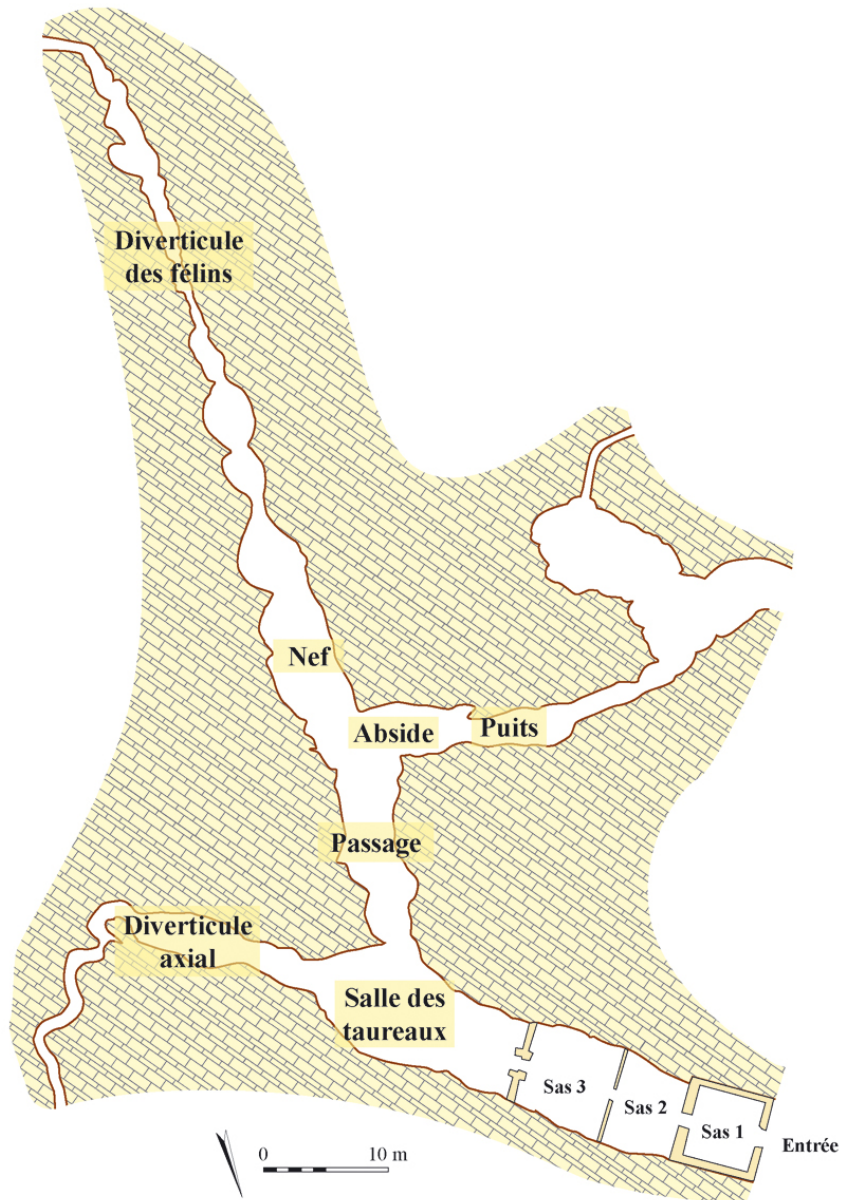
Suddenly we found a hole. We moved a few stones to make the opening wider. Because I was the strongest, I was the first to climb down into the darkness. I was afraid to start with, because you never know what’s lurking in a cave. But my burning curiosity overcame my fear of the unknown. Still, my heart was beating furiously. I slipped, tried to hold on to some stones but slid downwards several metres. And then, when I finally came to the bottom I was amazed to see the strangest pictures on the walls.ⁱⁱⁱ



1.4 Left wall of the *Hall of Bulls*, Lascaux II (replica of the original cave, which is closed to the public). Original cave painted on limestone between c. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France. The horse is 11 feet 6 inches long.^{iv}

Like those boys, upon entering a cave one has the feeling that he or she is entering the womb of the earth. It is damp, and cold, and dark. The space is not lit with floodlights as we enjoy in the above photograph; overwhelmingly, our anxious sensations of superstitious mystery are magnified by the interplay of light from our flickering torches. In Paleolithic (“old stone”) days light from stone lamps, moving over bumps and crevices, might have suggested fear-inspiring natural shapes and perhaps an illusion of movement. For 5000 years the walls at the Lascaux Cave [image 1.4] were painted over and over again with approximately 600 naturalistic and realistic paintings and another 1500 abstract symbols or designs. This could be the romanticized birthplace of human intelligence, imagination and creative power.

It is not surprising that the artists referred to **Naturalism**. Those big game hunters were imitating the actual appearance of their world. By depicting the world as it might be seen they were reflecting not only their questions, but also their search for answers. They were seeking to make sense out of this world. In addition to working in dim light, the site was relatively inaccessible. The main hall is approximately 85’ from the entrance [image 1.5]. At sunset on the summer solstice, the sun shines in for about 55 minutes. The full moon could enter on the morning of the winter solstice. For an artist, the lack of light added to the challenge of painting diverse animals with true-to-life details on the irregular surface.



1.5 Map of Lascaux cave, Dordogne, France (redrawn after A. Leroi-Gourhan, (1984), “Grotte de Lascaux”, in *L’art des cavernes—Atlas des grottes ornées paléolithiques françaises*, Ministère de la culture, ISBN 2-11-080817-9).^v

These artists were not limited to naturalistic depictions. They also added **Realism**, which is more than the apparent representation of things and experiences [image 1.4]. The subject is recognizable and the artist appears to be recording exactly what he or she is seeing, but an emotional or psychological overlay has been added. Even if the depiction represents an imagined or supernatural figure, it has a surface naturalism to which abstraction and expressionistic distortion have been added. Realism may include *trompe-l'oeil* (fool the eye) and the illusion of perspectival depth.

The transformation of a space, as was accomplished in these caves, is known as an **installation**. As a **multimedia** presentation the drama of the location might have been accompanied by chanting, singing, prescribed gestures such as dance, and quite likely music. The best acoustics in the cave have been noted in the front where there is art nearby, such as horses, bison and other hoofed animals. In the rear, where sound is dampened, are six engravings of panthers and other stealthy animals. (Unfortunately, this author had no access to clear pictures of these prowling creatures at Lascaux. There are, however, some fine ones on Don Hitchcock's web site at <https://www.donsmaps.com/lascaux.html> . Perhaps these much older lions at Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc, shown in image 1.6, will satisfy your imagination.) An echo made by whistling [image 1.7], or percussive music (such as clapping, slapping on one's thighs or knocking on stalactites or skulls) might simulate a stampede of these pounding monsters.



1.6 Lion Panel with Mammoth.
C. 30,000 BCE, Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc
Cave, France.^{vii}



1.7 Bone flute (20,000-18,000 BCE).^{vi}

Surprisingly in the cave, there is only one complete drawing of a human [image 1.8], and he is at the bottom of an 18' shaft or well which can only be reached by climbing down a ladder. Because of this location he is known to us as the *Man at the Well*. The man, depicted with a bird's head, is shown in an ithyphallic position of power with his spear and a bird on a pole as he faces a disemboweled bison. Behind him is with a woolly rhino, which may or may not have been drawn by the same artist. Is the man, perhaps, a shaman? As a religious specialist the shaman might have understanding of three worlds: the present world of the living, the province of the dead, and the domain of ghosts. Remnants of a three-twined rope were also found in the shaft. The rope might be a remnant from a net, fishing line, thread, woven goods, or basket. Let your imagination run! This scene is more of a **narrative**; conceivably, a story is being told here. Does he hope to accrue an animal's power as he straddles the spiritual worlds of animals and humans? Are the human and the animal worlds being linked with the spirit world through his dreams and trances? Is protection being offered through the spirit of the bird's head on his mask? Does the bird suggest the ascent of the man's soul? His staff possibly points north. Is that significant?



1.8 Lascaux. Shaft with the *Man at the Well*, a bison, and a rhinoceros.^{viii}

Most importantly, why was the man not depicted naturalistically? Does the abstract depiction, the dramatic realism, perhaps suggest **Spiritualism**? Spiritualism does not have the same meaning as “religious.” Spiritualism, used correctly, signifies “communication with the dead through a medium or psyche.” Ouija boards, spirit voices, levitating tables and automatic writing are examples of spiritualism. Or, this is possibly **Animism**. Animism is the belief that a spirit or force resides within each animate and inanimate object. We still refer to animism today: skies seem ‘threatening,’ seas and fires ‘rage,’ forests ‘murmur,’ and Mother Earth ‘beckons’ us to rest. Or, perhaps, this figure is simply an example of one human’s fear or vulnerability.

The best way to understand the past is through writings and the creations of those who lived in the past. Because the people of prehistory celebrated their accomplishments mostly in an oral tradition, the **primary sources** of prehistory are not literary. These early sources are to be known through the disciplines of geology, paleontology, anthropology, archaeology and ethnography (cultural anthropology). What is known of Paleolithic life derives largely from paintings found in 147 sites particularly in the Franco-Cantabrian area of southern France and northern Spain. Twenty-five of these caves exhibit **parietal** art (painting on cave walls). The most famous of these sites is at Lascaux, which has been closed to the public since 1963 due to the destructive growth of algae, bacteria and fungi. However, there are other interesting locations which you might choose to explore. In France these include caves at Chauvet and Pech-Merle caves; in Spain the caves of Altamira and El Castillo; the Blombos cave in South Africa; the Borneo caves in Indonesia; and Mezhirich in the Ukraine.

When you become interested in the past, the choices you make to study will reflect your own times. What is the voice you hear speaking in one of these creations? Bring that voice home, and happy spelunking!

You might appreciate this link to a website in which you can click and drag your mouse (instead of a greased torch) to explore around the cave:

Rousselle, Stefania, Neda Shastri and Kaitlyn Mullin, *Lascaux Caves, Paleolithic and New Again*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/europe/100000004789226/lascaux-caves-paleolithic-and-new-again.html>

Or, to take a visual tour of the cave, go to:

<http://archeologie.culture.fr/lascaux/fr/visiter-grotte-lascaux/diverticule-axial>

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ⁱ Lascaux (Dordogne) France. Mary Beth Looney, "Hall of Bulls, Lascaux," in *Smarthistory*, November 19, 2015, accessed August 16, 2019, smarthistory.org/hall-of-bulls-lascaux/

ⁱⁱ Photo by Don Hitchcock at www.donsmaps.com/lascaux.html

ⁱⁱⁱ Quoted by www.coursehero.com/file/27520277/1Prehistory-3Egypt-stdntpptx/.n.d. Web. 28 Aug. 2019.

^{iv} Mary Beth Looney, "Hall of Bulls, Lascaux," in *Smarthistory*, November 19, 2015, accessed August 16, 2019, smarthistory.org/hall-of-bulls-lascaux/

^v Permission: GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2.

^{vi} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, at the Vienna National Historical Museum, 2010. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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^{viii} Lascaux (Dordogne) France. Photo: Don Hitchcock, donsmaps.com

ELEMENTS OF ART AS DEMONSTRATED AT THE LASCAUX CAVE

Dordogne, France

Paintings are dumb. They don't say a word. Artists can communicate their beliefs and ideas only by means of carefully chosen basic elements. The relationships of these elements to one another and to the work of art as a whole determine the organization of that work. The Lascaux artists provide clear demonstrations of the formal elements of art, which include:

- Line
- Shape
- Space, perspective and size
- Texture
- Media and tools
- Color



1.9 *Art of the Painting of the Lascaux Caves, France.*ⁱ

LINES are made by the movement of an implement. They give direction and organize the space. There are five kinds of lines: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved or straight. Lines may vary in thickness, clarity, smoothness and direction.

The straight, diagonal and downward slashes in image 1.10 leave no question about the movement of an implement. "Stroke, stroke, stroke." The **rhythm** of the lines is even and intentional. The fuzzy lines around the perimeter of the bison suggest texture. By way of contrast, the lines forming the legs and feet are curved, smooth and delicate.



1.10 Lascaux. Nave (left wall). *Bison Striped by Arrows*. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.ⁱⁱ

Lines may also be **implied**, encouraging the viewer to be a participant in the scene. In image 1.11, this author has added red lines to demonstrate the suggestion of forward, confrontational movement.



2.11 Left wall of the *Hall of Bulls*, Lascaux II. Reproduction of Lascaux Cave, 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.ⁱⁱⁱ

SHAPES are actual or implied “closed lines.” They must have length and width. Shapes may be regular or irregular, symmetrical or asymmetrical, organic or geometric. Shapes often create a feeling or an emotion.

Are the shapes of the heads in images 1.12 and 1.13 **organic** (natural forms) or **geometric** (ideal, abstract forms)? (Red lines have been added by this author.)



1.12 Lascaux. *Megaloceros (The Black Stag)* in the Axial Gallery. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.^{iv}



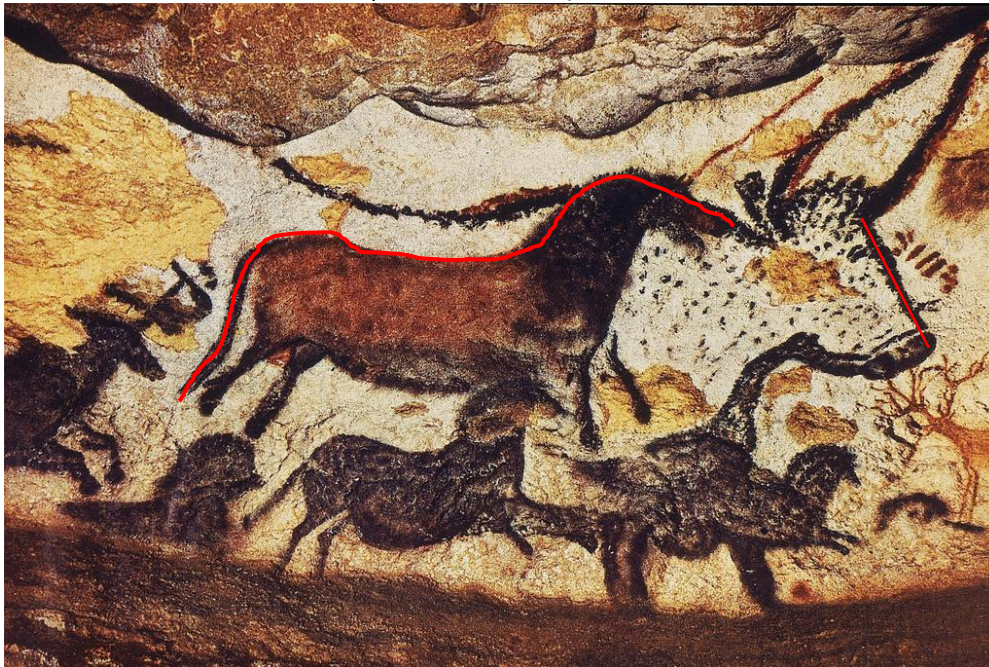
1.13 Lascaux. *Wall Painted With Deer*. 16,000-14,000 BCE. Dordogne, France.^v

Geometric shapes are more popular than one might imagine. Artist Paul Cézanne stated: “All natural forms can be reduced to spheres, cones and cylinders. One must begin with these simple basic elements and then one will be able to make everything one wants.”

SPACE suggests the relationships between shapes (or forms). Space is achieved through **size**, **overlapping**, **shading** and **foreshortening** of shapes. **Perspective** is the optical illusion of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface. These techniques add **realism** to a creation, and may even “fool the eye” (*trompe-l’oeil*).

In image 1.14, the bull is shown in **profile**, but his horns are shown **frontally**. For your comparison, the drawing [image 1.15] shows a frontal view. This twisted, combined frontal and profile perspective gives the bull more visual power and magical properties.

Yes, **SIZE** is important in these paintings. The line from the head and rump to the tail of the horse is 11’ 6” long! Imagine standing on the scaffolding and starting that long line. This artist had a complete vision of the animal. (Certainly the artist at Lascaux had a more steady hand than mine!)



1.14 Lascaux Wall. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.^{vi}



1.15 Frontal view of a bull.^{vii}

TEXTURE suggests the sensation of touch, such as rough, smooth, wet or even woolly. Without a doubt the texture of the “Little Horse” [image 1.16] is fluffier than the so-called “Chinese Horse” [image 1.17]. The natural **relief** of the walls may have suggested specific animals, to which the artist may have added **actual** or **implied** texture.



1.16 Lascaux. Axial Gallery, right wall, *Little Horse*. 16,000-14,000 BCE Dordogne, France.^{viii}



1.17 Lascaux. *Chinese Horse*. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.^{ix}

All objects have a physical texture.

What do you think is the story told by the differing textures of these horses?

An artist must select the **MEDIA** and **TOOLS** he or she will use.

What does the choice of media tell us about these people?

What tools might they have used? Tools, including lamps, scaffolding and paint “brushes,” were our earliest technology. They were the initial act of extending our control over nature. The remains of oak wood used for scaffolding have been found at Lascaux.



1.18 Lascaux: an oil lamp (a deer fat lamp) found in the sediments in the floor of the shaft. Magdalenian culture, 17,000 BCE. Shaped like a large spoon made of red sandstone, it is $8 \frac{3}{4}$ inches long by $4 \frac{3}{16}$ inches wide and $1 \frac{1}{4}$ inches thick. The lamp is finely polished and symmetrical. Its shallow oval cup serves as a receptacle for fuel. The upper surface of the handle is decorated with two abstract signs of chevrons fitted into each other, such as are found painted or engraved in various parts of the cave. When the lamp was discovered, it still contained sooty substances grouped in a circle at the bottom of the cup. These particles were tested and determined to be the remains of a juniper wick used for ignition. Dordogne. France.*

For these paintings, earth pigments were mixed with animal fat. Red came from hematite (iron oxide or red ocher). Black was made from manganese dioxide or charcoal. The white is kaolin or chalk. Minerals were heated to produce yellow, brown, and violet. No green or blue was used in these paintings.

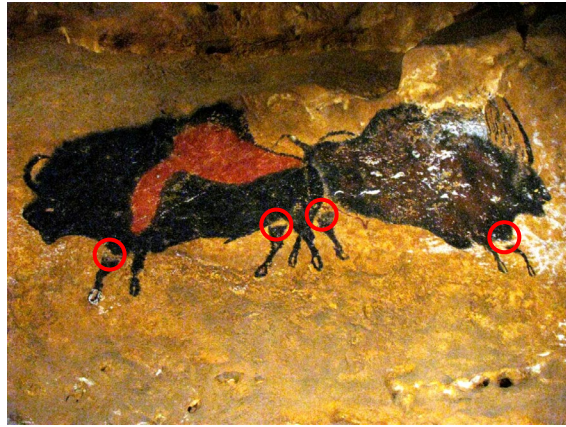
COLOR conveys information and emotion. Color may have a sacred or symbolic function.

(The Yellowstone Bull stepped out in front of my car and declared, “I won’t move until you take my picture!” [image 1.19] Oh! I get the message. It’s spring!! Thanks.)

What are the white spaces at the top on the bulls’ legs in image 1.20 all about? (The red circles were added by this author.)



1.19 Yellowstone Bull.^{xi}



1.20 Two Bison (aka Crossed Bison) in the nave. 16,000-14,000 BCE Lascaux Cave, Dordogne, France. Combined length 8 feet. The artists used the concavity of the wall to create the illusion of the two bison galloping at full speed toward the viewer.^{xii}

*Are the colors used at Lascaux **monochromatic** or **polychromatic**? What do we learn from the colors?*

Time-Life photographer Ralph Morse had the unique opportunity to visit the caves shortly after they were opened in 1947. His statement expresses the “WOW” that we feel when we encounter Paleolithic art: “The first sight of those paintings was simply unbelievable. I was amazed at how the colors held up after thousands of years—like they were painted the day before. Most people don’t realize how huge some of the paintings are.”



1.21 Axial Gallery overview of the Animals on the Ceiling. Lascaux (Dordogne) France (16,000-14,000 BCE).^{xiii}



32 Lascaux: *Animals on the Ceiling*. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.^{xiv}

The last images we will consider are views of the ceiling, first, as it may be seen from inside the cave and secondly, with the view spread out onto a flat surface [images 1.21 and 1.22]. Because you may turn this picture to any direction that pleases you, the depiction also raises questions from several directions:

- What information do the **Elements of Art** (line, shape, space, texture, media, tools and color) suggest?
- The caves probably benefitted the people for about 5000 years, but people never lived in this cave. Why were these 600 paintings and over 1500 abstract designs created? For art? For religion? For theater? As a teaching tool, a library? An archive of their history?
- Numerically, the most frequently depicted animal was the horse; in lesser numbers there were bison, mammoth, wild goats, wild ox and deer. Lastly, deer! They depended on reindeer for food and materials and yet they are not presented here as the most important creature. What was that all about?
- Some walls were painted over and over again. Why?
- What was so important to these people that they went to such lengths to decorate the cave?

We may consider the Cro-Magnon Homo Sapiens of Lascaux to be primal, but they were not primitive. Anatomically, Paleolithic people were like us with the same clever hands, the same binocular vision and the same integrating brain with powers of abstract thought. As tribal people they lived in small groups of 20-30 people. Men averaged 5' 8" in height. As hunter-gatherers their survival depended on the animals they could kill and the food they could gather.

Yes, the peoples of the Paleolithic period were remarkable, but the people who came after them, the people of the **Neolithic** age (starting c. 10,000 BCE), will introduce revolutionary ideas. The domestication of animals and the intentional cultivation of crops with increased tool usage will encourage a transition from food gathering to food producing. The resulting economic benefit will be food that can be shared with others. With the shift from rural/pastoral life toward communal living in cities with an urban/commercial focus the Tigris and Euphrates river valleys as well as the Nile river valley will flourish. In their desire to have some control over this world more energy will be devoted to warfare, religion and the construction of homes, food storage facilities and defensive walls. Both societies will attempt to manipulate nature with irrigation. In both areas, distinctive and differing occupations will evolve, class distinctions will become codified, palaces will be built and, with the advancement of abstract thought, writing will develop to keep track of the whole experience.

More complete definitions of these Elements of Art are on the Reference Document *Basic Elements of Art*.

Use this format to cite this document:

Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 1, Prehistoric Civilizations. Elements of Art as Demonstrated at the Lascaux Cave." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Christian Jegou Publiphoto Diffusion / Science Photo Library. Property release not required. Accessed from www.sciencephoto.com/contributor/pdx/

ⁱⁱ Accessed from Ministère de la Culture/Centre National de la Préhistoire/Norbert Aujoulat at archeologie.culture.fr/lascaux/en/mediatheque/bison-0

ⁱⁱⁱ Mary Beth Looney, "Hall of Bulls, Lascaux," in *Smarthistory*, November 19, 2015, accessed August 16, 2019, smarthistory.org/hall-of-bulls-lascaux/

^{iv} Photo: Don Hitchcock, donsmaps.com

^v Public Domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Swimming_stags.jpg

^{vi} Accessed from Artstor, library.artstor.org/asset/AWSS35953_35953_31673590.

^{vii} Public domain at www.freepik.com/free-icon/bull-face-frontal-outline_784099.htm

^{viii} Accessed from Artstor, library-artstor-org.libdb.pccc.edu/asset/ARTSTOR_103_41822000206142

^{ix} Public domain by the French Ministry of Culture, under the reference PA00082696.

^x Accessed from Wikipedia Creative Commons license, photographer Sémhur, 25 September 2009. Source: Original on display at Le Musée National de Préhistoire, Les Eyzies-de-Tayac.

^{xi} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2010. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xii} Public domain by Don Hitchcock, donsmaps.com, 2008

^{xiii} Accessed at www.artstudio.org/houston-museum-of-natural-science-more-than-graffiti/

^{xiv} Accessed from Artstor, library-artstor-org.libdb.pccc.edu/asset/ARTSTOR_103_41822000086999

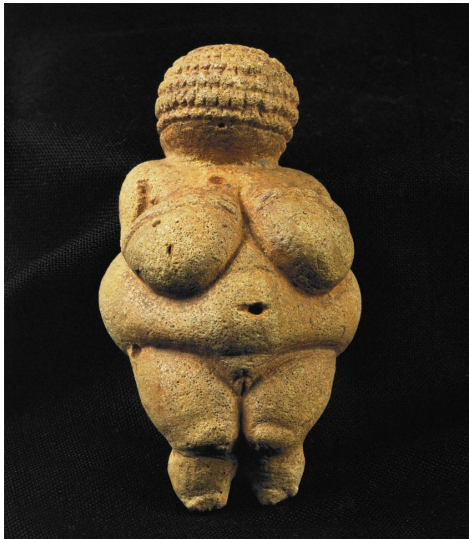
SCULPTURE IN PALEOLITHIC CULTURE

The Venus of Willendorf



1.23 Figurine inspired by *Venus of Willendorf*, held in the hand of a friend of the author.ⁱ

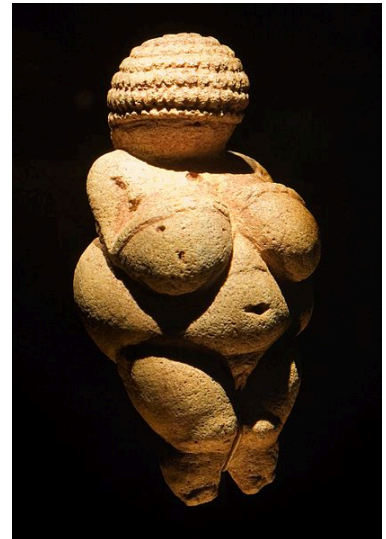
Drawing inspiration from the above figurine made by a PPCC student, hold the figurine shown below [from three angles, in images 1.24, 1.25 and 1.26] in the palm of your hand. In your imagination, caress her. Appreciate how she nestles into the softness of your hand and your fingers curl around her. Let your thumb stroke her head. With your other hand pass your fingers over her pendulous breasts, her ample abdomen and her carefully defined pubic area. Where are *her* hands? What is special about her hair?



1.24 Frontal view of the *Venus of Willendorf*. C. 30,000-25,000 BCE. Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria. Limestone, height 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".^{iv}



1.25 Back view of the *Venus of Willendorf*.ⁱⁱ



1.26 Side view of the *Venus of Willendorf*.ⁱⁱⁱ

You are meeting a **Paleolithic** figure known as the *Venus of Willendorf*. She was named for the location of her 1908 discovery above the Danube River, near the town of Willendorf in western Austria. She now resides in the Natural History Museum in Vienna. Carved from non-native stone between 25,000-20,000 BCE, she is only 11.1 cm tall (4 $\frac{3}{8}$ "). She and other prehistoric figures of women are called "Venus" figures in acknowledgment of the Greco-Roman goddess of love.

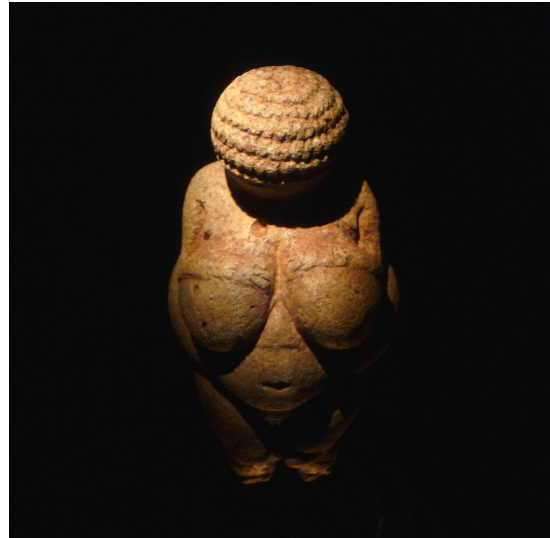
However, unlike the demurely concealed Classical or Renaissance depiction, most of these prehistoric figures are plump, with exaggerated female characteristics: large breasts, thighs and buttocks. They are found, especially in agricultural societies, all over Europe and America. Many were carved of soft stone, bone or ivory; others were formed of clay and fired, making them among the oldest ceramics known. They are all of a modest, personal size. The *Venus of Willendorf* is by far the most famous of these Venus figures.

By now you are holding her easily. She feels totally **naturalistic**. The details depicted in this sculpture are consistent with the physical world as we know it. She certainly is recognizable as a woman, but wait, what's missing? "She has no face!" She has no identity! "She has no feet!" She won't be going anywhere; she won't be working! And her arms are unnaturally thin! The artist, a man or a woman, has added emotional and psychological meaning to this figure, making it a fine example of both **Naturalism** and **Realism**.

Let's look at how specific **Elements of Art** suggest both **Naturalism** and **Realism**.

What types of **lines** do you see and where do you see them? Are the lines, or the implied lines, vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved or straight? Obviously, the curved lines of her breasts and thighs are significant. Look again at the curls in her hair, or perhaps we are looking at horizontal bands of braided or plaited hair, or perhaps she was wearing a woven cap [image 1.27]. She may be static, in repose. But curved lines make *our* eyes move, suggesting life. Isn't that possibly why she felt so realistically powerful as you held her in your hand?

What **shapes** do you observe? Remember, shapes are closed lines. Because sculpture has height, width and depth, shapes are identified as **form**. To me, the rounded forms of her body, which could be seen geometrically as cones or spheres, suggest her health, and perhaps her status in society. Would you agree, or do you think she is too fat to successfully gather food?



1.27 Looking at the top of the head of the *Venus of Willendorf*. C. 30,000-25,000 BCE, Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.^v

The **texture** of this figurine gives rise to some curious possibilities. Her navel is thought to have been a natural indentation in the stone. Did that possibly suggest some topical ideas to the artist? As I hold her, I can feel the hard work of using a piece of flint to carve her out of a piece of oolithic limestone, and then the additional work of smoothing her by sanding her with other rocks so that my tactile sensation does not detract from the function of the sculpture.

By the way, the stone from which she was made is not indigenous to this part of Austria! So the material from which she was made, the **media**, was imported. Either the carved image was brought in from elsewhere, or the oolithic limestone was imported. What else do you suppose they were trading? Furs, amber, shells and flint blades are a few good possibilities.

And what might we surmise from the **color**? When she was discovered there were still traces of red ochre on her. Doesn't that red have a powerful emotional, psychological, and physiological meaning?

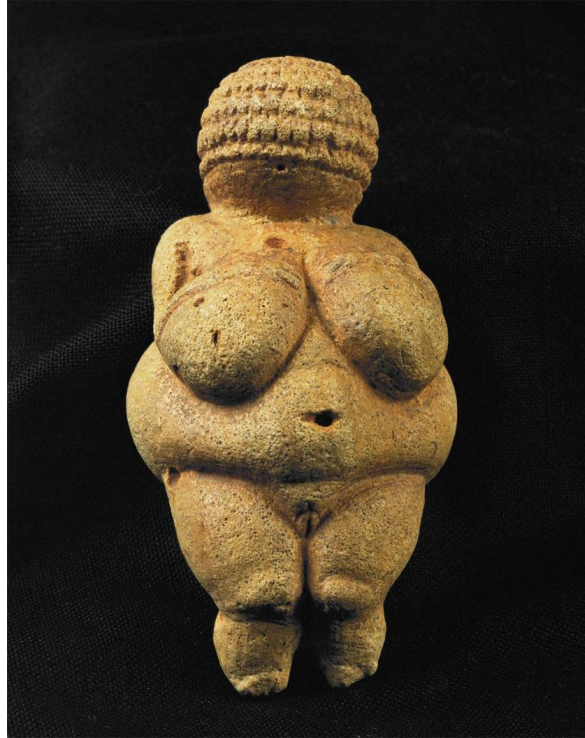
These Elements of Art, in addition to the Cultural Context Values, bring us to the most important question: what might have been the **function** of this work? Portable sculpted works of art are known as **mobiliary** art, and her personalized size might have been significant. To me, her gender role seems to have been strongly reinforced. She might have been an image of beauty, or a guardian figure, or a goddess. Others suggest she was merely a doll, just *A Woman of Willendorf*. I prefer to wonder, in the way of a Humanities instructor, was this an attempt to explain the mystery, and tragedy, of life? Unfortunately, like other Paleolithic art, we have no written documents—so your guesses are as good as mine!

While we're discussing the Elements of Art, let's make one last comparison. The dominant lines and shapes of these two Paleolithic subjects are diametrically opposite. The weak stick figure of the *Man at the Well* [image 1.28] was

made of straight lines and a collection of square shapes, making a rectangle. Cars are linear: when driving you go to and return from something. We often live in a house with four corners. Squares are Cartesian, they are rational; they are made with Euclidian theorems. The square, or the rectangle, in art will represent humankind's **physical** aspirations. On the other hand, a circle suggests wholeness, completeness and continuity [image 1.29]. As a field of grain returns to complete the cycle of life, so does human life. The circle, therefore, represents our **spiritual** aspirations. You will see this recurring comparison in Greek and Roman architecture, as well as in Gothic examples.



1.28 Lascaux, *The Man at the Well*. 16,000-14,000 BCE, Dordogne, France.^{vi}



1.29 *Venus of Willendorf*. C. 30,000-25,000 BCE, Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria. Front view.^{vii}

I can't make the *Venus* "come alive" in your hand, but this link a video by the Khan Academy does a pretty good job.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/prehistoric-art/paleolithic-art/v/nude-woman-venus-of-willendorf-c-28-000-25-000-b-c-e>

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ⁱ Figurine inspired by the *Venus of Willendorf* by PPCC student Eddy Valkonen, 2010. Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱⁱ Aiwok [CC BY-SA 3.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0)]

ⁱⁱⁱ © Jorge Royan / www.royan.com.ar

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^v Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/a6a2eb18-4aa3-48e4-a570-5c294bcc7a20

^{vi} Cropped from Mary Beth Looney, "Hall of Bulls, Lascaux," in *Smarthistory*, November 19, 2015, accessed August 16, 2019, smarthistory.org/hall-of-bulls-lascaux/

^{vii} User: Matthias Kabel [CC BY-SA 3.0 (creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/)]



3.12 *Khafre* from the temple of Khafre, Cairo.



3.33 *Coffinette of Tutankhamen.*



3.31 *Nefertiti*, ca. 1348-1336 BCE.

Chapter 3

Egypt

EGYPT-INTRODUCTION AND PREDYNASTIC YEARS

Ancient Egypt serves as an excellent example of a complex society which adapted to and then controlled their changing environments. Cross-cultural connections introduced the people of Northeast Africa to domesticated wheat and barley. People in part of the world had likely been gathering wild barley since before 10,000 BCE. However, by about 7,000 BCE they had learned from the people in the Fertile Crescent and began cultivating wheat and barley and also kept domesticated animals, including sheep and goats. At that time, agricultural production and herding were possible in areas that are today part of the Sahara Desert because it was much wetter than it is now. However, environmental change was leading to the desiccation or drying out of areas not adjacent to the Nile River, and by about 5,000 BCE, it was no longer possible to farm much beyond the floodplain of the Nile River. Many people adapted by moving towards the Nile River, and the Nile became increasingly important to Egypt's populations.

The Nile River flows south to north, fed by two main river systems: the White Nile and the Blue Nile. The White Nile flows steadily throughout the year and has its origins in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa. The Blue Nile originates in the Ethiopian highlands, and brings floodwaters up past the first cataract in the summers.



3.1 *First Cataract of the Nile River.*¹

Cataracts are generally considered impassable by boat due to their shallows, rocks, and rapids. The winds also blow north to south, in the opposite direction of the river flow, thus making it difficult to trade and maintain contact between Upper Egypt (to the south) and Lower Egypt (to the north). Egyptian views of the Nile generally recognized the river's centrality to life as demonstrated in the "Hymn to the Nile," dated to approximately 2100 BCE.

The praise-filled ode to the Nile River begins, "Hail to thee, O Nile! Who manifests thyself over this land, and comes to give life to Egypt."ⁱⁱ The course of the Nile River definitely impacted settlement patterns, while the river also allowed for trade and the development of larger agricultural communities.

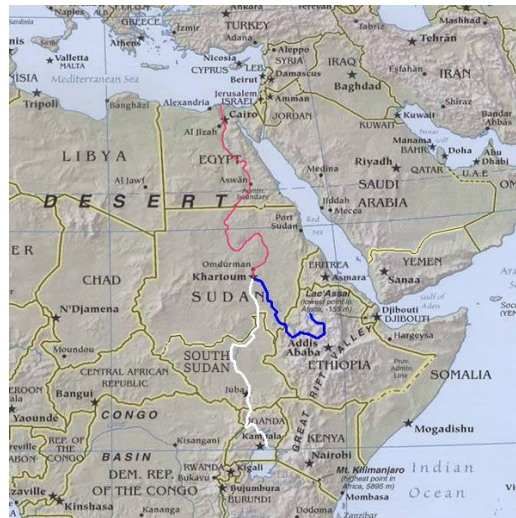


3.2 The Nile Goddess, Hapi.ⁱⁱⁱ



3.3 Vegetation along the watered shores of the Nile.^{iv}

The Nile Goddess, Hapi, as seen in image 3.2, bears a tray of lotus blossoms and water vessels. Two ankh (life) and djed (stability) hang from the tray. This image is from the reign of Nectaneba II, in 362-343 BCE. Each year the Nile flooded, leaving behind rich alluvial soil which nourished the land along the banks and allowed the people to plant and harvest several cycles of crops. Taxation was determined by the height of the flooding river. In years when the flood was minimal, there might be starvation, but at least the taxes might be lower. At the edge of the newly deposited river soil the desert and its unrelenting heat took over. The Greek philosopher and traveler Herodotus said Egypt was a gift of the Nile because Egypt relied so heavily on it.^v The White Nile originates near Lake Victoria, in the Great Lakes region of East Africa. The Blue Nile flows from the Ethiopian Highlands. The two rivers merge at Khartoum, in present day Sudan, and flow northward to empty into the Mediterranean Sea.



3.4 The Path of the Nile. Colors denote the various sources of the Nile.^{vi}

Over time, Egyptian rulers created **divine kingships**, asserting their right to even more power and access to resources, power that they legitimized by claiming special relationships with, or even descent from the gods. Once Egypt was unified,

pharaohs ruled as divine kings, as the personification of the gods and they promised order in the universe. When things went well, the pharaohs were credited with agricultural productivity and the success of the state. There was no separation between religion and the state in ancient Egypt. Keep in mind that modern historians call these kings pharaohs, though they were not known as pharaohs in their own time until about 1200 BCE. For simplicity we will call them pharaohs in this text.



3.5 *Palette of Narmer*, 3000 BCE, Egyptian Museum, Cairo, greywacke.^{vii}

The Palette of Narmer, see image 3.5, can be used to date the unification of Egypt. It was a ceremonial palette that might have been used to hold makeup. It shows signs that King Narmer legitimized his rule, in part, by claiming a special relationship with the gods. King Narmer, who is referred to in some texts by his Greek name Menes, is commonly recognized as the first unifier of Upper Egypt (to the south) and Lower Egypt (to the north) in approximately 3100 BCE. Unification brought together Egypt from the first cataract at Aswan to the Nile Delta. The Palette of Narmer, which was found in Hierakonpolis, shows King Narmer's conquest of both regions. One side shows him slaying an enemy of Upper Egypt. The largest figure, Narmer is wearing the crown of Upper Egypt and beheading a rival king, while standing atop conquered enemies. The other side also shows him as a conqueror, wearing the crown of Lower Egypt and directing flag bearers to mark his victory. When Narmer unified Upper and Lower Egypt, he took the two crowns and put them together into what we call the Peshret Crown or Double Diadem crown, to symbolize that he now rules all of Egypt. See image 3.6 for an example of this.

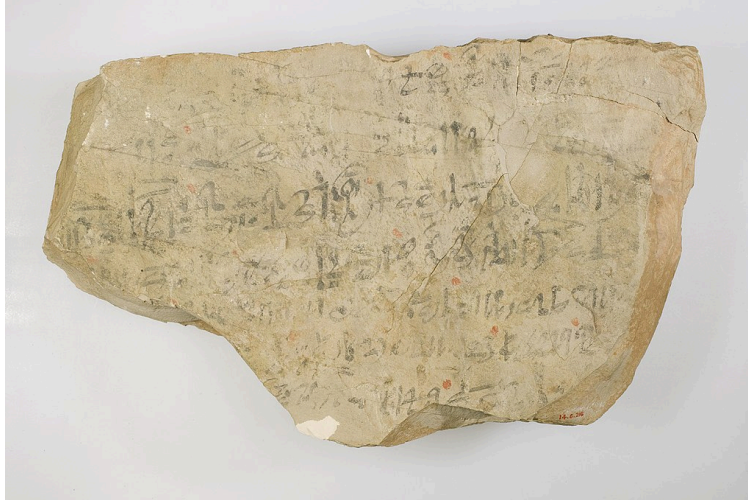


3.6 *Double Diadem Crown, Peshret Crown, Temple of Horus at Edfu. Wadjet and Nekhbet bless Ptolemy VIII, Euergetes II.*^{viii}

Religious imagery appears in the inclusion of the goddess Hathor at the top of the palette as well as the falcon, a reference to Horus, the patron god of Hierakonpolis, who became the god of sun and kingship later in dynastic Egypt. The Palette of Narmer is an excellent example of the fact that Egyptian sculpture followed a specific set of rules.

- Space is flattened. The artist uses “bird’s eye” perspective, which allows the viewer to see all aspects of an image at the same time. Note two examples of this in the lower register which shows a bull with a profile head and frontal horns. The artist also carved the city looking across to its ramparts and also shows a view from above looking down at the walls surrounding it.
- Objects are manipulated to fit into the available space.
- The surface of the work, whether it is the wall of a temple, a column, or the side of an object, is divided into sections to tell a story.
- People and gods and animals are shown with their legs and feet in profile, their torsos facing the viewer, and their heads in profile. Eyes are large and frontal.
- The pharaoh is divine and he (or she) is often shown consorting with the gods or enjoying their protection.
- The most important person is the largest. We call this hierarchical scaling, which depicts the figure of the king, in this case Narmer, as much larger than the enemy he is about to dispatch.
- A pharaoh can only be depicted sitting, kneeling, or standing. Other positions are not appropriate.
- Most humans are depicted ideally rather than realistically.

The Palette of Narmer also has some of the earliest known hieroglyphs or written text, combines pictograms (a pictorial symbol for a word or phrase) and phonograms (a symbol representing a sound). Tax assessment and collection likely necessitated the initial development of Hieroglyphics. Ancient Egyptians eventually used three different scripts: Hieroglyphic, Hieratic, and Demotic. Hieroglyphics remained the script of choice for ritual texts. The Egyptians developed Hieratic and Demotic, the two other scripts slightly later and used them for administrative, commercial, and other purposes. The Egyptian administration tended to use ink and papyrus to maintain its official records.



3.7 Hieratic Ostrakon, Metropolitan Museum of Art, ca 1295-1070 BCE.^{ix}

On the other hand, literate people used ostraca, pieces of broken pottery and chips of limestone, for less formal notes and communications. Over the past decades, archaeologists have uncovered a treasure trove of ostraca that tell us about the lives of the literate elite and skilled craftsmen. This one is from Thebes in the Valley of the Kings. See image 3.7.

In addition to one of the earliest writing systems and Egyptian paper (papyrus), archaeologists have credited ancient Egyptians with a number of other innovations. We remember them for their process of mummification, pharaohs, pyramids, and stone carving techniques. Ancient Egyptians invented the ramp and lever. They also developed a 12-month calendar with 365 days, glassmaking skills, arithmetic (including one of the earliest decimal systems), geometry, and medical procedures used to heal broken bones and relieve fevers.

Scholars break the 1500 years following unification, a time known as dynastic Egypt, into three main periods: the Old Kingdom (c. 2660–2160 BCE), the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040 – 1640 BCE), and the New Kingdom (c. 1530–1070 BCE). There is disagreement about the exact dates of these periods, but, in general, these spans denote more centralized control over a unified Egypt. If you search the Internet, you will encounter many different dating systems for Egyptian history. During dynastic Egypt, pharaohs ruled a united Upper and Lower Egypt. In between these periods of centralized control were intermediate periods, during which the Egyptian pharaohs had less authority. The intermediate periods were characterized by political upheaval and military violence, sometimes resulting from foreign invasions.

Striking continuities existed in Egypt throughout the Old Kingdom, the Middle Kingdom, and the New Kingdom. Egypt had stable population numbers, consistent social stratification, pharaohs—who exercised significant power—and a unifying religious ideology, which linked the pharaohs to the gods. As Egypt transitioned from the period of unification under King Narmer to the Old Kingdom, the king and the elite became increasingly wealthy and powerful. They further developed earlier systems of tax collection, expanded the religious doctrine, and built a huge state bureaucracy. Social distinctions and hierarchies remained fairly consistent through all of dynastic Egypt. Most people were rural peasant farmers. They lived in small mud huts just above the flood plain and taxes were paid in agricultural produce. When they weren't farming, they were expected to perform rotating service for the state, by, for example, working on a pharaoh's tomb, reinforcing dykes, and helping in the construction of temples. The labor of the majority of the population supported the more elite and skilled classes, from the pharaoh down through the governing bureaucrats, priests, nobles, soldiers, and skilled craftspeople, especially those who worked on pyramids and tombs.

The status of women in dynastic Egypt was relatively equal to that of men. At least compared to women in other ancient societies, women in ancient Egypt had considerably more legal rights and freedoms. Men and women generally had different roles; Egyptian society charged men with providing for the family and women with managing the home and children. These ascribed gender roles meant that women were usually defined primarily by their husbands and children, while men were defined by their occupations. This difference could leave women more economically vulnerable than men. For example, in the

village of craftspeople who worked on the pharaoh's tomb at Deir el Medina, houses were allocated to the men who were actively employed. This system of assigning housing meant that women whose husbands had died had to leave their homes as replacement workers were brought in. Despite some vulnerability, Egyptian law was pretty equal between the sexes when it came to many other issues.

Egyptian women could own property and take cases to court, enter into legally binding agreements, and serve actively as priestesses. There were also female pharaohs, most famously Hatshepsut who ruled for twenty years in the fifteenth century BCE. One last, perhaps surprising, legal entitlement of ancient Egyptian women was their right to one-third of the property that a couple accumulated over the course of their marriage. Married women had some financial independence, which gave them options to dispose of their own property or to divorce. Therefore, while women faced constraints in terms of their expected roles and had their status tied to the men in their families, they nevertheless enjoyed economic freedoms and legal rights not commonly seen in the ancient world.



3.8 *Female figurines* which show some of the everyday tasks carried out by women. They made bread, brewed beer and prepared for family meals. 2050-1800 BCE, Egyptian Museum, Berlin. *

Suggestions for readings:

"The Teachings of Khety (2040-1648 BCE), <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/museums-static/digitalegypt/literature/satiretransl.html>

Egyptian Love Poetry can be read online or purchased as a hard copy. Most are written by unknown authors and are known by the first line of the poem. Here are some examples. Try this site if you are interested: <https://www.love-poetry-of-the-world.com/Egyptian-Love-Poetry-Poem2.html>

Or, copy and paste these titles into a search engine to find sites.

- "Love, How I'd Love to Slip down to the Pond"
- "My Love is One and Only, Without Peer"
- "Why, Just Not, Must You Question Your Heart?"
- "I Love You Through the Daytimes"

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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ⁱ Photo by Kathleen J. Hartman, CC BY-NC-4.0 license.

ⁱⁱ Hymn to the Nile, c 2100BCE." Ancient History Sourcebook Fordham University. <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/hymn-nile.asp>

ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by Kathleen J. Hartman, CC BY-NC-4.0 license.

^{iv} Cnes Spot Image, CC BY-SA 3.0.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Search&limit=100&offset=1000&profile=default&search=Egypt+nile&advancedSearch-current={}&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Nile_SPOT_1173.jpg

^v <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/why-is-egypt-called-the-gift-of-the-nile.htm>

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^{viii} Photo 2007 by Kathleen J. Hartman, CC BY-NC-4.0 license.

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EGYPT-OLD KINGDOM

In the **Old Kingdom** pharaohs built **pyramids** to emphasize their relationship to the divine and facilitate their ascent to the gods after their earthly deaths. Pyramids probably contained tombs for the pharaohs and their wives, but the wealth within the burial site was so tempting, that grave robbers made quick work of emptying the tombs and selling the contents. The earliest pyramids were built in stair-step layers. Some scholars believe they represent creation stories in which a mound of dry land appeared out of the marsh of the Nile. The stone steps enabled the pharaoh to ascend to the sun after his death. See Image 3.9. ⁱ



3.9 Saqqara Stepped Pyramid of Djoser, 2630-2611 BCE. ⁱⁱ

- Pyramids were marvels of engineering, built on a massive scale to honor the pharaohs and usher them into the afterlife. Egyptian pyramid builders adhered to several rules:
- Pyramids were built on the West side of the Nile, where sunset represented death, and the dead were also generally buried on the western side of the river.
- Each side of the pyramid faced one of the cardinal directions. (N,S,E,W)
- Pyramids were constructed near enough so that the Nile could be used as a source of transportation for the huge building blocks. Care was taken to select a site without cracks in the bedrock to ensure stability.

Tombs were never again as grandiose as they were in the Old Kingdom, partly because of the persistence of the grave robbers. Since no intact Royal tombs from this era have yet been found, and it's hard to imagine what they must have been like. Pharaohs were mummified to preserve their bodies and were buried with everything considered necessary for the afterlife, including furniture, jewelry, makeup, pottery, food, wine, clothing, and sometimes even pets. The most recognizable pyramids from the Old Kingdom are the three pyramids at the Giza complex, which were built for a father and his son and grandson, who all ruled during the fourth dynasty. See image 3.10.

The pyramids of Giza were built for a Father, Khufu (Greek, Cheops, ca. 2530 BCE), Son Khafre (Greek Chephren, ca. 2500 BCE), and Grandson, Menkaure (Greek Mycerinus, ca. 2470 BCE). See Image 3.10. The largest Pyramid known as the Great Pyramid of Giza, is still largely intact today. It was the largest building in the world until the Eiffel Tower was built in 1888. Over 449 feet high, it covered an area of 13 acres and was built with over 600 tons of limestone. The sides are each 755' with a variance from the longest to the shortest sides of between 2" and 7", depending on who is measuring. It is within 1/20 of a degree of true North. Skilled craftsmen and local labor forces of Egyptians were the primary builders of the pyramids. The Great Pyramid of Giza took an estimated 20 years to construct and employed skilled stonemasons, architects, artists, and craftsmen, in addition to the thousands of unskilled laborers who did the heavy moving and lifting. Each side of the pyramid faced one of the cardinal directions. The construction of these pyramids was an enormous, expensive feat. They stand as testimony to the increased social differentiation, the great power and wealth of the Egyptian pharaohs and the significance of beliefs in the afterlife during the Old Kingdom.



3.10 *Pyramids of Giza with the Step Pyramids and a few camels in the foreground.*ⁱⁱⁱ

Huge funerary monuments were intended to guarantee immortality. One example is the Sphinx at Giza which was built in about 2540 to 2514 BCE near the pyramids. The human head represents the pharaoh with the body of a lion and is 240 feet long and 65 feet high.



3.11 *Great Sphinx of Giza, Cairo, Egypt, ca. 2500 BCE.*^{iv}

King Chefred, also known as Khafre is depicted in this a dark green diorite sculpture. See Images 3.12 and 3.13. His proportions and clothing are realistic, but this was not intended to be a portrait. Instead it represents the divinity of the king. So it would be more correct to describe it as an idealized version of Chefred. Note that the king is calm and confident in his power, and Horus, the falcon god sits on his shoulder protecting him from danger and validating his right to rule.



3.12 *Khafre* from the temple of Khafre, Cairo.^v

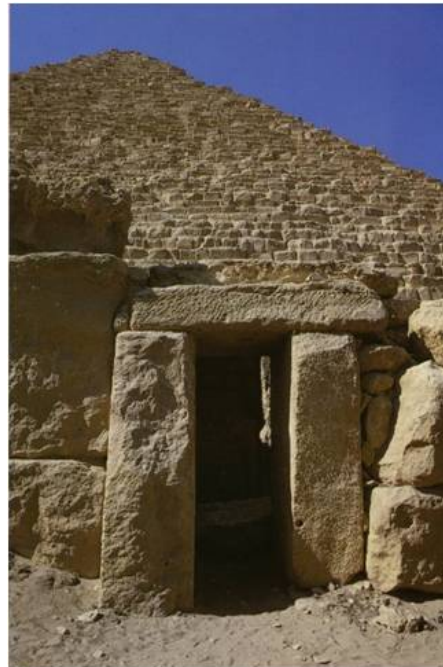


3.13 Detail of *Khafre*, with the god Horus protecting him, Cairo.^{vi}

Refer back to the introductory section about Palette of Narmer to see the canon of rules. Note how they apply here: The king is idealized and consorts with the gods. He stands moving powerfully forward. This work was intended to be seen only from the front, so the back is flat and not carved. No effort was made to remove the excess stone. Royal sculpture was carved of hard stone like diorite or schist so as to last for millennia and represent the king for eternity. Keep in mind, however, that this king lived 4400 years ago, and it is possible that only the works of art made of hard materials have survived the centuries. There may have been many other beautiful works of art made of less durable materials that did not survive.

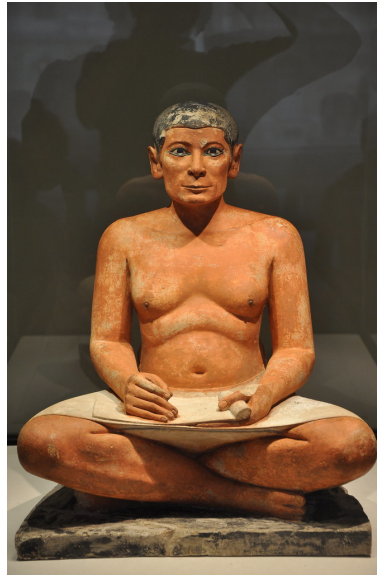


3.14 *King Menkaure (Mycerinus) and his Queen*, circa 2460 BCE.^{vii}



3.15 *Entrance to Menkaure Mortuary Temple*.^{viii}

This sculpture, Image 3.14, shows Menkaure and is probably his Queen Kha-merer-nebty II, although no names were included on the work itself. It is about 4'7" tall and is carved and polished from greywacke. He wears the ceremonial beard, headdress, and kilt of the pharaoh and is depicted as a young, vigorous man. The queen wears a thin sheath which is visible near her ankles and which clings to her, emphasizing her feminine characteristics and therefore her fertility. The lower portions of his kilt and their legs and feet are not polished as are the upper portions of their bodies. His left foot is slightly forward of his right. There are traces of paint on this sculpture, indicating that it was originally painted. The entrance to Menkaure's mortuary temple, Image 3.15, is an excellent example of the post-and-lintel construction method. Notice that the weight of the lintel is held up by the two massive posts on either side of the door. We see this type of construction in temples and tombs all over Egypt.



3.16 *Seated Scribe*, Louvre, ca. 2500.^{ix}



3.17 Scale of *Seated Scribe*, Louvre Museum.^x

The Seated Scribe, Images 3.16 and 3.17, is made of painted limestone, and shows a more natural man than the ideal pharaoh. His features could depict the man as he was, with a square jaw and normal belly fat. The scribe was the most educated person in the king's court. He could read and write and probably knew some math and some aspects of the law. Although most scribes were men, there is some evidence that wealthy women also might have learned to read and write.



3.18 *Rahotep and Nofret*, ca. 2610 BCE, Egyptian Museum of Cairo.^{xi}

Other important people also had funerary sculpture created for their tombs. Rahotep, see Image 3.18, was the High Priest, adviser to and military commander of Pharaoh Sneferu. Rahotep and his wife Nofret commissioned these seated sculptures of themselves of carved limestone about 2600 BCE. Notice that Nofret has a little extra weight in her neck and chin, which is normal. Both husband and wife hold their hands in ceremonial positions, and there are hieroglyphics painted behind them on the plinth. Note the color of their skin is the common red for a man who worked and conducted his business outside and white for a woman, who kept the house and children indoors and stayed away from the sun most of the day.

In addition to the construction of pyramids, the Old Kingdom saw increased trade and remained a relatively peaceful period. The pharaoh's government controlled trade. Egypt exported grain and gold and imported timber, spices, ivory, and other luxury goods. During the Old Kingdom, Egypt did not have a standing army and faced few foreign military threats. Lasting almost 400 years, the Old Kingdom saw the extension of the pharaoh's power, especially through the government's ability to harness labor and control trade. However, the power of the pharaohs began to wane in the fifth

dynasty of the Old Kingdom. Continuing environmental change that led to droughts and famine, coupled with the huge expense of building pyramids likely impoverished pharaohs in the last centuries of the Old Kingdom.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

Use this format to cite this document:

Betts, Kristine. "Egyptian Civilization: Old Kingdom." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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ⁱ <https://www.sacred-texts.com/egy/pyt/pyt12.htm>

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ⁱⁱⁱ Samehm1998, CC BY-SA 4.0.

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EGYPT-MIDDLE KINGDOM

Following the decentralized First Intermediate Period of roughly 150 years, Pharaoh Mentohotep II reunified Egypt to found the **Middle Kingdom**. With military expeditions, the pharaohs extended the boundaries of the state north to Lebanon and south to the second cataract of the Nile into a region known as Nubia. With this extension of territory, Egypt had access to more trade goods and the organization of trade shifted so that professional merchants took a leading role in developing new trade routes. These professional merchants paid taxes to the state, supporting further consolidation of power by the pharaohs and also infrastructural improvements like irrigation. During the Middle Kingdom, the pharaohs focused less on the building of massive pyramids and more on administrative reorganization, military expeditions, and infrastructural repair.

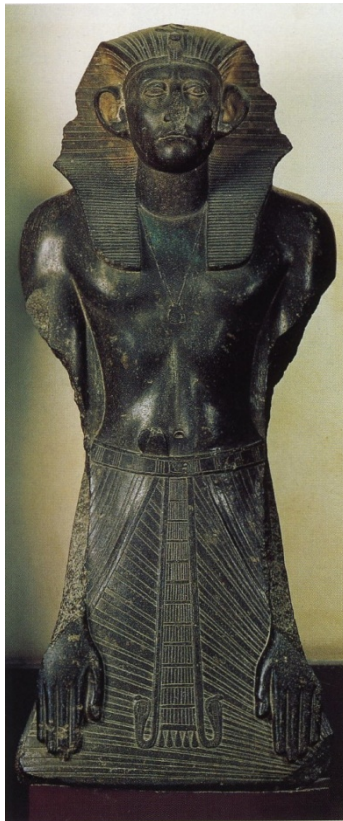


3.19 *Mentuhotep II Seated*, Cairo Museum.ⁱ



3.20 *Mortuary Temple of Mentuhotep II, Luxor.*ⁱⁱ

Image 3.19 is a painted limestone sculpture of Nebhepetre, also called Mentuhotep II which was discovered in the Bab el-Hosan. Mentuhotep ruled southern Egypt (Upper Egypt) from Aswan to the city of This, about 90 miles north of Thebes. He inherited a realm that had already spent many years in intermittent warfare, but he was able to unify the kingdom by retaining local rulers who stayed loyal to him. The reunification brought increased prosperity and stronger trade throughout the region. Mentuhotep also built several large temple complexes, including this one at Luxor. His reunification of Egypt earned him the title of the first pharaoh of the Middle Kingdom.



3.21 *Sesostris III (Senusret III) at prayer, ca. 1878-1841 BCE, black granite, 12th Dynasty.*ⁱⁱⁱ

During the years of the Middle Kingdom, the power of the pharaoh was less certain. The golden years of the Old Kingdom were past. There was less income available to build huge pyramids, and times were more troubled. The art reflected this stressful change. Much of the royal sculpture shows pharaohs with furrowed brows and grim expressions, like image 3.21 of Sesostri III.

Disputes over succession and ineffectual rulers led into the Second Intermediate Period. Most notably, Egypt was invaded from both the north and the south during this period. The Hyksos invaded from the north in 1670 BCE. It is not certain where they came from, but they may have been Canaanites and Ammonites from Mesopotamia, or they may have been Bedouin tribesmen. It is certain that they were foreign to the region. They brought bronze and horse-drawn chariots, which allowed them to conquer parts of Lower Egypt and establish their own kingdom, one lasting about 100 years in the Nile Delta region. From the south, the Kingdom of Kush, based in Nubia, invaded and temporarily established control over Upper Egypt to Aswan. Thus, foreign rulers dominated much of Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period.

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Betts, Kristine. "Egyptian Civilization: Middle Kingdom." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.
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ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by Kathleen J. Hartman, CC BY-NA-4.0.

EGYPT-NEW KINGDOM

The **New Kingdom** of reunified Egypt that began in 1530 BCE saw an era of Egyptian imperialism, changes in the burial practices of pharaohs, and the emergence of a brief period of state-sponsored monotheism under the Pharaoh Akhenaten. In 1530 BCE, the pharaoh who became known as Ahmose the Liberator (Ahmose I) defeated the Hyksos and continued sweeping up along the Eastern Mediterranean. By 1500 BCE, the Egyptian army had also pushed into Nubia southward to the fourth cataract of the Nile River. As pharaohs following Ahmose I continued Egypt's expansion, the Imperial Egyptian army ran successful campaigns in Palestine and Syria, along the Eastern Mediterranean. The adoption of the Hyksos' chariot and metal technologies contributed to the Egyptian ability to strengthen its military.



3.22 *Tombs in the Valley of the Kings, Egypt.* ¹

During the New Kingdom, pharaohs and Egyptian elites used the **Valley of Kings**, see image 3.22, located across the Nile River from Thebes, as their preferred burial site. They desired tombs that were hidden away and safe from thieves looking for treasure. Therefore, instead of pyramids, they favored huge stone tombs built into the mountains of the Valley of the Kings. Nearly all of the burials in the Valley of the Kings were raided, so the fears of the pharaohs were well founded.



3.23 Hypostyle Hall, Karnak Temple Complex, Luxor. ⁱⁱ

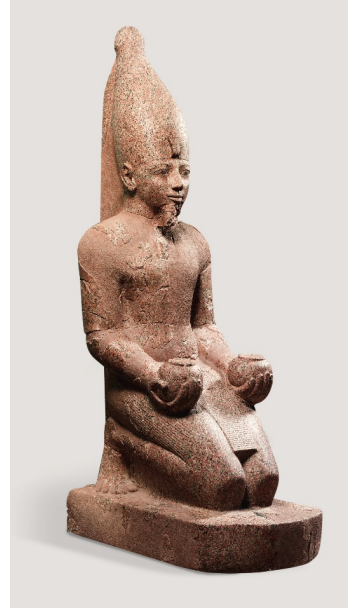
During the Middle and New Kingdoms many of the rulers also built massive temples which were used to worship them in their new roles as gods after their death. The temples were not the same, but many of them have similar characteristics. They had a large gateway, which was called a pylon and a hypostyle hall which was a forest of huge columns to hold up large stone slabs which formed the roof. This post and lintel system created a dark mysterious space that was used by the priests as a place of worship apart from the view of the lower-class citizens.



3.24 Temple of Hatshepsut, Deir-el-Bahri, western Thebes. ⁱⁱⁱ



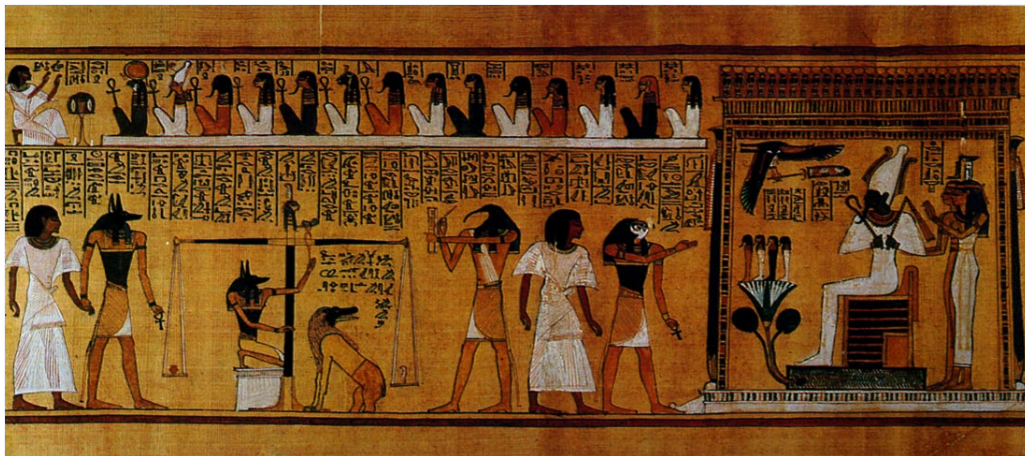
3.25 Column with image of Hatshepsut.^{iv}



3.26 Sculpture of Queen Hatshepsut, kneeling.^v

Hatshepsut, circa 1479-1457 BCE was the daughter of Thutmose I, granddaughter of Ahmose the Liberator, and married her half-brother Thutmose II. When her husband died, she ruled as regent for her young son. But when he came of age, she refused to relinquish control. The priests crowned her pharaoh and she ruled for twenty years. Over the years artists depicted her with fewer and fewer feminine characteristics, and she dressed in the familiar royal ceremonial clothing befitting a pharaoh. When she was removed from power by her son, many of the images of her reign were destroyed. She altered her name with a masculine ending, was addressed as “His Majesty” and was depicted in the clothing of a king with the pharaonic beard, and the royal sheldyt kilt.

Throughout dynastic Egypt, much continuity existed in religious beliefs, causing scholars to characterize Egyptian society as conservative, meaning that Egyptians shied away from change. In general, Egyptian religious beliefs emphasized unity and harmony. Throughout the dynastic period, Egyptians thought that the soul contained distinct parts. They believed that one part, the *ka*, was a person’s lifeforce and that it separated from the body after death. The Egyptians carried out their elaborate preservation of mummies and made small tomb statues to house their *ka* after death. The *ba*, another part of the soul, was the unique character of the individual, which could move between the worlds of the living and the dead. They believed that after death, if rituals were carried out correctly, their *ka* and *ba* would reunite to reanimate their *akh*, or spirit.



3.27 Judgment of Hunefer, Hunefer’s Book of the Dead, detail.^{vi}

If they observed the proper rituals and successfully passed through Final Judgment (where they recited the 42 “Negative Confessions” and the god Osiris weighed their hearts against a feather), Egyptians believed that their resurrected spirit, their *akh*, would enter the afterlife. In the afterlife, Egyptians expected to find a place with blue skies, agreeable weather, and familiar objects and people. They also expected to complete many of the everyday tasks, such as farming, and enjoy many of the same recognizable pastimes. Through the centuries, the Egyptians conceptualized the afterlife as a comfortable mirror image of life. One change that occurred over time was the “democratization of the afterlife.” As time progressed through the Middle Kingdom and into the New Kingdom, more and more people aspired to an afterlife. No longer was an afterlife seen as possible for only the pharaoh and the elite of society. Instead, just about all sectors of society expected access, as evident in the increased of funeral texts, like the Book of the Dead. People of varying means would slip papyrus with spells of prayers from the Book of the Dead (or a similar text) into coffins and burial chambers. They intended these spells to help their deceased loved ones make it safely through the underworld into the pleasant afterlife.



3.28 Panel with adoration scene of Aten. Pharaoh Akhenaten with his wife and children making offerings to Aten.^{vii}



3.29 Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and three daughters beneath the Aten, Amarna, 18th dynasty, ca. 1345 BCE, Pergamum Museum, Berlin.^{viii}

Egyptian art and culture remained stable and unchanging for thousands of years. Drastic change can only be seen in one 25-year period of Egyptian history. We call it the Amarna period. In the 14th century B.C.E. Amenophis IV introduced ideas which modified the religious beliefs that had guided Egyptian philosophy and shaped its institutions since its earliest pharaohs. He was a heretic, and tried to replace the many traditional gods of Egypt with a single Supreme Being, Aton. He changed his name from Amenophis to Akhenaten, ("it pleases Aton") and moved the capital of Egypt from Thebes to Tell-el-Amarna, from which the Amarna Period takes its name.

Why did Akhenaten introduce these radical changes? Akhenaten was probably trying to break up the power and influence of the long-established priests of Amon-Ra with his reforms. When he took the throne, the priests owned 1/3 of the arable land and controlled 1/5 of the work force. The Temple of Amen controlled 81,000 slaves and servants, 421,000 head of cattle, 691,000 acres of agricultural land, 83 ships, 46 shipyards, and 63 cities. This wealth was a challenge to the power of the pharaoh. Akhenaten moved to take control of these resources and limit the power of the temple priests. He shut down the temples of the old gods, removed representations of those gods from his city, and even removed the plural word "gods" in favor of his monotheistic references to Amon-Ra. Additionally, by taking on the role of the son of Aten and regulating entry into the afterlife, Akhenaten certainly attempted to reformulate beliefs to emphasize his own importance.

Although Akhenaten's religious revolution was a failure; his artistic revolution was much more successful. The Amarna period witnessed the most dramatic changes Egyptian art had ever seen, and its influence lingered long after its rulers had been consigned to oblivion by the outraged public. Some say that Akhenaten was directly responsible for the new artistic style. His chief sculptor, a man named Bak, claims that he was taught sculpting by the king himself, in a surviving inscription at Aswan.

The art of the Amarna period breaks radically with Egyptian tradition in its depictions of royalty. These are some of the most important characteristics of the art of this time:

- The king is shown in casual poses, playing with his children, and much of the stiffness of Egyptian art gives way to a new softness and fluidity.
- Curved lines replace the stiff horizontal and vertical lines seen in the rest of Egyptian art.
- The king is depicted on the same scale as other people, indicating a much humbler attitude, and greater interest in naturalism.
- The king's body is not idealized, but looks rather deformed. Some scholars think Akhenaten may have had Frolic's syndrome, or some other genetic disorder, but such diseases are difficult to properly diagnose from artwork. Nonetheless, the king has a very elongated face, with wide, curved feminine hips and breasts. Many students mistake him for a woman when they see the surviving sculptures. The feminine traits may be symbolic, to indicate that the king embodied both the male and female. We don't know.
- Sunken relief is more common in the Amarna period than raised relief.
- It also shows a particular moment in time, rather than the timeless and eternal art of earlier periods.
- Figures are not posed, formal and stiff-looking. Bodies indent the cushions they sit on; they are not fused with the stone. They appear to interact with the real world.
- Figures are much more sensual and there is a greater interest in the female form in particular. Children are depicted, but Akhenaten's daughters appear as miniature adults. Although very small, they have adult figures and proportions, with breasts and hips.
- Aton enjoys center stage during the Amarna period, pushing the hundreds of other Egyptian gods out of the picture.



3.30 *Colossal Statue of Akhenaten, Cairo.*^{ix}



3.31 *Nefertiti, ca. 1348-1336 BCE, painted limestone.*^x

Akhenaten's radical changes were likely troubling for most of the Egyptian population. They had previously found comfort in their access to deities and their regular religious rituals. The worship of Aten as the only Egyptian god did not last more than a couple of decades, floundering after the death of Akhenaten. Pharaohs who ruled from 1323 BCE onward tried not only to erase the religious legacies of the Amarna Period, but also to destroy the capital at Tell el Amarna and remove Akhenaten from the historical record. Archaeologists have not found Akhenaten's tomb or burial place. Scholars continue a long-standing debate about how this brief period of Egyptian monotheism relates (if at all) to the monotheism of the Israelites. Despite such uncertainties, study of the Amarna period indicates that Egyptians in the fourteenth century BCE saw the fleeting appearance of religious ideology that identified Aten as the singular god.



3.32 *Golden Mask of Tutankhamen.*^{xi}



3.33 *Coffinette of Tutankhamen holding the crook and flail: symbols of his authority. This held Tutankhamen's mummified liver.*^{xii}



3.34 Alabaster unguent jar from Tutankhamen's tomb.^{xiii}



3.35 Tutankhamen's Golden Throne. The young pharaoh is gently anointed by his wife.^{xiv}

Akhenaten died in about 1365 BC, and Tutankhamen's reign lasted about 9 years, from 1361 to 1352 and he was probably 19 when he died, having taken the throne at age 10. Tutankhamen married his half-sister, Ankhesenamun, but they did not produce an heir. This left the line of succession unclear. Some think the priests of Amon-Ra may have been responsible for his death. Whether or not that is true, the priests quickly re-established their rule after his passing. Because Tutankhamen was a minor ruler from a time Egyptians wanted to forget, he had a small and unimposing tomb. It is only his obscurity that preserved the remarkable contents of his tomb, which are among the most splendid art objects still in existence from ancient Egypt. It's hard to imagine what an important pharaoh must have taken with him into the afterlife, considering the hundreds of pounds of pure gold lavished on a minor figure like Tutankhamen.

Some of the strongest rulers of the New Kingdom, including Ramses I and Ramses II, came to power after the Amarna Period. These pharaohs expanded Egypt's centralized administration and its control over foreign territories. However, by the twelfth century BCE, weaker rulers, foreign invasions, and the loss of territory in Nubia and Palestine indicated the imminent collapse of the New Kingdom. In the Late Period that followed (c. 1040 to 332 BCE), the Kingdom of Kush, based in Nubia, invaded and briefly ruled Egypt until the Assyrians conquered Thebes, establishing their own rule over Lower Egypt. Egyptian internal revolts and the conquest by Nubia and the Assyrian Empire left Egypt susceptible to invasion by the Persians and then eventually the 332 BCE invasion of Alexander the Great.

We should discuss Ramses II when we talk about the New Kingdom. He was born at approximately 1300 BCE to his father Seti I and his father's principle wife, Tuya. Ramses II spent many years studying under his father's watchful eye. He acted as his father's deputy in military, religious and administrative actions while he was still a young man. In 1279, when Ramses II was in his mid twenties, Seti died and Ramses II was crowned pharaoh. Ramses II ruled Egypt for over 60 years, until he was 96 years old. He had over 200 wives and concubines and fathered 96 sons and 60 daughters.



3.36 *Battle of Kadesh from the Ramesseum, Luxor, Egypt.* ^{xv}



3.37 *Treaty of Kadesh*, the oldest known peace treaty, concluded in 1259 BC between the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses and Hittite King Hattusili III. Discovered at Bogazkoy, Turkey. Museum of the Orient, Istanbul. ^{xvi}

Ramses II is known for defeating the Hittites at the Battle of Kadesh as both armies fought for control of Syria, and signed the world's first known peace treaty at the end of that war.



3.38 Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel, Nubia, 19th Dynasty. ^{xvii}



3.39 Abu Simbel, exhibit at the Nubian Museum showing the original and the current location. ^{xviii}

Ramses is known for his massive building projects, including many monuments, cities, and the Abu Simbel complex, which had to be moved to the top of a cliff in 1967, block by block, to allow the Aswan Dam to be built. Note image 3.38 and 3.39 that show the model of the Abu Simbel carvings in their original position which would have been under water when the new Aswan Dam was built, and the new, dry position on top of the cliff after they were moved. The exhibit at the Nubian Museum does an excellent job comparing the placement of the works before and after they were moved.

Use this format to cite this document:

Betts, Kristine. "Egyptian Civilization: New Kingdom." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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^v Metropolitan Museum, Open Access -Public Domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Kneeling_statues_of_Hatshepsut_in_the_United_States#/media/File:Large_Kneeling_Statue_of_Hatshepsut_MET_21V_CAT092R3.jpg

^{vi} Photo by Kathy J. Hartman. CC-BY-NC-4.0 License.

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La_salle_dAkhenaton_\(1356-1340_av_J.C.\)_\(Mus%C3%A9e_du_Caire\)_2076972086.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:La_salle_dAkhenaton_(1356-1340_av_J.C.)_(Mus%C3%A9e_du_Caire)_2076972086.jpg)

^{viii} Photo by Gerbil CC SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Akhenaten,_Nefertiti_and_their_children.jpg

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COMPARISON OF AKHENATEN'S HYMN TO THE ATON AND THE HEBREW PSALM 104

Akhenaten's Hymn to the Aton

(14th century BCE)

(John L. Foster, trans. *Ancient Egyptian Literature: An Anthology*, U.Texas P., 2001.)

1 Let your holy Light shine from the height of heaven,
O living Aton, source of all life!
2 From eastern horizon risen and streaming,
you have flooded the world with your beauty.
3 You are majestic, awesome, bedazzling, exalted,
overlord over all earth,
yet your rays, they touch lightly, compass the lands
to the limits of all your creation.
4 There in the Sun, you reach to the farthest of those you would gather in for your Son,
whom you love;
5 Though you are far, your light is wide upon earth;
and you shine in the faces of all who turn to follow your journeying.
6 When you sink to rest below western horizon
earth lies in darkness like death,
7 Sleepers are still in bedchambers, heads veiled,
eye cannot spy a companion;
8 All their goods could be stolen away,
heads heavy there, and they never knowing!
9 Lions come out from the deeps of their caves,
snakes bite and sting;
10 Darkness muffles, and earth is silent
he who created all things lies low in his tomb.
11 Earth-dawning mounts the horizon,
glows in the sun-disk as day:
12 You drive away darkness, offer your arrows of shining,
and the Two Lands are lively with morning song.
13 Sun's children awaken and stand,
for you, golden light, have upraised the sleepers;
14 Bathed are their bodies, who dress in clean linen,
their arms held high to praise your Return.
15 Across the face of the earth
they go to their crafts and professions.
16 The herds are at peace in their pastures,
trees and the vegetation grow green;
17 Birds start from their nests,
wings wide spread to worship your Person;

Psalm 104

(*Holy Bible The New King James Version*. New York: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982.)

1 Bless the Lord, O my soul.
 O Lord my God, you are very great.
 You are clothed with honor and majesty.
2 wrapped in light as with a garment.
 You stretch out the heavens like a tent,
 you set the beams of your chambers on the waters,
 you make the clouds your chariot,
 you ride on the wings of the wind,
4 you make the winds your messengers,
 fire and flame your ministers.
5 You set the earth on its foundations,
 so that it shall never be shaken.
6 You cover it with the deep as with a garment;
 the waters stood above the mountains.
7 At your rebuke they flee;
 at the sound of your thunder they take to flight.
8 They rose up to the mountains,
 ran down to the valleys
 to the place that you appointed for them.
9 You set a boundary that they may not pass,
 so that they might not again cover the earth.
10 You make springs gush forth in the valleys;
 they flow between the hills,
11 giving drink to every wild animal;
 the wild asses quench their thirst.
12 By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation;
 they sing among the branches.
13 From your lofty abode you water the mountains;
 the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.
14 You cause the grass to grow for the cattle,
 and plants for people to use,
 to bring forth food from the earth,
15 and wine to gladden the human heart,
 oil to make the face shine,
 and bread to strengthen the human heart.
16 The trees of the Lord are watered abundantly,
 the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

Hymn to the Aton, continued. . .

18 Small beasts frisk and gambol, and all
who mount into flight or settle to rest
live, once you have shone upon them;
19 Ships float downstream or sail for the south,
each path lies open because of your rising;
20 Fish in the River leap in your sight,
and your rays strike deep in the Great Green Sea.
21 It is you [who] create the new creature in
Woman,
shape the life-giving drops into Man,
22 Foster the son in the womb of his mother,
soothe him, ending his tears;
23 Nurse through the long generations of women
to those given Air,
you ensure that your handiwork prosper.
24 When the new one descends from the womb
to draw breath the day of his birth,
25 You open his mouth, you shape his nature,
and you supply all his necessities.
26 Hark to the chick in the egg,
he who speaks in the shell!
27 You give him air within
to save and prosper him;
28 And you have allotted to him his set time
before the shell shall be broken;
29 Then out from the egg he comes,
from the egg to peep at his natal hour!
30 And up on his own two feet goes he
when at last he struts forth therefrom.
31 How various is the world you have created,
each thing mysterious, sacred to sight,
32 O sole God, beside whom is no other!
33 You fashioned earth to your heart's desire,
while you were still alone,
34 Filled it with man and the family of creatures,
each kind on the ground, those who go upon feet,
he on high soaring on wings,
35 The far lands of Khor and Kush,
and the rich Black Land of Egypt.
36 And you place each one in his proper station,
where you minister to his needs;
37 Each has his portions of food,
and the years of life are reckoned him,
38 Tongues are divided by words,
natures made diverse as well,
39 Even men's skins are different
that you might distinguish the nations.

Psalm 104, continued...

17 In them the birds build their nests;
the stork has its home in the fir trees.
18 The high mountains are for the wild goats;
the rocks are a refuge for the coney.
19 You have made the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows its time for setting.
20 You made darkness, and it is night,
when all the animals of the forest come
creeping out.
21 The young lions roar for their prey,
seeking their food from God.
22 When the sun rises, they withdraw and lie
down
in their dens.
23 People go out to their work and to their labor
until the evening.
24 O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
25 Yonder is the sea great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.
26 There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.
27 These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
28 when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with
good things.
29 When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
30 When you send forth your spirit, they are
created;
and you renew the face of the ground.
31 May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works—
32 who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
33 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
34 May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the Lord.
36 Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the Lord, O my soul.
Praise the Lord!

Hymn to the Aton, continued. . .

40 You make Hapy, the Nile, stream through the
underworld,
and bring him, with whatever fullness you will,
41 To preserve and nourish the People
in the same skilled way you fashion them.
42 You are Lord of each one,
who wearies himself in their service,
43 Yet Lord of all earth, who shines for them all,
Sun-disk of day, holy Light!
44 All of the far foreign countries--
you are the cause they live,
45 For you have put a Nile in the sky
that he might descend upon them in rain--
46 He makes waves on the very mountains
like waves on the Great Green Sea
to water their fields and their villages.
47 How splendidly ordered are they,
your purposes for this world,
48 O Lord of Eternity, Hapy in heaven!
49 Although you belong to the distant peoples,
to the small, shy beasts
who travel the deserts and uplands,
50 Yet Hapy, he comes from Below
for the dear Land of Egypt as well.
51 And your Sunlight nurses each field and
meadow: when you shine, they live,
they grow sturdy and prosper through you.
52 You set seasons to let the world flower and
flourish--winter to rest and refresh it,
the hot blast of summer to ripen;
53 And you have made heaven far off
in order to shine down therefrom,
in order to watch over all your creation.
54 You are the One God,
shining forth from your possible incarnations
as Aton, the Living Sun,
55 Revealed like a king in glory, risen in light,
now distant, now bending nearby.
56 You create the numberless things of this world
from yourself, who are One alone--
cities, towns, fields, the roadway, the River;
57 And each eye looks back and beholds you
to learn from the day's light perfection.
58 O God, you are in the Sun disk of Day,
59 Over-Seer of all creation
--your legacy passed on to all who shall every be;

60 For you fashioned their sight, who perceive
your universe,
that they praise with one voice all your labors.
61 And you are in my heart;
there is no other who truly knows you
but for your son, Akhenaten.
62 May you make him wise with your inmost
counsels, wise with your power,
that earth may aspire to your godhead,
its creatures fine as the day you made them.
63 Once you rose into shining, they lived;
when you sink to rest, they shall die.
64 For it is you who are Time itself,
the span of the world; life is by means of you.
65 Eyes are filled with beauty until you go to your
rest;
66 All work is laid aside as you sink down the
western horizon.
67 Then, Shine reborn! Rise splendidly!
my Lord, let life thrive for the King
68 Who has kept peace with your every footstep
since you first measured ground for the world.
69 Lift up the creatures of earth for your Son
who came forth from your Body of Fire!

Use These Questions to Compare Akhenaten's *Hymn to the Aton* and *Psalm 104* from the *Old Testament of the Christian Bible*

These two poems, so comparable in content, are printed side-by-side so as to emphasize the common themes. The 69-verse *Hymn to the Aton* is in regular font; the 36-verse *Psalm 104* is in italics. Before reading either poem, please consider your attitude about the Egyptian sun (especially on a summer day in the Valley of the Kings when the temperature reaches 120°F).

1. Akhenaten's *Hymn to the Aton* was in praise of the sun-disk god. Describe Akhenaten's attitude toward the sun. How important was mortal man? Did Egypt receive any special blessings from the Aton?
2. *Psalm 104* is attributed to King David. Explain the psalmist's attitude toward the sun. Was the sun the Supreme Creator (variously called in other writings Adonai, Yahweh, Jehovah or Lord)? Identify at least three metaphors which were used to describe the Lord. According to this psalm, were the Hebrews entitled to any special blessings?
3. Both authors emphasize the opposition of light and dark. What is symbolized by this contrast? Summarize the opposing interpretations of the setting of the sun, flooding waters and the shroud of darkness.
4. Did both authors claim the same status? Evaluate what Akhenaten was claiming about himself as compared to what the Psalmist was stating about himself.

Use this to reference the hymn comparison:

Hartman, Kathy J. "Egyptian Civilization, Compare Akhenaten's Hymn to the Aton and Psalm 104." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

EGYPTIAN CULTURAL BELIEFS AND VALUES

The most important thing you can do to understand Egyptian architecture, sculpture, and artifacts is to compile a list of the beliefs and values that influenced their culture and learn to apply them to the art. To understand the values of any culture look at these ideas and see if you can find them in the work of art you are analyzing. You will not be able to see all of these ideas in every work of art.

Basic beliefs of Egyptian culture:

- Obsession with the afterlife. A person is accountable at the time of judgment for what they did during life on earth. If the king passes this judgment, he takes his place with the gods.
- Citizens will serve the king and the gods for eternity.
- Simplicity of form. The artist uses simple, clean horizontal and vertical lines and flat planes.
- Unity of heaven and earth. Egyptians saw their gods all aspects of life including the sun, the moon, and the Nile. The Nile is the goddess Hapi and is the giver of life.
- Permanence of medium. Stone and other hard materials are used because they are difficult to cut and shape, therefore they will last a long time.
- Wealthier patrons could afford to commission or purchase more expensive works of art for their tombs.
- Color is symbolic: green is the color of rebirth, red indicates a male, white indicates a female, black indicates divinity.
- Their art is mathematical, which makes it look rather stiff and formal.
- Freestanding human sculpture was intended to be seen from the front, so no effort was made to complete the back of the work.
- No effort was made to remove the extra stone between the legs or between the arms and the side of the body. The original shape of the stone block is still evident in the completed work.

Egyptian cultural values:

- Authoritarianism- The human authority figure is either divine or a sanctioned representative of the divine so his or her authority is immune to human judgment. The king either had total control or had to continually fight for it. The art includes huge stone sculptures to overwhelm the onlooker and large numbers of grave goods to show that they could afford to waste or use materials.
- Idealism-figures are erect and stiff but perfectly proportioned. During some periods of Egyptian history a canon or pattern was used to determine the proportions of the human form. Individualism is temporary. Only the canon, as a mathematical abstract is permanent and unchanging, and therefore perfect.
- Symbolism- Most early civilizations were illiterate and therefore depended on symbolic communication. (animals, colors, ceremonial objects, hand gestures, the eye)
- Mysticism- there is an ultimate reality hidden from the ordinary channels of knowledge which can be revealed only to an individual mind in certain moments of insight.

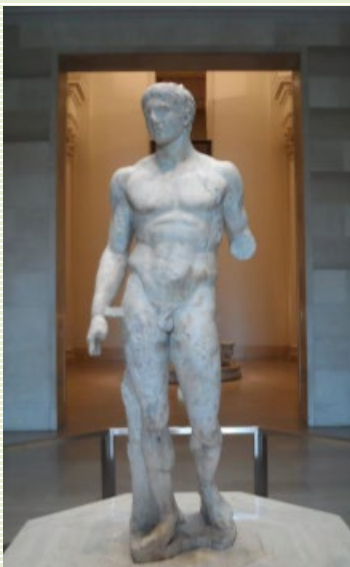
Betts, Kristine. "Egypt, Cultural Beliefs and Values." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.



4.87 Four caryatids at the south porch of *The Erechtheum*



4.110 *The Charioteer*



4.137 *Doryphoros (Spear Bearer)* 5th century BCE

Chapter 4

Greece

WHO WERE THE ANCIENT GREEKS?

Who were the ancient Greeks that one hears so much about? How is it that a group of relatively isolated people, new to urban life, would invent Democracy, remove the religion from philosophy and apply math to music? How could a small group of people bring about ideas that would change the world? They created a new way of viewing the human being and redefined what it meant to be human. All of this took place over the relatively short period that Athens was a successful democratic city-state. The foundation of the fifth century Athenian culture, however, developed earlier in the Cycladic culture, the Minoan culture and the Mycenaean culture.

Before delving into the nature of fifth century Athens, it is important to look back on the people from whose lives Greek culture emerges. These people, over a long period of time, formed a loosely knit group that lived in small communities and were tied together, mostly through language and shared religious ideas. They lived on and around the Aegean Sea between 3200 and 1050 BCE. They provided the foundation on which the Classical fifth century Greeks built their civilization.



4.1 Map of the ancient Aegean Sea. Crete is the large island at the bottom of the mapⁱ

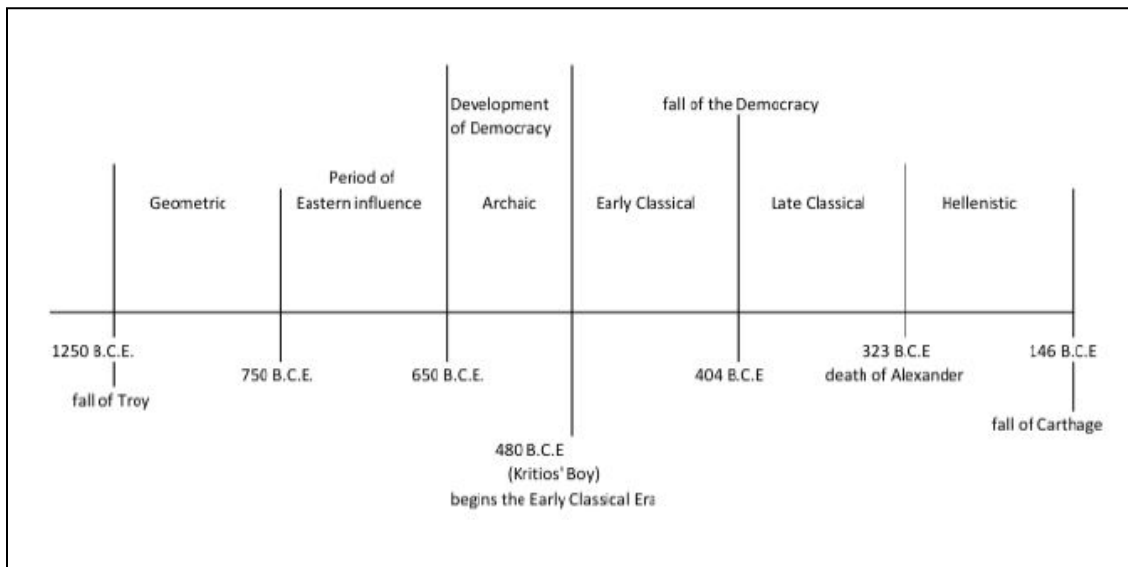
Three major civilizations dominated the Aegean Sea during the Bronze Age. The study of these cultures can be a challenge as they shared ideas through trade. The sharing continued when the Mycenaean culture conquered the Minoan culture. Each group would have lasting influence on the redevelopment of the Greek identity. Many of the stories of ancient

Athenian culture were borrowed from these earlier civilizations. Some of the myths reflect relationships between these early cultures that provided benefits and/or created tensions. As such, many are tales that warn against such dangers as pride and the foolishness of trusting strangers. *The Iliad*, perhaps the most famous ancient Greek epic poem, may have been created as a validation of the Mycenaean campaign against Troy. It also may have been meant as a warning about the cost of war.

Amateur adventurers and the booming art market of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries corrupted much of what has been found in the way of Bronze Age artifacts and building ruins. However, connections to the later fifth century Greeks can be seen and will be explored in the next sections of the text.



4.2 "Close of day at Alikii"ⁱⁱ



4.3 Who Were the Greeks, timelineⁱⁱⁱ

Note the timeline above. It covers the period between the legendary War with Troy, now believed to have been an historic reality, and the fall of Carthage, which is often considered to be the end of Greek domination and the beginning of Roman domination. The names of the various time periods have been included so you can revisit this as you read about the different eras.

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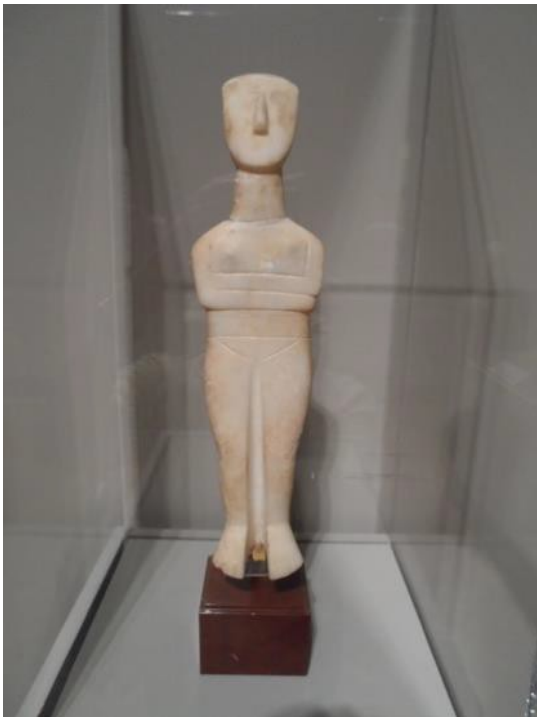
ⁱⁱ Photo by jas-mo is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND, 2.0 <https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/dea9742f-5228-43c6-bf43-917d0a08c596>

ⁱⁱⁱ T. Kate Pagel, PhD "Who Were the Ancient Greeks?" *Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2019, CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

CYCLADIC CULTURE

The Cycladic hosted a civilization that excited modern artists with its abstract looking figures. Of the three major Bronze Age Civilizations, this one is the most difficult to tie directly to the Greeks. There is less known about this culture than the others. It is clear, however, that they traded with both the Minoan and the Mycenaean cultures so there is likely more inter-cultural influence than can be proven. It is certainly possible that this simple abstract style was later joined with the Egyptian tendency toward simplification of form seen in the Archaic Period. In any case, some of the subject matter and the emblematic style are clearly present in the later, Geometric sculpture.

Note that the female figures, mostly found in graves are frontal, nude, formal and stiff. They are beautiful in their simplicity but in fact they would have been brightly painted. These figures were clearly meant to be viewed from the front as they have nearly no depth.



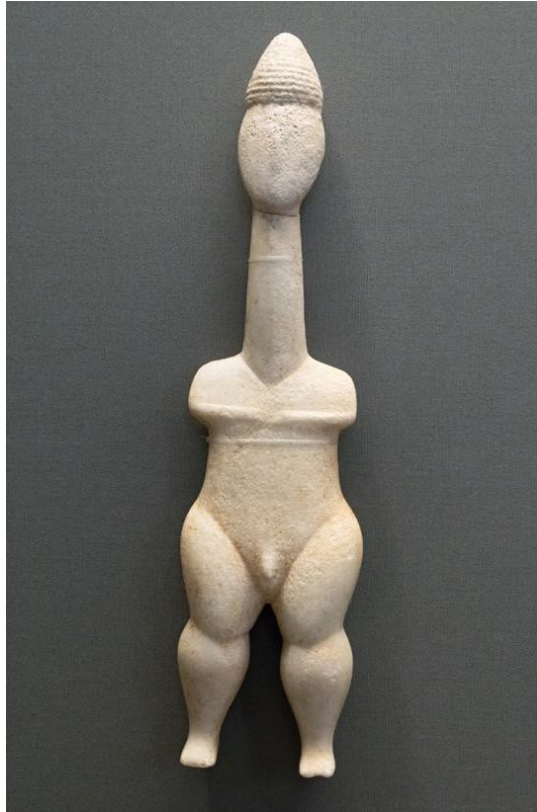
4.4 *Cycladic female figure, front view*ⁱ



4.5 *Cycladic female figure, side view*ⁱⁱ

Note the simplicity of the figure's facial features. Many of her other features are indicated only by incised, or shallowly carved, lines on the figure.

The male figures, on the other hand, tend to be made of rounded shapes and are designed to be viewed from more than one angle. Unfortunately, little of what has been found on these islands remains associated with its context. These figures were extremely popular in the 1800s, when amateur archeologists unearthed artifacts for sale on the art market. Their influence can be seen in modernist art.



4.6 *Cycladic male figurine* of the Plastiras variety. Marble, from Antiparos or Amorgos, Early Cycladic I period, 3200-2800 BCE. Grotta-Pelos phase. National Archaeological Museum of Athens, inv. No 3912. ⁱⁱⁱ

The figure in the image above is clearly male, however, there is little more than can be said for certain. It has been suggested that the incised portion at the top may represent coiffed hair or a hat of some sort. The more common male figures are depicted playing musical instruments. The harp is most often the instrument that is shown. The conical incised head may indicate elaborate coiffure or bonnet.



4.7 *Marble harp player* 11" high, Cycladic Islands 2700-2200 BCE.^{iv}

Above is one of many Cycladic male figures depicted playing a musical instrument. This is perhaps the strongest evidence of Cretan influence on later Greek culture. These figures strongly resemble male figures of the later Geometric style. That these are so common in Cycladic culture seems to be an indication that music was as important to the Cycladic culture as it would be to the Greeks of the Geometric Period. The flute is another instrument that appears in Cycladic sculpture. The double flute or aulos that became important to fifth century Athenian theatre is depicted in one of these Ancient sculptures. Again, there are clear connections between these early people and their later cultural, if not genetic, descendants.



4.8 Cycladic aulos player ^v



4.9 Seated Male figure, Geometric period ^{vi}

Although the materials are different, the simplicity of form in the Geometric period (c. 900-750 BCE.) closely resembles that of the Cycladic period (c. 2800-2000BCE.) It is impossible to say if this figure is playing a flute or drinking from a vessel. In either case, the figure is clearly emblematic, rather than realistic.

Among the islands was a large and prosperous one called, Thera. Many scholars believe that this could have been the seed for the stories of Atlantis, the legendary, highly advanced civilization that sank into the sea. In any case, much of the island was blown away when the volcano that had once formed it exploded, causing a tidal wave that affected everything within hundreds of miles.

[Watch the short video \(https://smarthistory.org/thera/\)](https://smarthistory.org/thera/) and discover some important remnants of Cycladic culture found on Thera.



4.10 *The Lilies Fresco or Spring Fresco* from Akrotiri on the island of Thera, modern-day Santorini. 17th Century BCE.^{vii}

Above is one of the landscapes mentioned in the digital clip. As mentioned in that clip, this is one of the earliest recorded landscapes and it is in true **fresco** (see clip for description) form. This is the only wall-painting of Akrotiri that was found in situ, (in its original place) covering three walls of the same room. It depicts the rocky Theran landscape before the volcanic eruption; clusters of red lilies with yellow stems dominate the red and gray volcanic formations, while swallows swoop above, alone or in flirtatious pairs, animating the scene and symbolically announcing nature's annual rebirth.

The opulent use of colors—black, white, red, yellow and blue—and the lively movement created by the lilies dancing in the wind and swallows at play, allow for the attribution of this composition to the painter of the “Crocus Gatherers” fresco. The room had a shelf high on the wall and an opening for communicating with a smaller room to its north.

This level of abstraction is later seen in Mycenaean pottery and may well have been influenced by the Cycladic culture, which traded with Mycenae. Because the Cyclades are so close to Crete and because the Minoans may have controlled those islands it is hard to say which culture had the most impact on later art. The ideas and styles seen in both Cycladic and Minoan art show up later in the Mycenaean and Geometric art styles.



4.11 *Modernist Sculpture* by Modigliani, Minneapolis Museum of Art.^{viii}



4.12 *Head of small idol*, Antiparos, Early Bronze Age^{ix}

There is no doubt, however, about the impact that Cycladic art had on modern artists such as Modigliani, because many modernists consciously turned to Cycladic and African art for their inspiration. Notice how similar the emblematic faces of the Cycladic, Modern and Geometric period sculptures are. This geometric style changes drastically when Humanism is introduced in the Greek world. Until that time, these emblematic images abounded.



4.12 *Ancient Greek Helmeted Charioteer*. c. 775-750.BCE^x

Early Cycladic pottery was often covered in geometric designs, a practice that would be repeated during the Geometric period on mainland Greece. Later Cycladic pottery, like sculpture and wall frescoes, was often decorated with simplified, abstracted images of nature. Below note the birds and foliage decorating the second vessel.



4.13 Early Cycladic pottery vessel with simple painted geometric decoration, 2800-2300 BCE.^{xi}



4.14 Large Cycladic ewer, decorated with birds, probably from the island of Milos. Knossos-Temple repositories 1650-1550 BCE. Heraklion..^{xii}

The Cycladic love of music, styles of pottery and sculpture, and approaches to decoration all reappear in later Greek art. The cultural, if not genetic, descendants of the people that inhabited the Cyclades during the Bronze Age, benefitted from these early artists and craft people. To see how these ideas were shared and adapted by other Bronze Age cultures, read on to the sections on the Minoans and the people of the Mycenaean culture. They too left their mark on the people that followed them.

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cycladic_figurine,_male,_Plastiras_variety,_NAMA_3912,_190927.jpg.

^{iv} Mark Cartwright. *Harp Player* CC BY-NC-SA. Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 17 Nov 2024. Web. 23 Nov 2019.

^v Photo courtesy of Kathleen J. Hartman licensed under CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{vi} Photo by Walters Art Museum [Public domain] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Greek_-_Seated_Male_Figure_-_Walters_54789_-_View_A.jpg Walters Art Museum, Go to Smarthistory.org and search for "Ancient Aegean" then "Cycladic" then "Akrotiri, Thera".

vii Cartwright, Mark. **CC BY-NC-SA**. Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 17 Nov 2024. Web. 23 Nov 2019.

viii Photo courtesy of Kathleen J. Hartman. CC BY-NC 4.0 License

ix Head of small idol. Antiparos, early Bronze Age. National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Photo by Zde, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Head_of_idol_NAMA_080726.jpg

x Ancient Greek Helmeted Charioteer. C. 775-750. Dorieo [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ancient_Greek_helmeted_charioteer_-_NAMA_inv._6190.JPG

xi Early Cycladic pottery. Zde [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cycladic_pottery_decor_3200-2300_BC_AM_Apeiranthos_143697.jpg

xii Heraklion Archaeological Museum [CC0] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cycladic_ewer_archmus_Heraklion.jpg

THE MINOANS

The Minoan civilization lived on the island of Crete and on small islands around it, from around 2700 BCE. until c. 1100 BCE. The Minoans had a strong trading economy supported by their strategic position in the Aegean. This position also made it difficult for other people to conquer and hold the islands, which helped to protect the people and their advanced technology and creative arts. The island appears in an important Greek myth that seems to disguise history in its depiction of a mainland Greek hero defeating the Minotaur (a giant bull). Giant bulls, now extinct, appear in much of the Minoan art. Bulls seem to have been part of a ritual and probably served as a religious symbol, important to the islanders. The Minoan influence on the fifth century Greeks did not end with the creation of epic “historic” myths. The Mycenaean culture borrowed a good deal from the Minoans and as such, the Minoans exerted influences on the later fifth century Greeks.



4.15 *Bull Leaping Fresco, Knossos. c 1400 BCE.*¹

Another common use of the bull image is in the many rhytons (ritual vessels) found on Crete and the Greek Mainland that were often created in the shape of a bull's head. In each case the rhyton has been purposefully destroyed, leading to the conclusion that it's ritual purpose had expired. Most of these rhytons are an interesting mixture of realism and stylization. These bull vessels have even been found painted on Egyptian walls as gifts being presented to the pharaoh by a Cretan envoy. Rhytons made in the bull image are also found on mainland Greece, making it clear that the Mycenaean people who lived there were in contact with the Minoans living on the islands of the Aegean Sea, long before they themselves took over those islands.

Minoan culture produced pottery in much the same pattern as the Cycladic culture. Early potters tended to decorate in organically rendered, rather than mathematically geometric patterns. Later pottery sported more emblematic images such as stylized sea life, so important to island dwellers. Notice the comparison below.



4.16 *Minoan Rhyton* in form of a bull, c 3000-1400 BCE. Archaeological Museum in Herakleion.ⁱⁱ



4.17 *Early Minoan pottery* from Pyrgos burial cave, 3000-2600 BCE.ⁱⁱⁱ



4.18 *Mycenaean Crater with Octopus* in Minoan style- 14th Century. BCE. Archaeological Museum, Nicosia, Cyprus.^{iv}



4.19 *The Queen's Megaron, with the dolphin fresco (copy) at Knossos palace, Crete, Greece.*^v

Look at the stylized fresco above. It is fanciful and lively. There is, however, no way to know exactly what the intention behind it was. It may have been purely decorative, or it may have been intended to bring bounty from the sea. To complicate matters further, excavations and restorations of the Minoan ruins have taken place over time and have been done by several different people. Each one had different ideas about how restoration should be approached. Also, much of the area was occupied throughout so many time periods that accurate restoration is necessarily specific to an era but what is left to view is from several time periods. Early restorers often made up whatever they could not determine scientifically and in some cases artifacts were seriously modified.

The small statue known as the Minoan Snake Goddess was clearly modified by the man who found it. He put the cat on her head and added the snakes. Christopher Witcombe suggests that, "Largely on the basis of Evans' find, the group was enthusiastically identified as the 'Snake Goddess' attended by three votaries. A more judicious examination of the figurines, however, suggests that the central figure, around which the three other figurines can be joined as in a circle dance, is holding not a snake but a lyre."^{vi}



4.20 *Minoan Snake Goddess, Heraklion Archeological Museum, Heraklion, Crete. 1600 BCE, Knossos, Crete.*^{vii}

MINOAN TECHNOLOGY

Knossos, the largest city on the island of Crete was a pretty amazing place. It boasted the oldest known flushing toilets and hypocaust-heated floors. These luxuries were not just for the now famous palace but also for the common Minoan citizen. They too had hot and cold running water as well as a drain-off system that also served as ventilation. These types of advancement are not developed in struggling cultures.

The Minoans also had a written language. Mainland Greece did not obtain one until nearly a thousand years after the fall of the Minoan culture. The Minoan language, referred to as “linear-A,” has not yet been deciphered. Linguists have found a close relationship between linear-A and Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language. This makes a great deal of sense as much of ancient Greek myth is clearly connected to stories originally written in Sanskrit and now associated with Hinduism. Within The Ramayana alone there are parallels to Helen’s kidnapping and retrieval in The Iliad and to Odysseus using a sacred bow to win back his wife in The Odyssey. Even the story of Icarus flying too close to the sun is paralleled in the Indian epic. The Minoan language can also be connected to Hittite and Armenian languages, which means that Linear-A is Indo-European in origin. DNA from a four thousand year old Minoan supports the theory that genetics and cultural ideas from Europe create the foundation for this incredible early civilization.



4.21 Knossos Palace, Crete.^{viii}

Above is what is known as the Palace at Knossos, on Crete. Dr Senta German states that,

“The power of Evans’s interpretation and reconstruction of the site as purely Minoan – the product of the indigenous culture of that island – is very much still with us despite the fact that much has changed about how art historians and archeologists understand the different periods of construction at Knossos. Today, much of its final plan and form, which Evans reconstructed (including the Throne Room and most of the frescoes), are understood as being of Mycenaean construction (not Minoan).”^{ix}



4.22 The so-called "Throne of Minos" in the so-called "Throne Room" at Knossos Palace, Crete, Greece.^x

It is, therefore impossible to say how much influence the original inhabitants had on what is now available for viewing. It seems likely that anything that was a benefit, like running water, would continue to be used and maintained. As for the Minoan influence on the art, it was probably considerable. The images are often of life at sea. As the Mycenaeans lived on the mainland, those images would likely have been drawn from earlier art from the area.

The story of the Minotaur (half bull and half human), that disguises the historic takeover of the islands is briefly outlined here. A young man named, Theseus, was to become the next ruler of Mainland Greece, probably through his association with the main city, Mycenae. He volunteered to go to the island of king Minos as one of the sacrifices required of the Mainland Greeks. Each year a dozen young men and women were sent to the main island and sacrificed as revenge for the loss of Minos' son, which he blamed on the Mycenaean Greeks. After proving to Minos that his real father was Poseidon, Theseus went to the maze, where it was expected that he would succumb to the Minotaur that lives there. Ariadne, King Minos' daughter, helps Theseus win the challenge by providing him with a string that will allow him to find his way out of the maze where the Minotaur lives. While in the maze, Theseus kills the sleeping Minotaur and escapes the maze by following the string.

Theseus ignores his promise to Ariadne that he would take her with him, after all, anyone who would betray their family does not deserve to be treated kindly. This attitude toward family is still present in fifth century Greece. Theseus returned to his homeland and took over the kingdom as his father, Agaeas, threw himself into the sea, (named The Aegean, after him) when he thought that his adopted son had died. Although this story is a myth, it refers to many historic subjects and as such, seems to be a disguised history of the Mycenaean culture overtaking the bull enthused Minoans, ending whatever strife they had caused.

In spite of the difficulties in assessing the available evidence, it is clear that there are many ideas in the Minoan culture that are shared by or borrowed from other Bronze Age cultures. It is also clear that many of those ideas reappear in later Greek art, literature and architecture. Even the Mythical story of the Mainland Greek hero Theseus defeating the Minotaur can be traced to the history of Bronze Age dwellers in and around the Aegean Sea. The Mycenaean culture did indeed take over the islands. Although they did not remain long, they seem to have brought their own ideas there as well as taking Minoan ideas and art styles back to Mainland Greece.

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ⁱ Bull Leaping fresco by Lapplaender is licensed as [CC BY-SA 3.0 de (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/de/deed.en>)] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Knossos_-_06.jpg

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ⁱⁱⁱ Early Minoan pottery from Pyrgos burial cave, 3000-2600 BC. Archaeological Museum of Heraklion. Zde [CC BY-SA 4.0 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Early_Minoan_pottery_from_Pyrgos,_3000-2600_BC,_AMH,_144535.jpg

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^v Photo by Jebulon, CCO, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Queen%27s_Megaron_with_dolphins_Knossos_Palace.jpg

^{vi} Witcombe, Christopher, L.C.E. "Women in the Aegean: Minoan Snake Goddess." Art History Resources. 2000. Accessed 10/09/19

^{vii} Photo by Olaf Tausch, CC BY 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kleine_Schlangengöttin_01.jpg

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^{ix} Dr. Senta German, "The Palace at Knossos (Crete)," in 2019, July 11, 2018, accessed October 9, 2019. Smarthistory.

^x Photo by Jebulon [CC0] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Throne_of_Minos_at_Knossos_Palace.jpg

THE MYCENAEAN CULTURE

On mainland Greece and in the Peloponnesus two Mycenaean Kings ruled in a manner that would influence Spartan rule in the same area hundreds of years later. Ruling together, the legendary kings made war on Troy, across the Aegean Sea in what would become Persia, and became the subjects in the ancient Greek tale of the fall of Troy called The Iliad.

Go to the site: Smarthistory.org click on “Ancient Mediterranean” then on “Ancient Aegean” then, “Mycenaean” and “Mask of Agamemnon.” Watch the four-minute video for a great overview of the Mycenaean’s place in the ancient world. **Mask of Agamemnon Video (<https://smarthistory.org/mask-of-agamemnon/>).**

The Lion’s Gate makes it clear that this civilization was sophisticated and stratified. A visitor to Mycenae passed through this imposing gate on their way into the citadel. Lions are traditionally a symbol of kingship and the fact that there are two lions above the gate is likely a reflection of the double-king system that seems to have been practiced at some time by Mycenaean royalty and later by the Spartans.



4.23 *Lions Gate of Mycenae* (13th century BC), Greeceⁱ



4.24 *Lion’s Gate detail*ⁱⁱ



4.25 *Goddess Flanked by Two Lionesses* on a pithos (a large storage jar) from Knossosⁱⁱⁱ

There is an image found at Mycenae that suggests that there was once a goddess above the column that stands between the lions. Notice in the Minoan image to the left that displays such a goddess who is flanked by lions that look a good deal like those in the Mycenaean image.



4.26 Corbelled arch, entrance to the “*Tomb of Agamemnon*”^{iv}



4.27 Atreus’ (or Agamemnon’s) Tholos Tomb ceiling^v



4.28 Atreus’ Tholos Tomb Interior^{vi}

Tombs from the Mycenaean period (1900- 1100 BCE.) were called Tholos or beehive tombs. Note the entrance to this royal tomb. The Treasury of Atreus, also called The Tomb of Agamemnon, is the largest of the nine tholos discovered at Mycenae. One of the most impressive aspects of these tombs is the construction of the ceilings. The beehive shape of the interior is called a corbel vault. By moving each succeeding layer of stone slightly inward a pointed dome is formed. This corbelling technique can also be seen on the entrance and on the Lion’s Gate.

As is clear in these pictures the tomb’s size is impressive. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, “The diameter of the tomb is almost 50 feet (15 meters); its height is slightly less. The enormous monolithic lintel of the doorway weighs 120

tons and is 29.5 feet (9 meters) long, 16.5 feet (5 meters) deep, and 3 feet (0.9 meter) high. It is surmounted by a relieving triangle decorated with relief plaques.^{vii}

Gold and other riches were buried inside the tombs. This explains why this building is often referred to as Atreus' treasury. Among the riches was the most famous artifact, known as, the mask of Agamemnon. The mask is actually about 400 years older than the time of Agamemnon, a legendary king who fought in the Trojan War. However, it is clear that Homer was not exaggerating when he described Mycenae as rich in gold. As was seen in the reclaimed architecture, there is some evidence that the mask depicted below may have been modified by the addition of a rather modern looking mustache.^{viii}



4.29 So-called "Death mask of Agamemnon." Found in Tomb V in Mycenae by Heinrich Schliemann in 1876.^{ix}

MYCENAEAN POTTERY

The Mycenaean civilization flourished in the late Bronze Age from the 15th to the 13th century BCE, and their artists continued the traditions passed on to them by Minoan Crete. Pottery, frescoes, and gold work skillfully depicted scenes from nature, religion, hunting, and war. Developing new forms and styles, Mycenaean art proved to be more ambitious in scale and range of materials than Cretan art and, with its progression towards more and more abstract imagery, it influenced later Greek art, particularly in the Geometric and Archaic periods.



4.30 Mycenaean warriors depicted on a krater from Mycenae known as the '*House of the Warrior Vase*', 12th century BCE. (National Archaeological Museum, Athens)^x

This pottery provides valuable insights into the accuracy of Homer's description of Trojan warriors and weaponry, if indeed there was a Homer. It is clear that whoever wrote down the story of the Iliad described weapons and other items used in war as he knew them in his own time, rather than as they were during the Bronze Age.

Early wheel-made Mycenaean pottery (1550-1450 BCE) from mainland Greece has been described as 'provincial Cretan' which does convey the fact that although shapes and decorative styles were of Cretan origin, the final decoration was not quite as finely executed as in Minoan centers such as Knossos and Phaistos. However, despite this difference in quality, it is likely that Cretan potters did actually relocate to the mainland. In terms of raw material though, Mycenaean pottery is in fact often superior in quality to Minoan as the majority was made from old Yellow Minyan Clay and fired at higher temperatures than on Crete. The designs themselves were painted using a red to black, lustrous, iron-based clay slip (or 'paint') which had a tendency to become mottled depending on the firing process.



4.31 *Bridge-Spouted Jug* from the chamber tombs of the Mycenaean cemetery of Paleo Epidavros (LH II, 1500-1450 BCE).^{xi}

THE EVOLUTION OF DESIGN

Over time, Mycenaean pottery decoration continued to become more and more abstract to the point where it is sometimes difficult to identify the original subject. The evolution of the octopus image in pottery decoration is an excellent indicator of the changing style. An early copy of a Minoan octopus is more or less accurately represented and its twisting tentacles with detailed suckers randomly cover all of the vase but gradually they become more formal with tentacles painted symmetrically on either side of the body and finally the tentacles become mere lines, impossibly long in relation to the body size and usually fewer than eight are depicted. Eventually, dark bands of varying width become the principal form of decoration and only the space near the neck of vessels is used for pictorial representations.



4.32 Mycenaean imitation of Minoan Marine Style, 15th century BCE. ^{xii}



4.33 Mycenaean crater with octopus 14th cent. BCE^{xiii}

MYCENAEAN LEGACY

Mycenaean pottery was exported and imitated throughout the Aegean and also in places as far afield as Anatolia, Syria, Egypt and Spain. There is also evidence that Mycenaean potters actually relocated and set up workshops abroad, particularly in Anatolia and southern Italy. Indeed, it may well be that designs of Mycenaean origin introduced into these areas lived on to be re-introduced back to mainland Greece once the so-called Dark Ages that followed the fall of the Mycenaean culture had ended. This three-century decline in all areas of culture but particularly in arts and crafts would, therefore, not be an end but only an interruption in the evolution of Greek culture. Pottery design would once more flower with the geometrically styled pottery of the 8th century BCE. The “new” style owes a great debt to the highly stylized pottery decoration so loved by the Mycenaean people. ^{xiv} Perhaps the greatest legacies of the Mycenaean age were the stories that were shared in the epic poems, The Iliad and The Odyssey. These will be briefly summarized in the next part of this chapter.

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- ⁱ Photo by G Da, CC BY-SA 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Lions_Gate_of_Mycenae_\(13th_century_BC\),_Greece_-_panoramio.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Lions_Gate_of_Mycenae_(13th_century_BC),_Greece_-_panoramio.jpg)
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- ^v Photo by Sharon Mollerus, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Atreus_Tholos_Tomb_\(3378349043\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Atreus_Tholos_Tomb_(3378349043).jpg)
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- ^{vii} Encyclopædia Britannica. "Treasury of Atreus." Editors of Encyclopædia Britannica. Jul 23, 2008
<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Treasury-of-Atreus> accessed 12/28/2019 7.
- ^{viii} Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris, "Mask of Agamemnon," in Smarthistory, November 24, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/mask-of-agamemnon>.
- ^{ix} National Archaeological Museum CC BY 2.0 <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MaskOfAgamemnon.jpg>
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- ^{xi} Photo by Schuppi, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mycenaean_Cemetery_of_Paleo_Epidavros_-_Findings_4.JPG
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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amphora_with_Octopus_\(3406154155\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Amphora_with_Octopus_(3406154155).jpg)
- ^{xiii} Archaeological Museum, Nicosia, Cyprus. Photo by Молли, CC BY-SA 4.0
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arheologicheski-Octopus.jpg>
- ^{xiv} Cartwright, Mark. "Mycenaean Pottery." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 01 Oct 2012. Web. 09 Oct 2019.

THE TROJAN WAR (OR THE ILIAD)

The Trojan War, once believed to be fictitious, was one of the most important events in the History of Greece. The story of this war, which took place sometime between 1150-1250 BCE., was captured in two epic poems, and was later put into writing sometime between 650 and 750 BCE when the Phoenicians brought the alphabet to Greece. The Iliad, supposedly written down by Homer, is set during the last nine months of that war. This is the story that would be retold for thousands of years and would teach many generations about the cost of war, the need for honor and loyalty and the history of the Mycenaean culture, which fell shortly after this engagement.

The war began because Zeus' mother, Gaia, asked her son to reduce the numbers of mankind as the race was disturbing Gaia (Mother earth) with their digging of mines and other such things. A plan goes into action through a young man who was completely ignorant of the part he would play in the destruction of two cultures. Paris, the son of King Priam of Troy, had been abandoned as a child due to a prophesy that the babe would be the cause of the end of Troy. In typical Greek mythic fashion, Paris was not really abandoned but instead, was raised by a shepherd and later became embroiled in a beauty contest between three goddesses. This contest was part of Zeus' plan to relieve his mother of her pains. Paris chose the goddess, Aphrodite, as the winner, because she had promised him a prize of the most beautiful woman in the world. Alas, she failed to tell him that the woman, Helen, was already married to a king named, Menelaus.

There are clear lessons to be learned from this part of the tale. Be careful what you ask for is one. Another is that things are not always as they seem. The constant interference and interruptions by the gods, also reminds the listener (originally this would have been recited out loud) that the gods should never be slighted for they had power to alter men's lives, if not their fates.

To make things more challenging, while they had been vying for Helen's attentions, every Greek male of marriageable age had vowed to protect her and to honor whoever won her. As such, they were duty bound to get her back once Paris had taken her away from Menelaus. The king had been temporarily out of town at the time of the abduction. The former shepherd and now the recognized son of Troy (he came to Troy and was so amazing that he was recognized as royalty) took Helen across the Aegean Sea, to the city he was now a part of again. This situation was not only in accordance with Zeus' plan but was also a result of Menelaus forgetting that he had promised a sacrifice to Aphrodite, if he were lucky enough to win Helen's hand. He had forgotten that promise.

The listener is reminded that it is never wise to anger a goddess! There is also reference to Paris having committed the most horrid of sins. It was required of a good Greek that he take in supplicants, like Paris, who showed up at Menelaus' door. To treat such hospitality so rudely as to steal a man's wife, defined Paris as a scoundrel who deserved whatever he got. Every great story needs a villain, and for the noble Greek, being a coward was villainess on its own.

So, off to war go the Greeks and all of their allies. It could easily take year to travel along the coastlines from Mycenae to Troy. Navigation that allowed one to cross a sea was not yet available. The siege lasted ten long years. Books two through twenty-three of The Iliad are dedicated to a four-day period of time when the most important Achilles, an Achaean warrior who had been prophesied to be the champion upon whom winning the war would depend. An Achaean was a member of a group of the Hellenes or as we now refer to them, Greeks. Achilles had a conflict with his king, Agamemnon. Menelaus and his brother, Agamemnon ruled together, as it is assumed was the practice at some time in Mycenae, and which would be the practiced in the same region when Sparta ruled it.

Because he had to return his own prize, the Theban woman, Chryseis, King Agamemnon took away the war prize that Achilles had earned for himself, a woman named Briseis from Lyrnessus. In a culture where honor was everything, this left Achilles deeply insulted. Because of this disagreement over a war prize, Achilles withdrew from the battle, putting the entire Greek army in jeopardy. At first all went well, but when things got worse, Patroclus, close friend and relative of Achilles, put on his famous war mate's armor, hoping to raise the moral of the troops. Mistaken for Achilles, he was killed by Hektor, the eldest son of the Trojan king, Priam. This is one of many warnings against the cost of pride that can be found in The Iliad. Because of his pride, Achilles lost someone dear to him. Because of his pride, King Agamemnon almost lost the war.

Having turned his anger on Hektor, the first son of Troy and the city's champion, Achilles decided to get his revenge on the killer of his friend. When Achilles' rejoins the war the tide of the battle is turned. He teaches the listener another lesson when he inappropriately drags Hektor's dead body around the walled city. A touching scene where the old king Priam sneaks into the Greek camp to ask for his son's body back reminds the listener that there are expectations of respect between enemies. It is also important to realize that there was a large Greek settlement in Troy at the time that it was attacked. In many ways, the Greeks were fighting Greeks. Finally Achilles, perhaps embarrassed by his own behavior, allows Priam his request and holds off on the battle while the appropriate funeral games are played. The games determined who would inherit the deceased warrior's weapons and other belongings. The listener would sense the validation of appropriate social behavior in this tale.

After Achilles is killed by Paris' arrow it is through sneakily gaining a tactical advantage that the war is finally won. The Iliad does not go as far as telling about the Trojan Horse filled with Greek warriors that is rolled into the city by its inhabitants. They thought that they had driven the Greeks away. It is alluded to, however, so that at the end of The Iliad, the listener knows how the war began, how it was fought and how it ended.

Some scholars believe that The Iliad was initially constructed to validate the Mycenaean campaign against Troy. Since the only version that lasted until it was written down did not come into being until sometime in the 8th century BCE. One can only guess at the intent of the story when it originated. There is no doubt, however, that it did educate Greeks about how to act in their world and in their society. The Iliad became a treatise on proper and improper behavior. It taught religion, social expectations and moral lessons to many generations who followed in the footsteps of those "original Greeks," the Hellenes, of which the Mycenaean culture was part.

THE ODYSSEY

The Odyssey is the story of the hero Odysseus returning to his home in Ithaca on mainland Greece. It is executed in a different style than The Iliad. While the Iliad is about public heroism, The Odyssey is about private heroism. It is told in first person and is filled with supernatural creatures that probably stand in for foreign cultures around the Aegean Sea. The tale is about travel and exploration and is filled with disguised history about the strange and wonderful things that one may come upon when away from home. More than anything, however, The Odyssey is about the need to be at home with family. This tale demonstrates the cost of war in a new way, focusing not only on the heroes but also on the heroism of a wife, who never wavers in her loyalty to her husband.

Odysseus also must learn the cost of pride, which nearly causes him to lose everything and does cause him to lose his ship and all of his men. The long journey begins because he is too prideful about his brilliant idea to construct a wooden horse in order to trick the Trojans into losing the war. Later he taunts the son of Poseidon, a Cyclops that ate a few of his men, and he suffers for years because of it.

This would be a great choice of tale to tell on a cold and stormy winter's night when fantastic things can be easily imagined. As in The Iliad, there are moral lessons and many references to customs such as a widow being married to the best suitor, rather than being allowed to rule on her own. With her goes the kingdom and all of its goods. Likewise there is a focus on the need for hospitality as Penelope, Odysseus' wife, must entertain the suitors at her husband's expense. The suitors take unfair advantage of the hospitality, however. Like Paris before them, they pay the price for this rudeness.

When Odysseus finally makes it home, Athena disguises him as an old man and in that form he wins his wife in an archery contest and with his son, now grown. He then kills all of the hangers-on that have been plaguing his loyal wife and then makes sacrifices to the gods to atone for his prideful behavior. Unlike most of the heroes of The Iliad, Odysseus lives happily ever after.

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FROM THE WAR TO THE GEOMETRIC AGE

Traces of the Mycenaean Civilization disappear shortly after the time of the Trojan War. If Homer is correct in telling us that the war lasted ten years and that many did not return or returned as long as a decade later, it is no wonder that the Mycenaean culture faltered. There is discussion in The Iliad of the ships leaving the Trojan shore. There is no discussion of them leaving with great piles of loot, other than slaves. Perhaps the great adventure was too expensive for the culture to bear.

In any case, the two king system of the Spartans, who ruled much later in Southern Greece, never allowed both kings to be at war at the same time. It would not be until the Peloponnesian war, in the 5th century BCE that Greeks would again attempt such a bold venture. That venture, the attempt to build an Athenian Empire, came to its conclusion much like the first one. In the end, the war was far too expensive to benefit Athens in the long term.

With the failure of the political structure the grand building program of Mycenae ended. Burials were no longer done in grand tombs. Palaces and fortifications were no longer built. The fact that the culture was revived after such a long period of decline indicates that although there is little evidence of it, the resilient Greeks continued on, holding on to their stories of the past in order to learn from them.

It is also likely that many of the ideas that Mycenaean culture shared with the world may well have come full circle and returned to the region as the culture there began to grow and prosper again. There are far too many similarities between the early cultures of the Aegean Sea and the later cultures of the same area to think that there is not a strong connection between the groups.

Following the fall of Mycenae people grouped themselves into tribes. Over time the tribes became more sophisticated and the people became more settled. Limited agriculture began again and the goddess Demeter looked out for it. The pantheon of gods not only survived but would eventually expand as new ideas flowed back into the mainland. For many centuries, however, this slow growth was not accompanied by lasting building projects or monumental sculpture. As such, this period of time (c 1150-750 BCE.) is often referred to as "The Dark Age."

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GEOMETRIC PERIOD

POTTERY

After the fall of Mycenae, around 1100-1150 BCE., mainland Greece sunk into a Dark Age. Governmental structures crumbled, trade slowed and large architectural edifices ceased being built. Eventually, between 900 and 750 BCE., stylized pottery, resembling the pottery made by the pattern-loving Mycenaean culture reemerged. It was often more abstract than the earlier Hellenic style and it shows signs of Egyptian influence. Much like the Geometric Period sculpture, the images on pottery reflect a growing sense of Greek identity as well as reflecting the past on which that identity was being built. Work from the period also incorporated ideas from the world around the creators.



4.34 *Chariot and a Foot Soldier*, detail, lower tier of a monumental Attic Geometric krater. Metropolitan Museum of Art. ⁱ

Note the geometric patterns on this shard from a large krater, which is a jar or vase with two handles used to mix water and wine. Kraters were used to cleanse water by adding alcohol to it, so that it was safe to drink. These kraters are some of the best artifacts that have been left to science from the Geometric time period. The krater includes emblems of horses and a warrior. Like the sculpture of the period, the figures are symbols rather than natural renderings. This krater was probably the grave marker of a warrior. Note the horses pulling the chariot into battle. A warrior leads the group but is only indicated by a shield with a head and legs. Size is unimportant as the leading figure is twice the size of the charioteer. No distinction is made between the three horses. The depiction of three heads and twelve legs is sufficient to show how many there are. Notice, that much like Minoan pottery, every space is filled if not by figures, by abstract designs.

Monumental kraters and amphorae were made and decorated as grave markers. Kraters were large two handled storage jars with narrow necks that were sometimes tapered to a point at the bottom and were used to carry wine or oils. The most famous examples of this art use a technique called *horro vacul*, in which every space on the vase is filled with imagery. Kraters, sometimes six feet tall, marked male's graves. Female graves were marked with amphorae.



4.35 Terracotta Krater, Metropolitan Museum of Art. ⁱⁱ

One of the Dipylon kraters in the Metropolitan Museum is 43 inches (110 cm) tall and has a circumference of 25.5 inches (65 cm). The monumental vase is hollow, with a hole at the bottom, indicating that it was not used as a mixing bowl like regular kraters. It is possible that the krater's intended use was to accommodate the ritual offering of wine to the deceased. Clearly a krater with a hole intentionally made in the bottom was intended as a ritual object rather than a practical one. This demonstrates that the krater was made specifically as a funeral object rather than reused as one. Ritual, then, is an important part of the death experience.

As has been mentioned, it is possible that offerings of wine were poured into the krater. In any case, these funeral kraters are some of the best examples of the geometric style. Note the abstract images of what seems to be funeral games and preparation for the funeral pyre on a similar Krater depicted below. These images resemble the games that were played in *The Iliad* in order to determine who deserved to inherit the weapons, chariots and war prizes (slaves, wives of captors etc.) of the deceased warrior.

Notice the detail below of the top band of the decoration on one of these kraters. There is a procession that carries the dead warrior on a funeral bier which is a stand on which the dead is placed. Below the bier are animals that are to be sacrificed. These customs were discussed in *The Iliad* and were practiced through the 5th Century BCE. This approach to honoring dead warriors is a long-standing tradition that was clearly passed down from the Mycenaean civilization. As such, this part of the Greek identity remains intact.



4.36 *Dipylon krater*, found in the Dipylon Graveyard. National Archeological Museum.ⁱⁱⁱ



4.37 Detail of a similar krater from the National Archeological Museum^{iv}

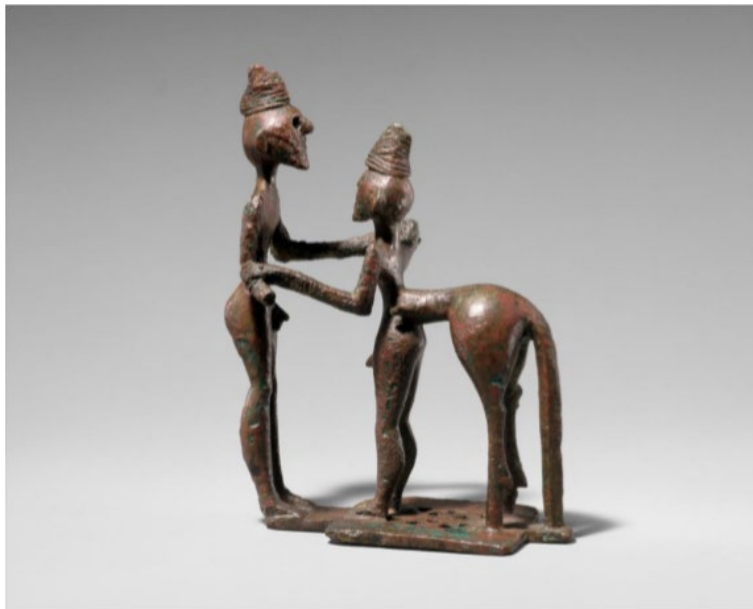
The illustrations on these kraters are done in bands, much like Egyptian wall paintings. The images are formal and emblematic, as are Egyptian images of humans in action. These images cannot be read, unlike that seen in Egyptian images. Instead, they were purely decorative, like that seen on earlier Minoan pottery.

One of the biggest differences between the Mycenaean designs and those of the Greeks that followed them is that the geometric design of the Mycenaeans is less organic. The pottery designs of the Geometric Period required careful division of space which resulted in a much more mathematical image. Like the indications of reason seen in Geometric sculpture, reason and proportion determine the look of the geometric designs. Like the Geometric sculpture, the figures have idealistically broad shoulders, possibly indicating a move toward idealism.

It is fairly easy to see how the Geometric Period pottery reflects the identity that was developing on the Greek mainland, as well as how it reflects the past. As technology improved and new ideas began to flow into Greece again, influences from nearby neighbors, such as Egypt become a part of the art. Although there is still a lot to discover about this period in history, much can be learned from a “reading” of the art.

SCULPTURE

Following the Dark Age brought on by the fall of the Mycenaean culture, a style of sculpture began to emerge that, like the pottery of the time was essentially geometric in nature, rather than naturalistic. Most of the sculpture made during this time (c. 900 BCE - 700 BCE.) was fairly small. They are made of bronze, terra cotta or ivory. The bronze sculptures, often of figures or animals, were created using the lost wax method of casting. The sculpture of this era is essentially emblematic. Individuals are not being celebrated in these images. Instead the ideas presented are more important than naturalistic presentation. In this period the re-development of the Greek identity can be viewed.



4.38 *Geometric-Man and a Centaur* 750-730 BCE, Metropolitan Museum of Art.^v

Geometric bronzes were often left as a votive object which was left at a religious site as an offering to the gods at such shrines and sanctuaries as Delphi. Image 4.38 an early image of a centaur, a creature that is half horse and half human. Note that he has the body of a man and his backend is horse-like. By the Archaic Period the human legs disappear, being replaced by a horse body with the top of a man in place of the horse's neck. This image is a reminder that humans have an animal within them. The Greeks tended to define themselves, not by what they were but by what they were not. The human brain raises man above the beasts. It is through reason that man can raise himself to the level of being able to control a large animal.



4.39 *Seated Male Figure*, bronze 750-700 BCE, Walters Art Museum.^{vi}

Many Geometric Period sculptures reflect an interest in music. Image 4.39 shows a man who seems to be playing a type of hand flute. Figures are often seen playing a harp or lyre, much like the Cycladic figures created generations earlier by the folks who lived on the Aegean Islands. Since music is based in reason, this is a great way to celebrate the abilities of the superior human.



4.40 *Geometric Horse statue*. Bronze, Olympia, Greece, Walters Art Museum.^{vii}

Image 4.40 above was probably left as a votive offering at the site of the Olympics, an area dedicated to Zeus. Horse statuettes were often used as offerings to the gods, due to the high value of horses. Horses became a symbol of wealth because of the great expense of keeping them. It is with the aid of the horse that the Greeks succeeded in warfare. As far back as the Trojan War, the elite rode into battle in a chariot, pulled by a horse. Since it is expensive to commission such

statuettes, it is likely that only those who were well off could afford to celebrate in this way. As such it is no surprise that a statue of a charioteer was commissioned, supposedly as a votive object.



4.41 *Charioteer (?)*, small bronze, Greek geometric period. Archaeological Museum of Delphi.^{viii}

Notice that that the figure indicates a focus on the head. The shape of the hair creates an arrow, the tip of which is the top of the head. The collarbones and hair frame the head, bringing even more focus to it. The message seems to be that it is the ability to use reason that separates the charioteer from his horse. A small human is able to tame and control a large animal. This is quite a feat and could certainly not be accomplished through brute force and requires the application of reason. A close look at the Charioteer reveals what was important to this culture's growing identity. He has broad shoulders, so along with his ability to reason, he is ideally strong. The depiction of the figures' genitalia is quite small. When comparing this to the oversized head, it becomes clear that the use of reason is expected (or hoped) to be able to overcome baser instincts. Geometric sculpture reveals a growing sense of rationalism and idealism. These ideas will continue to develop as the culture moves through a transformation into the Archaic Period.

EASTERN INFLUENCE FROM THE GEOMETRIC PERIOD TO THE ARCHAIC PERIOD

From c.750 BCE to 650 BCE, important changes came to the Aegean Sea and the lands in and around it. Many scholars have referred to this time as the "Orientalizing" period because Egypt and many other non-Western cultures were lumped together under the title, "Oriental." This is no longer considered accurate or appropriate so the time period will be referred to as one of eastern influence since much of the change came from east of Mainland Greece.

Some of the most important influences in this time came from the Phoenicians. They had developed navigation and as such travelled farther and faster than anyone that came before them. In addition to teaching the world how to navigate the seas, the Phoenicians brought their alphabet to Greece. This alphabet was based on phonetic sounds and a version of it is used in America to this day. This allowed the Greeks to write down their stories, codifying them so that they can still be read today. Below is an image of an inscription on a fragment from a cup. This is a clear indication that writing had arrived on mainland Greece.



4.42 Fragment late geometric inscription on a Kotyle (a cup).^x

Another thing that seems to have come to, or returned to Greece, is the fertility god, Dionysus who came to be associated with the making of wine. Wine was critical to survival as it allowed water to be cleansed without having to boil it. Trees were at a premium by this time in the rocky land. Wine became an important item of trade and in fact was so popular that the pottery that carried it has been found all around the Mediterranean Sea. During this time many of Demeter's temples were replaced by temples to Dionysus, the hermaphroditic fertility god that taught Greeks to make wine in one of the popular myths. This myth also warned against the danger of drinking too much wine.



4.43 Attic pottery, komast dancers 580-570-BCE, NG Prague, Kinsky Palace.^x

This is an image of a komast dance, which was a part of a procession for Dionysus. Notice that the figures, while not completely natural, are more natural looking than most Geometric images. The figures have taken over the space, with little room left for geometric design. Other changes can also be seen in the decoration found on much of the pottery made during this time. Not only does the decoration begin to incorporate somewhat more natural looking imagery but often the subjects have also changed. The images are sometime of nature rather than of men, funerals and music.



4.44 Jug with birds from Athens, ca. 750–725 BCE Louvre Museum^{xi}

Notice that the birds, although not detailed, are more natural looking than most Geometric Period images. Although the geometry is not left out, it is not the focus of the piece.

This short period of time brought many changes to a Greece that was on the brink of establishing a new identity in the world. Writing, new religious ideas, navigation and new techniques and styles in art arrive with the increase in trade and travel. The Archaic Period that these changes ushered in would establish a new way of looking at humans and at the place of Greece on the world stage.

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ⁱⁱ Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art, CC0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Terracotta_krater_MET_DT263097.jpg

ⁱⁱⁱ Photo courtesy of Kathleen J. Hartman. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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^v Photo by Metropolitan Museum of Art, CC0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bronze_man_and_centaur_MET_DT259.jpg

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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/ab/Charioteer%2C_small_bronze%2C_geometric_period%2C_A_M_Delphi%2C_Dlfm404.jpg

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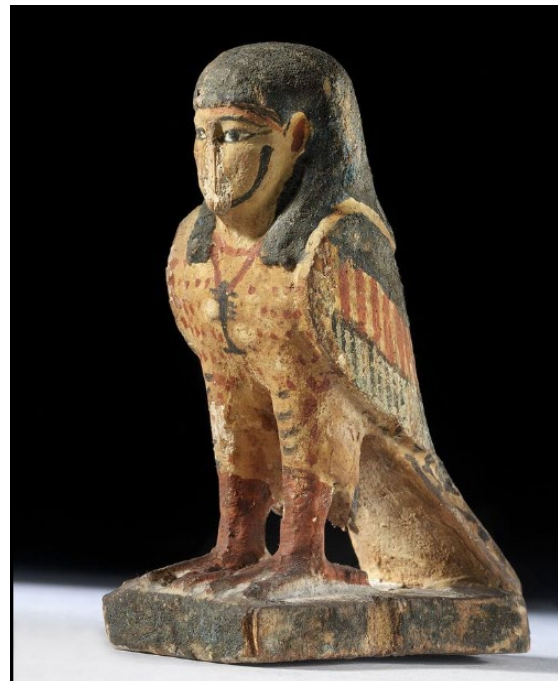
^x Photo by Zde ,CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Attic_pottery,_komast_dancers_580-570_BC,_Prague_Kinsky,_UKA_80.14,_141917.jpg

^{xi} Photo courtesy Louvre Museum [Public domain] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jub_birds_Louvre_CA1930.jpg

THE EARLY ARCHAIC PERIOD

The Geometric Period in Greek art was followed by a period of eastern influence, sometimes called the “Orientalizing” period. This period took place between 750 and 600 BCE. During this time, trade increased and the Phonetic alphabet arrived to enhance the Greek culture that was developing on the mainland. The stories of the Trojan War had been passed on verbally before writing came to the mainland. This transition period is also when *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* were written down and codified. Due to increase in trade and travel, early Archaic art developed in a new direction. The art of Egypt, as well as the art of the Etruscans, made a strong impression on the **Hellenic** (Greek) people.

Black figure painting was developed in Corinth using a method of painting with clay slip, a nearly liquid clay, on the orange clay which was found near Athens. The slip turned black when the pottery was fired, creating a stunning contrast between the painted areas and the naturally orange clay. It quickly became popular and spread throughout the area that would become Greece. Fanciful creatures and exotic plants take the place of the geometric patterns of the Mycenaeans. Notice that the painting on this vase imitates a series of friezes on a building. This jug is from a time that is more recent than the period of eastern influence but, it is a perfect example of the pottery of the early Archaic Period. Like earlier Minoan pottery, every space is filled with figures or flowering plant designs. Lions, boars and horses accompany strange bird like griffins or sphinxes, which resemble the Egyptian image of the *ba*, which is a person’s personality. It is represented by a human headed bird.



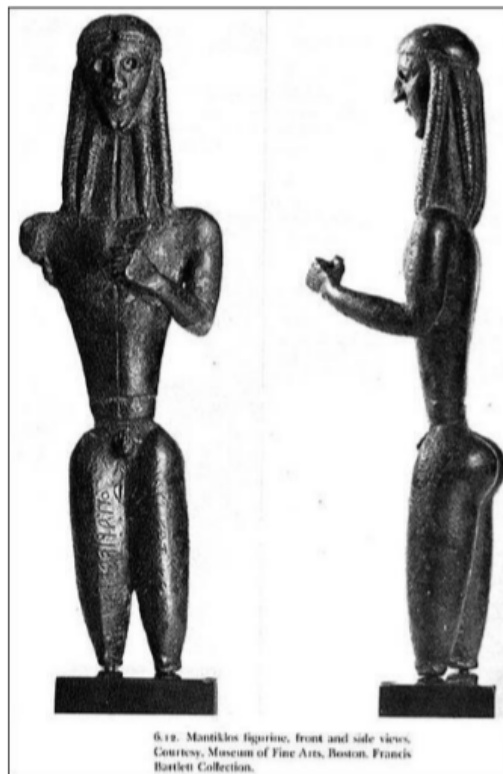
4.45 Corinthian black figure jug 580 BCE, Staatliche Antikensammlungenⁱ 4.46 Ba Statue, New Kingdom, National Museum, Germanyⁱⁱ

Near Athens this black figure style provided a medium in which to represent mythological stories. This is one of the earliest pieces of pottery to do so.ⁱⁱⁱ As such, human beings are introduced as subject matter. Although they are not terribly naturalistic, they are more so than those in the earlier geometric style.



4.47 *The Polyphemos Painter, The Blinding of Polyphemos, Amphora c. 600 BCE.*^{iv}

The Polyphemos amphora depicts a scene from the *Odyssey* where Odysseus put out the eye of the Cyclops. It demonstrates the use of silhouette with only the face in outline. The bodies resemble those on geometric vessels but they are fuller, livelier and more individual than in the earlier style. Like the vase in image 4.45, every space is filled with design elements. The Athenian orange clay is obvious in this particular vessel.



4.48 *Mantiklos Apollo. Bronze, Early 7th Century BCE. Thebes.*^v

Sculpture was also affected by the new ideas flowing into the area. Image 4.48 is a small bronze statue which at first seems geometric. It is in fact similar to geometric sculpture but there is an indication of movement not seen in the earlier period. Notice that Apollo's left leg is slightly forward, a position that will be popularized as the Archaic Period continues. His hand has been separated from his chest, creating a more open and inviting image.

It is easy to see the influence of Egypt in this statuette. The hair is plaited (braided) and the image is essentially frontal and formal. The figure steps forward, as male Egyptian sculptures do. The new openness of the statue, however, is not Egyptian. There were probably jewels or stones inset into the eye sockets and all lines lead to the head. That is an indication that reason is becoming an important aspect of the developing culture. Notice also that the Gluteus maximus muscle is exaggerated. This demonstrates that there is pride in the muscular build that comes from walking or riding everywhere. This is the seed of idealism that would soon blossom.



4.49 *Lady of Auxerre*, Limestone^{vi}



4.50 *Lady of Auxerre* reconstruction^{vii}

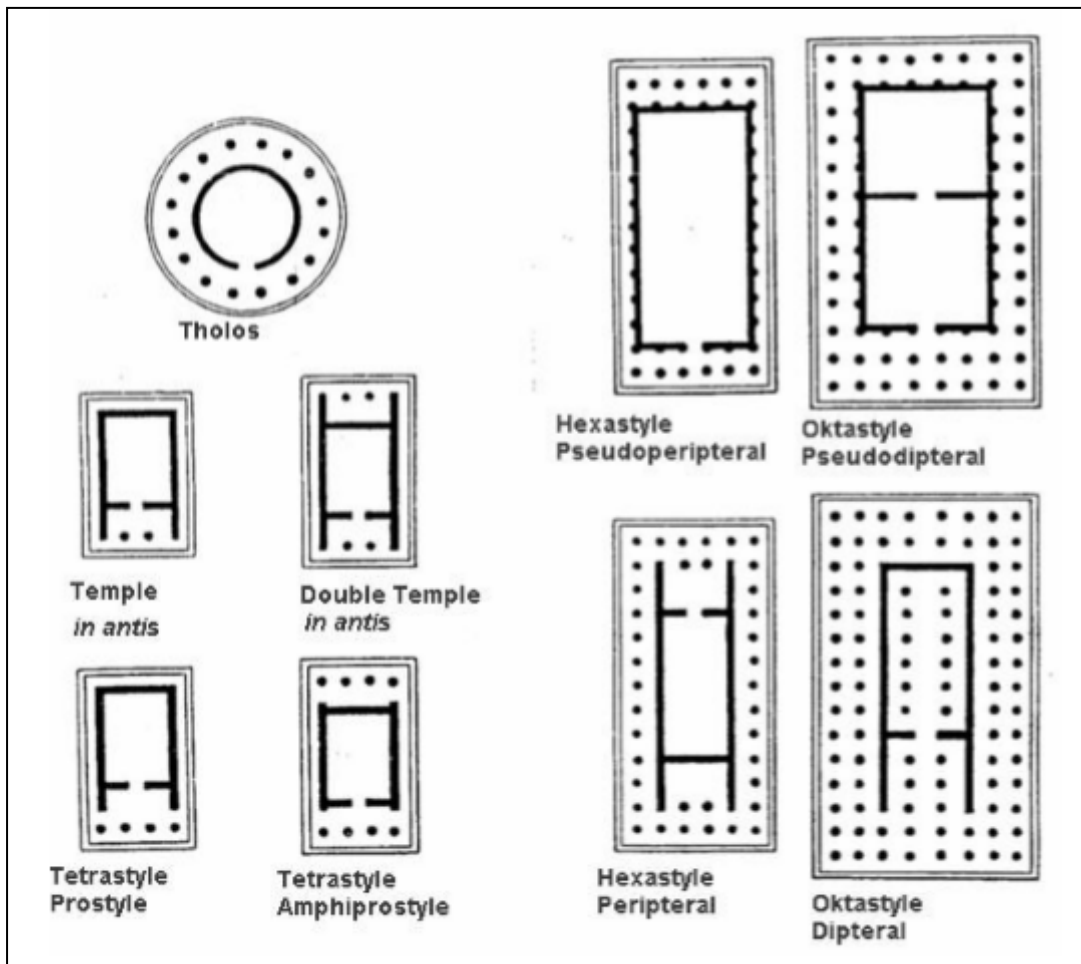
The Lady of Auxerre is a relatively small limestone figure is 26" tall and was probably a votive offering. The statuette demonstrates an Egyptian influence, but she is more open than most Egyptian sculpture. The Lady has the plaited hair often depicted in Egypt as well as the long fingers that are seen in images there. She shares something else with Apollo, however, which is not typically Egyptian. She has a smile on her lips. It may have been borrowed from the neighboring Etruscans. Close inspection reveals that the lady has a pattern incised (carved shallowly) onto her dress. Even the belt around her tiny waist

is decorated with texture. The entire figure would have been painted, as can be seen in the reconstruction. Although the skirt of her dress is quite blocky, her upper body is revealed “through” the fabric. Her arms display musculature, unlike earlier Geometric Period figures.

Much of the Egyptian influence, seen above, remains in pottery and sculpture throughout the Archaic period (C. 600 to 480 BCE). As the Classical Period approaches, however, the images become less Egyptian in style and as time moves on a visual Greek identity can be seen.

ARCHAIC ARCHITECTURE

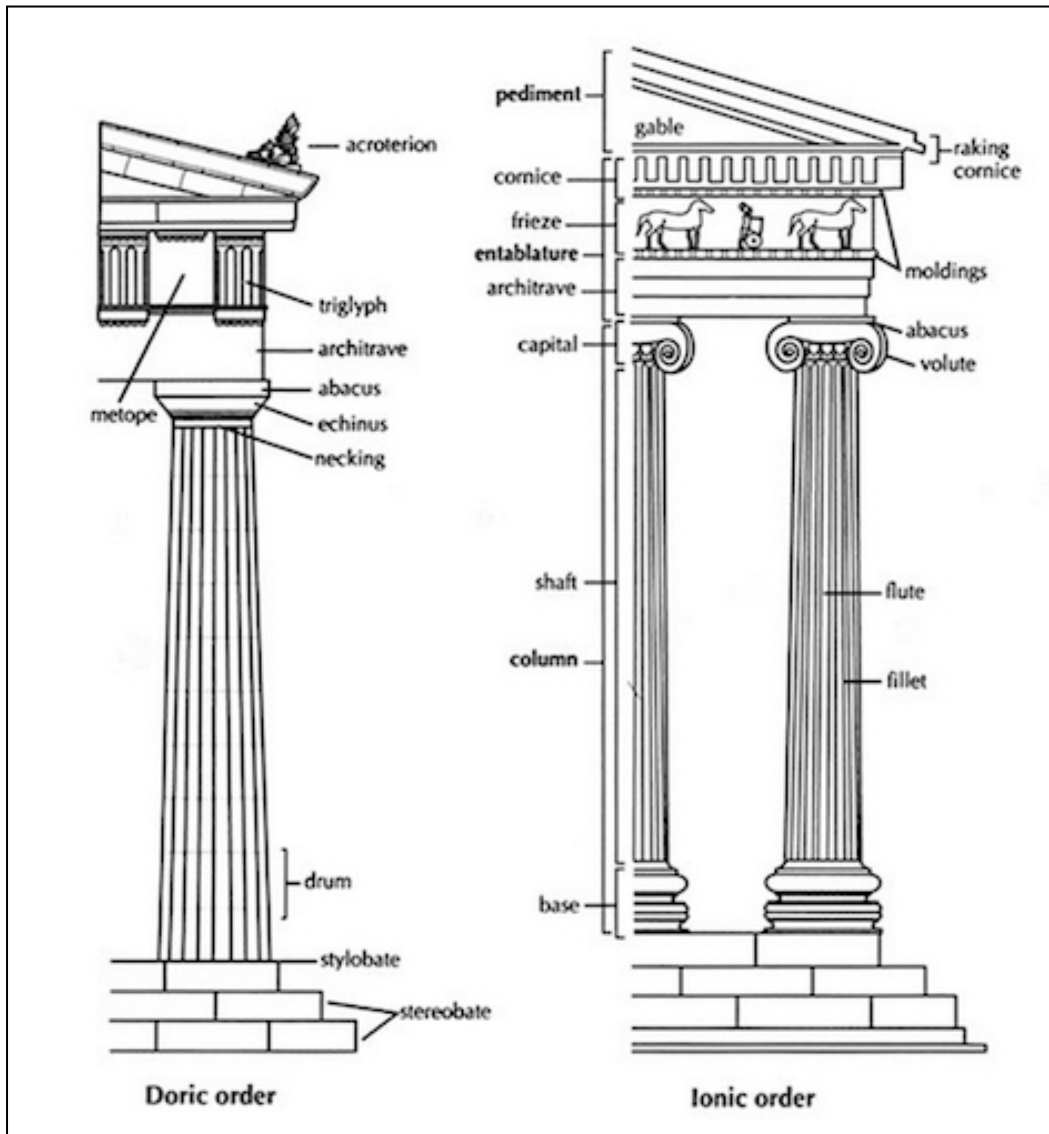
Stone temples were first built during the Archaic period in ancient Greece. Before this, they were constructed out of mud-brick and wood--simple structures that were rectangular or semi-circular in shape--which may have been enhanced with a few columns and a porch. The Archaic stone temples took their essential shape and structure from both these previous wooden temples and the shape of a Mycenaean megaron, which is a rectangular great hall, usually supported with pillars. The impact of cultural interest in reason is already apparent in these structures, which also demonstrate a quickly developing knowledge of building with stone.



4.51 Examples of Greek temples, established and then refined through the Archaic and Classical periods.^{viii}

Most temples were in the shape of a rectangle and stood on a raised stone platform known as the stylobate, which usually had two or three steps. One notable exception to this standard was the circular tholos dedicated to Apollo at Delphi. Columns were placed on the edge of the stylobate in a line or colonnade, which was peripteral (surrounded by a single row of columns) and ran around the naos (inner chamber that holds a cult statue) and its porches.

While this describes the standard design of Greek temples, it is not the most common form found. The first stone temples varied significantly as architects and engineers were forced to determine how to properly support a roof with such a wide span. Later architects, such as Iktinos and Kallikrates who designed the Parthenon, tweaked aspects of basic temple structure to better accommodate the cult statue. All temples, however, were built on a mathematical scale and every aspect of the temple is related to the other parts of the temple through ratios. For instance, most Greek temples (except the earliest) followed the equation $2x + 1 = y$ when determining the number of columns used in the peripteral colonnade. In this equation, x stands for the number of columns across the front, the shorter end, while y designates the columns down the sides. The number of columns used along the length of the temple was twice the number of columns across the front, plus one. Due to these mathematical ratios, we are able to accurately reconstruct temples from small fragments.



4.52 Comparison of the Doric versus the later Ionic style.^{ix}

PAESTUM, ITALY

The Greek colony at Poseidonia (now Paestum) in Italy, built two Archaic Doric temples that are still standing today.



4.53 Temple of Hera I and II, Paestum, Italy c. 550-460 BCE.^x

The first, the Temple of Hera I, was built in 550 BCE and differs from the standard Greek temple model dramatically. It is peripteral, with nine columns across its short ends and 18 columns along each side. The opisthodomos or rear room of a Greek temple, is accessed through the naos by two doors. There are three columns in antis (posts or pillars at doorway) across the pronaos (front porch of a temple). Inside the naos is a row of central columns built to support the roof. The cult statue was placed at the back, in the center, and was blocked from view by the row of columns. When examining the columns, one finds that they are large and heavy, and spaced very close together. This further denotes the Greeks' early unease with building in stone and the need to properly support a stone entablature and heavy roof. The capitals of the columns are round, flat, and pancake-like.

The Temple of Hera II, built almost a century later in 460 BCE, began to show the structural changes that demonstrated the Greek's comfort and developing understanding of building in stone, as well as the beginnings of a Classical temple style. In this example, at the front of the temple are six columns, with fourteen columns along its length. The opisthodomos was separated from the naos and had its own entrance and set of columns in antis. A central flight of stairs led from the pronaos to the naos and the doors opened to look upon a central cult statue. There were still interior columns; however they were moved to the side, permitting prominent display of the cult statue.

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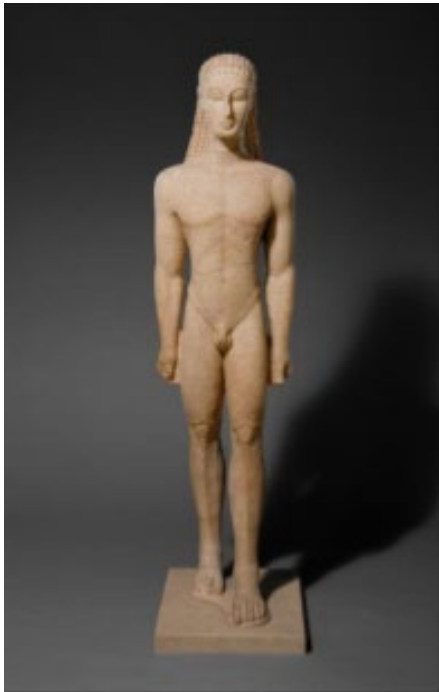
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- ^{viii} "Temple types." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Temple_types.gifWikipedia CC BY-SA.
- ^{ix} <https://smarthistory.org/introduction-to-greek-architecture/>
- ^x "Veduta di Paestum 2010." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Veduta_di_Paestum_2010.jpgWikipedia CC BY-SA.

LATER DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARCHAIC KOUROS 600 TO 480 BCE

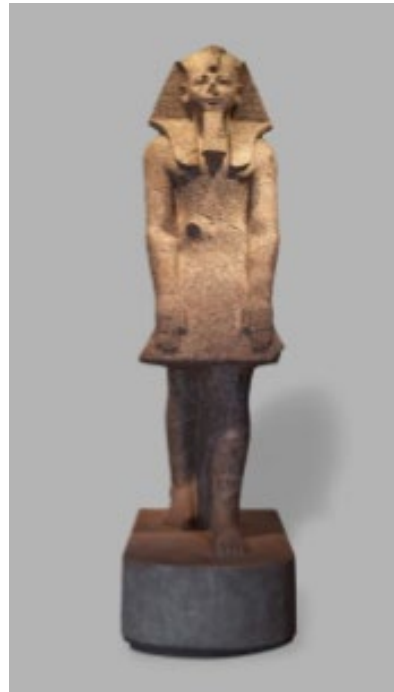
As new ideas arrived in mainland Greece, the residents began to develop an identity based on how they fit into the world around them. Early in the period, as was seen in the “Early Archaic” section, influences from Egypt and other areas meshed with the earlier geometric style to spark development of a new style. This new style became more and more natural as time moved forward and the burgeoning Northern Greek identity continued to develop.

Each city-state had its individual founding story tied to a mythological figure. Through shared language, religion, lifestyle, and trade, the development of the northern sculptural style was shared throughout the area. Most of the statues were created as votives or grave markers, replacing the kraters and amphorae of the earlier period. Other than small personal items, such as perfume bottles and mirrors made from polished metal, these are the artworks most associated with individuals.

Kourai (pronounced kuer-eye) was the term applied to sculptures of nude males. Each one of these was referred to as a kouros (kuer-ose). These sculptures resemble Egyptian sculpture in many ways. They are stepping forward on flat feet. They have idealized bodies and their stance is fairly stiff. They are facing straight forward in the direction that their feet are pointed. The early kourai are nearly expressionless like their Egyptian cousins. Although Hatshepsut is female, the Egyptian statue is so idealized (The ideal ruler was the ideal male) that her gender is hard to identify. The kouros is also an image of the ideal male.



4.54 Marble statue of a *Kouros* (youth) 600-580 BCE.ⁱ



4.55 *Hatshepsut Standing*, 1479-1458 BCEⁱⁱ

They were not, however, entirely Egyptian in style and the differences became more pronounced as the style developed. The Greek figures have a smile on their lips, whereas the expressions on the Egyptian statues are always unemotional. The Greek figures are freestanding. The space between their legs is not filled with stone as they are in monumental Egyptian carvings. Instead, the legs of the kouros support the weight of the sculpture. The Greek male statues are not clothed as Egyptian male statues are. These sculptures have elements of earlier sculpture. There are geometric looking lines incised into the surface of the torso, but they now indicate musculature.



4.56 *New York Kouros* back view.ⁱⁱⁱ



4.57 *New York Kouros* side view.^{iv}

Although these images make it appear as though the Greeks loved unpainted marble, they would have been brightly painted, as all sculptures were during the Archaic and Classical Periods. The hair, headband, eyes, lips and the neckpiece would all have been painted. Because ancient painters had not yet discovered strong binders, only small deposits of the paint remain. In order to appreciate it, it must be investigated through a microscope and chemical testing.

The next image is a close-up view of the head of the New York Kouros. The eyes seem to lie on top of the surface of the face, rather than being recessed into the skull, as eyes naturally are. The head is smaller than is often seen in Geometric sculpture but the proportions are still not natural. Note that the back of the head is reduced so much that the ear is quite close to the where the occipital bone would be. The ear is also stylized. It seems to be constructed of a geometric spiral. The highly stylized hair, held back by a headband seems more Egyptian than Greek. Note the change in expression, below, only a few years later.



4.58 *Kroisos Kouros*, Parian marble, side view, found in Anavyssos (Greece), c 530 BCE, now exhibited at the National Archaeological Museum of Athens.^v



4.59 Kouros head mid 6th century BCE.^{vi}



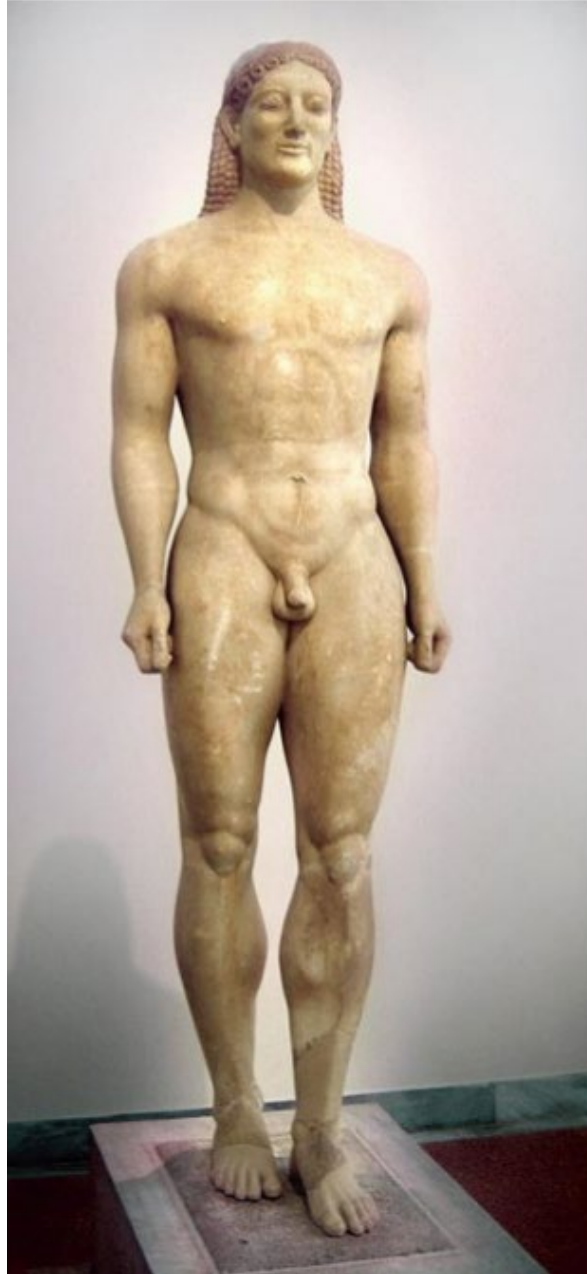
4.60 Etruscan roof tile mid 6th century BCE.^{vii}

Notice the smile that is shared by these two figures, both created in the mid 6th century BCE. It is likely that Etruscan sculpture influenced the late archaic style as this same grin appears on most of the late archaic kouros and pediment sculptures. Along with the smile, which seems to have been intended to make the subject look unperturbed by life, the later sculptures present more natural rendering of musculature. The change from the early Archaic to the late archaic sculptural style is depicted below.



4.61 Collection of Archaeological Museum of Thebes.^{viii}

The three kouros in this image are successively from later time periods going from left to right. The early kouros has incised lines and a pattern of ridges to indicate the torso muscles. The bottom of the ribcage is indicated by a sharp triangle. On the kouros at the far right the muscles of the arms as well as the torso muscles are more rounded and three-dimensional. The bottom of the ribcage is more naturally depicted and it is proportionally correct.



4.62 *The Kroisos Kouros*, Parian marble, found in Anavyssos (Greece), dating from c 530 BCE, National Archaeological Museum of Athens.^{ix}

The Kroisos Kouros was created late in the Archaic Period. It demonstrates nearly natural musculature, although it is highly idealized. His calf muscles are tight, showing that they are engaged. He still holds his hands in fists next to his thighs but the oblique muscles are no longer incised or raised ridges. They bulge in an idealistically powerful way, but are anatomically more natural than in earlier statues. The smile is present, although it is not as exaggerated as those from a few years earlier. This kouros still has a plaited hairdo and his eyes are still sitting on the surface of the face. Other details, however, are far more naturalistic. The navel is no longer a perfect circle and instead appears to be a naturally depicted belly button. Even his knees are tensed, indicating the growing interest in depicting accurate yet ideal anatomy. He is the 530 BCE. ideal man. Kouri like him are becoming more human in nearly every way.

DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHAIC TEMPLE SCULPTURE

The other place that sculpture of this period is seen is on the stone temples that had begun to be built for the first time since the Mycenaean culture had ruled centuries earlier. There were two areas of the Doric temple that were decorated with painted sculpture. The pediments were filled with visual representations of Greek Myths. Pediments are triangular areas under the gables of the temple roof and above the frieze. The other decorative spaces were the metopes. These are spaces created between the triglyphs which are decorative panels with three grooves or glyphs, which were also filled with mythic imagery. Like votive sculpture, the sculpture on Doric Temples became more naturalistic as time moved forward toward the Classical era.

On the Temple of Aphaia the pediments depict the battle scenes from the legendary war with Troy. Notice how the sculpture must be fit into a rather awkward space. As such, the most important figure stands in the center and the action seems about to begin around that figure. This temple is particularly helpful in viewing the progression of the naturalistic style of Archaic sculpture. Although the pediment sculpture is only a decade or two apart in origin, there is a marked difference in style from the East pediment to the West.



4.63 Reconstructed west pediment of the *Temple of Aphaia*.^x

The west pediment was probably created when the temple was built, around 490 BCE. As such the figures are carved in the high archaic style. Once the Greeks almost miraculously defeated the Persians and their Greek allies a new attitude flowered. This is an attitude that had been building for some time in the Greek city-states. In 776 a cook won the Olympics. While one had to be a freeborn male citizen to compete, all competitors were treated equally. This may well have been the seed of the Humanism that comes into full flower following the defeat of the Persians in 479 BCE.

The figures on the west pediment are Archaic symbols and demonstrate everything that is expected of the style. They sport the Archaic grin, the stiff poses and the ideal but more symbolic than natural physicality associated with the growing Idealism and Rationalism of the mainland Greeks. The males are depicted nude, as they would be in an Olympic competition, a sign of pride in the well-developed physical specimen. They would not have fought nude in battle.



4.64 *Aphaia pediment Athena, Central figure West Pediment.*^{xi}

Notice that on the earlier pediment, Athena looks almost entirely Archaic in style. She sports the archaic grin and is in a stiff frontal position. This is perhaps the earliest figure that is almost in a contrapposto position in which the body parts are counter-positioned so that they are not in alignment with one another. Her left foot is turned slightly to the side. This does not, however, cause a twist in the rest of Athena's body so it is not quite a contrapposto position. Like the kouros of the Archaic Period, this statue of Athena is primarily a symbol. In this case, she is a symbol of war. The smile seems to be an attempt to make her appear unconcerned with fear and death. Like other Archaic figures, she is beyond this reality. She holds a spear and the triangular shape of the statue brings the eye to the head, suggesting her association with reason. She is not only the goddess of war but also of wisdom, as she was born from the head of Zeus. Athena is not the only figure on this pediment that displays this Archaic styling. She, like the others demonstrates an early attempt at indicating potential movement in a sculptural subject. The turned foot like the forward foot of her predecessors, fails to convey a life-like stance.



4.65 Trojan archer (so called “Paris”), figure W-XI of the west pediment of the Temple of Aphaia, c. 505–500 BCE ^{xii}

Note that the archer in the image above also has the Archaic grin. His back leg displays attention to how the muscles work, although the bunching of the muscle is as symbolic as it is natural. The other leg seems impossibly positioned when one would expect the forward foot to be anchored. There are holes around the bottom of the hat, suggesting that some indication of hair was originally seen escaping the confines of the hat. Although the body is clothed, the muscles are revealed in such a way that the clothes cease to exist unless one is looking directly at the cuff of the leggings. Again, strength is being demonstrated and it is more important than any desire to create a natural position.



4.66 Aphaia pediment warrior W-VII5^{xiii}

This dying warrior is perhaps the best sculpture to compare to the statues on the East pediment as it is clearly a different style than the dying warrior on the East Pediment, created only ten or twenty years after the West pediment sculptures were carved. The figure above is in an impossible position. It is a position that displays the strength of his legs, although it makes little sense to have the right leg over the left, except to show it off. The arm that the figure uses to pull what must be an arrow out of his torso is flexed and strong but is not natural. His right arm holds him in a reclining position that looks more relaxed than painful. The most alarming thing about trying to view this as anything but symbolic is that he

sports a grin that is diametrically opposed to the image of a dying man pulling an arrow out of his body. The symbolism associated with the archaic style ceased to work once sculptures began to be presented in action.



4.67 West Pediment archer^{xiv}



4.68 East pediment, Heracles as archer, c 485-480 BCE^{xv}

When viewing the archers side by side, it is easy to see that the later sculpture is more natural and less a symbol than the earlier one. The latter figure has a clear distinction between his clothing and his body. Rather than showing off his strength in a presentational way, it is displayed through his more carefully rendered musculature and his look of determination. Notice that although he still has a smile, it is not as broad and as such is less incongruent with the action of the image. His clothing seems to move a bit as he positions himself. The arm that holds the bow is flexed in a believable way. He is still ideal but he is also more natural in his depiction than his predecessor. Even his eyes look more natural as they are a bit recessed, rather than sitting on the surface of his face.



4.69 Aphaia Pediment Warrior W-VIIS^{xvi}



4.70 Dying Warrior East Pediment Temple of Aphaia in Egina. (casting in Pushkin museum after Munich original)^{xvii}

The difference between the pediment sculptures can be seen most clearly when comparing the two dying warriors. The more recent figure struggles to hold himself up as his weight seems to drag him down. His arm muscles are engaged and tensed. The right leg is no longer placed in front of the left. His body is no longer presenting strength in a frontal way. He is no longer merely a symbol of strength but is now an image of the bravery that it takes for a human to succeed in battle. He dies nobly and although there is still a trace of the archaic smile, he looks down and it can be read as a grimace. His body is still ideally proportioned but it is no longer what is on display. The trace of a smile still indicates a sense of not allowing circumstance to bring one down. Like other archaic statues, this one is not allowing himself to be affected by the horror that he is experiencing. This time, however, the figure seems to be more than a symbol, he is human.

The sculptures on the more recent east pediment of the Temple of Aphaia were carved about the same time as the Kritios Boy, which is considered the first fully classical sculpture. He is a kouros because although he shares the traits of the fallen warrior, unlike the warrior, the boy has no trace of a smile and so, he fulfills the expectations of the new classical style in every way.

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^{vii} Terracotta antefix (roof tile) Metropolitan Museum of Art [CC0]

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FROM THE ARCHAIC TO THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

The Archaic Period (800-480 BCE) is characterized by the introduction of republics instead of monarchies organized as single city-states or polises. In Athens, they moved toward democratic rule. Laws such as Draco's reforms in Athens were created. The great Panathenaic Festival was established in Athens. The Panathenaic Festival was a once a year festival honoring Athena and involving the entire City of Athens. This was the most important religious festival in Athens and it involved several types of contest, including races, poetry, equestrian events and other sports contests involving men and boys. There was a great procession and ritual that young girls proudly took part in. Distinctive Greek pottery and Greek sculpture were refined, and the first coins were minted on the island kingdom of Aegina. This was a time of innovation and change, investigation, development and domination.

These changes set the stage for the flourishing of the Classical Period of ancient Greece. Athens lost its Democracy in 404 BCE, ending the high Classical period. However, the ideas generated during that time continued to influence the known world and Greece continued to be a moving force in that world until the death of Alexander in 323 BCE. From the Greek victory at the Battle of Salamis in 480 BCE, to the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE the western world fell under the influence of the Greeks.

During the Golden Age of Athens, from 480 BCE until the fall of the Democracy in 404 when Pericles initiated the building of the Acropolis and just before the period began, he spoke his famous eulogy for the men who died defending Greece at the Battle of Marathon in 490 BCE. Pericles was the most famous Athenian statesman. He was elected General and led Athens to its height. He then witnessed the beginning of its destruction. It was Pericles who helped to form the Athenian League and who supervised the building of the Parthenon, a Temple to Athena which was built on the Athenian acropolis. Most cities in Greece had a defendable hill in the middle of the city where their important buildings were located.

Greece reached heights in almost every area of human learning during this time and the great thinkers and artists of antiquity such as Phidias, Plato, and Aristophanes, flourished and shared ideas in Athens. Leonidas and his 300 Spartans fell at Thermopylae and, the same year (480 BCE), Themistocles won victory over the superior Persian naval fleet at Salamis leading to the final defeat of the Persians at the Battle of Plataea in 479 BCE.

GREECE REACHED THE HEIGHTS IN ALMOST EVERY AREA OF HUMAN LEARNING DURING THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

Democracy which when translated literally refers to Demos = people and Kratos = power, so power of the people, was established in Athens allowing all male citizens over the age of twenty a voice in the Greek government. The Pre-Socratic philosophers, following Thales' lead, initiated what would become the scientific method in exploring natural phenomena. Men like Anaximander, Anaximenes, Pythagoras, Democritus, Xenophanes, and Heraclitus abandoned the theistic model of the universe and strove to uncover the underlying, first cause of life and the universe.

Euclid and Archimedes continued to advance Greek science and philosophical inquiry and further established mathematics as a serious discipline. The example of Socrates and the writings of Plato and Aristotle have influenced western culture and society for over two thousand years. The Golden Period also saw advances in architecture and art with a movement away from the symbolic to the naturalistic ideal. Famous works of Greek sculpture such as the Parthenon Marbles and Discobolos known as the discus thrower, date from this time and epitomize the artist's interest in depicting human reason, beauty, and accomplishment naturally, even if those qualities are presented in works featuring immortals.



4.71 1868 Lawrence Alma, *Tadema-Phidias showing the Parthenon Frieze to His Friends*.ⁱ

All of these developments in culture were made possible by the ascent of Athens following the victory over the Persians in 479 BCE. The peace and prosperity that followed the Persian defeat provided the finances and stability for culture to flourish. Athens became the superpower of the day and, with the most powerful navy, was able to demand tribute from other city-states and enforce its wishes. Athens formed the Delian League, a defensive alliance whose stated purpose was to deter the Persians from further hostilities. The Athenians became so powerful that they considered themselves to be forming an Empire. Pericles set out to make Athens the jewel of the world in terms of knowledge, learning, the arts and philosophy. The powerful Athenian government, based on the Democracy was considered by many to be the reason that Athens was able to have such a large part in defeating Persia. After all, who would make the better army, Persian slaves who had little power over their own lives and as such limited allegiance to their masters, or the brave Athenians who fought for their homes, families and freedom?

With great pride Athens drew into her midst the greatest minds of the age. Pythagoras developed his geometry and a system for writing down music and for reliably duplicating it. The great philosophers, Socrates and Plato would continue to develop secular philosophy, driving it in an entirely new direction. Theatre would develop into a popular entertainment as well as supporting the Classical ideas that birthed it. Greek architecture reached its pinnacle in temples dedicated to the gods and in the Parthenon, dedicated to Athenian Democracy. These ideas, like the popular red figure pottery of Athens, would spread across the known world, changing it forever.

THE DELIAN LEAGUE

The Delian League (or Athenian League) was an alliance of Greek city-states led by Athens and formed in 478 BCE to liberate eastern Greek cities from Persian rule and as a defense to possible revenge attacks from Persia following the Greek victories at Marathon, Salamis, and Plataea in the early 5th century BCE. The alliance of over 300 cities would eventually be so dominated by Athens that, in effect, it evolved into what some scholars refer to as, the Athenian empire, although it was never ruled by an Emperor. Athens became increasingly more aggressive in its control of the alliance and, on occasion, constrained membership by military force and compelled continued tribute that was in the form of money, ships or materials. Following Athens' defeat at the hands of Sparta in the Peloponnesian War in 404 BCE the League was dissolved. This alliance was, however, a large part of what allowed Athens to rise to the position of the most influential city in the ancient world.



4.72 A map illustrating the members of the Delian League, led by Athens c. 431 BCE. The yellow represents Athenian allies and the red represents Athenian territories.ⁱⁱ

Membership & Tribute

The name, Delian League is a modern one; the ancient sources refer to it as simply ‘the alliance’ (symmachia) or ‘Athens and its allies’. The name is appropriate because the treasury of the alliance was located on the sacred island of Delos in the Cyclades. The number of members of the League changed over time but around 330 BCE they are recorded in tribute lists; sources which are known to be incomplete. The majority of states were from Ionia and the islands but most parts of Greece were represented and later there were even some non-Greek members such as the Carian city-states. Prominent members included: Aegina, Byzantium, Chios, Lesbos, Lindos, Naxos, Paros, Samos, Thasos and many other cities across the Aegean. Members were expected to give tribute to the Delian Treasury, which was used to build and maintain the Naval Fleet controlled by Athens.



4.73 *New Style Tetrachm, reverse. Late fourth century BCE.*ⁱⁱⁱ

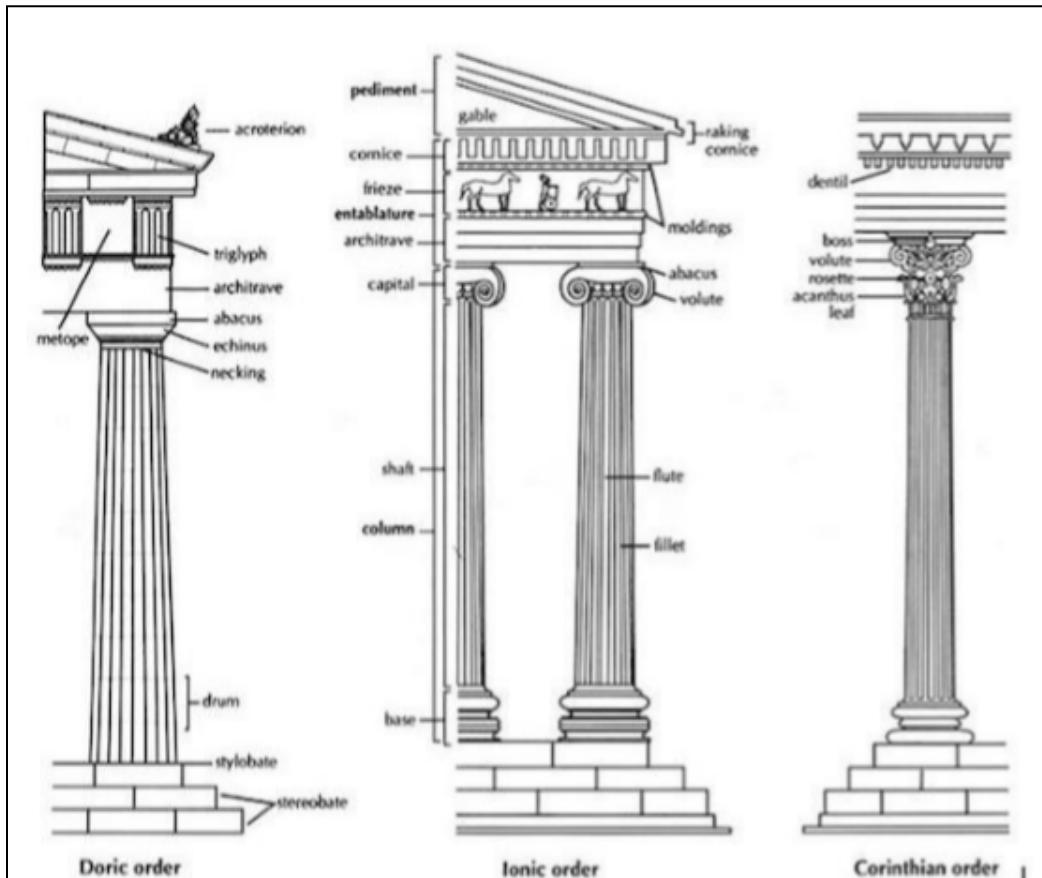
Initially members swore to hold the same enemies and allies by taking an oath. It is likely that each city-state had an equal vote in meetings held on Delos. Members were expected to give tribute (phoros) to the treasury, which was used to build and maintain the naval fleet led by Athens. Significantly, Athenian treasurers controlled the treasury. The tribute in the early stages was 460 talents (raised in 425 BCE to 1,500), a figure decided by Athenian statesman and General Aristides. An alternative to providing money was to give ships and/or materials such as timber and grain.

The Delian League enjoyed some notable military victories such as at Eion, the Thracian Chersonese, and most famously, at the Battle of Eurymedon in 466 BCE, all against Persian forces. As a consequence Persian garrisons were removed from Thrace and Chersonesus. In 450 BCE the League seemed to have achieved its aim if the Peace of Kallias is to be considered genuine. Here the Persians were limited in their field of influence and direct hostilities ended between Greece and Persia.

Other successes of the League were not military but economic and political, making them more difficult to determine in their significance and real effect for all members. Piracy was practically eliminated in the Aegean, inter-city trade increased, a common coinage was introduced (the Athenian silver tetradrachm), taxation became centralized, democracy as a form of government was promoted, the judiciary of Athens was accessible to member's citizens, and such tools as measurement standards became uniform across the Aegean.

The primary beneficiary of all of these was certainly Athens and the massive re-building project of the city, begun by Pericles and which included the Parthenon, was partially funded by the League treasury. In fact, much to the dismay and frustration of some allies, Pericles moved what was left of the Delian Treasury to the new Athenian Parthenon.

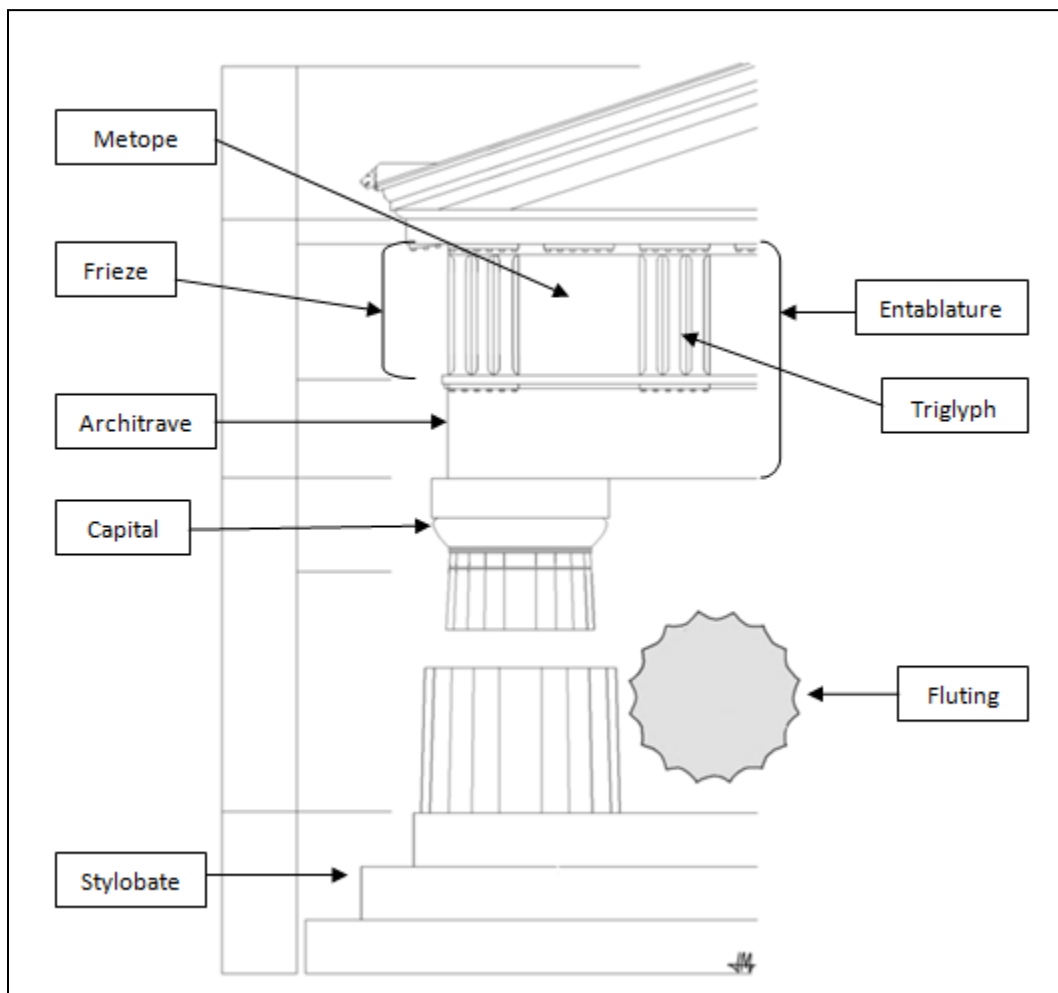
CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE AND THE PARTHENON: AN OVERVIEW



4.74 Greek Architectural Orders^{iv}

Classical Greek Architecture: The Doric Order

An architectural order describes a style of building. In classical architecture each order is readily identifiable by means of its proportions and profiles, as well as by various aesthetic details. The style of column employed serves as a useful index of the style itself, so identifying the order of the column will then, in turn, situate the order employed in the structure as a whole. The classical orders—described by the labels Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian—do not merely serve as descriptors for the remains of ancient buildings, but as an index to the architectural and aesthetic development of Greek architecture itself. In order to best understand the structure and politics of the Parthenon, it is important to review the Doric style as well as the newer, lighter ionic style. Perhaps as a way to placate allies who were angry over the move of the League funds from Delos to Athens, the Parthenon, which would now house the money, was built in both the Doric (earlier southern style) and the Ionic (associated with Athens) styles.



4.75- The Doric Order. ^v

The Doric order is the earliest of the three Classical orders of architecture and represents an important moment in Mediterranean architecture when monumental construction made the transition from impermanent materials such as wood to permanent materials like stone. The Doric order is characterized by a plain, unadorned column capital and a column that rests directly on the stylobate of the temple without a base. The Doric entablature includes a frieze composed of triglyphs (vertical plaques with three divisions) and metopes (square spaces for either painted and/or sculpted decoration). The columns are fluted and are of sturdy, if not stocky, proportions. The 1/8 proportions of the Doric temple are seen in the width of the column drum being 1/8 the height of the column.

Each column on the exterior swells slightly and is narrowest at the top. This is referred to as entasis and it is seen in most Doric temple columns. It creates a lively feel and is almost as though many arms with strong flexing muscles hold up the building. Although Doric temples are large, they are clearly designed primarily for human use and as such, are more human-sized than ancient temples in most other cultures.



4.76 Temple of Hatshepsut.^{vi}



4.77 The Parthenon, Athens, Greece 447-432 BCE. ^{vii}

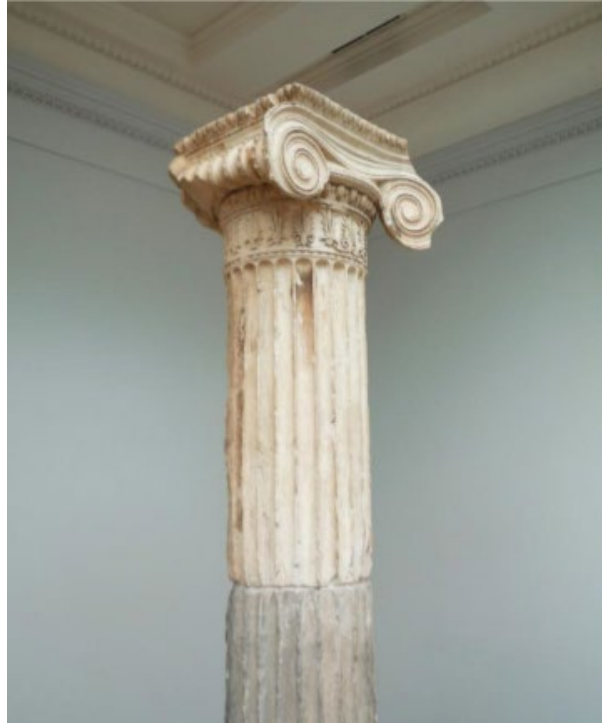
Compare Egypt's Temple of Hatshepsut, which is larger than The Parthenon. In the right front view of the Athenian Parthenon, the roof is no longer there. The pediment and metopes are badly damaged and mostly missing. A row of the interior ionic columns stands behind the Doric exterior columns. This is representative of the mix of styles that was possibly an attempt to appeal to Athenian allies whose funds were used to construct the building.

Notice that both the Egyptian temple and the Greek Parthenon were built using post and lintel construction, although a pediment has been added to the Parthenon. Each has capitals, fluting and a portico. The Egyptian columns are of a single piece of granite that is taller than the Parthenon columns. The Greeks created columns by assembling sections called drums. Lastly, the three-tiered funeral temple of Hatshepsut reaches 97 feet in height, while the tallest point on the Parthenon is 64 feet in height.

The Doric order emerged on the Greek mainland during the course of the late seventh century BCE and remained the predominant order for Greek temple construction through the early fifth century BCE, although notable buildings of the Classical period, especially the canonical Parthenon in Athens, still employ it. By 575 BCE, the order may be properly identified, with some of the earliest surviving elements being the metope plaques from the Temple of Apollo at Thermon. The Doric order finds perhaps its fullest expression in the exterior of the Athenian Parthenon designed by Iktinos and Kallikrates in about 447-432 BCE.

Classical Greek Architecture: The Ionic Order

Image 4.78 presents an ionic capital that sits at the top of the column, and that held up the pediment above it. Between the pediment and the column there was an unbroken frieze, which did not include triglyphs. The ionic capital has a scroll-like design known as a volute, at each corner. There was decorative carving in a band beneath the volutes and above the fluting that fills the rest of the column. Although it is not visible in this image, the column originally sat on a base, unlike the Doric columns. The 1/9 proportions of the Ionic temple can be seen in the column width being 1/9 of the column height. Watch for the return of this proportion during the Gothic age. As its name suggests, the Ionic Order originated in Ionia, a coastal region of central Anatolia, which is now Turkey, where a number of ancient Greek settlements were located. The Ionic order developed in Ionia during the mid-sixth century BCE and had been transmitted to mainland Greece by the fifth century BCE.



4.78 Ionic column from the Erechtheum on the Acropolis at Athens.^{viii}

The monumental temple dedicated to Hera on the island of Samos and built by the architect Rhoikos c. 570-560 BCE, was the first of the great Ionic buildings, although it was destroyed by earthquake in the sixth century BCE. The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, a wonder of the ancient world, was also an Ionic design. In Athens the Ionic order influenced some elements of the Parthenon, notably the Ionic frieze that encircles the cella, a room within the temple that normally held a statue of the patron god or goddess. Ionic columns are also employed in the interior of the monumental gateway to the Acropolis known as the Propylaia built circa 437-432 BCE. The Ionic style was promoted to an exterior order in the construction of the Erechtheum built circa 421-405 BCE and the temple of Athena Nike, on the Athenian Acropolis.



4.79 The Temple of Athena Nike, on the Acropolis at Athens.^{ix}

Notice that the slender ionic columns taper as they rise to meet the architrave that is just below what is left of the frieze. The Ionic order is notable for its graceful proportions, creating a more slender and elegant profile than the Doric order. The ancient Roman architect, Vitruvius, compared the Doric building to a sturdy, male body, while the Ionic was possessed of more graceful, feminine proportions. The Ionic order incorporates a running frieze of continuous sculptural relief, as opposed to the Doric frieze, composed of triglyphs and metopes.

Classical Greek Architecture: The Corinthian Order

The final Classical style, the Corinthian, was used in interiors of buildings but is not seen in the Parthenon. However, it is included here as it has a considerable influence on later Roman architecture. The Corinthian order is both the most recent and the most elaborate of the Classical orders of architecture. The order was employed in both Greek and Roman architecture, with minor variations, and gave rise in turn to the Composite order. As the name suggests, the origins of the order were connected in antiquity with the Greek city-state of Corinth where, according to the architectural writer Vitruvius, the sculptor Callimachus drew a set of acanthus leaves surrounding a votive basket. The Corinthian style is in a 1/10 proportion and as such is taller and leaner than the Ionic and Doric styles. In archaeological terms the earliest known Corinthian capital comes from the Temple of Apollo Epicurius at Bassae and dates to c. 427 BCE.



4.80 Corinthian Column, Jerash Jordan. ^x

The defining element of the Corinthian order is its elaborate, carved capital, which incorporates even more vegetal elements than the Ionic order. The stylized, carved leaves of an acanthus plant grow around the capital, generally terminating just above a band that separates the capital from the column. The Romans favored the Corinthian order, perhaps due to its slender properties. The order is employed in numerous Roman architectural monuments, including the Pantheon in Rome and this example, from Jerash, Jordan where Roman settlers brought their architectural influences.

To cite this document please follow the format below:

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ⁱ Public domain, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3e/1868_Lawrence_Alma-Tadema_-_Phidias_Showing_the_Frieze_of_the_Parthenon_to_his_Friends.jpg

ⁱⁱ By Marsyas uploaded by Mark Cartwright CC BY-SA. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delian_League#/media/File:Map_athenian_empire_431_BC-en.svg

ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by Rob Sing, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0 <https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/799d8ca9-72d6-4093-8ade-c77ffb0d161>

^{iv} Dr. Jeffrey A. Becker, "Greek architectural orders," in Smarthistory, August 8, 2015, accessed December 26, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/greek-architectural-orders/>.

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^x Photo by Michael Bunther, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jerash,_Corinthian_Column._Jordan0928.jpg

THE BUILDINGS ON THE ACROPOLIS

By around 500 BCE 'rule by the people,' or democracy, had emerged in the city of Athens. Following the defeat of a Persian invasion in 480-479 BCE, mainland Greece and Athens in particular entered into a golden age. In drama and philosophy, literature, art and architecture Athens was second to none. The city's influence stretched from the western Mediterranean to the Black Sea, creating enormous wealth. This paid for one of the biggest public building projects ever seen in Greece, which included The Parthenon.

The temple known as The Parthenon, was built on the Acropolis at Athens between 447 and 438 BCE. It was part of a vast building program masterminded by the Athenian statesman Pericles. Within the interior of the temple, which is executed in the Ionic style, stood a colossal statue representing Athena, patron goddess of the city. The statue, which no longer exists, was made of gold and ivory and was the work of the celebrated sculptor, Phidias.

The Parthenon would become the largest Greek Doric temple, although it was innovative in that it mixed the two architectural styles of Doric and the newer Ionic. The temple measured 101'4" by 228' and was constructed using a 4:9 ratio in several aspects. The diameter of the columns in relation to the space between columns, the height of the building in relation to its width, and the width of the inner cella in relation to its length are all 4:9.ⁱ

Be sure to view this short video. You will learn more about the great temple of Athena, patron of Athens, its corrections of optical illusions and the building's troubled history: Khan Academy VIDEO: Parthenon (acropolis) from Smarthistory Parthenon, Athens <https://smarthistory.org/the-parthenon-athens/>ⁱⁱ

Parthenon Sculptures



4.81 Part of the *Parthenon Ionic frieze* (cast), on the west side of the naos, seen between the Doric pillars on the exterior.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Parthenon was decorated with marble sculptures representing scenes from Athenian cult and mythology. There are three categories of architectural sculpture. The interior, ionic frieze, carved in low relief, ran high up around all four sides of the building inside the colonnades. The metopes, carved in high relief, were placed at the same level as the frieze above the architrave surmounting the columns on the outside of the temple. The exterior of the building is constructed in the Doric style. The pediment sculptures, carved in the round, filled the triangular gables at each end.



4.82 *Iris*, from the west pediment of the Parthenon, c. 438-432 BCE, marble, 4'15", British Museum.^{iv}

The Parthenon served as a church until the fifteenth century, when the Ottoman Turks conquered Athens, and the building became a mosque. In 1687, during the Venetian siege of the Acropolis, the defending Turks were using the Parthenon to store for gunpowder, which was ignited by the Venetian bombardment. The explosion blew out the heart of the building, destroying the roof and parts of the walls and the colonnade.

The Venetians succeeded in capturing the Acropolis, but held it for less than a year. Further damage was done in an attempt to remove sculptures from the west pediment, when the lifting tackle broke and the sculptures fell and were smashed. Many of the sculptures that were destroyed in 1687, are now known only from drawings made in 1674, by an artist probably to be identified as Jacques Carrey.



4.83 Marble metope from the Parthenon, c. 447-438 BCE, 5'8" tall, Acropolis, Athens.^v

Here a young Lapith holds a Centaur from behind with one hand, while preparing to deliver a blow with the other. The composition is perfectly balanced, with the protagonists pulling in opposite directions around a central space filled by the cascading folds of the Lapith's cloak. The sculpted decoration of the Parthenon included ninety-two metopes showing scenes of a mythical battle. Those on the south flank of the temple included a series featuring human Lapiths in mortal combat with Centaurs. The Centaurs were part-man and part-horse, thus having a civil and a savage side to their nature. The Lapiths, a neighboring Greek tribe, made the mistake of giving the Centaurs wine at the marriage feast of their king,

Peirithoos. The Centaurs attempted to rape the women, with their leader Eurytion trying to carry off the bride. A general battle ensued, with the Lapiths finally victorious. This imagery served as a fitting metaphor for the Athenian Democracies' defeat of the beastly, enslaved Persians. Democratic Athenians considered anyone who served a king to be enslaved. Other races were generally depicted as more animal-like than the highly civilized Athenians.



4.84 Horsemen from the ionic west frieze of the Parthenon, c. 438-432 BCE, 3'3" tall, Acropolis, Athens Trustees of the British Museum.^{vi}

This block was placed near the corner of the west frieze of the Parthenon, where it turned onto the north. The horsemen have been moving at some speed, but are now reining back so as not to appear to ride off the edge of the frieze. The horseman in front twists around to look back at his companion, and raises a hand (now missing) to his head. This gesture, repeated elsewhere in the frieze, is perhaps a signal. Although mounted riders can be seen here, much of the west frieze features horsemen getting ready for the cavalcade proper, shown on the long north and south sides of the temple. The east pediment of the Parthenon showed the birth of goddess Athena from the head of her father Zeus. The sculptures that represented the actual scene are lost. Zeus was probably shown seated, while Athena was striding away from him fully grown and armed.

View the video at the following link for an in-depth look at the Parthenon sculptures:^{vii}

[Khan Academy clip from Smarthistory, Phidias, Parthenon sculpture](#) (pediments, metopes and frieze).

For a close-up 3-D view of the frieze use this link:^{viii}

[Parthenon Smarthistory Article](#)



4.84a Three goddesses, Hestia, Dione and Aphrodite, from the east pediment of the Parthenon, c. 438-432 BCE, 7'7" long, Acropolis, Athens.^{ix}

Only some of the figures ranged on either side of the lost central group survive. They include these three goddesses, who were seated to the right of center. From left to right their posture varies in order to accommodate the slope of the pediment that originally framed them. They are remarkable for their naturalistic rendering of anatomy blended with a harmonious representation of complex draperies.

The incorporation of multiple styles does not diminish the importance of proportionate ratios that are seen in both architecture and sculpture of the Classical age. These ideas reflect the Greek interest in the application of reason and enhance the superiority that Athenians seemed to feel was a part of their legacy. In spite of the mixture of styles, allies were often unimpressed. Many felt that the use of Delian League funds and the arrogance of the Athenians presenting themselves in friezes with the gods was too much. Including styles popular in regions other than Athens was not enough to stem the anger of many allies who felt that the Parthenon was a symbol of betrayal.

THE ERECHTHEUM



4.84 *The Erechtheum, 421-405 BCE, Classical period, Acropolis, Athens.*^x

Another temple on the Acropolis is the Erechtheum. This temple is essentially built in the Ionic style but the design is unusual in that it is not a symmetrical structure. Sitting at the edge of the cliff atop the Athenian Acropolis, it incorporates the foundation of an Archaic temple and honors the site where Athena was deemed the patron of the city of Athens, which is named for her. Here the olive tree is visible that now stands where the mythical tree grew when Athena struck the ground with her spear. It also houses an area dedicated to Zeus and another that is dedicated to Poseidon. This building is smaller and more elegant than its neighbor, the Parthenon. It exemplifies Athenian ingenuity in its somewhat unusual construction.

The Erechtheum was finished decades after the larger temple, which was completed in 432 BCE. shortly after the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. The Erechtheum was completed 26 years later, shortly before the end of that long war. Take a closer look at this multi-level, multi-purpose structure by viewing the video at the following link:

[“The Erechtheion](#)



4.86 Coffered ceiling of the North porch of *The Erechtheum*, 421-405 BCE., Acropolis, Athens.^{xi}

Looking up at the north porch, one can see the coffers that decorated the ceiling and reduced the weight of the roof. Just behind the left center column, the hole is visible that marks the spot through which Poseidon thrust his trident to land below, creating a salt spring. Below the hole in the ceiling is a hole in the floor that allows viewers to see where the trident struck the ground.

The Erechtheum is perhaps the most complex building on the Acropolis. It houses shrines to several different deities, including Athena, Zeus and Poseidon. It is named for the mythic King Erechtheus who judged the contest between Athena and Poseidon for who would be the patron deity of Athens.

This caryatid is one of six elegant female figures that support the roof of the south porch of The Erechtheum (figures who do the work of columns—carrying a roof—are called caryatids). The figure wears a garment pinned on the shoulders (this is a peplos, a kind of garment worn by women in ancient Greece). The drapery bunches up at the waist and pours over the belt. She stands in contrapposto with her left knee bent and pressing against the drapery. The folds of drapery on the right side resemble the fluting (vertical grooves) on a column. She looks noble and calm despite the fact that she carries the weight of a roof on her head.



4.86 Caryatid column from the South porch of the Erechtheum.^{xii}

These graceful female figures replace columns. Think about how the human form and architecture relate in ancient Greece. Keep in mind that both sculpture and architecture were based on ideal mathematical proportions. Although the arms have broken off, it is likely that the figures once held offerings, probably to the gods being honored in this temple. It is most likely that the arms bent at the elbow and the hands held out those offerings. Note that the figures are fully carved in the round. Also notice that the figures are each slightly different but that the legs that are nearest the sides of the porch are the more column-like, creating a symmetrical grouping.



4.87 Four caryatids at the south porch of *The Erechtheum*, Acropolis, Athens, Greece^{xiii}



4.88 Rear view of a caryatid and Ionic column^{xiv}

The Erechtheum is a highly decorated and elegant Ionic temple. The scroll forms at the top of the column which is called the capital, and its tall slender profile indicate that this is the Ionic order. The column is formed of four pieces, known as drums, and is fluted (decorated with vertical grooves). Just below the scroll shapes, also called volutes, there are decorative moldings. Also note the decoration on the entablature below. The entablature is the horizontal area carried by the column. It is called “egg and dart” (egg shapes alternating with V- shapes), and below that there is a ring of plant-like shapes—an alternating palmette and lotus pattern.



4.89 Entablature of the *Erechtheum*, Acropolis, Athens, marble, 421-407 BCE (British Museum, London).^{xv}

In its complexity, the Erechtheum represents Athenian piety and ingenuity. It is a temple to Zeus, Poseidon and Athena. It honors an ancient temple, whose foundation supports it. It honors the legendary king of Athens, Erechtheus, in its name and location and it straddles the cliff and creatively employs its own version of symmetry. The Erechtheum is truly a monument to Athenian ambition, idealism, history and religion.

THE TEMPLE OF ATHENA NIKE

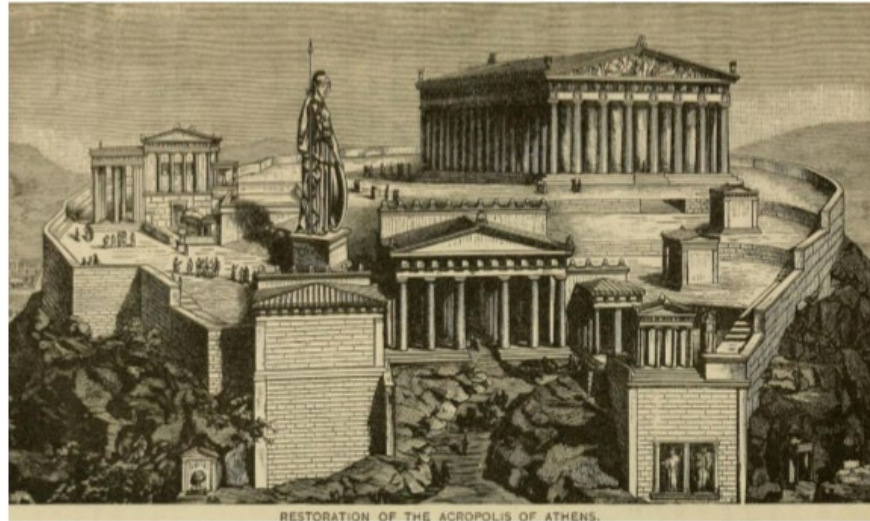
The smallest building on the Athenian acropolis is the Temple of Athena Nike. Nike is a reference to victory and as such, this temple celebrates Athena as a protector of the city. The building was constructed to house the ancient wooden statue of Athena that was believed to have dropped from the sky and that was rescued when Athens abandoned the acropolis to the Persian army. Like the Parthenon and the Erechtheum this temple is unique. It is placed at the southwest corner, at the edge of a high cliff. Its construction was completed in the year 420 BCE during the High Classical Period. It was built according to the design of Kallikrates, the same architect who was responsible for the construction of the Parthenon. The temple by Kallikrates replaced an earlier small temple, which was completely destroyed during the Persian wars.



4.90 The *Temple of Athena Nike* on the Acropolis of Athens. 421-405 BCE^{xvi}

The spot, highly vulnerable to attack but also well placed for defense, was appropriate for the worship of the goddess of victory. There is some archaeological evidence that the location was used for religious rituals already in Mycenaean age,

roughly from 1600 to 1100 BCE. Mycenaean also raised the first defensive bastion here and its fragments are preserved in the temple's basement.



4.91 Restoration of the Athenian acropolis.^{xvii} The Temple of Athena Nike is the small temple on the left below the Parthenon.

The temple of Athena Nike, built in the Ionic order using beautiful white Pentelic marble, has columns at the front and back but not on the sides of the cella; this kind of floor plan is called an amphiprostyle. Because of the small size of the structure, there are only four columns on each side. The columns are monolithic, which means that each one of them was made of a single block of stone, instead of horizontal drums, as it was in the case of the Parthenon.

Another interesting detail is that the columns of the temple of Athena Nike are not as slender as those of many other Ionic buildings. Usually the proportion between the width and the height of an Ionic column was 1:9 or even 1:11. Here the proportion is 1:7—and the reason for that choice might have been the intention to create a harmonious whole with other buildings nearby. The temple of Athena Nike stands just next to the Propylaea, a heavy, monumental gateway to the Acropolis, built in the Doric order. To visually counteract this massive structure, the architect may have decided to widen the columns, otherwise the building might feel out of place and be too delicate in contrast to the neighboring architectural mass of the Propylaea. The ancient Greeks were very aware of mathematical ratios while constructing architecture or creating statues, feeling that the key to beauty lay in correct proportion.



4.92 Temple of Athena Nike, Acropolis, Athens, Greece, 421-405 BCE. ^{xviii}

As with all Greek temples, the Temple of Athena Nike was considered a home of the deity as represented in its statue, and was not a place where regular people would enter. The believers would simply perform rituals in front of the temple, where a small altar was placed, and they could glimpse the sculpted figure of the goddess through the spaces between the columns. The privilege of entering the temple was reserved for the priestesses, who held a respected position in Greek society. As the name suggests, the temple housed the statue of Athena Nike, a symbol of victory. It probably had a connection to the victory of the Greeks against the Persians half a century earlier. Nike usually had wings, but in this case we know that the statue had no wings, hence it was called Athena Apteris, which means without wings. The ancient Greek writer Pausanias later explained that the statue of Athena had no wings so that she could never leave Athens.

This temple featured beautiful sculptural decoration, including a typical continuous Ionic frieze on the eastern side that represented a gathering of gods. On the southern wall, the sculptor showed a battle between Greeks and Persians, and on the remaining sides, battles between Greeks and other warriors. Sculptures on the pediments, almost entirely lost, most probably depicted the **Gigantomachy**, a story of Zeus fighting the Titans, and **Amazonomachy**, a story of the Amazons. Best known are reliefs from the outside of the stone parapet that surrounded the temple at the cliff's edge. These represented Nike in different poses and could be admired by people climbing the stairs to the Acropolis. Most famous of these is the Nike Adjusting Her Sandal. It presents the goddess in a simple, everyday gesture, perhaps adjusting her sandal, or maybe taking it off, as she prepares to enter the sacred precinct. Whatever she is doing, the relief is still charming in its elegance and simplicity. Both Nike Adjusting Her Sandal and parts of the frieze can be admired today at the Acropolis Museum.



4.93 Athena adjusting her sandal. ^{xix}

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The British Museum, "The Parthenon, Athens," in Smarthistory, December 14, 2015, accessed July 30, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/the-parthenon-athens/>. And, Dr. Jeffrey A. Becker, "Greek architectural orders," in Smarthistory, August 8, 2015, accessed December 26, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/greek-architectural-orders/>. Modified by T. Kate Pagel, PhD for "Buildings on the Acropolis." Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker, "Caryatid and Ionic Column from the Erechtheion," in Smarthistory, November 25, 2015, accessed August 2, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/caryatid-and-ionic-column-from-the-erechtheion/> adapted and supplemented by T. Kate Pagel, PhD, for "Buildings on the Acropolis." Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Katarzyna Minollari, "Temple of Athena Nike on the Athenian Acropolis," in Smarthistory, September 11, 2016, accessed January 2, 2020, <https://smarthistory.org/temple-nike/>. Modified by T. Kate Pagel, PhD for "The Buildings on the Acropolis." Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Cartwright, Mark. "Parthenon." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 28 Oct 2012. Web. 26 Dec 2019.

ⁱⁱ Video, (Iktinos and Kallikrates (sculptural program directed by Phidias), Parthenon, Athens, 447 – 432 BCE. Speakers: Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker.) found on The British Museum, "The Parthenon, Athens," , December 14, 2015, accessed December 26, 2019.

ⁱⁱⁱCC BY 3.0 https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?sort=relevance&search=parthenon+frieze&title=Special:Search&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Parthenon_frieze_w_facade_in_situ.jpg

^{iv} <https://smarthistory.org/the-parthenon-athens/> <https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/7b3d371d-3cad-46fe-9892-416533617710>

^vPhoto by Marie-Lan Nguyen (User:Jastrow), 2007 CC BY 2.5

https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Metope+parthenon&title=Special%3ASearch&go=Go&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:South_metope_27_Parthenon_BM.jpg

^{vi}Cavalry from the Parthenon Frieze, West II, 2–3, British Museum Public Domain

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parthenon_Frieze#/media/File:Cavalcade_west_frieze_Parthenon_BM.jpg

^{vii}Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker, "Phidias, Parthenon sculpture (pediments, metopes and frieze)," in Smarthistory, November 25, 2015, accessed August 1, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/parthenon-frieze/>.

^{viii} © Marie-Lan Nguyen CC BY 2.5

https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?sort=relevance&search=Parthenon+sculpture+pediment&title=Special:Search&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:East_pediment_KLM_Parthenon_BM.jpg

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?sort=relevance&search=Parthenon+sculpture+pediment&title=Special:Search&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:East_pediment_KLM_Parthenon_BM.jpg

^x Photo by Stan Shebs is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erechtheum_SW-650px.jpg

^{xi}Photo by Юкатан is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8e/Coffered_ceiling_of_Erechtheum.jpg

^{xii}Photo by Psy guy is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Column_from_Porch_of_the_Caryatids.JPG

^{xiii}Photo by Jebulon, CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication.

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^{xv}Photo by Jebulon, CC0 1.0, Public Domain.

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^{xvi} Photo by George E. Koronaios, CC BY-SA 4.0

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/47/The_Temple_of_Athena_Nike_on_the_Acropolis_of_Athens.jpg

^{xvii} Restoration of the Athenian acropolis. Internet Archive Book Images [No restrictions]

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0b/A_general_history_for_colleges_and_high_schools_%281889%29_%2814578006309%29.jpg

^{xviii} Temple of Athena Nike detail. Benjamín Núñez González [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)]

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4f/Templo_de_Atenea_Nike%2C_Atenas%2C_Grecia%2C_2019_02.jpg

^{xix} Université Bordeaux Montaigne [Public domain]

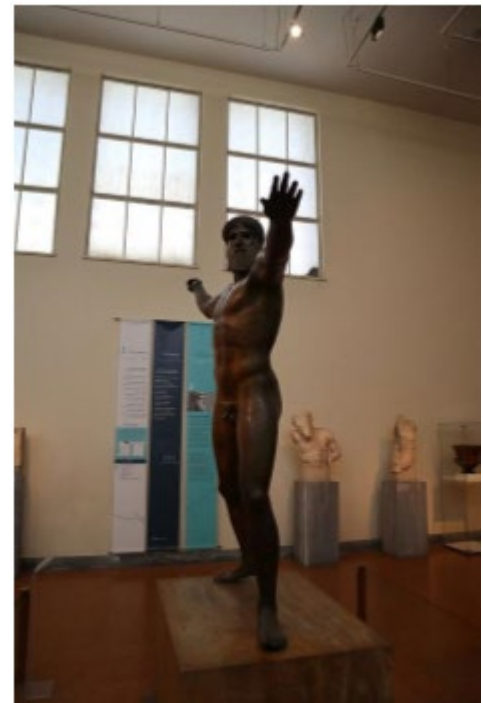
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b6/Moulage_du_temple_d%27Ath%C3%A9na_Nik%C3%A9%2C_Ath%C3%A8nes%2C_relief_du_parapet_Nik%C3%A9_d%C3%A9tachant_sa_sandale_avant_d%27entrer_dans_le_sac%27nctuaire%22.jpg

CLASSICAL GREEK SCULPTURE

OVERVIEW

It is important to remember that the ancient Greek sculpture that can be viewed today is limited to those relatively few pieces that have survived. For this reason there are only a few of the bronze sculptures, the most valuable and noble of the genre, left for our viewing. Bronze was and still is worth a lot, whether it be in money or trade. Consequently, bronze statues, the most important as the Greeks would have seen it, were melted down by later generations and cultures. In most cases they were turned into weapons. Whether made of bronze or marble, Classical sculptures reflect the time period in which they were created.

Most of what is known about Classical Greek sculpture comes from the excellent copies made by the Romans. Copies of popular sculptures were made for sale. There are still five extant copies of Doryphorus. Bronze statues were often copied before being melted down. Many of the marble statues that have survived from ancient Greece and from the later Roman era are broken. Marble hardens over time after being carved and can become brittle. Arms and other appendages often break off. Because of this many marble copies of bronzes required extra support for limbs. The bronzes could be designed with arms outstretched like those of Zeus/Poseidon, but that approach cannot be as successful in marble.



4.94 and 4.95 *Zeus or Poseidon*, depending on whether he held a trident or a lightning bolt. Bronze, 460 BCE, 6' 10", National Archeological Museum, Athens. Front view and side view.¹

Sometimes even statues that were originally carved in marble have supports, especially supports that hold the arms to the body in the Classical era, or supports that appear as large vases or tree stumps during the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. There are three basic divisions in Classic sculpture, Early Classical, High Classical and Late Classical. Pieces categorized as Early Classical in style are generally dated between c. 480 and 450 BCE. Pieces in the High Classical style are dated between 450 BCE and 404 BCE, the fall of the Athenian Democracy. Late Classical pieces date from 403 BCE to 323 BCE, when Alexander the Great died. Although the statue of Zeus seems open from the front, he seems closed when viewed from the side.

Zeus is an excellent example of a transition piece. He is more closed from one view than later Classical work but he is more open than the Archaic Kouros that came before him. Both copies and originals have been separated from their context. This adds another layer of confusion to those attempting analysis. Fortunately, Athens managed to retain many of the works from the Classical age, and in the case of the acropolis, much of it can be connected to its original context.

PERSONAL VERSUS PUBLIC ART

The majority of the art from the Classical era that is still available for viewing was commissioned by the City-State that displayed it. As such, it was large and monumental. Consequently, most sculpture that can be studied from the age was public art, which had an agenda to honor the gods or later, to honor the Athenians, as seen on the Parthenon.



4.96 *Caryatid Mirror with Aphrodite*, c 460 BCE, 17x7", Walters Art Museum.ⁱⁱ

Personal art from the Classical era is made up of small sculpture that few could afford. This type of sculpture was household items such as perfume bottles, hairpins and mirrors, such as this brass mirror. Wall paintings were also popular but none have survived.

The Parthenon displays the two major types of sculpture found in public buildings. The first is sculpture in the round. While much public art used bronze sculptures that were designed so that a person could walk around them, the Parthenon pediments presented marble sculptures carved in the round, even though they would only be viewed from one angle, from below and from the front. This search for excellence is perhaps a reflection of Athenian idealism.

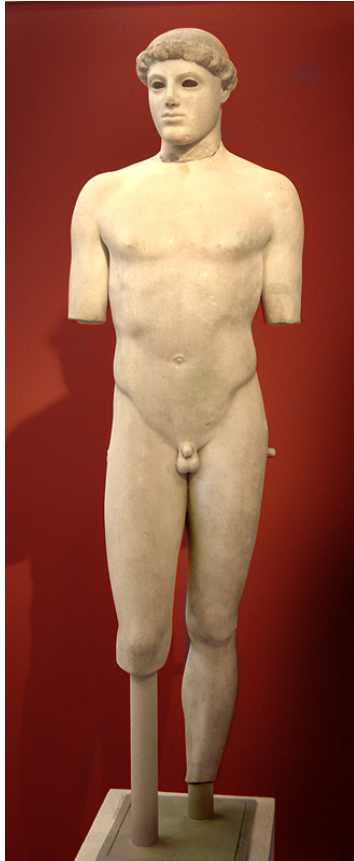
The other type of public sculpture was bas-relief, which is carved on a flat surface so that it can only be viewed from the front. The Metopes that decorate the exterior colonnade are in high relief (deeply carved,) whereas the frieze that decorates the interior colonnade is carved in low relief (shallowly carved). As you view the art of the classical age, think

about how it reflects the era in which it was created. Was it an early piece like the statue of Zeus, or was it a late piece from after the fall of the Democracy? Look for hints in the use of the elements of art.

Early classical sculpture tended to :

- Be more open than previous sculpture
- Contain a subtle contrapposto pose
- Demonstrate Humanism, Rationalism and Idealism
- Celebrate arête, (excellence and moral virtue) bravery, beauty and repose. The figure often stood alone, filled with potential.

Zeus is a great example of the Early Classical style, as is Kritios Boy, while Athena in image 4.98 and Zeus behind her below on the right are in the high Classical style. The differences are subtle.



4.97 Kritios Boy. Front view 480 BCE.ⁱⁱⁱ



4.98 Castings of Classical Sculptures. Athena is in front.^{iv}

High Classical sculpture tended to:

- be more open than Early classical sculpture,
- contain a clear contrapposto pose, normally more exaggerated than in Early Classical sculpture,
- demonstrate Rationalism, Humanism and Idealism, be designed to be viewed from multiple angles,
- and celebrate bravery, arête, beauty and repose.

The figure often stood alone, filled with potential. These figures generally followed Polykleitus' Canon in their approach to proportion.

Late Classical sculpture tended to:

- be taller and leaner in proportion than Polykleitus' Canon (now called, Doryphorus),
- incorporate stumps, vases and other "props,"
- be more erotic than Classical work, especially where images of women were concerned,

- and be more personal than earlier Classical statues.



4.99 *Aphrodite of Knidos*, Roman copy of marble original by Praxiteles, 4th Century BCE.^v

In each era the art is distinctive and is tied to the context in which it was created. With a bit of effort, these pieces can be read. The values and hopes of the people who created the images can be seen reflected in them. For more information of each of these art styles, read the sections and view the video clips associated with them.

Early Classical Sculpture

The Early Classical style is sometimes called, The Severe style, which is odd as it is not nearly as severe as the earlier Archaic Style. This early Classical style describes the trends in Greek sculpture between c.490 and 450 BCE. Artistically this stylistic phase represents a transition from the rather austere and static Archaic style of the sixth century BCE to the more idealized Classical style. The “Severe style” or “Early Classical style” is marked by an increased interest in the use of bronze as a medium as well as an increase in the characterization of the sculpture, among other features.^{vi}



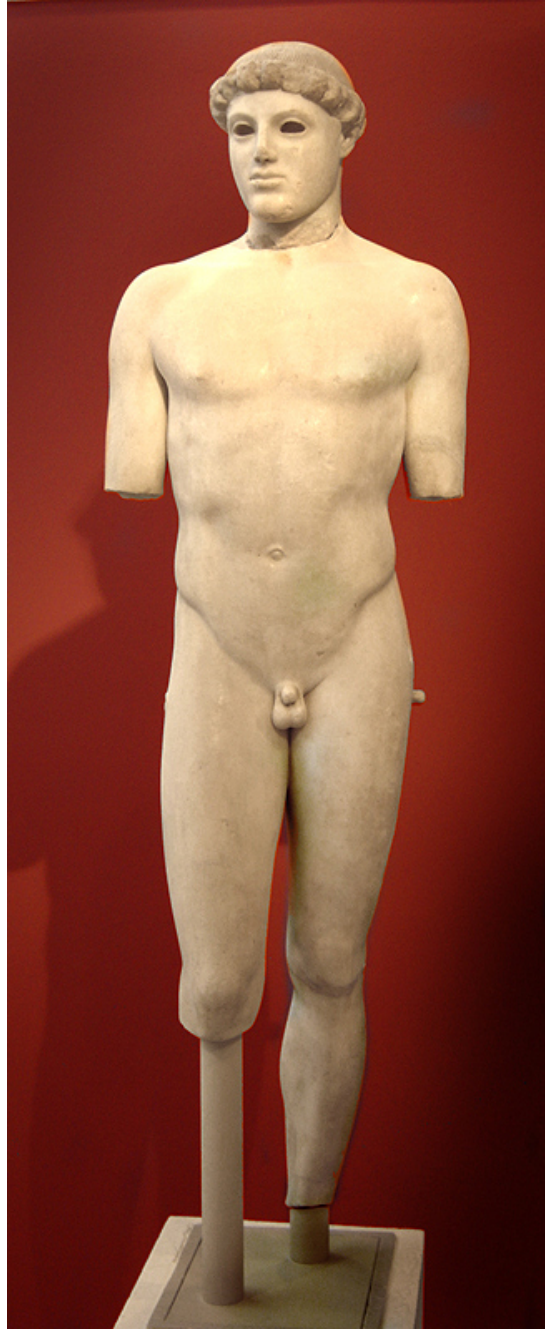
4.100 *The Calf-Bearer* and *Kritios Boy* shortly after exhumation on the Acropolis. Metropolitan Museum of Art.^{vii}

The earliest sculpture that clearly presents the idealism, humanism and rationalism of the Athenian Democracy was probably created in marble by the famous bronze sculptor, Kritios. Because of this the statue is known as Kritios Boy. This statue has become the beacon that announces the beginning of the Greek Classical age.

View the following video to better understand how this statue differs from his Archaic cousins. As you view the upcoming video, ask yourself, how can idealism, humanism and rationalism be perceived in the sculpture? These are the cultural values that identify Classic sculpture. See if you can identify how they appear in Kritios Boy.

See the following link:

[KRITIOS BOY VIDEO](https://smarthistory.org/kritios-boy/)^{viii} (<https://smarthistory.org/kritios-boy/>)



4.101 *Kritios Boy*. 480 BCE, Athenian Acropolis Museum, Marble, 46".^{ix}

There is a sense of impending movement in this statue. Such focus on potential lends itself to idealism. As a symbol, rather than a picture of an individual, the youth of the statue also suggests idealism as the figure is at the strongest, and most beautiful that he will be in his life. He is at his physical and mental peak.

The Archaic smile is gone and in its place is a look of calm, rational thoughtfulness. The boy stands like a living human. His muscles are flexed and tensed as he prepares to move forward into the space of the viewer. He is fully human and as such, is a celebration of the beauty, reason and potential of the Democratic, Athenian citizen. Just before the time that *Kritios Boy* was carved, advances in metallurgy, led to the casting of bigger than life bronze statues. Statues could now be cast in pieces, allowing glass paste eyes (ivory and onyx were also used) to be added from inside the head. This created a more natural look than what is seen on Archaic sculpture, where the eyes sit on the surface of the face.



4.102 *Kritios Boy* side view of torso. ^x



4.103 *Kritios Boy*, detail. ^{xi}

Notice that the sculptor took the same approach to carving this marble statue. Perhaps the artist, who specialized in casting bronze, wanted to test the same approach with marble. It is evident that the sculpture's eyes would have been added in a more life-like medium. Unlike the bronze statues of the time, however, supports had to be added to help maintain the position of the arms. Unfortunately, this did not prevent the statue from being broken into pieces during the Persian invasion of the Athenian Acropolis (refer to video). This fragility may explain why this method is rarely seen in marble sculptures.

Kritios Boy has the relatively small genitals and relatively large head that brings a viewer's focus to the importance of the head and the use of the reason that resides within it. This intentional manipulation of size served as a symbol of the rational mind ruling over the carnal body.

Although his weight shift is subtle, in the front view, Kritios Boy demonstrates the potential of idealism along with presenting a human looking body with a rational expression. He is purely Classical.

Viewing Kritios Boy from the rear reveals the s-curve formed by the backbone and completed by the turn of the head. This s-curve indicates the potential for movement, as the weight shift causes parts of the body to be counter-positioned. This position is referred to as **contrapposto**. The head turns to the side, the torso faces front and the hips tilt, as human hips do when one is about to step forward. Kritios Boy is technically a kouros, as he is a naked male standing alone and stepping forward. The style and intent are so different, however, that the term ceases to be used in this period.

As one analyzes sculpture, one will often find the statues broken, particularly if they are carved from marble. Over time, marble hardens as the air surrounds it after carving. Unfortunately, it can become brittle and break when stressed.



4.104 *Kritios Boy*, rear view.^{xii}

While the video does a great job of discussing this statue, it fails to mention the hair. Did hairstyles change, or was the long plaiting of the Archaic kouroi a stylistic element? In either case, the hairstyle of Kritios Boy is like that of contemporary (in the same time period) Greeks. Kritios Boy seems younger than the archaic kouroi. Could this be because the men who were left to fight and defend Athens were younger? It is possible that the ideal is depicted as younger because so many men were lost to the Persian war. Or perhaps his age is to remind the viewer that the ideal human has potential.

The Classical elements seen in the Kritos Boy can also be perceived in this piece of pottery, created the same year. Notice that there is an attempt to demonstrate depth as one leg is placed in front of the other. There are indications of muscle structure that illustrate the growing sense of humanism in mainland Greece. The Archaic smile is gone, replaced by a look of intense concentration. Red figure pottery allowed potters to paint in more detail than black figure pottery, allowing more emphasis to be put on muscle structure, rational expressions and movement.



4.105 *Artisan*, red-figure pottery, 480 BCE^{xiii}

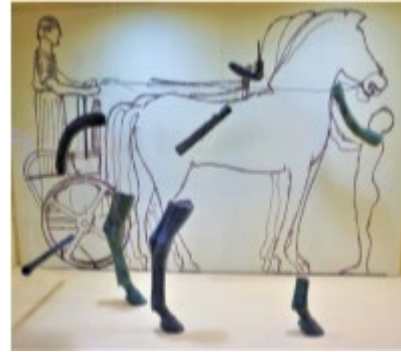
See the following link to learn more about “the severe style” that creates a transition from the Archaic style to the Classical style.

[NIOBID KRATER](https://smarthistory.org/kritios-boy/).^{xiv} (<https://smarthistory.org/kritios-boy/>)

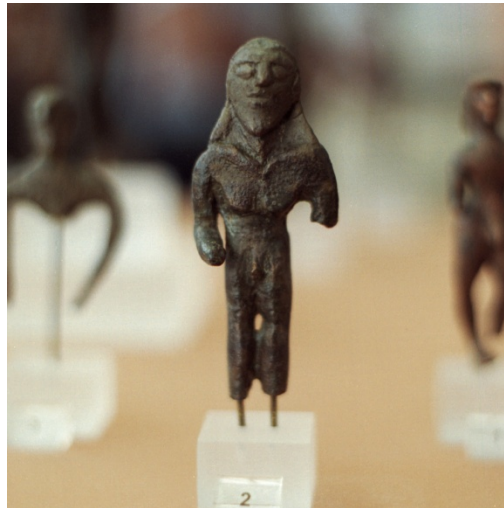
Below is an image of the Charioteer of Delphi, a part of a larger sculpture that was cast in the Early Classical style. Can you identify what makes this sculpture Classical in style?



4.106 Detail, *Delphi Charioteer*, Delphi Museum ^{xv}



4.107 Drawing, *Charioteer of Delphi* ^{xvi}



4.108 *Geometric Charioteer*^{xvii}

Notice how much the image of a Charioteer has changed since the Geometric period. The image above displays frontal stiffness and an outsized head. The Classical Charioteer demonstrates naturalism and displays rationalism through expression and body stance, rather than through size distortion. There is no way to tell if the Geometric Charioteer was part of a larger sculpture group. The differences between the two styles, however, are obvious.

Although it is difficult to see in these pictures, there is evidence of silver in the headband. The eyes are glass paste and would have looked strikingly real when they were fully intact. The figure even has finely worked bronze eyelashes. This bigger-than-life sculpture has carefully crafted feet, even though they would have been invisible to the public. The figure would have been lifted above eye level as it stood in the chariot.

Every detail has been carefully created. Bronze was far too valuable to cover with paint and paint would not have lasted long as there were no binders that would allow it to stick to metal in the fifth century BCE. Even though no paint would have been used on this figure, it was polychromatic in its incorporation of silver, glass and copper inlay. This type of casting was expensive and difficult which indicates the importance of the image



4.109 *Charioteer of Delphi*, detail. c. 475 BCE. Delphi Archeological Museum^{xviii}

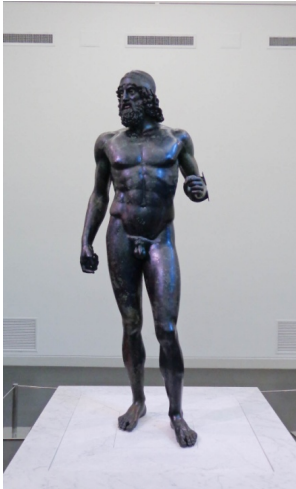


4.110 *The Charioteer*^{xix}

There is a weight shift indicated by the contrapposto stance. The twist is caused because the figure's feet face in a different direction than his face. This twist is subtle but effective in giving the figure a sense of humanity and life. He stands proudly, ready to do his part for his community. He displays potential, is calmly beautiful, and he is very human.

RIACE WARRIOR

Another great example of the Early Classical style in bronze casting is the Riace Warrior. The attention to detail is impressive. This life sized bronze statue has silver foiled teeth and copper inlay for lips and nipples. He has brass foiled eyelashes and ivory whites in his eyes. It is likely that his pupils were glass or precious stone. As well as being durable and allowing great detail in sculpture, bronze statues had a polish that resembled the shine on skin that had been treated with olive oil. Athletes covered themselves in olive oil much like body builders do today. It showed off the musculature, emphasizing body strength and beauty. Bronze exemplifies the beauty of the human form at its most ideal.



4.111 *Riace Warrior A*. 450-460 BCE, from the sea near Riace, Italy, 6'6", Museo Archaeologico Nazionale).^{xxi}



4.112 *Riace Warrior*, torso.^{xx}

The Warrior's beard is nearly perfect in its symmetry and unlike the body, is not shiny but textured in perfect curls. The beard indicates age and wisdom, a trait also associated with Zeus. This warrior is indeed godlike in his perfection. He seems about to take a breath with his lips slightly parted. It appears that this warrior had a shield on his right arm and like the Spear Bearer held a spear that brought attention to his head. Bronze sculptures were made using the lost wax method. The bronze is relatively thin and the statues are hollow. In every case, the sculptures point to a change in style and technology that accompanied a change in culture. As the ancient Greeks began to focus on the potential of human beings, politics, religion, art followed suit.



4.113 *Riace Warrior A*, detail.^{xxii}

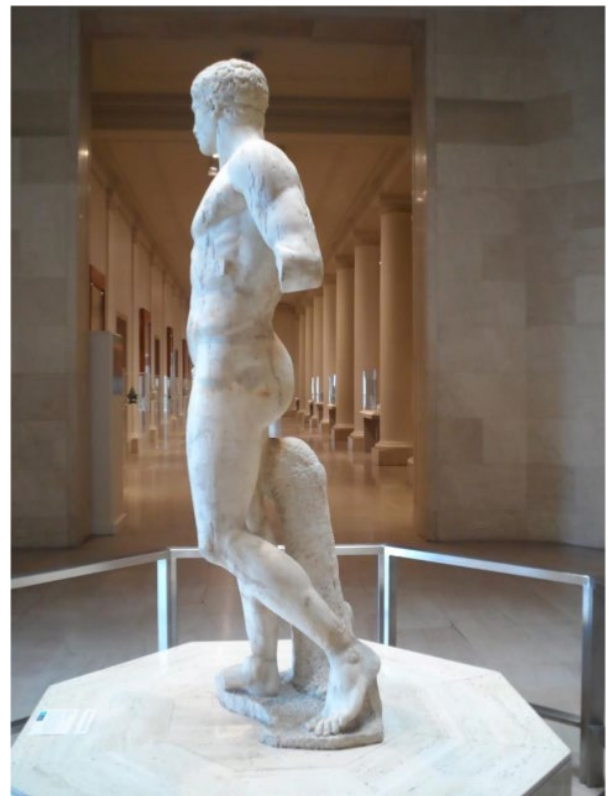


4.14 *Riace Warrior A* detail.^{xxiii}

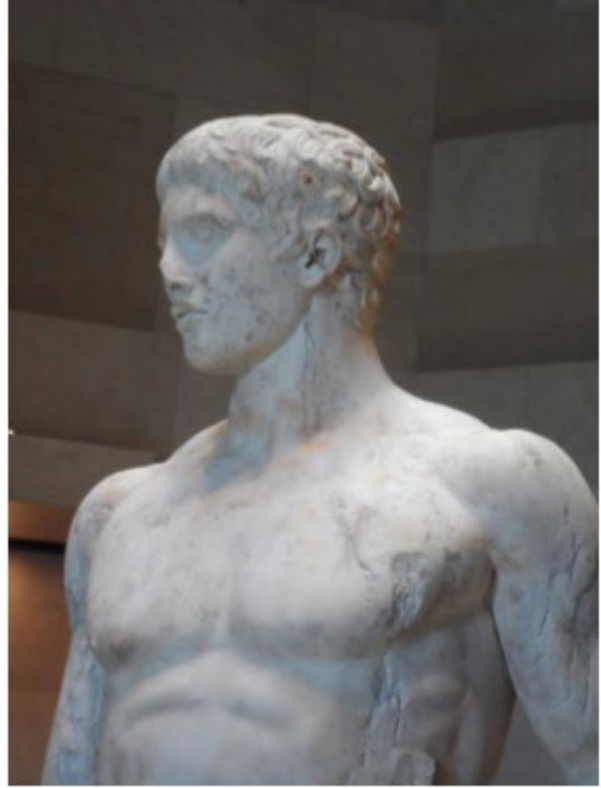
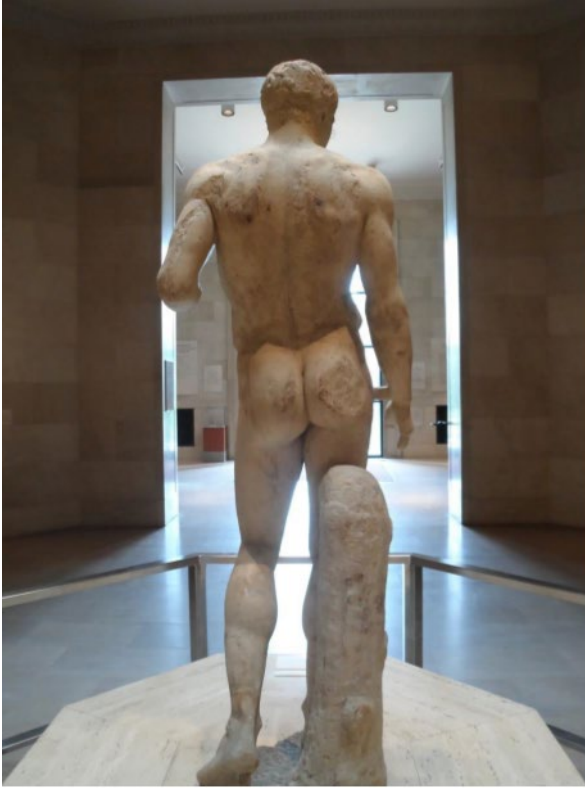
THE SPEAR BEARER, A NEW STANDARD

Polykleitos was a fifth Century BCE sculptor best known for the sculpture that is currently referred to as, Doryphoros or The Spear Bearer. The sculpture, first produced in bronze, is called this and it can be assumed that he originally held a spear in his upraised hand. (Note the supports that the Romans had to add to the marble copy). Polycleitus, however, called the sculpture, Canon. The term, canon, is not a reference to a weapon, but a reference to a measuring standard, in this case, for the ideal human form. Doryphoros is a symbol of the ideal Greek citizen, brave, free and beautiful. Look what was accomplished when the Greeks went up against the larger numbers of Persians and won, against all odds. Surely this was because Greeks were free! Of course they had defeated the slaves fighting for Xerxes. Anyone answering to a king would have been considered a slave by these Democratic and Republican Greeks. They had thrown off their tyrants and formed governments that included the voices of citizens, limited though the citizenship was.

Here in bronze stood an image of the perfect citizen, ready to fight for his city- state. The Classical Greeks were idealists. They sought perfection in body and mind. The success of the new Democracy and Republics in fighting off the Persian invasion inspired a growing interest in human potential. Doryphoros is not rigid and symmetrical as the Kouros tended to be. Like Kritios Boy, Polykleitos' Doryphoros stands in a contrapposto pose. In other words, he is counterbalanced. He puts weight on one foot while keeping the other relaxed, as though he is about to step forward. The arm above the active foot is relaxed and the arm above the relaxed foot reaches up to hold a spear. It bears his weight as he leans on his spear.



4.115 and 4.116 *Doryphoros, Spear Bearer*, Minneapolis Institute of Art. 1st century BCE. Marble copy of 450-440 BCE original by Polykleitos^{xxiv}



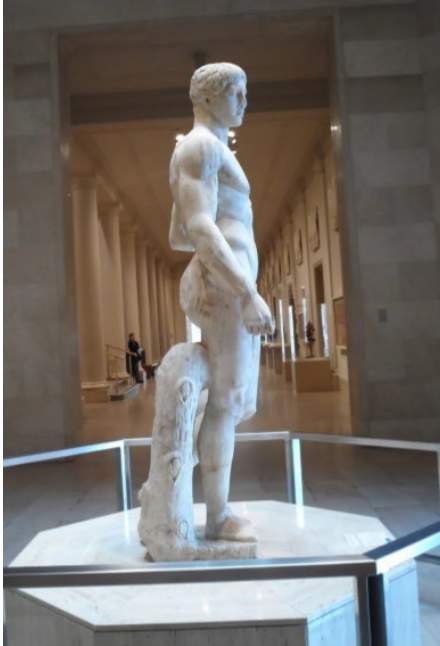
4.117 and 4.118 *Doryphoros, Spear Bearer*, Minneapolis Institute of Art. 1st century BCE. Marble copy of 450-440 BCE original by Polykleitos.^{xxv}

This counter positioning (contrapposto) creates an s-curve completed by the turning of the head. This curve and the diagonal line created by the spear would have created a sense of movement, as potential energy seems about to be released. This indication of potential ties in nicely with the attempt to present an ideal, rather than a completely symbolic or realistic image.

Doryphoros is a symbol of the focus on potential. There are no elements of the sculpture that identify him as an individual. The Spear Bearer stands alone, a symbol of bravery, harmony and beauty. He is, quite literally, bigger than life. Measuring 78" x 19" x 19" he was a good deal taller than the average Greek man, but not so large as to be inaccessible. (Humans are more than a foot ½ taller on average than they were in 450 BCE.) Even by today's standards, however, 6 1/5 feet is far from petite.

The Spear Bearer represents an abstract ideal of perfection. No flaws can be seen on his body. He is eternally young, at the height of his health and beauty. Doryphoros looks forward into the distance as if planning where to go next.

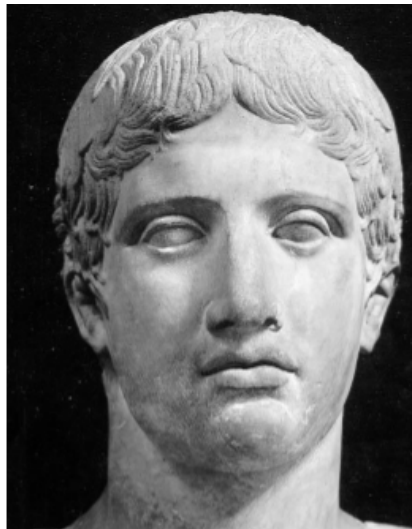
He is about to move, indicating his potential for action. His expression is calm and harmonious like his stance. The calm expression reminds the viewer that the ideal Greek is a man of reason. He does not become emotional when challenged with circumstance, or by an enemy.



4.119 and 4.120 *Doryphoros, Spear Bearer*, Minneapolis Institute of Art. 1st century BCE. Marble copy of 450-440 BCE original by Polykleitos^{xxvi}

The sense of movement and the naturalism are indications of how the Greeks were honoring humans. In Democratic Athens, as well as in the neighboring Republics, the ideal man served his community. This warrior displays the importance of being a part of his community through his service as a warrior. He demonstrates the growing sense of humanism developing in Athens and elsewhere in Greece.

As well as demonstrating Idealism and Humanism, Doryphoros demonstrates the importance of reason. Notice that his head is a bit large and his genitals are quite small. This is not because Greek men were big headed or because they had tiny genitals. This presentation illustrates the importance of the head, versus the more base instincts suggested by the genitals. The triangle shape created by his body and his spear brings focus to his head, which is at the top of the triangle, where the eye is led. At the apex of the triangle is the most important part of man, his head, where reason resides. His eternal beauty is based on reason. He is beautiful, brave and free, as any decent Greek would have been proud to be.



4.121 *Doryphoros, Spear Bearer*, detail. Minneapolis Institute of Art. 1st century BCE. Marble copy of 450-440 BCE original by Polykleitos^{xxvii}.

For a clear comparison of this classical sculpture to an Archaic Kouros, click the following link:

[POLYKLEITOS, DORYPHOROS \(SPEAR-BEARER\)](https://smarthistory.org/polykleitos-doryphoros-spear-bearer/) (<https://smarthistory.org/polykleitos-doryphoros-spear-bearer/>)

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ⁱ Bronze statue of Zeus or Poseidon. Sharon Mollerus, CC BY 2.0

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f5/Bronze_Statue_of_Zeus_or_Poseidon_%283423215449%29.jpg

ⁱⁱ Walters Art Museum, Public domain, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/90/Greek_-_Caryatid_Mirror_with_Aphrodite_-_Walters_54769.jpg

ⁱⁱⁱ CC BY-SA 3.0 https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/94/009MA_Kritios.jpg

^{iv} Photo by:shako, CC BY 3.0

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/41/Castings_of_classical_Greek_sculpture_in_the_Pushkin_Museum_01_by_shakko.jpg

^v Photo by José Luiz Bernardes Ribeiro

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/18/Aphrodite_of_Knidos_%28GL_288%29_-_Glyptothek_-_Munich_-_Germany_2017.jpg

^{vi} Dr. Jeffrey A. Becker, "Riace Warriors," in Smarthistory, August 8, 2015, accessed August 2, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/riace-warriors/>.

^{vii} Metropolitan Museum, CC0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/01/-The_Calf-Bearer_and_the_Kritios_Boy_Shortly_After_Exhumation_on_the_Acropolis-%3B_Danseuse_du_Temple_de_Bacchus_MET_DP150943.jpg

^{viii} Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris, "Kritios Boy," in Smarthistory, December 13, 2015, accessed August 2, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/kritios-boy/>.

^{ix} Photo by Tetraktys, CC BY-SA 2.5 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:009MA_Kritios.jpg

^x Critius, CC BY-SA 2.5 https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/de/ACMA_698_Kritios_boy_5.JPG

^{xi} Critius, CC BY-SA 2.5 https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/49/ACMA_698_Kritios_boy_4.JPG

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^{xiv} Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker, "Niobid Krater," in Smarthistory, December 15, 2015, accessed August 2, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/niobid-krater/>.

^{xv} By Berthold Werner, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/05/Delphi_BW_2017-10-08_10-08-55.jpg

^{xvi} Drawing, Charioteer. Joyofmuseums, CC BY-SA 4.0,

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Charioteer_of_Delphi_-_Delphi_Archaeological_Museum_by_Joy_of_Museums_-_5.jpg

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^{xx} Photo by Luca Galli from Torino, Italy, CC BY 2.0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0b/Riace_bronzes_-_Statue_A_%28detail%29_-_National_Archaeological_Museum_of_Magna_Graecia_in_Reggio_Calabria_-_Italy_-_14_Aug._2014.jpg

^{xxi} Photo by A. Ismoon, (Fichier:Museo Magna Grecia 10.jpg Photo retouched, cropped, CC BY-SA 4.0

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f0/Museo_Magna_Grecia_102.jpg 16

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MUSIC IN THE GREEK CLASSICAL AGE

Music was always an important part of Greek culture. Images of musicians appear as early as the Bronze Age Cycladic culture of the Aegean Sea. The aulos, the double flute that was used in Classic tragedy, had changed little since those early images. By the fifth century, Greek education came to include both gymnastics for the body and music for the soul. As the application of reason became more prominent, the philosopher and mathematician, Pythagoras, turned to it in order to codify music and like nearly every other art form, music would be defined and formulated by math.



4.122 *Aulos Player*, terra cottaⁱ

The Greeks divided their music into modes, each defined by the mood that it evoked. These modes were similar to the modern idea of musical keys. The problem was that these modes and their corresponding melodies could only be taught through repetition. Pythagoras wanted to find a way to codify music so he created a repeatable musical system. He did this through the application of math. Just as the Parthenon and Doryphorus were constructed to be mathematically harmonious, Pythagoras did the same for music.

He discovered that he could coordinate mathematical ratios of melodic intervals with the scale system which he called modes. He demonstrated that the intervals, such as the octave, fifth and fourth, have mathematical relationships. When a tuned string was stopped off at the middle and compared to the same string played without the stop, the interval between determined the octave. The ratio was 1:2. Divide a string into two parts and compare it to a string divided into three parts and the interval between determines a fifth. Likewise when comparing the triply divided string to the string divided into four parts, a fourth is created by the interval between the two, with a ratio of 3:4.ⁱⁱ

This system allowed the same type of order to be imposed on music that was imposed on sculpture and architecture. This order was based on ratios and allowed the logic of music to be identified and duplicated reliably. It could even be

written down and shared with those who, if they knew the system, did not need to meet the composer or have the piece played for them in order to duplicate it.

Since the Greeks thought of immortality as being in tune with cosmic forces, the hope was that at last the individual might hear the music of the spheres. The music of the spheres is related to the golden mean, a mathematically based theoretical measure of all things. This idea assumes that the physical world is in harmony with the metaphysical one. As such, math tied the world's together, determined beauty, and allowed music, with all of its implications to be more accessible to the Greek mind.

T. Kate Pagel, PhD. "Music in the Classical Age." Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Aulos Player, terra cotta. Photo courtesy of Kathleen J. Hartman, CC BY-NC-4.0 License.

ⁱⁱ Fleming, William. Arts and Ideas, eighth edition. Harcourt Brace, College Publishers, New York. 1990.

GREEK CLASSICAL THEATRE

What is theatre? When one hears about theatre many things may come to mind. Is it about actors, special effects or bright lights and song? Today's theatre incorporates new technologies in lighting, flies actors about the stage and creates entire worlds that enfold the audience. Not that much has changed since the early days of theatre in ancient Greece. The most important purpose of most modern theatre is entertainment. In Classical Athens, where the only existing Classical plays were penned, however, the purposes of theatre were many. Also, like the sculpture of the time, these plays served the Democracy and reflected the values and ideas of Classical Athens.

Greek theaters did not have lighting; they were outdoor theaters that used hillsides to serve as seating for up to 15,000 spectators. How could so many people hear the play without microphones or electricity? The hillside works like a band shell to channel the sound to the audience. The "theatron," was where the audience sat. The term translates as, seeing place. The spelling, "theater" refers to the structure. The spelling, "theatre" refers to what is experienced there.



4.123 Theater at Epidaurus, fish-eye view from the theatron. Note the seating added later by the Romansⁱ

Clearly, it was not only important to hear the play but also important to see the action. While Greek theaters did not require lighting, there were special effects, including the use of a crane to fly Medea away in the play named after her. There are also ancient anecdotes describing the frightening nature of the furies, vengeful spirits in *The Euminides* that haunt Orestes for killing his mother. It is clear that in addition to the elevated shoes worn to help make actors visible, costumes were also worn. However, entertainment was only one of the many reasons Greek theatre came into existence.

HISTORY

This art form actually began as a yearly contest between two choirs, each singing religious hymns dedicated to Dionysus, the god of wine and revelry. These choirs were referred to as choruses and they could contain as many as fifty singers. During one of these contests in 612 BCE one of the singers stepped forward and spoke lines for one of the characters whose story was being told in song. This speaker's name was Thespis and since that day, actors have been referred to as thespians. The early plays, many by the poet Aeschylus, only had two speakers on stage at one time. Sophocles, a later poet, added a third speaker. This was not realistic theatre. The same two or three actors (always male) played all of the speaking roles.

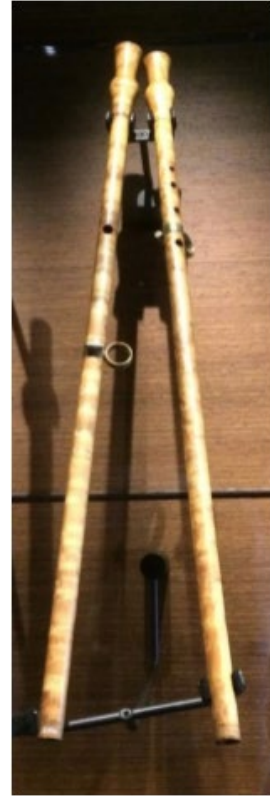
STYLE

How could the audience know which character was which? A mask was worn to identify the speaker and possibly to amplify the voice. Additionally, after each section of dialog, the chorus, now much smaller in number, commented on the action, helping the audience to catch anything they may have missed and aiding in the understanding of the story. These choruses often seemed to have represented the general population of the Democracy. Much like the speaking characters did, the choruses, each with a leader, often debated the issues at hand. The **agon**, or argument, was the basis of this

theatrical form. It is from this word that we get the term to agonize. The agon is a reflection of the application of reason and of Democracy, both of which were important to Athenians.



4.124 Theatre mask, 4th or 3rd century BCE, terra cotta, Stoa of Attalus Museumⁱⁱ



4.125 Auolosⁱⁱⁱ

This mask is made of terracotta and so would probably have been too heavy for actual use. It does, however, provide an idea of what a mask might have looked like. Note the megaphone shaped mouth, which may have aided in projecting the actor's voice. Fifth century theatre masks were made of linen on wooden frames. Leather may have been employed as well. It can be shaped when wet. There would have been a recognizable mask for each character that spoke dialogue.

The ancient playwrights considered the music that they wrote to be the most important part of their new plays. It certainly would have been the part that was easiest for the audience to share later when they struck out for their homes. Musical patterns and rhyming words are the easiest ways to remember a long sequence of information. These plays were written as elaborate poems, half of which were sung.

The plots were all drawn from Greek myths so the music was the biggest draw, as the stories were already fairly well known. The playwrights took great pride in the new music that would be presented by the chorus in the center of the orchestra, which is the circular area where the chorus danced and sang. Unfortunately, only a snippet a few seconds long, from one of Euripides' plays, is still available today. Remember that Pythagorus made writing down music possible.

The auolos is dedicated to tragic theatre. A single musician stood at a small altar in the middle of the orchestra and accompanied the chorus on a double- flute called an auolos. It is likely that the mournful sounding instrument was in what would now be considered a minor key. Minor keys tend to make the listener uncomfortable, like the music in horror movies that warn the silly girl not to go in the basement.

PURPOSES OF ANCIENT GREEK THEATRE:

City Dionysia is the name given to the five-day theatre festival dedicated to Dionysus each spring in Athens. As the name suggests, the entire city was a part of the celebration. The first day consisted of a grand procession led by the **Choregus**, who was a wealthy Athenian that was “volunteered” by city officials to fund the training of the chorus. This gave him the opportunity to achieve immortality and fame. It also helped to keep any one person from controlling too much wealth, as this honor was extremely expensive. The procession that he led was made up of the widows and orphans of all of the brave Athenians that had given their lives for their city-state. In other words, this was a civic, as well as a religious celebration. It reminded the population, many of whom were only able to make it to Athens once a year, about their duty to the group.

The next three days consisted of viewing the plays. Three tragedies by the same playwright were performed each day. With the exception of Euripides, playwrights acted in their own plays. During the performances, the audience was expected to purge their emotions, which was no doubt encouraged by drinking wine in the sun all day. In this society that sought control of their emotions, theatre provided an outlet, much like watching Oprah Winfrey does today. Ancient anecdotes indicate that Greek audiences were known to break out into tears. They were noisy and heavily involved in the plays, booing if they did not approve and cheering wildly when they did.

Following the three plays, was a short satire called a **saytr** play. It was over the top styled comedy. The actors were dressed as satyrs, known for their randy nature. They sported huge phalli, which added humor in a culture that minimized genitalia in their sculpture. Allowing such aspects to rule behavior was humorously inappropriate. The satire gave the playwright an opportunity to spoof his own work and provided the audience a transition from the serious business of watching tragedy. Tragedy was expected to teach the audience. City officials, who sat in the only permanent seating in the space, judged the plays. The viewers were expected to learn about their duties to the Democracy, about their religion and about social expectations of appropriate behavior. The final day was a day of celebration and the prize of a goat, a valuable item, was given to the playwright that was judged to have written the best trilogy of plays.



4.126 *Marble seat* Dionysus Theatre Acropolis, Athens, Greece.^{iv}

Two more valuable things that theatre provided were social and economic benefits. This gathering was, for many, the only time in the year that they could take part in their Democracy and meet their fellow citizens. Everyone was welcome at

the plays and they were provided free to any who wished to attend. The festival was held in the spring in order to encourage trade. In the spring the Aegean Sea was navigable, so allies and friends could make it to the city.

GREEK VALUES

Since Greek theatre in Athens was intended to teach and unify the democracy it naturally had specific rules. It is in these rules, as well as in the texts of the plays that the values of idealism, rationalism and humanism can be perceived. This is especially clear in the plays by Sophocles and Aeschylus. However, Euripides, the most modern of the three, seemed to be questioning these very ideals. One could say that while Aeschylus presented things the way that they should be, Euripides presented them the way that they were.

There is a theatre **convention** (an agreed upon way of doing things) called the three unities, that displays the purposes of theatre and the cultural values associated with it.

1) Unity of action – This meant that, like Classical sculpture, there was one focus. Only one story line kept the message clear. This is much different than modern sit-coms, which have three or more story lines that conclude in twenty minutes. This is the clarity associated with idealism and is a rational way of creating the opportunity to purge emotions, what great irony. If one is to learn from theatre, the lessons must be clear.

Also, all subject matter had to be drawn from the myths. This not only guaranteed that morals, history and religious duties would be taught, it also kept the audience from fighting about contemporary issues. It is important to note that comedy was not to be mixed into tragedy for the sake of clarity. Unlike comic inventions, tragedy could not be misread.

2) Unity of place- This meant that there were no set changes to confuse things. All violent action (which is not the ideal way to act) took place offstage and was only shared by messenger characters, often shepherds. This kept the focus on the message and avoided unnecessary distraction. The setting usually consisted of a set of palace doors. All protagonists were expected to be of noble birth so the population could learn from them. The palace doors kept the action focused on the community and provided an additional entrance for actors. Also these important mythical people affect the entire community, as any citizen of a democracy would do.

3) Unity of time-The action of each play was to take place in real time. In other words, what was seen on stage should be able to happen in the amount of time that the play lasted. This made the action believable and separated it from the epic form of poetry, which could cover long periods of time. Keeping the action in real time involved the viewer, making them concentrate on what they were supposed to be learning. Remember that the primary dialogue of these plays consisted of agons, where the viewer became embroiled in the argument, causing them to think about the ideas being presented.

CONCLUSION

Like sculpture, philosophy and architecture, Greek theatre reflects the culture that created it. The values and intentions of Democratic Athens are clearly outlined in the structure and texts of Greek theatre. The theatre provided a place to learn, trade, socialize, party, release emotions and generally have a great time. The experience of City Dionysia helped to unify and show off the new Democracy in a way that little else could. It is a delight that there is so much of that art form left for modern audiences to enjoy.

THE PLAYWRIGHTS

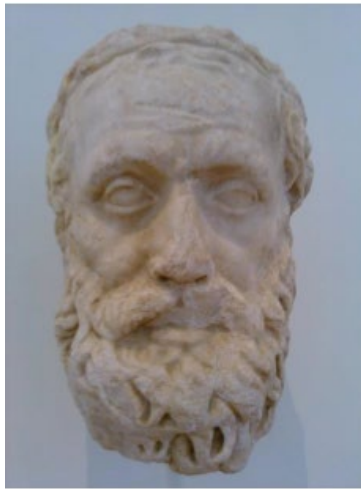
GREEK TRAGEDY

Sometimes referred to as Attic tragedy, Greek tragedy is an extension of the ancient rites carried out in honor of Dionysus, and it heavily influenced the theatre of ancient Rome and the Renaissance. Tragic plots were often based upon myths from the oral traditions of Archaic epics, and took the form of narratives presented by actors. Tragedies typically began with a prologue, in which one or more characters introduce the plot and explain the background of the story. The

prologue is then followed by *paraodos*, (an ode sung by the chorus) after which the story unfolds through three or more episodes. The episodes are interspersed by *stasima*, or choral interludes that explain or comment on the situation that is developing. The tragedy then ends with an *exodus*, which concludes the story. Each of the playwrights discussed below made contributions to Greek theatrical form and style.

AESCHYLUS AND THE CODIFICATION OF TRAGIC DRAMA

Aeschylus was the first tragedian to codify the basic rules of tragic drama. He is often described as the father of tragedy. He is credited with inventing the *trilogy*, a series of three tragedies that tell one long story. Trilogies were often performed in sequence over the course of a day, from sunrise to sunset. At the end of the last play, a *satyr play* was staged to revive the spirits of the public after they had witnessed the heavy events of the tragedy that had preceded it.



4.127 *Aeschylus*, bust^v

According to Aristotle, Aeschylus also expanded the number of actors in theatre to allow for the dramatization of conflict on stage. Previously, it was standard for only one character to be present and interact with the homogeneous chorus, which commented in unison on the dramatic action unfolding on stage. Aeschylus's works show an evolution and enrichment in dialogue, contrasts, and theatrical effects over time, due to the rich competition that existed among playwrights of this era. Unfortunately, his plays, and those of Sophocles and Euripides, are the only works of classical Greek literature to have survived mostly intact, so there are not many rival texts to examine his works against.



4.128 *Sophocles*, cast of bust in Pushkin Museum^{vi}

REFORMS OF SOPHOCLES

Sophocles was one such rival who triumphed against the famous and previously unchallenged Aeschylus. Sophocles introduced a third actor to staged tragedies, increased the chorus to 15 members, broke the cycle of trilogies, making possible the production of independent dramas, and introduced the concept of (limited) scenery to theatre. Compared to the works of Aeschylus, choruses in Sophocles' plays did less explanatory work, shifting the focus to deeper character development and staged conflict. The events that took place were often left unexplained or unjustified, forcing the audience to reflect upon the human condition.

THE REALISM OF EURIPIDES

Euripides differed from Aeschylus and Sophocles in his search for technical experimentation and increased focus on feelings as a mechanism to elaborate the unfolding of tragic events. In Euripides' tragedies, there are three experimental aspects that reoccur. The first is the transition of the prologue to a monologue performed by an actor informing spectators of a story's background. The second is the introduction of **deus ex machina**, or a plot device whereby a seemingly unsolvable problem is suddenly and abruptly resolved by the unexpected intervention of some new event, character, ability, or object. Finally, the use of a chorus was minimized in favor of a monody sung by the characters.

A great way to explore these conventions is to read Euripides' *The Bacchae*. The play was written just before the fall of the Democracy, from beyond the borders in Macedonia. Euripides did not live to see it produced in 406 BCE, although his play finally won the prize. In *The Bacchae*, Euripides, who was a known atheist, questions the cultural values of Athens that brought them to the point of failing power. The playwright consciously manipulates audience expectations as a way of making them view Athens' rise to power in a different light. All Greek tragedy was based on the *agon*, or argument. The characters argued, the choruses argued, all in the service of making the audience think. In this, Euripides is no different.



4.129 *Satyr and Maenad*. Detail red figure pottery. c. 480 BCE.^{vii}

Euripides introduces Tiresius, the blind prophet, the character that traditionally tells the truth. He understands what is happening purely through reason, indicating rationalism. Tiresius is dressed in women's clothing getting ready to go and dance with the Bacchantes or Maenads, female followers of Dionysus. In his *agon* with the young king Pentheus, he warns the king not to go against the gods. This episode is inappropriately comic, since only women and animals, like satyrs, would act as emotionally as Tiresius does. It points out that pure reason may not be all it is cracked up to be. Euripides goes further by introducing a protagonist, Pentheus. A protagonist carries the theme of the play, and is generally viewed as the hero, but this one, although born noble, is not noble in character. His dependence on pure reason and his idealized view of himself eventually lead to his demise.

Additionally, a god is in the role of the antagonist (the foil that the protagonist struggles against). The fact that Dionysus seems to use more reason than the king is further proof that Euripides does not support the idea that a human can be ideal or that they can succeed when using only reason. He seems to be telling his audience that humans are NOT able to function purely through the use of reason. According to the playwright, they are far too emotional to do so. He, like Socrates, seems to be calling for balance. Each, however, would achieve it in a different way.

Each playwright did indeed contribute new ideas to the development of tragic theatre. With each succeeding generation the plays became more and more like the theatre that is done today. According to Friedrich Nietzsche, in his *Birth of Tragedy*, Euripides caused the end of the tragic form. In a real sense, he rang the death toll as the purposes of tragic theatre were soon to become obsolete.

THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE GREEK THEATRE



4.130 Theater at Delphi, c. 350-300 BCE^{viii}

The image above shows what the audience member would see at an ancient Greek theatre. The circular space known as the orchestra is in front of the hillside that curves around it. The hillside is filled with stone seating that was added long after the fall of the Athenian Democracy, by the Romans. The Greeks did not use stone seating, other than a few special seats for dignitaries. They sat on the hillside as one would at a picnic. They also had no permanent theater buildings and instead built a temporary wooden stage, the **skene**, and the building behind it each year, out of wood. Although the structure was not fancy, it served the needs of the Greek Theatre

The Greek theater was a large, open-air structure used for dramatic performance. Theaters often took advantage of hillsides and naturally sloping terrain and, in general, utilized the panoramic landscape as the backdrop to the stage itself. The Greek theater is composed of a few simple areas, the seating area (theatron), a circular space for the chorus to perform (orchestra), and the stage (skene). The slope of a hillside served as the theatron, (which translates to “the seeing place”) providing space for spectators. Two side aisles (parados, pl. paradoi) provided access to the orchestra. The Greek theater inspired the Roman version of the theater directly, although the Romans introduced some modifications to the concept of theater architecture. In many cases the Romans converted pre-existing Greek theaters to conform to their own architectural ideals, as is evident in the Theater of Dionysus on the slopes of the Athenian Acropolis. Since theatrical performances were often linked to sacred festivals, it is not uncommon to find theaters associated directly with sanctuaries.



4.131 Theater of Dionysus, Athens^{ix}

The Ancient Greek orchestra was round but most today reflect the Roman modification of using a half circle for the area in front of the skene. This is the area in which the chorus danced and sang between sections of dialog (episodes). Scholars argue about whether or not the actors with speaking roles used the orchestra. Most think that it was reserved for the use of the chorus and the aulos, player. The skene, which was raised slightly, was probably where actors would have delivered the dialogue. Keep in mind that this is done in a formal and stylized manner. Greek Theatre was not intended to be realistic like much modern theatre is today.

In the center of the orchestra there was a small altar to Dionysus where the musician played his aulos. Since theatre developed from choral contests, music and dance take up about half of the running time of a play. There was a special type of music reserved for theatrical tragedy. After each section of dialog the chorus sang and danced, often repeating or clarifying important ideas that had just been shared. Although modern readers think of the dialog when looking at ancient theatre, it was the music that playwrights hoped would impress the audience.



4.132 Aulos player, Palermo Regional Archaeological Museum Antonio Salinas^x

In most fifth century theatres the skene was a temporary wooden platform. As time went on and the Classical era passed, many of the skene were built in stone. It was probably on the skene, a raised platform, that both the dialog and the action of the plays took place. Actors wore special shoes that elevated them further. Actors (the two or three that played all of the speaking roles) did not sing or dance. Since the same actor might play several characters, masks helped to identify which character was on the skene at any one time.



4.133 Parados at the Great Theater of Epidaurus^{xi}

The paradoi provided exits and quick entrances for the chorus. There was such an entrance on each side of the orchestra, outside the theatron. Actors, on the other hand, could enter through the temporary building behind the skene or could step up onto the skene from either side. As settings did not change, this was sufficient to control stage traffic. The Theater of Dionysius in Athens (on the lower slope of the Athenian acropolis) was perhaps the most important theatre in the world. People traveled from all over the Greek World to attend, City Dionysia, the five-day Athenian spring theatre festival. The entire city turned itself over to the celebration. In any case all of the tragic plays that are extant (currently in existence), were first performed in this theatre. These hillside theatres allowed large crowds to be able to see and hear the same performance. They also allowed for people to come and go without causing undue interruptions in the action. Song, dance, dialogue and action were accessible to all who attended.

To cite this document, please use the following format:

Dr. Jeffrey A. Becker, "Introduction to ancient Greek architecture," in Smarthistory, August 8, 2015, accessed July 30, 2019, <https://smarthistory.org/introduction-to-greek-architecture/>. And T. Kate Pagel for "Classical Greek Theatre." Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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^{vii} Photo by Vassil, CCO

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^{viii} Ancient Greek theatre at Delphi. Zde [CC BY-SA 4.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]

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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1e/At_the_Great_Theatre_of_Epidaurus.jpg

FROM POWER TO COLLAPSE, OR FROM THE CLASSICAL TO THE LATE CLASSICAL PERIOD

When Athens formed the Delian League and began to take over the running of it, the city-state of Sparta doubted Athenian sincerity and formed their own association for protection against their enemies. It was called the Peloponnesian League, so named for the Peloponnese region where Sparta and the others were located. The city-states which sided with Sparta increasingly perceived Athens as a bully and a tyrant, while those cities which sided with Athens viewed Sparta and its allies with growing distrust. This would be the beginning of the end for the Democracy.

Already looking like it was corrupted by Athenian ambition; two further episodes changed the League forever. In 460 BCE the First Peloponnesian War broke out between Athens, Corinth, Sparta, and their allies. For the first time the League was being used against Greek city-states and Persia was off the agenda. Then c. 454 BCE Athens used the excuse of a failed League expedition in Egypt, which was to aid the anti-Persian prince Inarus, to move the League treasury to Athens.

The League became, thenceforth, even more difficult to control. In 446 BCE Athens lost the Battle of Koroneia and had to repress a major revolt in Euboea. An even more serious episode occurred when fighting between Samos and Miletos, both League members, was escalated by Athens into a war. Again the Athenians' superior resources brought them victory in 439 BCE. Yet another revolt broke out in Poteidaia in 432 BCE that brought Athens and the Delian League in direct opposition with Sparta's own alliance, the Peloponnesian League.

This second and much more damaging Peloponnesian War (432-404 BCE) against a Persian-backed Sparta would eventually, after 30 years of grueling and resource-draining conflicts, bring Athens to her knees and ring the death knell for the Delian League. Such disastrous defeats as the 415 BCE Sicilian Expedition and the brutal execution of all males on rebellious Melos the previous year were indicators of the desperate times. Athens' glory days were gone and with them, the Delian League. By 404 BCE Athenian Democracy was ended.

This time is generally referred to as the Late Classical Period (c. 400-330 BCE). Philip II of Macedon (382-336 BCE) filled the power vacuum left by the fall of these two cities, after his victory over the Athenian forces and their allies at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE. Philip united the Greek city-states under Macedonian rule and, upon his assassination in 336 BCE, his son Alexander assumed the throne.

The art of the late Classical period began to change with the political changes. The Greek ideal was no longer attainable. With no democracy in place, individuals no longer had any power over the government under which they lived and labored. Instead Athenians and other Greeks turned their attention to themselves and their families, ushering in an era of individualism. The ideal of Athens became tarnished and a more realistic view of the world took its place. Much of the idealism that remained would transform into propaganda for Alexander the Great and those who would follow him. A new aesthetic began to form and it can be seen in the late Classical period.

The benefits of the League had been mostly for the Athenians, nevertheless, after 404 BCE it is significant that the realistic alternative, Spartan rule, would not have been any more popular for the lesser states of Greece. This is perhaps indicated by their willingness to re-join with, albeit a weaker and more militarily passive, Athens in the Second Athenian Confederacy from 377 BCE. Once Democracy was disbanded in 404 BCE, Athens would never again rule the Aegean Sea or lead the world in the arts and learning.



4.134 *Mourning Athena*, Acropolis Museum.¹

Although image 4.134 was made in response to those lost in the War against Persia, it seems fitting to place her here, where she can mourn the fall of a once great city that bears her name.

To cite this Document use the following format:

Cartwright, Mark. "Delian League." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 04 Mar 2016. Web. 01 Dec 2019. Modified for "From Power to Collapse." By T. Kate Pagel, PhD. Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

THE LATE CLASSICAL: GREEK SCULPTURE MOVES IN A NEW DIRECTION

After the fall of the Democracy, the image of a marshal warrior, free and independent, no longer had the same appeal. Under the Oligarchy and later the Monarchy of Phillip 2nd and then that of his son, Alexander the Great, this image of the ideal man no longer had a place. People could no longer impact their own political life. Focus turned to more personal and achievable goals. As might be expected, this transition period was accompanied by a transition in art and with the ideas of Aristotle in philosophy and even theatre.

One of the first sculptors to embrace the new focus was named, Praxiteles. He was, as far as is known, the first sculptor to become so well known and loved that he could create art without first having a sponsor to commission it. This may have begun with his most famous sculpture, Aphrodite of Knidos. He made two copies for his commission, one clothed, and another, boldly naked. Click the link below and view the video about how this bold change began.



4.136 *Aphrodite of Knidos*, Roman copy of a work by Praxitelesⁱⁱ

[SMARTHISTORY CAPITOLINE VENUS VIDEO](https://smarthistory.org/capitoline-venus-copy-of-the-aphrodite-of-knidos/)ⁱⁱⁱ (<https://smarthistory.org/capitoline-venus-copy-of-the-aphrodite-of-knidos/>)

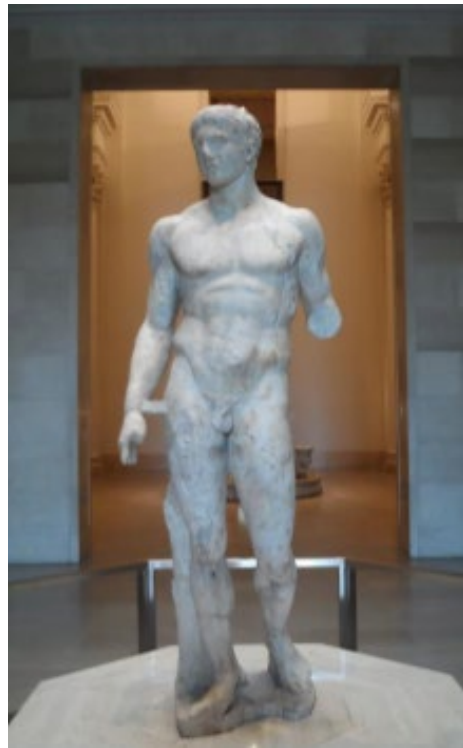
Notice that this copy has been modified to better fit Roman tastes. In the first century CE, the new Emperor, Augustus, traced his lineage to Aphrodite (This was part of a campaign during which Virgil was commissioned to write a new epic about Rome's beginnings in Troy, called *The Aeneid*) so viewers are treated with the dolphin associated with the sea, where the Goddess of love came into being. Her hair seems to also be updated to fit the tastes of the viewers of that time. In nearly every other way, this copy of Aphrodite, later called Venus, resembles her predecessors. Like most art of this time the subject is caught in the moment she steps from her bath, rather than depicting potential.

The idea of art being created without a sponsor lined up ahead of time points to a new attitude. As the Athenian Democracy and many of the former Republics were no longer commissioning large art projects, it fell to individuals to continue the tradition. As the political landscape changed so did the economic one. Praxiteles was able to sell both of his statues. The type of loyalty formerly associated with sculptors like Phidias, who carved for Greeks, whether they were from the north or the south, was shifting. His work is known from its importance to the Greek mainland. Now loyalty was to whoever could best pay for work and Phidias did not work for free. But in this new age, Praxiteles began a new approach to selling his wares; he used speculation and made his work before he had a buyer.

A more subtle change than the added prop or the somewhat exotic nature of *Aphrodite of Knidos* is the fact that when carving in marble, Praxiteles evidently chose a marble with a slightly pink tint, because it was closest to natural skin tone. He still had his sculptures painted, although probably not the skin itself. The painting was important enough that scholars today know the name of his painter, Nicias. Such focus on the artist was not entirely new but it certainly increased as speculation became more prominent.



4.136 *Hermes and Dionysus*. Attributed to Praxiteles. 4th Century BCE^{iv}



4.137 *Doryphorus (Spear Bearer)* 5th century BCE^v

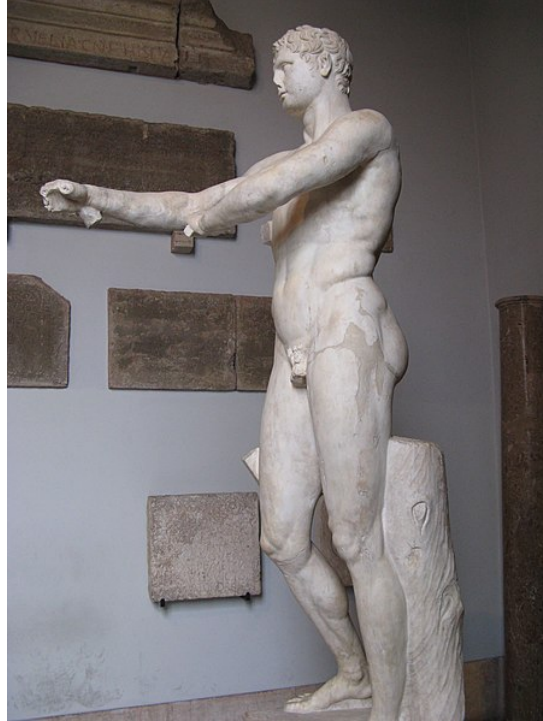
Another famous statue that has been attributed to Praxiteles is *Hermes and Dionysus*. This sculpture demonstrates a graceful elegance, rather than the strength and bravery of High Classical art. Grace and elegance, like the eroticism of *Aphrodite of Knidos* is more of a personal trait than a public one and unlike the strength of the marshal warrior, it serves the individual, rather than the state.

Notice that the Late Classical statue of *Hermes* is closer to a 1/8 proportion in comparison to the 1/7 proportions of the High Classical, *Doryphorus*. The introduction of these proportions is generally credited to one of Praxiteles' contemporaries, the sculptor, Lyssipus. While the warrior holds only a spear, *Hermes* leans on a prop, apparently cloth draped over something. He also holds a baby, something not seen in any existing High Classical sculpture. This nod to domesticity makes sense in a world where it was becoming increasingly difficult to impact anything outside one's family. The infant seems to share the proportions of Praxiteles' tall adult as his head is not the same in proportion to his body as the head of a real infant is.

Praxiteles also focuses on texture. In most of the statues attributed to him there are highly polished areas that contrast with rougher textures. Perhaps the well-known sculptor was showing off his skills in order to continue to raise his reputation and thereby sell his work. The body of *Hermes* is still flawless and his expression is calm. In many ways he still exhibits elements expected of the Classical era but in other ways, he breaks away from tradition. Note, for instance, that the sculptor incorporates *contrapposto* but it is much more exaggerated than the stance of *Doryphorus*. Including a child introduces an emotional subject, not something seen earlier in the Classical period. When thinking of a canon for the Late Classical era, this sculpture is a good choice, since many sculptors copied the style in the following years.

For a closer look at the change in proportions that helps to define the Late Classical sculpture style, view this video on the sculpture, *Apoxyomenos*, by the sculptor, Lyssipus.

[APOXYOMENOS \(SCRAPER\)](https://smarthistory.org/lyssippos-apoxyomenos-scraper/).^{vi} (https://smarthistory.org/lyssippos-apoxyomenos-scraper/)



4.138 *Apoxyomenos, The Scraper*, Roman copy of Lyssipus bronze^{vii}

Lyssipus worked in bronze. The stump was probably added as support for the marble copy. This is not the only statue with this name but it is certainly the most famous.



4.139 *Farnese Hercules*, Naples Archaeological Museum^{viii}



4.140 *Farnese Hercules*, detail. ^{ix}

Above are images of another Roman copy of a sculpture by Lyssipus. The Farnese Hercules is also a Roman copy of a sculpture by Lyssipus. It is named for the Roman family that found it and employs the new, taller canon of proportions and the exaggerated contrapposto pose. In addition, there are apples in the hand that Hercules (Roman

spelling) holds behind his back. This colossal statue (10 ½ feet tall) provides a reason to walk around it in order to view the entire thing. Notice that he appears exhausted, something never seen in High Classical sculpture, because it would not have been ideal. During the Late Classical period emotion begins to creep into what was formerly calm repose.

The art of the Late Classic period is a transition style that begins to incorporate the ideas of Aristotle, Plato's student. Plato considered knowledge to be the highest good and Rationalism, Humanism and Idealism were the values that he and his teacher, Socrates, embraced. Aristotle eventually had to begin his own school, as Plato would not allow him to teach in the Platonic academy. Aristotle believed that happiness was the highest good and he embraced Empiricism, reflected in art as Realism. He also embraced individualism. The seeds of these ideas can be perceived in Late Classical sculpture in its attention to a new kind of beauty, based on elegance, the exaggeration of movement, which would increase during the Hellenistic age and in the attention to the experience of the moment, rather than on potential.

These ideas would continue to develop alongside Plato's ideas, and with them would be spread across the known world by Alexander the Great. The diversity of values that the competing ideas represent, make the Hellenistic era an exciting and challenging period to study. A careful look at Late Classical art provides hints of what was to follow the Classical era and of what would define the Hellenistic period.

Dr. Pagel T. Kate. "The Late Classical: Sculpture moves in a new direction." Humanities: New Meaning From the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bc/Roman_Venus_Copy_of_Praxiteles_Front.jpg

ⁱⁱⁱ Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris, "Capitoline Venus (copy of the Aphrodite of Knidos)," in Smarthistory, April 5, 2016, accessed January 1, 2020, <https://smarthistory.org/capitoline-venus-copy-of-the-aphrodite-of-knidos/>.

^{iv} Photo by tetraktys, CC BY-SA 2.5. Archaeological Museum , Olympia, Greece. Parian marble 7'1", https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hermes_di_Prassitele,_at_Olimpia,_front_2.jpg.

^v Photo by Kathleen J. Hartman, CC BY-NC- 4.0 License.

^{vi} Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker, "Lysippos, accessed January 1, 2020, Apoxyomenos (Scraper) ," in Smarthistory <https://smarthistory.org/lysisippos-apoxyomenos-scraper/>

^{vii} Photo by Yair Haklai, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Apoxyomenos-the_Scraper-Pio-Clementino-2.jpg

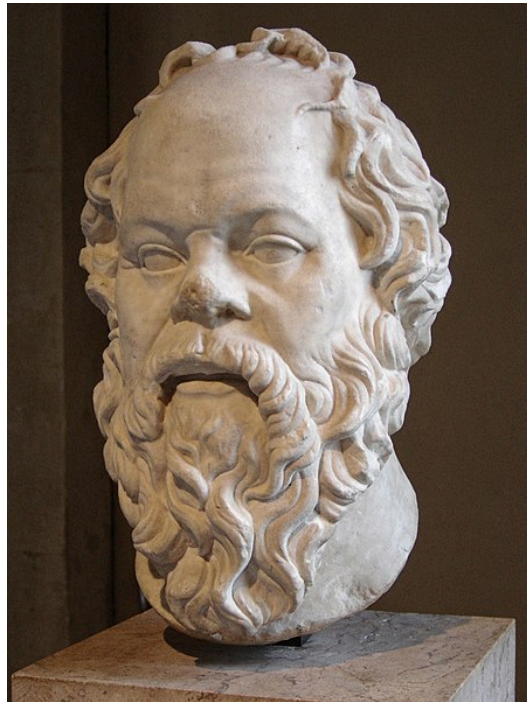
^{viii} Photo by Miguel Hermoso Cuesta, CC BY-SA 4.0 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hércules_Farnese.JPG

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GREEK PHILOSOPHY

Socrates and the Apology

Socrates, born in Athens in the 5th century BCE, marks a watershed in ancient Greek philosophy. Athens was a center of learning, with sophists and philosophers traveling from across Greece to teach rhetoric, astronomy, cosmology, geometry, and the like. Rhetoric is the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques.



4.141 Socrates, copy by Lysippos, 1st century, marble. ¹

The great statesman Pericles was closely associated with these new teachings, however, and his political opponents struck at him by taking advantage of a conservative reaction against the philosophers. It became a crime to investigate issues above the heavens or below the earth because they were considered impious. While other philosophers, such as Anaxagoras, were forced to flee Athens, Socrates was the only documented individual charged under this law, convicted, and sentenced to death in 399 BCE. In the version of his defense speech presented by Plato, he claims that the envy others experience on account of his being a philosopher is what will lead to his conviction.

Many conversations involving Socrates (as recounted by Plato and Xenophon) end without having reached a firm conclusion, a style known as **aporia**. Socrates is said to have pursued this probing question-and-answer style of examination on a number of topics, usually attempting to arrive at a defensible and attractive definition of a virtue. While Socrates' recorded conversations rarely provide a definitive answer to the question under examination, several maxims or paradoxes for which he has become known recur. Socrates taught that no one desires what is bad, and so if anyone does something that truly is bad, it must be unwillingly or out of ignorance; consequently, all virtue is knowledge. He frequently remarks on his own ignorance, claiming that he does not know what courage is, for example. Plato presents Socrates as distinguishing himself from the common run of mankind by the fact that, while they know nothing noble and good, they do not know that they do not know, whereas Socrates knows and acknowledges that he knows nothing noble and good.

Socrates was morally, intellectually, and politically at odds with many of his fellow Athenians. When he was on trial, he used his method of **elenchos**, a dialectic method of inquiry that resembles the scientific method, to demonstrate to the jurors that their moral values are wrong-headed. He tells them they are concerned with their families, careers, and political responsibilities when they ought to be worried about the "welfare of their souls." Socrates' assertion that the gods had singled him out as a divine emissary seemed to provoke irritation, if not outright ridicule. Socrates also questioned the Sophistic doctrine that arete (virtue) can be taught. He liked to observe that successful fathers, such as the prominent military general Pericles, did not produce sons of their own quality. Socrates argued that moral excellence was more a matter of divine bequest than parental nurture.

Socrates was unable to write. He was known for wandering the city barefooted and asking uncomfortable questions as a method of inquiry into the truth. Because he was not literate, one must turn to the writings of others, such as Socrates' most famous pupil, Plato, in order to understand him. The Apology, written by Plato is one of the few writings by Plato that can be verified by the words of other writers. As such, The Apology is probably a fairly accurate rendering of Socrates' trial.

To read The Apology and to read more about The Apology, click this link:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1656/1656-h/1656-h.htm>



4.142 Nikolaps Douralas, *Socrates prison*.ⁱⁱ

Image 4.142 shows one of the places where Socrates was probably held during his trial and subsequent execution. Following his conviction of having corrupted the youth and looking into things above and below the earth, he drank hemlock, a poison that provides an extremely painful end. According to Plato's Apology, it is in his trial that Socrates coined the now famous idealistic phrase, "The unexamined life is not worth living." (Plato's Apology)



4.143 Jacques-Louis David, *Death of Socrates*, 1787, Metropolitan Museum of Art. ⁱⁱⁱ

Socrates goes on to demonstrate his humanism in his attention to serving the populace and his belief in reason as the path to truth, in his story about the oracle that deemed him the wisest man. He claimed that he was only wiser because he knew what he did not know. It would seem that he was correct in his assessment of why people did not all like him. Philosophers were associated with unpopular ideas such as sophism, where people taught persuasive speech for money. His constant questioning, which he associated with the need to find truth, and as such with his position as a philosopher, often alienated those who did not really wish to see the truth. Although many did indeed dislike him due to his intellectual pursuits, and although he ended his life in prison, his ideas continue to influence the world, over two thousand years later.

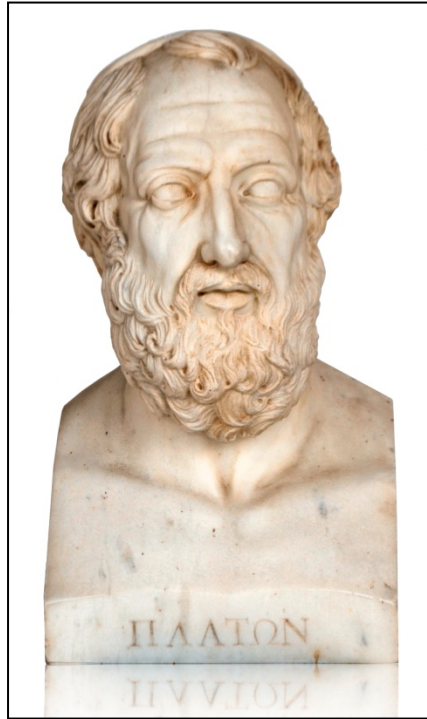
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PLATO AND ARISTOTLE: DISAGREEMENTS ON PHILOSOPHY

Plato was an Athenian of the generation after Socrates. Ancient tradition ascribes 36 dialogues and 13 letters to him, although of these only 24 of the dialogues are now universally recognized as authentic. Most modern scholars believe that Plato wrote at least 28 dialogues, and two of the letters. Plato's dialogues feature Socrates, although not always as the leader of the conversation. Along with Xenophon, Plato is the primary source of information about Socrates' life and beliefs, and it is not always easy to distinguish between the two. Plato's work generally supports the values of the Classical Greeks.

Much of what is known about Plato's doctrines is derived from what Aristotle reports about them, and many of Plato's political doctrines are derived from Aristotle's works: *The Republic*, *the Laws*, and *the Statesman*. *The Republic* contains the suggestion that there will not be justice in cities unless they are ruled by philosopher kings; those responsible for enforcing the laws are compelled to hold their women, children, and property in common; and the individual is taught to pursue the common good through noble lies. *The Republic* determines that such a city is likely impossible, however, and generally assumes that philosophers would refuse to rule if the citizenry asked them to, and moreover, the citizenry would refuse to compel philosophers to rule in the first place.



4.144 *Plato*, Achilleion Museum, Korfu^v

"Platonism" is a term coined by scholars to refer to the intellectual consequences of denying, as Plato's Socrates often does, the reality of the material world. In several dialogues, most notably *The Republic*, Socrates inverts the common man's intuition about what is knowable and what is real. While most people take the objects of their senses to be real if anything is, Socrates is contemptuous of people who think that something has to be graspable in the hands to be real. Socrates' idea that reality is unavailable to those who use their senses is what puts him at odds with the common man and with common sense.

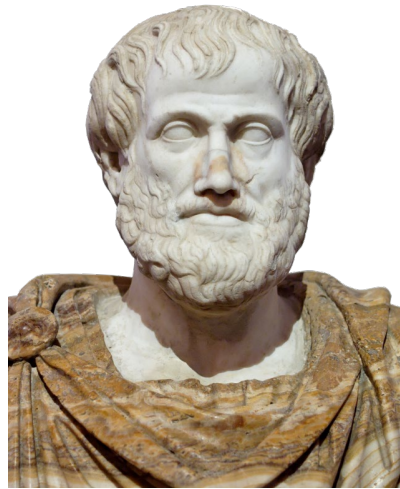
Plato says that he who sees with his eyes is blind, and this idea is most famously captured in his allegory of the cave, a paradoxical analogy wherein Plato argues that the invisible world is the most intelligible and that the visible world is the least knowable and most obscure. In the allegory, Plato describes a gathering of people who have lived chained to the wall of a cave facing a blank wall. The people watch shadows projected on the wall from the fire burning behind them, and the people begin to name and describe the shadows, which are the closest images they have to reality. Plato then explains that a philosopher is like a prisoner released from that cave, and who comes to understand that the shadows on the wall are not reality. This is clear evidence that Plato and Socrates were idealists, reaching beyond this reality for truth.

Plato also embraced rationalism as is seen in the fact that he felt that the philosophers, masters of reason, were best suited to rule. He was also a humanist but never escaped his own elitism, as is evidenced by his suggestion that the average person was not fit to rule themselves. Plato embraced Rationalism, Humanism and Idealism and he believed that knowledge was the highest good.

ARISTOTLE:

Aristotle moved to Athens from his native Stageira in 367 BCE, and began to study philosophy, and perhaps even rhetoric under Isocrates. He eventually enrolled at Plato's Academy. He left Athens approximately twenty years later to study botany and zoology, became a tutor of Alexander the Great, and ultimately returned to Athens a decade later to establish his own school, the Lyceum. Like, Plato before him, Aristotle's ideas reflected the world

in which he lived. He is the founder of the Peripatetic School of philosophy, which aims to glean facts from experiences and explore the "why" in all things. In other words, he advocates learning by induction.



4.145 *Aristotle*, marble, Roman copy after Greek bronze original by Lysippos from 330 BCE, Museo nazionale romano di palazzo Altemps ^{vi}

At least 29 of Aristotle's treatises have survived, known as the corpus Aristotelicum. They address a variety of subjects including logic, physics, optics, metaphysics, ethics, rhetoric, politics, poetry, botany, and zoology. Aristotle is often portrayed as disagreeing with his teacher, Plato. He criticizes the regimes described in Plato's Republic and Laws, and refers to the theory of forms as "empty words and poetic metaphors."

Aristotle's ideas reflected the changing values of post war Athens. He preferred utilizing empirical observation and practical concerns in his works. Aristotle did not consider virtue to be simple knowledge as Plato did, but founded in one's nature, habit, and reason. Virtue was gained by acting in accordance with nature and moderation. This, according to the philosopher, would help a person achieve the highest good, which he considered to be happiness. Aristotle's ideas focused less on the ideal and more on individual pursuit and empirical evidence. As such, he looked at the world around him, and the world of the past, to find truth.



4.146 *Plato's Academy* Archaeological Site in Akadimia Platonos, Athens, Greece. ^{vii}

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^{vi} Photo by Jastrow, Public domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aristotle_Altemps_Inv8575.jpg

^{vii} Photo by Tomisti, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Athens_Plato_Academy_Archaeological_Site_5.jpg



5.10 *Dying Gaul*



5.13 *Winged Victory of Samothrace*



5.21 *Seated Boxer, c100-50 BCE.*

Chapter 5

Hellenistic

Greece

INTRODUCTION TO THE HELLENISTIC TRADITION

The Peloponnesian War from 431 to 404 BCE rocked the Greek world. The end of that war was, for nearly everyone involved, disastrous. However, the intellectual and artistic legacy of Greece continued to gain popularity and would influence a new, short-lived Empire and the Romans that would shortly overtake and develop most of it. Although Sparta ended the War allied with Persia, their former enemy, the population had been decimated by the long period of fighting. There had always been a much larger number of slaves, the Helots, than there were masters in the Peloponnese. Sparta became dependant on the slaves they had captured centuries earlier. With the Spartan numbers decreased it took about a half century before the Helots won their freedom, putting an end to the power the Spartans had won in the war.

In 146 BCE, the Romans took over the area and the Spartans became Roman. Athens and her allies suffered worse. Athens lost her navy and she would never again rise to the level of power that she had enjoyed before the war. Although the Democracy was briefly restored, it did not last, nor did the oligarchy that briefly ruled. The power vacuum was filled in 338 BCE when Phillip the king of Macedonia defeated Athens and several of her allies. Phillip was from an area mostly known for people who had the audacity to drink undiluted wine. Literacy was low and the king himself did not read or write. He quickly adapted to Athenian ways, however, and was at the marriage of his daughter to another ruler, when he was assassinated. One of the legacies that Phillip left was the combining of religious and political power. This idea was probably borrowed from Persia, a country that had been successful with that approach to rule.

Phillip was replaced by his son Alexander in 336 BCE when he was 16 years old. Up to that time Alexander had been tutored by Aristotle. Alexander inherited a strong kingdom and an experienced army. In his youth he had been awarded the generalship of Greece, and used this authority to launch his father's military expansion plans.



5.1 *Alexander the Great*, 2nd-1st century BCE, bust, British Museum ⁱ

In 334 BCE, he invaded the Achaemenid Empire, ruled Asia Minor, and began a series of campaigns that lasted ten years. Alexander broke the power of Persia in a series of decisive battles, most notably the battles of Issus and Gaugamela. He overthrew the Persian King Darius III, and conquered the entirety of the Persian Empire. At that point, his empire stretched from the Adriatic Sea to the Indus River. Planning to reach the "ends of the world and the Great Outer Sea," he invaded India in 326 BCE, but was eventually forced to turn back at the demand of his troops. Alexander died in Babylon in 323 BCE, the city he planned to establish as his capital, without executing a series of planned campaigns that would have begun with an

invasion of Arabia. In the years following his death, a series of civil wars tore his empire apart, resulting in several states ruled by the Diadochi, Alexander's surviving generals and heirs.



5.2 The Empire of Alexander the Greatⁱⁱ

Alexander's legacy includes the cultural diffusion brought by his conquests. He founded some 20 cities that bore his name, the most notable being Alexandria in Egypt. Alexander's settlement of Greek colonists, and the spread of Greek culture in the east, resulted in a new Hellenistic civilization, aspects of which were still evident in the traditions of the Byzantine Empire in the mid-15th century. Alexander became legendary as a classical hero in the mold of Achilles, and he features prominently in the history and myth of Greek and non Greek cultures. He became the ruler against which military leaders measured themselves. Military academies throughout the world still teach his tactics.

Alexander's ideas spread throughout the known world and lasted much longer than his Empire. His son was too young to take over upon his death and so his generals fought each other over who should rule, effectively disempowering and dismantling the Empire. Partly due to the competing ideas of Aristotle and Plato, and partly due to the many cultures that became Hellenized with the movement of Alexander's army, there existed multiple artistic styles and philosophical influences. As complex as this seems, by tracking those cultural influences and the ideas of those two philosophers, sense can be made of the confusion.

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ARISTOTLE VERSUS PLATO AND OTHER ODDITIES

One of the most distinctive aspects of the Hellenistic tradition is syncretism, the mixing of cultural elements, styles, values, religious ideas etc. This was also common during the early Archaic period. Another critical element was the spread of the ideas of Aristotle and Plato. Thirdly, the rise of personal art altered the style considerably, while monumental art grew

bigger and more impressive. These elements combined to define a new era. For a review of the major differences between the ideas of Aristotle and those of Plato, see the chart below:

Criteria	Aristotle	Plato
Highest Good:	Happiness	Knowledge
Cultural Values:	Empiricism Individualism Antiquarianism	Rationalism Humanism Idealism

Empiricism, discovering truth through the senses, is in direct conflict with Plato’s idea that truth must be reached through application of pure reason, which is rationalism. Remember that in the Athenian court system of the Classical age, eye-witness testimony and physical evidence were not trusted and as such, reason was the only defense. It was also the only way to convict a suspect.

Once the Democracy and many Republics had fallen, many people turned to their own lives in hope of finding truth. Individuals no longer had power over their political lives and so, instead of focusing on the betterment of the whole, people often turned to the betterment of themselves, focusing on the individual, rather than the group.

This is also the time that Antiquarianism began to develop. Alexander spent much of his short life going from oracle to oracle to prove to himself and others that he descended from divinity. This combination of politics and religion, adopted by his father, would continue to develop into propaganda that supported his rule and later the rule of Rome. As this idea developed, the idealism seen in many sculptures of the time was not actually intended as a cultural value that was being sought after, but as a tool to influence people.

Because of these seemingly conflicted values and because of the many cultures that were merging ideas, there was an interesting mix of art styles that could be seen around the Mediterranean Sea and the Aegean Sea. Below is a chart of what to keep an eye out for in your study of the Hellenistic Tradition. Personal art had become more common during the Late Classical Period, and it continued to grow in popularity. Monumental art, sponsored by the ruling powers, also continued to develop. Although the two types of art shared many things, stylistically, there are some ideas that tended to appear more often in one or the other.

Personal Art	Personal and Monumental Art	Monumental Art
Novelty	A mix of idealistic and realistic styling	Deified ruler
Exoticism	A mix of cultural stylistic elements	Monumental tombs
Humor	Intense feeling of movement	Idealism as propaganda
Virtuosity	Not frontal	Victory monuments
Speculation	Deep Shadows	Colossal Statues
Images of Loss	Viewed from All Angles	



5.3 *Tetradrachm* of Lysimachos. British Museum.ⁱⁱⁱ

The tetradrachm above provides an excellent example of the deification of rule, as well as providing an example of syncretism. Alexander was smart. He put an idealized image of himself in the hands of all of his subjects. Here he appears wearing the crown of rule and symbols of religion that both his new subjects and his Greek subjects would recognize. The head of Alexander is featured wearing royal and divine symbols: the diadem and the horns of Zeus Ammon. Ammon is a Libyan deity that Alexander consulted at an oracle in the desert. This use of propaganda would influence many generations to come. Image 5.4 shows Alexander with more than a passing resemblance to Apollo. This was not an accident.



5.4 *Alexander the Great*, Bust.^{iv}

Clues when Comparing Greek Art

- **Geometric Art:** Frontal, closed space, full sun half god perfection of the artistic type
- **Classical Art:** General idea of a marshal warrior, god-like man rising above limitations
- **Hellenistic Art:** Non-frontal, deep shadow, open space, organic shapes, half-brute, defeat of the human spirit, sometimes a bit shocking
- **Idealism:** Ethos, self-control, order, denial of change
- **Realism:** Pathos, passion, suffering discontent, embraces change, emotions

Watch for these ideas as you investigate Hellenistic art and architecture from 323 to 146 BCE. Of course there will be exceptions to the rules but this will help you to grasp how Hellenistic art is distinctive. One of the important results of this combining of cultures and values will be new philosophy that develops from the syncretism. Those philosophical viewpoints, Stoicism and Epicureanism will be discussed further in Chapter 6, Roman Philosophy. Another important idea that will continue to influence politics is the Antiquarian tendency to deify, or to find divine origins for the rulers.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by Mike Peel (www.mikepeel.net), CC BY-SA 4.0, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/99/Alexander_coin%2C_British_Museum.jpg

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PERGAMON

The ancient city of Pergamon, now modern day Bergama in Turkey, was the capital of the Kingdom of Pergamon following the death of Alexander the Great and was ruled under the Attalid dynasty. The Acropolis of Pergamon is a prime example of Hellenistic architecture and the convergence of nature and architectural design to create dramatic and theatrical sites. The buildings on the acropolis were built into and on top of a steep hill that commanded great views of the surrounding countryside. Both the upper and lower portions of the acropolis were home to many important structures of urban life, including gymnasiums, agorae, baths, libraries, a theater, shrines, temples, and altars. Culturally speaking, Pergamon had become the jewel of the known world.



5.5 *Scale Model of the Acropolis of Pergamon*, as it may have looked. Center left: Theatre of Pergamon. Center right: Altar of Zeus. Pergamon Museum Berlin.ⁱ

The theater at Pergamon could seat 10,000 people and was one of the steepest theaters in the ancient world. Like all Hellenic theaters, it was built into the hillside, which supported the structure and provided stadium seating that overlooked the ancient city and its surrounding countryside. The theater is one example of the creation and use of dramatic and theatrical architecture.



5.6 Ancient Greek *Theatre of Pergamon*, Turkeyⁱⁱ

Theatre continued to be popular during the Hellenistic Age. The comedies pioneered by Aristophanes during the high Classical period and after the fall of the Democracy developed into a style more appropriate to areas under the rule of

kings. The speech in which the playwright made a serious point was eliminated. The Greek poet, Menander, introduced a new character type, the clever slave. This gave people a character that they could relate to as well as the opportunity to watch the slave outwit his master.

THE ALTAR OF ZEUS

Another architectural wonder found at Pergamon is the great Altar of Zeus, now housed in Berlin, Germany. The altar was commissioned in the first half of the second century BCE, during the reign of King Eumenes II to commemorate his victory over the Gauls, who were migrating into Asia Minor. The Gauls were an ancient, often nomadic people that lived in northern Europe and became known for attacking and pillaging wealthy cities such as Pergamon and Rome. The altar was a U-shaped Ionic building built on a high platform, an idea borrowed from the Persians, with central steps leading to the top. It faced east, was located near the theater of Pergamon, and commanded an outstanding view of the region. The altar is known for its grand design and for its frieze, which wrapped 370 feet around the base of the altar depicting gigantomachy, which refers to the battle between the giants of the Titans and the Olympians, and was led by Zeus.



5.7 The *Altar of Zeus*, marble, 175 BCE, reconstruction in Berlin, Germany. Original in Bergama, Turkey. ⁱⁱⁱ

The gigantomachy depicts the Olympian gods fighting against their predecessors the Giants (Titans) who were the children of the goddess, Gaia. The frieze is known for its incredibly high relief, in which the figures are barely restrained by the wall, and for its deep drilling of lines with details that create dramatic shadows. The high relief and deep drilling also increased the liveliness and naturalism of the scene.



5.8 *Athena Defeats the Giants*, Frieze on the *Altar of Zeus*, Pergamon Museum, Berlin. ^{iv}

The figures are rendered with high plasticity. The texture of their skin, drapery, and scales add another level of naturalism. Furthermore, as the frieze follows the stairs, the limbs of the figures begin to spill out of their frame and onto the stairs, physically breaking into the space of the viewer. The style and high drama of the scenes is often referred to as the Hellenistic Baroque for its exaggerated motion, emphasis on details, and the liveliness of the characters.

The most famous scene on the frieze depicts Athena fighting the giant Alkyoneus. She grabs his head and pulls it back while Gaia emerges from the ground to plead for her son's life and a winged Nike reaches over to crown Athena. Athena's drapery swirls around her with deep folds and her whole body is nearly removed from the frieze. The figures are depicted with the heightened emotion commonly found on Hellenistic statues. Alkyoneus's face strains in pain and Gaia's eyes, which are all that remain of her face, are full of terror and sorrow at the death of her son.

The entire composition is depicted in a chiastic shape. A chiasm is a figure that repeats concepts in reverse order in the same or a modified form. Athena stretches out to grasp Alkyoneus's head, the two figures pull at each other in opposite directions. Meanwhile, the figure of Nike moves diagonally towards Athena, showing their convergence in a moment of victory. The diagonal line created by Gaia mimics the shape of her son, connecting the two figures through line and pathos. The scene is filled with the tension and emotion that are key features in Hellenistic sculpture.



5.9 Gaia pleads with Athena to spare her sons. v

THE DYING GAULS

A group of statues depicting dying Gauls, the defeated enemies of the Attalids, was situated inside the Altar of Zeus. The court sculptor, Epigonus, is believed to have cast the original set of statues in bronze in 230-220 BCE. Now, only marble Roman copies of the figures remain. Like the figures on the frieze and other Hellenistic sculptures, the figures are depicted with lifelike details and a high level of naturalism. They are also depicted in the common **motif** of barbarians. A motif is a recurring subject or theme, often found in design. The men are nude and wear Gallic **torcs**. A torc was a neck ring, often brass, that signified the warrior class. Their hair is shaggy and disheveled. The figures are positioned in dramatic compositions and are shown dying heroically, which turns them into worthy adversaries, increasing the perception of power of the Attalid dynasty.

One Gaul is depicted lying down, supporting himself over his shield and a discarded trumpet. He furrows his brow as he looks at his sword and at his own image, reflected there, as he prepares himself for death. His muscles are large and strong, signifying his strength as a warrior and implying the strength of the one who struck him down.



5.10 *Dying Gaul*. Roman copy of Greek original, c 230-220 BCE. Capitoline Museum, Rome. ^{vi}

Two other figures complete the group. One figure depicts a Gallic chief committing suicide after he has killed his own wife. Also known as the Ludovisi Gaul, this sculpture group displays another heroic and noble deed of the foes, for typically women and children of the defeated would be murdered to avoid their being captured and sold as slaves by the victors. The chief holds his fallen wife by the arm as he plunges his sword into his chest, where blood is already exiting the wound. All three figures in the group are depicted in a Hellenistic manner. To fully appreciate the statues, it is best to walk around them. Their pain, nobility, and death are evident from all angles.



5.11 Ludovisi Gaul Killing His Wife. ^{vii}



5.12 Ludovisi Gaul, detail. ^{viii}

The theater structure and the altar were only two of the important buildings on the acropolis of Pergamon. Yet, in these two structures and in their decoration, the Hellenistic style comes through. Both the theater and the altar are highly dramatic. The theatre positions the audience at an extremely steep angle with a breathtaking view of the ocean behind the action of the players. The plays enacted there reflected the changing times in their addition of a clever slave. Comedy was topical but unlike Classical Greek comedy, it would not lampoon the ruler.

The images carved in the frieze of the Altar of Zeus are caught in a moment of intense action. It seems as if the wind is blowing the garments around the figures, adding to the drama. The fascination with the moment of death is seen in both free-standing sculptures. Unlike his predecessors, the Gaul who is lying down is seen after the event, the moment before he dies. His image is not about potential. His is an image of contemplation of loss. The standing figure also prepares for death. His idealistic proportions do little to keep him from his fate. The mixture of the real and the ideal is unsettling. He is quite beautiful as he commits the ultimate act of self-reliance.

These public monuments fit neatly into the Hellenistic period. There is virtuosity in the carving. The grouping of bronze statues would have been an indication of the wealth of the city, as well as the pride that Pergamon took in defeating the Gauls, who were feared by nearly everyone in the ancient world. The Greek city in the Persian landscape was in itself a mixture of cultures. The mix of those two cultures can be seen in the podium on which the Altar sits. This mix of styles and cultural values can also be seen when viewing some of the art that was created elsewhere in a world that was rapidly becoming Hellenized.

For a better view of the Gaul, click on the following virtual link:
[DYING GAUL AND LUDOVISI GAUL](https://smarthistory.org/dying-gaul/). <https://smarthistory.org/dying-gaul/>

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OTHER SCULPTURE IN THE HELLENISTIC TRADITION

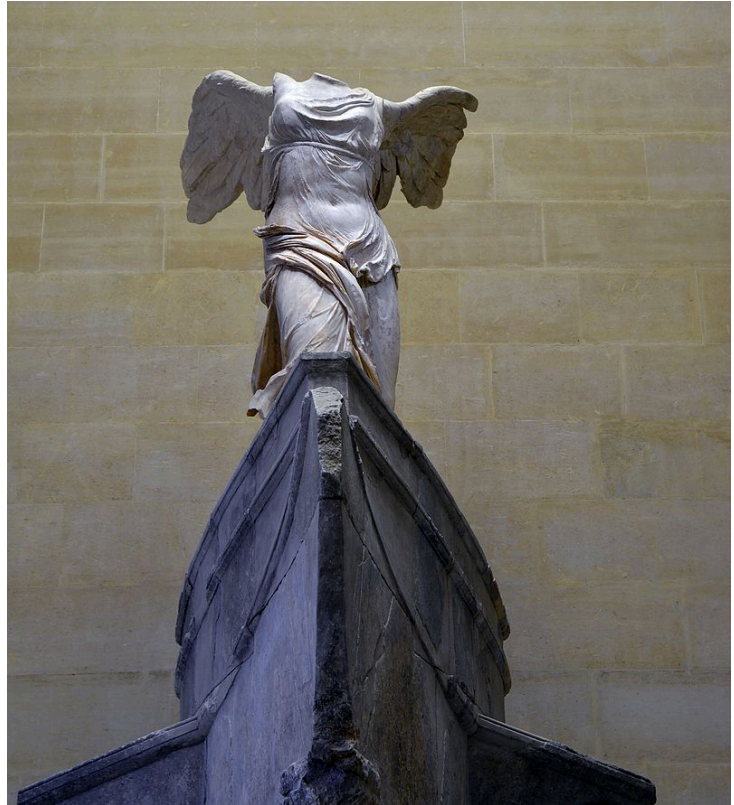
In addition to the sculpture seen at Pergamon, other Hellenistic sculpture shows an increased use of naturalism. During this time, the rules of Classical art were pushed and abandoned in favor of new themes, genres, drama, and pathos that had never before been explored by Greek artists. A new level of naturalism was added to their figures by adding elasticity to facial and physical forms and expressions. These figures interact with their audience in a new theatrical manner by eliciting an emotional reaction when viewed. This is known as pathos.

NIKE OF SAMOTHRACE

One of the most iconic statues of the period, the Nike of Samothrace, also known as the Winged Victory, (c. 190 BCE) commemorates a naval victory. She is made of Parian marble which is a fine-grained, semi-translucent, pure white, flawless marble quarried during the classical era on the Greek island of Paros in the Aegean Sea. It was highly prized by ancient Greeks. This Parian marble statue depicts Nike, now armless and headless, alighting onto the prow of the ship. The prow is visible beneath her feet, and the scene is filled with theatricality and naturalism as the statue reacts to her surroundings. Nike's feet, legs, and body thrust forward in contradiction to her drapery and wings that stream backwards. Her clothing whips around her from the wind and her wings lift upwards. This depiction provides the impression that she has just landed and that this is the precise moment that she is settling onto the ship's prow. In addition to the sculpting, the figure was most likely set within a fountain, creating a theatrical setting where both the imagery and the auditory effect of the fountain would create a striking image of action and triumph.



5.13 *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, Louvre, Paris, 190 BCEⁱ

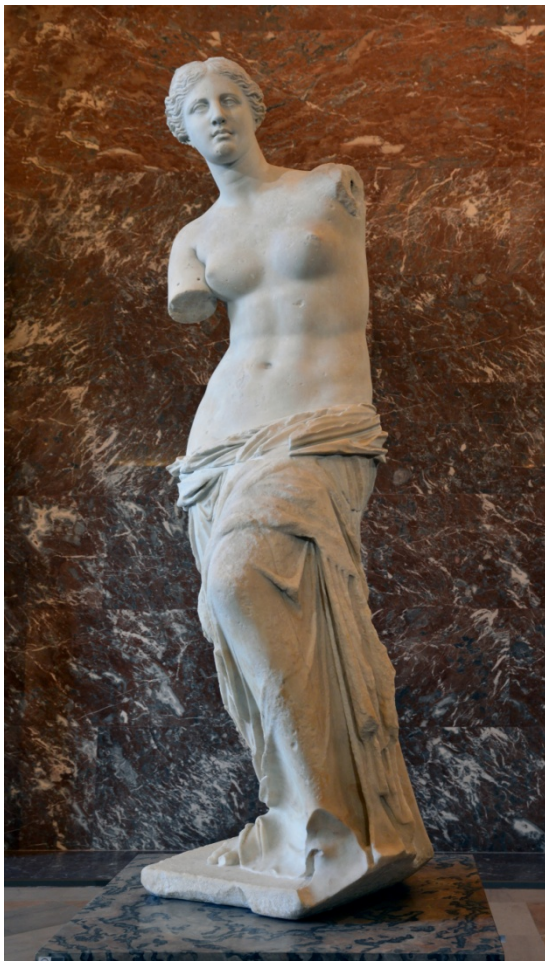


5.14 *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, Louvre, Parisⁱⁱ

VENUS DE MILO

Also known as the Aphrodite of Melos (c. 130-100 BCE), this sculpture by Alexandros of Antioch, is another well-known icon of the Hellenistic period. Today the goddess's arms are missing, but it has been suggested that one arm clutched at her slipping drapery while the other arm held out an apple, an allusion to the Judgment of Paris and the abduction of Helen. Originally, like all Greek sculptures, the statue would have been painted and adorned with metal jewelry, which is evident from the attachment holes. This image is in some ways similar to Praxiteles's Late Classical sculpture Aphrodite of Knidos (fourth century BCE) but is considered to be more erotic than its earlier counterpart. For instance, while she is covered below the waist, Aphrodite makes little attempt to cover herself. She appears to be teasing and ignoring her viewer, instead of accosting him and making eye contact.

Notice that unlike Aphrodite of Knidos, this goddess is not successful in keeping her drapery covering herself. A rear view reveals that the drape may be just about to drop off. Although she has the facial expression of a classically calm statue, she is far more sensual than images of women during the Classical age.



5.15 *Venus de Milo*, 130-100 BCE, Parian marble, Louvreⁱⁱⁱ



5.16 *Venus de Milo*, detail^{iv}

ALTERED STATES

While the Nike of Samothrace exudes a sense of drama and the Venus de Milo a new level of feminine sexuality, other Greek sculptors explored new states of being. Instead of, as was favored during the Classical period, reproducing images of the ideal Greek male or female, sculptors began to depict images of the old, tired, sleeping, and drunk—none of which are ideal representations of a man or woman.

The Barberini Faun, also known as the Sleeping Satyr (c. 220 BCE), depicts a reclined figure, a satyr, drunk and passed out on a rock. His body splays across the rock face without regard to modesty. He appears to have fallen to sleep in the midst of a drunken revelry and he sleeps restlessly, his brow is knotted, face worried, and his limbs are tense and stiff. Unlike earlier depictions of nude men, but in a similar manner to the Venus de Milo, the Barberini Faun seems to exude sexuality.



5.17 *Barberini Faun*, marble copy bronze original, 220 BCE, Munich, Germany, 85".^v

Above is seen the detail of the faun's tail. Other than this detail, he is quite human. He dreams and seems about to wake. Again the interest in the moment between waking and sleeping, and life and death, emerges. This was originally cast in bronze, a material that would have been saved for more civic images during the Classical age.



5.18 *Barberini Faun*, detail^{vi}



5.19 *Barberini Faun*, detail^{vii}

Images of drunkenness were also created of women, which can be seen in a statue attributed to the Hellenistic artist Myron of a drunken beggar woman. This woman sits on the floor with her arms and legs wrapped around a large jug and a hand gripping the jug's neck. Grape vines decorating the top of the jug make it clear that it holds wine.

The woman's face, instead of being expressionless, is turned upward and she appears to be calling out, possibly to passersby. Not only is she intoxicated, but she is old: deep wrinkles line her face, her eyes are sunken, and her bones stick out through her skin. Keep in mind that children and old people were not considered ideal enough to depict during the Classical period. During the Hellenistic era, they became quite popular.

All around the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas sculpture reflected the new ideas that were emerging during the Hellenistic age. Pathos replaced ethos in many cases, while in others the ideal was mixed with the real, creating natural, yet theatrical images. These images evoked emotion interacted with their environments and were relatable to the average person.



5.20 *Old Drunkard*, Capitoline Museum^{viii}

THE SEATED BOXER

The Seated Boxer by Apollonias, is an excellent example of what can be expected from Hellenistic sculpture. Although the bronze sculpture is from a slightly later time period and is not in motion like many pieces from this era, he fits expectations in many ways. Notice that the boxer is idealistic in his body proportions while he displays the emotion that is associated with realism. Think back to the distinction between realism and idealism as you review this sculpture.

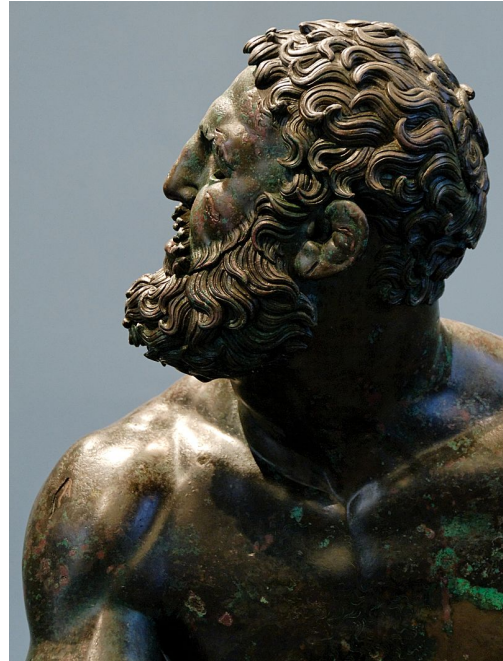


5.21 *Seated Boxer*, bronze, Apollonias, c 100-50 BCE. ix

Notice that the figure interacts with his environment. The sculpture is open and invites the viewer into the scene. He turns to the side as if he has just realized that something is there. The shapes are organic. The line of his shoulders defines his slumped body. It is as though he has had a tough bout. Even though he is seated, the contrapposto is extreme.



5.22 *Seated Boxer* detail ^x



5.23 *Seated Boxer*, detail ^{xi}

This sculpture is not about potential. It presents the figure after he has lost. Whereas idealism tends to be seen in sculptures that represent victory over enemies and emotion, this sculpture presents an image of failure. Not only does the boxer seem to have lost his fight, his anguish shows in his facial expression and in the slumped position of his body. The defeated fighter has a swollen ear and a nose that appears to have been broken (indications of realism). Cauliflower ear is a result of multiple trauma to the ear. Note the bend in his nose. Although his muscles are well developed and his hair seems to be perfectly coifed (indications of idealism), he is far from ideal.



5.24 *Seated Boxer*, detail ^{xii}



5.25 *Seated Boxer*, detail ^{xiii}

The Boxer's hands are bound in leather. Hands like these had been beating on his face. Greek boxers tended to land blows to the face, rather than to the body. This also explains why his body looks so perfect, even though his face is badly cut and scraped. Note that the boxer displays blood, an illusion created by an inlay of copper in wound areas. Blood, sweat and tears indicate a movement away from idealism.

The Seated boxer, with his deep shadows and bloody hands and face is a great example of the influence that Alexander's spread of ideas had on sculpture in and after the Hellenistic Age. He is ideal, yet real. He is beaten, human and is interacting with his viewers. He represents changes in Greek identity that were, as they always are, accompanied by changes in art style. He is, in nearly every way, a Hellenistic image.

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ⁱ Louvre Museum, Public domain,

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^x Photo by Marie-Lan Nguyen, CC BY 2.5, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Thermae_boxer_Massimo_Inv1055_n5.jpg

^{xi} Photo by Marie-Lan Nguyen, CC BY 2.5, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Thermae_boxer_Massimo_Inv1055_n9.jpg

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THE WONDERS OF THE WORLD

During the Hellenistic Period travel increased, especially to those areas that had come under Greek rule. Persia had a decent road system that aided anyone attempting to move around in an area formerly inaccessible to the Greeks. During the Hellenistic period, several people listed the best places to visit. As the years went by, the more popular lists became known as the Wonders of the World. Here is the list created by Philo of Byzantium.ⁱ It includes the approximate date that each monument was constructed.

- Great Pyramid of Giza Egypt (2584 BCE)
- Hanging Gardens of Babylon Babylon (c. 600 BCE)
- Temple of Artemis Ephesus (550 BCE)
- Statue of Zeus at Olympus Greece (435 BCE)
- Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (351 BCE)
- Colossus of Rhodes (292 BCE)
- Pharos Lighthouse at Alexandria Egypt (280 BCE)

Notice that these wonders are drawn from the Greek world. Many had existed for some time when the list was created. The last three were created in or around the Hellenistic period. Each of them displayed the elements expected in Hellenistic monuments.

Although The Pyramid of Giza is the only wonder that still exists, there are drawings and documents that discuss and outline the basic use of sculptural and architectural elements in many of the other buildings. It is, therefore, possible to gain a fair understanding of what these colossal monuments looked like and how they were used. In the cases of the lighthouse and the mausoleum at Halicarnassus, and we can still view the remnants of the structures that once decorated the mausoleum.

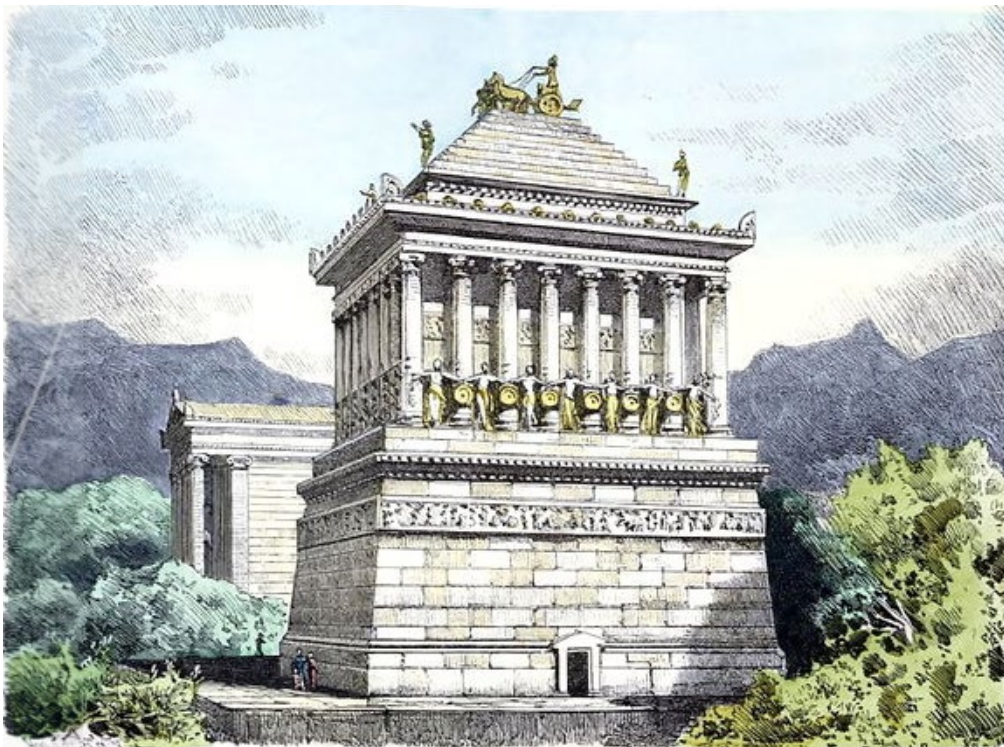
One of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World is the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (Bodrum), built for king Mausolos of Caria. Unfortunately there is not a lot left to see of this ancient and once magnificent tomb. It was named as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World but now one must rely on imagination and models. Mausolos ruled the kingdom of Caria in the western part of Asia Minor (Turkey) from 377 BCE. During his reign he transferred his capital from Mylasa to Halicarnassus. His ideas were never on a small scale and he set out to create a worthy capital city taxing the inhabitants heavily to cover the costs of fortifications and other grand projects. Mausolos was married to his sister Artemisia, a common practice for rulers in those days, and they ruled until his death in 353 BC. Although brokenhearted, Artemisia set about to build a tribute to Mausolos. This was to be the finest tomb in the known world. The Mausoleum, standing at over 165' in height, is described as being an enormous white marble tomb with ionic columns that formed a temple with a stepped pyramid roof. It was topped by a carriage containing statues of Mausolos and Artemisia drawn by four horses.

This stood relatively intact for almost 19 centuries until an earthquake in 1304 destroyed it. The Knights Hospitaller broke it up further in 1522 and used the pieces as building material for their castle. The site has pleasant gardens with excavations to the right and a covered arcade to the left. The arcade contains a copy of the famous frieze mainly recovered from the castle walls. The original was sent to the British Museum in London in 1846. Four original fragments on display were discovered more recently. Mausolos' name is now associated with all stately tombs through the modern word Mausoleum.



5.26 The ruins of the *Mausoleum at Halicarnassus* (Bodrum), ⁱⁱ

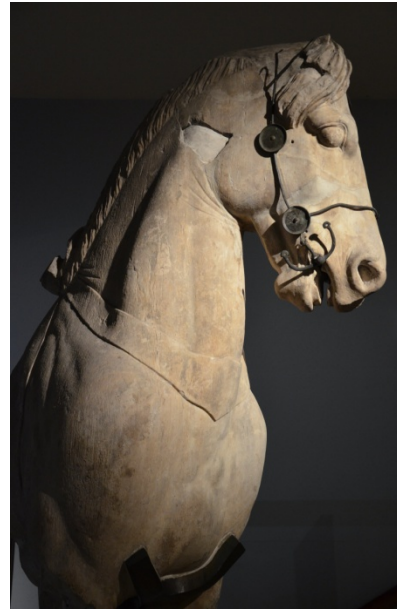
Notice that the mausoleum incorporates the Persian idea of a podium, or platform. This no doubt helped to aggrandize this king, who like rulers in Egypt chose to marry his sister and combine religion and politics. The columns of the building were ionic in style brought from northern Greece. The structure is topped by a pyramid shaped roof, which is crowned by a statue set, much like the Classical Charioteer. This time, however, the king himself rides the chariot with his sister-wife. Combining a minimum of three cultures's building styles created the grandest mausoleum in the European world.



5.27 Drawing of the *Mausoleum at Halicarnassus*, by Ferdinand Knab (1834-1902)ⁱⁱⁱ



5.28 Mausolos, from the top of the mausoleum ^{iv}



5.29 Horse from the top of the mausoleum ^v

What is left of the sculpture that decorated this building also demonstrates Hellenistic styling. Notice that the image of the king's head is handsome and strong looking. He considered himself a handsome brute but the image was likely idealized, none-the less. Although the king was Greek, he sported a beard, a style probably borrowed from the Persians. Even the horse is in a contrapposto pose. It is not preparing to move but is tossing his head; it is in action. This is a rare opportunity to view a Greek sculpture with the added bit and bridle. Other sculptures that remain also display motion.



5.30 Slab of the *Amazonomachy Frieze* from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, c 350 BCE, British Museum, 36x 71". ^{vi}



5.31 Slab from the *Amazonomachy Frieze* from the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, c 350 BCE, British Museum, 36x71".^{vii}

In the image above, strong diagonal lines indicate intense movement. The men's bodies are idealistically muscular and flawless yet there is bloodshed, not an ideal element. In the image below, it seems as though there is a strong wind blowing. The movement of the clothing of both men and women adds to the feeling of excitement. The Amazonomachy was a war between the Greeks and the Amazons, an all female group of warriors.

Another Wonder of the World that was created during the Hellenistic period was the Faros Lighthouse at Alexandria in Egypt. What was left of the lighthouse after it began to sink into the sea seems to have been used to construct other buildings, which is why there is still something to look at. Most of what can be learned about the lighthouse comes from anecdotes and documents, however.



5.32 Reconstruction *Drawing of the Faros Lighthouse, Alexandria, Egypt*. Prof Hermann Thiersch (1874-1939).^{viii}

The strongest tie to the time period is that this lighthouse was built in a city named for Alexander the Great. It was impressive and huge, a testament to the importance of Alexander, who also visited the oracle in Egypt to validate his rule. In addition to the lighthouse, which was the largest and most impressive building found, there was a library built there that housed the most important Greek texts. It is unfortunate that the library was later destroyed.

The final monument that was created during the Hellenistic era was the Colossus at Rhodes. There are many descriptions of the colossus, but it only stood for about a quarter of a century so there are more questions than certainties. What is known for certain is that this was the largest free-standing sculpture known. Some said that it straddled the entrance to the bay, but that has been largely discounted due to what has been learned about physics. The statue was of a young man with a crown of light around his head, possibly a reference to the Mithraic cult or to another Persian sun god. The Mithraic Mysteries, also known as Mithraism, were a mystery cult in the Roman world where followers worshipped the Indo-Iranian deity Mithras. This god was originally a Persian sun god. Note the mixture of cultural ideas. Rhodes was under Greek rule at the time that this statue was built. The statue was an idealized nude male, an idea that is quite Greek in origin. The size and materials, which took tons of bronze to construct, were typical of Hellenistic monuments. An earthquake felled the colossus and the people of the city refused to rebuild it because an oracle had warned against it.

Whether sculpture was monumental or personal, a mixture of cultures and ideas defined this period. Intense movement, ideal imagery and emotional content all combine to form this new art style, which would go on to influence the development of the Roman Empire. All of these are evident in the Mausoleum, even though it was built slightly before the time of Alexander. The Wars with Persia and ongoing settlement by the Greeks had already begun the spread of ideas that Alexander completed.

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ⁱ Seven Wonders of the World. cmglee, Flappiefh, Nicolas M. Perrault [CC BY-SA (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>)]

ⁱⁱ Photo by bazylek100, CC BY 2.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Halicarnassus_Mausoleum.jpg Some text also taken from the file attached to the image in Wikimedia.

ⁱⁱⁱ Public domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mausoleum_at_Halicarnassus_by_Ferdinand_Knab_\(1886\)_cropped.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mausoleum_at_Halicarnassus_by_Ferdinand_Knab_(1886)_cropped.png)

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6.17 Augustus Prima Porta



6.48 Trajan's Column, Rome



6.59 Woman Scholar, Pompeii.

Chapter 6

Roman Civilization

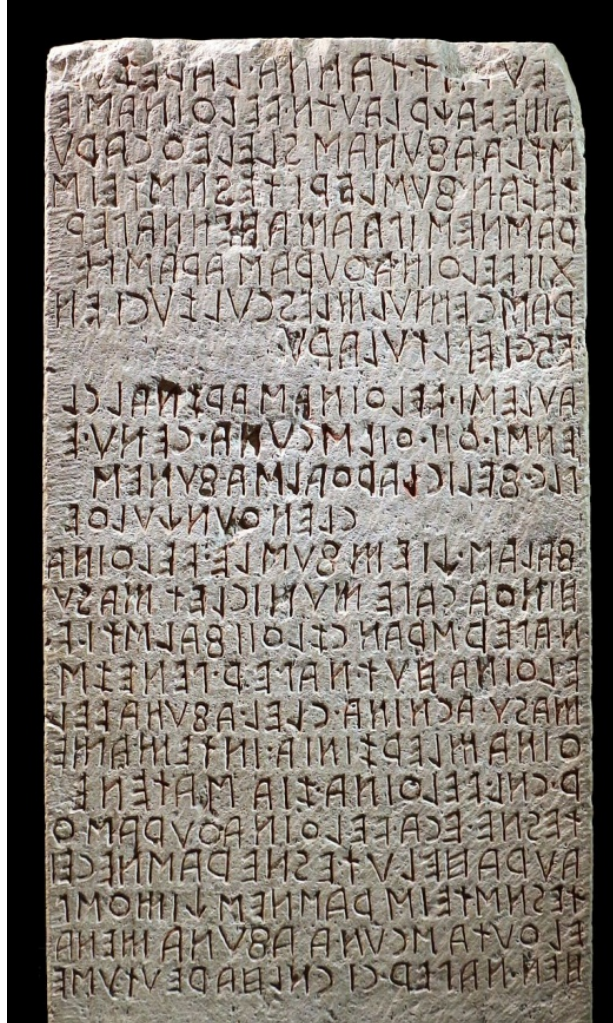
ETRUSCAN INFLUENCES ON ROMAN CULTURE

One of the most surprising aspects of the history of early Rome is that, despite constant threats from its more powerful neighbors, it was never swallowed by them. The Etruscans dominated much of northern Italy down to Rome, while the southern half of Italy was so heavily colonized by the Greeks as to earn the nickname “Magna Graecia,” meaning “Great Greece.” Scholars do not agree on the origins of the Etruscans. Some say they came from the east; others say they developed in Italy. The Etruscans became rich through trade with the Celtic world and the Greeks. They are also known to have traded wine and olive oil in what is now France, Switzerland, and Germany. The Etruscans were ruled by the Tarquin kings from about 650 BCE to 500 BCE. During that time they drained the malaria filled marshes, planned and built temples and cities, and constructed roads, which improved relations with the Romans to the south.



6.1 Map of Etruscan influence on the Northern Italian Peninsula. 750-500 BCE.¹

Although there are 10,000 or so inscribed Tuscan texts, there are no known literary works that might tell us about who they are or where they came from. Inscriptions have been found on vases, tombs, statues and jewelry and some of their language was used in religious ceremonies until the 5th century CE.ⁱⁱ To this date scholars are not yet able to translate much of the Etruscan text that has been found, although it is believed that the characters are derived from the Greek alphabet. So the text is not connected to any real literature and does not tell of the origins of their culture. We are left to wonder where they came from and what they believed.



6.2 Inscribed Etruscan text on a stone plinth. National Museum of Umbriaⁱⁱⁱ

The Etruscans built protected cities atop the hills of what we now call Tuscany. Civit -di-Bagnoregio , see image 6.3, which tourists can now access with a raised walkway, was built in the 12th century atop the ruins of a Roman city, which was built atop an existing Etruscan city. The Etruscans originally chose the site high on a mountain top to provide protection from invaders. Only the columns of the ancient temples remain, and pieces of Civita continue to tumble into the valleys below.



6.3 *Civit -di-Bagnoregio*^{iv}

Etruscan men and women enjoyed an active social calendar together. Unlike their Greek counterparts, Etruscan women were given much more freedom to participate in public social events. They were able to obtain an education and to own property. It was not uncommon for women to attend gatherings that might be considered male-only activities in other cultures. We know this because of some of the sarcophagi that have been unearthed. The Sarcophagus of Cerveteri, image 6.4, was created in 520 BCE and was found in the Banditaccia Necropolis, which was an Etruscan city that is now in Rome. In relics of other cultures, women are seen as servants, but in many Etruscan works, husbands and wives lie together on a dining couch, touching and interacting with each other. Their hair, clothing, and facial expressions are stylized, just like the Archaic Greek sculptures of the same period. The eyes are almond shaped and they sit in postures that may not be very comfortable. This work is made of terra cotta, most likely because there was no ready source of marble to be found locally. It is 3.7 ft tall by 6.2 ft wide and was made in several sections.



6.4 *Sarcophagus of Cerveteri*, terra cotta, 520 BCE, National Etruscan Museum, Villa Giulia, Rome.^v

Some of the sarcophagi contain skeletons while others contain ashes, so we believe they used both types of funeral practices. Even though they cremated their dead, they are well known for large temple complexes with elaborately sculpted

and painted tombs. Like the Egyptians, they believed in an afterlife. Etruscan tombs are filled with practical grave goods that they believed would be needed for their reunion with family and a continuous series of banquets, games, dancing, wrestling, parades, and music. Tombs looked like homes, and the tomb cities look like cities of the living with streets, parks and plazas.



6.5 *Tomba dei rilievi* , in the necropolis of Banditaccia, Cerviteri, Italy.^{vi}

The Tomb of the Rilievi, image 6.5, is supported by two columns and includes niches along the walls. The walls are covered with painted objects that might have been used by a well-to-do family. There are cooking implements, farm tools, pillows and even pets. The tomb was colorfully painted to enable the inhabitants to feel at home in their eternal environment.

Up until 600 BCE the Etruscans worshipped outdoors in groves beneath the open sky. They then began to build temples to honor their many local gods. Some of these were adopted from the Greek pantheon of gods such as Atumes (Artemis) goddess of the hunt, Nethunes (Poseidon), god of the sea, and Apidu (Apollo). The Apollo of Veii, image 6.6, was positioned on top of the temple of Portonacci with many other Etruscan gods. He is 5'11 inches tall and is made of terra cotta. Apollo's clothing and hair are stylized much like the Greek Archaic works of the same time period. He actively strides forward, moving his arms to keep his balance.



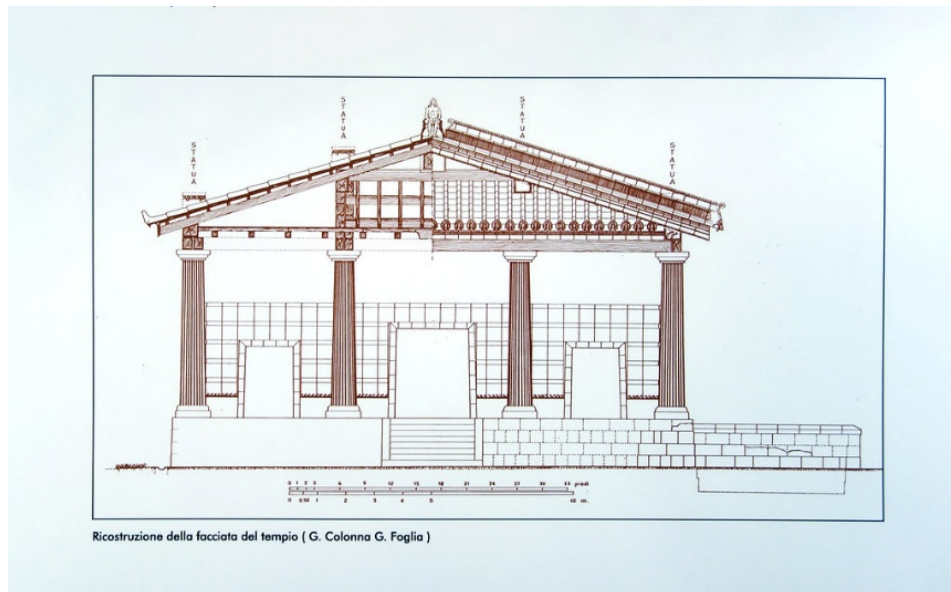
6.6 *Apollo (Aplu) of Veii*, from the roof of the Portonaccio Temple at Veii (Italy), around 510 BCE. National Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia, Rome ^{vii}

It is believed that many Etruscan gods and their temples were made of perishable materials and have therefore disappeared through the years. Image 6.8 is a reconstruction of the Temple of Veii. Note that it has been built with a deep porch and a large number of Tuscan columns that provide an entrance to three interior rooms or cella. The Etruscans had no marble quarries so their buildings were constructed of individual blocks.

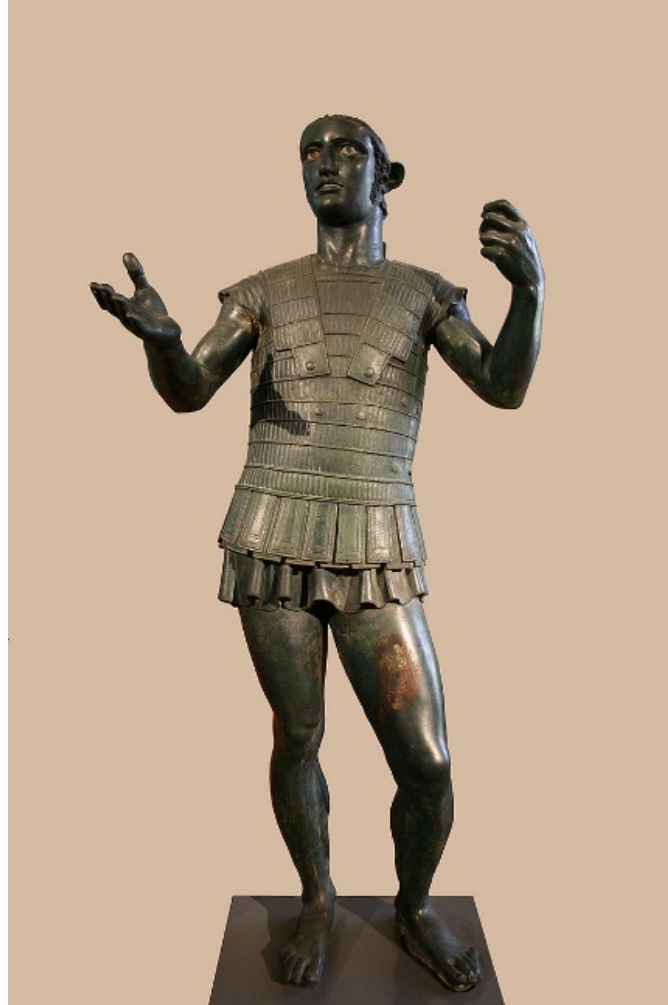


6.7 Etruscan arch and wall. ^{viii}

See image 6.7, an Etruscan arch and wall that remain standing. This method was translated by the Romans into the arches and vaults. Note also that statues were intended to be placed on the roof of the building, perhaps in such a way as to tell a story. According to Vitruvius, three doors led into cellas (rooms) for Jupiter, Juno and Minerva. ^{ix}



6.8 Reconstruction of the façade of the Temple Veii. ^x



6.9 *Mars of Todi*, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco.^{xi}

The Etruscans were masters of metallurgy. Mars of Todi, image 6.9, is a bronze warrior from the late 5th or early 4th century BCE. It was found on the slope of Mount Santo. It is currently in the Vatican Museum and is a life size, cast bronze sculpture made using the lost wax method. Originally this sculpture included a helmet and probably a spear. Notice the weight shift and the attention to detail in the muscles of the legs and neck. It is likely that the object was dedicated to Laran, the Etruscan god of war. Dressed in intricately worked plate armor, the figure takes a contrapposto stance and indicates that the Etruscan artist was aware of the formal elements of the Classical style of sculpture. It represents the tradition of libations made by soldiers prior to battle, an opportunity to plead with the gods for support and success in battle.

The Etruscans provided a foundational legacy for the Roman Empire. From the Etruscans the Romans learned to use divination to make decisions and establish new towns. They learned to hold elaborate victory processions after battles. They adopted the toga, learned to use currency to purchase goods, and learned to use a dental bridge for their teeth. Tuscan columns were used in Roman architecture and Etruscan words appear in the Roman language. We know something of the construction of Etruscan temples because of the writings and drawings of Vitruvius in his book “De Architecture” written in the Renaissance. So it would be appropriate to say that it was the Etruscans who provided the foundations of art and architecture used by the Romans and passed down to builders and architects in our time. The Romans copied much from the Etruscan culture, and then they destroyed what was left. It took centuries, but the defeat was total. All we have left of Etruscan culture are a few of their art works, some unconnected inscriptions, and buildings that lay in ruins.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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ⁱⁱ Omniglot.com/writing/Etruscan.

ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by Sailko, CC BY-SA 4.0.

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^v Photo by Gerard M, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarcophagus_of_the_Spouses#/media/File:Villa_Giulia_-_Sarcofago_degli_sposi.jpg

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^x <https://www.ancient.eu/image/6282/etruscan-temple-diagram/>

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruscan_civilization#/media/File:0_Mars_de_Todi_-_Museo_Gregoriano_Etruscoano_\(1\).JPG](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Etruscan_civilization#/media/File:0_Mars_de_Todi_-_Museo_Gregoriano_Etruscoano_(1).JPG)

ROMAN CIVILIZATION INTRODUCTION AND TOPOGRAPHY

As the title of one recent textbook of Roman history puts it, Roman history is, in a nutshell, the story of Rome's transformation "from village to empire."ⁱ The history of Rome begins with the legend of Romulus and Remus. It is said that in about 753 BCE, the twin brothers who were said to have been fathered by the gods, were placed in a basket in the Tiber River and were then pulled from the river and suckled by a she wolf. They were found and raised by shepherds and eventually Romulus founded the city of Rome after killing his brother. The she wolf suckling Romulus and Remus is the iconic image of the founding myth of Rome, and there are many sculptures like this one, image 6.10, which tell the city's founding story.

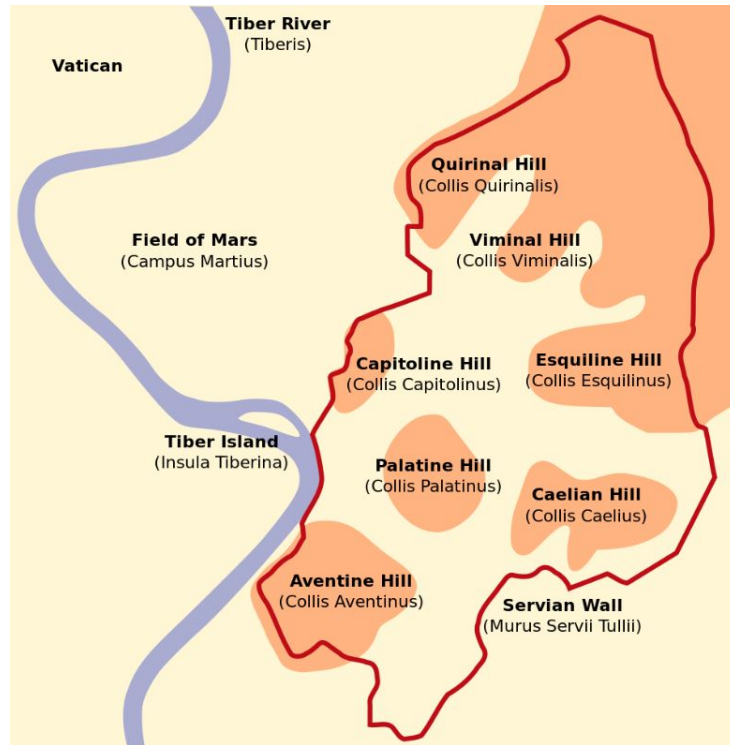


6.10 She-wolf of the Capitoline, Bronze, 13th century, she-wolf with Romulus and Remus.ⁱⁱ



6.11 Modern flowers placed on an ancient tomb.ⁱⁱⁱ

Today Romans still celebrate the city's birthday on April 21st with parades and flowers left at ancient monuments. (See image 6.11)



6.12 Map of the Seven Hills of Rome.^{iv}

The geography and topography of Rome, Italy, and the Mediterranean world as a whole played a key role in the expansion of the empire but also placed challenges in the Romans' path, challenges which further shaped their history. Before it became the capital of a major empire, Rome was a village built on seven hills sprawling around the river Tiber.

Set sixteen miles inland, the original Roman settlement had distinct strategic advantages: it was immune to attacks from the sea, and the seven hills on which the city was built were easy to fortify. The Tiber, although marshy, malaria ridden, and prone to flooding, enabled Romans to trade with the neighboring city-states. By the mid-Republic, Roman markets required access to the sea, so the Romans built a harbor at Ostia, which grew to become a full-fledged commercial arm of Rome. Wheeled vehicles were prohibited inside the city of Rome during the day, in order to protect the heavy pedestrian traffic. Thus, at night, carts from Ostia poured into Rome, delivering food and other goods for sale from all over Italy and the Empire.



6.13 Reconstruction of an insula called Casa de Diana in Ostia.^v



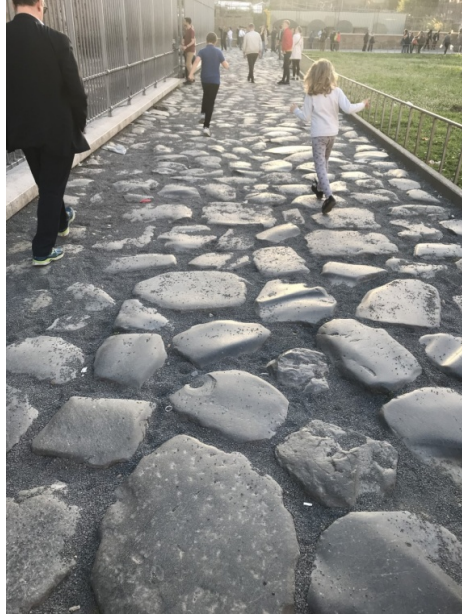
6.14 *Insula in Ostia, Italy.*^{vi}

The most common building erected in Rome was the insula. It was built for the commoners by the thousands, and 90% of the population lived in them. We believe that more than 45,000 of these were built, many by profit hungry speculators. In an effort to cut costs, many of the insula were poorly built and collapsed. Often a family lived in the upper stories and ran a small business on the lower floors. See image 6.13 which is a model of an insula and figure 6.14 which shows the ruins of an insula found in the modern city of Ostia. Only the wealthiest inhabitants of buildings like this had plumbing. Most of the people who lived in Rome used continuously flushing public toilets and the public baths.

As Rome built a Mediterranean empire, the city itself grew increasingly larger, reaching a population of one million by 100 CE. While Italy boasted fertile farmlands, feeding the city of Rome became a challenge that required the resources of the larger empire, and Egypt in particular became known as the breadbasket of Rome. As a result, emperors were especially cautious to control access to Egypt by prominent senators and other politicians, for fear of losing control over this key area of the Empire.

A persisting challenge for Roman emperors was that of the location of the empire's capital. When the Roman Empire consisted of Italy alone, the location of Rome in the middle of the Italian peninsula was the ideal location for the capital. Once the empire controlled huge amounts of territory, the location of Rome was a great distance from all the problem frontiers. As a result, emperors over the course of the second and third centuries spent increasingly less time in Rome. Finally, Diocletian's split of the Empire in 293 CE into four administrative regions, each with a regional capital, left Rome out, and in 330 CE, the emperor Constantine permanently moved the capital of the empire to his new city of Constantinople, built at the site of the older Greek city of Byzantium.

The large area encompassed by the empire required a sophisticated infrastructure of roads and sea routes, and the Romans provided both. By the first century CE, these roads and routes connected the center of the empire (Rome) to the periphery, providing ways for armies, politicians, traders, tourists, and students to travel with greater security and speed than ever before.



6.15 Cobblestones in Rome, near the Coliseum. ^{vii}

When Roman roads were well built they offered newly conquered populations a practical way to take their goods to market and stay connected to their neighbors. As primary sources reveal, travel was never a fully safe undertaking, as bandits lurked on the roads and pirates on the seas. Greedy locals were always eager to fleece unsuspecting tourists, and shipwrecks were an unfortunate common reality. Still, the empire created an unprecedented degree of networks and connections that allowed anyone in one part of the empire to be able to travel to any other part, provided he was wealthy enough to be able to afford the journey. See image 6.15 for an example of a cobblestone road built in the Coliseum complex that is still in use today.

The main energies of Rome were devoted to conquest and administration. Roman troops were well disciplined, tenacious, practical and obedient. Roman cities sprung up all around the Mediterranean and as far north as the Danube, the Rhine, and the Thames. Each city was a center for the propagation of Roman government, language, and customs. Rome sought to impress upon all of its outlying provinces that it was a powerful, dignified, and diverse state.

After the fall of the Etruscan kings, historians divide Roman history into two major periods: the Republic which ruled Rome from the late sixth century BCE to the late first century BCE, and the Empire from the late first century BCE to the fall of the Western half of the empire in the late fifth century CE. During the Republican period power was theoretically distributed among all Roman citizens. In practice, this was really an aristocratic oligarchy. By contrast, under the Empire, Rome was under one ruler, the Emperor. This is a general chronology of the dates we will use to discuss Rome. These dates are not absolute but can be helpful to understand Roman history.

800 BCE-300 BCE– Etruscan culture
753 BCE – Founding of Rome
c. 753-510 BCE – Regal Period
c. 510-44 BCE – Roman Republic
44 BCE - 476 CE – Roman Empire
44 BCE - 68 CE – Julio-Claudian Dynasty
69 CE – Year of the Four Emperors
69-96 CE – Flavian Dynasty
96-180 CE – The Five Good Emperors
235-284 CE – The Third Century Crisis
395 CE – Permanent division of the Empire into East and West

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Betts, Kristine. "Roman Civilization-Introduction and Topography." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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ⁱ Mary Boatwright, Daniel Gargola, Noel Lenski, and Richard Talbert. The Romans: From Village to Empire: A History of Rome from Earliest Times to the End of the Western Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

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ROMAN CIVILIZATION – THE REPUBLIC

From its earliest time, the population of Rome was divided into two orders: the patricians, defined as the descendants from the first one hundred senators appointed to the Roman aristocratic Senate by king Romulus, and the plebeians, that is, everyone who was not a patrician. The **plebeians** had their own political assembly, the Plebeian Council, while all Roman citizens also belonged to the Centuriate Assembly, which was responsible for annual elections for top political offices. The period of the early Republic, following the expulsion of the kings, was a time of conflict for the two orders, as patricians tried to establish a government that reserved all political power to themselves, whereas the plebeians fought for the opportunity to hold political and religious offices.

Just a decade or so after the expulsion of the kings, shortly after 500 BCE, however, Roman expansion began in earnest. It is striking to consider that the Romans spent eighty of the hundred years in the third century BCE at war. In 280 – 275 BCE, Rome became embroiled in a war with Pyrrhus, king of Epirus in northern Greece. They defeated Pyrrhus at their third battle against him in 275 BCE, showing the superiority of the new Roman **manipular** legion even against the phalanx of the Macedonians, military descendants of Alexander the Great. This victory united most of Italy, except for the very northern portion, under Roman rule.

During roughly the same period, from 264 and 146 BCE, the Romans also fought three Punic Wars against Carthage, originally a Phoenician colony that had become a leading maritime power. Rome not only took control of both Carthage and Corinth in 146 BCE, but they plowed the city under and sowed salt in the furrows. The victory over Carthage in the Second Punic War allowed Rome to “close” the circle of the Mediterranean almost completely, acquiring control over all territories that had previously belonged to Carthage. More importantly, the abundance of resources that flowed in following the victories over Carthage raised the question of distribution of this new wealth and land. Starting in 133 BCE, the final century of the Roman Republic was defined by political violence and civil wars.

Increased competition in the late Republic caused three politicians to form alliance in order to help each other. Marcus Licinius Crassus, the wealthiest man in Rome, and Gnaeus Pompey joined forces with a relative newcomer to the world of politics, Gaius Julius Caesar. To cement the alliance, Caesar’s daughter, Julia, married Pompey. Together, they lobbied to help each other rise again to the consulship and achieve desirable military commands.

The alliance paid immediate dividends for Caesar, who was promptly elected consul for 59 BCE and was then awarded Gaul as his province for five years after the consulship. A talented writer as well as skilled general, Caesar made sure to publish an account of his Gallic campaigns in installments during his time in Gaul. As a result, Romans were continually aware of Caesar’s successes, and his popularity actually grew in his absence. His rising popularity was a source of frustration for the other two triumvirs. Finally, the already uneasy alliance disintegrated in 53 BCE. First, Julia died in childbirth, and her baby died with her. In the same year, Crassus was killed at the Battle of Carrhae, fighting the Parthians. With the death of both Julia and Crassus, no links were left connecting Caesar and Pompey; the two former family relations, albeit by marriage, swiftly became official enemies.

Late in 50 BCE, the Senate, under the leadership of Pompey, informed Caesar that his command had expired and demanded that he surrender his army. Caesar, however, refused to return to Rome as a private citizen, demanding to be allowed to stand for the consulship in absentia. When his demands were refused, on January 10th of 49 BCE, Caesar and his army crossed the Rubicon, a river which marked the border of his province. By leaving his province with his army against the wishes of the Senate, Caesar committed an act of treason, as defined in Roman law; the civil war began.

While most of the Senate was on Pompey’s side, Caesar started the war with a distinct advantage: his troops had just spent a larger part of a decade fighting with him in Gaul; many of Pompey’s army, on the other hand, was disorganized. As a result, for much of 49 BCE, Pompey retreated to the south of Italy, with Caesar in pursuit. Finally, in late 48 BCE, the two fought a decisive battle at Pharsalus in northern Greece. There, Caesar’s army managed to defeat Pompey’s much larger forces.

In 44 BCE, having been victorious in the civil war against Pompey and his supporters, Caesar took the title of “dictator for life,” and had coins minted with his image and new title. See image 6.16. His was the first instance in Roman history when a living individual placed his likeness on coinage.



6.16 Caesar had this coin minted, declaring himself Dictator for Life.¹

This new title appears to have been the final straw for a group of about sixty senators who feared that Caesar aimed to make himself a king. On the Ides of March (March 15th) of 44 BCE, the conspirators rushed Caesar during a Senate meeting and stabbed him to death. Since Caesar did not have legitimate sons who could inherit— Caesarion, his son with Cleopatra, was illegitimate—he adopted an heir in his will, a common Roman practice. The heir in question was his 19 year old grand-nephew Gaius Octavius, whose name after the adoption became Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus (or Octavian, in English).

Quickly, he formed an alliance with two experienced former allies of Caesar: Marcus Antonius and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. The Second Triumvirate defeated Caesar’s assassins at the Battle of Philippi in northern Greece in 42 BCE; they then carved out the Roman world into regions to be ruled by each. Marcus Antonius, who claimed Egypt, although it was not yet a Roman province, proceeded to marry Cleopatra and rule Egypt with her over the following decade. Ultimately, however, another civil war resulted between Antonius and Octavian, with the latter winning a decisive victory in the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. From that moment until his death in 14 CE, Octavian—soon to be named Augustus in 27 BCE, the name he subsequently used—ruled what henceforth was known as the Roman Empire, and is considered by modern historians of Rome to have been the first emperor.



6.17 Augustus Prima Porta, Vatican Museums, marble.ⁱⁱ

There are many sculptures of Augustus, but the most famous is the one known as the Augustus Prima Porta which is now housed in the Vatican Museums. The white marble sculpture of Augustus is a copy of the bronze original and was probably carved by Greek sculptors. This work is highly idealized and uses the Polyclitan canon of proportions, so we are fairly certain that he did not actually look like this. It shows him barefooted, as gods are normally barefooted, and his footsteps are guided by Cupid, the son of Venus, riding a dolphin at his feet. This is another reference to his godhood since Augustus said he was related to Venus through his ancestor Aeneas. He wears the leather cuirass, or vest, which depicts both real events and mythological figures, including Tiberius, the son of Livia and Augustus' successor. It also depicts the god of the sky and the goddess of the earth and images of the enemy Parthian returning military standards that had been taken from Rome in a previous battle. Since Augustus is depicted as a god, the sculpture was probably created after he was deified in 14 CE and before the death of his wife in 29 CE.

While the late Republic was a period of growth for Roman literary arts, with much of the writing done by politicians, the age of Augustus saw an even greater flourishing of Roman literature. This increase was due in large part to Augustus' own investment in sponsoring prominent poets to write about the greatness of Rome. One of the great poets of the Augustan age was Virgil, who wrote poetry glorifying Augustan Rome. Interestingly, Virgil was probably educated in the classroom of Philodemus, the Greek philosopher whose works have been found in nearby Herculaneum. Virgil's *Aeneid*, finished in 19 BCE, aimed to be the Roman national epic and was intended to be the Roman version of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined. It told about the travels of the Trojan prince Aeneas who, by will of the gods, became the founder of Rome. During his travels, before he arrived in Italy, Aeneas was ship-wrecked and landed in Carthage. Dido, the queen of Carthage, fell in love with him and wanted him to stay with her, but the gods ordered Aeneas to sail on to Italy. After Aeneas abandoned her, Dido committed suicide and cursed the future Romans to be at war with her people. Aeneas then went home and fathered a son Ascanius. Image 6.18 shows Aeneas and Ascanius listening to a sow who tells them where to build Rome.



6.18 Aeneas, with his son Ascanius, founds the city of Rome, marble, British Museum.ⁱⁱⁱ

In addition to sponsoring literature, Augustus also focused on building and rebuilding monuments in Rome. In his *Res Gestae* (The Deeds of the Divine Augustus), which is like an autobiography, Augustus includes a very long list of temples that he had restored or built. Click the link in the endnote to read Augustus' propagandized list of all he did for Rome.^{iv}

Among the new building projects that he undertook to stand as symbols of renewal and prosperity ordained by the gods themselves, none is as famous as the Ara Pacis, or Altar of Peace, in Rome. The altar is dedicated to Pax; a goddess worshipped by Augustus, and was built to celebrate Augustus' victory in Spain and Gaul. It is about 35' wide, faced the Pantheon, and was consecrated on the 4th of July 13 BCE. It would have been painted and decorated with gold gilt. The altar features a number of mythological scenes, processions of the gods, and images of the Vestal Virgins; it also integrates scenes of the imperial family, including Augustus himself making a sacrifice to the gods, while flanked by his grandsons Gaius and Lucius. The message of these building projects, as well as the other arts that Augustus sponsored is simple: Augustus wanted to show that his rule was a new Golden Age of Roman history, a time when peace was restored and Rome flourished, truly blessed by the gods.

Pieces of the Ara Pacis were scattered across many museums in Europe, but in 1938, under the watchful eye of Mussolini who was seeking to connect the new German Reich to the glory of ancient Rome, the fragments were brought back together and reassembled. In the early 1990's an American architectural firm, Richard Meir & Partners built a new enclosure to protect the monument.



6.19 Ara Pacis, Alter of Augustan Peace, 13-9 BCE, Rome.^v



6.20 Detail, Ara Pacis, showing Augustus and his family.^{vi}



6.21 Model showing the placement Ara Pacis in the Campus Martius complex, Museum of the Ara Pacis, Rome.^{vii}

In image 6.21, note the altar in the center of the Campus Martius complex and the Horologium Augusti (sundial) which used an Egyptian obelisk brought from Heliopolis in 10 BCE as the center or gnomon. It is theorized that during the autumnal equinox the shadow of the gnomon pointed to the Ara Pacis and since Augustus was born at that time, it is clearly a reference to him. Augustus would have had to transport the obelisk down the Nile, across the open sea, up the Tiber River, and then through the streets of Rome using ox carts and pulleys until it reached its destination. The Campus Martius was a place for the burial of war heroes and a place for young military recruits to exercise. Romans also came to the site to participate in sporting events. Strabo of Amasia, a Greek geographer, says that Augustus' *ustrinum*, which is a repository for his ashes after he was cremated, was also on this campus. ^{viii}An abbreviated version of *Res Gestae*, the list of his buildings and accomplishments, was also written on a slab positioned between two pillars near his burial place in the Campus Martius.

There are many examples of portrait busts that were created during the Republican era. Since many of them do not have any identification directly associated to the work, we cannot always be sure who they are. Keep in mind that Romans were very interested in creating art that was tied to the real rather than the ideal. So much of the art of this period was intended to be portrait art of historical figures, even though we may not always have the correct name of the person it represents. See image 6.22 which are images of unknown Romans. We can assume that these were wealthy persons or someone of political renown because busts were sculpted of them, and this was a time consuming and expensive activity. So they either paid to have it made, or it was made to honor their office and position.



6.22 Unknown Portrait busts, Royal Ontario Museum. ^{ix}



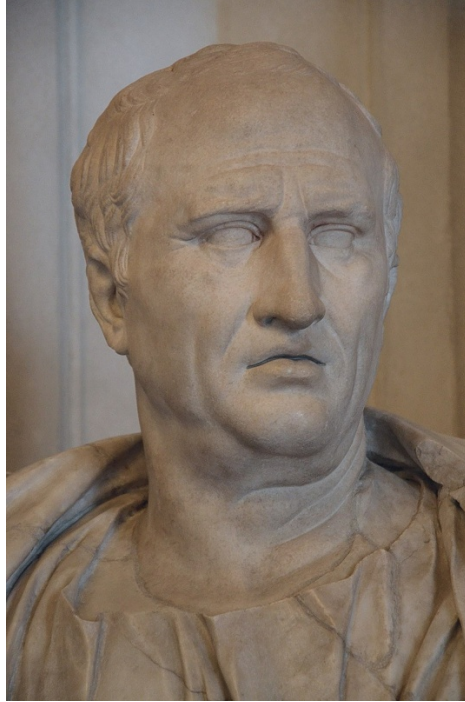
6.23 Portrait of a young woman. 80-90 CE.^x

We know image 6.24 is a portrait of Portia and her husband Cato because it is from a headstone, which was installed to encourage reverence and respect for the departed couple who lovingly hold hands.



(Edizioni Brogi) 8305. ROMA - Vaticano, Museo Pio Clementino - Ritratti Romani detti di Catone e Porzia.

6.24 Portrait of Portia and Cato, Vatican Museum, Rome.^{xi}



6.25 *Portrait of Cicero*, Capitoline Museum, Rome. ^{xii}

Some portrait sculpture is very well known, like figure 6.25 of Cicero, while other examples of portraits from the Republican era are anonymous and we may not know who they are.



6.26 Examples of Roman glass. ^{xiii}

Roman craftsmen were also well known for their beautiful glassware which was used to store and serve food in wealthier Roman homes. They also created the small glass tesserae used to make mosaics and made jewelry and glass

sculpture. They created windows to let sunlight into their baths and eventually they were also used to make greenhouses to allow gardens to be kept during colder weather. Glassmakers learned to add a variety of metals to the glass recipe while it heated in the furnace to create different colors of glass. In the first century BCE glassblowing was invented. The craftsman blew air through a pipe into the hot glass and turned it as he blew. This incorporated air into the mixture and formed thinner vessels which were cheaper to make and were available to the lower classes. Roman glassmakers also learned how to add handles, gold leaf, fused ropes of colored glass, and learned to pour glass into molds. See image 6.26 for some examples.



6.27 Fresco from the triclinium of the villa of Livia, wife of the Emperor Augustus, 30-20 BCE, Museo Nazionale Romano di Palazzo Massimo .^{xiv}



6.28 Pompeii Atrium of the house of the Meander, atrium, pool, and wall paintings.^{xv}

One other type of art we want to mention here is the private living quarters of the very wealthy. The upper class built large, open air homes, called a domus, which included floors covered with mosaics and walls painted with images of nature and the gods and goddesses. The front door to the atrium was open to the street and anyone who had business with the owner was able to enter and wait his turn for an audience. The domus was very different from the insula we discussed in our last chapter. These were places of luxury that housed the well-to-do and their servants.

Use this format to cite this document:

Betts, Kristine. "Roman Civilization-The Republic." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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ⁱ Gallica Digital Library, Public domain.

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^{iv} <https://www.livius.org/sources/content/augustus-res-gestae/>

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^{viii} <https://www.livius.org/articles/place/rome/rome-photos/rome-mausoleum-of-augustus/>

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?sort=relevance&search=Roman+busts&title=Special:Search&profile=advanced&fulltext=1&advancedSearch-current=%7B%7D&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Royal Ontario Museum, Eaton Gallery of Rome - Roman busts.jpg>

^x Photo by Tetraktys, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_portraiture#/media/File:Matronalivia2.jpg

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THE EMPERORS - 26 BCE to 476 CE

The period from the consolidation of power by Augustus in 27 BCE to the death of the emperor Marcus Aurelius in 180 CE was one of relative peace and prosperity throughout the Roman Empire. For this reason, the Romans themselves referred to this time as the *Pax Romana*, or Roman peace. During this period, the Empire became a smoothly run bureaucratic machine as commerce prospered, and the overall territory grew to its largest extent in the early second century CE. The model of the city of Rome in Image 6.29, gives us an idea of the massive amount of growth and the many building projects that were implemented to impress the world with the power of the Roman Empire. Note the Coliseum, the Circus Maximus, the Tiber River with its bridges, and the aqueducts that brought water into the city center.



6.29 *Model of Imperial Rome*, Museo della Civita Romana.¹

Upon the death of Augustus, some Senators were hoping for the return of the Republic, while others assumed that Augustus' stepson would inherit his nebulous yet amazingly powerful position. Augustus adopted his stepson Tiberius Claudius Nero (not to be confused with the later emperor Nero), son of his wife Livia from her first marriage. Over the final years of his life, Augustus gradually shared more of his unofficial powers with Tiberius in order to smooth the process of succession and the Senators conferred upon Tiberius all of Augustus' previous powers. Tiberius' succession is an example of why historians refer to the first Roman imperial dynasty as the Julio-Claudians. There was so much intermarriage and adoption between Julius Caesar's branch of the family tree and the Claudii Neronis branch of the tree that historians now refer to it as the Julio-Claudian period.



6.30 *Emperor Tiberius*. National Archeological Museum, Madrid.ⁱⁱ

Tiberius appears to have been a reluctant emperor, who preferred life out of the public eye. In 26 CE, he retired to Capri for the final eleven years of his rule. It is a testament to the spectacular bureaucratic system of the Roman Empire that the eleven-year absence of the emperor was hardly felt. Tiberius had a difficult time selecting a successor since each relative who was identified as a candidate died an untimely death. Ultimately, he adopted as his successor his grandnephew Gaius Caligula, or “little boot,” son of the popular military hero Germanicus. While Caligula began his power with full support of both the people and the Senate, and with an unprecedented degree of popularity, he swiftly proved to be mentally unstable and bankrupted the state in his short rule of just less than four years. In 41 CE, he was assassinated by three disgruntled officers in the Praetorian Guard, which ironically was the body formed by Augustus in order to protect the emperor.



6.31 *Caligula, 37-41 CE*, marble, Metropolitan Museum of Art.ⁱⁱⁱ

The assassination of Caligula left Rome in disarray. While the confused Senate was meeting and planning to declare the restoration of the Roman Republic, the Praetorian Guard proclaimed Claudius as the next emperor. Although Claudius was a member of the imperial family, he was never considered a candidate for succession because he had a speech impediment. As a result, Augustus considered him an embarrassment to the imperial family. Claudius proved to be a productive emperor, but his downfall appears to have been pretty women of bad character, as he repeatedly weathered plots against his life by first one wife and then the next. Finally, in 54 CE, Claudius died and was widely believed to have been poisoned by his wife, Agrippina the Younger. His successor instead became Nero, his stepson, who was only sixteen years old when he gained power.



6.32 *Claudius, white marble, Naples Archeological Museum*^{iv}

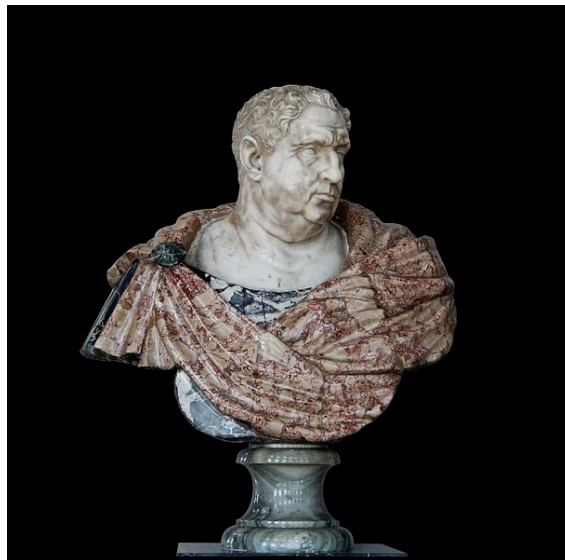
Showing the danger of inexperience for an emperor, Nero gradually alienated the Senate, the people, and the army over the course of his fourteen-year rule. He destroyed his own reputation by performing on stage—behavior that was considered disgraceful in Roman society. Although Nero did not cause the great fire of Rome in 64 CE, he seized 100 acres in the center of the city after the fire to build his ambitious new palace, the Domus Aurea, or Golden House. This palatial building had a rotating ceiling made to look like the sky, an oculus in the dome over the dining room and precious stones embedded in the walls. In June of 68 CE when the Praetorian Guard rebelled and the military leader Galba marched on Rome with his army, Nero was killed, marking the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.

The year and a half after Nero's death saw more civil war and instability throughout the empire than any other period since the late Republic. In particular, the year 69 CE became known as the year of the four emperors, as four emperors in succession came to power: Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and Vespasian. Each challenged his predecessor to a civil war, and each was as swiftly defeated by the next challenger.



6.33 Bust of Nero, National Museum at Cagliari. 54/59 CE, marble.^v

Vespasian, a mere son of a tax-collector, was the only successful emperor of 69 CE and the founder of the Flavian dynasty. He was a talented military commander and was in command of a major military force in 69 CE, since he had been working on subduing the Jewish Revolt since 67 CE. Ironically, Nero had originally appointed him to command the Jewish War because of Vespasian's humble family origins—which to Nero meant that he was not a political threat. Also, Vespasian was the only one of the four emperors of 69 CE who had grown sons, and thus obvious successors. Furthermore, his older son, Titus, was already a popular military commander in his own right and cemented his reputation even further by his conquest of Jerusalem in 70 CE.



6.34 Emperor Vespasian, Chateau de Vaux le Vicomte^{vi}



6.35 *Emperor Titus, 78-81 CE*, Carlberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.^{vii}

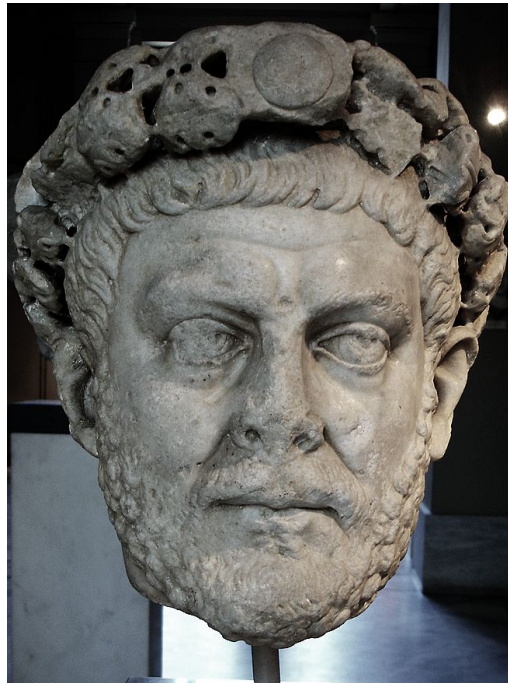
The Flavian dynasty did not last long, as it ended in 96 CE with the assassination of Emperor Domitian, Vespasian's younger son. The period from 96 CE to 180 CE saw a different experiment in determining imperial succession. Instead of establishing traditional dynasties in which sons succeeded their fathers, this was the period of the "Five Good Emperors" and each emperor adopted a talented leader with potential as his successor.

One of these was the emperor Trajan who ruled from 98 to 117 CE. The best source of information about Roman provincial government is the prolific letter-writer Pliny the Younger, who served as governor of the province of Bithynia on the shore of the Black Sea in 111 – 113 CE. Pliny was a cautious and conscientious governor, and thus believed in consulting the emperor Trajan on every issue he encountered in his province. Luckily for us, their correspondence survives. Pliny's letters reveal a myriad of problems that the governor was expected to solve: staffing personnel for prisons (is it acceptable to use slaves as prison guards?), building repairs and water supply, abandoned infants and their legal status (should they be considered slave-born or free?), fire brigades (are they a potential security risk to the Empire?) and, most famously, what to do with Christians in the province. The emperor Trajan patiently responded to each letter that he received from Pliny and appears to have placed stability and peace in the province foremost in his concerns. Thus, for instance, with regard to the issue of Christians in Bithynia, Trajan recommends that Pliny not worry about tracking down Christians in his province, as they were not a threat.



6.36 *Trajan*, white marble, 1st century CE, Coliseum Collection in Rome.^{viii}

While the second century CE was a time when the Empire flourished, the third century was a time of crisis, defined by political instability and civil wars, which ultimately demonstrated that the Empire had become too large to be effectively controlled by one ruler. In addition to political upheaval and near-constant civil wars, the Empire was also dealing with increasing pressures on the frontiers, a plague that devastated the population, famine, and rampant inflation. The third-century crisis showed that a single emperor stationed in Rome was no longer equipped to deal with the challenges of ruling such a vast territory. The man who ended the crisis was the emperor Diocletian. Born to a socially insignificant family in the province of Dalmatia, Diocletian had a successful military career. Proclaimed emperor by his troops in 284 CE, Diocletian promptly displayed a political acumen that none of his predecessors in the third century possessed. Realizing that a single emperor in charge of the entire empire was a “sitting duck,” whose assassination would throw the entire empire into yet another civil war, Diocletian established a new system of rule: the Tetrarchy, or the rule of four. He divided the empire into four regions, each with its own capital.



6.37 *Diocletian, Istanbul Archeological Museum.*^{ix}

It is important to note that Rome was not the capital of its region. Diocletian clearly wanted to select as capitals cities with strategic importance, taking into account such factors as proximity to problematic frontiers. Of course, as a Dalmatian of low birth, Diocletian also lacked the emotional connection to Rome that the earliest emperors possessed. Two of the regions of the Tetrarchy were ruled by senior emperors, named Augusti (“Augustus” in the singular), and two were ruled by junior emperors, named Caesares (“Caesar” in the singular). One of the Augusti was Diocletian himself, with Maximian as the second Augustus. The two men’s sons-in-law, Galerius and Constantus Chlorus, became the two Caesares. Finally, it is important to note that in addition to reforming imperial rule, Diocletian attempted to address other major problems, such as inflation, by passing the Edict of Maximum Prices. This edict set a maximum price that could be charged on basic goods and services in the Empire. He also significantly increased the imperial bureaucracy. In a nutshell, as some modern historians have described him, Diocletian was the most significant Roman reformer since Augustus.

Diocletian’s political experiment was most clearly successful in achieving one goal: ending the third-century crisis. The four men were able to rule the empire and restore a degree of political stability. While it succeeded in restoring stability to the Empire, inherent within the Tetrarchy was the question of succession, which turned out to be a much greater problem than Diocletian had anticipated. Hoping to provide for a smooth transition of power, Diocletian abdicated in 305 CE and required Maximian to do the same. The two Caesares, junior emperors, were promptly promoted to Augusti, and two new Caesares were appointed. The following year, however, Constantius Chlorus, a newly minted Augustus, died. His death resulted in a series of wars for succession, which ended Diocletian’s experiment of

the Tetrarchy. The wars ended with Constantius' son, Constantine, reuniting the entire Roman Empire under his rule in 324 CE.

While traditional Roman religion was the ultimate melting pot, organically incorporating a broad variety of new cults and movements from the earliest periods of Roman expansion, Christianity's monotheistic exclusivity challenged traditional Roman religion and transformed Roman ways of thinking about religion in late antiquity. By the early fourth century CE, historians estimate that about ten percent of those living in the Roman Empire were Christians. With Constantine, however, this changed, and the previously largely underground faith grew exponentially because of the emperor's endorsement. See Chapter 7 to learn more about Constantine and the changes he implemented.

After the death of the Emperor Theodosius in 395 CE, the Roman Empire became permanently divided into Eastern and Western Empires, with instability and pressures on the frontiers continuing, especially in the West. The sack of Rome by the Goths in 410 CE was followed by continuing raids of Roman territories by the Huns, a nomadic tribe from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and south-eastern China. The Huns experienced an especially prolific period of conquest in the 440s and early 450s CE under the leadership of Attila. While they were not able to hold on to their conquests after Attila's death in 453 CE, their attacks further destabilized an already weakened Western Roman Empire. Finally, the deposition of the Emperor Romulus Augustulus in 476 CE marked the end of the Roman Empire in the West, although the Eastern half of the Empire continued to flourish for another thousand years.

The fall of the Roman Empire in the West, however, was not really as clear and dramatic a fall as might seem. A number of tribes carved out territories, each for its own control. Over the next five hundred years, led by ambitious tribal chiefs, these territories coalesced into actual kingdoms. Rome was gone, yet its specter loomed large over these tribes and their leaders, who spoke increasingly barbaric forms of Latin, believed in the Christian faith, and dreamed of the title of Roman Emperor.

Use this format to cite this document:

Betts, Kristine. "Roman Civilization-The Emperors." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by PierreSelim.Public domain.

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?search=Emperor%20Claudius&title=Special%3ASearch&fulltext=1&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Claudius_crop.jpg

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Search&limit=100&offset=0&profile=default&search=Emperor+Titus&advancedSearch-current={}&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Titus, Roman emperor, 79-81, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen \(36375008056\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=Special:Search&limit=100&offset=0&profile=default&search=Emperor+Titus&advancedSearch-current={}&ns0=1&ns6=1&ns12=1&ns14=1&ns100=1&ns106=1#/media/File:Titus, Roman emperor, 79-81, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (36375008056).jpg)

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ROMAN ARCHITECTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

The peace produced by the Pax Romana enabled Rome to focus on its greatest strength: architectural planning and public works. The insula and the domus served as private dwellings, but the emperors also built large practical facilities for Romans to gather together. There was no middle class but the millions of lower class Romans depended on government facilities and programs to survive. The government provided food distribution systems, recreation, entertainment, roads, bridges, police and fire protection, water, sanitation, and some of the first hospitals in the western world.

A safe clean water supply was critical for the health and happiness of the city. Aqueducts were developed as part of city planning. Some aqueducts were built as early as the 4th century BCE. When Roman armies conquered new territories, one of the first things they did was to build clean and abundant water delivery systems. One example is the Pont du Gard which was constructed by Agrippa in 18-19 CE in Nimes France. It carried water more than 30 miles to the city using a system of gravity flow and a gradual decline over long distances. A fall of 6" per 100' was best and detours were made to avoid a sudden drop.



6.38 *Pont du Gard, South France.*¹

The bridge spans 900' of the river. Each large arch spans 82' and is made of uncemented blocks weighing more than two tons. Note image 6.38 which shows the stone projections built into the structure when the blocks were laid allowing the builders to secure scaffolding as they worked. A block and tackle was used to raise the stones the 160' to the top layer. The lower arches are 65' high and the upper arches are 28' high. The smaller arches are placed in groups of 3 over the larger arches, manifesting the engineer's sense for the aesthetic as well as the practical.



6.39 Stone projections at the Pont du Gard made for scaffoldingⁱⁱ

The 4' water channel in the top is shaped with concrete and is covered by slabs of stone, so one could walk the full length of the aqueduct on top of the channel. This aqueduct supplied the city of Nimes with enough water for 100 gallons per day per person. The middle section could also be used as a foot bridge. Structures like this convinced people in the provinces that coming under Roman rule was to their advantage. Evidence of Roman aqueducts can also be seen in Spain, Greece, North African and Turkey.



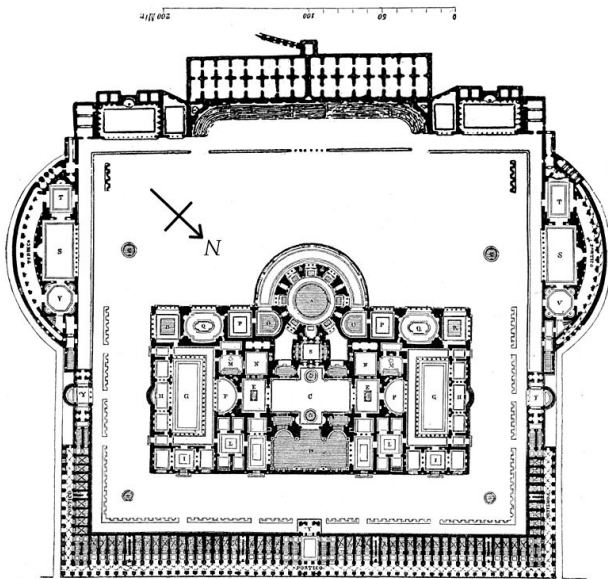
6.40 Ancient water to refill modern bottles, somewhere in Rome.ⁱⁱⁱ

Water from the aqueducts was used for public fountains and baths. The city of Rome had eleven aqueducts which brought water from as far as 57 miles away. Visitors to Rome today flock to see the Trevi Fountain which is supplied with water by the Aqua Virgo, constructed by Agrippa in 19 CE and they can fill their plastic water bottles with water from the ancient water system.

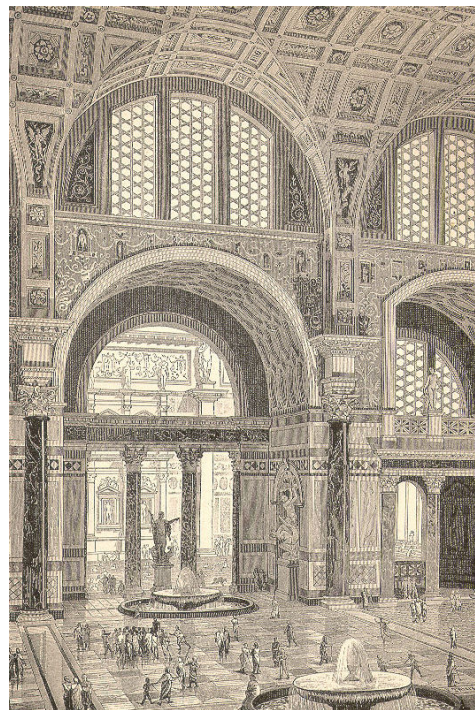


6.41 Water for the *Trevi Fountain* comes from an aqueduct built in 19 CE. ^{iv}

Another major destination for all of the water brought into the cities was to supply the public baths. Only the very wealthy had private baths, but there were more than 800 public baths located conveniently throughout the city. The Baths of Caracalla, built in 215 CE are a good example.



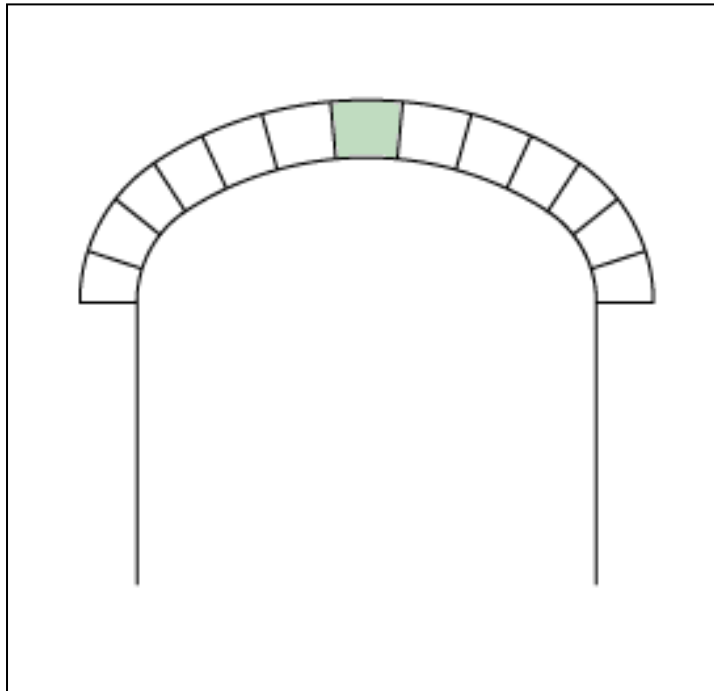
6.42 *Plan of the Baths of Caracalla.* ^v



6.43 *Drawing of the Thermae, Baths of Caracalla.* ^{vi}

An important thing to notice in this drawing of the *thermae*, or Baths of Caracalla is the enclosure of a large area of interior space. This is a different way to think of space. The Greeks built their edifices to be seen as a backdrop for their ceremonies. The Romans built to enclose space for human use. We will notice this same way of thinking in the Pantheon and the Coliseum. The bath was built in 215 CE and is 750' by 350' with symmetrical placement of the pools. There are pools of different water temperatures, steam baths, dressing rooms, lecture halls, and exercise rooms. Slaves were available to scrape oil from the body with a *strigil* to remove the sweat and dirt from the body before bathing. There were different assigned hours of the day for men and women to use the baths and masseurs were available to soothe muscles and depilators to pluck unwanted hair from the body. Other buildings in the area were shops, restaurants, and libraries. The subterranean corridors were wide enough for vehicles, storerooms, heating chambers, and housing for the slaves and stokers who kept the water flowing. A heating system circulated hot air through tubes and hollow bricks beneath the floors and sometimes in the ceiling vaults. The baths were created at state expense and for less than a penny a guest could stay all day. To the Romans the baths were an indispensable part of civilization and an important way to keep the masses happy.

Roman architects were able to build these large enclosed spaces because of their use of arches and vaults. The use of the vault was known in earlier civilizations, but it was Roman ingenuity that really developed it. One of the major benefits of arches and vaults is that more light can be incorporated into interior spaces. See image 6.44 which shows a simple arch. Note the keystone at the top of the arch, and note that the stress or weight is thrust down either side of the arch allowing the weight to be distributed evenly. See the image of the Basilica 6.45 that depicts a several short barrel vaults, which are really just simple vaults lined up together. In the barrel vault the edges of the half cylinder rest directly on the walls which must either be thick enough to support the weight or must be reinforced with buttresses. When we talk about Romanesque architecture we will get back to this discussion of arches and vaults.



6.44 Simple Arch- CC BY SA 2.5.vii



6.45 *Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine, 308-312 C.E., Roman Forum*^{viii}

The other important tool used by the Romans was their development of the use of concrete. Romans were masters of the use of this building material. Concrete is made of aggregate which can be broken pieces of brick, small rocks, and volcanic dust mixed with lime and water. The addition of volcanic ash made the concrete slow drying and strong. Excavations today show that many of the stones cracked but the concrete did not. Romans mined a special volcanic dust called pozzalona and used it as the binder. The only reason modern concrete stronger than Roman concrete is because we use metal bars to reinforce it. Romans also discovered that they could pour concrete in underwater harbor structures and it would set and even become stronger. The exterior face of their concrete structures was often covered with marble casing, stucco, or plaster because they liked the look of it better than the look of a concrete surface.

Large public gathering places are a hallmark of the Roman Empire. Many of the emperors created markets for the population to sell goods to each other. One example is Trajan's Market, which might be called the world's oldest shopping mall. It is a six-story market and public area used for shops, offices, and open stalls. They sold a huge variety of food, clothing and other everyday goods as well as silk, spices, ivory and jewelry imported from around the empire. The markets were run by the lower classes and the slaves since the upper class was theoretically not allowed to make money selling goods.



6.46 *Trajan's Market, Rome, Italy.*^{ix}



6.47 *Trajan's Column, Trajan's Market, Rome.*^x



6.48 *Trajan's Column Detail.*^{xi}

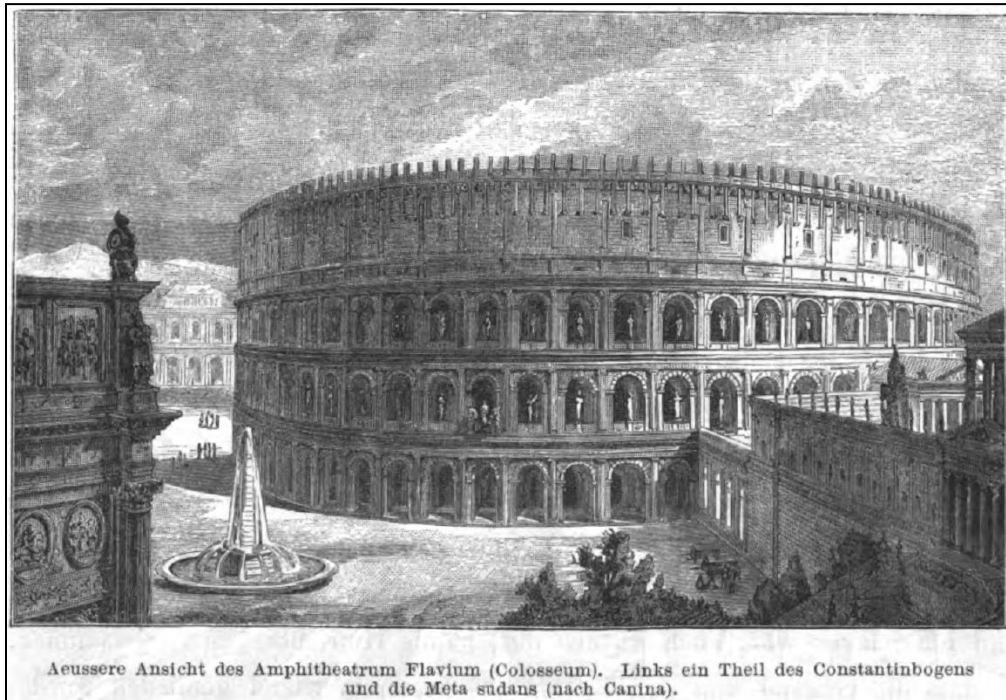
Roman emperors sought multiple ways to leave their mark on Rome and other cities in the empire. Trajan, for instance, erected a 128 foot column in the market between the library of the east and the library of the west. Trajan's Column was carved and installed between 106 and 113 BCE and was created to commemorate his victory over the Dacians. In it there are depicted 150 separate episodes of Trajan's life.

The images on the column read like a continuous comic book and could be compared to the frieze on the Parthenon in Athens. Each new scene begins with a symbol, perhaps a tree, or a building or another picture of Trajan. From it we can see his soldiers, who were actually the construction crew, setting up camps, building bridges, and putting up the infrastructure that would support that army. In figure 6.48, note the large bearded man under the bridge. It is a personification of the god of the river Danube, supporting the bridge so Trajan's army can cross a reference to the belief that even the gods were helping Trajan win the war. The column's base is circled by a victory wreath and below that is a collection of defeated weapons and military armor indicating the victory over the defeated Dacians and the strength of the army. This was not just about battles; it was also about the power of Rome to build lasting structures that elevated not only Trajan, but Rome.

The citizens also liked to be entertained. Originally known as the Flavian Amphitheater because of the huge monument to Flavius erected there, the Coliseum was built by captured Jewish slaves and dedicated in 80 CE. It was built on land confiscated by Nero after the fire, but Vespasian cleverly returned the land to the use of the general population by creating a public place of entertainment. The building is shaped like two Greek amphitheaters facing each other around a central arena, the word for sand or beach, since the floor was covered with sand to soak up the blood. Most cities had an arena, and they can be seen all over the Roman world. Some of these structures are still in use today.

The Coliseum in Rome was built to house public games at the expense of the emperor. They celebrated holidays of which there were many. For instance, in the year 41 CE there were 159 holidays, 93 devoted to games provided for the public. Its capacity was about 50,000 people and it provided an inexpensive place to get away from the squalor and noise of

the city for the day. Spectators were protected from the sun by a canvas awning held in place with poles and deployed by sailors pulling ropes to the beat of drums. Fast food was sold much like it is in our sports stadiums today. There were battles between gladiators, battles with animals, and even a real sea battle fought on the flooded floor on the 100 day opening ceremony which included sinking ships and drowning sailors. Remember from your studies of the Greeks that they did not want to show a death on stage. By contrast, Roman entertainment included the loss of thousands of lives in their games as a testament to their focus on realism rather than idealism.



6.49 Drawing of the Coliseum as it looked when it was built, Hartman Grisar, 1911.^{xii}



6.50 Interior of the Coliseum 2019.^{xiii}

Technically the Coliseum is a masterful use of arches, vaults, and concrete. The edifice is 161' high, 620' long, and 500' wide. Access to the interior is through many numbered gates, and when you bought your ticket for a specific gate, it might

even come with a door prize of a slave. The many doors made it possible for large numbers of citizens to enter and exit quickly. Basement cages held the animals and people who were to perform or die that day. Tunnels led to trap doors which opened onto the floor of the arena. The decorative scheme of the outer wall is based on the Greek orders: Doric columns are on the bottom level, then Ionic columns, then Corinthian columns, and the top level is flat pilasters. Today much of what we see is the result of nearly two thousand years of damage caused by weather, earthquakes, and plunder. When times were hard, people of the middle ages and the Renaissance came to this building to remove blocks, panels, and metal coffers to reuse them in their homes and public buildings.



6.51 *Coliseum numbered entrance door.* ^{xiv}

One of the best preserved monuments to have survived from ancient Imperial Roman times is the Pantheon. Dedicated in 120 BCE, the original building was erected by Agrippa in the time of Augustus, but today we see the reconstructed version built by Hadrian. We know when it was built by the stamps made in the wet clay of the bricks used to make it. The Pantheon was built to house the statues of the planetary deities of Rome and the deified emperors. If you drew imaginary lines, the building would form a geometrically perfect sphere. It is 143' high, which is higher than St. Peter's Basilica at 140' and higher than the cathedral of Florence at 137'. Hadrian loved to greet his guests here. It must have been very impressive then, as it is now.



6.52 *Pantheon*, Rome 120-124 BCE. ^{xv}

The decorative pediment on the front porch of the Pantheon is supported by monolithic marble columns imported from Egypt and topped by Corinthian capitals, but the building does not rely on these columns for structural support. The interior of the building is a circular drum made of concrete which is 20' thick at the springing of the dome and 5' thick at the oculus in the ceiling. Wooden forms were built and the concrete was then added in a continuous pour process. So the dome is actually supported by the massive thickness of the concrete walls. This is another example of how Roman architects shaped the interior spaces for the use of many. The 27' oculus, Latin for eye, is open to the sky and was intended to represent the sun in the dome of heaven. It is the main source of light, and like the beam of a searchlight it moves around the interior of the building based on the weather and the movement of the sun. There is no covering over the oculus, so when it rains, water enters the dome and is funneled out through drains in the floor.



6.53 *Oculus of the Pantheon, Rome Italy.*^{xvi}



6.54 *Exterior walls of the Pantheon.*^{xvii}

One other common structure seen in Rome and other parts of the Roman Empire was the triumphal arch. It is an ornamental version of a city gate that is moved to the city center to permit processions to enter the forum for celebration. A parade of slaves and booty passed through the arch in tribute to a victorious leader returning from a campaign. The Arch of Titus is an early example of this. It was built to honor Titus when he returned from conquering Jerusalem in 70 CE. There is a memorial inscription in the attic across the top to honor him and his accomplishments. The panels inside of the arch depict the sack of the city and show Roman soldiers carrying away the table of the showbread and the candelabrum from the Holy of Holies in the temple. Other soldiers carry the Arc of the Covenant and Roman military standards.



6.55 Arch of Titus, Rome, 70 CE.^{xviii}



6.56 Sacking of Jerusalem, Arch of Titus, Rome 70 CE.^{xix}

Roman Philosophy

The philosophies adopted by Rome were as practical as their art and architecture. They focused on two main beliefs: Stoicism, which was founded by the Hellenistic philosopher Zeno of Citium in 350 BCE, and Epicureanism, founded at about the same time by Epicurus, who was born on the island of Samos and studied under Plato. We know that the Romans conquered and absorbed everything Greek, including their art, architectural styles, theater, religious beliefs and their philosophy.

Stoicism was expounded by Epictetus (55-135 CE), a Roman slave. For him philosophy was a way of life. These are some of the basic beliefs of the Stoics:

- Humanity is one people and we are all citizens of one state
- Every person is an actor and the gods assigned the parts
- Humans have a kinship with nature
- Nature is reasonable, so humans should also act reasonably
- Reason is the most divine quality
- Humans can control their own acts
- Do not let anyone gain a hold on you, as this is enslavement
- Life and suffering should be endured with benign resignation
- All experience of evil is to train the mind. Evil is a challenge to exercise our powers of endurance.
- We should deny pain and the pleasures of the flesh
- Adversity produces strength of character

Cicero said: Pleasure is the mother of all evils^{xx}

Epictetus said: Nature gave us one tongue and two ears so we should hear twice as much as we speak.^{xxi}

The four Stoic cardinal virtues are:

- Temperance in the sense of sobriety and self-control
- Courage to embrace endurance and fortitude
- Justice meaning to have regard for the rights of others
- Wisdom and practical prudence for all things

Epicurus established a school in Athens, but refrained from civic duty. His most famous work is "On Nature" which was recovered from a charred papyrus in the ruins of Herculaneum. For Epicurus, the main goal in life is happiness, and he bases happiness on our sense of perception. His basic beliefs include:

- We can become happy by avoiding pain, seeking the greatest pleasure, and practice moderation in all things, since overindulgence can lead to pain
- One man's pleasure may cause another man's pain, so avoid hurting others lest there be reprisals and consequent pain to you
- Don't let today's pleasure cause tomorrow's pain
- Eat little to avoid indigestion, drink little to avoid the morning after
- Deny the social responsibility of citizenship
- He encouraged escapism and extreme individualism

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Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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- ^{vi} German 1891 encyclopedia Joseph Kürschner (editor): "Pierers Konversationslexikon". Public domain.
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- ^{xx} <https://www.iep.utm.edu/cicero/>
- ^{xxi} <https://www.quotes.net/authors/epictetus>

MOUNT VESUVIUS – AUGUST 79 CE

One major event of this time was the eruption of Mount Vesuvius about 2 hours north of Rome by car today in August 79 CE. The eruption killed between 15,000 and 30,000 when the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum were completely covered with ash so deep that we are just now learning what lies beneath it. Although Vesuvius is still active it is dormant and scientists continue to monitor it for new activity. We know a good deal about the eruption from the writings of Pliny the Elder, who was killed trying to rescue people from the destruction and from his nephew Pliny the Younger. ⁱ



6.57 Mount Vesuvius in modern times. ⁱⁱ

Pompeii was a well established city that probably housed about 20,000 people. This was a resort town that catered to wealthy patrons. As in any wealthy Roman town there was an amphitheater, cobblestone streets, and plenty of running water to provide fountains, reflecting pools, and baths.



6.58 Cobblestone Street in Pompeii, Italy.ⁱⁱⁱ

Many of the homes and businesses in Pompeii were managed by women, who were likely literate and well read. Women managed hundreds of slaves and had great power within the walls of their homes, but were kept from the public eye and had no career outside of the home. Slaves provided services, administered by the woman of the house. Since there was no middle class, a family had to retain slaves that could provide everything they needed. So for instance there was no shop in town to purchase clothing, so they had to have a slave to make it. Slaves were captured in battles fought by the Roman army in Egypt, Greece, and Tunisia. When the battle was over, the men were killed and the women and children were brought back to places like Pompeii to serve the wealthy patrons.



6.59 Woman scholar, wall painting in Pompeii.^{iv}

Greek slaves had been brought in to create sculpture for the gardens, intricate mosaics for the floors, and elaborate wall frescos. Since the destruction was so unexpected, many objects were left behind, including things like dice on the gaming tables, cosmetic boxes, and solid gold jewelry. As we excavate more and more of the city we continue to find stacks of bread on the table, books on their shelves, and people clinging to each other in their last moments of life. Image 6.60 shows a public thermopolia, what we might think of as a take-out restaurant. The holes in the marble counter held dolia, which are containers for drink and for dry food such as nuts, beans, olives, dates, and fruits.



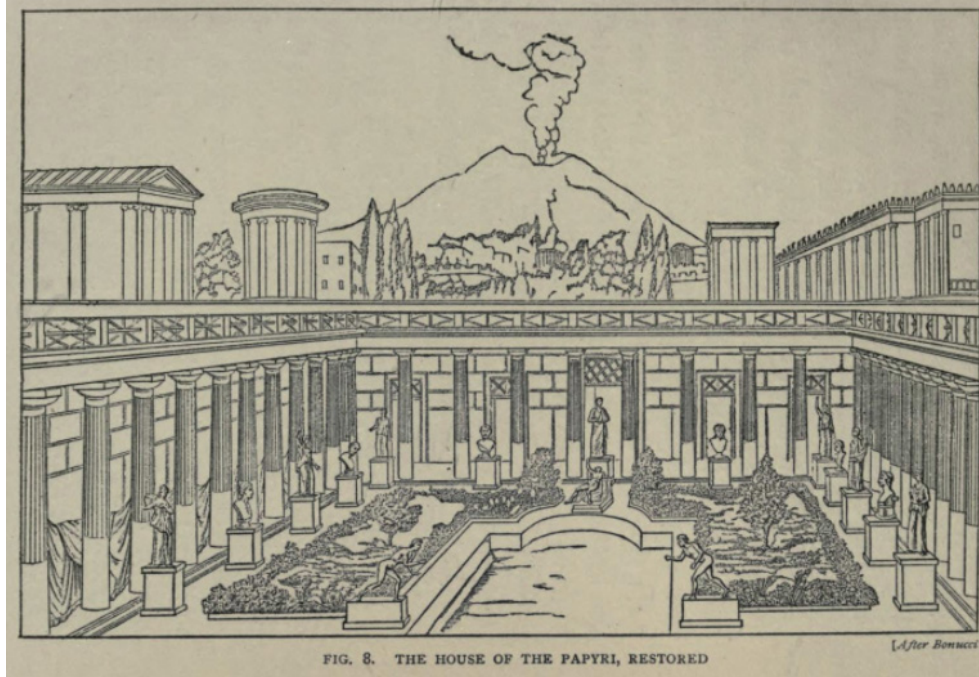
6.60 Pompeii Fast Food concession or *Thermopolium*, 70 CE. ^v

When the volcano erupted, no one was safe. The pyroclastic flow devastated the town and buried anyone who had not fled. There were several hours of pumice stone hail that gave some warning to the inhabitants, but not everyone was able to escape.



6.61 Plaster casts of the residents of Pompeii overcome by the volcanic eruption. ^{vi}

Another town that lay the foot of Mount Vesuvius and was buried by its fury was the town of Herculaneum. It was well known as the home of the Villa of Papyri, the largest ancient library found to date. It held thousands of ancient books in the form of scrolls and was home to the Epicurean scholar and philosopher Philodemus. About 1,800 scrolls have been found, but they were so carbonized that it was thought that they were charcoal to be used to heat the library and some were discarded. Today we realize their value and we are in the process of using NASA technology to read them.



6.62 Villa of the Papyri-restored^{vii}

There are still many unexcavated areas of Herculaneum, and it is hoped that these areas contain more books that can eventually be read and preserved. Even though Herculaneum was a center of intellectual discourse, ritual bathing, and grand architecture, it too was destroyed. A series of bathhouses has been found along the shoreline, and they house a grisly collection of skeletons. See image 6.63. Since Romans cremated their dead, these are rare examples of Roman skeletons left intact for scientists to study.

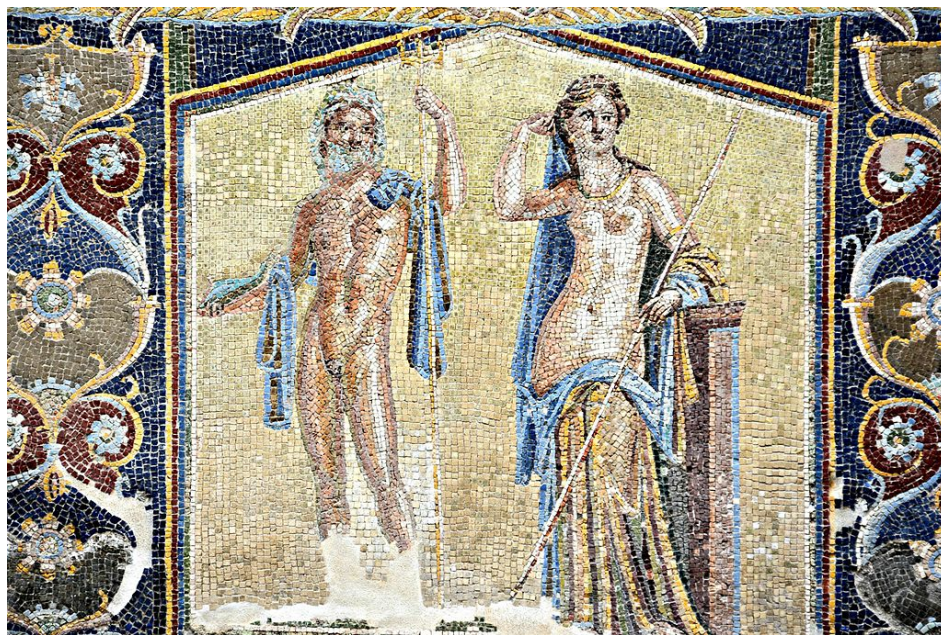


6.63 Herculaneum- skeletons found in the boat houses awaiting rescue. ^{viii}

Herculaneum is filled with intricate mosaic floors and colorful wall paintings and mosaics. It will be decades before these delicate works are all excavated and preserved.



6.64 Floor mosaics in Herculaneum^{ix}



6.65 Mosaic of Neptune and Amphitrite, Herculaneum. ^x

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ⁱ <http://pompeii.virginia.edu/pliny.html>

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^v Photo by Mosborne01, CC BY-SA 2.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeii_thermopolium_interior.jpg

^{vi} Photo by Soren Bleikertz, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeji_schlafende_SaE.jpg

^{vii} Ethel Ross Barker, Buried Herculaneum, 1908. Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Villa-of-the-Papyri-restored-1.jpg>

^{viii} Photo by Norbert Nagel, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herculaneum_-_Ercolano_-_Campania_-_Italy_-_July_9th_2013_-_32.jpg

^{ix} Photo by Nancy J. Price, CC BY-SA 3.0. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Herculaneum-mosaic-floor-0409.jpg>

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Casa_di_Nettuno_e_Anfitrite_\(Ercolano\)_WLM_003.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Casa_di_Nettuno_e_Anfitrite_(Ercolano)_WLM_003.JPG)

RELIGION DURING PAX ROMANA

As empires go, Rome was not particularly bad. It was better than the empires it replaced, and it was better than most of those which replaced it. The empire had a system of law. It had stable order, which promoted trade. Public works projects built roads, baths, temples and markets.

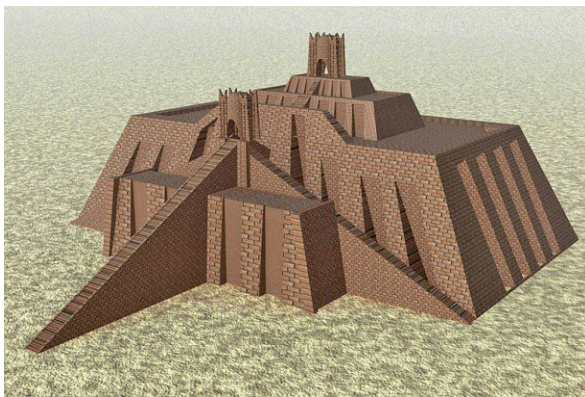
Beneath the grandeur, however, lay a decaying social system where the poor, sick, widows and orphans were left out. Roman urbanization and commercialization had led to both the economic boom of Pax Romana and to destitute peasants. Many had come to the city from rural farms when they had been replaced by slave workers. Here they lived in urban squalor in one of the 46,000 unregulated five-six story *insulae*. The *insula* apartment had no chimney, no lighting and no water supply or drainage (therefore, it was easier to just toss the contents of the chamber pot out the window). Jobs might be very difficult to find and prices were high. There was no pension system, unemployment insurance or medical protection. Social security was nonexistent for the urban poor. Some became clients of wealthy patrons whom they provided with political support in return for handouts. Others relied on a grain dole that the government instituted in the late Republic and continued during the Empire.

It was not a pretty sight. It was a world of unrelenting cruelty. Who today could condone the sight of men and women being fed to beasts as people of all classes shrilled their delight? To the Romans, the spectacle was a just punishment for lawbreakers.

Roman religion was not a matter of ethical behavior, but of honoring the gods who could protect and assist you, who could potentially influence the outcome of any process that was risky, uncertain, or incomprehensible. It was essential that the gods be given what was “due” to them, that proper ritual and performance be observed. With proper ceremony the gods could grant health and prosperity.

Roman society was a **polytheistic** society. The vast majority of people were **pagans** adhering to various cults (forms of worship). None of the gods demanded exclusive attention. There were no sacred scriptures, compulsory beliefs, distinct clergy or obligatory ethical rules. The state tolerated all religions provided they were not immoral or politically dangerous.

Ah, but we are in Rome and when in Rome rank and status count. The many gods were not equal in prestige to one another. There were distinct ratings of gods, similar if you will, to the levels of a Sumerian ziggurat [images 6.66 and 6.67]. In the ziggurat, seven stories provided reception and accommodation rooms for the gods. In coincidental parallel analogy, there were also seven classes of Roman gods.



6.66 The Ziggurat at Ur. Based on a 1939 drawing by Leonard Woolley.ⁱ



6.67 A contemporary photograph of the Ziggurat at Ur, Iraq. 20 January 2007 by the U.S. Army.ⁱⁱ

Emperor Gods

The highest ranking class was the god of the empire. As the *pater patriae* the emperor/god was responsible for overseeing Rome's relationship with the other gods.

Emperor worship had been introduced by **Augustus Caesar** as a unifying force for the Empire. After 100 years of social unrest, including 20 recent years of civil war, the populace was ready for peace. "Thanks be to god!" *But since Augustus had done it, was he not god?* He had brought peace, security, and prosperity. *Was he not the savior of the world?* Moreover, he had been Divine. His father was Apollo, and his mother the mortal Atia. Therefore, he was the son of a god. In demonstration of his divinity, he had been seen ascending to heaven after his death.

Earlier you witnessed hints of his divinity in the sculpture known as *Augustus of Prima Porta* [image 6.68]. The sky god (Caelus), the sun god (Sol), the goddess of the hunt (Diana), the earth goddess (Tellus) and Apollo are all depicted on his military cuirass. The most obvious sign of his divinity is Eros, the son of Venus, riding triumphantly beside him on a dolphin. Eros reminds the viewer that Augustus is from the family of the Julians, who claimed descent from Venus. In image 6.69 he is presented as the *Pontifex Maximus* ("high priest," but literally the "great bridge tender").

Adding to Augustus' dignity was his relationship to his great-uncle and adoptive "father" **Julius Caesar**. Four months after Caesar died, a grand funerary festival named *Ludi Victoriae Caesaris* ("Praise to the Victorious Caesar") had been organized in his honor. During the festival, a very bright object appeared in the sky and transfixed the people of Rome. Since Caesar once claimed that he was a descendant of the goddess Venus, many Romans concluded that Caesar had become a deity and that the bright object was actually a new star containing Caesar's soul. More than 100 years later, famous Roman historian Suetonius wrote, "A star shone for seven successive days, rising about the eleventh hour, and was believed to be the soul of Caesar."

Augustus used this event to emphasize his familial connection with the deified Julius and to proclaim the role of his divine credentials role in heralding a new age of peace and prosperity [image 6.70]. He also had a basilica-styled temple built in his "father's" honor in the Roman Forum. The *Temple of Divus Iulius* (Temple of the Deified Julius, aka Temple of the Comet Star) was built in 42 BCE and dedicated in 29 BCE by Augustus for the purpose of fostering a "cult of the comet."

On the very personal level, emperor worship structured time, giving civic holidays and days off. Civic magistrates covered the obligations of 59 holidays a year in honor of various gods, plus 34 days of games for various pretexts, plus 45 general feast days, plus various five day festivals to honor the emperors—in total there were 159 public holidays per year.



6.68 *Augustus of Prima Porta*. 1st century CE, Vatican Museums. 204 cm (80.3").ⁱⁱⁱ



6.69 Augustus as *Pontifex Maximus*. After 12 BCE, National Museum of Rome.^{iv}



6.70 Silver denarius. 27 BCE – 14 CE, Classical Numismatic Group. On obverse Augustus Caesar wears an oak-wreath; "DIVVS IVLIVS" (Divine Julius) is written around him. On the reverse is a comet with eight rays and tail upward.^v

You have also met **Trajan**, who is, unfortunately, not very clearly depicted at the top of his column [image 6.74]. No matter: St. Peter now caps the column, having replaced the nude statue of Trajan. But the column is still relevant as a memory device for the deified Trajan. The 123 day Trajan-sponsored celebration which accompanied the conquest of the Daciens included both games and food. During that dedication 11,000 beasts were slaughtered at the Colosseum. Thus, even in the domestic rituals of life, Romans ended up paying service to the gods of the state, and therefore, to the state itself.

Great Gods of Greece and Rome



6.71 The east pediment of the Parthenon. 447 to 432 BCE, Athens, Greece.^{vi}

The great gods of Greece and Rome ranked just a little lower than the emperor gods. Many of these are familiar to you: **Zeus**, who was known as **Jupiter** in Rome; **Athena** (Roman **Minerva**); **Poseidon** (Roman **Neptune**); **Hera** (Roman **Juno**) and **Apollo**. You already know these as Greek gods; these Roman examples will demonstrate the Roman respect which they also held.



6.72 *Jupiter of Cuma*. 1st century CE, found at Masseria del Gigante at Cuma, 1758. National Archaeological Museum, Naples. Italy.^{viii}



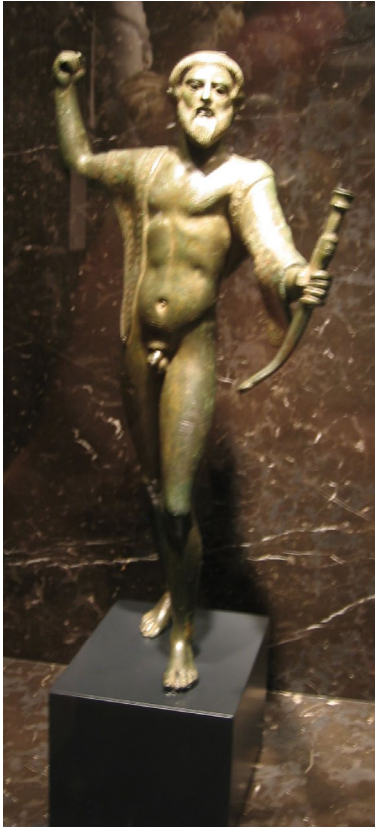
6.73 Silver statue of *Juno*. 1st-2nd century CE, Roman. Petit Palais, Paris.^{vii}



6.74 *Trajan's Column*. 106-113 CE, Rome.^{ix}

Gods of Specific Functions

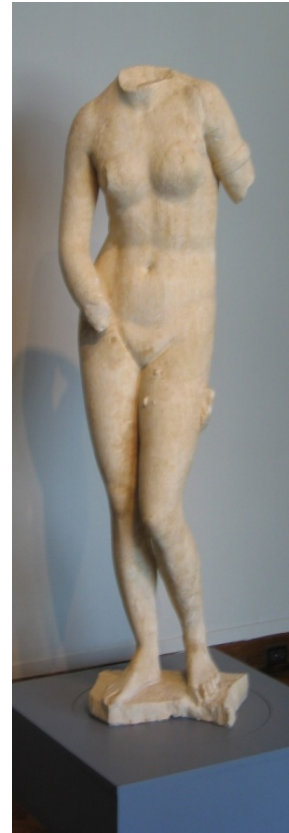
Life was often lived “near the edge.” The primary concerns were the growth of crops and the avoidance of starvation. Ranking just a little lower than the great Greek and Roman gods were the gods of specific functions, such as war, the weather, flocks and the hunt, love, the crops, mountains, streams and forests.



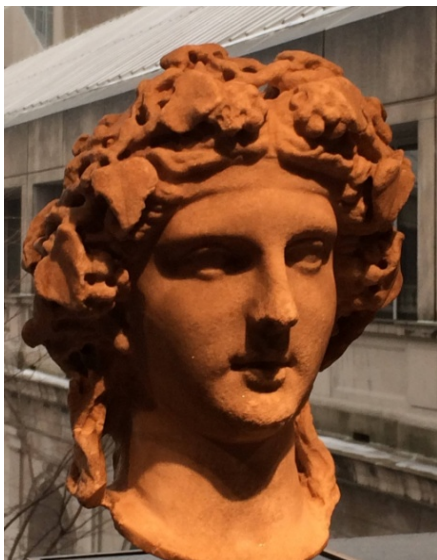
6.75 Ares (Mars) gave victory to Roman legions. 460-450 BCE, Etruscan. Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art.^x



6.76 Artemis (Diana). Goddess of the hunt and storms that destroy the harvest. 1st-2nd centuries CE. Louvre Museum.^{xi}



6.77 Venus (Aphrodite). Roman Aphrodite from the time of Hadrian. 117-138 CE, Chicago Art Institute.^{xii}



6.78 Head of Young Bacchus. 1st century CE. Chicago Art Institute. Marble^{xiii}



6.79 Pan Making Music. God of hills, flocks, herdsmen and hunters. ‘Pan’ is the root of *pastor*. First century fresco from Pompeii, now at the National Archaeological Museum, Naples.^{xiv}

Civic Gods

Just a little lower in status was the divine patron of one's city. In Greek, Sumerian and Rome cities civic pride, financial interest and piety were all intertwined in the proper observance of the city god. You will recognize some of the locations.



6.80 Maurice Bardin. *Tower of Marduk on the Euphrates River*. 1936 Babylon as it may have looked circa 604-562 BCE. Oriental Institute, Chicago.^{xvii}



6.67 A contemporary photograph of the Ziggurat at Ur, Iraq. 20 January 2007 by the U.S. Army.^{xv}



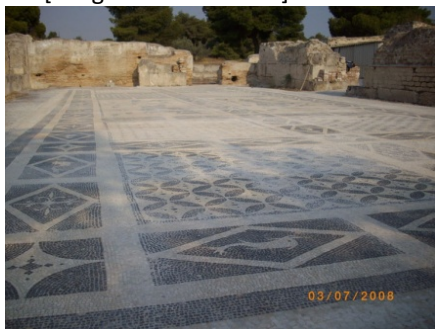
6.81 Remains of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece.^{xvi}

Marduk rose from an obscure deity in the third millennium BCE to become one of the most important gods and the head of the Mesopotamian pantheon in the first millennium. He was the patron god of the city of **Babylon**, where his temple tower, the ziggurat, may have served as the model for the famous "tower of Babel" [image 6.80]. In the first millennium, he was often referred to as **Bel**, the Akkadian word for "Lord."

The Mesopotamian moon god was known by the name of **Nanna** (Sumerian) or **Sin** (Akkadian). Sin was the father of the sun god, Shamash (Sumerian: Utu), and, in some myths, of Ishtar (Sumerian: Inanna). This ziggurat [image 6.67] was built by king **Ur-Namma** of Ur (r. about 2112-2095 BCE), the founder of the Ur III dynasty. The monumental temple tower was built of solid bricks.

Delphi was an important ancient Greek religious sanctuary sacred to the god **Apollo**. Located on Mt. Parnassus near the Gulf of Corinth, the sanctuary was home to the famous oracle of Apollo which gave cryptic predictions and guidance to both city-states and individuals. The temple of Apollo [image 6.81] was first built in the seventh century BCE, rebuilt after a fire in the sixth century BCE, and then rebuilt after an earthquake in the fourth century BCE.

The city god of **Isthmia** was **Poseidon**. Unfortunately the sanctuary had been abandoned by the year 400 CE. Among the ruins which have been studied by archaeologists are the floor of the Roman bath and the hydrocaust (heating system) for that bath [images 6.82 and 6.83].



6.82 Mosaic floor of the Roman bath at Isthmia, Greece.^{xviii}



6.83 Hydrocausts under the floor of the Roman Bathhouse at Isthmia, Greece.^{xix}

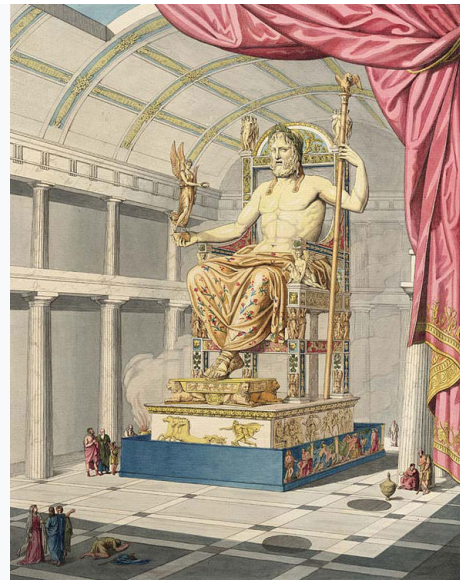


6.84 Roman bust of *Athena*. 2nd century CE, Chicago Art Institute.^{xx}

This Roman bust [image 6.84] dates from the second century CE. The helmet helps us recognize **Athene**, the patron goddess of **Athens**. Her idealized features and impassive face embody the “noble simplicity and quiet grandeur” that Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768), founder of the discipline of art history, considered the pinnacle of ancient artistic achievement.^{xxii} Of course, her temple tops the Acropolis in Athens.

Personal and Household Gods

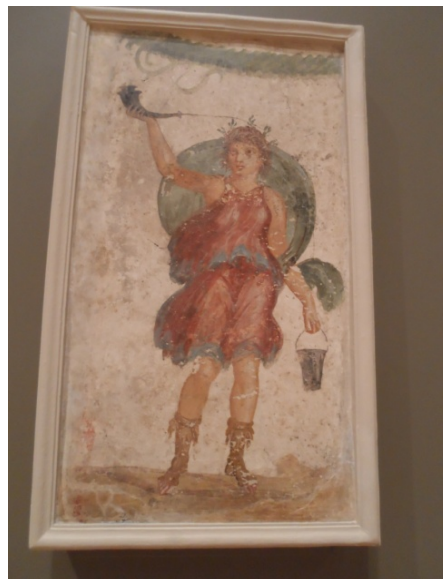
Just a little lower, but closer to home, were the personal gods. These were no more consistently good, or merciful, or even just than the gods of the state, or those of Greco-Roman antiquity, or those of one’s city. The primary advantage to a personal god was that, as guardians of the family welfare, *Lares* (aka “*Penates*”) could be recognized in a home shrine [image 6.86]. A homeward-bound Roman received comfort knowing he/she was returning *ad Larem* (to the Lar).



6.85 Zeus at Olympia. 19th century CE illustration by D. Quincy of what the 5th century BCE **acrolithic** statue, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, may have looked like.^{xxi}

The fifth century Temple of mighty **Zeus** at **Olympia** had all of the characteristics we associate with a Doric temple: a peripheral form with a frontal pronaos upon a platform with three steps, carved metopes and triglyph friezes, and a pediment.

The **Chryselephantine** (gold and ivory) statue of Zeus, sculpted by Phidias [image 6.85], was so lifelike that Byzantine emperor Theodosius II ordered the sanctuary destroyed in 426 CE. Earthquakes, flooding and possibly a tsunami did further damage.



6.86 *Standing Deity Holding Horn and Bucket* (probably a *Lar*). First century CE fresco from Pompeii.^{xxiii}

Among citizens of the upper class the Goddess of Fortune [image 6.87] was especially popular. The Temple of Fortuna Virilis [image 6.88] dates from late in the second century-early first century BCE. It was the temple of **Portunas**, the goddess of the harbors. She rewarded talent and ambition with material well-being. This temple is still standing in Rome because in 872 the basilica was rededicated to **Santa Maria Egiziaca**. It was believed that this specific Saint Mary had been a prostitute, born in 344 in Alexandria. She was often confused with Mary Magdalene, a follower of Jesus with a “tarnished reputation.”



6.87 Household figurine of *Fortuna on Her Throne*. Before 79 CE, Pompeii.^{xxv}



6.88 Temple of Fortuna Virilis. Late 2nd century-early 1st century BCE, Rome.^{xxiv}

Egyptian Gods

As Roman religion became increasingly ritualized and distant from the everyday life of the average person, and with a desire to escape the impersonal, authoritarian attitude of the Roman government, many Romans adopted the more personal, mystical beliefs of the peoples they had conquered.

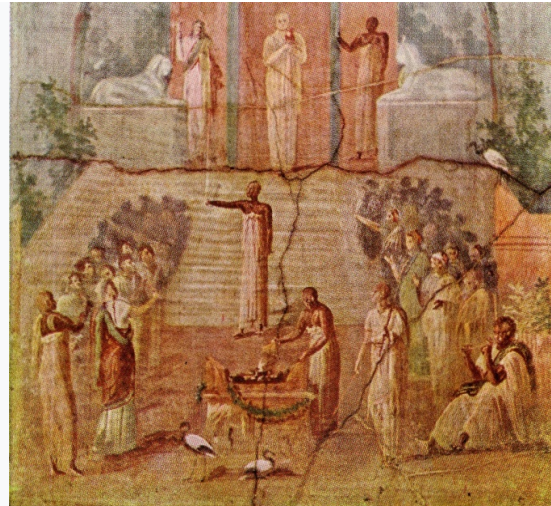
After Augustus’ defeat of Marc Antony and Cleopatra, **Egyptian** gods offered spiritual renewal and salvation. The cult of **Isis**, mother of Horus, was adopted by some [images 6.89-6.92]. Remarkably attentive, she would respond when one was in trouble. As her cult spread she was identified with nearly every goddess of the known world. Vespasian (r. 69-70 CE) officially welcomed her and built a public temple. Justinian closed the last temple to Isis at Philae in the sixth century.



6.89 Statuette of *Isis and Horus*. 332-330 BC, Metropolitan Museum of Art.^{xxvi}



6.90 Roman statue of a goddess breastfeeding a baby. 1st century BCE, Vatican Museum, Rome.^{xxvii}



6.91 A *Lychnapsia* (Festival of Lamps held in honor of Isis). Before 79 BCE, Roman wall painting from Herculaneum.^{xxviii}

Isis was known by a myriad of names: Queen of the Inhabited World, Lady of All, Star of the Sea. In the same way that her son, Horus, was a symbol of rebirth, her tears were also a symbol of renewal and resurrection because they caused the annual Nile inundation.

“Greatest of the gods. First of all names, thou rulest over the mid-air and the immeasurable space. Thou art the lady of light and flame” (Second century CE Roman Eleusinian Hymn).



6.92 Statue of Isis. Late 2nd century-early 3rd century CE, Baths of Diocletian Rome.^{xxix}

Isis [image 6.92] is wearing the “basileion” (a headgear with the sun disk, crescent and horns of a cow). Plutarch declared, “the garments of Isis are dyed in rainbow colors because her power extends over multiform matter that is subjected to all kinds of vicissitudes.”

The cult of **Asclepius** also derived from Egypt. Originally known as **Imhotep** from Old Kingdom Egypt, he was recognized as the architect who created the Step Pyramid of Djoser [image 6.93], a new kind of architecture and an innovative symbol of power. He also discovered how to cut stone for the building of monuments. As his reputation grew the savant became revered as a scribe, a sage, statesman, physician, priest, astronomer, savior of Egypt from famine, as well as vizier to the pharaoh. In Greece he became known as **Asclepius**, the son of the god Apollo and the mortal Koronis [image 6.96]. According to the *Homeric Hymn to Asclepius* he surpassed all his fellow doctors for, in addition to being able to heal the sick, he could raise the dead. So many sick people cheated death that Pluto in Hades protested to Zeus. Pindar wrote that Zeus, in an attempt to maintain the balance between the Earthly and the Heavenly Worlds, killed Asclepius by throwing a thunderbolt at him. Zeus later relented: Asclepius was brought back to life and made into a god.

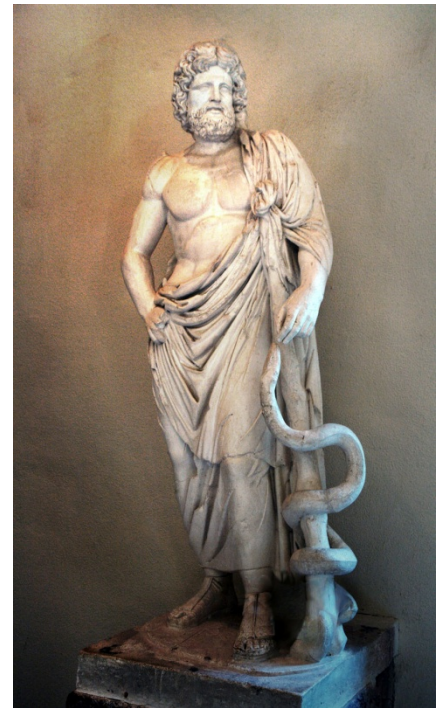
Asclepius was brought to Rome in 293 BCE, where his serpent routed the plague.



6.93 Step Pyramid of Djoser. C. 2610 BCE, Memphis, Egypt.^{xxx}

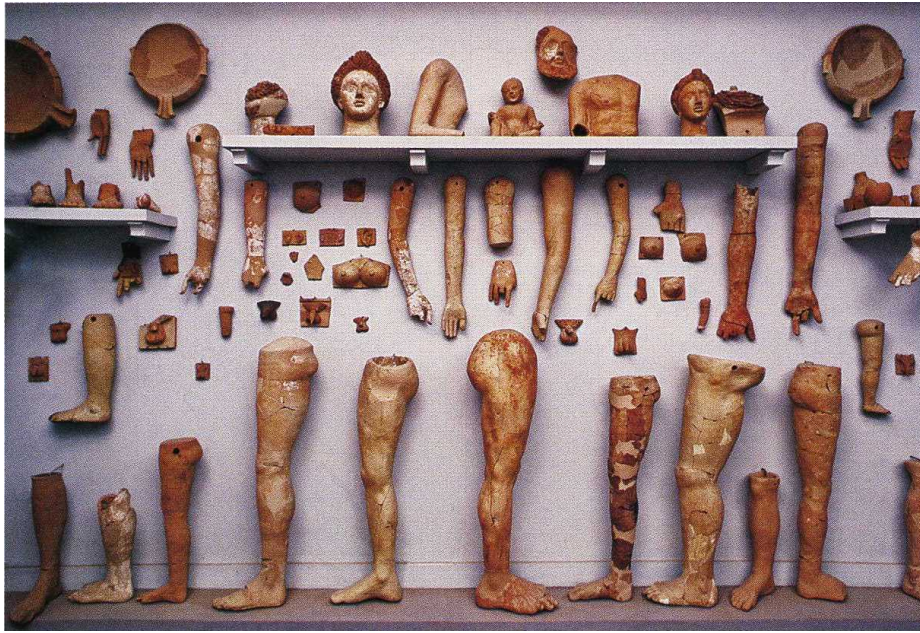


6.94 Imhotep. 332-30 BCE, Louvre Museum.^{xxxi}



6.95 Asclepius, God of healing. 160 CE, Roman copy of a late classical statue. Found at complex of the Asklepius Baths and the Library in Epidaurus.^{xxxii}

Asclepius carries a serpent staff because the serpent is able to renew itself by shedding its skin.



6.96 “Cures accomplished” as demonstrated in gifts to Temple of Asclepius in Corinth.^{xxxiii}
In the fourth century BCE a healing sanctuary of Asklepius developed at Epidaurus, near Corinth. Many who were cured brought anatomical votives.

Persian God

From Iran, the Persian **Mithras** was especially popular with the soldier-emperors and their troops in the western part of the empire. Mithras was known as the *sol invictus* (“God of the unconquerable sun”) and the, “the sun that returns to shine again.” When the Emperor Constantine declared Sunday as a day of rest, was he honoring the Christian God or Mithras? Mithras’ birthday, the Feast of the True Sun, is December 25, coinciding with the winter solstice. Pope Liberius recognized the holy day of December 25 as Christmas in 354.

Mithras is possibly linked to the Spanish cult of the bullfight.

In image 6.97, is Mithras dressed in a toga, a typical Roman attire? (No. He wears a “Persian” tunic, cloak and conical hat.)



6.97 Relief from the Mithraeum of Santo Stefano Rotondo, Rome.^{xxxiv}
The central episode of his life was the *Tauroctonia* (killing of the bull). Mithras seizes the bull by its nostrils and thrusts a knife into its side in the presence of a raven and a dog licking its wounds near a serpent. A scorpion chomps off the genital of the bull, from whose tail wheat ears emerge. Attending the scene are Coutes (with a lit torch oriented upward) and Cautopates (with a torch oriented downward). They, as well as the sun and the moon in the upper corners, represent extremes in vital cycles, beginning and end, dawn and sunset.

Phrygian God

The ancient Phrygian (modern day Turkey) Mother of the Gods was **Cybele** [images 6.98 and 6.99]. The Julian family, eager to emphasize their Trojan ancestry, promoted her origin from Pergamon.



6.98 *Statuette of Cybele on a Cart Drawn by Lions*. 2nd half of 2nd century CE, Roman, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Bronze. Length 54 ¾".^{xxxv} The 7-spoked wheels of the cart are original; the cart itself has been lost to time. This sculpture once served a decorative function as part of a fountain with the lions' mouths serving as waterspouts. The lions suggest her role as mistress of untamed nature.



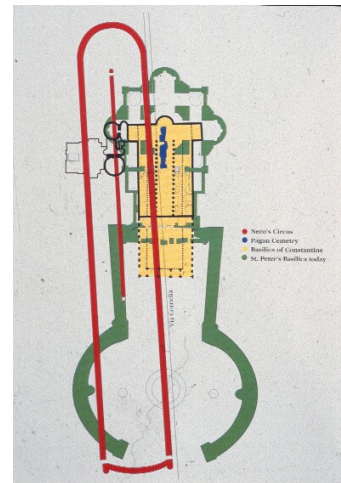
6.99 As protector of her people, Cybele's crown is shaped like turreted fortress walls. 50 CE, Roman, Getty Villa.^{xxxvi}

During the Second Punic War (218-202 BCE) a Sibylline oracle commanded that Romans should welcome Cybele, the "great mother" of Mt. Ida in Asia Minor if they wanted to be saved from Hannibal. The goddess was escorted into Rome and housed in the Temple of Victory along with her Phrygian priests and wild music of rattling sistrums and cymbals. Simulating her blessing of the earth's fertilization by rain, the yearly festival of Cybele in Rome ended with a procession that carried the silver cult image into a river for ritual bathing. However, some authorities viewed with suspicion some of the rituals conducted in her honor. "How", they reasoned, "could she claim to be a fertility goddess when her priests castrated themselves in a public orgiastic ceremony?"



6.100 *Tellus with Remus and Romulus on the Ara Pacis*. 9 BCE, Ara Pacis Museum, Rome.^{xxxvii}

Over the years, **Cybele** became identified with **Rhea** (mother of the Olympians), and then eventually she evolved into **Tellus**, who was a union of mature motherhood and womanly beauty, tenderness and grace [image 6.100]. Tellus is the root of the word "Italy."



6.101 Overlap of Circus of Nero, pagan cemetery, Constantine's basilica and St. Peter's today.^{xxxviii}

The Temple of Cybele also underwent transformation. Having been identified as the site of Saint Peter's martyrdom in 67 CE, **Saint Peter's Basilica** in Rome was placed upon the site of the leveled Temple of Cybele.

In Rome, religion was widely inclusive. Everybody recognized that they needed the power of the gods and the gods seemed to be present everywhere. It was natural and obvious to worship many gods.

It should be remembered that although the gods knew a great deal, none of these gods was considered omnipotent. None was concerned with ethics. They certainly were not transcendent. None was concerned with the afterlife. None of these created the universe; they were just a part of it, as were their followers. They were not even credited with creating humans, and they certainly were not a loving parent. With rare exceptions, the relationship between these gods and humans was not based on mutual love. All could take on human characteristics for a while, or they could be aloof and remote.

Each of these gods stressed personal fulfillment rather than involvement in the community, a set of ethics or moral behavior. None of these religions had a creed, a set of required beliefs. None had any authoritative scriptures, distinct clergy or obligatory ethical rules. There was no belief that only one was “true.” Because they were tolerant of each other, no individual could be labeled as a “heretic.” Nor could one be required to follow “orthodox” requirements.

Significantly, as the Greek historian Herodotus had pointed out (c. 425 BCE) these eternal gods had nothing to lose. They could live forever, and therefore they lacked human vulnerability. They could not demonstrate nobility of character, or courage, or self-sacrifice. These qualities, known as **kleos**, Herodotus maintained, belonged solely to humans.

Jewish God

Rome also housed a large minority population of émigré **Jews** who stood by the tenets of their faith and practiced its rituals. They comprised possibly 7% of the population. The Jewish tradition had nearly everything the polytheistic society lacked. They had a creed, the “shema:” “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One.” They had scriptures: the Pentateuch. They had distinct clergy through the tribe of Levi. They accepted a mutual covenant with God, believing that God had chosen them to be his people, and in response they had chosen God. As the “chosen people,” they held a strong commitment to social justice. They felt they were expected to set the example of the higher moral standard of a God who demanded ethical behavior. And they were monotheistic, insisting on the worship of only one God.

The Jews may be introduced to us by way of two funerary slabs [images 6.102 and 6.103], both of which were unearthed during archaeological digs as the modern city of Rome expanded.



6.102 Funerary slab carved with scene of Noah on the Ark. Possibly of Jewish influence.^{xxxix}



6.103 Funerary stele of an archon of the Synagogue of Calcarennes. 3rd century CE, Catacomb of Monteverde, Via Portuense, Rome.^{xl}

Related resource on Mystery cults in the Greek and Roman Worlds at www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/myst/hd_myst.htm

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- ^{xiii} Ibid.
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- ^{xv} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/95/Great_Ziggurat_of_Ur.JPG
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- ^{xvii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman at the Oriental Institute, Chicago, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xviii} Public domain at www.ancient.eu/image/234/roman-bath/
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ROMAN CULTURAL BELIEFS AND VALUES

The most important thing you can do to understand Roman architecture, sculpture and artifacts is to compile a list of the beliefs and values that influenced their culture and learn to apply them to the art. Look at these ideas and see if you can find them in the work or art you are analyzing. You will not be able to see all of these ideas in every work of art.

Basic beliefs of Roman culture:

- Strong respect for the past and aversion to change.
- Romans believed that innovation amounted to disrespect for their ancestors. Ancestral custom had to be respected, and reformers, such as the emperor Augustus, managed to phrase their reforms as return to something old, rather than something new.
- Each citizen of Rome had power or authority, that intangible quality that made others obey him. But the amount of authority depended on one's social status and political standing.
- Romans were also known to be serious and determined rather than playful. Note the austere facial expressions of the portrait sculptures which conveyed their power and superiority to others.
- Roman culture was divided into two social classes: the patricians, defined as the descendants from the first one hundred senators appointed to the Roman aristocratic Senate by king Romulus, and the plebeians, that is, everyone who was not a patrician.

Roman cultural values:

Antiquarianism: It means looking to the past for truth. (Think "nostalgia"). We see evidence of this in the culture's interest in copies of Classical art, architecture, theatre and philosophy.

Authoritarianism: Because the human authority figure is either divine, or a sanctioned representative of the divine, his or her power is unquestioned and immune to human judgment. This absolute authority tends to be reflected in the arts because that authority tends to be a major patron of those arts. Messages of power and propaganda, often displayed in fearful imagery, tend to show up in authoritarian cultures. Most of the cultural expression is in support of the authority.

Order: Truth is found in order. Systems become the authority. One of the cultures that best represent the value of order is the culture of the Romans. We see the creation of systems of law, roads, water, etc. These are what held the Roman Republic, and later the Empire, together when all else was faltering. The system of government that created the Senate maintained control even under such mad Emperors as Caligula. Order is a focus on setting up systems that will benefit the culture despite upheavals caused by individuals and circumstances. These orderly systems were what allowed Rome to rule a huge area that encompassed a large number of diverse cultures. The systems were what all had in common.

Utilitarianism: "Yes it is lovely but, what does it do? What is it good for?" These would be questions that a utilitarian culture would ask. Pragmatism is the key to Utilitarianism. This value focuses on the practical as opposed to the ideal. Potential is NOT as important as what works. Utilitarianism can be seen in the multiple uses of Roman buildings as well as the building of tract homes today. Aesthetics is fine, but usefulness is key. When this value is present in a culture, Idealism (as an artistic style NOT value) tends to be used for propaganda purposes. Great examples are Alexander the Great's idealized face on coins and the Roman tendency to idealize its emperors as a way of validating their rule. Examples of Roman utilitarianism include the building of aqueducts and baths, the inclusion of many entrances to the Colosseum, the development and use of concrete.

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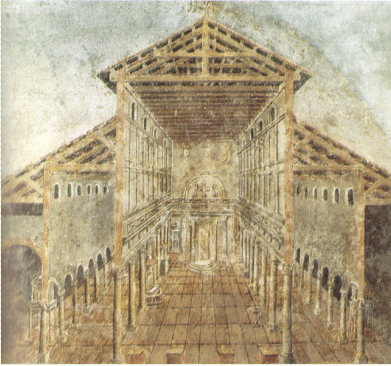
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7.67 Section of Old Saint Peter's



7.80 Good Shepherd Carrying a lamb



7.86 Jesus as the Good Shepherd

Chapter 7

Converting the

Empire to

Christianity

The Origins of Christianity

Augustus had been ruling for over 20 years when, sometime between 8 BC and 4 AD, in a small town called Bethlehem near Jerusalem, in the province of Judea, a Jewish couple named Joseph and Mary registered their first child, Jesus, who had just been born while they were in town for a tax census. Today the Christian world celebrates the birth of Jesus in December and calls it Christmas, but his birth was most likely in the spring of the year since the shepherds were “abiding” in the fields with their sheep, which they did not do in the winter months. Most of what we know about Jesus comes from the Bible and there are a few references to him in the historical writings of Flavius Josephus (circa 37 -100 CE), a Jewish historian who wrote about this period in history.ⁱ

Thirty years later Jesus began his meteoric 3 year ministry. He was a sensational speaker with the capacity to teach the undereducated with simple storytelling, metaphors, and parables. Miracles were attributed to Him. Above all he proclaimed that he was the son of God. His followers declared him to be the Messiah, who the Jewish people had traditionally expected to come, to bring them prosperity, and to save them from their earthly Roman captivity.

In 29 CE he led his followers into Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover, the feast of Jewish independence from the pharaoh in Egypt. In the superheated climate of an overcrowded city the nervous Jewish Sanhedrin tried him, disobeying many of their own judicial laws, and found him guilty of blasphemy and deserving of the death penalty. The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate agreed to his death and Jesus was crucified by Roman occupation troops on a hill Golgotha just outside of the city of Jerusalem. Christians believe that on the third day after his death Jesus rose from the tomb and began a 40 day ministry among his disciples. At the end of his forty days he ascended into the heavens, leaving behind representatives to carry the message of Christianity to the world.

There are many influences on Christianity that come from Jewish traditions and beliefs. The Jews were monotheistic, and believed that no other God should be worshiped beside Him. They also believed that they were God’s chosen people and that there was a kingdom of heaven toward which they were striving. The Jews had always believed in the coming of a Messiah and that he would save them from the oppressive domination of the Romans who occupied their land. They believed in receiving rewards for good works or punishment for disobedience to God’s commandments. They also met privately in synagogues to read the scriptures and listening to a discussion about their meaning. These beliefs carried over into the new Christian faith and were taught by Jesus to his followers, called disciples.

In addition to these beliefs which can be found in the five books of Moses and were the first five books of the Old Testament in the Bible, Christ added new doctrine. He taught that all individuals are important in God’s eyes. He taught that men should love one another and forgive one another, seventy times seven. He taught charity (pure love, not donating money to the kettle). He believed a person should learn self-control. In essence, Jesus taught that a person should learn to go beyond the outward laws of Judaism and learn to control his thoughts, feelings, anger, and emotions. For instance Jesus said that it was not enough to refrain from killing, but men should not even get angry at others. It was not enough to refrain from committing adultery, but even looking at a woman with lust was wrong. He also taught that men (and women) should develop humility and be willing to turn the other cheek for offenses they thought others had done to them.

In addition to learning to be personally humble, forgiving and thoughtful, Jesus taught that His Father had allowed him to die to redeem the world from sin, and that belief in Jesus was necessary for this promised redemption. Ethics was not enough, there had to be commitment to Jesus. So after Jesus was crucified on the cross he returned to the leaders of His church and commissioned them to go out into the world and preach this new gospel. Many early Christians felt compelled to proselytize and teach others what they knew about Jesus. It was not easy to be a Christian during the first 250 years of the Christian Church. Various Roman emperors outlawed the new religion and tortured and killed its followers. It was not until Constantine that things began to change.

The Bible is a Greek word for *biblia* which means the books, and refers to the collected works of the Christian faith. It is divided into two main sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the national literature of the Jewish people. It is written almost entirely in Hebrew with a few passages in Aramaic. Hebrew can be difficult to translate because it does not use vowels. So, a given group of consonants with one set of vowels may mean one thing, whereas with another set it may mean something entirely different. Often spacing was eliminated between words or even between lines of prose. This made it difficult to read. Also, much of the original Hebrew text was lost or destroyed because of wars and the fact that the Hebrew people were often taken captive and lost their written texts. The Old Testament is God's covenant with the Jews through the prophet Abraham. Through the Abrahamic covenant Israel felt a special destiny to be his people if they would obey his laws.

The New Testament is a multinational collection of writing to a limited group of people.

Just as the Abrahamic covenant and the laws given by God to Moses were central to the Old Testament, Jesus is central to the New Testament. The theme of the New Testament is Jesus' nature as Christ, the Messiah. The New Testament begins with the four Gospels. They were written years after Jesus died by some of his disciples.

- Matthew, written ca 85 CE
- Mark, written ca 68-72 CE
- Luke, written ca 85 CE
- John, written ca 95-100 CE

Matthew, Mark and Luke are **synoptic**, interwoven stories which tell many of the same stories in different ways. John was written later and reflects the developments of the first century of the Christian church. The book of The Acts of the Apostles was written by Luke about the Apostle Paul's missionary journeys. The epistles are a collection of letters to specific churches or to the church as a whole. The Book of Revelation was written by John to encourage Christians during the persecution under Domitian (81-96 AD) The Book of Revelation predicts a new heaven and a new earth for the faithful.

There are also additional Biblical writings that are not in many standard modern Bibles. These works did not "make it" into the Bible for various reasons. The Apocrypha were those sacred books not included in the Hebrew Bible, such as The Books of Esdras, Tobit, Judith or Esther. Or there are additional non-canonical writings said to be sacred writings of the ancient patriarchs, though their dates do not match the dates of those said to have written them, so they have not been included. Some of these were written in Greek and Ethiopic and are legends about characters in the Bible.

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Sermon on the Mount

(Matthew 5-7, New Testament, King James Version of the Bible)

The Bible is one of the most important pieces of literature in the western world. We look at the Bible so we can better understand the art and the artists of the time. (Read the Sermon on the Mount below and consider the following ideas.)

- What is a metaphor and how was it used in the Sermon on the Mount? A figure of speech wherein one thing is spoken of as if it were another. Read through the Sermon on the Mount and find a few metaphors. How did teaching with metaphors affect the listener?
- Jesus teaches a more difficult law than the Jews were accustomed to living. His sermon refers to the laws of 'old time'- which are the Ten Commandments. Notice how he compares the old law (thou shalt not kill) to the new law (thou shalt not even be angry). Find other examples of his call to live a higher law.

And seeing the multitudes, he¹ went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel², but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law³, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes⁴ and Pharisees⁵, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

¹ Jesus.

² Basket.

³ The Law of Moses.

⁴ Interpreters and keepers of records and sacred scriptures, especially the laws.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca⁶, shall be in danger of the council⁷: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear⁸ thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil. Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans⁹ so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

⁵ Members of an ancient Jewish sect that preached strictest observance of the Law of Moses. They became symbols of a formalist observance of rigid rules.

⁶ A word suggesting contempt or derision.

⁷ High court.

⁸ Break your oath or perjure yourself.

⁹ Jewish citizens who worked as tax collectors for the Romans. They often collected more than required and kept it. They were hated by the inhabitants of the Roman colonies.

Take heed that ye do not your alms¹⁰ before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon¹¹. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

¹⁰ Righteous acts of religious devotion.

¹¹ Idolatry, worldly treasure.

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote¹² that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam¹³ that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Enter ye in at the strait¹⁴ gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth

¹² Speck or splinter.

¹³ Beam used to build houses.

¹⁴ Narrow.

these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

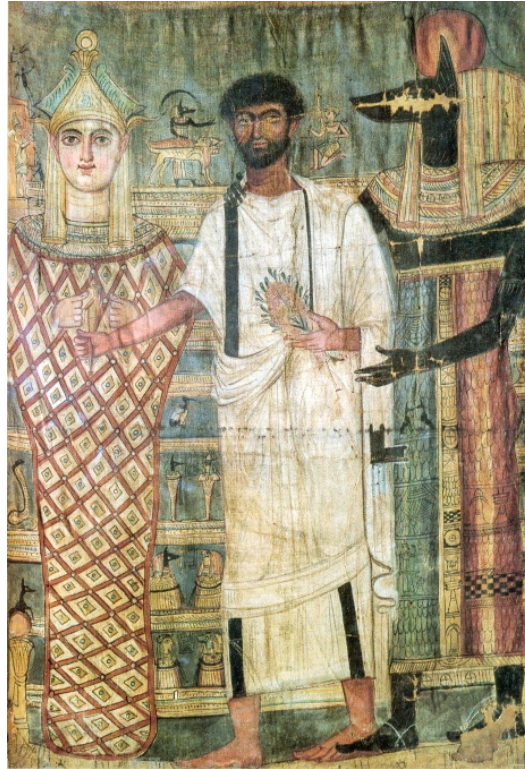
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Betts, Kristine. "Sermon on the Mount." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

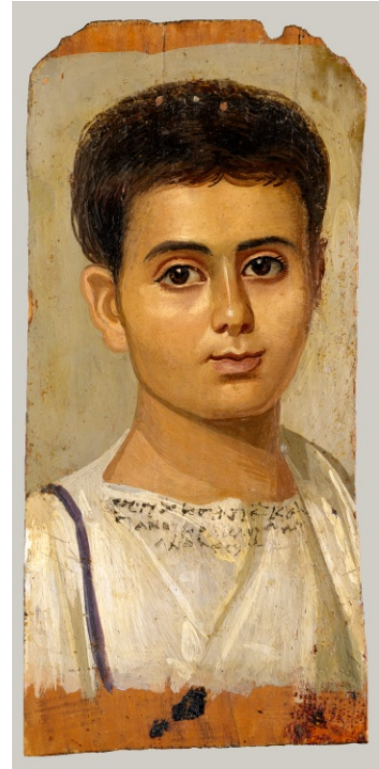
ANTICIPATING BYZANTINE CULTURE



7.1 Mummy with an Inserted Panel
Portrait of a Youth. 80–100 CE,
Metropolitan Museum of Art.ⁱⁱ



7.2 Shroud from the time of the Ptolemaic dynasty.
305-30 BCE, Private collection.ⁱ



7.3 Portrait of the Boy Eutyches,
Freedman of Kasanios. 100–150 CE,
Metropolitan Museum of Art.
H. 38 cm (14 ¹⁵/₁₆ in); w. 19 cm
(7 ¹/₂ in).ⁱⁱⁱ

What do these images hold in common?

If you are remarking about the drama of the “big eyes,” you are right on target! Their huge, deep-set eyes with an arresting gaze address us, the viewer, directly. In ancient times the eyes were an indication of godliness. The eyes were considered “the window to the soul” and the clear eye was believed to penetrate darkness. Egyptian, Greek and Roman traditions blended together to create these impressive images. These three traditions will also be the foundation of Byzantine culture.

During the 1st to 3rd centuries CE, when Egypt was a province of the Roman Empire, painted shrouds or portraits were prepared to accompany the mummies. Paintings of this type, often called **Faiyum portraits** (though not all of them came from the Faiyum oasis 15 miles south of Alexandria), were typical products of the multicultural, multiethnic society of Roman Egypt.

These portraits were finely executed in encaustic paint (heated beeswax to which pigment has been added) on wood or stuccoed linen. Other ingredients such as egg, resin and linseed oil were also added, allowing artists to depict the inhabitants of the Greco-Roman period of ancient Egypt in exacting detail. These were portraits of individuals in a multi-racial society; they are the faces of people you might know. They may (or may not) have been painted during the person’s lifetime and first displayed in the home while the individual was alive.



7.4 Portrait of a Young Woman in
Red. 90-120 CE, Metropolitan
Museum of Art.^{iv}

The Faiyum portraits exhibit many Egyptian characteristics. Of foremost importance is the continuing Egyptian practice of preserving the body. Earlier mummies had idealized masks modeled in plaster or cartonnage to represent the face. In the Faiyum portraits the mask was replaced with a painted wood panel which was held in place by the linen mummy wrappings on the coffin [image 7.1]. The second Egyptian feature is to be seen on the *Funerary Shroud* [image 7.2] on which nearly life-sized portrayals of Anubis and Osiris flank the figure. The gods are both easily recognized because of their **attributes** (characteristic features). Anubis, on the viewer's right, wears the nemes headdress with a lunar disk on his head, a proclamation of regeneration. Osiris, on the left, is symbolized by the scepter and the whip. The third standard Egyptian feature is the frontal depiction of gods, with the head and feet shown in profile. Having been judged righteous, the figure on the shroud is depicted in this forward-facing posture and is wrapped in a garment of the living. Only the hands and face are visible as he was transformed into the divine Osiris. The portrait of the so-called *Young Woman in Red* [image 7.4] displays the sparkling fourth feature; her image was gilded (probably after her death) to suggest the divine flesh of the gods. An additional Egyptian characteristic that you will often see was the enhancement of the eyes of the subject with "Egyptian blue," a paint mixture of silica, lime, copper, and an alkali. Blue was associated with the sky and the river Nile, and thus came to represent the universe, creation and fertility.

Greek influence is evident in the contrapposto turn-of-the-head seen in each of these. The high cheekbones of the *Young Woman in Red* and the repetitive ringlets in her hair are typical Greek conventions. The writing on *Eutyches'* toga is Greek [image 7.3], which was the common language of the eastern Mediterranean at the time.^v The encaustic technique had first been developed by the Greeks as a wax paste to fill the cracks on ships. Later they discovered they could paint fearsome faces on the ships. The liquid/paste was applied on prepared wood and much later encaustic was used on canvas and other materials.

The Hellenistic influence is clear. Egypt had been part of the Hellenistic world since the 332 BCE conquest by Alexander the Great. The naturalistic shadows of Hellenistic individualism allowed the commemoration of old men, young children, athletes and pagan gods. The portrait displayed within the mummy panel [image 7.1] captivates us with his large deep-set eyes and a down-turned mouth. His downy moustache indicates that he was no older than his early twenties. The youthfulness of *Eutyches* [image 7.3], depicted under a bright source of light, entices us to mourn his death. The *Young Woman in Red* [image 7.4] looks at the viewer with large serious eyes which are accentuated by long lashes. A mass of loose curls covers her head, and some strands fall along the back of her neck on the left side. Framed by the black hair, deeply shadowed neck, and dark red tunic, her brightly lit face stands out in appealing youthfulness.

We can't help but admire the Roman influence of curly hair, white tunic, purple *clavus* (vertical stripe) and mantle draped over the left shoulder, as seen in both images 7.2 and 7.3. Specific clothing, footwear and accoutrements identified one's gender, status, rank and social class. The sparkling jewelry and gold wreath of *the Young Woman in Red* [image 7.4] follow contemporary Roman court fashion. Furthermore, we are reminded of the whole tradition of Roman portraits we have seen of distinguished Roman citizens such as Caesar Augustus.

The Individualistic features of people you might know, with contrapposto positioning, dramatic shadow and attractive Humanistic bodies, disappear in the Byzantine Era, but those huge, **mystical** eyes are an easily recognized feature of the Byzantine icon. We can witness the shift in the third century Catacombs of Priscilla, a Greek chapel north of Rome. We call the figure *Donna Velata* ("Lady of the Veil") [image 7.5] out of custom, *but is the person male or female?* There are no natural curves, no telling shadows, no three-dimensional space. The figure certainly does not suggest a humanistic contrapposto stance. This is not a portrait, there are no attributes, it is not a recognizable individual. All we really know about *Donna Velata* is to be witnessed in the deep-set eyes, and that the figure stands in the **orant** position, the Greek position of prayer.



7.5 *Donna Velata* ("Lady of the Veil") (detail). 3rd century CE, Cubiculum of the Velatio in the Catacomb of Priscilla, Rome, Italy. ^{vi}

You will be witnessing those same mysterious eyes when you meet with the Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora at the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna [images 7.6 and 7.7]. Except for their identifiable clothing, which was distinctively important to the Romans, Individualism and Humanism are values of a bygone age. The new look of the mystical Byzantine Era is in those clairvoyant eyes.



7.6 and 7.7 Mosaic portraits of the Emperor Justinian^{vii} and Empress Theodora. ^{viii} c. 547, Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy.

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ⁱ Unknown artist, Scanned by Szilas from the book J. M. Roberts: Kelet-Ázsia és a klasszikus Görögország (East Asia and Classical Greece). Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d2/Shroud_from_the_time_of_the_Ptolemaic_dynasty.jpg

ⁱⁱ Metropolitan Museum of Art. Public domain at www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/547697

ⁱⁱⁱ Metropolitan Museum of Art. Public domain at www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/547951

^{iv} Metropolitan Museum of Art. Public domain at www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/547860

^v According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/547951) "Scholars do not completely agree on the inscription's translation. The boy's name ('Eutyches, freedman of Kasanios') seems indisputable; then follows either 'son of Herakleides Evandros' or 'Herakleides, son of Evandros.' It is also unclear whether the 'I signed' at the end of the inscription refers to the painter of the portrait or to the manumission (act of freeing a slave) that would have been witnessed by Herakleides or Evandros. An artist's signature would be unique in mummy portraits."

^{vi} Public domain at smarthistory.org/santa-maria-antiqua-sarcophagus/

^{vii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Emperor_Justinian_and_Members_of_His_Court_MET_LC_25_100_1a-e_s01.jpg

viii Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theodora_mosaik_ravenna.jpg

BROTHERLY LOVE IN TURBULENT TIMES



7.8 Map of Commerce from Rome between 100 BCE to 300 CE. Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, The Netherlands.ⁱ

Imagine yourself as a soldier in the Roman Legion. You've been serving in the oldest city in The Netherlands, Nijmegen [image 7.8]. The date is year 15 of Trajan's Reign (113 CE). Trajan has been expanding the empire of 50 million people to its greatest extent, 3.5 million square miles. Being an effective Roman general, Trajan's great military victories have been commemorated with classically influenced columns and inscriptions, sculptures and triumphal arches [image 7.9]. Proper towns have been built with paved streets, water supply and a forum with its administrative basilica, markets and temples. Additionally, every settlement has *commoda* (people's palaces): stadia, circuses, public baths and amphitheaters.



7.10 *Solidus*. Unestablished date, Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen.ⁱⁱ

As a member of the Legion you have been paid a basic wage of three *solidi* a year [image 7.10]. It was from this coin that future legionnaires will be known as "soldiers." (The German language turned the word *solidus* into *skelding*, the origin of *shilling*.)



7.9 Trajan's Column. 106-113 CE, Rome.ⁱⁱⁱ



7.11 and 7.12 Two panels of a Roman military diploma. Unestablished date, Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen.^{iv}

Upon finishing your service you received a copy of your military record [both halves, images 7.11 and 7.12]. This small folding bronze double tablet, your *diploma*, authorized your rights of Roman citizenship.

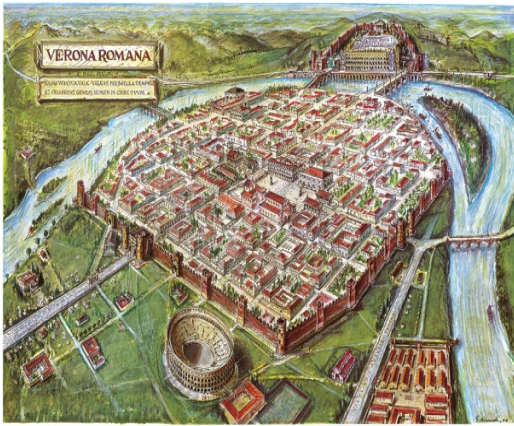
By studying the map, the coins and the diploma (all from the Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen, The Netherlands) we can deduce several characteristics of Roman civilization: trade, roads, citizenship, a single code of laws, a unified currency, soldiers and enforced peace of (at the time of Trajan) 400,000 men. *Pax Romana* was marvelous for spreading the Roman values of Authoritarianism, Organization and Utilitarianism. Though the “peace” was without the political freedom as the Greeks had understood it and more limited than had been experienced in Republican Rome, it was a more continuous peace than the Mediterranean had ever known. However, like an *autostrada* which goes in two directions, that ordered civilization also had “oncoming” traffic. Lured by relative stability and security, cultivated land and wide borders, barbarian gladiators, slaves and freed-men poured into the army and then into Roman society.



7.13 Augustus Coin found in the Pudukottai Hoard India. 27 BCE-14 CE, British Museum.^v

The ordered civilization of Pax Romana ended with one long period of civil wars, usurpations and violent transfers of power. Between 235 and 260 CE more than 20 emperors took the throne, and all but one died violently, either in battle against Roman enemies or through assassination or lynching. The myth of the so-called *divine* emperor [image 7.13] has been cancelled out. Goodbye, also, Humanism and Individualism. For the foreseeable future, Authoritarianism will be a significant value.

The time of Roman power and grandeur had passed. With the crumbling of Rome the empire was plunged into military anarchy. In an effort to control the far-flung empire, power was given to local leaders. The imperially sanctioned bureaucrats raised taxes, doubled the size of the army and devalued the currency, but the economy continued to spiral downward with deeper and deeper hyperinflation. Without money, and having lost their confident can-do Roman spirit, public building stopped almost completely. Urban centers were depopulated as inhabitants fled to the countryside for safety. Taking up the roads, citizens built city walls. Thus it was that hill towns in Italy and Spain would develop different accents, dialects, breads, sweets, pasta shapes, histories and myths.



7.14 *Città Antica*, Verona. 1618.^{vi}



7.15 Modern city map of Verona.^{vii}



7.16 Cut in the ancient city wall of Verona.^{viii}

These reused paving stones may still be seen in modern Verona, Italy. The protective city walls are evident in the reconstructed vision of the old fortification of *Città Antica* between the Adige River and the Via Dei Partigiani [image 7.14]. Modern-day roads [image 7.15] were shaped by that fortification, with an occasional need to cut through those walls. We can still see the stacked paving stones from which those defensive walls had been built [image 7.16].

Seeking to bring some stability to the far-flung Empire, openly autocratic **Diocletian** (r. 284-305) expanded upon a notion of joint rule which had been tried earlier in Republican Rome.^{ix} In 293 Diocletian ripped away all remaining façades of republicanism with the creation of a **Tetrarchy**, a rule-of-four. By dividing the empire in half he created the **Western Roman Empire** and the **Eastern Roman Empire** (also to be known as the **Byzantine Empire**). These two divisions were further subdivided into four quadrants [image 7.17]. The four new dominions were smaller and more manageable. The **Augustus** (emperor) Diocletian maintained his rule of the eastern quarter (from Nicomedia in Bithynia, Thrace, Asia, and Egypt). Conveniently for him, this area had greater economic and demographic resources and was inaccessible to those pesky Germanic barbarians. His **Caesar** (“chosen successor”), **Galerius** (ruling from Thessalonike), was responsible for the Danube frontier and the Balkans. In the west Diocletian elevated one of his officers, **Maximian**, to an equal position of co-emperor. Headquartered in Milan, Augusti Maximian ruled Italy and Africa. Maximian’s Caesar was **Constantius** who ruled from Trier. His territorial responsibility was the least populated portion of the empire: Britain and Gaul.



7.17 *Map of the Roman Empire under the Tetrarchy*, showing the dioceses and the four tetrarchs' zones of influence post-299, after Diocletian and Galerius had exchanged their allocated provinces.^x

With the establishment of the Tetrarchy, no emperor spent any length of time in Rome. On the other hand, as a result of Diocletian's leadership and more skilled and competent administrators, the eastern empire, now known as "Rome," would stand for a thousand years until 1453 when the Ottoman Turks conquered Constantinople.

Let's examine a manufactured image of Diocletian's revolutionary political system. We find the sculpture not in Constantinople's *philadelphion* (open space), where in 305 CE it had been attached to a column by an unknown artist, but in Venice, Italy!^x After looting Constantinople in 1204, Crusaders brought the 51" tall porphyry (purple marble) sculpture of the *Four Tetrarchs* to Saint Mark's Basilica and had it built into the façade of the building [image 7.18].^{xii} Dressed in military garb, the sour, heavy and dour rulers anxiously grasp their swords with their free hands [image 7.19]. In this symbolic representation we can distinguish the bearded Augusti (emperors) [Image 7.20] from the clean-shaven Caesari (subordinates) [image 7.21], but it is impossible to distinguish Diocletian from Maximian. There are no identifiable, individual features. Individualism is gone!



7.18 Fourth century CE sculpture of the *Four Tetrarchs* from Constantinople placed after 1204 into the exterior wall of Saint Mark's Basilica, Venice, Italy (on the lower left).^{xiv}



7.19 Close-up of Fourth century CE sculpture of the *Four Tetrarchs*.^{xiii}



7.20 The bearded Augusti (Diocletian and Maximian).^{xv}

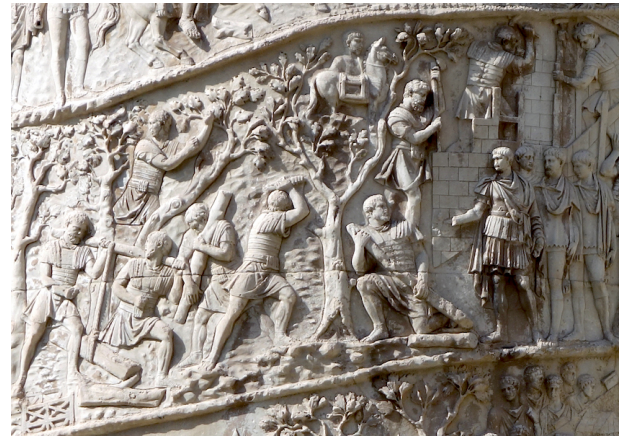


7.21 The unbearded Caesari (Galerius and Constantius).^{xvi}



7.19 *Four Tetrarchs*.

Individualism was not the only value to be disappearing. Neither were the figures on this sculpture scaled according to Pythagorean proportions, appreciated as recently as 106-113 CE on *Trajan's Column* [images 7.9 and 7.22]. In a swift turn of events, Humanism was also gone.



7.22 *Column of Trajan* (detail). 113 CE, The Emperor (fourth from the lower right) oversees construction in Rome.^{xvii}

The four *arcons* were embracing in a desperately hoped-for unity. In theory, the colleagues were supposed to act in concert with each other, issuing laws that were to be observed in both halves of the empire, while each was responsible for defending his own territory. In reality, the Eastern Empire flourished while the Western Empire struggled and neither gave much thought to helping the other. Each saw the other more as a competitor than as a teammate and both worked primarily in their own self-interest. This was not a portrayal of cooperative unity. This “brotherly love” is no more convincing than the Augustinian implementation of Pax Romana, or for that matter, than the declarative Ara Pacis had been to us. We must admit, that even in Roman times, *pax* and *peace* were not the same.

Before we leave Diocletian, it should be pointed out that he was very pious in his devotion to the Roman gods. It must have caused considerable family stress when both his wife, Prisca, and his daughter, Valeria, converted to Christianity. Furthermore, missing his chance to harness the dynamic element of Christianity for the benefit of the empire, Diocletian began the worst persecution in the history of Christianity. During the ten years of his “final suppression,” from 303-313, he issued several imperial edicts:

1. He demanded sacrifice to the Roman gods. Noncompliance with this edict led to death or forced labor in the salt mines.
2. With the aim of depriving Christians of their leaders and organization, clergy were imprisoned and made by torture to sacrifice to the gods.
3. “Scriptures” were burned. That requirement raised a dilemma: *which documents should be desperately hidden and which could be burned? Just what does a “scripture” look like?* To get the authority off one’s back, some believers would turn over anything that looked like a “scripture.” Other individuals would be labeled as “traditores” for their compliance in surrendering holy writings. We can’t help but wonder about early writings which were irrevocably lost due to this edict.
4. No Christian could hold Roman citizenship. Therefore, no one could hold a post in the imperial or municipal services, and neither could one appeal a judicial verdict.
5. No Christian slaves could be granted freedom.

It may be argued that no 10-year period was more important for the fortunes of Christianity than this decade. But the persecution failed to force the majority of Christians to recant; instead, the growing popularity of the movement was attracting the kind of hatred that success breeds.

Diocletian retired in 305 and convinced Maximian to do so as well. According to Diocletian’s clear specifications for the Tetrarchy, the two Caesars were move up to the position of Augusti, but the army, and ambitions sons, preferred biological lineage to the non-hereditary succession that had been proposed. The next battle in this era of high treason will be another civil war between the usurper **Maxentius** (son of former Augusti Maximian and the son-in-law of Caesar Galerius) against the usurper **Constantine** (son of the Caesar Constantius I Chlorus).

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- ⁱ Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License
- ⁱⁱ Ibid.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Trajan%27s_Column_Panorama.jpeg
- ^{iv} Photos by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License
- ^v Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AugustusCoinPudukottaiHoardIndia.jpg
- ^{vi} Artstor, library-artstor-org.libdb.ppcc.edu/asset/ARTSTOR_103_41822003339007
- ^{vii} Public domain at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verona_Arena#/map/0
- ^{viii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2007. CC BY-NC 4.0 License
- ^{ix} From 60-53 BCE Gaius Julius Caesar, Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus and Marcus Licinius Crassus had been joined in a rule-of-three political alliance known as the Triumvirate.
- ^x Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/07/Tetrarchy_map3.jpg
- ^{xi} Public domain at Khan Academy "Portraits of the Four Tetrarchs," at <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/roman/late-empire/v/tetrarchs>
- ^{xii} Named for the Greek word for "purple," porphyry is very close to the color of the fabulously expensive shellfish-based purple dye which was used for the purple stripe on the tunics and togas of the Roman Senatorial class. So, porphyry meant Rome and the power of the Caesars. Of course, the Crusaders thought the sculpture belonged here in Italy, closer to "real" Rome, than in pillaged Constantinople!
- ^{xiii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License
- ^{xiv} Ibid.
- ^{xv} Ibid.
- ^{xvi} Ibid.
- ^{xvii} Photo: Steven Zucker, CC BY-NC-SA 2.0. Accessed at www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/roman/early-empire/a/column-of-trajan
- ^{xviii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License
- ^{xix} Ibid.
- ^{xx} Public domain at khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/roman/early-empire/a/column-of-trajan

THE AMBITION OF CONSTANTINE

Constantine was a dreamer and a visionary. Constantine imagined power, and when Diocletian and Maximian retired from their positions as joint Augusti (Emperors) of Rome in 305 CE Constantine saw the possibility of viewing his dreams in vivid Technicolor.

Diocletian's arrangement for the rule of the Tetrarchs had been to avoid the entanglements of biological succession with a non-hereditary transfer of leadership. Upon the retirement or death of either of the two Augusti, the Caesars (subordinates) were to be advanced to the position of Emperor. But given the simultaneous retirement of both Augusti, the army, and ambitious sons, preferred the biological tradition. The primary contenders for the throne were **Maxentius** (son of former Augusti Maximian and the son-in-law of Caesar Galerius) and **Constantine** (son of the Caesar Constantius I Chlorus).

Constantine's ambition was interpreted in this ninth century manuscript illumination [image 7.23]. On the evening of October 27, 312 his army was camped on the banks of the Tiber River on the outskirts of Rome and preparing to march against the army of Augustus Maxentius. According to tradition Constantine and every man under his command saw a cross of light shining in the sky. In a vision that would become crucial to subsequent European history, Christ appeared holding a flaming cross and proclaiming "In hoc signo vinces" ("In this sign you shall conquer"). Constantine had no idea of the meaning of the unfamiliar emblem; he was not a Christian, though there were likely some Christians among his advisers.



7.23 *The Dream of Constantine*, Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. 879 – 882, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Paris, France.ⁱ

Waste no time! Constantine ordered the battle shields inscribed with the flaming cross, an insignia that resembled the Greek letters *Chi* (**X**) and *Rho* (**P**) [images 7.24 and 7.25]. What could **X** possibly mean? The monogram could have been an abbreviation for the Greek "ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ" which means *Christos* or the Messiah, a great and powerful figure who would overthrow the enemy. Or, it could have been a compression of the Greek word "ΧΡΕΙΣΤΟΣ" which translates as *Chrestos* or auspicious. Or, it could have been a symbol of power, similar to the scepter and shepherd's crook held by the pharaoh. Or, invert the sequence and it could have been a signal for **P_X**, peace!



7.24 Symbol of *Chi Rho* as held by Justinian's soldiers. C. 547, Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna.ⁱⁱ

Whatever the “real” meaning of the insignia, on the next day, October 28, 312, under that sign, Constantine marched against Maximian and won the **Battle of Milvian Bridge**. Although no one realized it at the time, this battle was a turning point that marked the end of the old Roman Imperial system and the beginning of the **Byzantine Empire**.



7.25 *The Battle of Milvian Bridge*, Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus.ⁱⁱⁱ

Seven months later, on June 15, **313**, Constantine acknowledged the assistance he assumed he had received from the divine *Christos* with the **Edict of Milan**. With this declaration he decriminalized Christianity only 10 years after Diocletian had launched the “final suppression.” While Constantine did not mandate Christianity (that would not occur until the reign of Theodosius, 392-395), the Edict did grant the right of religious choice and the restoration of property that had been confiscated.

EDICT OF MILAN, 313 CE

“With sound and most upright reasoning. . . we resolved that authority be refused to no one to follow and choose the observance or form of worship that Christians use, and that authority be granted to each one to give his mind to that form of worship which he deems suitable to himself, to the intent that the Divinity. . . may in all things afford us his wonted care and generosity.”¹

The ninth century manuscript illuminations to which we have been referring are together on a single page from a codex known as the *Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus*. The tempera on parchment illumination is quite large, measuring 41 cm high (16.5”) by 30.5 cm wide (12.5”). On the next page [image 7.27] it is reproduced as large as this program allows, but even so it is undersized. The story of Constantine is laid out in three registers. The bottom section [image 7.26] tells of his mother’s **pilgrimage** to the Holy Land in 326-328. Like any good traveler, St. Helena brought home souvenirs, including shiploads of relics, some tubs of soil from Calvary, the stairs which Christ was believed to have climbed in the palace of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem and most famously, slivers from the True Cross! It was her fascination with relics, which was shared by her son, Constantine, that introduced the “**cult of relics**” to the Christian church.



7.26 *Pilgrimage of St. Helena*, Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus.^{iv}



7.27 Manuscript from the *Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus*. 879 – 820, Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Paris, France. ^v

In Rome, “virtue” was defined as manliness, courage and victory in war; these qualities frequently led to fame, wealth and power. Constantine had exemplified his virtue in the 312 Battle of Milvian Bridge, and the proper way to celebrate was with the Roman equivalent to a billboard advertisement, the **triumphal arch**. In Rome alone there are about 50 of these advertisements. Look around the area in which the **Arch of Constantine** [image 7.28] was constructed. *What does the placement of this arch suggest about Constantine’s piety toward the Roman Empire?*



7.28 Arch of Constantine, south face. 315 CE, Rome, Italy.^{vi}

When we walk around to the north face [image 7.29] of this 69’ high monument we see symbols that clearly reveal a man who wanted to be known as the “Restorer of Roman Glory.” Trajan’s conquest of Dacia (Germany) was celebrated inside the central doorway. The medallions on the second story were *spolia* from a monument to Hadrian, who was also frustrated by the Dacians. On the attic story at the upper right was a depiction of another master of those troublesome Dacians, Marcus Aurelius. Constantine’s association with the emperors Trajan, Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius suggested that, despite sporadic attacks by barbarians, all was well in Rome. “You can look to me as the *Pater Patriae*.”



7.29 Arch of Constantine, north face. 315 CE, Rome, Italy.^{vii}



7.30 Diagram of the Arch of Constantine showing architectural features and spolia. 312-315 CE, Rome, Italy.^{viii}

There are some divine images on the four supporting columns [images 7.31-7.34], but the arch was not made to promote Constantine as the first Christian emperor, nor is there any reference to the intervention of a Christian God on Constantine's side. The huge inscription refers merely to the help of *divinitas*, but nothing more precise. While original to the arch, the winged divine images are not intended as portrayals of God's angels. Instead, they remind us of the Assyrian *Blessing Genius* at the gate of the city of Khorsabad [image 7.35] or the Greek *Victory Untying Her Sandal* at the Athenian Temple of Athene Nike [image 7.36]. Certainly the inclusion of references to the persecutor Marcus Aurelius was not intended to be complimentary to Christians.



7.31 Winged Victories and subjugated barbarians on the Arch of Constantine, north face. First plinth.^{ix}



7.32 Second plinth.



7.33 Third plinth.



7.34 Fourth plinth.



7.35 Assyrian Blessing Genius. 722-705 BCE, Musée du Louvre, Paris, France.^x



7.36 Nike with the Sandal. C. 420-410 BCE, relief from the Temple of Athena Nike, Athens, Greece.^{xi}

The really surprising feature of this monument is to be seen on the 3' 4" high horizontal frieze under the medallions [image 7.37]. Here we are convinced of the developing Byzantine cultural values of Authoritarianism and Idealism. Though Constantine's head has been broken off (perhaps by some hoodlum in a Roman riot), he is without a doubt formally depicted, in a divine frontal pose, on the speaker's platform between forward-facing Hadrian and Marcus Aurelius. From this position he distributes wisdom, justice, and largess to the Roman people. The composition has no spatial depth; there are no oblique lines or foreshortening. Neither do the citizens show independent movement; they are not individualized; their heads are in idealistic *isocephalic* unity and they are lined up like puppets on a string. Each turns in adoring worship of the emperor. They are clearly secondary to the empire to which they belong.

Hadrian

Constantine on
rostra, addressing
the people

Marcus
Aurelius



7.37 Oration of Constantine frieze on the Arch of Constantine, north face, left side. 315 CE, Rome, Italy.^{xii}

Compare the proportions and spatial depth to earlier processions on both the Parthenon [image 7.38] and the Ara Pacis [image 7.39].



7.38 Parthenon, *East frieze*. C. 445–435 BCE, Athens, Greece.^{xiii}



7.39 Ara Pacis detail of the south frieze showing the procession of the Imperial family, with Agrippa and Livia on the left. 13 - 9 BCE, Rome, Italy.^{xiv}

The 40" reliefs [images 7.40 and 7.41] above the frieze give us a comparison view of the citizens and confirm our suspicions. The *spolia* roundels from the monument to Hadrian were rechiseled with the features of Constantine, but the original, older and more Classical proportions are still evident. Compared to the earlier reliefs, the citizens depicted in the frieze appear to belong to a different race altogether. The contrapposto stance is gone; their forms are insubstantial and generalized; their humanity and dignity have been lost. True beauty now lies in a balanced and orderly society as expressed in the symbolic function of the sculpture. With an authoritarian attitude, the Kingdom has come; the Rule of Caesar is now the Rule of God.



7.40 Arch of Constantine reliefs.^{xv}



7.41 Two reliefs from the Arch of Constantine: left: roundel showing *Sacrifice to Apollo*, era of Hadrian, c. 117-138 CE; right: detail, *Distribution of Largesse*, era of Constantine, 312-315.^{xvi}

Constantine returned to Rome on the 10th anniversary of his accession to the throne to dedicate this victory arch as well as a new basilica, which is today known as the **Basilica Nova** [images 7.42-7.44].^{xvii} Although the basilica had been started as a Roman bath by Maxentius in 306, Constantine had it transformed into a civic building.

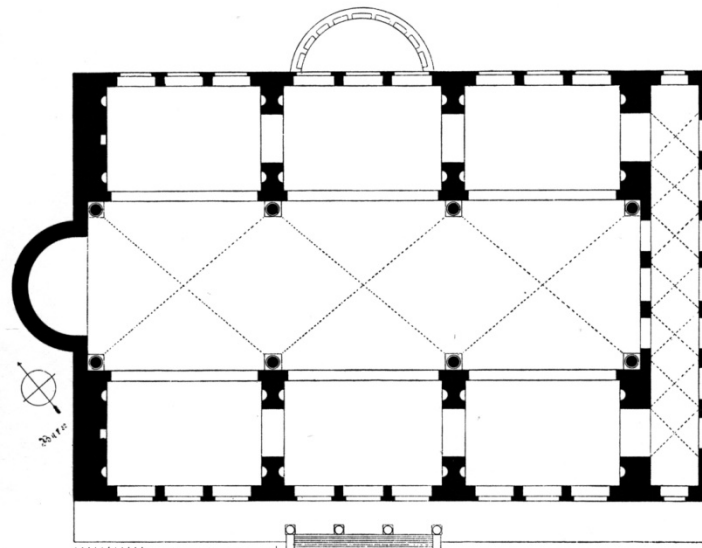


7.42 Basilica Nova. C. 306-312 CE), Rome, Italy.^{xviii}



7.43 Artist's conception of Basilica Nova.^{xix}

The original apse was on the north-west side (on the left) of this groin-vaulted nave, with the entrance to the south-east (on the right). To accommodate crowds Constantine added an additional entrance on the long side, making the building more similar to Trajan's *Basilica Ulpia*. Another apse was added across the hall [image 7.44].



7.44 Plan of the Basilica of Maxentius and Constantine.^{xx}

It is speculated that the basilica was being constructed in honor of Maxentius, possibly with a statue of the augustus in the original apse. Constantine's new apse would dilute the focus, but perhaps that was not a strong enough statement. Whatever had been in the original niche, Constantine had it replaced with a 40' acrolithic (marble, wood and masonry core sheathed in bronze) seated statue of himself, the **Colossal Statue of Constantine the Great** [images 7.45]. The acrolithic technique is similar to the chryselephantine (gold and ivory) technique used by Phidias for both his sculpture of *Zeus* in the Temple of Zeus in Olympia as well as his statue of *Athene* in the Parthenon. Constantine was sure to have felt honored by the comparison! As a permanent lauratron, it was a lasting symbol of his presence and power.

The bronze sections of the sculpture have disappeared over time, possibly to be repurposed for a military function. The artist's conception of the full statue [image 7.45] is helpful, but even the marble parts that remain tell a remarkable story about how Constantine viewed himself. Today those parts are lined up in the Palazzo of the Musei Capitolini, Rome [image 7.46].



7.45 Reconstruction of the *Colossus*.^{xxi}



7.46 Remains of the *Colossal Statue of Constantine the Great*. 312-315 CE, Palazzo dei Conservatori of the Musei Capitolini.^{xxii}

Which of these three Emperors do you think might have been known as “the visionary”?

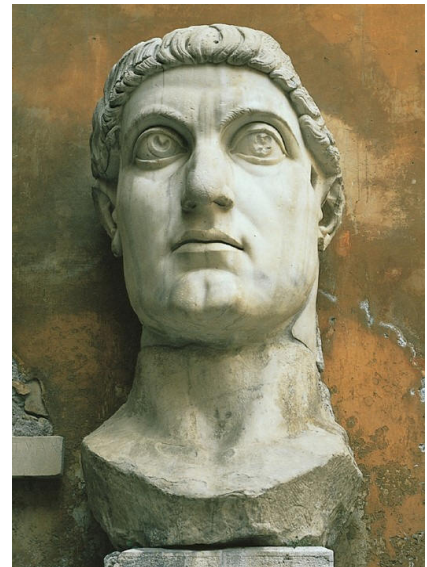
It’s those eyes! It’s that godlike gaze which has experienced the vision of the flaming cross! A tiny fleck of marble had been left in each of Constantine’s eyes to represent the reflection of light in the transparent cornea.



7.47 *Augustus of Prima Porta*. C. 19 BCE, Vatican Museums, Rome, Italy.^{xxiii}



7.48 *Portrait head of Caracalla*. C. 212 CE, Metropolitan Museum of Art.^{xxiv}



7.49 *Colossal statue of Constantine*. 312-315, Musei Capitolini.^{xxv}

Constantine’s portrait bust [image 7.49] depicts him in a rigidly frontal position with static, absolute, immobility. This is an idealistic portrayal: he is relatively youthful with an unlined face and clean shaven. There is a bit of individualism in his small mouth, massive jaw and nose, and carefully arranged hair which was not tousled like Augustus’. Overall, however, his features were executed on a scale reserved for depictions of gods. His head is 8’ 6” high, and those clear-seeing eyes, which are not looking at his subjects but towards the heavens, are one foot high!

Constantine was not allying himself with the dour Tetrarchs of the Roman Empire [image 7.19]^{xxvi}, nor with terrifying, no-nonsense Caracalla [image 7.48] but with the serene Augustus [image 7.47]. Constantine’s abstract and austere expression represented the sense of authoritarian power that was bolstered by his spiritual vision.

This was a man of unimaginable power. His status was similar to that of the pharaoh Ramesses II [image 7.51]. Both were human, but in a colossal way. (The author's friend's hand was resting on Ramesses II's foot [image 7.50]. I couldn't resist the comparison and asked my husband to place his hand on Constantine's foot [image 7.52].)



7.50 Colossal Statue of Ramesses II at Luxor Temple, Egypt.^{xxviii}



7.51 Ramesses II at Luxor Temple, Egypt (c. 1279-1213 BCE).^{xxix}



7.52 Colossal statue of Constantine the Great.^{xxvii}



7.53 Colossal statue of Constantine.^{xxx}

One God—

One Christ—

One Baptism—

One Religion—

One Empire—

One Emperor.

Constantine's "One Way" hand [image 7.53] really spoke of his ambition: do whatever was necessary to achieve Oneness. So, we reflect back to the Edict of Milan. *Why did he legalize the religion? Why deliberately antagonize the pagan sectors of society?* On first glance it would appear he had nothing to gain as only 5-8% of the population was Christian. But, there were four other factors to consider.

1. The number of Christians was growing, despite the persecution (or possibly in contempt of the persecution, in spite of the oppression). Others were impressed with the courage and devotion shown by Christians. Bystanders were impressed when some were willing to stay true to the faith even when faced with torture and death. Indeed, the "Cult of the Martyrs," characterized by violent death, was considered an appropriate initiation into the faith. As Tertullian had proclaimed in the third century, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."
2. Persecution of the Christians was magnifying theological divisions. Instead of discussing the glories of Imperial Rome, the various factions were spending their energy on doctrinal controversy. A few of the items of debate included:
 - *Was Jesus human or divine?*
 - *Did he suffer, bleed, and die? Was he resurrected?*
 - *What was the status of Jesus in relationship to God?*

- *Did he exist prior to his birth?*
 - *Was he born to a Virgin?*
 - *Which literature is authoritative? What about forgeries?*
 - *What should be done about heretics?*
3. Because the church was not *religio licita*, it was not one of the approved traditions of the Empire. So, Christians could not own property. (Nor were they responsible for taxes to be paid on that property.)
 4. The Christian bishops were dedicated, responsible, and trusted by both pagans and the pious. Their fund raising for charitable work had achieved great success. By the year 250 the church in Rome was feeding 1500 poor people and widows each day. During a plague or riot its clergy were the only group to organize food supplies and bury the dead.

Constantine was a pragmatic politician. Christianity was becoming a state within a state. He had a choice of suppressing or integrating the followers of this new religion. By ending the persecution, Christianity could be used as a force for stability.

Use this format to cite this document:

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ⁱⁱ Photo at the Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna by Kristine Betts, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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^{iv} Ibid.

^v Ibid.

^{vi} Dr. Andrew Findley, "Arch of Constantine, Rome," in Smarthistory, November 25, 2015, accessed October 7, 2019, smarthistory.org/arch-of-constantine-rome/

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^{ix} Photos of divine images on the supporting columns of the Arch of Constantine by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2017. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^x Accessed at www.louvre.fr/en/pistes-de-visite/cour-khorsabad

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^{xvi} Ibid.

^{xvii} "The Colossus of Constantine," at <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ancient-art-civilizations/roman/late-empire/v/colossus-of-constantine>

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^{xix} Cited by [brewminate.com/art-and-architecture-of-constantine-and-a-new-rome/](https://www.brewminate.com/art-and-architecture-of-constantine-and-a-new-rome/) from Wikimedia Commons

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^{xxi}

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&url=https%3A%2F%2Fcanvas.harvard.edu%2Fcourses%2F7918%2Ffiles%2F1927949%2Fdownload%3Fverifier%3DWO8SA73sQ16z97jclUL7LgasWeqQSfct5l7fxbon%26wrap%3D1&psig=AOvVaw21v7SROGEj26J7brqzTYSe&ust=1605838080635000&source=images&cd=vfe&ved=2ahUKEwiSqpaUw43tAhWNE80KHUKXBt4Qr4kDegQIARBT>

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^{xxvi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Constantine: Converting the Empire to Christianity. Brotherly Love in Turbulent Times." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxvii} Ibid.

^{xxviii} Ibid.

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CONSTANTINE'S GREAT DECISIONS

Constantine would have loved his enhanced title: "Constantine the Great." He probably received the honorific designation "The Great" from Christian historians long after he had died, but we may be assured he would have felt complimented to be in the company of the Persian Cyrus II the Great, the Greek Alexander the Great, and the Roman general Pompey the Great.

As students of Humanities, we can make use of "The Great" title to recall Constantine's two great decisions, both of which have changed the world. His first important imperial decision was to give Christianity the legal status of "most favored religion." Related to this determination, and in recognition that debts must be paid to powerful gods, Constantine sanctioned the building of the first overtly Christian churches in Rome, Jerusalem and Constantinople. The second great decision was to move the capital of the empire from Rome to a new Rome, known after his death as Constantinople. All factors considered, Constantine clearly took full advantage of his "great" Imperial Authority.

As discussed in the Byzantine Era chapter "The Ambition of Constantine," the fourth century was a pivotal century in the history of Christianity.ⁱ In the early 300s Christianity had been a persecuted religion, practiced by a small minority. Under Constantine's legalization in 313, the status of "most favored religion" gave Christians preferences unmatched by other citizens. Christians enjoyed job bias: no more pagans (or even those who had recently abjured pagan beliefs) would be appointed as magistrates, prefects or provincial governors. Christians received fiscal privileges (including religious tax exemption). They were excused from the duty of sacrifice, as Jews had been ever since the reign of Caesar Augustus. Christians celebrated state-recognized holy days. Their properties, which had been confiscated during Diocletian persecution, were restored and they received sanctioned permission to build churches. As the century progressed Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire under the rule of Theodosius I (392-395). In colloquial jargon, over the course of the century Christianity had gone from "we'll give you to the lions" to "we'll give you a job." The Christian church, now linked with state power, would never be the same.

Constantine's second great decision was clearly an attempt to reunify the Eastern and Western parts of the nation. In 330 he relocated the capital of the empire to a new and great Christian city where he and later Christian emperors could hold court in an environment not contaminated by physical memories of paganism. While Rome had become infamous for scenes of plot and counterplot, treason and conspiracy, in this new Rome there were no temples to pagan gods and no relics of pre-Christian institutions. In his review of possible locations Constantine had considered Naissus (his birthplace), Thessalonica (which had been visited by Paul and was the location of Galerius' headquarters), Troy (immortalized by Homer), and Jerusalem (where he later built the Church of the Holy Sepulcher). Byzantiumⁱⁱ became the favored location because of its geographical location on the Bosphorus, at the juncture of Europe and Asia. Here, both land and sea routes connected the East and the valuable Roman provinces in the West [image 7.54]. It was a superb base from which to guard the Danube River, and was also reasonably closer to Rome's most contentious rival, Persia. Officially the city was known as New Rome; after his death it was referred to as Constantinople (the *polis* of Constantine).ⁱⁱⁱ



7.54 Byzantium was linked to Rome by the Via Egnatia and the Via Appia; two other roads led to the East, toward Asia Minor.^{iv}

The move of the capital inaugurated the era frequently referred to as “medieval.” *Medius* simply means “middle,” and *aeuum* means “age.” The **Medieval Era** was not the “mid-evil” age of darkness and barbarism that twenty-first century gremlins would have us imagine. The era was named by Renaissance scholars who considered everything that happened between the end of the Roman Empire and their own age as “middling,” i.e. unimportant, of little value. As moderns, we have inherited several fundamental aspects of government from early Medieval sources, including an imperial court with diplomatic service, a civilian bureaucracy, the ceremony of coronation and the female exercise of political power.

In recognition of the significance of the 312 Battle of Milvian Bridge as a turning point that had permitted him to become Emperor of Rome, Constantine acknowledged that he owed a debt to the Christian God. As soon as he had consolidated imperial power he began a vast building program with the construction of the first overtly Christian churches in Rome and the Holy Land, most of which were built on the **basilica** plan. The design was similar to his own audience hall in Trier known as the *sedes imperialis* (Imperial seat) of the northern German territories [image 7.55]. The Aula Palatina (palace hall) was strictly a secular building used for various public functions (audience hall, reception hall, law court). It was not used for worship and did not actually become a church until 1856 when King Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia had the hall rebuilt and converted from a civic building into a church—but the basilica styled Throne Room was a precursor to and **prototype** for the earliest Christian churches.



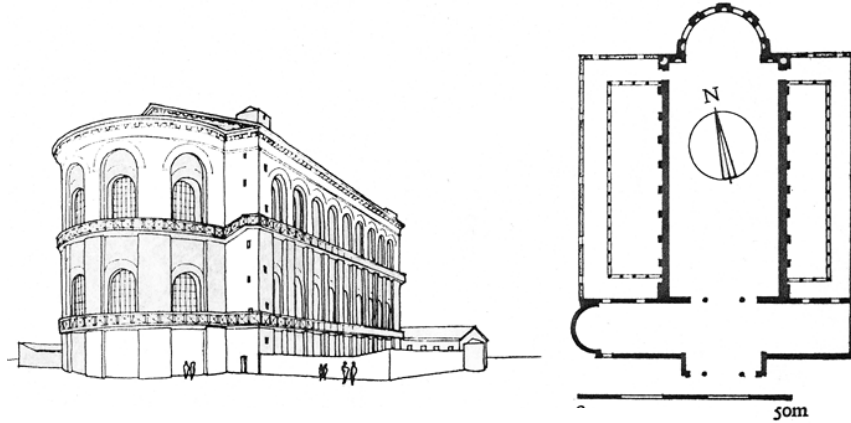
7.55 The Imperial Capital at Trier, Germany. The Basilica of Constantine is also known as Aula Palatina (310).^v

Perhaps the basilica is still standing, some 1700 years after construction, because the exterior walls of the Aula Palatina are 2.7 meters thick, with even wider foundations. Actually, only the exterior walls of the building survived the bombing of World War II. It is said that as fire that engulfed the building the organ pipes (mounted at the west end) cried a truly mournful hymn. While the exterior appears to be just plain red brick from a distance, we can observe that it originally had painted plaster/stucco, with yellow flowers painted around the windows [image 7.56].



7.56 Remnants of the original plaster may be seen around the windows of the Throne Room.^{vi}

The floor plan [image 7.57] gives an indication of how the exterior relates to the interior. We should remember that a cloister and the palace (*palatina*) originally surrounded the building.



7.57 Basilica plan of the Aula Palatina, Trier, Germany. C.310 CE.^{vii}

Roman grandeur was certainly in play here: the exterior measures 221' long and 109' high. The relationship of the interior depth to the interior height was expressed in carefully thought-out **Pythagorean (Greek) proportions** of 2:1. The interior is a double square of 100 x 200 Roman feet.

Several features of the Aula Palatina were typical of the basilica style; others were enhanced at this location for the benefit of the ruling Caesar:

1. The single **entrance at the end** of the building emphasized the building's length. The 221' long audience hall at Trier is the longest room surviving from antiquity.
2. **Clerestory windows** provided interior light. This giant hall appeared to have been formed out of light, which would have suggested the power of the Roman Empire and its Imperial sovereign. At Trier the windows in the rounded apse become smaller toward the middle, also making the room seem longer. Each thin glass pane^{viii} measures 50 x 65 cm.

The Basilica of Old St. Peter's in Rome, because it was financed by Constantine, may have also had glass in its windows, or there may have been stone slabs filled with thinner translucent stone, or the windows may have been left open.

3. **Interior decoration** was certainly not a requirement, but there was plenty of available wall space for frescoes or mosaics and many churches, not much newer than this, will be decorated. At Aula Palatina you must use your imagination to visualize how the light originally reflected on golden mosaics, painted stucco, sculpted busts and the multi-colored marbles lining the floor and walls: white from Carrara, black from Belgium, yellow from Tunisia, green from Greece and purple porphyry from Egypt. Scars left from the removal of those marble panels may still be seen, especially on the west wall, in image 7.58. The floor was black and white.
4. A **flat wooden-truss ceiling**. The ceiling of the Throne Room had an additional optical illusion to make the already large room appear even more intimidating: the flat ceiling was **coffered** (recessed, like stepped pyramids or ziggurats) to make the room appear higher.
5. A huge **interior space**, without internal supports. This allowed for stately **processions** toward the designated focal point, the **apse**.^{ix} During an audience, according to the church father Athanasius, the Emperor sat in the apse under the **triumphal arch** and behind a **curtain** which stretched in front of the throne. Established in divine majesty upon the Seat of Justice (*sedes iustitiae*) on the **bema** (throne on the raised area) [image 7.59], with his feet on a **footstool**, the Imperial ruler received homage, and as law incarnate, he dispensed justice. The story is told that after a petitioner's name had been announced, the subject was allowed to approach the throne, and prostrate^x himself. He had to be accompanied by a person of good reputation; if an assassination were attempted, the guarantor was to be quickly executed. Upon leaving, the petitioner was not permitted to turn his back on the sovereign; he had to shuffle backwards, seemingly endlessly, out of the room.



7.58 The Imperial audience hall in the Aula Palatina.^{xi}

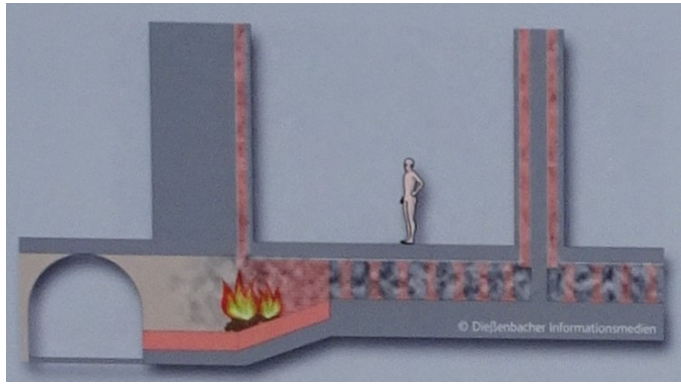


7.59 The bema (raised apse) in the Aula Palatina.^{xii}

Only the apse of the Aula Palatina was heated. For the benefit of the Imperial ruler, or representative, a hypocaust system (similar to that in the Roman baths) was installed under the floor [images 7.60 and 7.61].



7.60 Bricked-up remnant of ancient heating system (*praefurnium*), seen on the building exterior.^{xiv}

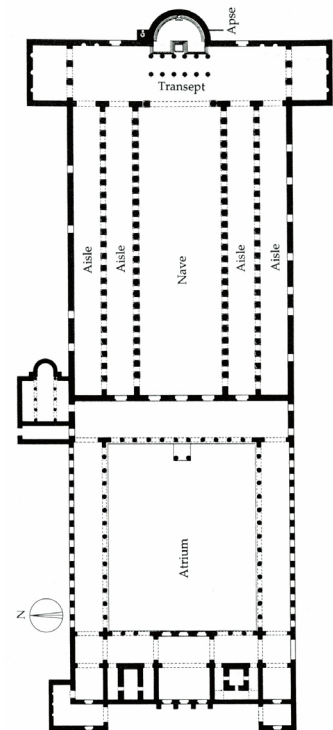


7.61 Hypocaust system.^{xiii} Rooms were heated by means of a floor heating system. The boiler room (with a boiler) was usually in the cellar or on the ground floor of the building to be heated and was only accessible to the staff from the outside. Hot gasses flowed through channels in the cavities under the floor. The cavity consisted of many small brick pillars that were placed at regular intervals. The hot gasses continued to flow up along the walls through hollow bricks, heating them in the process and were vented to the open air through chimneys.

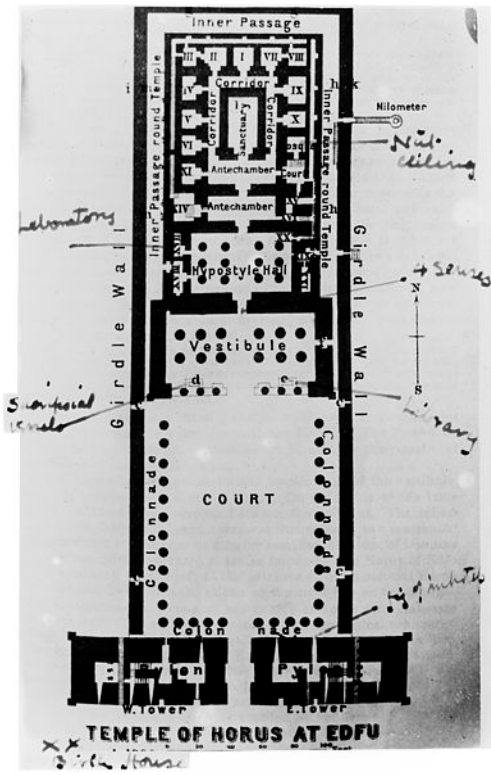
While the Aula Palatina was not built as a church, the **basilica**, as a **prototype**, had several advantages:

1. It was not associated with any pagan cults.
2. Every proper Roman town had an administrative basilica, so examples of the building style were plentiful.
3. It was relatively quick and easy to build, unlike central plan domed and vaulted elevations.
4. It could be readily adapted to the materials and resources locally available as well as to the anticipated size of the congregation.
5. The focus was clearly inward: impressive, dignified, and Roman [image 7.58].

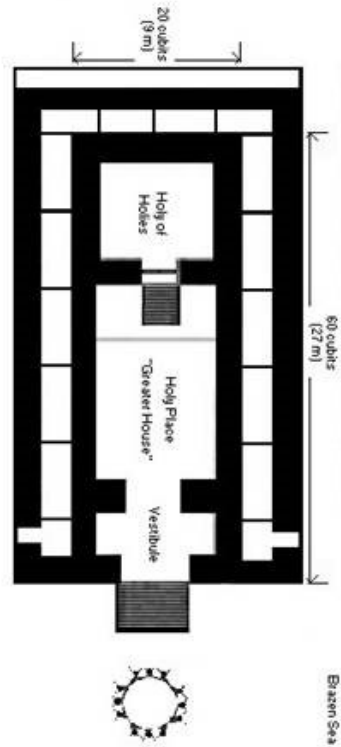
The basilica plan, with a straight central axis directed toward the East [image 7.62], was easily adapted from recognized building plans [images 7.63-7.66] and then enhanced with new meaning.^{xv} Three general zones may be identified. The courtyard, portico or *atrium* came to represent this earthly world; it became known as the **narthex**. The main hall came to represent the Kingdom of God; it became known as the **nave**. The Holy of Holies came to represent heaven; it became known as the **sanctuary**.^{xvi}



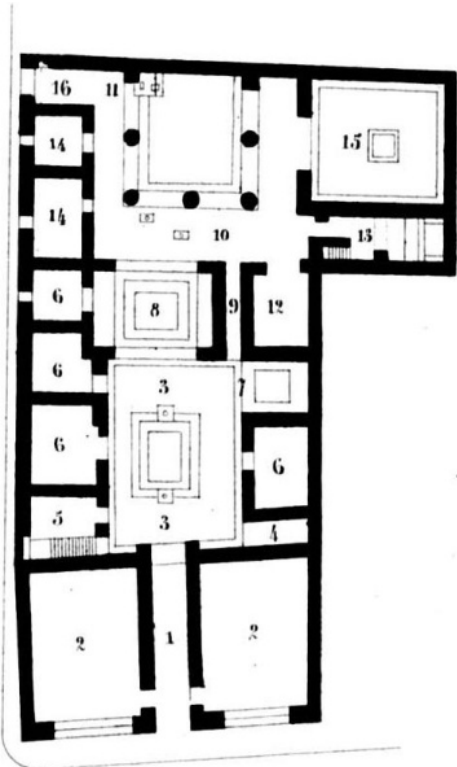
7.62 Plan of St. Peter's, Rome (324-340).^{xvii}



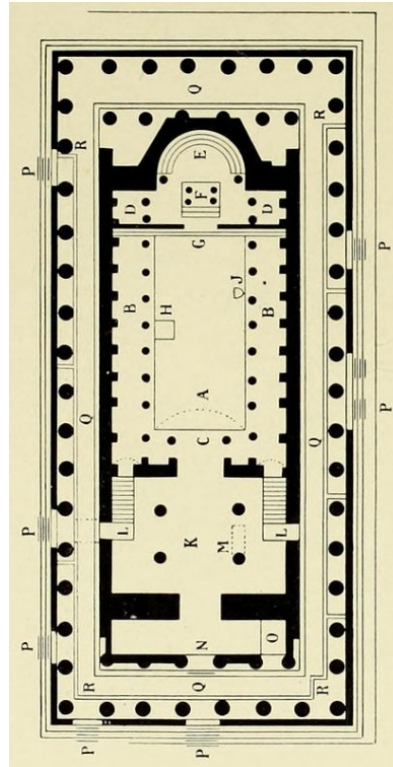
7.63 Plan of the Temple of Horus at Edfu, Egypt.^{xviii}



7.64 Plan of Solomon's Temple, Jerusalem (United Kingdom of Israel and Judah). Similar layout to the portable tent of the Tabernacle.^{xix}

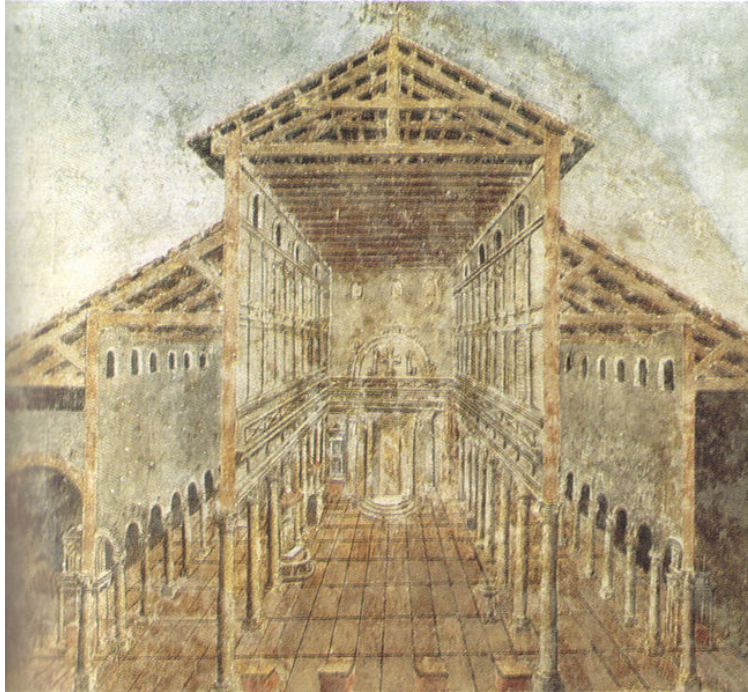


7.65 Plan of the House of the Tragic Poet, Pompeii.^{xx}



7.66 Mid-6th century conversion by Emperor Justinian of Parthenon to the Byzantine Church of the Mother of God.^{xxi}

As one approached the **narthex** on the west end of the church between the atrium and the nave one felt the stimulation of transition. In the **atrium** people might talk excitedly with their friends. Some individuals strolled in the quadrangular **ambulatory** (covered walkway) around the perimeter. In the atrium one could see the impluvium (in a Roman house, the impluvium was the central trough for rainwater) which had become the **baptistry** (for ritual washing). In an action similar to passing through the Propyleaum on the Acropolis in Athens, the narthex provided a clear separation between the temporal and spiritual worlds.



7.67 Giovanni Battista Ricci da Novara. *North-South Section of Old S. Peter's*, 1616. Fresco showing Constantine's Old St. Peter's Basilica as it looked in the 4th century.^{xxii}

It is our privilege to do things the ancients never could do. In the above image we can stand in the narthex and look into the body of the church, the **nave**, through all five doors simultaneously [image.67]. The basilica known as Old St. Peter's was built for a large congregation, some 14,000 standing individuals. Complimenting the single entrance on the end of the building, the five extended **aisles** emphasized longitudinal space. The advancing rhythm of the **colonnade** suggested St. Augustine's dictum that humans should "progress from blindness to understanding." Just as the petitioner did before Constantine's throne, after processing down the **aisle** toward the altar, the supplicant was required to prostrate him- or herself before the throne. He/she would then recess back out of the church, though it is not known if the penitent had to shuffle backwards as had been necessary in the recession from the throne of Emperor Constantine. **Procession, prostration, recession**—all were necessary protocols.

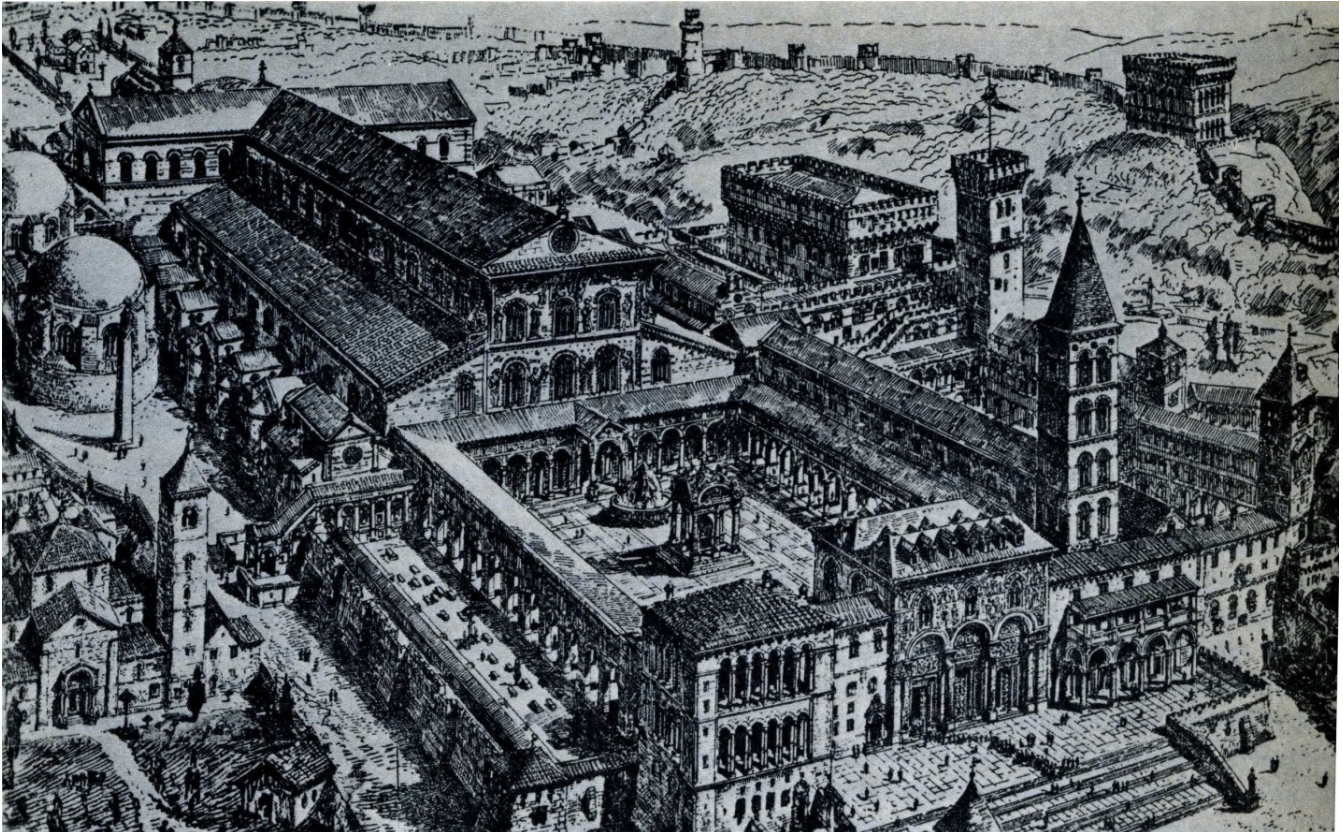
The body of the basilica was the **nave**, a word derived from the Latin word for "ship." From *navis* we get the words "naval" meaning "ships," "navigate" "to set sail," and "navel" meaning "hub." Like Noah's ark, the nave suggested a place of refuge from the chaos of churning waters, and salvation within the body of Christ. A fourth century prayer by St. Augustine is an illustrative exemplar of the significance of the nave:

Blessed are all thy saints who have traveled over the tempestuous sea of mortality and have at last made the desired port of peace and felicity. Oh, cast a gracious eye upon us who are still on our dangerous voyage. Remember and succor us in our distress, and think upon them that lie exposed to the rough storms of troubles and temptations. Grant O Lord, that we may bring our vessel safe to shore, unto our desired haven.^{xxiii}

The **transept** is a distinctive Christian element which was added between the nave and the sanctuary. Projecting out at right angles from the nave, these "arms," not coincidentally, reminded the worshipper of Christ's arms on the cross. Practically speaking, the transept was an area in which dignitaries may be present in the church without "contamination" from plebian folk. In some churches, the elite had a separate entrance into the church through the transept.

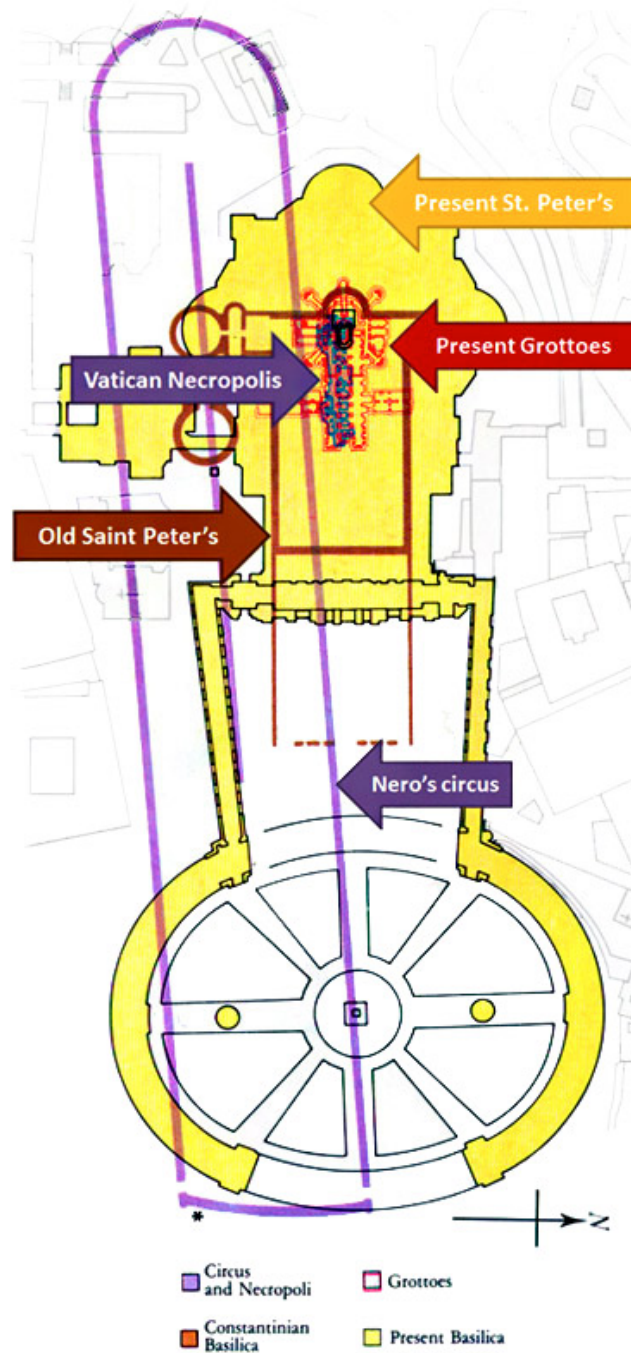
The area which had been the Holy of Holies in the Jewish temple continued to hold the **liturgical focus**. The **sanctuary** (area surrounding the altar) marked the area separating the celebrant (priest) from the communicant (worshipper). The space was identified by a **triumphal arch**, now signifying the victorious entry of Christ into Jerusalem and the Christian's entry into heaven. The focal point was the **apse**, and in some future Romanesque churches the apse will be tilted, reminding parishioners of Christ's leaning head on the cross. The most significant addition to the sanctuary, and the central focus for the liturgy, was the **bema**, a raised platform upon which was placed a wood or stone **altar** for the celebration of the **Eucharist**. Additionally, men could read scripture and preach from this platform.

One can easily see the basilica plan in Rome at the old St. Peter's Basilica (aka St. Peter's in the Vatican) and at the basilica of St. Paul's Outside the Walls.



7.68 H.W. Brewer (1836-1903). *A View of Old St. Peter's*, 1891. Reconstruction view as it looked between 1475 and 1483.^{xxiv}

Unfortunately for us, the original St. Peter's basilica was demolished in stages between 1505 and 1613 to make way for a new structure. After all, by the early sixteenth century the building was 1200 years old and badly in need of renovation and enlargement. Additionally, Renaissance artists Donato Bramante, Antonio da Sangallo, Raphael and Fra Giocondo, Michelangelo, Giacomo della Porta, Carlo Maderno and Gian Lorenzo Bernini needed an outlet for their creative talents. We call this [image 7.68] "Old St. Peter's" because it was completely replaced by the new building. During our visit to Constantine's basilica we will be dependent on diagrams and etchings.



7.69 Overlap of Circus of Nero, Pagan cemetery, Constantine's basilica and St. Peter's today.^{xxv}

The name for the administrative center of the papacy, the Vatican, was derived from *Vaticinor*, the Etruscan word for a "hill of foretelling or prophecy." That certainly suggests that this hill is an auspicious location, and indeed, it has several overlapping layers of history [image 7.69]. Constantine's basilica was built over the leveled Temple of Cybele, which was the traditional site of Saint Peter's martyrdom in 67 CE. St. Peter would have been buried in the necropolis, which is identified in the very center as the Vatican Necropolis. The Circus of Gaius and Nero, where Nero put Christians to death in the spectacular persecution that followed the fires of 64 CE, has the appearance of a racetrack. It is outlined in purple. The brown rectangular form marks the Basilica of Constantine, begun between 320 and 327 (and finished about 30 years later), which was intentionally aligned with the four cardinal points. The yellow Greek cross and keyhole shaped courtyard identifies the location of the current basilica, which is still over the tomb of St. Peter.



7.70 San Paolo Fuori le Mura, Rome, Italy. Aerial view.^{xxvi}

The basilica of *St. Paul's Outside the Walls* was, as the name implies, built over the tomb of the Apostle Paul outside the old city walls of Rome [Images 7.70-7.73]. About two kilometers from the Aurelian walls, it is a very walk-able distance from the heart of city. The church was founded by Constantine in 324. Though damaged by fire in 1823, it was renovated to the original plans, which had been drawn in imitation of St. Peter's Basilica.

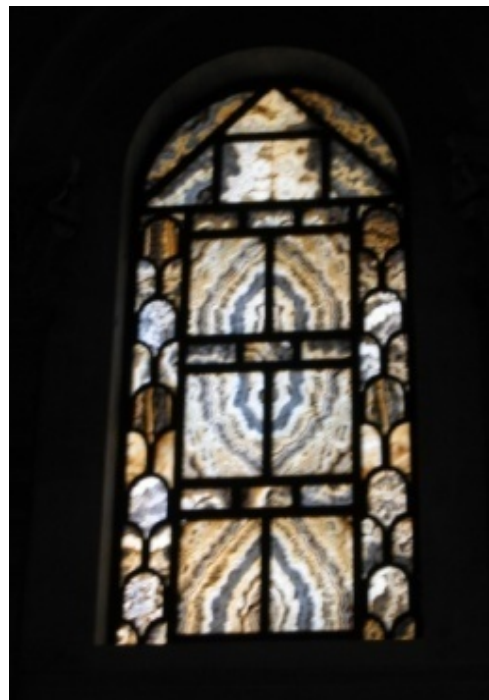


7.72 St. Paul's interior.^{xxviii}



7.71 Giovanni Battista Piranesi. *Basilica of S. Paolo fuori delle Mura*. 1750-1778 etching, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia.^{xxvii}

When one compares Piranesi's 1750-1758 etching (made 73 years before the fire) [image 7.71] to the rebuilt basilica [image 7.72], the essential conventions of a basilica church may be readily identified. The replacement translucent alabaster windows [image 7.73] certainly added a finishing flourish to the entire project.



7.73 Today's windows are made of translucent alabaster.^{xxix}

A MUSICAL REACTION TO THE "GREAT" DECISION

In future essays we will be studying music from the time of Constantine and the establishment of Christian communities. At this moment, however, the contemporary dance tune *Istanbul, not Constantinople* is not inappropriate. It's a bit corny, but it fits the theme, and is a fun connection of Constantinople and Istanbul.

Though popularized by They Might Be Giants, this version by the Trevor Horn Orchestra (recorded for the movie *Mona Lisa Smile*), is without a cartoon accompaniment so it is easier to be attentive to the elements of music.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNUsOaB5V2c>

All elements of music may be examined, but the driving 2/4 **meter** is especially significant. The rapidly recurring downbeat drives the dance because there is no time for the heart to rest. Even "One Way" Constantine would have appreciated the "push" of this music.

Use this format to cite this document:

Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Constantine Transition. Constantine's Great Decisions." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, The Ambition of Constantine." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱⁱ Byzantium had been named in 667 BCE for the Greek colonizer Byzas. The inhabitants and rulers of this Empire did not call themselves Byzantines, but rather referred to themselves as Romans. Their empire, after all, was a continuation of the Roman state. Modern historians call it the Byzantine Empire in order to distinguish it from the Roman Empire that dominated the Mediterranean world from the first through fifth centuries.

ⁱⁱⁱ After 1453 Constantinople was known as Istanbul (the city of the Turks). Appropriately, it is in modern-day Turkey.

^{iv} By Eric Gaba (Sting - fr:Sting) - Own work;For the source of data and the modern name of the cities, see the discussion page, CC BY-SA 2.5. On public domain at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=856541>

^v Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Trier_-_Aula_Palatina.JPG

^{vi} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{vii} http://projects.mcah.columbia.edu/medieval-architecture/htm/related/ma_trier_02.htm

^{viii} According to Pfarrer Guido Hepke, Vorsitzender des Kirchenvorstandes, in a letter dated to this author on August 07, 2018, archaeologists found shards of the original glass in the rubble from the destruction in World War II. Replacement windows were handmade in the late third century "Romain" technique.

^{ix} Be careful with your pronunciation here. The Egyptian *asp* was a cobra, which was a symbol of divinity. The bite of the asp caused Cleopatra's suicide. A Texas *asp* is stinging caterpillar. We want neither of these here!

^x It had also been necessary to prostrate oneself when approaching Alexander the Great.

^{xi} Photo by Hannah Swithinbank CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) by public domain on www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial-americas/medieval-europe-islamic-world/a/santa-sabina.

^{xii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xiii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, in Trier, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xiv} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xv} If topographic circumstances prohibited an east-facing axis, the altar would still point to the "Liturgical East."

^{xvi} In post-Reformation congregations, the entire church interior is called the sanctuary.

^{xvii} Public domain at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Alfarano_map.jpg

^{xviii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plan_of_the_Temple_of_Horus_at_Edfu,_Egypt_Wellcome_M0002875.jpg

^{xix} Public domain at <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/35/SolomonsTemple.png>

^{xx} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeii_Region_VI_Insula_8_House_3_plan_01.jpg

^{xxi} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parthenon_byzantine_church,_Adolf_Michaelis_\(1835-1910\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Parthenon_byzantine_church,_Adolf_Michaelis_(1835-1910).jpg)

^{xxii} Public domain at

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Affresco_dell%27aspetto_antico_della_basilica_costantiniana_di_san_pietro_nel_IV_secolo.jpg

^{xxiii} Potts, J. Manning. *Prayers of the Early Church*. Nashville: The Upper Room, 1953.

^{xxiv} Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker, "Saint Peter's Basilica," in Smarthistory, August 9, 2015, accessed September 24, 2019, smarthistory.org/st-peters-basilica.

^{xxv} Cited from Microsoft Online Images by jfridgley.com/neros-stadia/

^{xxvi} Photo by Archivio Plurigraf. Published in *the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Wall*. Rome, Pontifical Administration of the Patriarchal Basilica of Saint Paul, 2003.

^{xxvii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Piranesi-16012.jpg

^{xxviii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2006. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxix} *Ibid.*

CHRIST AS THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Before the legalization of the faith, early Christians had neither sacred images nor sacred places. Having developed from the Jewish tradition, both graven images and religious architecture were prohibited. As for idols, the prohibition from the Ten Commandments was unequivocal: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything” (Exodus 20:4, KJV). Initially, neither was specialized architecture important. The tabernacle was a portable place of worship (a two-room tent) as the people were traveling in the Wilderness. Christians, identifying themselves as the spiritual protégé of the Israelites, were in full agreement about the unimportance of religious structures. According to Acts 17:24: “God that made the world and all things therein...dwelleth not in temples made with hands” (KJV).

Furthermore, early converts to the faith were from the lower and middle class. They did not have the money for the luxury of art. Besides, decorative arts were considered too worldly, and in an even harsher understanding, worldly arts were pagan. They cared little for the culture of their own society; by converting to Christianity they were trying to escape the culture of this “known world.” Their meeting places were not in churches, but in private homes, at grave sites of loved ones, or outdoors.

After persecution ceased upper-class individuals began to be converted to the movement and images became more prevalent. Furthermore it was argued that the prohibition was not absolute since, only five chapters after the commandment that prohibits images (Exodus 20: 4), God gave instructions on how to make three-dimensional representations of the Cherubim for the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:18-20). Used in a **didactic** manner, Christian art could give instruction and illustrate Christ’s humanity: that he was the image of God the Father.

In an act of **syncretism**, many inoffensive and ambiguous pagan images were appropriated by Christians, to be understood in a specifically Christian way. The image of the Good Shepherd was not an original Christian convention. We have already studied three possible shepherding predecessors. The Amorite leader Hammurabi was known as “the good shepherd who cared for his flock” [image 7.74]. As an intermediary between Shamash (the incorruptible god of truth and justice) and humankind, Hammurabi was the earthly law enforcer, and if offended he could forgive in the name of Shamash. Tutankhamen [image 7.75] can serve as a typical Egyptian pharaoh. With his powerful crook and flail, the pharaoh was known as one who cared for his people. Holding the tools of farming and shepherding, he also represented fertility and rebirth, death and resurrection. You may not have studied the image known as *Moschophoros* (“calf-bearer”), but likely you recognize the Archaic smile of this *kouros* [image 7.76]. *Moschophoros* was perhaps bringing a calf for sacrifice at a temple, or he was protecting the animal from violence.



7.74 Stele declaring the *Code of Hammurabi*. C.1760 BCE. Louvre Museum, Paris, France.ⁱ



7.75 *Second coffin of King Tutankhamen*. 14th century BCE, Cairo Museum, Egypt.ⁱⁱ



7.76 *Moschophoros* (Calf-bearer). 560 BCE from the Acropolis, Acropolis Museum, Athens.ⁱⁱⁱ

The care of the Good Shepherd was particularly relevant at the time of death. Both Jews and Christians understood the significance of the shepherd in the light of Psalm 23: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters” (KJV). Images 7.77 and 7.78 both depict Christ in an Arcadian setting with sheep, birds and trees.



7.77 Funerary Stele originally on the floor of the Ursiana Basilica, Ravenna. 200-210 CE, Ravenna Archaeological Museum.^{iv}



7.78 Unidentified and undated funerary slab unearthed during archaeological digs as the modern city of Rome expanded. Epigraphic Museum, Museo Nazionale Romano, Baths of Diocletian, Rome.^v

There are significant changes when we compare the “more sophisticated” Christian sculpture of the *Good Shepherd* [image 7.80]. The shepherd stands with contrapposto weight-shift which is reminiscent of the Classical Greek *Doryphorus* [image 7.79]. The shepherd’s face is youthful and reminds us of the Hellenistic *Apollo Belvedere* [image 7.81]. The space is open; he is animated and he turns to be engaged with something unseen by us. Significantly, he is clothed, which would have been especially appreciated by Christians. A specific Biblical reference from John 10:11 was often attached to this depiction: “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep” (KJV).



7.79 *Doryphorus*. 20–50 BCE, Minneapolis Institute of Art.^{vi}



7.80 *Good Shepherd* carrying a lamb. C. 300-350 CE, Catacombs of Domitilla, Vatican Museums. Marble, 39 3/8".^{viii}

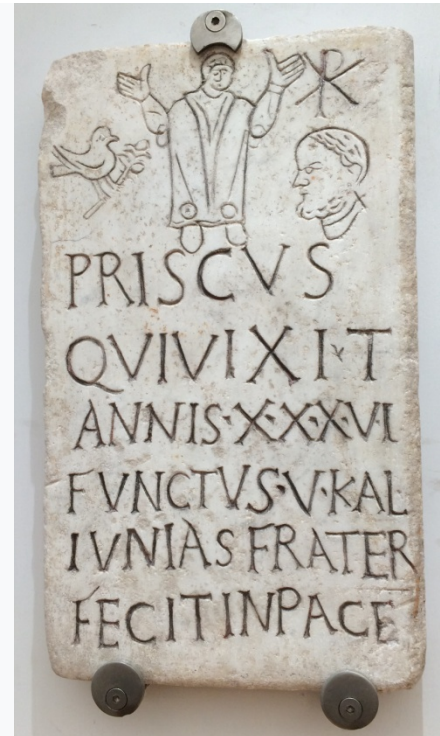


7.81 *Apollo Belvedere*. 140-130 BCE, Vatican Museums.^{vii}

While we're in Rome, let's examine two more funerary slabs [images 7.82 and 7.83]. These feature three other popular symbols. Both display the ✠ (*Chi-Rho*) monogram (aka Cristogram), which the Emperor Constantine had inscribed on the shields of the men fighting the Battle at Milvian Bridge.^{ix} Both depict the deceased standing in the *orant* position, the Greek position of prayer in which the arms are uplifted in supplication.^x And both have a bird, presumably a dove holding an olive branch of peace. The text on the plaque in image 7.83 commemorates the life of Priscus, who died at age 36. The text closes with the Christian statement "*fecit in pace*" ("be/rest in peace").



7.82 Unidentified and undated funerary slab unearthed during archaeological digs as the expanded.^{xi}



7.83 Dedication in modern city of Rome memory of a brother, Priscus. Late 4th century CE.^{xii}

In Jewish burial practices, the body laid in the tomb for about a year and then the bones were gathered up and redeposited with others from the family or clan in a pit or cavity, a "charnel pile" within the burial chamber. This tradition was a response to the Genesis 49:29 desire "to be gathered with my fathers." Around Jerusalem, in the first century CE, bones were collected in *ossuaries* (bone boxes made of soft limestone or chalk, long enough to hold the femur and other large bones).

Roman law forbade burial within the city walls. Burials took place in the *necropoli* (cities of the dead) which lined the roads leading away from the towns. In the catacombs *arcosolia* (indented shelves) were cut into the walls of the chamber. The ossuary, which may have been decorated with geometric or floral motifs, was placed on one of these shelves. Romans allowed private group cemeteries, but Christians felt a need for their burial to be distinguished from pagan burials. Quoting Tertullian (Roman theologian and Christian apologist from Carthage, 160-230 CE), "It is permissible to live with the pagans, but not to die with them."

After Rome had conquered Egypt in the second century CE burial of the intact body became more popular than cremation. As a result, the catacombs became not a necropolis (city of the dead) but a *coemeterium* (land of sleeping men) [image 7.84]. Cut into the *tufa* (volcanic ash), the coemeterium could be as many as seven levels deep, each level lined with *loculi* (rectangular niches for 2-3 bodies) which were closed with *tegula* (a stone slab sealed with cement hopefully prevented the stink of putrefaction from getting out).



7.84 *Catacombs of San Sebastiano*. 2nd to 5th centuries, Rome, Italy. ^{xiii}

Of course images of the Good Shepherd [images 7.85 and 7.86] continued to be popular. As a funerary memorial, this shepherd offered salvation, not money, or property, or service to the state. The Good Shepherd appealed to a higher power; it denied the value of the Emperor. It was probably just as well that burials were regarded in Roman law as sacrosanct, so that even during periods of persecution Christian tombs were left largely unscathed, attracting little notice from Roman authorities.



7.85 *Christ as the Good Shepherd*. C.225 CE fresco in the catacombs of Priscilla, Rome, Italy. ^{xiv}



7.86 *Jesus as the Good Shepherd* on the ceiling of the St. Callisto catacomb. Mid- 3rd century fresco, Rome, Italy. ^{xv}

When this course visited Rome we admired mosaics on the floors and frescoes on the ceilings of Roman homes. This fresco [image 7.87], on the ceiling of a luxury villa house in the harbor city of Ostia, is particularly impressive. The spoked-wheel design, with a center oculus, resembles a personal Pantheon. The house dates from the early 3rd century CE and was probably enjoyed as a summer retreat from the heat of the city. In my imagination I can hear one of his slaves exclaiming, “My master has the most fabulous design painted on the ceiling of his house! We could do a similar design, celebrating the Good Shepherd and the stories he told.”



7.87 *House of the Painted Vaults*. Early 3rd century CE, Room IV, Ostia, Italy.^{xvi}



7.88 *Christ as the Good Shepherd* in the Catacomb of Sts. Peter and Marcellinus. Early 4th century, Rome.^{xvii}

Today we identify the Roman catacomb in image 7.88 as the Catacomb of Sts. Peter and Marcellinus. The spoked-wheel design of the vault mural is in the *cubicula*, a small room off the long gallery in which families and small groups might gather. Sarcophagi were placed around the room. Crowning the dome of heaven is Christ as the Good Shepherd. He is surrounded by sheep and holds a lamp over his shoulder. Another symbol which was gaining in popularity was the cross, which here reaches out in four directions toward the semicircles in which are depicted the story of Jonah. Chapters 1 and 2 in the Book of Jonah told the story of God causing Jonah to be thrown overboard in a storm, swallowed by a whale and later released, repentant and unscathed after three days in the “belly of the whale.” In the semicircle on the left, Jonah is being cast from his ship. In the right semicircle, he emerges from the whale. In the lower semicircle he is safe on dry land and reclining on a gourd vine in paradise. Matthew 12:39-40 relates the interpretation of this story as a parable about Jesus’ death and resurrection. The intermediate figures have their arms raised in the *orant* position of prayer.



7.89 Fresco in the *Catacombs of Priscilla*. C. 250 CE, Rome, Italy .^{xviii}

The *orant* prayer position was a development from the Greek posture of prayer. In Christian art the outstretched arms became a symbol of the faithful dead. In the a fifth century Greek chapel north of Rome, known as the Catacombs of Priscilla, is a lunette known as the *Crypt of the Veiled Lady*. Flanking the Veiled Lady on the left is an image of a teacher/philosopher with his pupils. On the right a woman holds a child on her lap. In the center is the figure we call *Donna Velata*, the “veiled lady” [image 7.89]. *But is the figure male or female?* It is not recognizable. Even the setting gives no clues about the figure’s identity. All we really know about *Donna Velata* is to be witnessed in the deep-set eyes which anticipate the Byzantine icon, and that he or she stands in the *orant* position, the Greek position of prayer.^{xix}

A MUSICAL REACTION TO THE CATACOMBS

If you can, picture yourself standing beside a deceased loved one, with your family members, inside the catacombs, five, or six or even seven levels beneath the ground. You would probably be quick to remark that it is dark in here, and humid, and smelly, and mysterious. *What could you place on the ledge of that nearby niche that would overcome the darkness and dampness? Candles. How to combat the smell? Flowers and incense. And the mystery? Sing, sing the comforting words of the Psalms.*

Greek music was born amidst the patter of dancer's feet, on an open stage in showers of sunlight. Christian music was born in subterranean vaults. Psalms were muttered and mumbled, around corners and down corridors, by untrained voices, rather than sung. They did not use long-drawn out notes, as practiced singers would have done, but heartfelt lingering over their loved words, with sighs of earnest emotion.

Catacomb burials were abandoned in the fifth century. With the tradition forgotten, the catacombs were granted better preservation than above-ground cemeteries. But they were still respected as sacred space, and with the legalization of Christianity funerary basilicas were built directly above or adjacent to the cemetery (i.e. St. Peter's Basilica and St. Paul's Outside the Walls, both in Rome). Or the relics were moved to the city and reburied under altars or in crypts of the newly consecrated churches (Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna). And in today's modern church, *is not a communion table about the same dimensions as a sarcophagus? And are not flowers and candles placed on that table? And what is incense if not a mystery? It is first a solid, and then, poof, it is a nothing.*

While we have specimens and theories about early music, we know very little about the actual music. Secular music was usually improvised. Performers had neither the knowledge required to commit their inspiration to paper, nor any desire to make their creation available to possible rivals. We do know about the beginnings of sacred music, because music had a utilitarian function: to assist the worshipers to pray together.

The Greeks and the Romans displayed their gods in statuary and paintings. But the one God of the Hebrews commanded that He remain invisible, that no graven images limit the omnipresence of God. So, Jews honored God with forms that were outside the ordinary interchange between humans: music and poetry.

The Book of Psalms had legitimized the use of music in acts of worship. Timbrels, strings, pipes and cymbals are mentioned, and dance could be used to glorify God. *But dance?* That reminded Christians of the sensualities of pagan rituals. The strong patterned beat suggested the obscenities of the stage and could, indeed, be the devil's playground. Neither would Christians sanction any images of naked divinities; nude athletics as well as public bathing were also forbidden. Christians would later develop an emphasis on chastity and celibacy.

And instruments? They, too, will be considered dangerous. The thirteenth-century theologian Thomas of Aquinas presented a clear argument for "a cappella" ("only vocal") music: "The bodily shape of an instrument keeps the mind too busy, introducing a carnal pleasure."^{xx}

Suggested related music from this time includes the **Ambrosian Chant** "Aeterne Rerum Conditor."

Aeterne Rerum Conditor (HYMN OF ST. AMBROSE)
(c. 340-397)

Ae - ter - ne re - rum Con - di - tor, No - ctem di - em que qui - re - gis,
Et - tern - po - rum das tem - po - ra. Ut al - le - ves fa - sti - di - um

In Latin this music is known as "**musica plana**" or "**cantus planus.**" In English it is known as **Plainchant** or **Plainsong**. It is based upon Byzantine (i.e. Greek/Pythagorean) modes of music and is similar to the music of Jewish worship. The music is simple, serene and balanced, with a feeling of poignant ethos. Plainchant is also known as an "Ambrosian" chant (a title which does not refer to its sugary sweetness), in tribute to St. Ambrose (340-d. Trier, 397) who was the bishop of Milan when Christianity was becoming the religion of the Roman Empire. It was Ambrose who instructed and baptized Saint Augustine. St. Augustine is credited with the statement, famous to choristers, "One who sings once prays twice."

Significant elements: **Melody** line is simple. A single line proceeds stepwise, rising and falling with the words. The melody is also strophic: each line (or stanza) is sung to the same music.

Rhythm (syllabic). Each syllable is a single note. The words from the Latin Bible are easy to sing. A contemporary example of syllabic rhythm, in English, is “My Country ‘tis of Thee.” The words are set to a triple rhythm of iambic tetrameter (short-long, etc.). By emphasizing three-ness, Ambrose was battling Arian heresy. His goal was to use congregational performance as a weapon against heresy.

Of no creative importance: Harmony (monophony), Pitch, Meter, Tempo, Dynamics, Instruments

Try reciting a translation of this hymn in **iambic tetrameter**.

Iambic (from Greek metrical foot: one short syllable followed by one long syllable)

Tetrameter (from Greek “four meter:” repeat the “foot” four times)

short-long, short-long, short-long, short-long

To count the hymn in 3s (as Ambrose would have emphasized), the pickup starts on “3” and the emphasized syllable starts on “1.” Count it out. Surprisingly, it works!

O Splendor of God’s glory bright,
 3 1 23 1 23 1 23 1

O Thou who bringest light from light,
 O Light of light, light’s living spring,
 O Day, all days illuminating!

Gregorian Chant will not develop until 590-604 under Pope Gregory the Great.

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ⁱ Public domain at www.ancient.eu/image/541/hammurabi-and-shamash/

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^{viii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marble_statue_of_The_Good_Shepherd_from_the_Catacombs_of_Domitilla_full,_Vatican_Museums.jpg

^{ix} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Constantine: Chapter 7, The Ambition of Constantine.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^x See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, Anticipating Byzantine Culture.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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^{xiv} Public domain at www.ancient.eu/image/10352/the-good-shepherd-catacombs-of-priscilla/

^{xv} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Good_shepherd_02b.jpg

^{xvi} Cited brewminate.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Ostia39.jpg on Wikimedia Commons

^{xvii} Good Shepherd, Orants, and the Story of Jonah; cruciform vault mural from the Catacomb of SS. Pietro e Marcellino, Rome. 4th century. www.courses.psu.edu/art_h/art_h111_bel101/images/out4/shepherd.jpg

^{xviii} Public domain at www.ancient.eu/image/10353/the-cubiculum-of-the-veiled-woman/

^{xix} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Constantine: Converting the Empire to Christianity. Anticipating Byzantine Culture.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xx} Thomas of Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, “Against Musical Instruments”.

RELICS OF FAITH

The Nicene Creed

Before the days of the Emperor Constantine, the Roman government didn't care about faith-based religion. Ritual was important; it was necessary to honor the gods who could assist and protect you, who could influence the outcome of any process that was risky, uncertain or incomprehensible. Proper performance was essential. With proper ritual the gods could grant health and prosperity. In contrast to pagan religions, Christianity was a religion of belief, not of cultic ritual. Its controlling principle, how to be right with God, was set with the belief in Jesus as God and in the sacrifice of his life.

While Constantine was a pragmatic politician, using whatever means available to achieve a stable empire, Jesus was non-political. As demonstrated in the *Sermon on the Mount* he was a pacifist and condemned worldly authority. But the Emperor ruled over an empire with a strong military tradition. Theologians had to rethink Christ's previous and uncompromising hostility toward warfare of all sorts. If Christianity was going to work in a state ruled by a monarchy, it would have to change.

To solidify his power, in 325 Constantine called the First Ecumenicalⁱ Council at Nicaea (near the Eastern Imperial residence at Nicomedia; modern Iznik, Turkey) to formalize Christian belief about the divinity of Jesus. Giving his active support to Trinitarian Christianity, the emperor covered all travel and accommodation expenses and presided over the Council. Foremost among the Council's concerns were the heretical Arians, who were understood as "pagan" because they denied the divinity of Jesus and rejected the concept of the Trinity.

"Trinitarian Christianity" accentuated all possible opportunities to promote the three-part nature of God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Trinitarian practices were expressed in a standardized **creed**, authoritative **scripture**, and approved **hymns**, performed to a rhythm of "3." Additionally, there were to be no more than three sacred languages (Greek, Latin and Hebrew).

Jesus' Jewish heritage had established a precedent for both a creed and a sacred text. The Jewish "shema" was recognized as the fundamental expression of Jewish belief: "Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One." Jesus' sacred text was the Torah, the law of God as revealed to Moses and recorded in the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures (the Pentateuch). Had Jesus lived longer perhaps he, himself, would have been the authority, the scripture, but he didn't write anything.

It was at this Council that the creed, to be known as the Nicene Creed was written. The statement, as used todayⁱⁱ:

NICENE CREED, 325

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only-Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

Notice that the Nicene Creed's essential definition of the divine was in three parts: God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit, which were unified into one statement of belief. The fourth section refers to the believer. The statement pledges commitment to additional miraculous phenomena, including:

- God and Jesus are "consubstantial" (made from one divine substance)
- Jesus was born of a virgin
- Jesus died, and rose from the dead (as had the heroes Osiris, Theseus, Herakles, Orpheus and Octavian)
- And the believer, too, will be resurrected

With this statement faith overshadowed the evidence required of Aristotelian Empiricism. A standardized doctrine had been established and from henceforth citizens would know what rituals were to be taught. Standardization of "authentic" scripture took a bit longer, but great minds had been contemplating the subject for some time. In the second century Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, had noted that "4" is a perfect number. "There are four rivers in Paradise. There are four elements, winds from four directions, and four corners of the earth. Therefore the New Testament should have four gospels, no more, no less."ⁱⁱⁱ (Those four perfect books became identified as the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Athanasius of Alexandria (who is credited with writing the Nicene Creed) later listed the 27 books that should be recognized.^{iv} Twenty-seven derives from two other perfect numbers, "3" and "3" times itself creating the perfection of "9." "9" times "3" culminates in the consummate perfection of "27."^v Once the authoritative scriptures were established, they were copied at state expense.

It took longer to standardize Christian religious music, with the project accomplished in the late sixth century by Pope Gregory the Great. Christian music had derived from the Hebrew Book of Psalms. The Rule of St. Benedict (534 CE) required that all 150 Psalms be memorized and sung over the course of each week. Fortunately, with eight to ten "offices" per day^{vi} there were numerous opportunities to sing the 3000 melodies, but still, the quantity to be memorized was a tremendous task. Imagine the joy when Pope Gregory had the melodies written down.^{vii} (While Pope Gregory's project satisfied a need, it also limited the creation of new music until Vatican Council II in 1965.)

As we have seen^{viii} Constantine was fascinated with physical things that encapsulate the sacred, identified by us as **relics**. He sent his mother off to the Holy Land in 326-328 to bring home "Mysteries of the Passion" that would give validity and power to the Christian story [image 7.90]. She returned with pieces of the cross, nails, a lance, and the crown of thorns. In 335 Constantine himself followed in search of body fragments, possessions of saints—anything that would allow the faithful to know God.



7.90 *Pilgrimage of St. Helena*, Homilies of Saint Gregory of Nazianzus. Created between 879 and 882, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris, France.^{ix}

Far be it for me to criticize one's devotion to relics when my culture clamors for all things glittered with "star dust:" craving for Elvis' bath water, scrambling for a clip of Justin Bieber's hair (which sold in 2011 for \$40,668), engaging in riotous behavior or fainting at pop concerts.

Remember your own losses. Remember how you hungered for the smallest of souvenirs when someone you loved died. Anyone who has kept a snapshot of a lover and felt moved to kiss it, or has opened cupboards of a dead friend and felt the onrush of despair evoked by his or her presence in all that jumble of personal possessions has in a way had the same experience sought by the pilgrim when he gazed on Christ's face painted on Veronica's veil or worshipped at a relic of the True Cross.

In your more empirical moments, however, you may be more inclined to agree with Chaucer's analysis of *The Pardoner* (Indulgence Seller) as told in his General Introduction to the *Canterbury Tales*:

There was no pardoner of equal grace,
for in his trunk he had a pillow-case
which he asserted was Our Lady's veil.
He said he had a goblet of the sail
St. Peter had the time when he
made bold to walk the waves,
till Jesu Christ took hold.
He had a cross of metal set with stones,
and in a glass, a rubble of pig's bones.

Relics (even an old pillow-case!) have no material value, but they do have spiritual strength. To quote the papal secretary St. Jerome (340-420), "We honor the martyr's relics....because we honor Him Whose witness they are...we honor the servants, that the honor shown to them may reflect on their Master."^x For the Emperor Constantine, this spiritual strength was enough to promote three types of relics: places, things and holy pictures.

Relics as places. There has often been a need to give geographical expression to specific memories or beliefs. The Roman basilica plan was effective for processions, but a second type of plan, the **tholos** (aka central plan), was also created for holy relics, a tomb, or a baptistery. This round-dome building type will become as important as the rectangular basilica.

This circular *tholos* (aka beehive tomb structure) was constructed during the Mycenaean era (1400-1100 BCE) in Bronze Age Greece [images 7.91 and 7.92]. It probably had no relationship with either Atreus (the father of Agamemnon) or Agamemnon, but it was so monumental and impressive that archaeologists gave it the sovereign's name. It is easy to understand how the visitor's gaze is drawn upward to the domed ceiling of the corbelled vault.



7.91 The tholos "Beehive" Tomb of Agamemnon (AKA Tomb of Agamemnon). C. 1250 BCE, Mycenae, Argolis, Greece.^{xi}



7.92 Interior of the tholos Tomb of Agamemnon (AKA Treasury of Atreus). C. 1250 BCE, Mycenae, Argolis, Greece. The lintel across the doorway, the largest in the world, weighs 120 tons, with approximate dimensions 8.3 x 5.2 x 1.2m.^{xii}

On Mt. Parnassus, at the “center of the earth,” we find the altar to Athena Pronaia [image 7.93]. (The Oracle of Apollo, which used to give advice from this site, was abolished by Theodosius in 393 when the emperor made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire.) Since ancient times the circle has represented timeless, the eternal present of the heavenly realm.



7.93 The Tholos of Delphi, *Sanctuary of Athena Pronaia*, “Athena of Forethought.” 380-360 BCE, Delphi, Greece.^{xiii}

The circular area in the center of the Greek theater [image 7.94] was known as the *orcheisthai*. Dionysus’ altar was in the center of this stage. Gods could be distinguished from other actors because they wore shoes on the sacred dancing place^{xiv}; others went barefoot. The stage was for drama, yes, but also for dance, songs, and celebrations in honor of the god Dionysus.



7.94 Theatre at Epidaurus. Constructed c. 350 BCE, Epidaurus, Greece.^{xv}

The Pantheon in Rome [images 7.95 and 7.96] was dedicated to “all” the gods. Like the tholos in Mycenae, the viewer’s gaze is drawn upwards toward the oculus. As the superlative example of both exterior and interior harmony, its size and resolution of both structural and aesthetic challenges made this a three-dimensional textbook for centuries.



7.95 Aerial view of the Pantheon. 118-125 CE, Rome, Italy.^{xvi}

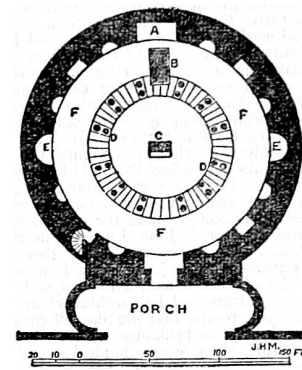


7.96 Interior of the Pantheon. The noon sun is shining on a protective niche, prepared for a statue of one of the planetary gods.^{xvii}

The emperor Constantine might have been directly responsible for this mausoleum dedicated to his daughter, Costantina [images 7.97-7.100]. The **ambulatory** (a barrel-vaulted passage) encircles the domed interior, accommodating pilgrims, who can’t help but look up to admire the ceiling.



7.97 The mid-4th century complex of St. Agnes: panoramic view from the south over the remains of the Ambulatory Basilica (on the left) and the Mausoleum of Constantina (now St. Costanza). Built before 350 CE Rome, Italy.^{xix}



7.98 Plan of the Mausoleum of Santa Costanza, Rome, Italy. C. 350 CE.^{xviii}



7.99 Interior of Santa Costanza. Rome, Italy.^{xx}



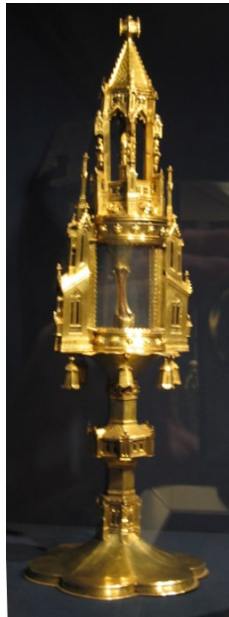
7.100 The ceiling of Santa Costanza. Rome, Italy.^{xxi}

Relics as things. Items which had belonged to saints were particularly precious and many have been saved. Believing that this nail came from Christ's right hand when he had been nailed to the cross, Constantine had the relic worked into his helmet. Jewsmiths in 17th century Augsburg adorned it with gold, silver, enameling, emeralds, sapphires, topaz, amethyst, and other precious gems. The rock-crystal in which it is housed was believed to have represented the Transfiguration. Believing in its strong healing power, visitors would rub their rosaries on the capsule [image 7.101].



7.101 *Ostensory with a Nail from Christ's Cross.* Imperial Treasury of Vienna, Austria.^{xxii}

Both of these reliquaries were fashioned in the style of a Gothic edifice. As such, each forms an elaborate architectural frame for a translucent rock-crystal vessel from 10th century Egypt. Rock crystal was considered a precious stone in the medieval Islamic world and was used to create a number of luxurious secular objects, such as containers for fragrant oil. The silver-gilt reliquary in image 7.102 was probably assembled in Lower Saxony between 1400 and 1500. The reliquary in image 7.103 is from Braunschweig in north-central Germany and is dated to 1375-1400. An inscription along the base specifically identifies the relic as a tooth of Saint John the Baptist.



7.102 *Fingerbone of John the Baptist.* Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.^{xxiii}



7.103 *Reliquary with Tooth of John the Baptist.* Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois.^{xxiv}

7.103 Metalwork: 1375/1400
Germany, Braunschweig
Rock-crystal vessel: c. 1000
Egypt, Fatimid Dynasty (909-1171)
Silver gilt and crystal

The holy gown [image 7.104] was believed to have been worn by Mary, either when she gave birth to Christ, or at the time of the Annunciation. Whichever was the “correct” story, it was a gift to Charlemagne from the Empress Irene of Byzantium in 876. The citizens of Chartres believed that it gave protection in 911 when the city was besieged by the Vikings, and it has always been a good source of income! The reliquary in which it is displayed, of course, is modern.



7.104 The *Sancta Camisia*. Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France.^{xxv}

Relics as holy pictures. You will certainly get your fill of holy pictures as we examine Byzantine-influenced churches in Ravenna and Constantinople. For a “preview,” here is a portrayal of the *Good Shepherd* at the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna [image 7.105].



7.105 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia: *Christ the Good Shepherd*. 425-450, Ravenna, Italy.^{xxvi}

This is no ordinary shepherd. *How do we know that “kingship” is suggested?* The mosaic is filled with symbols, which are the language of religion in the same way that numbers are the language of science. Actually, this entire discussion on “Relics” has really been about “symbols.” When you learn to read the symbols, you will be understanding the mystical, complex ideas of the Byzantine era.

A MUSICAL REACTION TO “LOOKING UP” TOWARD A DOME

Grad.
2.
h

Aec dí- es, * quam fé- cit Dó-
mi- nus : exsulté- mus,
et lae- té- mur in é- a.
¶. Confi- témi- ni Dó- mi- no, quó-
ni- am bó- nus : quó- ni- am in saé-
culum mi- se- ri- cór- dí- a * é- jus.

The **Gregorian Chant** is still intentionally “singing the words back to God which He has given to us,” but, it is now a step removed from Plainchant music. Or perhaps, it should be said music has advanced by two steps.

First step: Gregorian chant may be sung **antiphonally**, in parallel halves.^{xxvii} The musicians are divided into two parts: the **cantor**, who established the pitch and gave the solo intonation, and the **choral response** to the stimulus. Therefore, the music is known as **responsorial** (solo and chorus).

The second step was a decorative flourish added to the melody. The melody was probably based upon a well-known tune, but in a **melismatic** touch a single syllable has been elaborated upon and extended over several notes. Look up! Listen up! This is new!

“Haec Dies” is a Gregorian Chant which was based Psalms 118:24 and 106:1. The text would have been appropriate for Easter Sunday.

Haec dies,	This is the day
quan fecit Dominus	which the Lord hath made;
exultemus ea	we will rejoice and be
laetemur in ea.	glad of it.
Confitemini Domino,	O give thanks to the
quoniam bonus:	Lord, for He is good:
quoniam in saeculum	for His mercy
miser cordia	endureth
ejus.	Forever.

The first phrase, “Haec dies” is sung as a solo intonation by the **cantor**. (On this score, the script looks like “Aec dí- es.” Don’t let that fool you.)

The remainder of the hymn, “quan fecit...” is sung as a **choral response**.

The **melismatic** flourish extends over important words, such as *Dominus* and *exultemus*.

Significant elements: The **rhythm** is dependent on the words.
The **pitch** is also dependent on the words. The voice moves up and down just as we do when speaking.
Because of the syllabic nature of this music, the **meter** is unmeasured. Besides, spiritual “truth” is beyond all restrictions of time. God is beyond counting, beyond numbers, beyond rational understanding.
The **harmony** is monophonic; there is, after all, one God so his oneness should be emphasized.
The **instrumentation** is “a cappella”—only voices, praising God in unison.

How does the music offer an interpretation of the text?

Does the music make any sense as a melody without words?

It is not memorable on its own. There are no phrases, there is no inner logic.

What are the similarities between the Platonic and early Christian views of music?

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ⁱ “Ecumenical” means “all-world,” but in this case, “all-Mediterranean” is closer to reality.

ⁱⁱ Loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/prayer/traditional-catholic-prayers/prayers-every-catholic-should-know/Nicene-creed

ⁱⁱⁱ *Against Heresies*, Book III, Chapter 11.

^{iv} *The 39th Festal Letter of Athanasius*, 367 CE.

^v This number may sound familiar. You might remember that according to Thucydides, the Peloponnesian War lasted 27 years. However long it lasted, it was an auspicious number.

^{vi} Depending on the time of the year, monks would rise between 1:30 and 3:00 AM for “nocturne” or “vigil” and have “vespers” (night prayers) between 4:15 and 5:45. Between these times there were eight “offices” (services) as well as time for manual labor and daily study.

^{vii} Gregory lived from 540 to 604; he was Pope from 590-604. In the absence of the Roman Imperial government, the church had assumed much of the responsibility for food supply, organ amenities, and even defense against the Lombards—therefore, Pope Gregory became the quasi-ruler in the old Imperial capital of Rome.

^{viii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, The Ambition of Constantine.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{ix} Public domain at

commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Biblioth%C3%A8que_Nationale_MS_Gr_510#/media/File:Homilies_of_Gregory_the_Theologian_gr_510_f_891.jpg

^x St. Jerome, *Ad Riparium*, i, P.L., XXII, 907.

^{xi} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_tholos_tomb_Treasury_of_Atreus_or_Tomb_of_Agamemnon_in_Mycenae.jpg

^{xii} *Ibid*.

^{xiii} Public domain at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_tholos_of_Athena_Pronaia.jpg

^{xiv} Exodus 3:5 relates how Moses was told “put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground” (KJV).

^{xv} Photo by Syenna Tindall, friend of the author, 2017. Used by permission. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xvi} Pantheon aerial view / Getty Images, Creative Commons cited on brewminate.com/rome-and-a-villa-hadrians-pantheon-and-tivoli-retreat/

^{xvii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2006. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xviii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EB1911_Rome_-_Plan_of_Church_and_Mausoleum_of_Constanza.jpg

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^{xx} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:S_Costanza_1160909-10-11.JPG

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^{xxii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2010. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

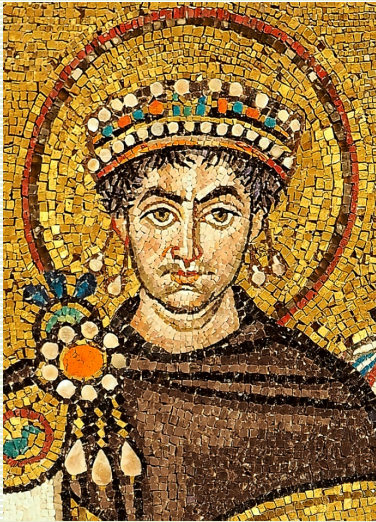
^{xxiii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2006. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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^{xxv} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8a/Chartres_cathedral_2850.jpg

^{xxvi} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxvii} “Antiphonal” is the root of our word “anthem.”



8.83 Basilica of San Vitale, Justinian



8.110 Sant' Apollinaire in Classe



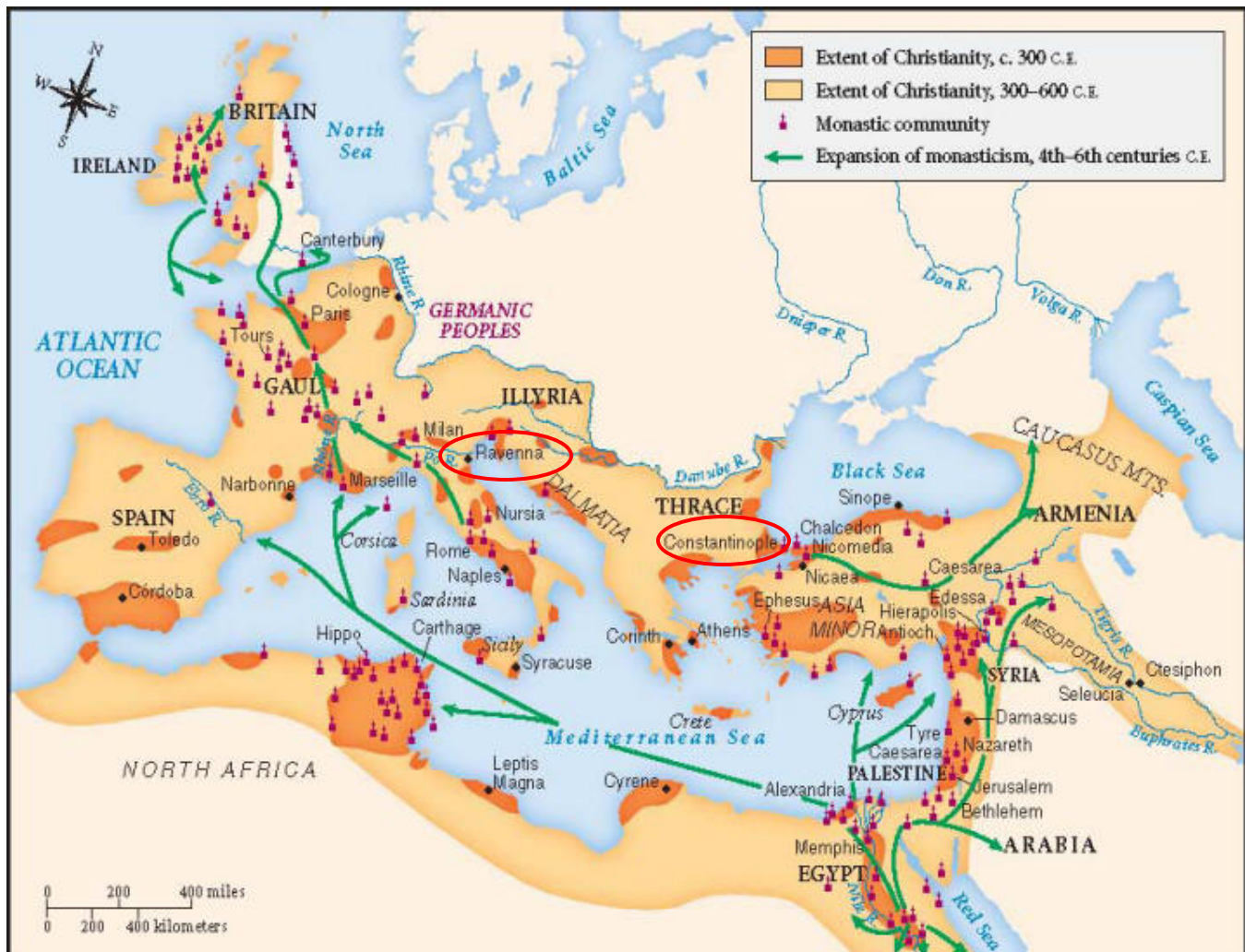
8.138 Hagia Sophia, Theotokos and Christ

Chapter 8

Byzantine Style

ORTHODOXY VS. HERESY

The Orthodox and Arian Baptisteries in Ravenna



8.1 Spread of Christianity between 300 and 600.¹ Red ovals identify the two *sedes imperialis* (Imperial Seats of Government) in Ravenna and Constantinople.

From reading the biblical New Testament account titled *The Acts of the Apostles* one gets the impression that Christianity moved uneventfully westward from Jerusalem to Rome. However, that action was not without controversy. In the first centuries after the death of Jesus there was little unity of belief and practice among many varieties of Christians. More correctly, there was bitter doctrinal controversy.

- *Was Jesus human or divine?*
- *Did he suffer, bleed, and die? Was he resurrected?*
- *What was the status of Jesus in relationship to God?*
- *Did Jesus exist prior to his birth?*
- *Was he born to a Virgin?*
- *Which was more important: Jesus' sayings or his death?*
- *How did Christianity relate to Judaism?*
- *Which literature was authentic? What should be done about forgeries?*
- *What should be done about heretics?*
- *Who was the authentic Pope, the successor to Saint Peter?*
- *What should be the correct date for the celebration of Christ's resurrection?*

Each group of Christians was making its own apostolic link back to the teachings of Jesus. Each sect had its own canon and its own theological doctrine, and each thought they were being faithful in their understanding of Christianity.

Even the Christianity preached in Palestine differed from that of Rome. They were discussing far more gospels than the four that ended up in the New Testament. Persecution had magnified the acrimonious controversy and the theological differences. If Constantine, with the promotion of the Nicene Creed,ⁱⁱ expected Christians to unite behind him as a pious, harmonious people with a unified “One Way” belief he was disappointed.

As an essential component of his One Roman Empire objective, Constantine actively supported those who backed him with the building of a number of basilica churches, endowments to the church with land and other wealth, and scriptures copied at state expense. The beneficiaries of his largess were those who professed to the Orthodoxⁱⁱⁱ tradition. Any one, or any group, that had unorthodox answers to the above doctrinal questions was labeled a **heretic**, and that meant willful opposition to the state. It is important to remember that at this time there was no separation between the church and the state. Heresy against the church was the equivalent to treason against the state. The philosophy for this position stemmed from teachings of Plato, who professed that “Truth must proceed before the corruption of truth.”^{iv} In other words, Truth, as a Form of the Good (along with justice, equality, beauty), must outrank untruth. Plato taught that humans were compelled to pursue the superlative form of Truth; therefore, corruption of the truth (heresy) was an intentional, obstinate choice.

There were a number of variant understandings of the significance of Jesus—and therefore, a number of sects that were considered heretical. Unfortunately because their writings were intentionally destroyed in Diocletian’s burning of scriptures,^v we only know about these noncompliant Christians from Orthodox writings about the heretics. In spite of their widely divergent thinking, many of their answers toward the above questions flowed back to Rome, there to be purged of heretical views and later incorporated into Orthodox teachings. Among the contributions of deviant groups we know the word “Trinities” was first used in Tunis in the third century by the followers of **Montanus**. The term “Christian” was first coined in Antioch in Syria by the followers of **Nestorius**. The **Docetist** document, “The Gospel of Paul,” described Paul’s journey to the tenth heaven and also his view of the torments of the damned in hell. This was an influence on Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and perhaps also on the Islamic recounting of Muhammad’s ascent to the seventh heaven. The Docetists made early reference to the “harrowing of hell” (the time between Jesus’ death and resurrection when he descended into hell, preached, and offered salvation to the dead). And, it was the Docetists who intentionally shifted the blame for Jesus’ death away from the Roman governor Pontius Pilate and onto the Jews. The followers of **Marcion of Sinope** were also deeply anti-Semitic. **Monophysite** teachings are exemplified at several churches in Ravenna. At the *Basilica of San Vitale* paradise is served by four rivers of honey, milk, wine and oil. In the *Basilica of Sant’ Apollinare Nuovo* monks and virgins are given elaborate status. At the *Basilica of Sant’ Apollinare in Classe* the end times will be accomplished with a glorious vision of Christ in a lovely field of flowers, accompanied by Moses and Elijah. This basilica in Classe also revealed Platonically influenced **Gnostic** teachings: God was understood to be so spiritual and unitary that humans could never know him directly.

By the early fourth century most of these heresies—Montanists, Nestorians, Docetists, Marcionites, Monophysites, Gnostics and more—had been suppressed. Others heretics were almost ignored. But in the Western Roman Empire, the followers of the dissident **Arian** (c.250-336), a priest of the Church of Alexandria, Egypt were causing an unsightly raucous. Both the Orthodox and Arians accepted the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but the interpretations varied. Arian’s challenges to Orthodox teachings had been set to noisy drinking and theatrical songs and soon even sailors were debating Jesus’ divinity. Not only was Arian deemed to be wrong in his understanding of the divine status of Jesus, but he was encouraging undignified, unRoman behavior. To conservative Roman citizens, without a doubt he must have been a heretic! His followers were severely denounced by the first Council of Nicaea, which wrote the Nicene Creed specifically to condemn his monotheistic heresy.

The difference between Orthodox teaching about the Trinity and the Arian understanding of Jesus is most easily understood by learning a bit of Greek! The Orthodox preaching was that Jesus and God were *homoousios* (of the same essence) and had existed since the beginning of time. *Homoousios* is the same word which in the Nicene Creed translates as “consubstantial with the Father.”^{vi} Now, let’s split hairs, torment and even slaughter each other over a single vowel which has been omitted. The Arian teaching was that that Jesus was *homousios* (similar in essence but not the same). Arians taught that Jesus, as a human, grew and changed. He was, therefore, a subordinate being created by God the Father and there had been “a time when he was not.” Therefore, Jesus was not quite divine.

Got it? The difference was all over one “o”! Oh, and the Arian’s lack of respect for the authority of Rome and the primacy of the Orthodox Church (aka Nicene Christianity or Trinitarian Christianity). *So was this an argument about a doctrinal controversy, or was it possibly a political power struggle?*

Milan had served as the seat of the Western Roman Empire from 286 until 402 when the Visigoths besieged the city. Given the fear of further barbaric attacks the Emperor Honorius moved the Imperial residence to **Ravenna**. The coastal city had been built on marshy hinterlands so it was difficult to attack by land. Equally important, because of its location on the Adriatic Sea, it was convenient to Constantinople. While darkness overtook the rest of the Roman world, Ravenna was protected by this marshland and benefitted from the powerful nearby port of Classe, through which came Byzantine design, workmen and materials. Ravenna was the *sedes imperialis* of the Western Roman Empire from 402 until the Lombard invasion of 751. Subsidence and the rapid decline in population in the eighth century would result in a lack of both finances and the will to replace the early churches, for which we are rewarded with the neglected preservation of many dramatic and spectacular buildings, mosaics and carvings.^{vii} In Ravenna we can get a sense of the richness of early Byzantine art that had once been empire-wide.

The controversy between Orthodox and Arian views was just one among many conflicts with heretical teachings, but it is visually well exemplified in two **baptisteries** in Ravenna, Italy. The intent of artistry in a **baptistery** was twofold: to decorate an exclusive place and also to teach and inform the participants about the only publically celebrated religion in the Roman Empire. The essential components of this Christian rite of initiation were described in the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. This citing is from the book of Mark, the first gospel to have been written:

Jesus ... was baptized by John in [the] Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descended upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, 'Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' Mark 1:9-11 (KJV).

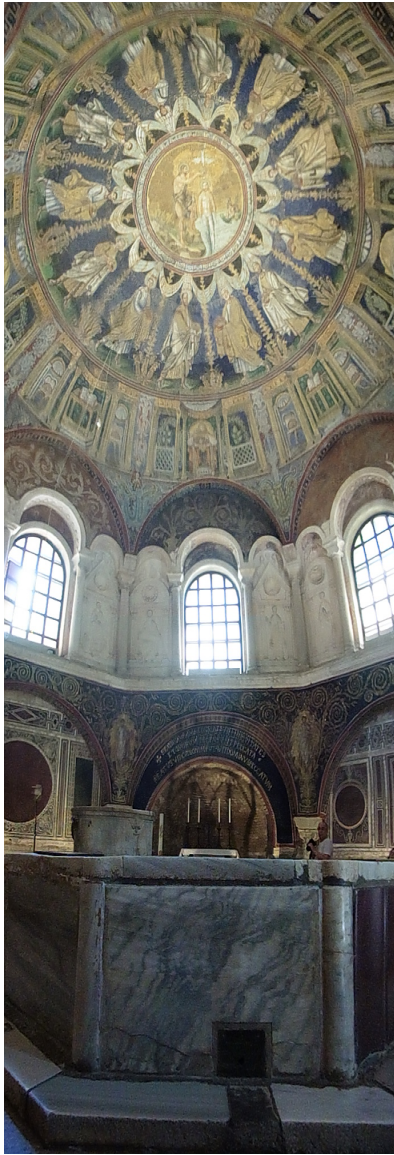
Christian theological concepts were still in a state of flux, but the sacramental procedure as established in the fourth century by St. Ambrose in Milan would spread throughout the west. The occasion was celebrated by immersion into a symbolically significant octagonal pool of water. Quoting from St. Ambrose, "Eight corners has its font, worthy of that number, it was suitable to build this hall for sacred baptism, because it corresponds to the Resurrection of Christ that took place on the eighth day."^{viii} Death, cleansing and resurrection were all commemorated in the immersion experience.

Our first destination in Ravenna is to the **Orthodox Baptistery**, the oldest of Ravenna's ancient monuments [image 8.2]. It was built before 451 under the patronage of the Orthodox church. Being within the approved tradition you might expect that it has been well-maintained, and it has. The intentional separation of this structure from the nearby original fourth-fifth century Ursiana Cathedral drew focused attention to its octagonal exterior and gave an immediate clue that this was built for a ceremonial function. As a centrally planned building, the axis and the interior focus will be upward toward the glittery mosaics in the dome [image 8.3]



8.2 The Orthodox Baptistery (Battistero Ortodosso). 438-450, Ravenna. This is also known by two other names: *Baptistery of Neone* (in recognition of the Bishop who sponsored the dome mosaics) and the *Baptistery of the Ursiana Cathedral*.^{ix}

The modern word “ceiling” is derived from the Latin *caelum* which means heaven or sky. In images 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6 the viewer’s attention is drawn straight up into that sky, looking through the Greek egg-and-dart molding of the oculus and then gazing upon the golden, heavenly setting in which Christ is being baptized by John the Baptist.



8.3 The Orthodox Baptistery.^x Today the interior is 12 meters wide and 14.6

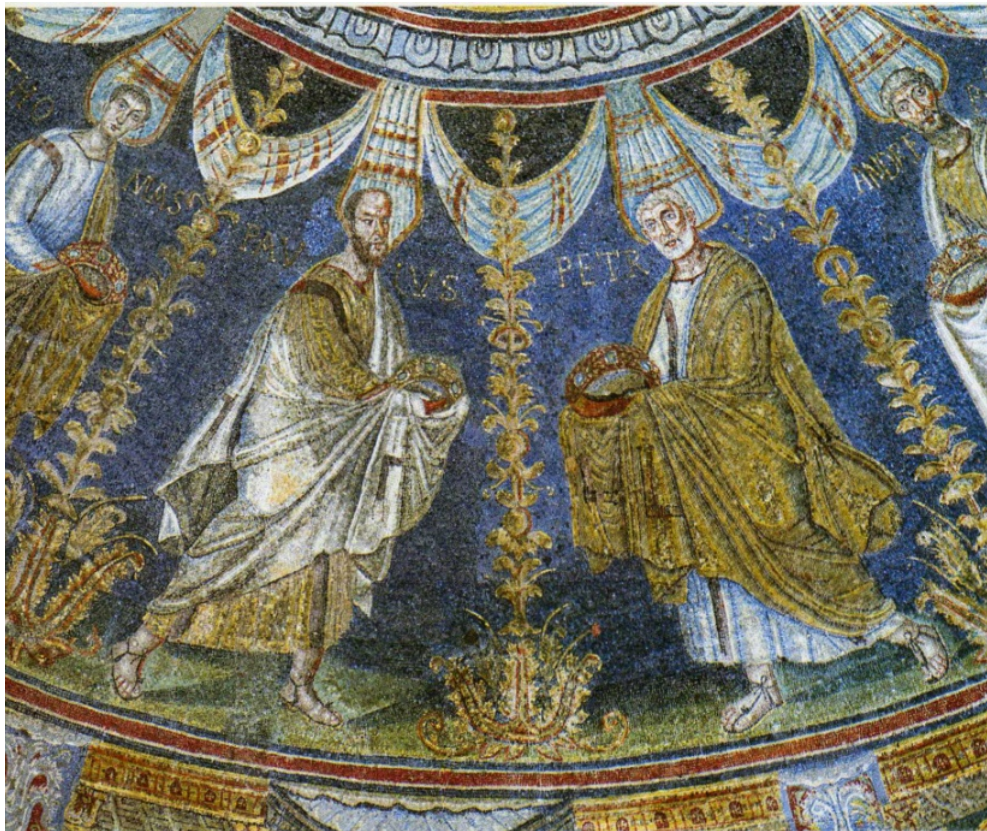


8.4 Orthodox Baptistery font, east wall, northeast niche and southeast niche from the west entrance. Width 3.1 meters.^{xi} Moving your eye upwards in *anagogical* manner, meters high.^{xii} notice the mosaics made of glass *tesserae* and marble panels on the lower walls, the stucco reliefs (once painted) of Old Testament prophets and patriarchs between the windows, and then finally the richly decorated heavenly ceiling.

The baptismal font [image 8.4] is directly beneath the heavenly vision, and when the *baptizand* (newly baptized) was lifted out of the waters he or she saw a vision of Christ experiencing the same ceremony [image 8.5]. The surrounding 12 disciples, who could each be identified by legible names printed in gold *tesserae*, were wearing their chaste robes of innocence, holding jeweled crowns of glory and processing in two lines behind the saints Peter and Paul. The disciples were veiled by a *pallium* (a drapery swag) which provides the illusion of a halo. The apostle Peter, leading one group, was placed in a position of dignity directly below Christ [image 8.6]. Leading the other group was Paul, who was placed directly beneath John the Baptist.



8.5 Dome of the Orthodox Baptistery, *Baptism of Christ and Procession of the Twelve Apostles*. After 458.^{xiii}



8.6 Paul and Peter meet under the feet of John the Baptist and Christ.^{xiv}

The Bishop's church and baptistery were the **prototypes**, if not the "proper" settings for the sacred rites of the faith. But there were other voices wanting to be heard in Ravenna. The equally sincere followers of the Arian tradition demanded a new expression of their theological position. It is in the comparison of the two baptisteries, both in Ravenna, that we see the exemplification of two very different understandings of the significance of Jesus.



8.7 Arian Baptistery in Ravenna, Italy. Built and decorated during the reign of the Arian Ostrogothic king Theodoric (493-526).^{xv}

The Ostrogothic king **Theodoric the Great** (r. 493-526) became the ruler of most of Italy about 50 years after the construction of the Orthodox baptistery. Driven by antagonism to papal pressures and the economic convenience of the port at Classe Theodoric made Arianism the official court religion and built a new Arian church, the *Basilica Spirito Santo*,^{xvi} in a neighborhood separated from the Orthodox Christians. The **Arian Baptistery** [image 8.7] was included in the *piazza* in front of the church. Built about 50 years after the Orthodox Baptistery, it was similar in design but slightly smaller than the Orthodox Baptistery.

In an early church vs. state conflict, the funding for this church and baptistery was from royal, not ecclesiastic, sources. However, because of later condemnation of the Arian movement the structure has not had substantive capital or maintenance. The only mosaics to have been preserved are those of the dome, which were not considered offensive to Orthodox tastes; nothing is left of the decoration which once covered the walls [image 8.8]. In 565 the building was converted into an oratory, renamed *Santa Maria in Cosmedin* (*Ornamented Chapel of Santa Maria*), and sold to a private citizen. In 1914 ownership was transferred to the state.



8.8 Arian Baptistery dome.^{xvii}

The desire to compare the dome of the Orthodox Baptistery and the dome of the Arian Baptistery is hard to ignore. The iconography on the Orthodox Baptistery was reworked in 1860, while the original design of the Arian Baptistery is unchanged, so a comparison of these two is not being made on a level playing field. Pushing that hesitation aside, the astute observer will notice several deliberate choices made by the Arian artists.

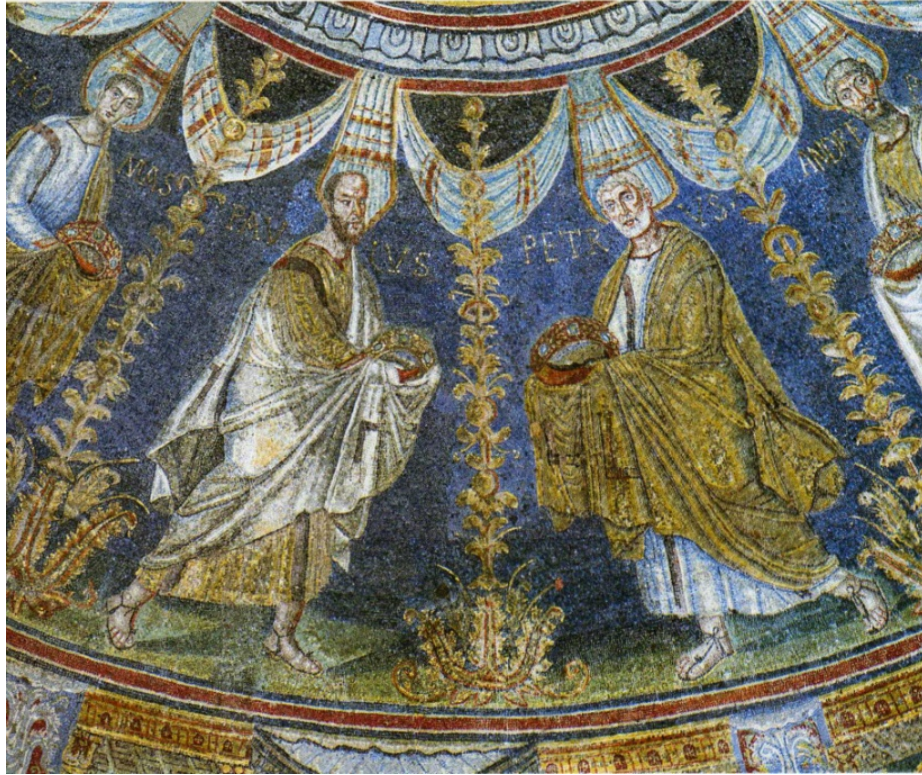
- The pallium (a drapery swag) linking the apostles has been replaced with distinct haloes.
- The apostles walk a narrow green line, separated from each other by stylized palm trees.
- The procession is more formal. There is a less movement, the heavenly gold background is timeless, and the apostles all wear white tunics with *clavi* (vertical stripe on the tunic) and mantles. Ten of the men hold their crowns of victory.
- In both examples the artists have depicted contrapposto movement and shadows beneath the disciples' feet.
- *What's that thing at the top, upside down over the Dove* [Image 8.9]? It's a throne, prepared for the Second Coming.



8.9 *Etimasia* (prepared throne) with a jeweled crucifix resting on a purple cushion.^{xviii}

Paul and Peter face each other on both baptisteries and are quickly recognized. They are identified by name at the Orthodox Baptistry [image 8.10]. At the Arian Baptistry [image 8.11] their identity is known by their **attributes**. Peter, the “more mature” man with white curly hair, holds the keys to the kingdom. His halo is also white and he leads the procession with the first-called disciple, Andrew, directly behind him. The other nine around the dome have beige halos.

Paul, the younger man with an “intellectual” high forehead, holds a scroll at the Arian Baptistry, suggesting the numerous letters he wrote to Gentile converts. Significantly, his blue halo was repeated on the unnamed individual behind him. Perhaps the matching haloes suggest this to be Paul’s successor? But the tradition of Apostolic Succession originates from the line of Peter, not Paul. *Was this possibly a hint that Paul’s successor was less clearly defined? That anyone, in any of Paul’s established congregations, could be a successor?*



8.10 Paul and Peter at the Orthodox Baptistry.^{xix}



8.11 Paul and Peter at the Arian Baptistry.^{xx}

Consider the placement of Peter and Paul on the ceilings. At the Orthodox Baptistry [image 8.5] Peter is under the feet of Jesus, directly in a line of power and authority from Jesus (the line of Apostolic Succession) while Paul is honored for his evangelizing work by being placed under John the Baptist. At the Arian Baptistry [image 8.8], while Peter is given respect (after all, he does hold The Keys), he is out in “no man’s land.” Paul and “the other blue-haloed disciple” are more closely aligned with the independent spirit of John the Baptist.

Observe the ethnic diversity of the unnamed Arian apostles who circle the medallion [image 8.12]. Some sport beards, others are beardless, and at least one has “muttonchops” [image 8.13]. *Was he, perhaps, a Goth?*



8.12 Procession of the Apostles at the Arian Baptistry.^{xxi}

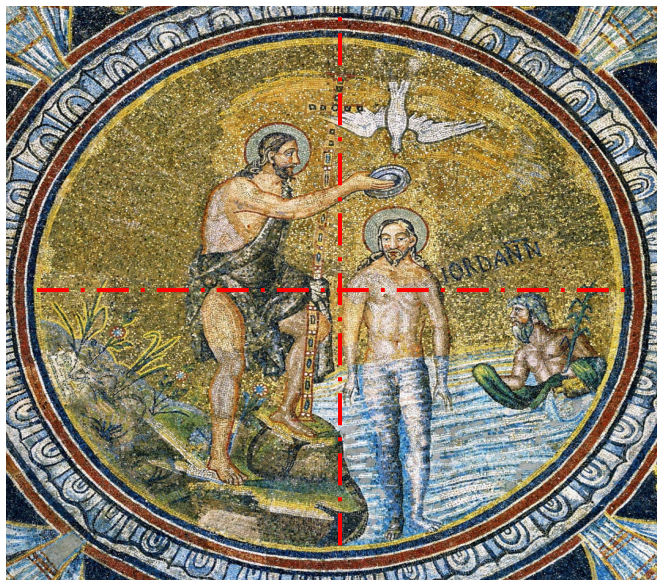


8.13 Apostle with “muttonchops” at the Arian Baptistry.^{xxii}

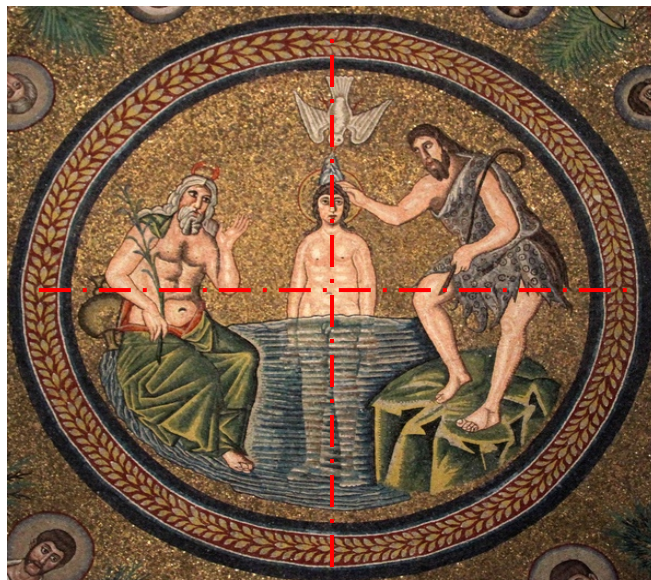
In discussing the two dome medallions we must first note that at the Orthodox Baptistry [image 8.14] the heads of John and Christ, John’s hand, top of John’s staff and the dove were all restored and reworked in 1860 by Felice Kibel. Over the centuries infant baptism had become more popular, as well as baptism by the sprinkling or pouring of water rather than immersion. Kibel placed a cup in John’s hand for the pouring of holy water and added a beard to Christ’s face.

There are many similarities between these two medallions [images 8.14 and 8.15]. Both give three-dimensional treatment to flora and figures and create illusionistic space. Both are set in a visionary realm; the floating, light-filled gold ground is a divine occasion, removed from space and time. Christ is depicted nude, without gestures of embarrassment. Both personify the River Jordan in the Roman style as an “Old Man River.” In both the Holy Spirit descends as a dove; this will lead to the common depiction of the Holy Spirit as a bird.

The obvious differences are significant. At the Orthodox Baptistry the medallion is set off with traditional Greek egg-and-dart molding; a more modern Roman wreath highlights the Arian medallion. In the Orthodox mosaic John the Baptist is on the viewer’s left; he is honored with a halo and holds a tall jeweled staff (which may have originally been a shepherd’s staff or crook). In the Arian mosaic John is on the viewer’s right. He is again bearded but he has no halo. John is not pouring water; with his right hand he is either making a sign of the cross or is resting his hand on Christ’s head. The River Jordan in the Orthodox Baptistry is personified as a man of wisdom preparing to pass a green mantle (cloth) to Christ. At the Arian Baptistry waters of the river pour from an upside-down amphora laid behind the river personification. The Holy Spirit is an active participant in the Arian scene; water flowing from the beak of the Holy Spirit may signify the giver of life, or the stream could be a beam of light.



8.14 Central medallion of the Orthodox Baptistry.^{xxiii}



8.15 Central medallion of the Arian Baptistry.^{xxiv}

The most significant difference is the intentional Arian formatting, both within the medallion and of the processional figures. In the Arian medallion [image 8.15] attention is drawn to Jesus with a framing of figures and gestures. Jesus is youthful and beardless in the style of the Early Christian images as seen in the catacombs.^{xxv} Dashed centering lines added by this author demonstrate the intentionality of the artist that Jesus occupy the central axis at the summit of the dome. As if to proclaim his much younger, very human nature, his navel is at the nexus of the dome. And the apostles, arranged as they are, give a higher status to Paul and the gentile converts and less to the organized, authoritarian, Orthodox church.



8.16 Map of Invasions of the Roman Empire (100-500 CE).^{xxvi}

The differences at the two baptisteries speak to the power struggle that was going on between the One Way Orthodox teachings and the heretical Arian beliefs. St. Ambrose was quoted by St. Augustine as having remarked that the

obstinacy of the Arians was “more detestable than that of the Jews.”^{xxvii} Headstrong, they were! Arian thought was condemned by the Council of Nicaea in 325. In 381 their monotheistic teachings were again suppressed by the Council of Constantinople. But Arians continued to exist along the frontiers of the Roman Empire, especially in the Balkans and among Italian and Germanic peoples [image 8.16]. The Vandals of North Africa were militant Arians. Byzantine Emperor Justinian viewed them as pirates in the western Mediterranean and defeated them 532-534. The Ostrogoths, whom we have just met in Ravenna, were Arians. Although they blended with Roman society, they will be conquered by Justinian between 535 and 553. The Visigoths (western Goths) were also Arians. Weakened by the Franks (who may have been Arian), struggles against Justinian and political disunity, they were left in a debilitated state and fell to Muslim invaders from North Africa in 711-716. In a corrective course maneuver against all these #%!Goths&\$, later Crusades became necessary.

Arian opposition to the dilution of the transcendent one, sole, only God by Trinitarian thought was also echoed by other heretical sects and by the teachings of Muhammad, which began in about 150 years.

Use this format to cite this document:

Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 8, Orthodoxy vs. Heresy: Orthodox and Arian Baptisteries in Ravenna.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Public domain at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Spread_christianity_between_300_and_600.jpg

ⁱⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, Relics of Faith: Nicene Creed.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱⁱⁱ Many of you have first-hand knowledge of an *orthodontist*. *Ortho* (straight) plus *dentist* (teeth.) *Orthodox* comes from the same root. *Ortho* (straight) plus *dox* (thinking). Therefore, unstraight thinking is *heterodox*, also known as *heresy*. A *heretic*, therefore, is one who chooses to think or believe differently.

^{iv} Plato, *Republic*, 508e2–3.

^v See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, Brotherly Love in Turbulent Times.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{vi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, Relics of Faith.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{vii} “Guide to Byzantine Treasures,” at <http://www.initaly.com/regions/byzant/byzant4.htm> This is a really fine link that will get you up close and personal with the art of Ravenna.

^{viii} Zeno of Verona, *Tract*, 1.49, 55.

^{ix} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^x *Ibid.*

^{xi} *Ibid.*

^{xii} *Ibid.*

^{xiii} *Ibid.*

^{xiv} *Ibid.*

^{xv} Public Domain at Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license; <upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/1a/Baptistery.Arians02.jpg>

^{xvi} Built simultaneously with the *Basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo*.

^{xvii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xviii} Public domain at <commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baptistery.Arians10.jpg>

^{xix} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xx} Shared under Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license at <christianiconography.info/Edited%20in%202013/Italy/baptismJesusArianBaptistery.crossEnthroned.html>

^{xxi} Public domain at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Procession_of_the_Apostles._First_left__Saint_Peter._Part_of_the_mosaic_in_Arian_Baptistery._Ravenna,_Italy.jpg

^{xxii} Deliyannis, Deborah Mausekopf. *Ravenna in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. P., 2010. Reproduced in color at <corvinus.nl/2016/07/27/ravenna-the-arian-baptistery/>

^{xxiii} Photo by the author Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxiv} *Ibid.*

^{xxv} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, Christ as the Good Shepherd.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxvi} MapMaster, “Invasions of the Roman Empire.” *Ancient History Encyclopedia*. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 16 Oct 2015. Web. 12 Oct 2019 on www.ancient.eu/image/4131/invasions-of-the-roman-empire/

^{xxvii} Confessions of S. Augustine, IV.16.

DEVELOPMENT OF SYMBOLIC ART

The Mausoleum of Galla Placidia in Ravenna

"She was the real power behind the throne." We've heard this before when we looked at the life of the Egyptian Queen Hatshepsut. In Ravenna, **Galla Placidia** also led an extremely colorful life, though she felt no need to dress in a manly manner or be addressed as "His" majesty. The daughter of Roman Emperor Theodosius, she was the half-sister of the Honorius Augustus (who had moved the Imperial residence of the Western Roman Empire from Milan to Ravenna in 404). While she was living in Rome in 410 the city was sacked by Alaric and the Visigoths. She was taken hostage and is said to have become an early example of what we now call the Stockholm syndrome: she fell in love with her barbarian kidnapper, Alaric's successor, Athaulf. In 414 she married Athaulf and went into battle for his side. When Athaulf was assassinated, she was bought back by her half-brother, Honorius, with a payment of corn. In 416 she was forced to marry a Roman general named Constantius III, to whom she bore two children, Honoria and Valentinian. Through the complications of Roman politics, their son Valentinian III became emperor at age 6. You guessed it: she assumed the control of the empire, ruling in his stead as Galla Placidia Augusta from 425-437.

This 4.5 gram gold *solidus* is dated to 421-450 [image 8.17]. Throughout this chapter you will be studying **symbols**, and this is a good place to do some careful looking. Symbols are the language of religion while numbers are the language of science.

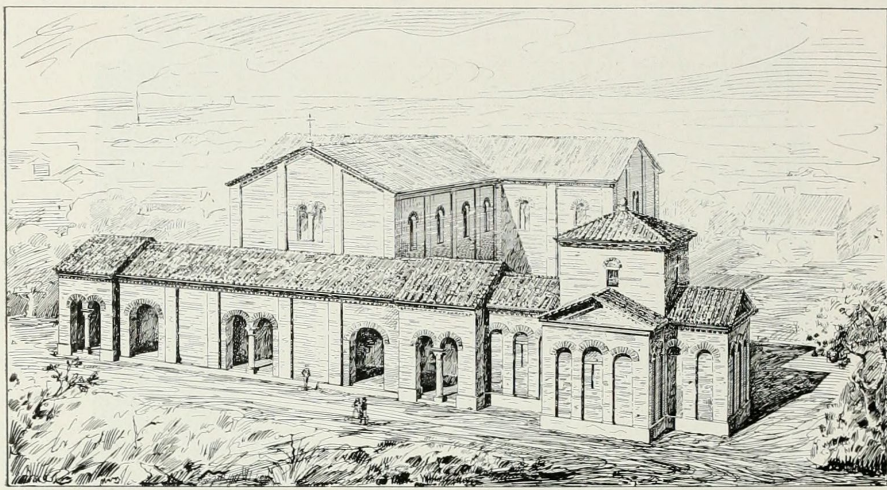
- Over her head, the hand of God holds either a crown, a nimbus (halo) or a wreath.
- On her head, a pearl diadem (a jeweled headband used as a royal crown) with four tails or her hair is adorned with jewels.
- On her neck, two pearl necklaces.
- On her ears, earrings.
- On her right shoulder, Chi-Rho monogram ✠ (aka Cristogram).



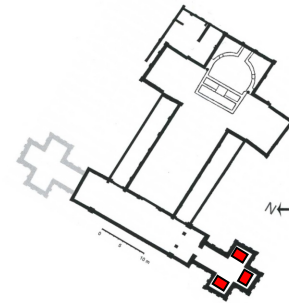
8.17 Solidus of Galla Placidia Being Crowned by the Hand of God. 421-450, Altes Museum Berlin. 4.5 gram gold coin.ⁱ

Galla Placidiaⁱⁱ was a devout Christian. She was involved in the building and restoration of over 100 churches where pagan temples had once stood in Ravenna and around the surrounding countryside. She has been credited with the restoration and expansion of the basilica of *Saint Paul Outside the Walls*ⁱⁱⁱ and the *Church of the Holy Sepulcher* in Jerusalem. She built *San Giovanni Evangelista* (St. John the Evangelist) in Ravenna in grateful appreciation for the sparing of her life and those of her children in a storm while crossing the Aegean Sea.^{iv} The dedicatory inscription reads "Galla Placidia, along with her son Placidus Valentinian Augustus and her daughter Justa Grata Honoria Augusta, paid off their vow for their liberation from the danger of the sea."

Her intended mausoleum was originally attached as a side chapel to the basilica of *Santa Croce* (Holy Cross) which she also built [images 8.18 and 8.19]. The cruciform shapes of the main body and side chapel were intentionally styled in remembrance of St. Helena who was by this time famous for her discovery of the True Cross.^v It has been speculated that Galla Placidia may, herself, have owned a relic of the True Cross.



8.18 Reconstruction drawing showing the connection between the original church of Santa Croce in Ravenna, and its chapel - now known as the mausoleum of Galla Placidia - to the right.^{vi} Most of the church was demolished in 1602, separating the mausoleum from the Church of Santa Croce, to which for a thousand years or so it had been attached.



8.19 Intended placement of sarcophagus for Galla Placidia. To her right and left are spaces (identified in red by this author) for Constantius III (her second husband) and either her son, Valentinian III, or her brother, Honorius.^{vii}

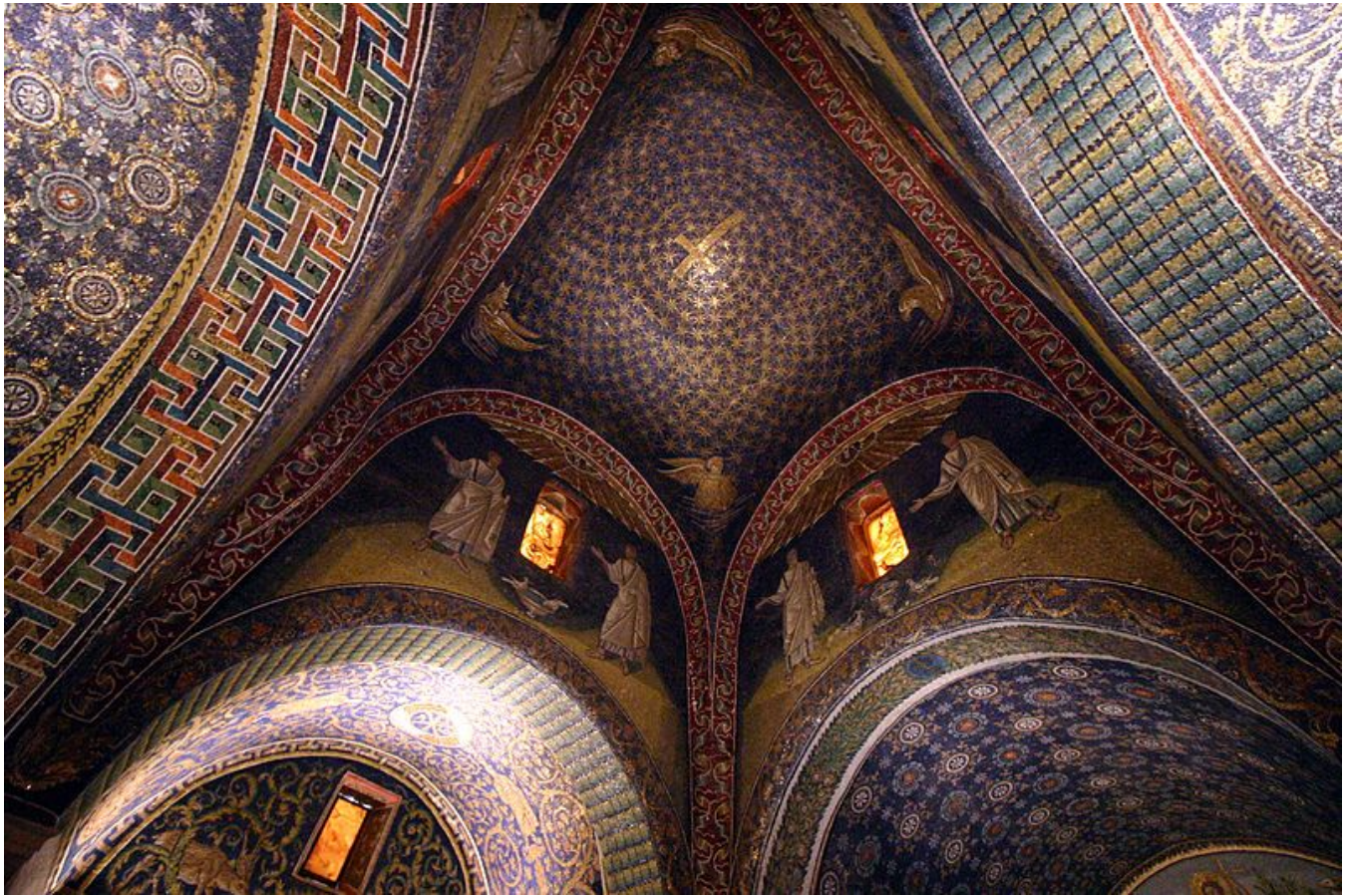
Unfortunately for her story, she died in Rome, so it is unlikely she was buried in Ravenna. She was possibly buried in *St. Peter's Basilica*, although a ninth century legend had her buried in a side chapel in *San Vitale* in Ravenna and another thirteenth century legend had her entombed in one of the sarcophagi here.



8.20 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia (425-450).^{viii}

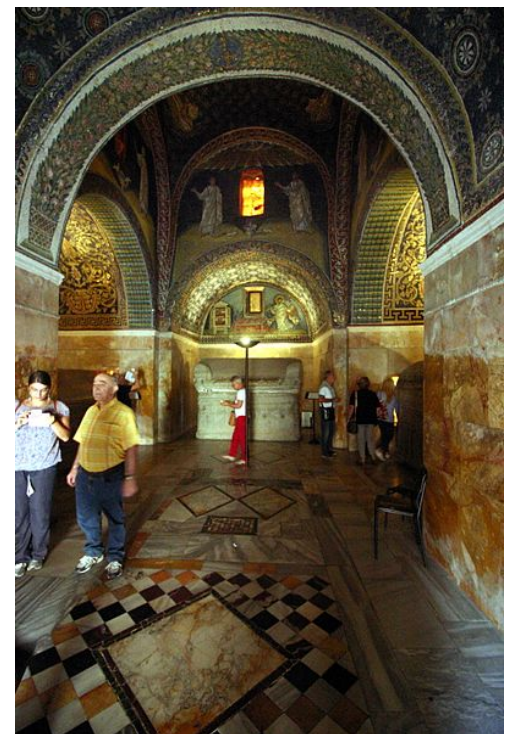
Constructed of reused Roman brick,^{ix} the exterior of the **Mausoleum of Galla Placidia** is decorated only by blind arcades and looks rather bland [image 8.20]. Galla Placidia would possibly remind us, however, of the admonition spoken in the book of First Samuel 16:7: "The Lord sees not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (KJV).

Inside we find the lantern tower has concealed a dome in which is displayed a supernatural world with glimmering mosaics [image 8.21]. The *tesserae* are made of glass with gold leaf sandwiched in between the layers. If the exterior represented St. Augustine's Earthly City, the sparkle of the interior represents the Heavenly City.^x



8.21 The mystical world inside the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.^{xi}

Come back down to earth. Look around us, at eye level [image 8.22]. We are seeing two zones: the lower one of marble panels and the upper one of mosaics. This is a visual distinction between the heavenly and the terrestrial worlds. Platonic thought is being mystically and symbolically suggested! The heavenly world is the realm of the spirit, of light, of invisible truth. The terrestrial world is the realm of the flesh, this visible world. We find ourselves in this world, but we can catch glimpses above of the truly "real" world, the world to which we would seek to ascend.

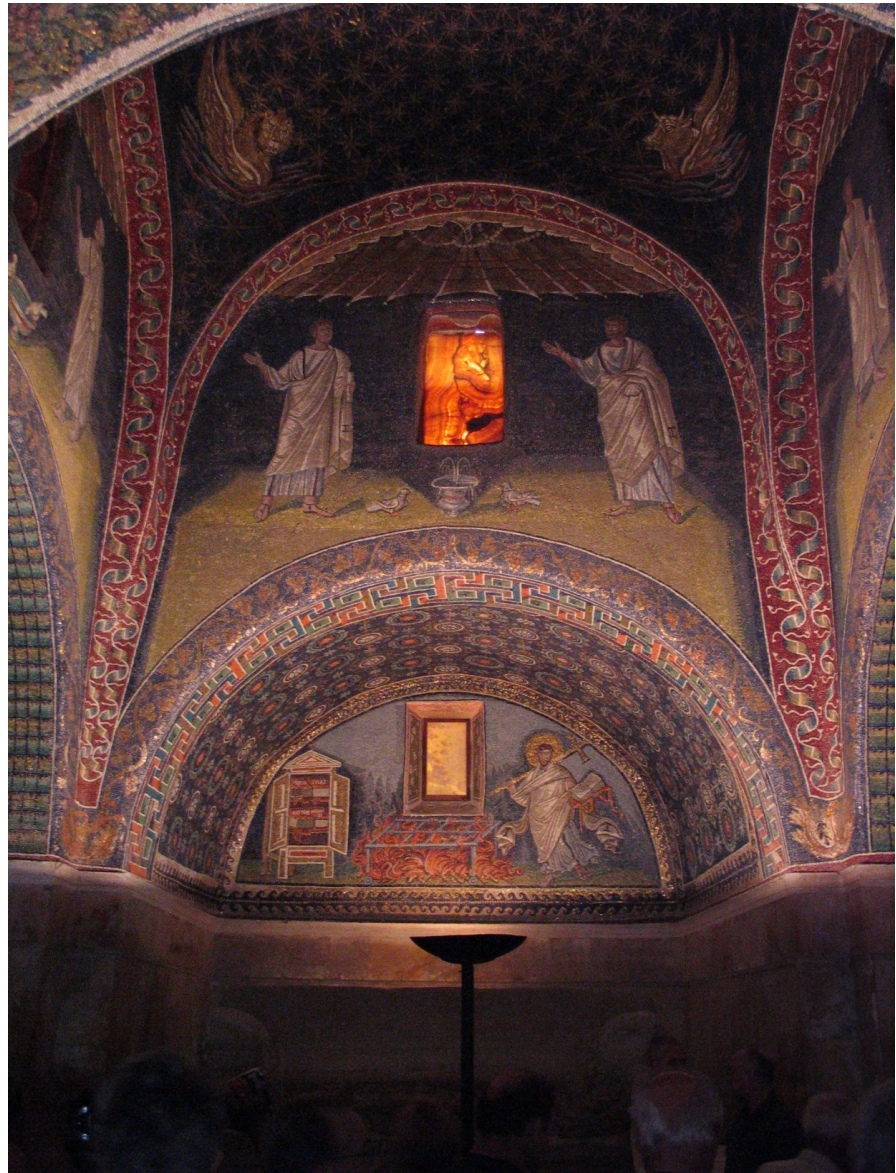


8.22 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Interior.^{xii}

After one's amazement at the heavenly splendor, the visitor comes to realize that there are stories all around us. These are not Roman stories of current events and real people, as we saw at the *Ara Pacis* or on *Trajan's Column*, but mystical stories. Under the influence of **Mysticism** the stories are symbolic, expressing religious feelings rather than empirical people in the present world.

Looking horizontally ahead, the first **lunette** be seen by the visitor is the story of St. Laurence of Rome [images 8.23 and 8.24].^{xiii} According to tradition Laurence was called from Toledo in Spain to Rome by Pope Sixtus II in 257. After he arrived the Pope was summoned before the Roman authorities, who demanded that he turn over the treasures of the church. The Pope, of course, refused. As the Pope was being handed over for punishment, Laurence reportedly said, "Oh, my Father, I wish I could go with you." The Pope replied, "Don't worry, my son. Your turn will come." Later Emperor Valerian's henchmen approached Laurence, who replied that if they came the next day he would provide the "treasures" of the church. *What were the "treasures" of the church? (Is Christianity even legal in 258 CE?)* The "treasures" were the poor, the blind, the lame, the homeless, the widows. The authorities were not amused and declared that he would pay for his insolent humor by being grilled on a gridiron. On August 10, 258 he was martyred. Laurence was reported to have exclaimed, as the torture ensued, "Let my body be turned; one side is broiled enough. You may eat."^{xiv}

It's quite a story, but *what peasant can resist the account of a man who knowingly stood up to Roman authorities, who willingly gave his life, who promoted the dignity of being human?* This mosaic, possibly the oldest to decorate a sacred space, depicts a gridiron, which could have held cooking pots, placed over coals. Laurence, wearing "discipleship" white, advances without hesitation toward the grill. His story will be retold in many locations, including on the Sistine Chapel ceiling painted by Michelangelo and in sculpture at Chartres Cathedral. You may easily recognize him because he often has a gridiron (which often looks like a ladder) either placed beside him or he is actually lying on the attribute.^{xvi} So influential was his story that our annual Perseid meteor shower was originally known as the "Tears of St. Laurence." As an aside, because of the bookcase, depicted on the left side of this lunette, Laurence is the patron saint of librarians. In the bookcase are the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.



8.23 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. *The Martyrdom of St. Laurence.*^{xv}



8.24 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Barrel lunette showing the *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence*.^{xvii}

Is this Renaissance painting of “*St. Lawrence Distributing the Riches of the Church*” [image 8.25] a fair interpretation of an event that happened 14 centuries earlier?



8.25 Bernardo Strozzi, Italian (1581-1644). *St. Lawrence Distributing the Riches of the Church*. C. 1625. Saint Louis Art Museum.^{xviii}

On the ground floor you were looking on a **horizontal** axis towards the lunettes; as you look into the dome you are looking on the **vertical** axis, ascending to the beauty of the heavenly world [image 8.26]. The dome still retains its original decorative program, with 8-pointed stars swirling in concentric circles around the symbol of ultimate sacrifice. **Pendentives** reach down like giant triangular vaults to make the transition from a square base to a circular dome. Like a renewed Garden of Eden, mosaics of running grape vines and Greek meanders link each of the barrel vaults of the cruciform plan.

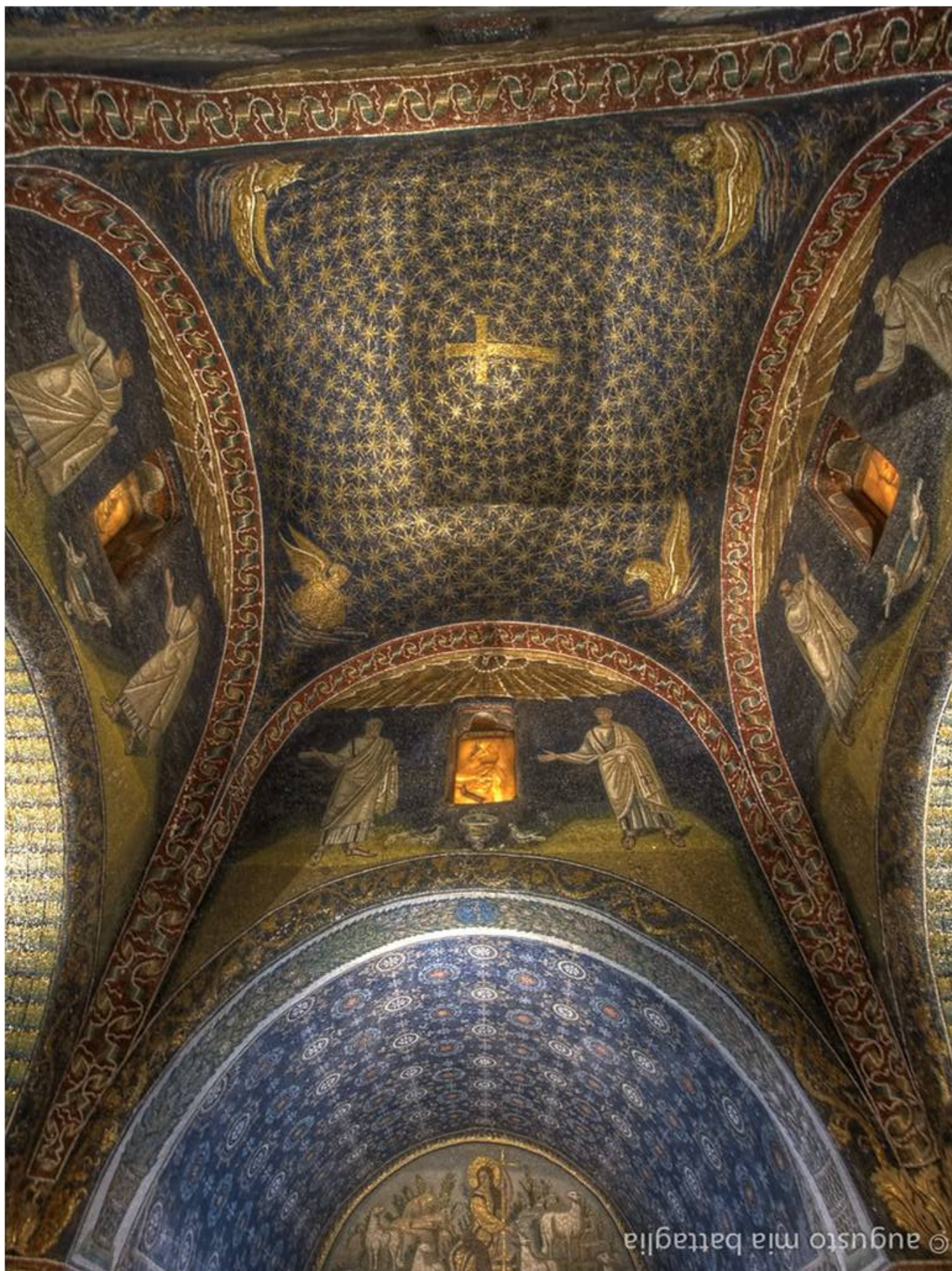


8.26 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Dome.^{xix}

Within the quadrangular lantern tower are visual reminders of the four Gospels, which coincidentally reach to the four corners of the earth. Clockwise from the top left:

1. A man (representing the book of Matthew, in which the genealogical record shows Jesus' humanity)
2. An ox (representing the book of Luke, which describes the nativity and Jesus' birth in a stable)
3. A lion (representing the book of Mark which promotes Jesus' royal dignity)
4. An eagle (representing the more mystical book of John).

We were once facing St. Laurence, then with a 90° turn we saw the upright cross on the dome. In image 8.27 we have now turned once again to face the entrance door. *How do you represent a god you have never seen? We have no likeness, no model, no description of what Christ looked like.*



8.27 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Dome and the *Good Shepherd*.^{xx}

This is not an ordinary shepherd. *What symbols are used in this Roman mosaic* [image 8.28]?

1. Christ does not hold a shepherd's staff; instead, he is subordinate to the cross.
2. He wears an imperial halo, a nimbus. (We will be seeing both the Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora wearing halos when we visit the Basilica of San Vitale in a later lesson.^{xxi})
3. As the "light of the world," the halo and Christ's head fill the spot occupied by windows in the other three lunettes.
4. He is youthful and without a beard, as we saw in the catacomb images.^{xxii}
5. He is wearing an expensive looking gold tunic with vertical *clavi* stripes, as were worn by the figures on the baptisteries in Ravenna^{xxiii} and earlier on the Faiyum portraits from Egypt.^{xxiv}
6. A *pallium* (Roman cloak) is draped over one shoulder and across his lap. Why is the *pallium* purple? Why was the *clavi* blue?
7. He wears shoes! In the Greek theater gods could wear shoes; others went barefoot.^{xxv}



8.28 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. *The Good Shepherd* (mosaic on barrel lunette above the entrance door).^{xxvi}

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Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Development of Symbolic Art: Galla Placidia." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/03/Galla_placidia%2C_solido_del_422.JPG

ⁱⁱ In Italian, "ci" and "ce" are pronounced like the "ce" in "cello." Phonetically, her name is pronounced gäl'ə pläsĭd'ĕä.

ⁱⁱⁱ See "Chapter 7, Constantine's Great Decisions." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{iv} Destroyed in World War II bombing of 1944 but rebuilt according to the original design.

^v See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Relics of Faith: Nicene Creed." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{vi} From Corrado Ricci: *Ravenna*. English version printed in Bergamo in 1913, page 58. Public domain at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ricci_-_Ravenna_-_Santa_Croce_\(reconstruction\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ricci_-_Ravenna_-_Santa_Croce_(reconstruction).png)

^{vii} Sign in front of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{viii} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/87e2545b-84d3-42ea-8084-4f0188a09c0c

^{ix} Ravenna had been a *municipium* of the Roman Republic since 89 BCE. Caesar Augustus built a port facility in Ravenna that could hold, repair, and provision 250 ships. For the next 300 years Ravenna would be Rome's main naval base for the eastern Mediterranean. There was plenty of used brick available.

^x The Khan Academy has produced a glittering video at the Mausoleum. <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/medieval-world/early-christian1/v/the-mausoleum-of-galla-placidia-ravenna>

^{xi} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wide_angle_view_-_Mausoleum_of_Galla_Placidia__Ravenna_2016.jpg

^{xii} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Interior_-_Mausoleum_of_Galla_Placidia__Ravenna_2016_\(2\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Interior_-_Mausoleum_of_Galla_Placidia__Ravenna_2016_(2).jpg)

^{xiii} Other sources identify the saint in this lunette as the Spanish martyr Saint Vincent.

^{xiv} The Legend of St. Laurence is fully recounted in the Medieval Sourcebook: The Golden Legend: Volume IV. Sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/goldenlegend/GoldenLegend-Volume4.asp

^{xv} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaik2_Mausoleum_Galla_Placidia.jpg

^{xvi} It is possible that this depiction inspired Dante's *Inferno*. The poet lived his final years in Ravenna and died here in 1321.

^{xvii} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/f03814a4-287c-4be8-abd0-bbc48c222897

^{xviii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, at the St. Louis Art Museum, 2018. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xix} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/f2e9c168-b28c-4d6b-9677-ce4b2b6cf34f

^{xx} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/baea8826-caf4-4334-9fd9-284b869e3fd6

^{xxi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Justinian, Master of Three Powers: San Vitale." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Christ as the Good Shepherd." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxiii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Orthodoxy vs. Heresy: Orthodox and Arian Baptisteries at Ravenna." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxiv} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Anticipating Byzantine Culture." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxv} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Relics of Faith." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxvi} Public domain at <https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/4d20882b-a1ad-4186-96ec-d0ee4420388d>

WITNESSES FOR IDEALISM

Sant' Apollinare Nuovo



8.29 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Originally dedicated in 504, Ravenna, Italy.¹

“Oh, when the saints go marching in!”ⁱⁱ Women on the left, men on the right—still marching, processing in identical rhythm to the colonnades on either side of the nave at the basilica of **Sant' Apollinare Nuovo** [image 8.29]. These lovely mosaics, in which virgins and monks are given equal status and elaborate costuming, stride idealistically over religious and political conflicts as well as significant damage from earthquakes and geological subsidence, pirates and war.

This lovely basilica had been built during the reign of the Ostrogothic king Theodoric (r. 493-526) when the *sedes imperialis* (Imperial seat) of the Western Roman Empire was in **Ravenna** and **Arianism** was the official court religion. Arians rejected the Orthodox doctrine of the consubstantiality of God the Father and Christ the Son. In their monotheistic belief, Christ had been created by God and was therefore subordinate to the Father; he was not “of the same substance” as Orthodox Christians professed. Built around the same time as the Arian Baptistery,ⁱⁱⁱ the church had been dedicated matter-of-factly to **Christ the Redeemer**. The royal palace of the king was located directly to the south of the basilica and it was possible that a door led directly from the palace grounds into the southern aisle of the church.

We do not know what the Arian artists placed on the walls of the nave, but Theodoric died in 526 and in 540 Ravenna was defeated by the Byzantine armies of Belisarius. Arian decoration was surely considered offensive to Orthodox authorities and needed to be “taken care of.” In the “reconciliation” to Orthodox theology images containing a Trinitarian emphasis were placed in numerous locations and a procession of martyrs was tiled to accentuate the long nave.

Constantine's legalization of Christianity in 313, as well as his fascination with relics, had led to a new devotion to the possibly 100,000 martyrs who had suffered imprisonments, beatings or death rather than abandon the faith. The extended area of the frieze was the appropriate place to celebrate those whose sacrifice had unified and strengthened the church.

St. Apollinare was one of those martyrs. As the first bishop of Ravenna, he was believed to have been sent by St. Peter as a missionary to Ravenna where he worked for nearly 20 years before being lapidated (stoned to death) by pagans or teenage hoodlums, ca. 75 CE. In an alternative version of his story, having the audacity to convert people and perform miracles, Apollinare was brought before a Roman judge, tortured and martyred about 180 CE. He was buried in a cemetery in Classe, which was the port city 8 km outside the city gates of Ravenna.^{iv}

The Arian basilica had long been praised for its gilded beams and coffers which reminded the populace of a *Coelum aureum* (Golden Heaven), and, indeed, they occasionally referred to the church by that glowing expression. In the 561 Orthodox reconsecration of the church under the Emperor Justinian, the gilded ceiling suggested a renaming of the facility to **Sanctus Martinus in Coelo Aureo** (St. Martin in Golden Heaven). Originally the **sanctuary** (including the apse and triumphal arch)^v would have been the liturgical focus. It is believed that mosaics on the sanctuary walls would have complimented the golden heavens but an earthquake sometime between 726 and 744 (during the reign of Archbishop John V) destroyed the entire eastern end.

Whatever "truth" there is to the story of St. Apollinare, his prestige in the Emilia-Romagna region was huge. Several communities of faith were influenced by him so in 856 when his remains were transferred from their previous location at the Basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe to a "safer" location inside Ravenna's walls and away from Arab pirates the basilica was rededicated again as **Sant' Apollinare Nuovo** (New Church of St. Apollinare) – "new" in that it was newer than the other churches around Ravenna with similar names. This specific "New" basilica is actually older than the one now known as Sant' Apollinare in Classe.

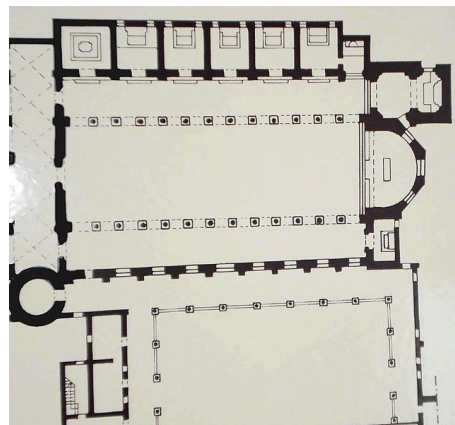
In the sixteenth century land subsidence, common to all structures in the shallow coastal aquifer of the Ravenna coast, had become so severe that the original floor was 1.25 to 1.5 meters (4 - 4 ½ feet) below today's floor. At that time the entire colonnade (including the arches), mosaics and floor were raised by the removal of a horizontal band (possibly stucco) between the arcade and the current mosaic frieze of processing saints. A new elongated Baroque sanctuary as well as a new marble portico was added during that renovation.

Adding to the insults on this precious basilica, bomb damage during the first World War destroyed that sanctuary. The current sanctuary dates from 1996.

Stylistically, the traditional basilica church was similar in plan to Old St. Peter's Basilica and St. Paul's Outside the Walls, both in Rome.^{vi} The façade was probably enclosed by a quadraporticus in front. Though smaller than Constantine's Throne Room (Aula Palatina) in Trier, the interior proportions of 138' long by 69' wide were also equally correct according to Pythagorean (Greek) logic: a perfect 2:1 ratio. The ninth to tenth century **campanile** (belltower) has more windows at the top to make it look more slender, taller, more graceful, and to reduce the weight of the structure.

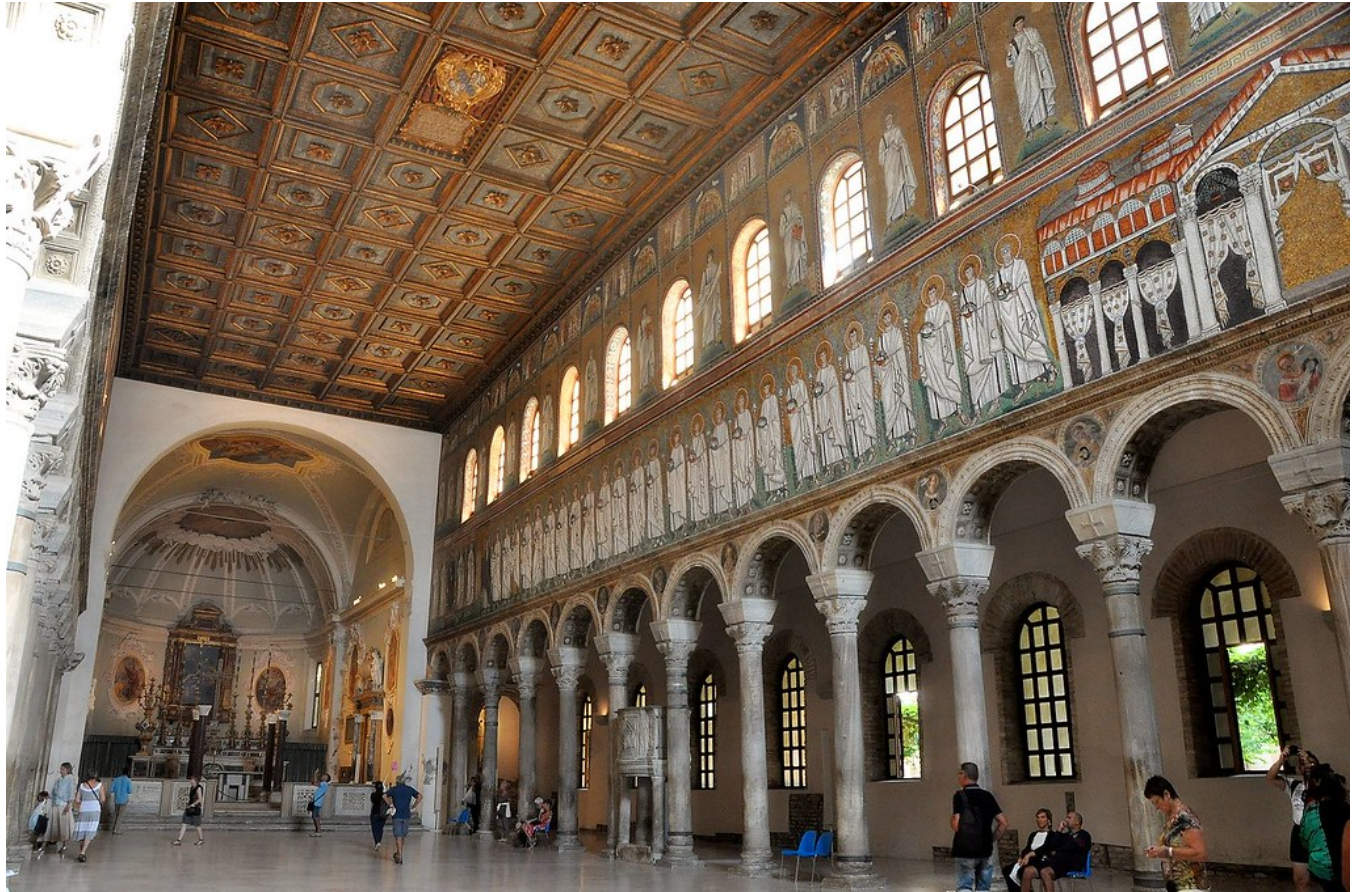


8.30 Marble portico of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, which was rebuilt after the First World War. The entrance is on the west side of the church.^{vii}



8.31 Plan of the Basilica of St. Apollinare Nuovo. The apse intentionally faces to the east, because Christ will come as "the glory of the God of Israel from the east." (Ezekiel 43:2. KJV).^{viii}

In the nave as seen today, our attention is drawn first to the more dignified (and warmer) south side where a heavenly court of 26 male martyrs is moving east toward Christ and his angels [image 8.32]. Washed of all sins, the saints are wearing their chaste robes of innocence and carrying their crowns of victory over death. We are unsure about the significance of the *gammadia* (hierograms of Greek writing) on their mantles.^{ix} Slight variations in each saint's hair color, facial hair, head tilt and crown decoration give us little clues to their identity; we are grateful to have them designated by the names printed above each head.



8.32 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. East and South sides of nave.^x

Leading the procession is Saint Martin of Tours who died in 397 [see also image 8.33]. A Roman soldier, he was remembered for his Christian compassion when he shared his cloak with a beggar. He later left the Roman army because he considered serving in the military to be incompatible with his Christian beliefs and in the 370s he became bishop of Tours in Francia. The renaming of the church in his honor (St. Martin in Golden Heaven) was both a compliment to his fierce opposition to Arianism and a political statement aligning the Byzantines and the Franks in the face of Lombard threats. The artist has honored Martin, who was not a martyr, with a new, royally influenced, purple mantle. St. Martin is followed in the procession by two popes, Saint Clement (88-99) and Saint Sixtus II (257-258). In mystically significant number four position is the man who served Pope Sixtus II so loyally, St. Laurence.^{xi} He is distinguished by his golden tunic under a white mantle. The theologian Hippolytus comes next, followed by another man who was also a pope, Saint Cornelius (251-253). Cornelius is holding his crown with just one hand and is pointing his right hand toward the man behind him, Cyprianus of Carthage, who was a friend and ally during a different schism between the Orthodox Christians and another heretical sect. Included later in the procession are saints who had a close connection to Ravenna: Vitalis (11th in the line), his sons Gervasius and Protasius (12th and 13th in line), and Apollinare (17th in the line). Most importantly, both the monks and the virgins on the opposite wall are witnesses in an eternal procession which is moving forward into the heavenly presence of God.



8.33 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Male martyrs Saints Martin, Clement, Sixtus II, Laurence (wearing gold), Hippolytus, and Cornelius. After 561.^{xii}

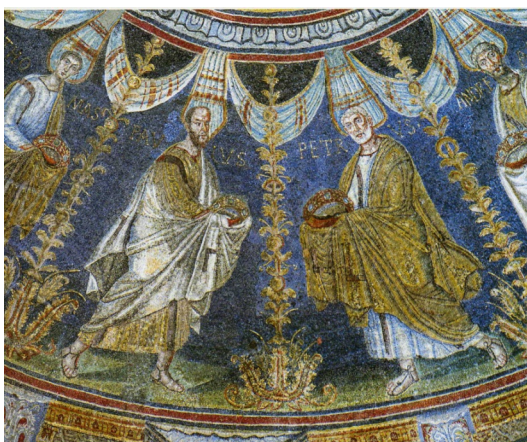


8.34 Arch of Constantine, Distribution of Largess. 312-315, Rome, Italy.^{xiii}

Compare the dignity of these saints [image 8.33] to the peasants illustrated on the Arch of Constantine [image 8.34]. Both display the Classical Greek characteristic of *isocephaly* in that their heads are on the same level. These are both are **idealistic** representations. Balance and order are important; individualism is not. Within each composition, the poses, expressions and dress of the figures are similar.

The contrasting treatment of the art element of space in these two examples is significant. The martyrs are tall and elegant; the peasants are stubby. The saints are icon-like, frontal, and eternal. The processing men are presented in closed space: they are neatly placed in almost rectangular frames without overlapping or depth. The commoners, on the other hand, do show some overlap and three-dimensional space.

A comparison of the martyrs' procession with the earlier sequence of the disciples on the dome of the Orthodox Baptistry [image 8.35] depicts a widely different treatment of light. The disciples exhibit dramatic shading in their clothing and they cast dark shadows as they stride forth on firm, green ground. This brings a **naturalistic** reality to their existence which is complimented by the starry firmament glittering behind them. The martyrs [image 8.36], on the other hand, are not depicted in natural light; instead, they are set against an otherworldly and heavenly gold background. The martyrs are portrayed in undefiled, pure color. The primary colors of blue, red and yellow are eternal colors; all other colors are derived from these. According to Platonic philosophy, shading or blurring of color would have suggested the corporeal matter of this lower world which is focused on mortal, fleshy and temporal things. Complimenting the **mystical** presentation, the feet of the martyrs are surrounded by an *aureole* of light made by bright yellow *tesserae*. Serving as a connection between Heaven and Earth, they radiated the light of Christ from within. The sixth century theologian and neo-Platonic philosopher Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite stated, "While man is a spirit imprisoned in an earthly body, a saint is more spiritual in form." Here the artists have willfully inverted the natural order of optical experience. They are denying this transient world.



8.35 Orthodox Baptistry, Ravenna. Paul and Peter meet under the feet of John the Baptist and Christ. After 458.^{xiv}



8.36 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Male martyrs Saints Martin, Clement, Sixtus, Laurence (wearing gold), Hippolytus, and Cornelius. After 540.^{xv}

Look again at the entire length of the south wall [image 8.37]. The Orthodox-professing saints are processing from the Arian King Theodoric's palace, which is labeled PALATIVM [image 8.38], toward the Throne of God. Behind the palace walls are possibly some buildings from sixth century Ravenna, or this may be a suggestion of heavenly Jerusalem, or these may just be "buildings." In a didactic manner, however, the Byzantine artists turned this from a "cityscape" into a "teachable moment." *What is with those random fingers, hands and parts of arms on the columns of the Palatium? And what is the doorway on the far right side?*



8.37 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. South side of nave.^{xvi}

It is possible that the floating fingers, hands and parts of arms [images 8.38 and 8.39] were part of a mosaic which was unfinished at the time of Theodoric's death. The more accepted speculation is that these are the remnants from the original Ostrogothic scene of the palace which included the king, his family, courtiers and Arian priests. Quite likely the Eastern Roman armies, upon conquering the heretics, lost no time in renaming the church and obliterating the face and form of Theodoric wherever they could. In a radical renovation, seated heretical figures within the luxurious Palatium were removed, *tessera by tessera*, and the space filled with mosaic curtains. Those who had been standing with their hands raised in gestures of acclamation, or in *orant* positions of prayer, have been allowed to remain, in a gesture of "Damnatio Memoriae" — "don't forget to remember."

Perhaps the authorities were not determined to erase a figure from memory, but to remind the viewer that the figure had been erased.

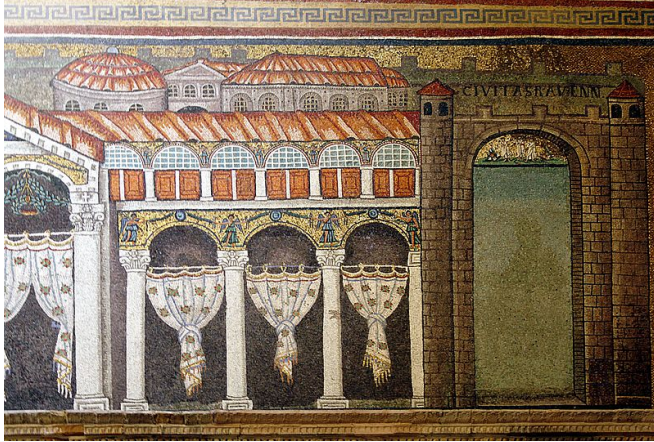


8.38 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Mosaic depicting Theodoric's Palace.^{xvii}



8.39 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Close-up of Theodoric's Palace.^{xviii}

At the far right of the mosaic of the palace is a lunette over a doorway which gave another warning to heretics [images 8.40 and 8.41]. The door possibly led to the church of St. Laurence (aka Mausoleum of Galla Placidia).^{xix} It is usually asserted that the lunette depicts Christ standing between two apostles. He holds a cross over one shoulder and a book in his other hand while he tramples on the evil of this world. This image sends one of two messages. If the lunette had originally been in the central arch of the *Palatium* pediment (now empty), then Christ was stomping on Satan. If it had originally been made for this location, then he was stomping out indigenous religion, i.e. the Arians. With either placement, Christ was defending his church.

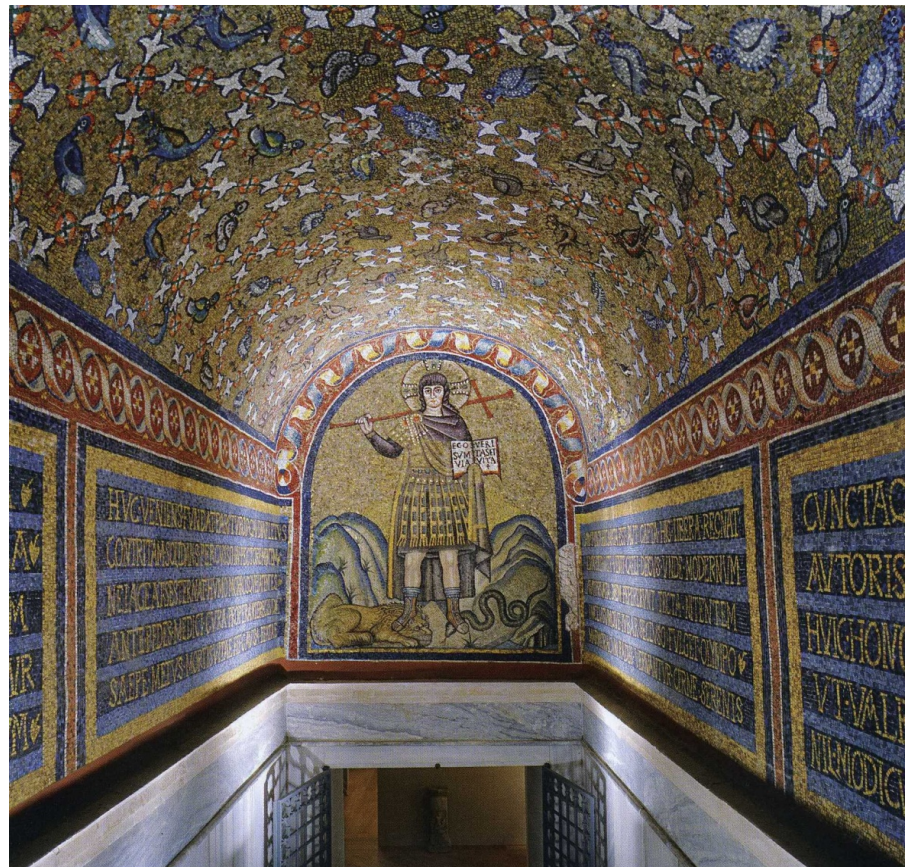


8.40 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Right side of the Palace and a door.^{xx}



8.41 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. *Trampling of the basilisk and serpent.* Transom above a former doorway.^{xxi}

A similar image from the century older Chapel of Saint Andrew in Ravenna expressed the message of a warriorlike Christ more bluntly. This is known as a "Militans" and is possibly the earliest known image of this subject [image 8.42]. Here a youthful Christ is dressed as a Roman soldier with a shining halo around his head, a purple robe over his shoulders, the cross in one hand and a book open to showing the text of John 14.6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." The iconography derives from Psalm 91:13 "the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet" (KJV). The verse was part of the daily monastic service of *compine* (final prayers at the end of the day), and also sung in the Roman liturgy for Good Friday, the day of Christ's Crucifixion.



8.42 Chapel of Saint Andrew. *Christ Treading the Beasts.* 495-520, Museo Arcivescovile, Ravenna.^{xxii}

Recapping the lineup: along the south wall of the Basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo the men are processing from our right to the left, from the earthly palace of the King Theodoric toward the gem-studded Throne of God which is near the apse [image 8.43]. Christ awaits them on a lyre-backed throne [image 8.44]. With his right hand he is making the gesture of an orator. Prior to the 1852 restoration/renovation by Felice Kibel he held an open book, on which was originally written "Ego sum Rex Gloriarum" ("I am the King of Glory"). Today we see the pointed scepter which Kibel placed in his hands. Christ is wearing an imperial purple tunic and mantle with gold *clavus* and he is crowned with a gemmed halo. This could have been an interpretation of Matthew 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory" (KJV).



8.43 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Panorama of mosaics along the south lateral wall.^{xxiii}



8.44 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. *Christ Surrounded by Angels and Saints*. Mosaic from a Ravennate Italian-byzantine workshop, completed in 526 AD by the so-called "Master of Sant' Apollinare"^{xxiv}.

The men having been given careful instruction, a similar intentional correction to heretical thought was provided for women on the "less prestigious" north side. At equal elevation to the men, 22 virgins are processing from our left to the right, from the Port of Classe toward the Theotokos (the Mother of God) and Christ who are seated near the apse [image 8.45].



8.45 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Panorama of the north lateral wall mosaics.^{xxv}

The round hulled ships, depicted on the left in image 8.46, are merchant vessels in the commercial port city. Again, we don't know if the buildings of Classe shown behind the walls represent extant buildings or if they, like those depicted behind the Palatium, were included simply for artistic purposes. Neither do we know about the original Arian decorating

program of the basilica, but it now appears that the ladies are intentionally leaving behind the luxury of trade, material goods and the walled town as they process towards the Mother of God.



8.46 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Mosaic of the *Port and Town of Classe*.^{xxvi}

The processing women [images 8.47 and 8.48] look similar to the processing men. Cleansed of all sin, their presentation is also **idealistic**. They are all the same height, displaying the Classical Greek characteristic of *isocephaly*. Like the men, they carry their crowns of victory over death. Their poses, expressions, hair style, head tilt and expressions have the similarity of familial sisters with a little variation allowed for each woman's shimmering silk and jeweled mantle. Again, they are presented in the closed space of nearly individual rectangular frames. They are icon-like with their eternal, frontal position. Unlike the men, they have no *gammadia* (hierograms of Greek writing) on their mantles, so we are really grateful to have them identified by the names written over their heads. The only woman who stands out is Saint Agnes, who has a lamb at her feet. Although the name 'Agnes' actually means 'pure' in Greek, it was quickly associated with the Latin word *agnus*, meaning 'lamb', and Saint Agnes is usually depicted with a lamb in Christian art.



8.47 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. *Women processing toward the Throne of the Theotokos*.^{xxvii}



8.48 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Detail of Virgin Martyrs Lucia, Caecilia, Eulalia, Agnes, and Agatha.^{xxviii}

We can be certain about whom they are going to see [image 8.49]. The 431 Council of Ephesus had clarified the concept of “*Theotokos*” as “Mother of God.” But in Greek the word literally means “bearer of God” and some heretical groups argued to address her as “God bearer” ranked her as a goddess, a concept used by heathens. By placing her in such an elevated position within this church, Orthodox authorities seemed to declaring, “Never you mind. Here she will be honored.”



8.49 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. *Theotokos* and Christ.^{xxix}



8.50 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. *Theotokos*. We can't miss the opportunity to marvel at her distinctive halo, with the gold tesserae set in swirling patterns at 30° from vertical, ensuring that they would catch light differently.^{xxx}

And who will lead the women? Three Magi, of course [images 8.51 and 8.52]. Wearing colorful eastern robes with leopard-spotted trousers (tights?) and Phrygian caps they look quite different from the women. They are not carrying crowns, but are presumably holding gifts. In the upper right hand corner (above Caspar) the Star of Bethlehem may be seen. The Persian caps replaced crowns in the 1852 reworking of the scene by Felice Kibel. But still, you may be asking, “*Why Persian?*” The correct answer was, “Wisdom comes from the East—and Constantinople is to the east!” Everyone, from the East as well as from the West, was expected to prostrate themselves in the presence of the Trinitarian God.



8.51 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Agnes, Agatha, Pelagia, Eufemia and the Wise Men (Magi): Balthasar, Melchior and Caspar. ^{xxx1}



8.52 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Three Wise Men. ^{xxxii}

We do not know what decoration was on either the lower or middle zone during King Theodoric's time. There may or may not have been Magi. But, in any case, *why did the Orthodox authorities depict three?* Not only were three gifts mentioned in the Bible (gold, frankincense and myrrh), but three brings emphasis to the Holy Trinity and was, thus, an anti-Arian statement.

Just as we are able to scan our view from one end to the other, so the sun processes across the frieze [image 8.53]. *Tesserae* are not industrially flat, square or set on a planed surface. *Tessera* means “four corners” in Greek. The cubes could be hand-cut from stone, mother-of-pearl, gold, silver, or colored glass with 24k gold leaf sandwiched in between the layers. The *tesserae* were sometimes intentionally, and often unintentionally, set at dissimilar inclinations so they would reflect light differently as the illumination passes over the undulating surface. Light may be reflected off of a *tesserae*, giving the impression that each tile is emitting light, or the light may bounce from one point to another. When the sun moves, the figures on the wall appear to be in movement!



8.53 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Raking view of the north wall.^{xxxiii}

The walls of the nave were divided into three horizontal zones. We have been examining the processions of virgins and martyrs in the lower zone which were of newer, **Byzantine** influence.



8.54 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Mosaics on the north side.^{xxxiv}

The middle zone, between the windows, is also of Byzantine influence [image 8.55]. In total thirty-two men are depicted, each holding an open or closed scroll or *codex* (book). None of them is identified, and they do not seem to represent specific persons, unlike the male and female saints just beneath them. The men have been interpreted as prophets, evangelists, patriarchs, biblical authors or members of the heavenly court surrounding the Christ and the Madonna below them.



8.55 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Between the windows: members of the heavenly court. Upper zone, above the windows: scenes from the life of Jesus. In this photograph, the c. 520 mosaic of the *Good Shepherd Separating the Sheep from the Goats* is in the center. ^{xxxv}

The mosaics in the upper zone depict the **Roman** sense of physical presence. The narrative movement depicted in these scenes at the very top of the wall is more similar to the lunettes at the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia and to even older scenes on Trajan's Column. They provide a good contrast with the less than half-a-century newer static, devotional and ritualistic **Byzantine** mosaics. Whereas the more modern processional frieze and middle zones are each 10' high (three meters), the upper zone, so far away and so small, is only 45" (1.15 meters) high. This Christological Cycle from the original Arian attic zone displays 26 scenes from the life of Jesus. Presumably these were non-offensive to Orthodox tradition and were allowed to remain, or perhaps they were just too high to be a bother.

These scenes are the earliest surviving **long cycle** of Gospel scenes in monumental art. Thirteen scenes from Jesus' ministry are on the north wall; thirteen scenes from his last week on earth (the Passion) are on the south wall. Two examples will be examined. Look for the difference between the differing depictions of Jesus.

The mosaic of the *Distribution of the Loaves and Fishes* [images 8.55 and 8.56] is directly above the first window west of the apse (on the far east end of the north wall). As one faces the altar, it is on the viewer's left side, placed with other miracle events close to the sanctuary where the Eucharist and miracle of Transubstantiation^{xxxvi} were celebrated.



8.56 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, north wall.^{xxxvii}



8.57 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, north wall, *Distribution of the Loaves and Fishes*.^{xxxviii}

The miracle depicted in image 8.57 was recounted in all four Gospel books (Matthew 14:15-21, Mark 6:38, Luke 9:13 and John 6:9). The event as told in the book of Matthew is similar to the others:

And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, this is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes. He said, Bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children (KJV).^{xxxix}



8.58 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, south wall. *The Last Supper*.^{xli}



8.59 Basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, *Last Supper* (520).^{xli}

Looking to the viewer's right on the south wall, the mosaic of the *Last Supper* was also placed at the front, and also near where the Eucharist was celebrated. It is the second scene in from the apse in the attic zone [images 8.58 and 8.59]. The event at the table is "read" from left to right. Jesus, on the left, may be identified by his jeweled Greek cross within a *nimbus* (halo), his purple tunic and mantle, and his hand raised in a gesture of peace. The artist, with the skillful use of tesserae, depicted tense and unhappy Judas on the far right. *Could that many bodies really fit into the allotted space? Do the disciples have corporeal bodies, or was this a mystical scene?*

How is Jesus depicted differently in these last two scenes? Why might he be beardless in one and have a beard in the other?

The answer is an ongoing argument. Some authorities suggest that the "beardless" portrayal suggests Jesus' human nature and his wonder-working Son of Man qualities. They contend that the "bearded" depiction indicates his more mature, divine nature as the glorified Son of God. Other scholars have suggested that these mosaics were just the products of two different workshops.

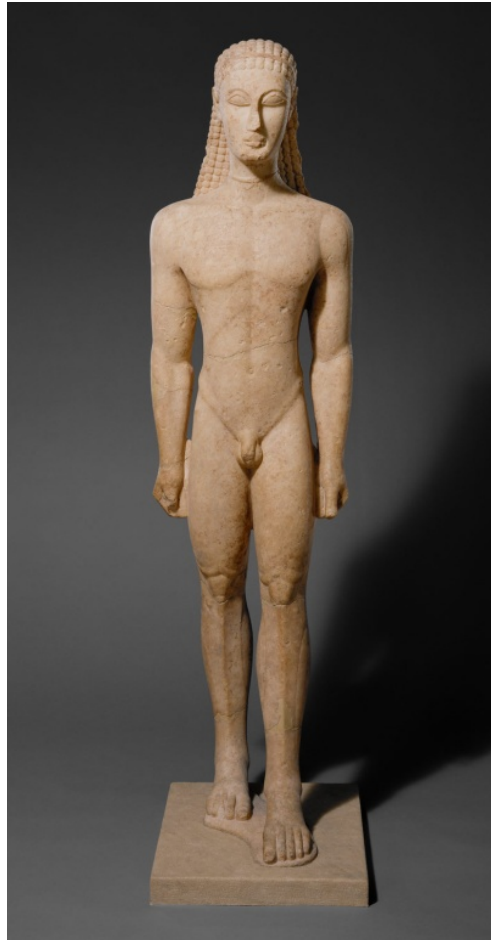
Historically, Egyptian pharaohs had a "beard of authority" that could be worn for ceremonial occasions. Greek philosophers, poets and statesmen wore beards. Roman emperors had been clean-shaven until Hadrian (r. 117-138), who wore a beard to display his admiration of Greek culture. St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430) stated, "The beard signifies the courageous man, the beard distinguishes the grown man, the earnest, the active, the vigorous."^{xliii} In Eastern tradition, from the seventh century onward, shaving will be considered a vulgar, Western/heathen practice.

Most of the attention in this lesson has been on the martyrs. The martyr was a new kind of hero. He, or she, was the contemporary equivalent to an Archaic Greek *kouros*, or a *kore*: one who was triumphant, balanced and confident [image 8.61]. The martyr gives no indication of emotion or strenuous activity. Like the Jewish male lamb presented at Yom Kippur, the *kouros* was an exemplar of physical and moral perfection.

Portrayals of *kouroi*, saints and others in the heavenly court were an opportunity to give the individual *kleos*.^{xliii} The fame and glory of *kleos* was earned through nobility of character, courage and self-sacrifice. *Kleos* is a trait that belongs to only humans; gods cannot demonstrate altruism because they have nothing to lose. By definition, gods don't die. The intention of these images was not to make an individual portrait but to call attention to the heroic excellence of their witness. Like the *kouros*, saintly glory could be gained through the unwavering witness of one's faith.



8.60 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Detail of *Virgin Martyr Agnes*.^{xlv}



8.61 Archaic Greek Kouros (youth). C. 590-580 BCE, Metropolitan Museum of Art.^{xliv}



8.62 Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Detail of *Holy Martyr Vincent*.^{xlvi}

There are a number of, often conflicting, stories about each of the martyrs but the meaning of “martyr” needs to be kept in mind. “Martyr” means “to witness.” It does not mean “to die.” Christian martyrs were the victims of imperial persecution. By forcing the authorities to put them to death they laid bare for all to see the intrinsic violence of the so-called Pax Romana. Their imitation of Christ, even to the point of death, brought Christ to the present.

To the Greeks, nudity had the connotation of heroic excellence. Earthly beauty was a metaphor for abstract beauty, for spiritual understanding, for intellectual harmony. Byzantine Christians shared the Greek understanding of heroic excellence, spiritual understanding and beauty, filtered through Plato and the neo-Platonists. As we saw at the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia, beauty is not to be found in this physical world. Lift your eyes: look to the higher symbolic world, the world of the heavens. But, the Christians had a contrary attitude toward any “pagan” practices, and especially toward nudity. Better, they reasoned, to suggest abstract beauty through symbols of heaven. If the heavenly city of God was “all manner of precious stones: jasper, sapphire, chalcedony (agate), emerald, sardonyx (onyx), sardius (carnelian),

chrysolite, beryl, topaz, chrysoprasus, jacinth and amethyst...and the street was of pure gold as if it were transparent glass” (Revelation 21:19-21, KJV) then heavenly beauty with gold and jewels was an ideal exemplar of beauty.

We first saw the heavenly glory of light that does not depict material form (i.e. dematerialized light) when we visited New Kingdom Egypt. Without the play of light and shadow, three-dimensional space was flattened. Isolated from the background, the processing saints at Sant' Apollinare Nuovo were also silhouetted, this time in a technique known as *fondo d'oro*, which literally translated means “gold background.” That makes the project sound expensive, and it was! But the ones being honored were worth the high cost of the gold leaf infused *tesserae*. The contrast of gold and the jewels of heavenly beauty provided a mystical sparkle, suggesting the spiritual truth of the martyrs' witness. As declared a writing credited to the Chapel of St. Andrew, “Oh the light is born here, or captured here, here it reigns free.” The saints are providing us with a glimpse of the perfection of heaven.

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Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 8, Witnesses for Idealism: Sant' Apollinare Nuovo.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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- ⁱ Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f8/Ravenna_Basilica_of_Sant%27Apollinare_inside.jpg
- ⁱⁱ This setting was probably not in anyone's mind when the black spiritual was written, and then famously recorded by Louis Armstrong in 1938, but it so fits this locale. The hymn tune immediately comes to mind when the visitor witnesses the procession.
- ⁱⁱⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 8, Orthodoxy vs. Heresy: Orthodox and Arian Baptisteries in Ravenna.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{iv} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 8, Spotlight on the World of the Spirit: Sant' Apollinare in Classe.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^v In post-Reformation congregations, the entire church interior is called the sanctuary.
- ^{vi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 7, Constantine's Great Decisions.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{vii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{viii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St_Apollinare_Nuovo_-_plan.jpg
- ^{ix} Z (zoe) could mean “life.” N (nu) could suggest “Nazarene.” Because St. Augustine promotes the “four-squared stability of saint's lives” Γ (gamma) might suggest the quality of a “cornerstone.”
- ^x Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/65fe52e9-b2c8-49e7-a606-0046b7b438a6
- ^{xi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 8, Development of Symbolic Art: Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xii} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/f0521586-ec64-45c8-b07c-26a2b8f587e7
- ^{xiii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Constantine: Converting the Empire to Christianity. The Ambition of Constantine.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xiv} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xv} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/f0521586-ec64-45c8-b07c-26a2b8f587e7
- ^{xvi} Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/65fe52e9-b2c8-49e7-a606-0046b7b438a6
- ^{xvii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Left_section_-_Theodoric%27s_Palace_-_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo_-_Ravenna_2016.jpg
- ^{xviii} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/df/Sant%27.Apollinare.Nuovo08.jpg
- ^{xix} See Hartman, Kathleen J. “Chapter 8, Development of Symbolic Art: Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.” *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xx} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Right_section_-_Theodoric%27s_Palace_-_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo_-_Ravenna_2016.jpg
- ^{xxi} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxii} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cc/Christ_treading_the_beasts_-_Chapel_of_Saint_Andrew_-_Ravenna_2016.jpg
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- ^{xxiv} Shared under Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike license at christianiconography.info/Edited%20in%202013/Italy/sApolNuovoRightNave.christAngels.html
- ^{xxv} Public domain at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basilica_of_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo#/media/File:Sant_Apollinare_Nuovo_North_Wall_Panorama_01.jpg
- ^{xxvi} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_the_Port_and_Town_of_Classe,_Basilica_of_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo,_Ravenna,_Italy_\(6124783623\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_the_Port_and_Town_of_Classe,_Basilica_of_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo,_Ravenna,_Italy_(6124783623).jpg)
- ^{xxvii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo#/media/File:Ravenna-apolinarenuovo01.jpg

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- xxxii Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ravenna_Basilica_of_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo_3_Wise_men.jpg
- xxxiii Photo at Sant' Apollinare Nuovo by Kristine Betts, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- xxxiv Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/77e2e651-d0af-48c3-bd2d-081eab6690da
- xxxv Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fd/Ravenna%2C_sant%27apollinare_nuovo%2C_int.%2C_storie_cristologiche%2C_epoca_di_teodorico_01.JPG
- xxxvi Transubstantiation is the belief that during Mass (a religious ceremony) what appears to be ordinary bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
- xxxvii Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- xxxviii Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Feeding_the_multitude,_Sant%27Apollinare_Nuovo,_Ravenna.jpg
- xxxix In a related event, it will be claimed that Hagia Sophia in Constantinople has a casket with crumbs left from this feeding of the 5000. See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, The Junction of East and West: Hagia Sophia." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- xl Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/63/S._Apollinare_Nuovo_Last_Supper.jpg
- xli Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- xlii Augustine of Hippo, *Exposition on Psalm 133*, 6. Leviticus 19:27, Clement of Alexandria, and the Capuchin Friars had similar comments.
- xliiii *Kleos* is related to the English word "to call," as in "what others say about you."
- xliv Metropolitan Museum of Art. Public domain at www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/32.11.1/
- xlv Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/deda97a6-e2fb-47ac-92c2-b0bded4e39e5
- xlvi Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_von_San_Apollinare_Nuovo_in_Ravenna_001.jpg

JUSTINIAN, MASTER OF THREE POWERS

Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna



8.63 Basilica of San Vitale. 526-547, Ravenna.ⁱ Form attributed to Isidore of Miletus.

After Constantine himself, the **Emperor Justinian I** is the most prominent individual in the history of the Western Roman Empire. In 527 Justinian had just begun his reign in the Eastern part of the Empire and was desirous of also reclaiming the lost western-half of the historical Roman Empire. With a similar intent to that the proclamation made by Constantine's colossal statue at the Basilica Nova,ⁱⁱ Justinian wanted a fail-safe demonstration of his power. As an exemplification of that authoritative power, the exclusivity of Orthodox theology would be of primary importance.

Justinian adopted the project to make sure that this city, the *sedes imperialis* (Imperial seat) of the Western Roman Empire, would be worthy of the glorious ritual which would demonstrate his authority. His power was proclaimed in Ravenna not with a triumphal arch or colossal statue, but with this remarkable basilica.ⁱⁱⁱ His ultimate objective would be met at this location: all would recognize his proud mastery of three types of power: political, military and religious.

The building of the **Basilica of San Vitale** [image 8.63] had probably been begun by Ecclesius, the Orthodox bishop in Ravenna, the year before Justinian's reign commenced. In 524 the bishop had visited Constantinople with Pope John I. While there he had been stunned by Byzantine buildings, both new and old, and returned to Ravenna filled with inspiration. The location was auspicious: archaeological excavations have revealed the remains of a small fifth century chapel with mosaic floors. That site was had perhaps been consecrated to St. Vitalis (San Vitale), a local soldier from the first, or possibly fourth, century who was said to have undergone various tortures to make him abjure his faith. Finally the martyr was thrown in a ditch and stones and dirt were heaped upon him. According to the tradition repeated in Ravenna, Vitalis and his wife Valeria were the parents of Milanese martyrs Gervasius and Protasius.^{iv} Adhering to the Roman tradition of "*pater familias*" the rank of father held precedence over the sons; therefore, Ravenna, home of the father, held a higher status and was more "deserving" of being the western *sedes imperialis* than Milan.

The now soggy floor of the old chapel is 27.5 inches (70 centimeters) below the floor of the present basilica of San Vitale and is today covered by ground water [image 8.64]. The hole in the floor of San Vitale isn't much to look at, but the political status of Ravenna and the relics of the saint made it a faithworthy justification for a centrally-planned building overlaying the former chapel, in the popular style then being built in Constantinople.



8.64 Basilica of San Vitale. "View" of the remains of the fifth century chapel consecrated to St. Vitalis. ^{vi}



8.65 Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. 425-450, Ravenna. ^v

Adding to its prime-estate status, the chapel was adjacent to the magnificent Mausoleum of Galla Placidia [image 8.65]. ^{vii} The Mausoleum had not been built around a relic but it did have an inspirational stellar dome. (Not incidentally, because of subsidence the floor of the Mausoleum had been raised 56 inches (1.43 meters) in the sixteenth century. We should be grateful anything is still standing in Ravenna!)

The specific inspiration for San Vitale may have come from several sources, but these aerial perspectives [images 8.66 and 8.67] encourage us to appreciate the unique similarity of the **central plans** of Santa Costanza ^{viii} in Rome and San Vitale in Ravenna. The **axis** of both structures is up toward the central dome.

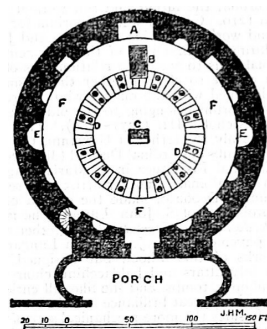


8.66 Bird's eye view of the Mausoleo di Santa Costanza (right) and the ruins of Constantine's funerary hall, where Costanza may have originally been buried (left). Built before 350 CE, Rome. ^x

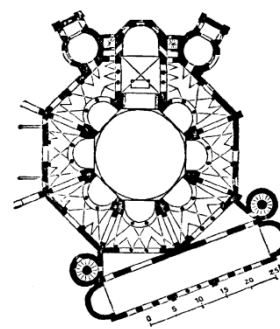


8.67 Bird's eye view of San Vitale, Ravenna. Built 526-547. ^{ix}

Both buildings were formed by two concentric rings which designate a circular **ambulatory** [images 8.66 and 8.67]. San Vitale adds further symbolism to the annular vault with an eight-sided octagon. The central octagon is looped by seven *exedrae* (semi-circles) which suggest God as an infinite power which expands in all directions. The eighth *exedra* opens into the **sanctuary**, which ends in an eastwardly projecting **apse** that reaches up into the second story **gallery** area. The central octagon is surrounded by a second octagon, which forms the second story ambulatory. The 197' **tiburum** (lantern tower) is above the central octagon [image 8.68]. It, too, is a symbolic eight-sided octagon. On the west side is the **narthex**, through which we have entered.



8.68 Plan of the Mausoleum of Santa Costanza, Rome, Italy. C. 350 CE. ^{xii}



8.69 San Vitale plan. ^{xi}

As we approach the nave we are encouraged to “Look up! Look forward!” That has been a recurring refrain ever since we arrived in Ravenna. Here elongated Roman arches, in double arcades, lead to vaulted semi-domes, then more arches, and then the central dome. The overwhelming changing patterns of light, reflecting off of sparkling glass *tesserae* and polished marble, were very intentional. It is likely that glass windows originally captured that light from every direction; these, reset in 1904, are an alabaster imitation.



8.70 Basilica of San Vitale. Wide angle photo of the interior.^{xiii} The dome was frescoed in 1780 by Serafino Barozzi and Ubaldo Gandolfi of Bologna and Jacopo Guarana of the Giambattista Tiepolo School, Venice.

Mystical configurations in support of Orthodox theology are all around us [image 8.70]. The *tiburum* (lantern tower) is eight sided, like the nearby baptismal fonts.^{xiv} Eight windows, symbolizing infinity, emphasize the octagonal shape. The apse has two levels, symbolizing heaven and earth. The apse also has three windows which is just one of several references to the Trinitarian fervor to be seen in this church.

The apse mosaic illustrates the Second Coming [images 8.71]. A beardless Christ is wearing a purple tunic with a broad golden stripe (*clavus*) and sitting on a blue globe. Christ's head is surrounded by a halo in which we see a jeweled cross. The gold background suggests this is a heavenly scene which is complimented by the Four Rivers^{xv} flowing out of Paradise. In his left hand Christ has a scroll with the seven seals of the Apocalypse from the Book of Revelation.^{xvi} In his right hand he is acting like a Greek Nike as he extends the martyr's crown to the local hero, St. Vitalis. Because this is a timeless and eternal event, Christ will forever be honoring his followers.



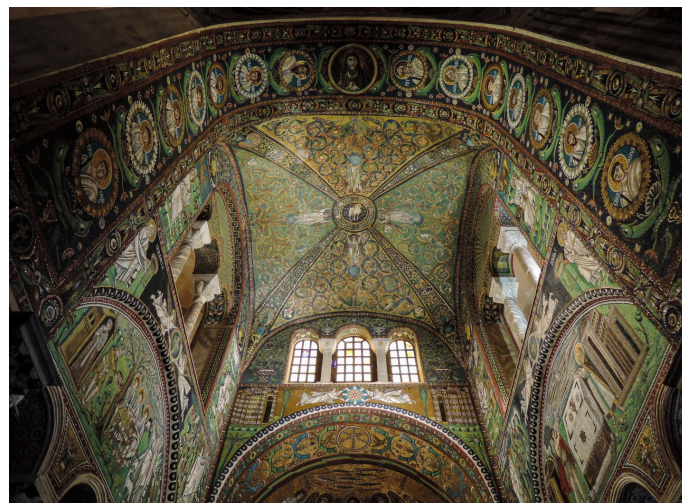
8.71 Basilica of San Vitale. In the apse a youthful Christ passes a crown of glory to Saint Vitalis.^{xvii}

Christ is flanked by two winged angels. The angel on our left has his hand on Vitalis' shoulder, introducing him to Christ. The angel on the right introduces Ecclesius, the Orthodox bishop of Ravenna, who is presenting a miniature model of his project, this very church, to Christ. While the church had been started in 526, most of the construction probably occurred after the Justinian's reconquest of Ravenna in 540. Byzantine workmen, materials and the most up-to-date architectural ideas would have poured into the Classe's ports from Constantinople and the east, along with innovative ideas in mosaic artistry.

In the apse we see a youthful Christ. Look above you at the triumphal arch and into the vault [images 8.72 and 8.74]. There are, in this sanctuary area, a total of three representations of Christ. *Can you find them?*



8.72 Basilica of San Vitale. Christ at the summit of the Triumphal Arch.^{xviii}



8.73 Basilica of San Vitale. Underside of the Triumphal Arch.^{xix}



8.74 Basilica of San Vitale. Vault over the apse.^{xx}

In the vault over the apse is another clear demonstration of the perfection of Trinitarian thought. You may recall the completeness of “27” as a derivative of three times three times three ($3 \times 3 \times 3 = 27$). *Look around; can you find the superlative example of 27?*

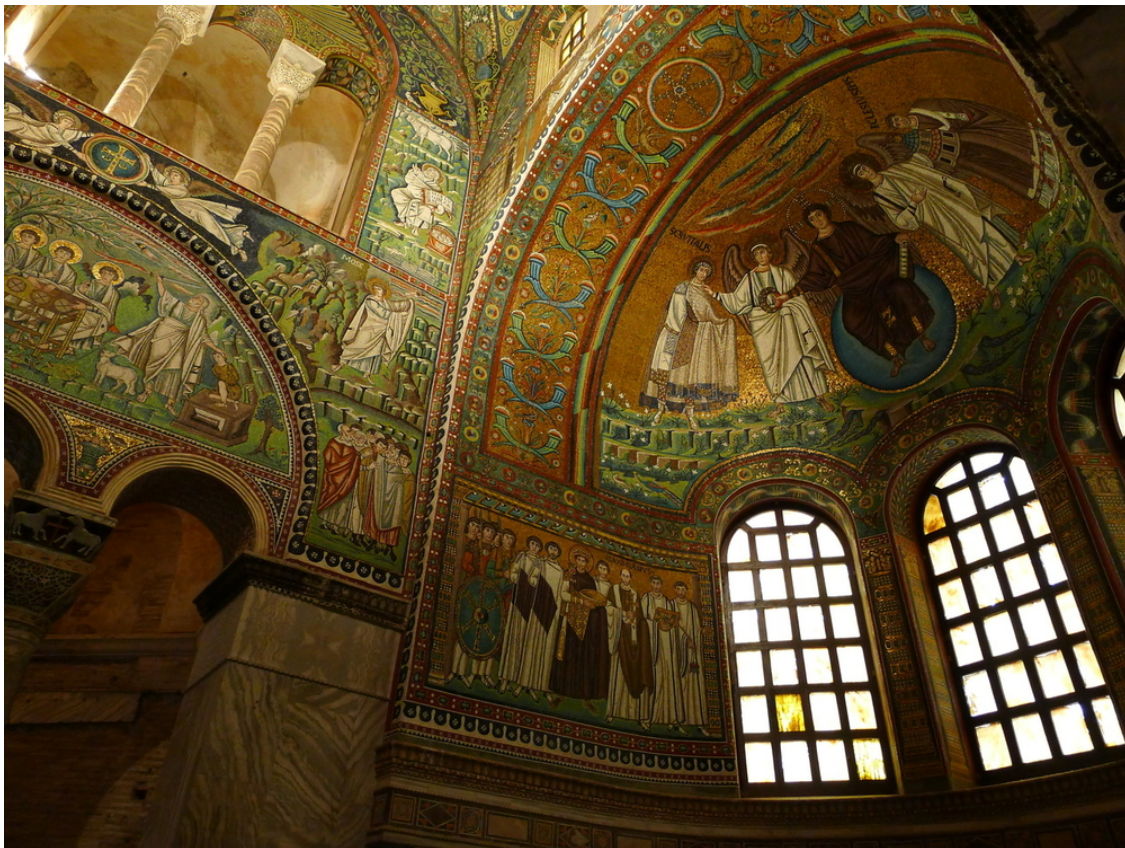


8.75 Basilica of San Vitale. *Lamb of God* at the peak of the vault.^{xxi} The spotless, unblemished lamb is surrounded by 27 stars.^{xxii}

In Trinitarian fervor, the three appearances of Christ portray him in three different stages:

- 1.) Young (and beardless) [image 8.71].
- 2.) Mature (bearded) [images 8.72 and 8.73].
- 3.) At the Second Coming as the *Agnus Dei*, the mystical and glorified Lamb of God [images 8.74, 8.75].

These three representations are a message to the community of Ravenna, and to all of western Rome, “Hark Arians (and Montanists, Nestorians, Docetists, Marcionites, Monophysites, Gnostics and everybody else) all three bases are covered. Christ is youthful and mature, physical and mystical. He is always regal while simultaneously being the ultimate sacrifice.”



8.76 Basilica of San Vitale. St. Vitalis Receives the Crown, to be passed to Justinian.^{xxiii}

Returning to the apse, the architect, Isidore of Miletus (also the architect of the remodeled Hagia Sophia^{xxiv}) would have us follow the direction of movement from the crown that was being passed to Saint Vitalis [image 8.76]. Our line of sight goes to the Emperor Justinian on the left side of the apse [image 8.77], and then straight across the apse to his equal, the Empress Theodora [image 8.79].

If the apsidal conch suggests the heavenly court, the images on the lateral walls are middle level. Here we witness the emperor (and the dignitaries) mediating between God and the people. You might have already guessed it: there is a level at the base where we, the populace, gather.



8.77 *Emperor Justinian and Courtiers* at San Vitale. C. 547.^{xxv}



8.78 The apse in the Basilica of San Vitale.^{xxvii}



8.79 *Empress Theodora and Retinue* at San Vitale. C. 547.^{xxvi}

The most famous mosaics at the Basilica of San Vitale are these apse portrayals of Justinian and Theodora and their courtiers. Emperor Justinian (b. 482) was not well educated, but he was a successful military commander with a sure grasp of imperial administration, law and theology. The depictions of Emperor Justinian and the Empress Theodora on the north and south walls of the apse were celebrations of a church ceremony rather than a depiction of a specific event. Justinian is offering the paten (a shallow metal plate used to carry the communion bread) while Theodora is presenting the chalice (the cup for the communion wine). The royals personally never visited Ravenna, but they had a thorough understanding of court ceremony and they wanted their subjects to remember them as being perennially present in Ravenna.



8.80 Basilica of San Vitale. North wall of apse.^{xxviii}



8.81 Basilica of San Vitale. South wall of apse.^{xxix}

Justinian's authoritarian attitude dominates image 8.82 just as he dominated the times. An examination of the symbols used in this mosaic leads to an understanding of Justinian's claim of military, political and religious power. His military power is presented by the honor guard of soldiers who are intentionally displaying the Chi-Rho monogram which had been adopted by Constantine. Gold torques at their necks identify them as barbarians. Their commander, General Belisarius, was Justinian's right hand man. He led the campaign to retake Italy from Arian heresy, but look at Justinian's right foot [images 8.82 and 8.84]. Breaking the barrier between heaven and earth he held even General Belisarius under his control.

Justinian's political power is proudly proclaimed by his imperial purple tunic. He boasts a large brooch on his right shoulder; no simple *clavus* for this emperor. His purple mantle is complimented by a golden rectangular inset, a *tablion*, which is lavishly decorated with figures of birds. Take note of his red and purple shoes, ornamented with pairs of pearl pendilia. Only the emperor may wear such finery.

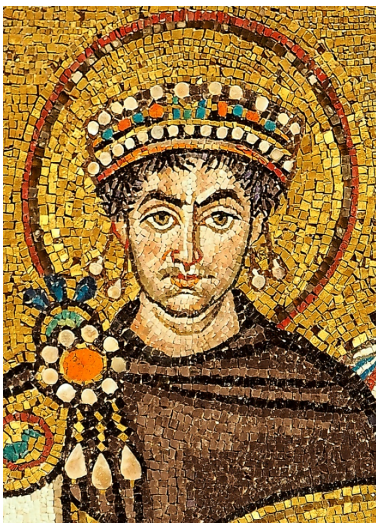
Justinian is not turned to face Christ. Because he is like unto a god himself, he is presented to the viewers from a frontal position. The Emperor is in good company with Bishop Maximianus, the only man identified by name. Maximianus became Archbishop (second only to the Pope) about the time of the completion and consecration of the church. He is wearing a *chasuble*, with the bishop's *pallium* draped over his shoulders. His white *omophorion* which was embroidered with crosses further confirms his identity. He is holding an ornate cross in his right hand. On the far right were two deacons. One carries the Bible while the other has an incense burner.

Sliding in slightly behind Justinian and the Archbishop Maximianus is possibly the banker who subsidized this church as well as several other projects under the rule of Justinian, Julianus Argentarius. Why was he tucked away? Perhaps he was added later, or perhaps those who handle money were seen as somewhat untrustworthy, even if he contributed 26,000 gold *solidi* for this project. We do not know the identities of the other individuals, but perhaps they were recognizable to their contemporaries.



8.82 Basilica of San Vitale. *Justinian and His Courtiers*.^{xxx}

Even if all the other members of the court were not depicted, the distinctive appearance of Justinian alone would be memorable [image 8.82]. San Vitale was constructed during Justinian’s long reign (527-565) and there was no other emperor during that period, so even though his image doesn’t look anything like other portrayals of him, it must be him. His large, wide-open eyes exemplify the mystery we saw in Faiyum portraits,^{xxxi} as well as the godlike gaze of Constantine on his Colossal Statue.^{xxxii} With those eyes he could serve as a model example of Matthew 6:22, “With the pure eye one sees God.”



8.83 Basilica of San Vitale. Close-up of *Justinian*.^{xxxiii}

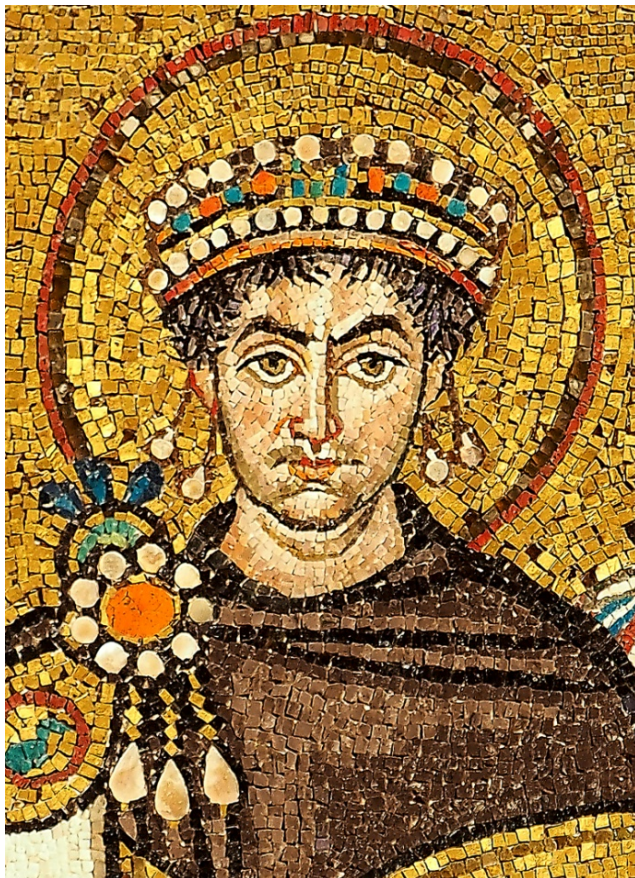


8.84 Basilica of San Vitale. Justinian’s royal foot, arrayed in royal red shoes, stepping on toes.^{xxxiv}

All of his subjects would have recognized the symbolism of the halo, which only he wears. The Egyptian god Anubis had been symbolized with a lunar disk on his head, Roman emperors wore halos and saints were honored with halos. Like Hammurabi, Justinian claimed to be serving by divine right and his tenure of 40 years on the throne was thought to have confirmed that right. Like Alexander the Great he saw himself as Divine, Heroic and a natural Leader. Justinian claimed descent from Julius Caesar and he promoted the Cult of the Emperor, as Augustus Caesar did for his great-uncle Julius Caesar. And, in similar fashion to Constantine, he ruled as the “equal of the apostles.” He was the visible manifestation of God.

Justinian was creating a tradition that was to last for all of Byzantine history: that of the emperor being both the spiritual leader of the Christian church and the political/military ruler of the empire itself. Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea (d. 339) had succinctly stated the Theo-political doctrine, “In as much that Jesus was prophet, priest and king so should the Christian Emperor hold all ranks.” Granted, this statement had been made two centuries before Justinian’s rule, but we may imagine the emperor exclaiming, “Works for me!” Justinian believed there should be a *symphonia* of church and state, a harmony and concord based on the incarnation of the divine Logos (reason, the word of God) and the man Jesus. Just as the two natures (divine and human) were found in the single person of the Christ, there should be no separation of the church and the empire; together they formed the Kingdom of God, which would soon spread to the entire world. For Justinian, the halo and the crown declared his divine kingship.

At first glance his crown appears fairly standard, but what is with those dangling “earrings?” Perhaps the style of his crown was similar to this crown which was found near Toledo, Spain, in 1858 [image 8.85]. Visigoth kings are known to have consciously copied Roman customs and ceremonies, including written law and victory parades. This diadem has been identified as the Votive Crown of King Recesswinth who ruled in Spain between 653 and 672. The diameter of the crown is 8 ½” so it could have been worn. Votive crowns were hung above the altar, indicating the emperor’s piety and ecclesiastical authority. Perhaps this was buried (hidden) during the Arab conquest of Iberia in 711 and not discovered until the nineteenth century.



8.83 Basilica of San Vitale. Close-up of Justinian.^{xxxv}



8.85 Votive Crown of Visigoth King Recesswinth. 653-672, National Archaeological Museum, Madrid.^{xxxvi}

As depicted on this mosaic, Justinian seemed to have it all together. But, another story was told by Procopius of Caesarea who was secretary to General Belisarius. He had been commissioned by Justinian to write an official history of Justinian's wars and an entire volume praising his building accomplishments. On the side Procopius also wrote a private memoir, the *Anecdota (Secret Histories)* which was not published during his lifetime. The scummy writings (which could have been copy for a twenty-first century tabloid) were discovered in Rome in the seventeenth century.

I think this is as good a time as any to describe the personal appearance of Justinian. Now in physique he was neither tall nor short, but of average height; not thick but moderately plump; his face was round and not bad looking, for he had good color even when he fasted for two days...Now such was Justinian in appearance, but his character was something I could not fully describe. For he was at once villainous and amenable; as people say colloquially, a moron. He was never truthful to any-one, but always guileful in what he said and did, yet easily hoodwinked by any who wanted to deceive him.^{xxxvii}

Empress Theodora was treated much more graciously by Procopius. "Theodora was fair of face and of a graceful, though small, person; her complexion was moderately colorful, if somewhat pale; and her eyes were dazzling and vivacious."^{xxxviii}

Theodora was born in 497 and married Justinian in 525. Little is known about her early life and the rumors that surround her make for titillating reading. She was, perhaps, the daughter of a bear keeper at the circus, a circus performer, a child prostitute, an actress, a pantomime artist, or a wool spinner. Whatever, Justinian was smitten and married her against the advice of his uncle, the Emperor Justin I. It was a fortunate decision; Theodora's intelligence and political acumen made her Justinian's most trusted adviser. When Justinian succeeded to the throne in 527 she was proclaimed *Augusta* (co-emperor) and received a crown, as well. Along with her husband, she is a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church, commemorated on November 14.

The Empress participated in Justinian's legal and spiritual reforms, and her involvement in the increase of the rights of women was substantial. She had laws passed that prohibited forced prostitution and closed brothels. She created a convent on the Asian side of the Dardanelles called the Metanoia (Repentance), where the ex-prostitutes could support themselves. She also expanded the rights of women in divorce and property ownership, instituted the death penalty for rape, forbade exposure of unwanted infants, gave mothers some guardianship rights over their children, and forbade the killing of a wife who committed adultery.



8.86 Basilica of San Vitale. *Empress Theodora and Her Retinue.*^{xxxix}

In this ecclesiastical ceremony [image 8.86] Theodora is presenting a golden chalice (for the communion wine). Strictly speaking, Theodora and the other ladies were not supposed to be in the sanctuary at all, so the two figures on the left may be eunuchs, lifting the curtain for the ladies to enter the stairway that will take them to the second story gallery. The ladies on her left are thought to be General Belisarius' wife as well as Theodora's friend and confidante, Antonina, and then the General's daughter, Giovannina. The other women are unidentified, but again, perhaps they would have been recognizable to a contemporary audience. A court official is almost at the right hand edge.

We pause to ponder: how did the artists, who had never met Theodora, make an image that conveyed royalty, dignity, and luxury [image 8.86 and 8.87]?

1. Like the Emperor Justinian, she is the only one with a halo.
2. She is isolated and silhouetted from the background in the technique known as *fondo d'oro*.^{xi}
3. She is taller, and her long neck supports an elaborate crown.
4. She wears a tiara of simulated emeralds, diamonds and sapphires with pearl pendilia.
5. Her narrow emerald necklace and dangling emerald earrings have pearl and sapphire pendilia.
6. She wears a brocaded cloth rather than a Roman toga.
7. She stands under an umbrella-shaped canopy (variously known as a fastigium, ciborium, aedicule or baldachin).
8. She stands near a classical Greek column.
9. Similar to a Classical Greek *kore*, her face is expressionless; she shows no emotion.
10. The striking beauty of Theodora may be compared to Platonic and neo-Platonic philosophy: beauty in this world is symbolic of the divine world.



8.87 Basilica of San Vitale. Close-up of the Empress Theodora.^{xii}



8.88 Basilica of San Vitale. Magi on Theodora's Chlamys.^{xli}

At the bottom of her brocaded *chlamys* [image 8.88] is another example of the Trinitarian fervor which we have often seen around Justinian's Ravenna. As we observed at Sant' Apollinare Nuovo, the Magi are recognized by their outlandish dress, short cloaks, peaked caps and leggings^{xliii}. All of these are indicators that they are foreigners paying the customary tribute, the *aurum coronarium*, in acknowledgement of the mastery of the Roman Empire. And why are there three? According to Andreas Agnellus, the ninth century author of the *Liber Pontificalis*, "The three precious gifts contain divine mysteries, namely gold signifies royal power, incense represents the priest, and myrrh indicates death, to underscore the fact that it is Christ who has drawn unto himself all the wickedness of mankind. And why did precisely three wise men come from the east, instead of four, six, or two? To signify the perfection of the entire Trinity."

It might be argued that the city on the Bosphorus which had taken the name of the 667 BCE Greek colonizer Byzas had abandoned Greek traditions. Pythagorean proportions, memorable capital styles and democratic government seem to have subsided into the marshland. Significantly, however, the Greek cultural value of **idealism** pushed on. Idealism was advanced in the writings of Plato and was carried forward by the neo-Platonists who strongly influence Christian thought. Idealism is the value respected by depictions of both the *kouros* and the martyrs. And it was important to the Emperor Justinian. In his attempt to bring perfect unity to the Empire he promoted the **Justinian Code**. Ten legal experts and 39

scribes led by the great legal expert Tribonian systematized the previous 900 years of Roman law into a rational, precise and comprehensive code of 4,652 clear and consistent laws. Formally known as the **Corpus juris civilis**, it was claimed that 3,000,000 lines of jurisprudential law had been reduced to 150,000. It was used as a basis for Byzantine law for over 900 years, and the laws therein continue to influence many western legal systems to this day.

You might appreciate this video about the Basilica of San Vitale:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial-americas/medieval-europe-islamic-world/v/justinian-and-his-attendants-6th-century-ravenna>

Use this format to cite this document:

Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Justinian, Master of Three Powers: San Vitale." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Dr. Allen Farber, "San Vitale and the *Justinian Mosaic*," in *Smarthistory*, August 8, 2015, accessed October 25, 2019, smarthistory.org/san-vitale/

ⁱⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, The Ambition of Constantine." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱⁱⁱ Before the legalization of Christianity, the basilica was a sheltered public hall off the forum. By the sixth century the word was used to designate the status of a church, not the form. This is a centrally-planned building.

^{iv} Saint Vitalis was believed to have been martyred either during the first century under the reign of Nero (54-68) or in the fourth century under the reign of Diocletian. Both Vitalis and Valeria as well as their sons, Gervasius and Protasius are among the identified martyrs at the Basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo. Images of their sons, Gervasius and Protasius, are also on the triumphal arch in the Basilica of San Vitale.

^v Public domain at search.creativecommons.org/photos/87e2545b-84d3-42ea-8084-4f0188a09c0c

^{vi} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{vii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Development of Symbolic Art: Mausoleum of Galla Placidia." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{viii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Relics of Faith." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{ix} Public domain on Wikipedia. Accessed at <https://www.medieval.eu/wp-content/uploads/exterior-of-San-Vitale-in-Ravenna.jpg>

^x Photo courtesy of santagnese.org, Creative Commons License (CC BY-SA 2.0).

^{xi} Public domain at

upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/53/Byggnadskonsten%2C_San_Vitale_i_Ravenna%2C_Nordisk_familjebok.png

^{xii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EB1911_Rome__Plan_of_Church_and_Mausoleum_of_Constanza.jpg

^{xiii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ravenna_Basilica_of_San_Vitale_wideangle.jpg

^{xiv} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Orthodoxy vs. Heresy: the Orthodox and Arian Baptisteries in Ravenna." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xv} Genesis 2:10-14 identifies these as the Pishon, Gihon, Chidekel (the Tigris), and Phirat (the Euphrates). Other sources declare these to be rivers of honey, milk, wine and oil.

^{xvi} Revelation 5:1, KJV: "A book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals."

^{xvii} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Apse_mosaic_-_Basilica_of_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Apse_mosaic_-_Basilica_of_San_Vitale_(Ravenna).jpg)

^{xviii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xix} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d6/Basilica_di_San_Vitale_Arc_%28Ravenna%29.jpg

^{xx} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Basilica_of_San_Vitale_-_Lamb_of_God_mosaic.jpg

^{xxi} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ravenna,_basilica_di_San_Vitale_\(067\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ravenna,_basilica_di_San_Vitale_(067).jpg)

^{xxii} The Book of Revelation 5:13 (KJV): "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature, which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them: heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

^{xxiii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxiv} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Hagia Sophia in Transition." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{xxv} Public domain at www.ancient.eu/uploads/images/4504.jpg?v=1569514700

- ^{xxxvi} Public domain at www.ancient.eu/uploads/images/4503.jpg?v=1569514700
- ^{xxxvii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Basilica.di.san.vitale.ravenna.jpg
- ^{xxxviii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ravenna_Basilica_of_San_Vitale_mosaic5.jpg
- ^{xxxix} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaics_of_Theodora_-_Joy_of_Museums_-_Basilica_of_San_Vitale.jpg
- ^{xxxx} Public domain at www.ancient.eu/uploads/images/4504.jpg?v=1569514700
- ^{xxxi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Anticipating Byzantine Culture." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxxii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, The Ambition of Constantine." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxxiii} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Justinianus_I_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Justinianus_I_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_(Ravenna).jpg)
- ^{xxxiv} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman at the Byzantine and Christian Museum, Athens, 2017. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxxv} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Justinianus_I_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Justinianus_I_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_(Ravenna).jpg)
- ^{xxxvi} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f2/Corona_de_%2829049230050%29.jpg
- ^{xxxvii} Procopius of Caesarea, *The Secret History*, Chapter VIII. sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/procop-anec.asp
- ^{xxxviii} Procopius of Caesarea, *The Secret History*, Chapter X. sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/procop-anec.asp
- ^{xxxix} Photo at San Vitale by Kristine Betts, 2019. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xl} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Witnesses for Idealism: Sant' Apollinare Nuovo." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xli} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xlii} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theodora_mosaic_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna\)_v2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Theodora_mosaic_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_(Ravenna)_v2.jpg)
- ^{xliii} Additionally, their peculiar "Persian" costumes are similar to those worn by the followers of Mithras. See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Roman Civilization. Religion During Pax Romana." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE WORLD OF THE SPIRIT: SANT' APOLLINARE IN CLASSE



8.89 *Augustus of Prima Porta*. 1937 reproduction in front of Sant' Apollinare in Classe.ⁱ

According to popular legend, Emperor Caesar Augustus himself founded **Ravenna** in the first century CE. In reality, settlement in this part of the Po Valley is even older, reaching back to the Umbrians and Etruscans before it was colonized by Rome in the second century BCE. But the dynamic influence of Octavian on this area is unquestioned. He had built a port facility on these sandy islands at the edge of the Adriatic Sea that could hold, repair, and provision 250 ships. For the next 300 years Ravenna would be Rome's main naval base for the eastern Mediterranean.

Civitas Classis, later known as **Classe**, was a satellite town 8 km south of Ravenna. In Latin the word "classis" means "fleet" and here, in the days of Octavian, it was the home of some of the dock workers, sailors and tradesmen from the port of Ravenna. It was also situated on marshland and shared similar land subsidence challenges. By the fifth century CE the port at Ravenna had gradually silted up and the Adriatic Sea had receded, leaving Classe as the major commercial port for the Emilia-Romagna region. Having a claim to Octavian's fame a reproduction of his famous statue was placed in front of the local basilica of **Sant' Apollinare** in 1953 [image 8.89].

In between the two cities, as well as along the coast, were sand dunes and cemeteries. The burial grounds were properly outside the city of Ravenna, and it was in one of the many Roman-era cemeteries that the first-second century Saint Apollinare, the first bishop of Ravenna, was interred. In the sixth century a church was built over the presumed holy ground. The basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna (constructed 493-526; dedicated to Sant' Apollinare in 856)ⁱⁱ and the basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe (built 533-536) both pay tribute to the same saint. The two churches compliment and complete each other. The Ravenna basilica promotes the value of idealism with magnificent nave mosaics while the apse of the Classe basilica shines a spotlight on the mystical world of the spirit.

Several conventions that were standard in Early Christian basilica churches, and remain common in future Romanesque and Gothic churches, are to be observed at the basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe [images 8.90-8.94]:

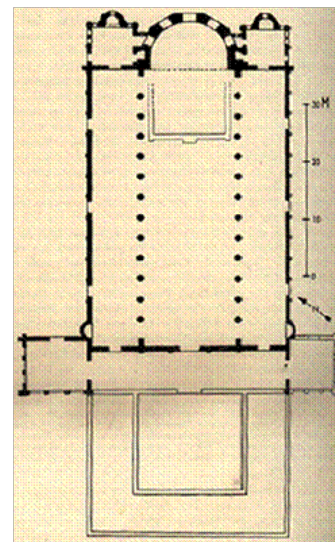
1. The **orientation** of the traditionally-shaped basilica is toward the east. (An east-facing axis was typical of churches until the modern period. If topographic circumstances prohibited an east-facing apse, the altar would still point to the "Liturgical East.")
2. A strict horizontal **axis** leading toward the apse was as essential in a basilica as the east-facing orientation.
3. The basilica originally had **twin towers** on the north and south ends of the narthex. These were sometimes known as the Peter and Paul towers, or at other times they were named in recognition of Bethlehem and Jerusalem. Here, the rectangular north tower remains from the original sixth century construction; the south tower is only remembered in the original plans [image 8.92].
4. As seen at St. Paul's Outside the Walls in Romeⁱⁱⁱ, a **quadraporticus** was frequently located in front of a basilica. At Sant' Apollinare in Classe a modern road has been constructed along the former edge of the quadraporticus.
5. A splendid cylindrical **campanile** was added to the building before the year 1000. The bell tower was useful for sounding the canonical hours. Or, the bell ringer could sound it repetitively and loudly as a community warning system (i.e. to call people into town to fight a fire).
6. On the plan it is evident that **three doors** led from the narthex into the nave [image 8.92]. The significance of "three" may have been an anti-Arian statement, or they could have been simply in the tradition of centuries of architectural history [images 8.93 and 8.94].
7. **Columns** divide the interior into a **nave** and two **aisles**.
8. **Clerestory** windows flood the basilica with light.
9. The **sanctuary** includes a **triumphal arch** and the **apsidal** area of the conch.
10. Surprise! There is no transept.



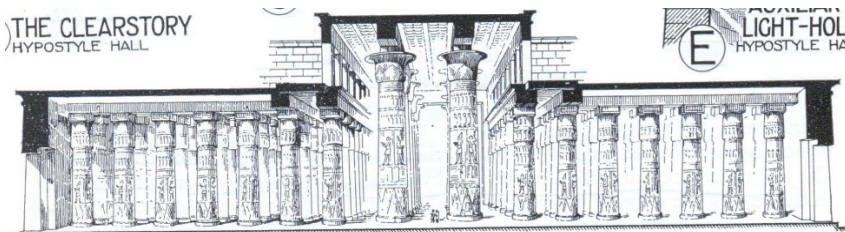
8.90 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. West façade rebuilt after World War II.^{iv}



8.91 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. Aerial view.^v



8.92 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. Original floor plan.^{vi}



8.93 Temple of Amon-Ra, Karnak.^{vii} Three center aisles honor of each of the Egyptian gods Amun, Mut and Khonsu.



8.94 Reconstruction of an Etruscan Temple of the 6th century BCE according to Vitruvius.^{viii} Three doors lead into *cellas* (rooms) for Jupiter, Juno and Minerva.

Two rows of 12 marble columns imported from the Sea of Marmara (literally, Sea of Marble) march the participant steadily forward toward the apse [image 8.95]. Stairs and the triumphal arch set the apse area apart and draw attention to the holy space even when no services are being celebrated. Only the mosaic apse and triumphal arch remain from the original decorating program; the side walls are thought to have also been decorated with Proconnesian marble (from the Sea of Marmara). The altar in which the saint's relics are, or are not installed, is in the center front of this picture.



8.95 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. Nave.^{ix}

The Basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe is a perfect example of a funerary basilica built over or adjacent to the tomb of an esteemed saint or martyr. The basilica is dedicated to the first bishop of Ravenna, Sant' Apollinare, but his story is far from uncomplicated. According to tradition he was sent by St. Peter as a missionary to Ravenna where he worked for nearly 20 years before being lapidated (stoned to death) by pagans or teenage hoodlums, ca. 75 CE. In an alternative version of his story, having the audacity to convert people and perform miracles, he was brought before a Roman judge, tortured and martyred about 180 CE.^x

Adding to the complexities of Apollinare's story, this basilica was begun between 533 and 536. Those dates make it "newer" than the "New" basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, which was begun during the reign of King Theodoric (r. 493-526). The appellation Nuovo was applied at the rededication when the saint's relics were transferred from the Classe location during the Amorian dynasty (820-867). This is turning into an overly complex byzantine story (no pun intended!).

The basilica in Classe was consecrated by Bishop Maximianus on May 9, 549, just a little later than the more famous Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna.^{xi} As with the latter church, construction of the Sant' Apollinare was made possible by generous subsidies from Julianus Argentarius, the mysterious banker who played a large role in religious life in Ravenna in the first half of the sixth century.



8.96 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. Sanctuary area.^{xii}

It is the apse at Sant' Apollinare in Classe that is so overwhelmingly amazing. As we study the original sanctuary mosaic, at least nine scenes may be identified [image 8.96].

Scene 1. *Where is Christ in this apse?* Many observers misidentify the central figure [images 8.96 and 8.97] in the lower part of the mosaic as Christ. He is, after all, the largest figure. He has a halo, and is placed in a “divine” frontal stance. Sorry, but not a good guess. This figure is clearly labeled as “SANCTVS APOLENARIS.” Apollinare is dressed in a chasuble with a bishop’s pallium. His hands are extended in the orant position of prayer.^{xiii}



8.97 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. Apse mosaic.^{xiv}

Scene 2. Saint Apollinare is standing in a beautiful green landscape with rocks, trees and birds. Twelve sheep walk toward him in orderly lines, six from the left and six from the right. These may represent the twelve apostles. It has been noticed that the first lamb on the saint's right side is pure white; perhaps it represents Apollinare himself, who was believed, because of his ability to perform miracles, to have been a saint during his lifetime. The other five lambs appear dirty; these could represent catechumens (before baptism). Cleaned neophytes (baptized people) are on the saint's left side.

As with all mosaics in Ravenna, those in the Sant' Apollinare in Classe have been restored on many occasions. Red lines were added in the 1970s restoration to indicate which parts of the mosaic are still original.

Scene 3. While we're near the saint, let's study the landscape [images 8.98 and 8.99]. None of the rocks, trees or birds has the illusionary quality of Greco-Roman art. The details of nature are unimportant. In the flattened presentation of this abstract art people, animals and objects have value not for what they are, but for what they symbolize.



8.98 Detail of landscape in mosaic of the *Good Shepherd* at Mausoleum of Galla Placidia. 425-450.^{xv}



8.99 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. *Landscape* in mosaic on the apse. C. 570.^{xvi}

Scene 4. *Perhaps Christ is one of the figures on the back wall of the apse?* These are also prominent, and each seems to be standing in a niche which has been ornamented with curtains [image 8.96]. Sorry, none of these is Christ. In the first place they are not solitary; the focus is not on one, solo, divine image. These are four early bishops of Ravenna. Ecclesius, bishop of Ravenna from 522 to 532, is on the left. We have seen him earlier in the apse mosaic of the San Vitale.^{xvii} The second is Severus, who was bishop of Ravenna in the 340s and whose cult was gaining momentum at the time of Sant' Apollinare's completion. The third is Ursus, who was bishop of Ravenna ca. 405-431 and who was responsible for the construction of Ravenna's cathedral (Basilica Ursiana) and the adjacent Orthodox Baptistry.^{xviii} The fourth bishop is Ursicinus, who was bishop of Ravenna between 533 and 536 and who commissioned the initial basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe. We've proven that these are historical, important people, but none is the focal point.

Scene 5. Look up, to the **triumphal arch** that surrounds the apse [image 8.96 and 8.105]. The sanctuary area is filled with **abstract symbols**. It must be remembered: symbols are the language of religion just as numbers are the language of science. Joseph Campbell's admonition is relevant here: "Those who do not know that symbols hold hidden meaning are like diners going into a restaurant and eating the menu rather than the meal it describes."^{xix}

The symbols across the lintel of the triumphal arch which forms the façade of the sanctuary are mostly unfamiliar to the modern reader. We remarked on them earlier in the dome of the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia^{xx}, and they are not difficult for us to identify. Based upon writings from the books of Ezekiel and Revelation and St. Jerome's fourth century writings, the four writers of New Testament Gospel books are remembered by means of these symbols.



8.100 Symbol of John.^{xxii}



8.101 Symbol of Matthew.^{xxiii}



8.102 Image of Christ.^{xxi}



8.103 Symbol of Mark.^{xxiv}



8.104 Symbol of Luke.^{xxv}

The book of John is very mystical, so the symbol for the writer is the eagle who sees this world from lofty heights [image 8.100]. In a similar manner to eagles soaring toward the sun, John's commentary was seen as radiating the light of divine knowledge.

The symbol of a man is used as a mnemonic for the book of Matthew which traces Jesus' genealogy to demonstrate his human nature [image 8.101].

Aha! We have found one depiction of Christ. He is shown in the center as **Christ the Pantocrator**, the omnipotent world ruler. He is both mature and divine, with both a beard and a halo [image 8.102]. He is giving a benediction (blessing) to his followers. (Don't you sense that there must be two more representations of Christ somewhere nearby?)

The memory device for the book of Mark is a lion because the text promotes the royal dignity of Jesus [image 8.103].

The book of Luke describes Jesus' birth in a stable, so an ox is an appropriate prompt [image 8.104].

Scene 6. Twelve more sheep may be seen under the horizontal lintel [image 8.105]. Like the twin towers on either side of the narthex, these could be symbolic of faithful worshippers as they proceed in measured steps from the walled cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem.



8.105 Sant' Apollinare in Classe. The triumphal arch.^{xxvi}



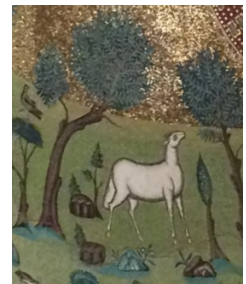
8.106 Moses.^{xxvii}



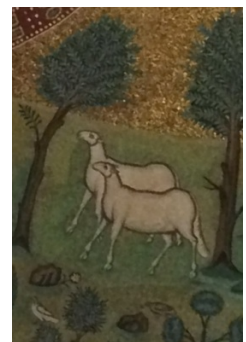
8.107 Elijah.^{xxviii}

Scene 7. The arch itself [image 8.96] has been cleverly utilized as Mount Tabor for a depiction of the event known as “The Transfiguration.” At this time, as described in the three Synoptic Gospels (Mark, Matthew and Luke), Jesus revealed his divine nature to Peter, James and John. The story emphasized a crucial Anti-Arian theological point by affirming the duality of Christ, who was not only man and God at the same time, but was perceived by men as such at this event. The two large figures floating in the clouds are the prophets Moses and Elijah (labeled “MOYSES” and “HbELYAS”) and the three sheep to the left and right of the cross are symbolic of Peter, James and John.

The account from the book of Luke 9:28-36 is perplexing to us, and the event was probably also mystifying to the three disciples. “And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son: hear him.’ And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen” (KJV).^{xxix}



8.108 Peter.^{xxx}



8.109 James and John.^{xxxi}

Scene 8. It only makes sense that Christ would make a second appearance in this scene of the Transfiguration, and he does. The Divine Presence is expressed as the Hand of God. It is between Moses and Elijah and above the cross. In one's imagination a voice from the cloud may be heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear him."

This hand may also be symbolically interpreted as one of three hands gesturing toward the cross, the other two belonging to Moses and Elijah.



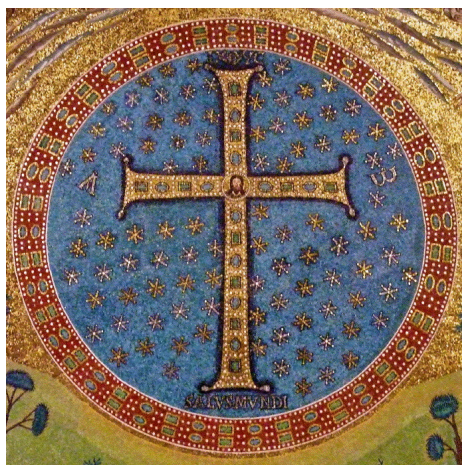
8.110 Christ at the center of the medallion.^{xxxiii}



8.111 The Hand of God at Sant' Apollinare in Classe.^{xxxii}

Scene 9. The third appearance of Christ is in a large jeweled cross set against a blue background. The cross suggests not only his crucifixion, but his victory over death and the Second Coming, an event that will be as mind-boggling as was the Transfiguration. The surrounding 99 stars in the star-spangled heaven are symbolic of the story of the "Ninety-and nine lost sheep" (Luke 15: 4-7).

Around the cross are additional statements about the significance of Christ. On the left and right arms of the cross are the letters Α (alpha, the first letter of the Greek alphabet) and Ω (omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet), suggesting that Christ is the beginning and end of all time, and the Lord of All that is really important. Above the cross, we see the Greek word ΙΧΘΥΣ, which translates as "fish", but it is also the acronym for "Ιησοῦς Χριστός, Θεοῦ Υἱός, Σωτήρ", or "Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Savior," a familiar phrase for early Christians. Below the cross are, in Latin, the words "SALVS MVNDI" ("Salvation of the World").



8.112 Cross at the summit of the semidome.^{xxxiv}



8.113 Christ in the center of the cross.^{xxxv}



8.114 Archangel Michael on the north pier.^{xxxvi}

We have identified nine stories presented in the masterpiece of the apse and triumphal arch at Sant' Apollinare in Classe. As you have observed, a Trinitarian emphasis is still giving "correction" to the heretics. To accentuate the need to repair unorthodox thought, just one more example will be given. On the piers (vertical supports) of the triumphal arch are two archangels, Michael and Gabriel. They are thought to have been part of the original sixth century mosaics. They are dressed in imperial tunics and are wearing privileged red shoes. Each is holding a banner which reads "agios, agios, agios," which is Greek for "holy, holy, holy." The declaration was no doubt a reference to the Holy Trinity and an anti-Arian statement



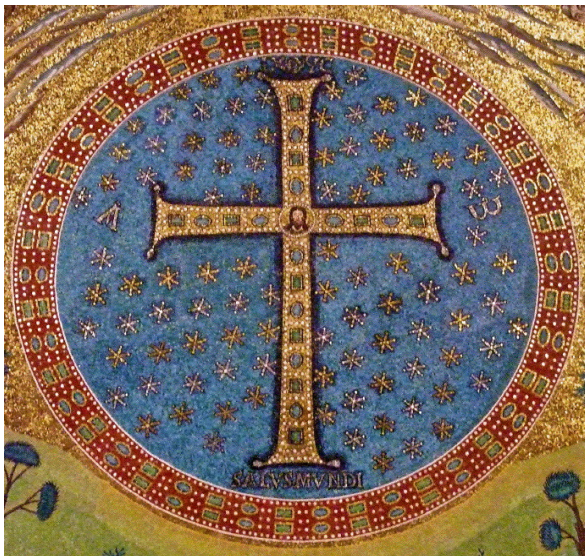
8.115 Archangel Gabriel on the south pier.^{xxxvii}

In Byzantine art we are transported to an ideal alternative world to witness a mystical understanding of beauty. The abstract patterns and symbols suggest a world of the spirit. Unlike the pagan (i.e. Greek) past, the earthly beauty of a human body is no longer the exemplar of supreme beauty. And, contrary to today, neither is nature the exemplar of perfect beauty. These Christians were members neither of the Zeus Affiliates nor of the Sierra Club.

Under the influence of Augustinian (and ultimately Platonic) thought, the heavenly city of God was so far removed from this earthly city that humans could only catch glimpses. God was understood to be so spiritual, so unitary that humans could not know him directly. As you have witnessed here, God was so removed from the things of this world that we could barely find him. And if you didn't know to look for God in the center of the cross, you would never find God.

But we want to glimpse that world! So we devise lamps that will lift us to that mystical realm: tall, elongated candlesticks on which we can place even taller tapering candles. "That's the best we can do for today, but perhaps tomorrow's engineers with theatrical lights can do better." And, they do!

You have before you two images of the medallion in the apse at Sant' Apollinare in Classe. The first was taken on a sunny day, under natural lighting. The second was taken at night when the stage was set for a performance by the Westminster Boys' Choir.



8.116 Daytime view at Sant' Apollinare in Classe.^{xxxviii}



8.117 The medallion under theater lights.^{xxxix}



8.118 The sanctuary at Sant' Apollinare in Classe under theatrical lights, prepared for the Westminster Boys' Choir, July 4, 2016.^{xi}

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ⁱ Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3c/Statua_di_Augusto-di_frente_Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe.jpg

ⁱⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Witnesses for Idealism: Sant' Apollinare Nuovo." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Constantine's Great Decisions." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

^{iv} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_\(Ravenna\)_-_Exterior#/media/File:Ravenna-252-San_Apollinare_in_Classe-1985-gje.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_(Ravenna)_-_Exterior#/media/File:Ravenna-252-San_Apollinare_in_Classe-1985-gje.jpg)

^v European Commission website at <http://www.heritage-route.eu/en/ravenna/gallery/#.X71Ll81Kj4Y>

^{vi} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Plans_of_Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_\(Ravenna\)#/media/File:Ravenna,_San'Apollinare_in_Classe,_alaprjz.gif](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Plans_of_Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_(Ravenna)#/media/File:Ravenna,_San'Apollinare_in_Classe,_alaprjz.gif)

^{vii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Great_Temple_of_Ammon_-_Karnak_40.jpg

^{viii} Public domain at www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/ancient-mediterranean-ap/ap-ancient-etruria/a/temple-of-minerva-and-the-sculpture-of-apollo-veii

^{ix} Public domain at [ccsearch.creativecommons.org/photos/b627f888-2b23-4042-a328-a0febd08dd9a](https://creativecommons.org/photos/b627f888-2b23-4042-a328-a0febd08dd9a)

^x Peter Chrysologus, Bishop of Ravenna 433-450, declared that Apollinaris did not die of wounds inflicted on him, so he was not a martyr. Verifying that idea, the depiction of him in the apse at Sant' Apollinare in Classe does not show him with a martyr's crown. Research conducted in 1954 suggested that only some of the relics were taken to Ravenna and the remainder were still buried in Classe, beneath the present basilica. Was the whole story a prank?

- ^{xi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Justinian, Master of Three Powers: San Vitale." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xii} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a6/Stappoclasseaps.jpg
- ^{xiii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Anticipating Byzantine Culture." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xiv} Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris, "Sant' Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna (Italy)," in *Smarthistory*, December 10, 2015, accessed October 30, 2019, smarthistory.org/santapollinare-in-classe-ravenna-italy/
- ^{xv} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_des_Mausoleums_der_Galla_Placidia_in_Ravenna_002.jpg
- ^{xvi} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/02/Sant%27apollinare_in_classe%2C_mosaici_del_catino%2C_trasfigurazione_simbolica%2C_VI_secolo%2C_10_giardino_%28con_restauri%29_2.jpg
- ^{xvii} See image 8.71 in Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Justinian, Master of Three Powers: San Vitale." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xviii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Orthodoxy vs. Heresy: Orthodox and Arian Baptistries in Ravenna." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xix} Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth*, 1988.
- ^{xx} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Development of Symbolic Art: Galla Placidia." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxi} Ibid.
- ^{xxii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe#/media/File:Sanapolinclass02.jpg
- ^{xxiii} Ibid.
- ^{xxiv} Ibid.
- ^{xxv} Ibid.
- ^{xxvi} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Upper_register_-_Triumphal_arch_-_Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_-_Ravenna_2016.jpg
- ^{xxvii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Moses_-_Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_-_Ravenna_2016.jpg
- ^{xxviii} Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris, "Sant' Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna (Italy).
- ^{xxix} The Transfiguration was a well-known theme in religious art. Another outstanding sixth-century mosaic depiction of the Transfiguration is at the Monastery of Saint Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai (Egypt). Renaissance artist Raphael's final painting, which has become a famous depiction of the Transfiguration, is now at the Vatican Museum.
- ^{xxx} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016.
- ^{xxxi} Ibid.
- ^{xxxii} Dr. Steven Zucker and Dr. Beth Harris, "Sant' Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna (Italy).
- ^{xxxiii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016.
- ^{xxxiv} Ibid.
- ^{xxxv} Ibid.
- ^{xxxvi} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/3a/Archangel_Michael_-_Triumphal_arch_-_Sant%27Apollinare_in_Classe_-_Ravenna_2016.jpg
- ^{xxxvii} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/fb/Sant%27apollinare_in_classe%2C_mosaici_dell%27arcone%2C_arcangelo_gabriele%2C_VI_secolo.jpg
- ^{xxxviii} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2016.
- ^{xxxix} Ibid.
- ^{xl} Ibid.

THE JUNCTION OF EAST AND WEST: HAGIA SOPHIA



8.119 The Byzantine Empire under Justinian. ⁱ

Rome fell several times—to the Visigoths (in 410), the Vandals (in 455) and the Heruli (in 476)—but Ravenna went from strength to strength, first under the Ostrogoths and then under the Byzantines. Great churches were built and beautiful mosaics were made to decorate them. From 540-751 Ravenna remained the administrative center for “Roman” Italy, which meant in effect that it was a Byzantine outpost in the West. But the Byzantine dream of reuniting East and West into a single empire was destined to fail, and slowly Ravenna as well as the port of Classe gradually silted up and lost their status.

Constantinople had its challenges, as well. Constantine’s vision that the new capital would be free from scenes of plot and counterplot, treason and conspiracy, was just that—an illusion.ⁱⁱ We resume the story of Constantinople in 527. The new Byzantine emperor (and thus Roman emperor), **Justinian I**, regarded his rule as universal, so he sought to re-establish the authority of the Empire in Western Europe. He had other reasons as well for seeking to re-establish imperial power in the West. Both Vandal Carthage and Ostrogoth Italy were ruled by peoples who were Arians, regarded as heretics by a Catholic emperor like Justinian.

Among other qualities, Justinian is remembered for being both an incredibly fervent Christian and a major military leader. One aspect of Justinian’s focus on Christian purification was to complete the work initiated by his Christian predecessors: the destruction of the ancient traditions of paganism in Greece and the surrounding areas. The Olympics had already been shut down by the emperor Theodosius I in 393 CE (he objected to the pagan religious festival, not to the athletic competition). Justinian intensified the push by insisting that all teachers and tutors convert to Christianity and renounce their teaching of the Greek classics; when they refused in 529, he shut down Plato’s Academy which had been functioning for almost 1,000 years.

With the intent of emphasizing his own greatness as well as that of his empire, Justinian undertook many art and architecture projects. Much of Constantinople had burned down early in Justinian’s reign in 532 after a series of revolts called the Nika riots. As the “last straw” in a confrontation over rising taxes, angry racing fans had become enraged at Justinian over the arrest of two popular charioteers. Included in the destruction by the “chariot hooligans” was the Church of the Holy Apostles which had originally been built by Emperor Constantine I in 325 over the foundations of a pagan temple. Once the tumult was under control, Justinian set about rebuilding the city on a grander scale. His greatest accomplishment was the total reconstruction of Constantine’s church [image 8.120]. The architects, Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus, were most likely influenced by the mathematical theories of Archimedes (c. 287-212 BCE). Justinian’s new church, constructed adjacent to the imperial palace between 532 and 537, was a staggering work intended

to awe all who set foot in the structure. It was not only the most enduring piece of Byzantine architecture; it was the largest church in the world for nearly a thousand years.



8.120 Hagia Sophia. 532-537, Istanbul.ⁱⁱⁱ

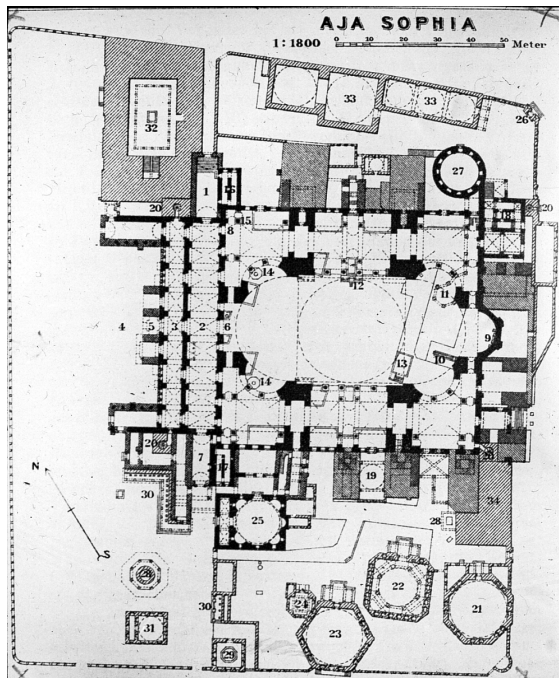


8.121 Feuillet de diptyque en cinq parties: L'empereur triomphant (Justinien?). Constantinople, première moitié du VI^e siècle. Ivoire, restes d'incrustations. Louvre Museum.^{iv}

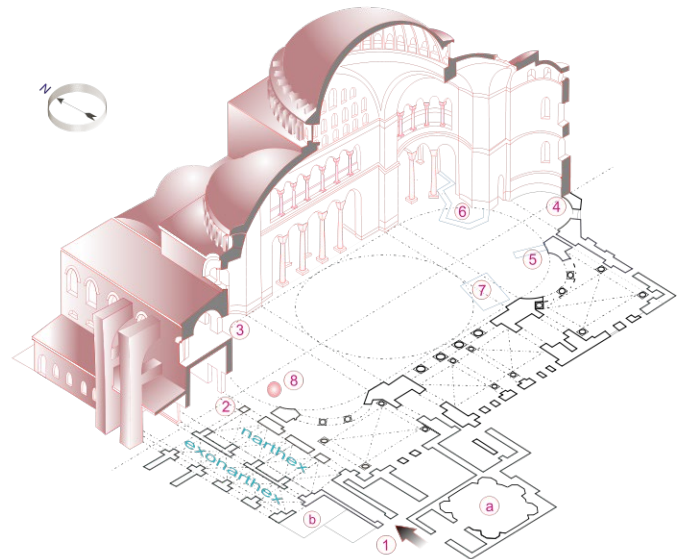
Like Rome, Constantinople had been built on seven hills. Hagia Sophia is located on the highest of these, upon which the ancient city of Byzantium had been founded. The church reflects the blending of two continents (Europe and Asia), two seas (the Black Sea and the Mediterranean), two languages (Greek and Latin), and two plans (basilica and central). The church represents the junction of East and West.

The church was built in the remarkably short period of five years and ten months. To speed the process along Justinian divided the workers into two groups with bonuses offered to the faster team. (Microsoft would apply a similar incentive 1500 years later to research and development teams!) The story is told that at the dedication on Christmas Day, 537, Justinian charged his chariot into the church proclaiming, "Glory to God, who has judged me worthy of accomplishing such a work as this! O Solomon, I have outdone you!"

This diptych at the Louvre is thought to represent an emperor [image 8.121]. It could be Anastasius (r. 491-518) but Louvre curators state the style is more likely that of Justinian (r. 527-565). When this author visualizes Justinian boisterously galloping into the church she can't help but connect this diptych to his boastful declaration.



8.122 Hagia Sophia. Ground plan.^v



8.123 Hagia Sophia section and ground-plan.^{vi}

1. Entrance 2. Imperial Gate 3. Perspiring column 4. Mihrab
5. Minbar 6. Sultan's prayers place 7. Omphalos – "Navel of World"
8. Lustration urns a.) Tomb of Mustafa I. b.) Minars of Selim II.

Look around the exterior of the structure as well as at the plans [images 8.122 and 8.123]. The **axis** is horizontal as well as soaringly vertical, while the **orientation** is towards the east. Remembering that circles suggest continuity and infinity, *where do you see circles?* Recalling that squares imply the active life and humankind's physical aspirations, *where do you see squares or rectangles?* *Where do you observe the intentional use of the mystical numbers 3 and 4?* Here, the mysticism of the east is united with Roman authoritarian architecture.

The height of the dome is 184' and its diameter is 107'. The interior measures 220' by 250' which is the size of three modern football fields. This will be the largest enclosed space in the world for over 1000 years.

The viewer's gaze sweeps around the space, drawing one's eyes up and forward, not stopping to focus on any one section or image [image 8.124]. *What makes Hagia Sophia so mystical?*

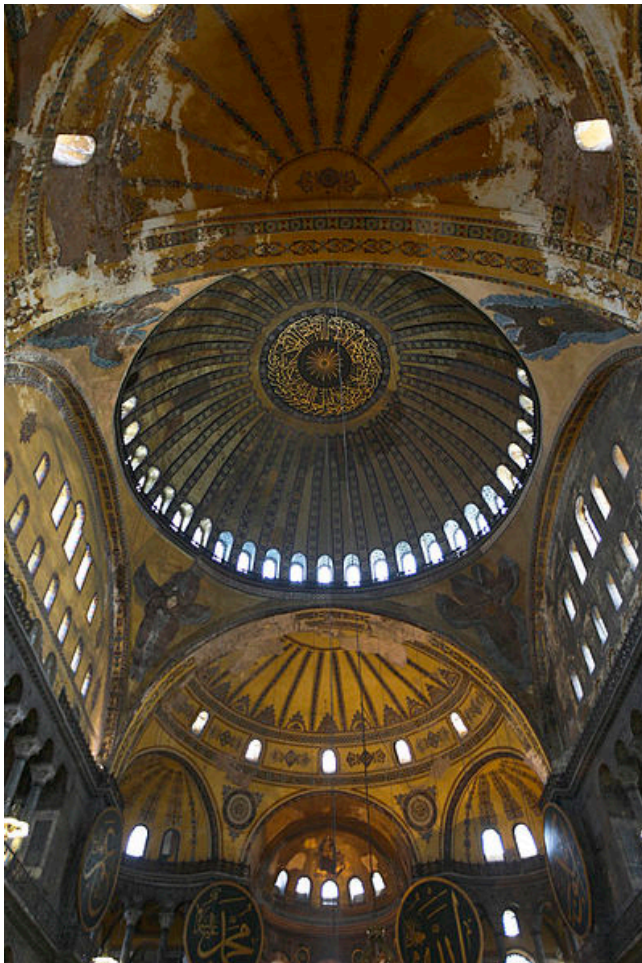
Hagia Sophia is a supreme example of the creation of a spacious and light-filled interior. Since the installation of clerestory windows into basilica churches in the fourth century, **light** had been a principal requirement of church architecture. Light represents wisdom (Sophia!), the word of God, the light of the world, and is symbolic of the Resurrection. Light denotes the presence of God and leads the believer to progress **anagogically**^{vii} from this material world to the immaterial world. Justinian's historian, Procopius, related the psychological and religious effect of mystical light and the graceful interior: "The worshippers mind rises sublime to commune with God, feeling He cannot be far off, but must especially love to swell in the place which He has chosen; and this takes place not only when a man sees it for the first time, but it always makes the same impression upon him, as though he had never beheld it before."^{viii}

Around the **corona** of the dome an arcade of 40 arched windows illuminate the colorful interior. Additionally, this ring lightens the weight of the dome and allows some movement during severe earthquakes, preventing meridional cracking.^{ix}



8.124 Hagia Sophia. Mystical light within the church.^x

Within the church the light reigns free. Thousands of lamps glitter on the mosaics. The dome alone is covered with 30 million cut glass *tesserae* infused with gold leaf. Interior light reflects off cornices, doors and doorframes. The sanctuary barriers are of polished bronze and 40,000 pounds of silver and light shines forth from polished green, white and purple marble. Additionally, the dignitaries are wearing rich, light-reflective, textiles.



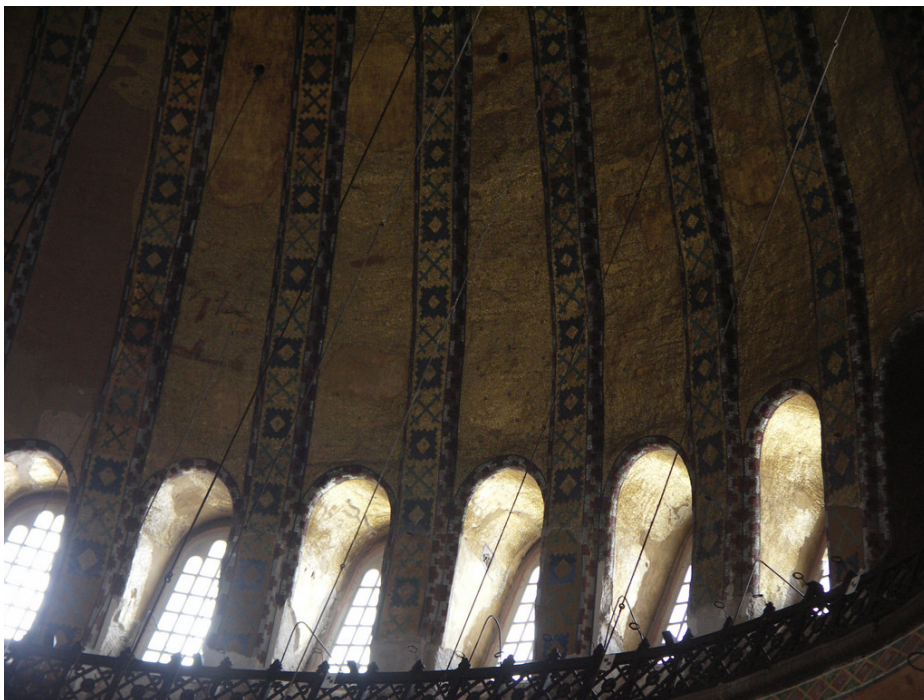
8.125 The domes at Hagia Sophia.^{xiii}

Procopius, again writing in *De Aedificiis*, compares the suspension of the dome to the Greek poet Homer’s vision of Zeus suspending the whole world from Mount Olympus, as recounted in *The Iliad*. “The dome is so light that it does not appear to rest upon a solid foundation, but to cover the place beneath as though it were suspended from heaven by the fabled golden chain.”

This crown in image 8.126, which is similar to Justinian’s, may look familiar to you!^{xi}



8.126 Votive Crown of Visigoth King Recesswinth. 653-672, National Archaeological Museum, Madrid.^{xii}



8.127 Windows at the base of the Dome, Hagia Sophia.^{xiv}

The windows at the bottom of the dome [image 8.127] are closely spaced, visually asserting that the base of the dome is insubstantial and hardly touches the building itself. The building planners did more than squeeze the windows together; they also lined the jambs or sides of the windows with gold mosaic. As light hits the gold it bounces around the openings and eats away at the structure, making room for the imagination to see a floating dome.

The growing importance of relics stimulated churches to be built in the **Central plan**. At Hagia Sophia the **dome** sits over the central bay. Concave triangular **pendentive** arches, each springing from a single pier, carry the circle of the dome [image 8.128]. Despite the enormous forces created by domes and the exceptional technical problems of their construction, the domes enabled a far wider and more open basilica layout than would have been possible had even the longest roof timbers been employed. As if to demonstrate their muscular strength, each of the pendentives around the corona hosts a depiction of an angel.^{xv}

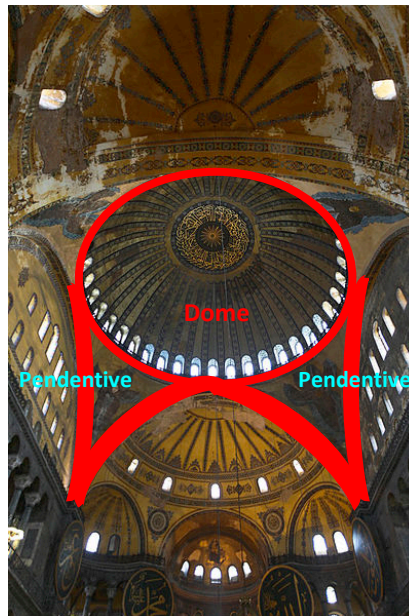
Around the dome, **exedrae** (recessed semidomes) on either side of the dome were both useful and served to buttress the dome. These, in turn, were supported by their own smaller semidomes.



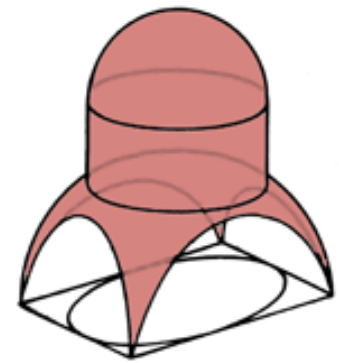
8.128 Hagia Sophia dome, semi-dome and cherubim.^{xvi}



8.129 *The Seraphim Mosaic*. Hagia Sophia, Istanbul. Angels were placed around the Pantocrator mosaic under Emperor Basil II (r. 986-994). The "seraphims" are depicted in red.^{xvii}



8.130 The domes at Hagia Sophia, outlined by the author to demonstrate the dome and pendentive arches.^{xix}



8.131 Pendentive diagram.^{xviii}

Simultaneously, the time-honored **basilica plan** was still utilized. Hagia Sophia clearly has a narthex, nave, aisles, a crossing (under the dome), and an apse. Processions and prostration, in honor of the emperor, were expected.

Constantine's fascination with **relics**^{xx} was not forgotten here, with mementos chosen to meet every theological persuasion. From Jewish tradition, the faithful could see the ark with which Noah's ark had been build, the olive branch carried by the dove to signal that the flooding waters had receded, the rock in the desert which Moses struck to bring forth water and the ram's horns which Joshua blew to bring down the walls of Jericho. Christians could view a casket containing crumbs leftover from the feeding of the 5000, an alabaster box containing ointment with which Mary Magdalene anointed Jesus, the lance that pierced Christ's side, Christ's tunic, the Crown of Thorns, a vial of Christ's own blood, fragments from the True Cross and the crosses of the two thieves with whom he had been executed. For citizens who honored both Jewish and Christian traditions, Hagia Sophia had the arm and head of John the Baptist^{xxi} and the well-head from where Christ had met the Samaritan woman. For good Roman citizens, the basilica held the standard carried to Rome by the mystical founder, Trojan prince Aeneas. The relics and the church were consecrated with a grand banquet at which 6000 sheep, 1000 oxen, 1000 pigs, 1000 poultry and 500 deer were served.

At the top of the south wall a 10th century construction worker doing repair work left his prayer, "Lord, help your servant..." We can imagine a grunt laborer, without benefit of safety-net or OSHA regulations, looking down 184 feet and hoping his prayer will be heard.



8.132 Hagia Sophia. Looking up 184'.^{xxii}

Most of the original mosaics were not figurative images. Geometric and floral patterns were on the ceiling and upper walls. The mosaic shown in image 8.133 was uncovered after the 1934 restoration of the facility.

One of the crises faced by the Byzantine court is known as the **Iconoclast Controversy**. The word *icon* refers to many different things today. For example, we use this word to refer to the small graphic symbols in our software as well as to powerful cultural figures. The changed meaning of “icon” derives from the word’s original meaning which was from the Greek word for “image” or “painting.” During the medieval era, this meant a religious image on a wooden panel to be used for prayer and devotion. Christians living in the eastern Mediterranean used icons (paintings of Christ, the Virgin Mary or the saints) as worship aids. Other Christians, citing the Ten Commandments’ prohibition on “graven images” opposed the images as “idols.”

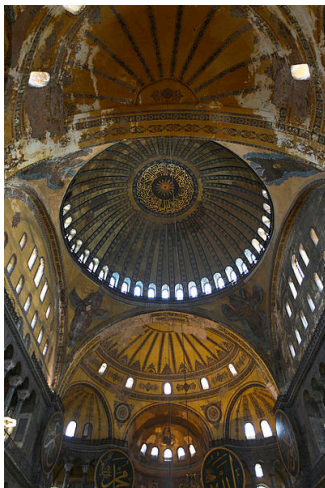


8.133 Hagia Sophia. Original non-figurative decoration on the upper wall, inner narthex.^{xxiii}

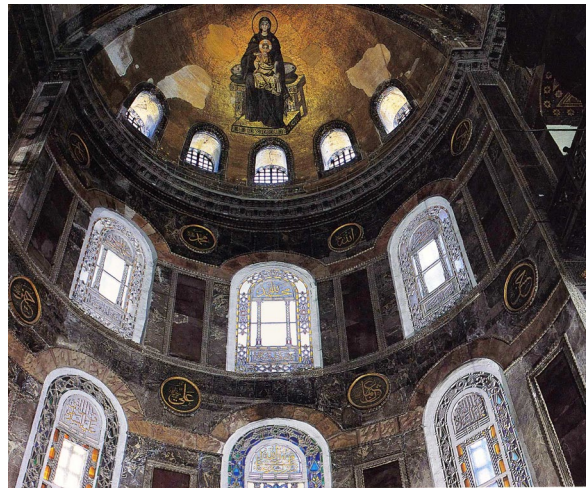
Pope Leo III (r. 717-747) was right at the heart of the controversy. It was widely held that Muslims were Christian heretics, worshipping the same God but in an incorrect way. Since Muslims had chosen to eschew images in their mosques, and they were extraordinarily successful in battle, the pope and his advisors reasoned that God might be punishing the Byzantines for misusing religious images and for falling into idolatry. The solution appeared simple: ban the use of religious images and hope for divine approval, which would become apparent through political and military success. So, in 726 he banned all icons. As they say, the proof is in the results: Pope Leo III reigned 25 years, longer than his five predecessors combined. The conclusion: God must have liked Leo and his stand on **iconoclasm!**

The period from 717-867 became known as the Period of Iconoclasm. Early Christian art was not the only thing destroyed; it has been estimated that 50,000 monks, with their “modern” interpretation of the significance of the Virgin, were exiled to Italy during this time.

In 843 a new pope, Pope Gregory IV, repealed the ban and **iconophiles** (aka **iconodules**) resumed their activities. From this date forward Greek-speaking churches would support the use of icons. These will be the followers of the **Eastern Orthodox** tradition. In 867 the pope’s action was supported by the Emperor Basil I.



8.134 Hagia Sophia domes.^{xxiv}



8.135 *Theotokos* (God-bearer) and *Christ* mosaic in the conch of the apse of Hagia Sophia.^{xxv}



8.136 Hagia Sophia. *Theotokos* (God-bearer) and *Christ*. 9th century mosaic.^{xxvi}

The **Theotokos** (“God-bearer”) in the conch of the apse is one of those images installed after the Iconoclast Controversy [images 8.134-136]. It is similar to the stylistic elements of early Christian art and was probably approved by

the Emperor Basil II (r. 986-994). The enormous size of Hagia Sophia makes the Theotokos look remote and removed from humankind but she is actually 16' 4" high, which is three-times life size!

Placed against a golden background, gold *tesserae* isolate the figure and eliminate every indication of time and place. In mosaics and painting this golden background was properly termed "**gold ground.**" The reflecting light surrounding the icon shines back to the beholder, projecting the figure forward into the space between the observer and the image. This was especially true when candles were set before the icon.

In Byzantine art the projection of the heavenly figure into the earthly realm was also accomplished mathematically. In the geometric technique of **Byzantine perspective**, lines converged forward to enhance the viewer's sensation of being included in the composition. The practice is also referred to as **reverse perspective** or **inverted illusionism**.^{xxvii} Figures were elongated and objects appeared to be heightened and tip upward. The foreshortened view does not distort the image when seen from below and at a distance. Examples of Byzantine perspective are to be seen at the top of the fountain beside the Empress Theodora [image 8.137] and the bema (raised platform) upon which the Theotokos sits [repeated image 8.138].



8.137 San Vitale, *Theodora and Her Retinue* (cropped). 527-547.^{xxix}



8.138 Hagia Sophia. *Theotokos (God-bearer) and Christ*. 9th century mosaic.^{xxviii}



8.139 *Virgin and Child (aka Kahn Madonna)* (1250-1275). 4' 3 5/8" x 2' 6". Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.^{xxx}

Byzantine perspective was an additional response to the Platonic influence on Byzantine art. The argument given in the *Timaeus* was that human eyesight is imperfect and untrustworthy. Objects don't really decrease in size as they recede in the distance. As Plato advised, earthly illusions are not to be trusted!

Byzantine, Romanesque and Gothic artists continued to extend space forward, bringing the icon to the viewer. Byzantine perspective, with the introduction of the divine into our world, was further mastered by the stained glass artists of the Gothic cathedral. Using the mystery of light, the saints bridged the divide between the heavenly world and this terrestrial plane. The convention of Byzantine Perspective is still to be seen in the painted and gilded panel known as the *Kahn Madonna* [image 8.139]. The artist, possibly from Constantinople, may have brought the traditional Byzantine perspective with him when he immigrated to Italy. It will be the privilege of later Proto-Renaissance artists, such as Cimabue (c.1280+), to introduce the angle of "linear perspective" with which we are familiar.

The panel in the south gallery known as the *Deësis* is a bit smaller, with the figures at two-and-one-half times life size [images 8.140-147]. This image of the Virgin, Christ in Majesty and John the Baptist is thought to have been installed in 1261 after the Crusaders had been expelled from the city. The gold ground upon which the figures are mounted presents them as eternal: they are always present to receive prayers and supplications. This mosaic was much more accessible to those converting the church to a mosque in 1254. It was easily covered with layers of whitewash, not because the Muslims don't recognize Christ as at least a prophet but because of the prohibition of figural imagery, especially within a religious space. It was uncovered in 1934 when the mosque was converted into a museum.



8.140 Hagia Sophia. *Deësis* mosaic in south gallery, central bay.^{xxxii}



8.141 Hagia Sophia. *Deësis* mosaic.^{xxxiii}

Certainly we are caught by the riveting stares of these figures. The eyes of the Virgin, Christ and John the Baptist remind us of the Faiyum portraits.^{xxxiii} Clearly their eyes are intended to be windows to their souls. The skill of the unknown artist is amazing. Notice how the light source, raking across from our left, is matched by the shading of the faces. Gold *tesserae* of the cross within Christ's halo is laid with swirling patterns and set at 30° to the vertical, thus ensuring they will catch the light in a different way.



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8.142 Hagia Sophia. Observe how the natural shadows light the faces of the *Virgin, Christ and John the Baptist*.^{xxxiv}

The Latin letters *IC* symbolize “Jesus Christ.”^{xxxv} The position of his fingers reinforce this abbreviation. The Greek *XC* stands for “Christ.” *MP* is Byzantine for “Mother of the King” or “Theotokos.”

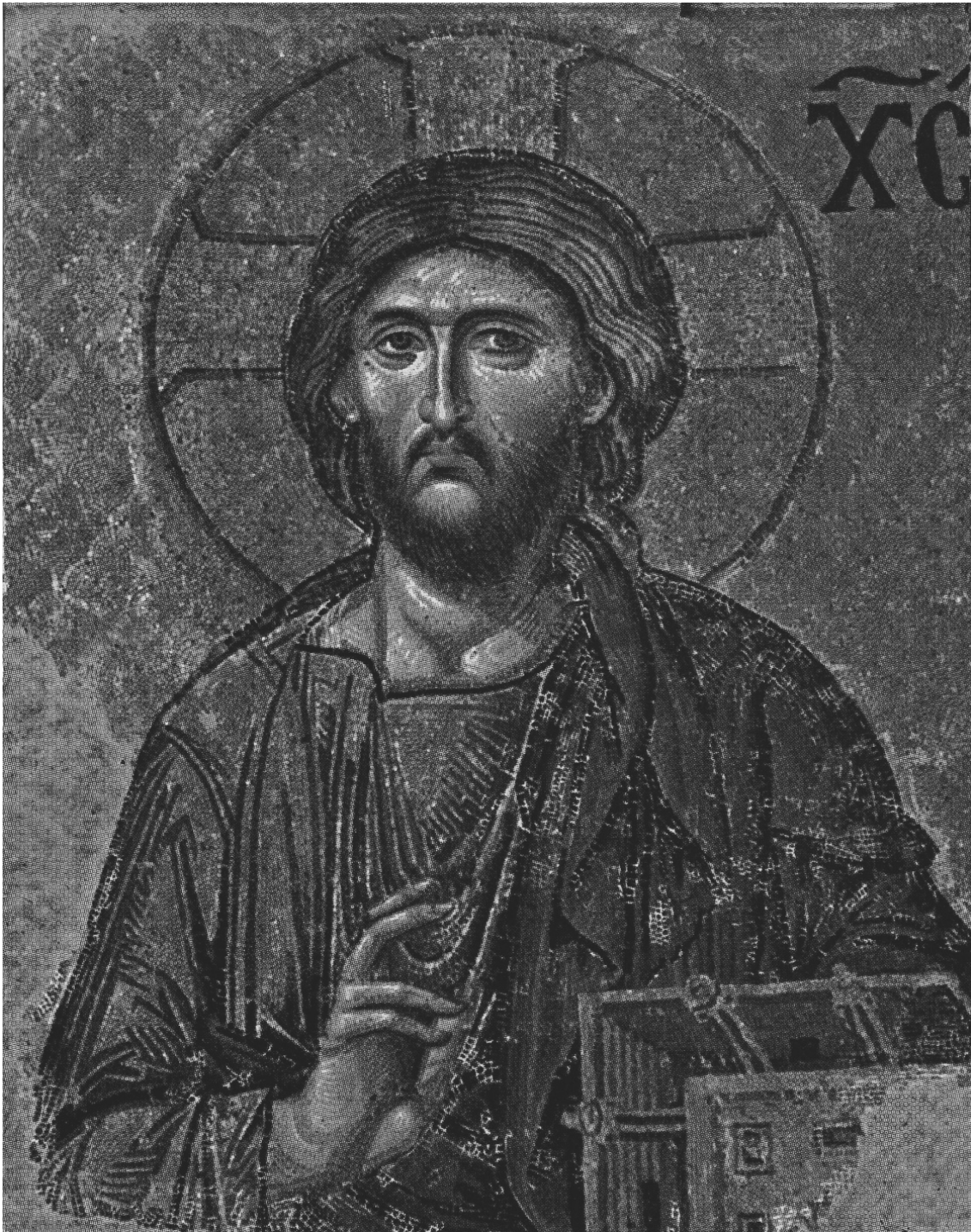


8.143 Hagia Sophia. *The Virgin in the Deësis mosaic*.^{xxxvi}



8.144 Hagia Sophia. *Deësis (aka World Ruler or Pantocrator)*.^{xxxvii}

Reducing the image to a value contrast of black and white encourages us to look at the icon in a new way. *Do you find the image to be open, receptive and welcoming or harsh and judgmental?*

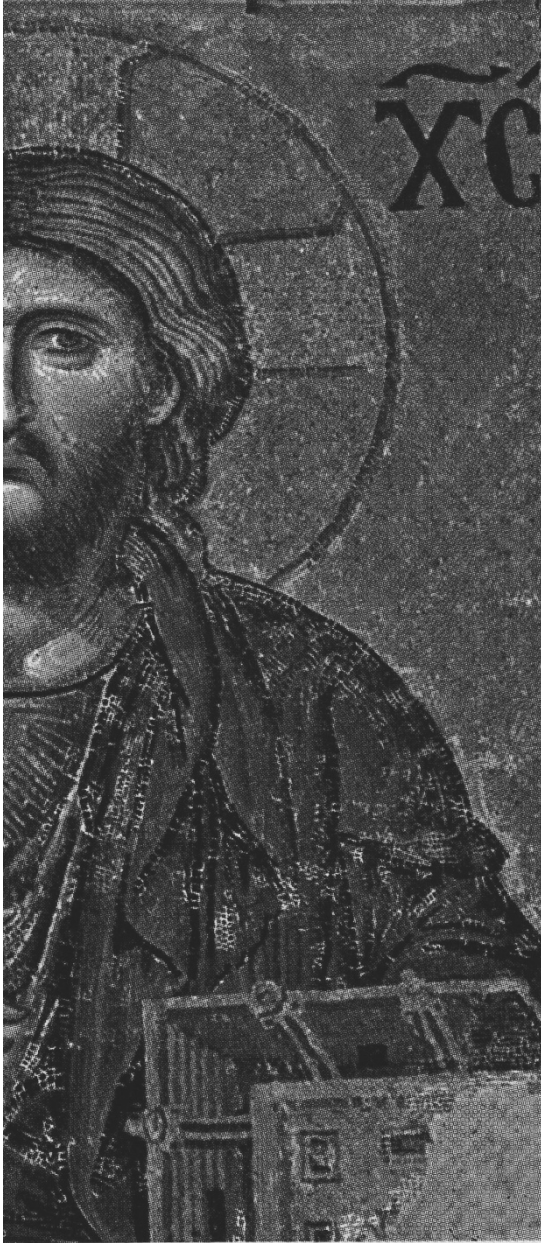


8.145 Hagia Sophia. *Deësis* (aka World Ruler or Pantocrator), reproduced with contrasting values of black and white.^{xxxviii}

Most students find this icon to be unkind, confrontational and critical of humankind. But the Byzantine churchman Nicholas Mesarities, writing in about the year 1200, declared, “His eyes are joyful and welcoming to those who are not reproached by their conscience...But to those who are condemned by their own judgment, they are wrathful and hostile.” *How did the very skilled artist accomplish both attitudes in one work?*

Our eyes are drawn to the dark side, to Christ's left side (our right). "Left" (as in the French *gauche*) is considered the awkward, sinister or unkind side of a person. He clutches a book which is illustrated in Byzantine perspective. This is the Book of Life in which are written the names of those who are saved (according to Philippians 4:3). *How do the elements of art emphasize the judgmental left side?*

- Lines: his eyebrow is more arched. His mouth is drawn into a sneer. The implied presentation is downward.
- Light and shadow: his cheekbone is accentuated with shadow. The colors of blues and blacks are also heavier and darker.



8.146 Hagia Sophia. *Deësis* (aka World Ruler or Pantocrator), detail of Christ's left side.^{xxxix}

His right side brings the relief we need! His fingers spell out the Latin letters **I** and **C** (i.e. **JC** for Jesus Christ) which are also printed over his head. Or, the two raised fingers could represent his two natures of divine and human. On this side the dominant “kinder” element is color. There is more gold (representing heaven, light, eternity, brightness and hope!). The blue is brighter, representing the sky, divine truth and steadfast faith.



8.147 Hagia Sophia. *Deësis* (aka World Ruler or Pantocrator), Christ's right side.^{x1}

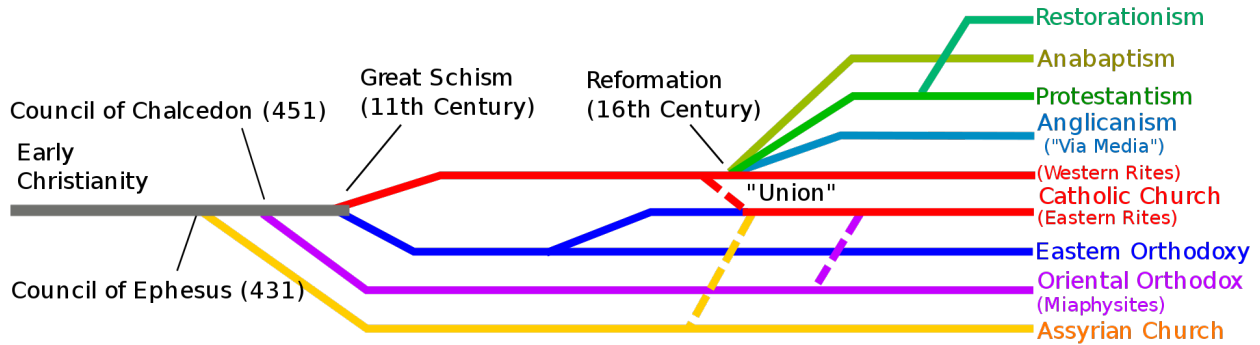
This is not an idol; it's an **icon**. Because of the devotional attitude attached to the image, the icon becomes a window or a door through which the worshipper gazes into heaven and gains access to the holiness of the saints. Naturalism and true to life details have no place here. The intent is to portray the **mystical**, the divine aspect of the dual nature of Christ who was understood to be both God and man. In the same way that the Eucharist (Holy Communion) embodies Christ's flesh and blood, an icon embodies the presence of the holy figure.

Icons demand concentration upon that which is essential about the holy person. For inspired reverence and meditation, the viewer is called upon to focus on the sanctity or worthiness of the holy figure instead of our customary focus on this mundane world of extraneous human qualities, body mass and human emotion. Not everybody gets it! A symbol is a real thing, invested with unreality.

At Hagia Sophia the church, itself, was an icon. It was not just brick and mortar. It was believed to be heaven’s door to earth. As a symbol of God’s universe the church was a vehicle of communication between God and man. Hagia Sophia was never copied but it did set a standard of architectural excellence which influenced ecclesiastical architecture throughout the Balkans and the Near East and in due course into areas that had never been Romanized such as the Christian principalities of Russia.

You might appreciate this video about the Deësis at Hagia Sophia: www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial-americas/medieval-europe-islamic-world/v/deesis-mosaic

Major branches within Christianity



8.148 Major branches within Christianity.^{xii}

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ⁱ Map uploaded from Wikimedia Commons by brewminate.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/ByzantineEmpire04.gif
ⁱⁱ See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Constantine’s Great Decisions." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
ⁱⁱⁱ Public domain at <https://pxhere.com/en/photo/1075731>
^{iv} Photo by the author, Kathleen J. Hartman, 2014. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
^v Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/38/S03_06_01_003_image_1753.jpg
^{vi} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Segment.svg
^{vii} French Abbot Suger gave a superb definition of “anagogical” in his writings about the first Gothic cathedral of St. Denis in Paris, 1149. “Thus when—out of my delight in the beauty of the house of God—the loveliness of the many-colored gems has called me away from external cares, and worthy meditation has induced me to reflect, transferring that which is material to that which is immaterial, on the diversity of the sacred virtues: then it seems to me that I see myself dwelling, as it were, in some strange region of the universe which neither exists entirely in the slime of the earth nor entirely in the purity of Heaven; and that, by the grace of God, I can be transported from this inferior to that higher world in an anagogical manner” (*De Administratione, XXXIII*).
^{viii} Procopius, *De Aedificiis*.
^{ix} Related video *Engineering Secrets of Hagia Sophia*, August, 1999 on <https://vimeo.com/12478063>
^x Copied from Wikimedia Commons by brewminate.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Berger04.jpg
^{xi} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 8, Justinian, Master of Three Powers: San Vitale." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
^{xii} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f2/Corona_de_%2829049230050%29.jpg
^{xiii} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_036_\(6498284165\).jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_036_(6498284165).jpg)
^{xiv} Public domain at human.libretexts.org/Courses/Achieving_the_Dream/Book%3A_Art_History_I/12%3A_Byzantine_Art/12.5%3A_Hagia_Sophia
^{xv} The root of our word “angel” is “evangelos,” not “angle!”
^{xvixvi} Public domain at human.libretexts.org/Courses/Achieving_the_Dream/Book%3A_Art_History_I/12%3A_Byzantine_Art/12.5%3A_Hagia_Sophia
^{xvii} Public domain at Team, Hagia S. R. "The Seraphim Mosaic." *Ancient History Encyclopedia*. Ancient History Encyclopedia, 22 Jan 2018. Web. 05 Nov 2019.
^{xviii} Public domain at upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/63/Penditfkkuppel-mit-Tambour.png

- ^{xix} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_036_\(6498284165\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_036_(6498284165).jpg)
- ^{xx} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Relics of Faith." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxi} John the Baptist's head is also claimed to be at San Jean of Angely in southwestern France. His other head?
- ^{xxii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Interior_of_Hagia_Sophia#/media/File:20131203_Istanbul_022.j
- ^{xxiii} Public domain at hagiasophiaturkey.com/mosaics-hagia-sophia/
- ^{xxiv} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_036_\(6498284165\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Istanbul_036_(6498284165).jpg)
- ^{xxv} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Virgin_and_Child_Mosaic_in_the_apse_of_Hagia_Sophia.jpg
- ^{xxvi} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Virgin_and_Child_Mosaic_in_the_apse_of_Hagia_Sophia.jpg
- ^{xxvii} This author prefers the term Byzantine perspective. "Reverse perspective" has a negative, judgmental ring to it, as though the artist hasn't studied his math or is being contrary and doing things "perversely" just to be a heretic. "Inverted illusionism" is another term that is sometimes used, but to this author this term is just too verbose.
- ^{xxviii} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Virgin_and_Child_Mosaic_in_the_apse_of_Hagia_Sophia.jpg
- ^{xxix} Cropped from mosaic of *Theodora and Her Retinue* at San Vitale. Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Theodora_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_\(Ravenna,_Italy\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mosaic_of_Theodora_-_Basilica_San_Vitale_(Ravenna,_Italy).jpg)
- ^{xxx} Public domain at commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Italo-Byzantinischer_Maler_des_13._Jahrhunderts_001.jpg
- ^{xxxi} Public domain at www.flickr.com/photos/profzucker/14068355978/in/photostream/lightbox
- ^{xxxii} Public domain at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Interior_\(2099879592\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Interior_(2099879592).jpg)
- ^{xxxiii} See Hartman, Kathleen J. "Chapter 7, Anticipating Byzantine Culture." *Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World*. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.
- ^{xxxiv} Public domain at www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial-americas/medieval-europe-islamic-world/v/deesis-mosaic
- ^{xxxv} There is no J in Latin. You will see this substitution of I for J in the four letters which are posted as a placard on Jesus' crucifixion cross: **INRI**, meaning "Jesus of Nazareth King of the Jews."
- ^{xxxvi} Public domain at [commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Deesis_mosaic_\(2\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hagia_Sophia_Deesis_mosaic_(2).JPG)
- ^{xxxvii} Public domain at pxhere.com/en/photos?q=hagia+sophia+pantocrator
- ^{xxxviii} Ibid (reproduced in black and white).
- ^{xxxix} Ibid.
- ^{xl} Ibid.
- ^{xli} Public domain at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-Chalcedonian_Christianity#/media/File:Christianity_major_branches.svg



9.4 Night Flight of Muhammad

Chapter 9

Islam



9.15 The Dome of the Rock

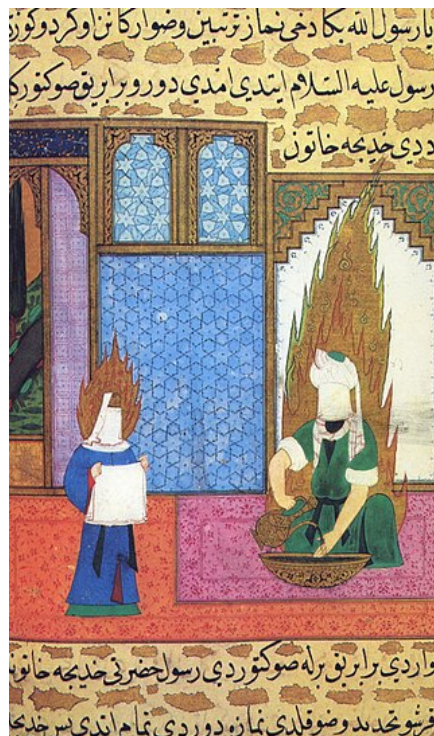


9.35 Andalus Quran, 12th century

INTRODUCTION – MUHAMMAD

Legend traces the Arabs back to Isma‘il, the son of Abraham and his Egyptian maid, Hagar, a link that would later help to legitimize Islam by connecting it to the Hebrew tradition. Muhammad (c.570 – 632) was born in the city of Mecca. Muhammad’s father, ‘Abdallah, was a member of the Hashimite Clan, a less prosperous branch of the Quraysh Tribe. ‘Abdallah died just prior to his son’s birth, and Muhammad’s mother passed away when he was just six years old. Orphaned at such a young age, his tribe intervened to ensure Muhammad’s survival. His uncle, Abu Thalib, the leader of the Hashimite Clan and an important member of the Quraysh Tribe, eventually took custody of the young boy. These early privations influenced Muhammad’s later desire to take care of those who could not care for themselves.

In his youth, Muhammad found employment in the regional caravan trade as a dependable herder and driver of camels. During this period, he cultivated a reputation of an empathetic and honest man, one who earned the respect of many Meccans. His upright character soon attracted the attention of a wealthy merchant known as Khadija who hired Muhammad to manage her caravans. Once Muhammad proved his reliability, Khadija, who was fifteen years older than Muhammad, proposed to him, and they married. He spent 15 years happily married and she gave him three sons who all died in infancy, and four daughters. This marriage afforded Muhammad a financial security that allowed him to begin meditating on religion in the abstract. Image 9.1 shows Muhammad and his wife Khadija performing the first wudu, which is the ritual washing that prepares a Muslim for rituals and prayers.



9.1 Muhammad and Khadija Performing the First Wudu as illustrated in the Siyer-I Nebi.ⁱ

Muhammad had been concerned about the direction society had recently been taking and that some of the most influential members of society, namely the merchant elite of the Quraysh Tribe, were no longer respecting their traditional responsibilities to the weaker members of society because of their own greed. He thought that the People of the Book, specifically, Christians and Jews, might have a better answer for the ills afflicting Meccan society. Muhammad had contact with the Christians and Jews of the peninsula and even traveled to Christian Syria while working in the caravan trade. In this context, the Angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad at a cave near Mecca in 610, during the holy month of Ramadan. The Angel Gabriel instructed him to “recite,” and then he spoke the divine word of God. His revelations became the Quran. See image 9.2 for a depiction of this event. This image is in a folio from Herat, Afghanistan that is now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York. The language around the image is Farsi. Notice that this shows the face of the Prophet, while the

previous image, 9.1, has the Prophet's face covered. The prohibition against depicting a living being in the arts was followed more in some times and cultures than others, so you will see some images of Muhammad that use only his name written rather than his picture.



9.2 Muhammad's Call to Prophecy, 1425, Compendium of Histories. Metropolitan Museum. ⁱⁱ



9.3 Muhammad's name in cursive. ⁱⁱⁱ

At first, Muhammad distrusted the apparition of the Angel Gabriel and he expressed embarrassment because he did not want to be associated with the pagan diviners of the region. Fortunately, his wife Khadija had a cousin who was a hanif, someone who was neither a Christian nor a Jew, but who believed in a vague concept of a monotheistic god. Her cousin trusted the veracity of Muhammad's revelations. So with trepidation, Muhammad eventually accepted his role as God's vehicle. His wife became the first convert to Islam.

According to tradition, Muhammad took a Night Journey to heaven on Buraq, a creature that transported prophets to visit heaven. One night about 10 years after he began to prophecy he was resting at the Kaaba. The story says that the angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad and brought him Buraq which carried him to the Temple in Jerusalem. He prayed there and then mounted Buraq again and flew to heaven where he met with prophets of the Old Testament and Jesus. The Islamic tradition says that while in heaven God gave him instructions about how to be a faithful believer. See images 9.4 and 9.5 for different versions of this story.



9.4 *Night Flight of Muhammad*, Sultan Muhammad, 1539.^{iv}



9.5 *Night Flight of Muhammad*, Bustan of Sa'di, 1514.^v

Muhammad began preaching to a small circle of friends and went to the **Kaaba** where Meccans prayed to 360 idols cut from stone in human form, some dressed in costumes and perfumed with spices. He told the people to abandon their idols and adore the one God. The powerful Qurarshite tribe and many others opposed his preaching because it deviated from traditional customs.



9.6 Haydar's Battle, The Destruction of Idols. 1808, Kashmir.^{vi}

The prophet and his followers left Mecca for Medina, a small center for farmers and artisans 270 miles northeast of Mecca with a mixed Arab and Jewish population. In September of 622 he was the last to leave Mecca. His departure is called *hegira* or flight and 622 CE is the starting point of the Islamic calendar which is based on 12 lunar months or 345 days. In a Christian century there are 103 Mohammedan years.

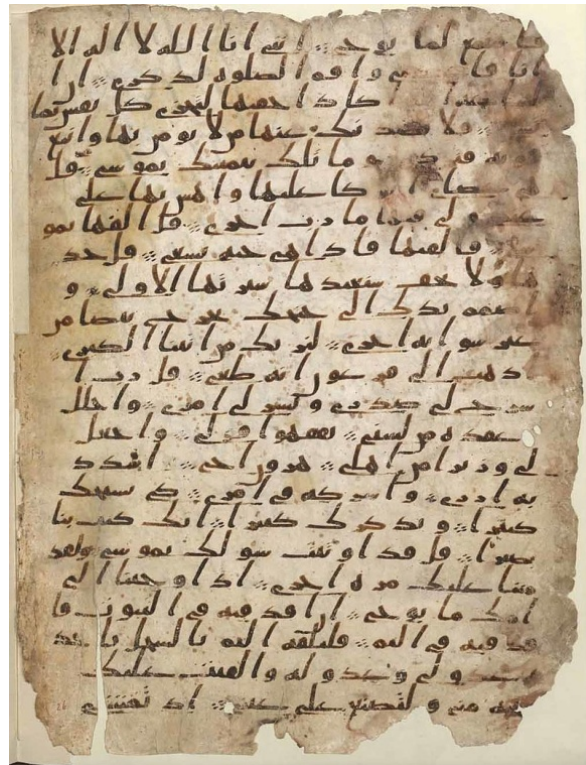
In Medina Muhammad hoped he would find friends. Three of the eleven principle tribes in Medina were Jewish and he approached them to be his first converts. However they thought he was a false prophet and a political menace trying to usurp the power they shared with the Arabs. He found himself fighting a two pronged war against the Jews of Medina and the Meccans. He became a general to lead his followers into battle. Islam is the only one of the world's great religions to have been founded on the sword as well as the word. Muhammad expelled the three Jewish clans by force. The first was allowed to leave with their belongings; the second was expelled without their belongings as he destroyed their palm groves. The males of the third group were beheaded and their women and children sold into slavery. Muhammad began raiding parties against the Meccans and stopped camel caravans headed for Mecca. He had a miraculous victory at Badr which his followers believed proved that he was a prophet. This was followed by a crushing defeat at Uhud. Revelation said that the defeat was to test the believers. Muhammad eventually negotiated a treaty with the Quraishites who now recognized him as a legitimate political and religious leader. With an army of 10,000 he marched on Mecca and they capitulated.



9.7 *Death of Muhammad*, from the *Siyer-i Nebi*, in Topkapi Museum, Istanbul, circa 1595. Ottoman miniature painter.^{vii}

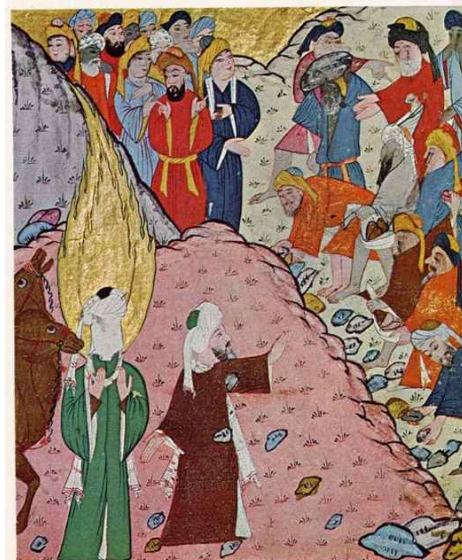
By the time Muhammad died in 632 he had met his immediate goals. The Moslem faith, once a persecuted minority, was now a state religion. He had created a powerful army to enforce his ideas. He was strong enough and wealthy enough to pursue a policy of conquest. He said he had received a revelation that all idolaters should be converted by force if necessary. This included Jews and Christians which were called "people of the book." Muhammad is viewed by Muslims as the last in a succession of prophets who preached parts of the same message. Their earlier sacred writings, the Torah, the Psalms of the Old Testament, and the Gospel of Jesus are constantly mentioned in the Quran. These people were given special protection under Muslim law. Jesus is granted particular respect by Muslims. When Muhammad died an election was held, and Abu-Bakr (r. 632 – 634) established the first caliphate.

Abu-Bakr set about to consolidate control of Arabia, and Muslim expansion began in Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Egypt, and Persia. Perhaps no single historical event between the fall of Rome and the European voyages of discovery was more important than the rise of Islam. Expansion continues into North Africa, and the Mediterranean. In 652 the Quran and the oral teachings of Muhammad were put into writing. Its final written form was not complete until 935. Debate continues to rage over which parts of the Quran are his words and which are the words of his followers.



9.8 Quran Manuscript, verso, 7th century, University of Birmingham.^{viii}

In 656 there was a growing split in the Muslim community. Abu Bakr had been Muhammad's closest friend, and his election brought much-needed stability and an almost democratic form of government to Islam. As caliph, Abu Bakr held together the converts to Islam by deploying the forces at his disposal, thus cementing his authority among the Arabian tribes. He prevented any rebellious Muslim tribes from reverting to the worship of their traditional tribal gods. Abu Bakr died in 634, two years after the Prophet Muhammad died.



9.9 Abu Bakr stops a Meccan Mob From Stoning Muhammad, 16th century Turkish.^{ix}

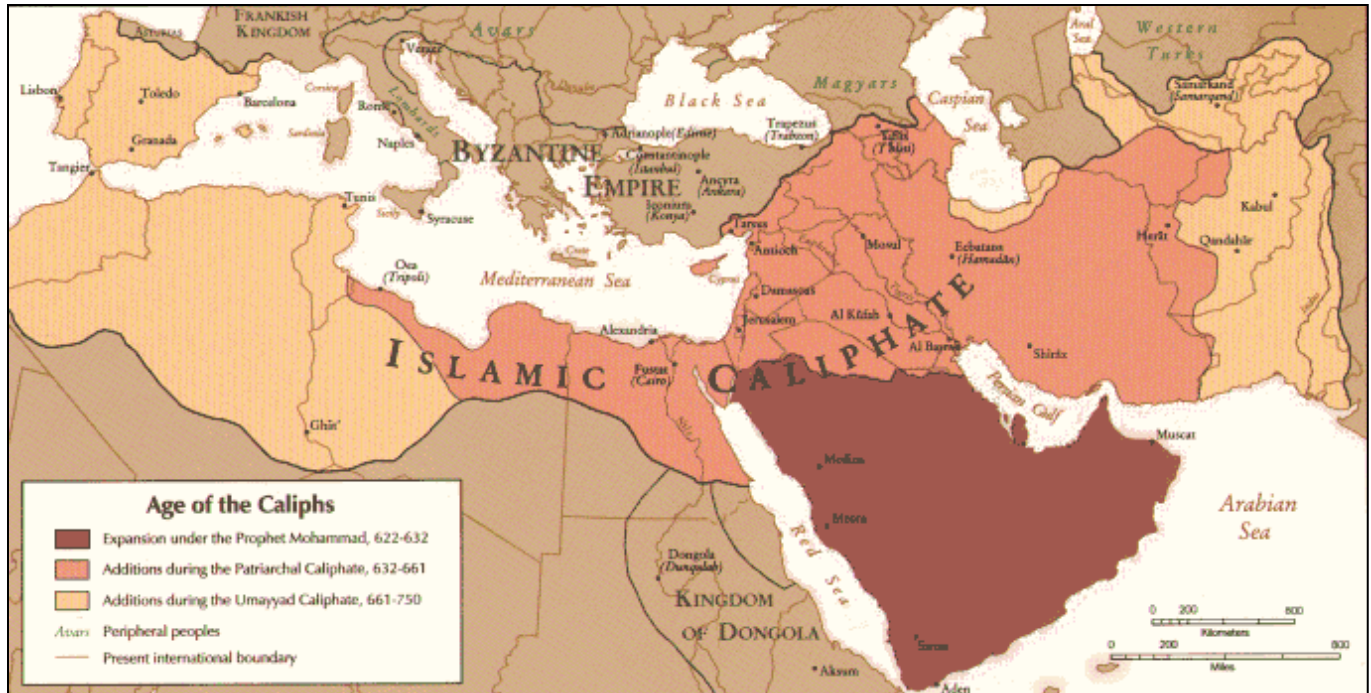
The next caliph was 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab (586 – 684), a close friend of Abu Bakr. 'Umar had been the military power behind Abu Bakr. A dynamic and uncompromising leader, 'Umar recognized the necessity of expansion northward to achieve various ends. First, he sought to subdue the security threat of raiding nomads, many of which remained a law unto themselves. Second, in his struggle to contain discontent, he used the cohesive element of jihad to unite the Muslim community against unbelievers. The Arabic term of jihad actually refers to a "struggle," usually against spiritual impurity, often known as "greater jihad," and is associated with fulfilling God's objectives here on earth. The "lesser jihad," alternatively, is a physical struggle against the unbelievers of the Dar al-Harb, or Abode of War, until it is absorbed into the Dar al-Islam, or Abode of Islam, where believers were free to practice their faith as members of the predominant faith. Of note is the fact that Muhammad did not consider jihad important enough to make it one of the pillars of Islam. Third, 'Umar understood the importance of plunder for the nascent caliphate. Troops received four-fifths of the loot from conquest; the remainder of the revenue went to him to be dispersed amongst the neediest members in the Islamic community. 'Umar directed the full might of Islam northward against the Eastern Roman Empire, sometimes referred to as the Byzantine Empire.

'Umar directed his forces against the Byzantines at Palestine in 634. The ensuing Battle of Ajnadayn was a decisive victory for the Muslims and a major loss for Emperor Heraclius. Two years later, an outnumbered Muslim army defeated the Eastern Roman Empire yet again at the Battle of Yarmouk, located on the Eponymous River, somewhere between Damascus and Jerusalem. In both instances, the Byzantines relied on their slow, heavy cavalry, whereas the Arabs capitalized on their light armor and their superior mobility. The Muslims realized that they could not just charge the East Roman lines; they showed their tactical superiority by flanking the Byzantines and executing a successful rearguard action instead. These victories opened up greater Syria to Muslim conquest. Antioch, Aleppo, and Jerusalem fell to the Muslims not long thereafter.



9.10 Entrance of Caliph Umar into Jerusalem, 19th century engraving.^x

Once he dealt with the increasingly vulnerable Byzantines, 'Umar directed his army to the east against the Sasanian Empire of Persia. In 636, fighting along the banks of the Euphrates River, a smaller Arab force triumphed over the Persians, at the Battle of Qadisiya. After successive days of exhaustive combat, the Muslims took advantage of environmental conditions and their light cavalry's mobility when they chased a dust storm and took the Sasanids by surprise. In 642, Umar's army eventually defeated the forces of the Sasanian Emperor Yazdagird III at the Battle of Nahavand, situated deep in Iran's Zagros Mountains.



9.11 Age of the Caliphs, US Government map.^{xi}

Clearly outnumbered Muslim armies thus successfully defeated two long-standing empires in the span of just a few decades. Several explanations help us understand the rapid expansion of Islam during this period. One concept, termed the vacuum theory, posits that the Byzantine and Persian empires had been severely weakened from near-continuous fighting, dating back decades prior to the rise of Islam, so they both suffered from the fatigue of war. Islam, therefore, occupied the vacuum of political power resulting from the collapse of these two exhausted empires.

The success of Muslim military strategy offers a second explanation. While Byzantine forces adopted a defensive stance on the battlefield, the Arabs employed more aggressive tactics, making use of their mobile light cavalry against their enemies' heavily armored armies. Once victorious, the Arabs populated garrison cities on the frontier, called *amsar*, with Muslims. These military settlements provided security, served as logistical loci, and discouraged Muslim troops from mingling with the locals. The caliphs thereby prevented their warriors being assimilated into the communities of the conquered while also preventing soldiers from disturbing the peace. The Muslims further exploited the internal divisions of targeted societies, as exemplified in Egypt, where the Coptic Christian majority, together with a large Jewish minority in Alexandria, had suffered under the rule of an oppressive Greek Orthodox Christian minority but gained autonomy and toleration within an Islamic state. In Syria, another Christian minority called the Syrian Orthodox Church, or Jacobites, collaborated with the Muslims and hastened the collapse of the Byzantines. All these factors led the early Islamic state to expand exponentially.

Uthman succeeded as the 3rd caliph when Umar died, but he was killed in a mutiny because he had ordered a complete revision of the Quran. The 4th caliph was Ali, who was the son-in-law of Muhammad and husband of his daughter Fatima. This appointment was not accepted by all factions and war broke out. Two years later he was killed. The Shi'a mourned his death and today they consider him a saint because they believe he should have been the successor. The Sunnis accept Ali and the first three caliphates as the rightful leaders. Should a literal descendant of Muhammad or a selected leader be caliph? There was no clear method to determine the line of succession. There were problems with favoritism, anger, and fighting in the dominant families. In 659 Muslims divided into Shia, Sunni and Khariji sects and there has been open conflict between the Sunni and the Shia since then.



9.12 *The Investiture of Ali*, Ediburgh Codex. By Ibe al-Kutbi. *The Legacy of Genghis Khan: Courtly Arts and Culture in Western Asia, 1256-1353.*^{xii}

There are many You Tube videos that discuss Islam. Some are more radical than others. The following are links to some of the more educational and shorter videos that might help you understand Islam for the purposes of this class.

You might like this 10 minute overview of Islamic culture:

[OVERVIEW OF ISLAMIC CULTURE](#)

Or watch this 10 minute "History of Islamic Iran" to see how the Islamic Iran changed hands multiple times.

[HISTORY OF ISLAMIC IRAN](#)

You might also like this 12 minute video by the Khan Academy that shows the Spread of Islam.

[KHAN ACADEMY- THE SPREAD OF ISLAM](#)

Or maybe this 10 minute "History of Islam" a quick 10 minute history of Muhammad and the beginnings of Islam.

[MUHAMMAD AND THE BEGINNINGS OF ISLAM](#)

Some ideas for this chapter were taken from: Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

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ⁱ Lutfi Abdullah, Public domain. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Siyer-i_Nebi_-_Muhammad_und_Chadidscha_\(1907\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Siyer-i_Nebi_-_Muhammad_und_Chadidscha_(1907).jpg)

ⁱⁱ Metropolitan Museum of Art, Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Muhammad-Majmac-al-tawarikh-1.jpg>

ⁱⁱⁱ By Salat-Ahmad2099, CC BY 2.5. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Muhammad_Salat.PNG

^{iv} Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Miraj_by_Sultan_Muhammad.jpg

^v Sultan Muhammad Nur, CC0.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22The_Miraj_or_The_Night_Flight_of_Muhammad_on_his_Steed_Buraq%22,_Folio_3v_from_a_Bustan_of_Sa%60di_MET_h1_1974.294.2.jpg

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:%22The_Miraj_or_The_Night_Flight_of_Muhammad_on_his_Steed_Buraq%22,_Folio_3v_from_a_Bustan_of_Sa%60di_MET_h1_1974.294.2.jpg

^{vi} Photo by Sieme Nathan, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Muhammad_destroying_idols_-_L'Histoire_Merveilleuse_en_Vers_de_Mahomet_BNF.jpg

^{vii} Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Siyer-i_Nebi_414a.jpg

^{viii} Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Birmingham_Quran_manuscript_folio_2_verso.jpg

^{ix} Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Abu_Bakr_stops_Meccan_Mob.jpg

^x By Granger, Public domain. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_entrance_of_Caliph_Umar_\(581-644\)_into_Jerusalem,_638-colored_engraving,_19th_century.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_entrance_of_Caliph_Umar_(581-644)_into_Jerusalem,_638-colored_engraving,_19th_century.jpg)

^{xi} Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Age_of_Caliphs.png

^{xii} Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Investiture_of_Ali_Edinburgh_codex.jpg

THE RELIGION OF ISLAM

As a religion of the Abrahamic faith, Islam holds much in common with Judaism and Christianity. Islam grew out of the Judeo-Christian tradition, a link which helped to legitimize the new religion. In fact, Muslims believe in the same God, or Allah in Arabic, as the Jewish and Christian God. Although Muslims trust that the People of the Book had received the word of God, they believe that it had become distorted over time, so God sent the Angel Gabriel to deliver His word to Muhammad and Muslims believe that he represented God's final word to man. Muhammad never claimed to be founding a new religion, rather he served as the last in a long line of God's messengers, beginning with the Hebrew prophets, and including Jesus. He says that his revelations, therefore, represent the pure, unadulterated version of God's message.

The Prophet's followers memorized the revelations and ultimately recorded them in a book called the Quran. In addition to the Quran, the Hadith or traditions of Muhammad was used to illustrate a concept. The Sunna, the teachings of the Prophet not found in the Quran, helped guide and inform Muslims on proper behavior. With that knowledge came great responsibility, as God held His people to a high standard of behavior, based on their obedience, or submission to His will. In fact, the word Islam means submission in Arabic, and a Muslim is one who submits (to God).

Derived from a Hadith, the Five Pillars of Islam are essential, obligatory actions that serve as the foundation of the faith.

- The first pillar, known as the witness, or shahada, is a profession of faith, in which believers declare that "There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His messenger."
- Prayer, also called salat, is the second pillar of Islam. Islam expects faithful Muslims to pray five times a day, kneeling towards Mecca, at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening. One should perform wudu, which are ritual ablutions prior to their prayers in order to approach God as being symbolically clean and pure.
- The third pillar is almsgiving, or zakat in Arabic. Islam requires Muslims to contribute a proportion of their wealth to the upkeep of the Islamic community. This proportion, or tithe, accorded with the size of one's wealth; therefore, the rich should expect to contribute more than the poor.
- Fasting, or sawm, is the fourth pillar of Islam and takes place during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. For the duration of Ramadan, believers consume neither food nor drink from dawn to dusk. This practice is meant to remind them of what it is like to be poor and go hungry.
- The fifth and final pillar of Islam is pilgrimage, or hajj. Islam expects all able-bodied Muslims to make a journey to Mecca at least once in their lifetime. All five pillars combine to unite the Islamic community.

Other sources you might want to study:

<https://www.truthnet.org/islam/whatisislam.html>

Some ideas for this chapter were taken from: Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2. <https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

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ISLAMIC CULTURE AND INFLUENCE

The world owes a debt to Islamic scholars for their advances in the sciences and learning. In addition to those, we can be grateful that we have the writings of the great Greek thinkers because the Arabic scholars translated them from Greek to Arabic and then used the texts to teach in their universities. This is a brief list of cultural activities for which the Muslims are known.

- 696- Arab coinage is introduced and Arabic becomes the official administrative language of Islam.
- 751- Arabs learn paper making from Chinese prisoners
- 755- Jurjis ibn Bakhtishu' founds a school of medicine in Baghdad
- 760- Development of algebra and trigonometry
- 830- Greek works translated into Arabic and placed in Bayt al-Hikma (House of Knowledge) in Bagdad, world atlas compiled, sciences flourish
- 925- Medieval Encyclopedia of al-Razi (Rhazes) brings medicine to Europe, including the first medical treatise on smallpox
- 970- The Fatimids build the mosque-university or al-Azhar in Cairo
- 1093- Arab compass is first known to be used
- 1176- Two universities founded in Cairo and Fustat
- 1171- Ibn Rushd (Averroes) writes Middle Commentary on Aristotle
- 1325- Ibn Battuta, travels in Asia and Africa until 1354.

“Early in the 9th century, there was established in Baghdad a foundation called the House of Wisdom (Bayt al-Hikmah), which had its own library. Its purpose was to promote the translation of scientific texts. The most famous of the translators was Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-`Ibadi, a Syriac-speaking Christian originally from southern Iraq who also knew Greek and Arabic. He was the author of many medical tracts and a physician to the caliph al-Mutawakkil (ruled 847-861/232-247 H), but he is most often remembered as a translator, an activity he began at the age of seventeen. He produced a truly prodigious amount of work before his death in about 873 (260 H), for he translated nearly all the Greek medical books known at that time, half of the Aristotelian writings as well as commentaries, various mathematical treatises, and even the Septuagint. Ten years before his death he stated that of Galen’s works alone, he had made 95 Syriac and 34 Arabic versions. Accuracy and sensitivity were hallmarks of his translating style, and he was no doubt responsible, more than any other person, for the establishment of the classical Arabic scientific and medical vocabulary. Through these translations a continuity of ideas was maintained between Roman and Byzantine practices and Islamic medicine. “¹

ART FORMS

Islamic artisans were quick to absorb ideas and influences from the cultures they encountered. From Greco-Roman architecture came the column and the arcade. From Byzantine architecture came the pendentive which allowed the dome to become a prominent feature of the Islamic mosques. From Persian art and architecture came miniature painting, the vaulted hall, the pointed arch, and floral and geometric ornament. They also had uniquely Islamic ideas and forms. All of Islamic art was affected by the Quran's prohibition against the representation of living creatures. Large scale paintings and sculptures were not produced and lifelike figures, whether of humans or animals, largely disappeared from art. Because of these prohibitions, artists were very inventive in the use of non-representational forms. The arabesque, a complex figure made of intertwined floral, foliate, or geometrical forms, became a highly visible sign of Islamic culture.



9.13 Arabesques and Quranic text above the mihrab, 10th century, *Great Mosque of Cordoba*.ⁱⁱ



9.14 Detail of the mosaic Quranic text, mihrab, *Great Mosque of Cordoba*.ⁱⁱⁱ

See image 9.13 for an example of the arabesque above the portal of the Great Mosque of Cordoba. The designs were rarely based on nature, but were meant to make viewers think of values other than those of their surrounding world. The minor arts of the Muslims included the weaving of pile carpets, leather tooling, brocaded silks and tapestries, inlaid metal work, enameled glassware, and painted pottery. Most of these products were embellished with complicated patterns. In general, the arts paid particular emphasis to pure visual design.

ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

Mosques were the most important of the Islamic buildings, but there are many examples of palaces, schools, libraries, private dwellings, and hospitals. Islamic architects built many more secular buildings than their European counterparts. The principle elements include bulbous domes, **minarets**, horseshoe arches, and twisted columns, together with the use of tracery in stone, alternating stripes of black and white or red and white, mosaics, and the use of Arabic script as a decorative device.

As in the Byzantine style, comparatively little attention was paid to the exterior decoration. The Arabic pointed arch was adopted by Gothic builders to become one of the main characteristics of the spectacular cathedrals of the 13th and 14th centuries.

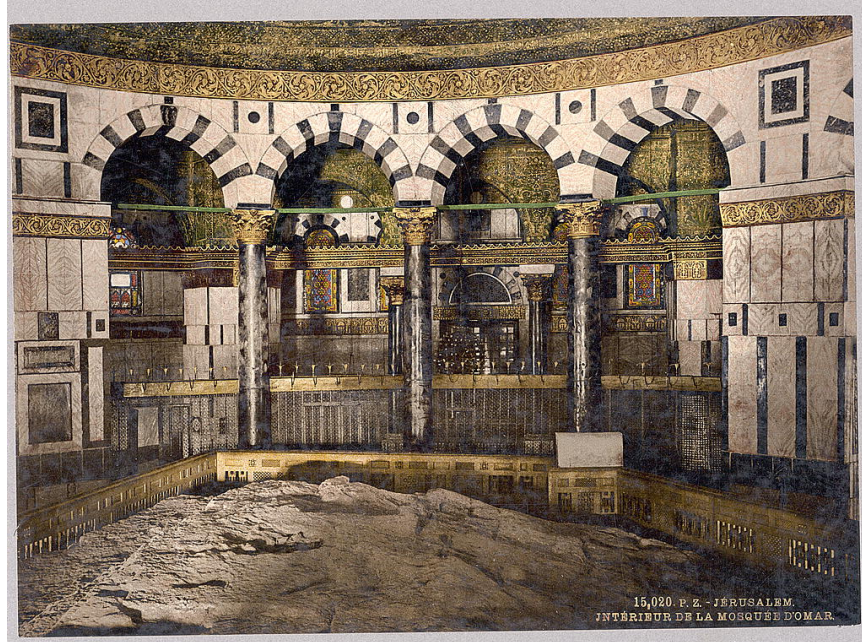
The mosque was plain in exterior decoration and rectangular in shape. Special features included basins and fountains for ritual washing, porticoes for instruction, and an open area for group prayers. The dome was often a high melon shape, and a minaret, a thin pointed tower, was included for an official to climb and call the faithful to prayer five times a day. Interior spaces were richly decorated, reminding the viewer of the beauty of paradise. Brilliant mosaics and rugs were on the floors, calligraphic friezes covered the walls, and overhead metal lamps cast a glow onto the faithful at night.

The Dome of the Rock, built in 691 by Abd-al-Malik is one of the most sacred sites in the Muslim world. The small “chain” building in front of the main mosque was created as a model when the Dome of the Rock was being built.

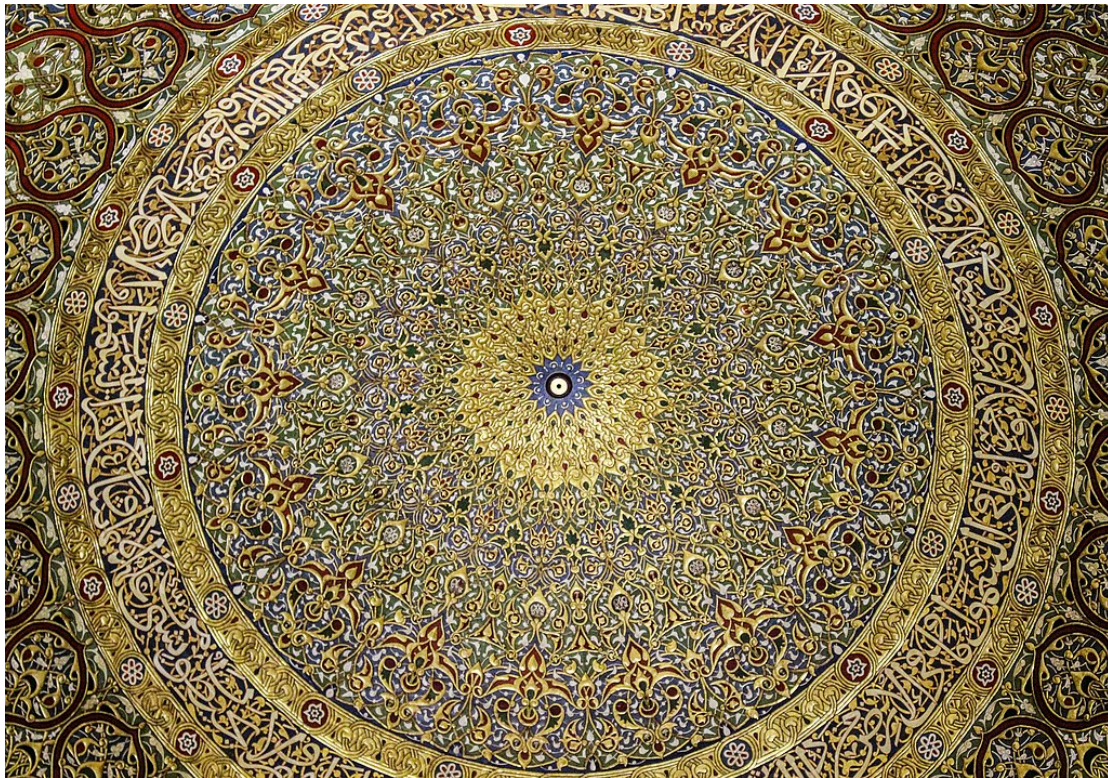


9.15 *The Dome of the Rock and Chain of the Rock, Jerusalem,* ^{iv}

This building has special significance to the people of Islam. It is built over the top of a rock that was supposed to be the same rock where Muhammad prayed when he took his night flight to Jerusalem. See images 9.xx and 9.xx. It is also supposed to be the same rock where Abraham was asked by God to sacrifice his son. Christians believe that son was Isaac, and Muslims believe the son was Ishmael. Today the Dome of the Rock is venerated by Jewish and Moslem pilgrims as a holy place.



9.16 The rock at the center of the Dome of the Rock mosque, Jerusalem.^v



9.17 Dome in the Dome of the Rock mosque, Jerusalem.^{vi}

Another example of Muslim architecture is the Mosque of Ibn Tulun built in 876-879. It was built by a governor who founded a short lived Egyptian dynasty in Cairo, independent of the caliphate in Bagdad. It is the best preserved monument of the luxurious Samarran Age and was restored in 1296 by the Mamluk Sultan Lajin to fulfill a vow. This mosque became the model for many other mosques which were later built throughout the Islamic civilization.



9.18 *Mosque of Ibn Tulun, central court yard, domed fountain, and minaret.*^{vii}

The mosque covers 6 1/2 acres of land and is rectangular with passageways on three sides that lead through an arcaded area into a central courtyard dominated by a domed fountain. This building is built entirely of brick and then covered with plaster, even though Egypt (unlike Iraq and Iran) had plentiful sources of stone. The fountain was used as a place to perform the wudu, before entering the sanctuary. There is no monumental gateway and entrance to it was through many doors on all sides.



9.19 *Mosque of Ibn Tulun, crest of figures on top of the courtyard wall.*^{viii}

The crest along the top of the wall looks like paper dolls with joined hands, and may have symbolized the militant, united Muslim community guarding the walls of the House of Islam. See image 9.19. Notice how they are stylized human forms rather than actual depictions of humans. This may have been “a nod” to the rule prohibiting the creation of living forms in art. The minaret is made of stone and dates from 1296. The original one was made of brick and was a simple round spiral probably inspired by the ziggurats standing in 9th century Iraq. The square tower topped by two octagonal stories is

typical of the 13th century minaret style, but the staircase on the outside, rather than the inside, imitates the original 9th century structure. The minaret was used by the muezzin to call the faithful to prayer.



9.20 Top of the wall with stylized figures, and the minaret.^{ix}



9.21 Mosque of Ibn Tulun, Entrance door.^x

The doors were made of wood with bronze plates and studs affixed. The mosque was at a higher level than the outer courts. Below the crest is series of discs in squares of Persian-Mesopotamian derivation which symbolize the captured shields that were hung on city walls after a battle. The rosette design seen in image 9.20 is an old Mesopotamian and Persian motif, imported from Iraq. The interior ornamentation consists of full and half palmate forms as well as pearl borders which came from Samarra. The ceilings were made of palm-log rafters, coffered with panels of sycamore wood.



9.22 Interior ornamentation.^{xi}



9.23 Mihrab and the minbar.^{xii}

The main area of the mosque is accessed through a series of arcades in that allow access to the mihrab. Notice that some of the arches are slightly pointed and some take on the horseshoe shape. Pilasters are carved into the corners and appear to support the arches. Note the green rugs on the floor that are to be used for prayer during the services. The mihrab is a central focus of the mosque. All who come to pray face the mihrab, which marks the **qibla**, or the direction of Mecca and the **Kaaba**. The inner core of the mihrab, that is the marble paneling, the glass mosaic frieze and the wooden hood, come from the 13th century restoration, but the outer case belongs to the 9th century. It is framed with Byzantine capitals and capitals. This photo, 9.23, also shows the **minbar**, which is a short flight of steps used by a speaker to access the platform and talk after the prayer service. The message above reads "There is no god but God; Muhammad is the Messenger of God, may God bless him and give him peace."

POTTERY

As Muslims conquered Persia, Byzantium, Egypt, and Mesopotamia they incorporated the methods, materials, and styles of the cultures they absorbed. Unlike some of the cultures they conquered, Islamic ceramicists were not so interested in the shape and form of the object as they were in the surface area to be ornamented. Because of this, much of their pottery is simple in shape but beautifully glazed. Luster decoration was an Islamic technical innovation which probably was first used on glass in Egypt and was adapted with great success to ceramic glazed-ware in 9th century in Iraq. Luster is a rich and hazardous form of decoration, in which the iridescent effect of gold results from metallic particles fired onto the surface of the vessel.



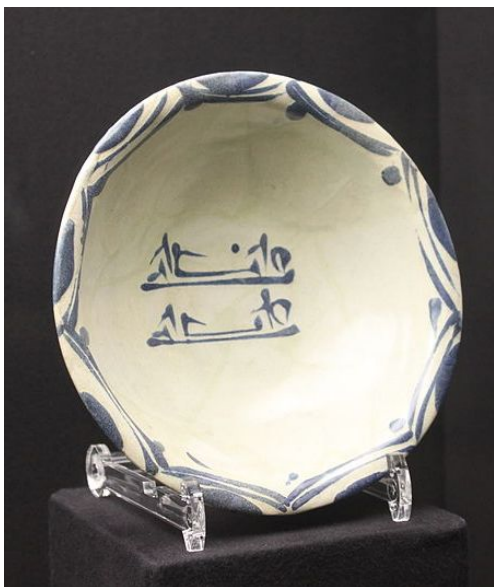
9.24 Lusterware bowl, 13th century, Tehran. ^{xiii}



9.25 9-10th century bowl, Tehran. ^{xiv}

Images 9.24 and 9.25 show luster bowls. Notice the human and animal forms are not quite human or animal and remind us of the early 20th century artistic styles that stretched and altered the human form in multiple ways. The use of overall patterns shows the Islamic artists' love of covering the entire surface with ornament, partly because of the "horror of a vacuum," and because more surface decoration provides more scintillation or sparkle. Luster was a luxury ware, and had been used by the princely courts but it later found a market with the middle class. Not all pottery used the luster finish, as it was for the wealthy and it was dangerous to make due to the fumes.

Other Islamic also beliefs impacted the decorations they used in their pottery. The rules in the Hadith prohibited eating or drinking from gold or silver vessels, so pottery and glass were used instead. Muslim artisans also turned to calligraphic text as decorations on their glazed-ware, just as they did to decorate their mosques. The text might be a phrase from the Quran or it might be a line of poetry such as is seen on the bowl in image 9.6 The Kufic inscription reads: "Magnanimity has first a bitter taste, but at the end it tastes sweeter than honey. Good health [to the owner]." It is made of terracotta with a white slip ground and has slip under glaze decorations.



9.26 Basra, Iraq, 9th century bowl. ^{xv}



9.27 Terracotta bowl, Khurasan, Iran, 11th-12th century, Louvre. ^{xvi}

In about the 9th century, Islamic potters saw some of the works of Chinese artisans. Chinese potters had access to very fine clay, which enabled them to create fine, hard china, hence the term “china”. Artisans in most of the Islamic world did not have access to that, so they rediscovered the ancient technique of using tin. They learned that an oxide of tin can be painted on the object, and then the object can be painted with color. When the firing process is done, the heat melts the colors and the tin into a reflective, glowing glaze. Tin glazes were used to make tiles and as a glaze for pottery. This process evolved into the beautiful and popular Spanish Majorca ware we see today.



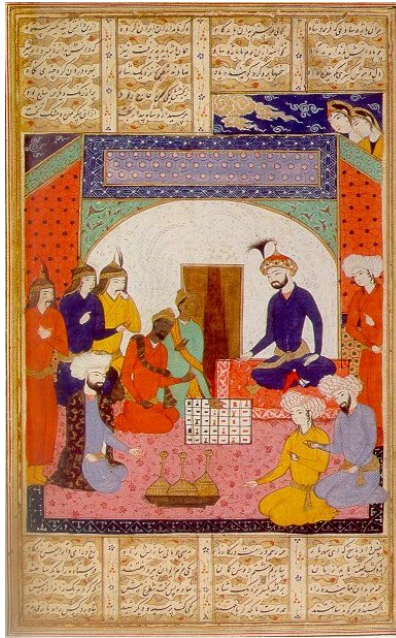
9.28 Iranian wall tile, 1250-1350, Walters Art Museum, tin glaze.^{xvii}
Los Angeles County Museum of Art^{xviii}



9.29 Earthenware, 9-10th century, tin glazed bowl. Los

MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION

Manuscript Illumination probably developed accidentally, as a by-product of their practice of translating and copying illustrated Greek scientific texts. By the year 1200 the art of illustrations was fully developed, mostly in Iraq and Iran. Persian rulers were lovers of fine books and maintained at their courts not only skilled calligraphers, but also some of the most famous painters. Although the painters were Muslims, the orthodox rules regarding the restrictions against portraying living beings were liberally interpreted by them and did not affect their secular arts. Within the framework of illustrating specific stories, the scenes of their life of pleasure such as the hunt, the feast, music, romance, and battle scenes fill the pages of their books. In them we feel the luxury and the splendor of the sumptuous courts of the Mongol sultans who had replaced the caliphs as rulers in the 13th century. There were strong Chinese influences. For instance, since the Chinese had invented the use of paper and the Persians were geographically close, the Persians began using paper as early as the 8th century. Persians also got their inks from China and used many of the same colors used by the Chinese. Ink could be made of ground mineral ore, vegetable matter or sometimes insects. Typically a picture might be outlined in black ink and then the color filled in. They also pounded gold or silver to a thin “leaf” and then pound it with glue to make a paste. This then became the basis for gold or silver paint. Keep in mind that silver tarnishes, so manuscripts which were painted with silver paint turned black with age. Extremely fine brushes might be made of charred twigs, squirrel fur, pigeon feathers and silk thread.^{xix}



9.30 Treatise on Chess, 14th century.^{xx}

The Treatise on Chess in image 9.30 is from a collection that tells the story about ambassadors from India who bring a chess game to the Chatrang Khosrow, the King of Persia. The book illustrates how the king learns to play the game from his visitors from far away.



9.31 The Mongols Besiege Bagdad, 1258, National Library of France.^{xxi}

The Mongol siege of Bagdad lasted about 12 days in the winter of 1258. A ditch was dug around the city and catapults and siege engines were used to batter the walls. The city was sacked and the great library, the House of Wisdom was destroyed. The city was left nearly empty, and it is considered by many to be the end of the Golden Age of Islam.



9.32 Muhammad receiving revelation from the angel Gabriel. Rashid al-Din, 1307. ^{xxii}

Image 9.32 is a miniature painting on vellum from the book *Jami' al-Tawarikh*, literally "Compendium of Chronicles" but often referred to as *The Universal History* or *History of the World*, published in Tabriz, Persia. It is now in the collection of the Edinburgh University Library, Scotland.

THE QURAN –CALLIGRAPHY AND ILLUMINATION

The creation of the universe and the creation of calligraphy are interconnected. Written language, according to Muslim belief aided in the creation of all other things. The Quran is uncreated, which means that it is a form of God, or at least of the presence of God, and therefore it is perfect. No mistakes are possible, no changes are allowed. Many of the calligraphers and not a few of the illuminators would have known the Quran by heart from beginning to end. Even when they didn't know it from memory, the passages would have been very familiar. The Quran is written in Arabic and consists of 114 suras, or chapters, which vary in length from a few lines to many verses. The earliest passages are the impassioned words of an embryo prophet as he appeals to his countrymen to return to the word of God. In the second group the unity of the Godhead is proclaimed, idolatry is denounced, and vivid pictures are drawn of judgment, heaven and hell. In the third group Muhammad lays stress on the divine character of his mission. In the next group, the Mecca suras, is found a militant Islam appealing to judgment by the sword. Finally, in the Medina suras, Islam is triumphant; fasts, festivals, and the pilgrimage to Mecca are instituted, and the slaughter of infidels is authorized.

The Quran offers natural opportunities for illuminators. The most obvious of these are the sura headings, and the divisions between the verses. There are also decorative indications in the margins that 5 or 10 verses have passed and places marking times in the reading when prostration is required.



9.33 The Keir Luxury Quran from Morocco or Analusia with gold leaf calligraphy, ca. 1300.^{xxiii}



9.34 A Panel from the Quran, sura 56. 14th or 15th century Mamluk period in Egypt.^{xxiv}



9.35 Andalus Quran, 12th century, Sura 15, Kufic script.^{xxv}

You might enjoy this 30 minute lecture about medicine in the Islamic world. There are commercials, but you can skip them. This would be especially good if you are in a medical degree track.

[MEDICINE IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD](#)

Some ideas for this chapter were taken from: Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

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Betts, Kristine. "Islam-Art Forms." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ <https://cmes.arizona.edu/sites/cmes.arizona.edu/files/Student%20Handout.pdf>

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^{iv} Photo by Andrew Shiva, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jerusalem-2013-Temple_Mount-Dome_of_the_Rock_%26_Chain_02.jpg

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- x Photo by Berthold Werner, CC BY 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kairo_Ibn_Tulun_Moschee_BW_6.jpg
- xi Photo by Djehouty, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ibn-Tulun-Moschee_2015-11-14k.jpg
- xii Photo by Baldiri, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ibn_Tulun_5.jpg
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- xiv Photo by Faqsl, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ceramic_bowl_-_9-10th_century_-_unknown_place_-_inventory_number_471_-_Abgineh_Museum_of_Tehran.JPG
- xv Photo by Faqsl, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ariana_museum_-_islamic_pottery_-_Bol_-_Irak_probablement_Basra_-_IX_i%C3%A8me_si%C3%A8cle_-_inventaire_AR_12746.JPG
- xvi Photo by Jastrow, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dish_epigraphic_Louvre_AA96.jpg
- xvii Walters Art Museum, Public domain. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iranian_-_Islamic_Wall_Tile_-_Walters_481281_\(2\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iranian_-_Islamic_Wall_Tile_-_Walters_481281_(2).jpg)
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- xxiv Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Panel_containing_excerpt_from_Quran_chapter_56.png
- xxv Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AndalusQuran12th-cent.jpg>



10.5 Plainsong, Capital, Cluny III



10.42 Bayeux tapestry, William lifts his visor



10.74 Hildegard of Bingen

Chapter 10

Romanesque

Age

MONASTICISM - DECLINE OF ROMAN INFLUENCE

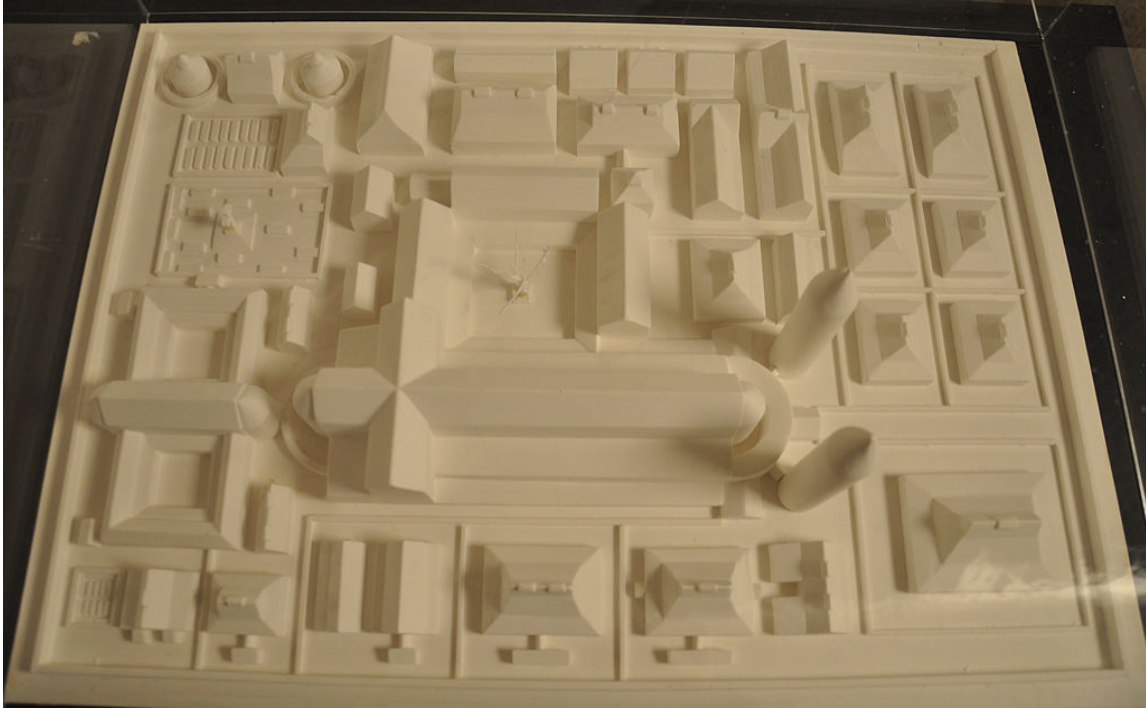
After the disintegration of the Western Roman Empire, chaos and confusion were left in its wake. The Romanesque age can be defined as the union of the older, settled Roman civilization with its ideas of reason, law, and order, and the spirit of the north with its restless energy. The Romans were urban and agricultural, built monumental stone architecture, had an organized legal system, were led by emperors and Caesars, and were literate. The barbarians were nomadic, bred pastured animals, built wooden forts with earthen walls, and lived in tents made of skins. Their government was based on a system of clans and kinship. There was an oral tradition and they had few written laws. Roman roads and aqueducts were still in place, but there was no central government to repair or maintain them. Cities shrank drastically, and in those regions of Gaul north of the Loire River, they nearly all vanished in a process that we call **ruralization**. As Europe changed to a more rural culture and elite values came to reflect warfare rather than literature, schools gradually vanished, leaving the Church as the only real institution providing education. So too did the tax-collecting apparatus of the Roman state gradually wither in the Germanic kingdoms.

The Europe of 500 may have looked a lot like the Europe of 400, but the Europe of 600 was one that was poorer, more rural, and less literate. Without the protection of Rome the people were susceptible to invasion by the Muslims and other colonizing groups. Ever since the fifteenth century, historians of Europe have referred to the period between the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the Italian Renaissance (which took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries) as the Middle Ages. The term demonstrates that Europe was undergoing a transitional period: it stood between, in the middle of, those times that we call "modern" (after 1500 CE) and what we call the ancient world (up to around 500 CE). This Middle Age would see a new culture grow up that combined elements of Germanic culture, Christianity, and remnants of Rome. As Roman law and rule disintegrated, the void was filled by the only stable organization in existence: the Christian Church. Bishops stepped in to consolidate power and take control. The abbey was one of the institutions that came to be extremely powerful during this time. Another term used by art historians to discuss this time period is Romanesque, due to the fact that it still relies on some of the ancient Roman ideas, now colored by Germanic and Christian beliefs.

LIFE IN THE MONASTERY

As the stability of Roman infrastructure disappeared, people lacked the security of city living, so they formed communities of devout Christians which flourished as havens of peace. These were called monasteries and they were miniature, self-contained worlds, which offered physical as well as spiritual safety. Another term for the monastery is the abbey, which was the center of monastic life. The monastery functioned as a religious shrine and may house one or many relics, depending on the amount of wealth it controlled. It was a manufacturing and agricultural center where monks or nuns spent hours in prayer and performed their assigned duties. They might also produce wine, ale, honey, cloth, grains or vegetables. The monastery was often the only source of medical care for the community, a hostel for travelers, and education. Many monasteries copied and illuminated manuscripts that could be sold. They were the "city of God" in physical form.

One such monastery was St. Gall. The plans were drawn in 817 CE and they are still in the library in a monastery in Switzerland. They were copied at least once because there are pin pricks in the margins of the vellum, but as far as we can tell it was never built. It was intended to be the plan of an ideal monastery.



10.1 Model of the Monastery of St. Gall.ⁱ

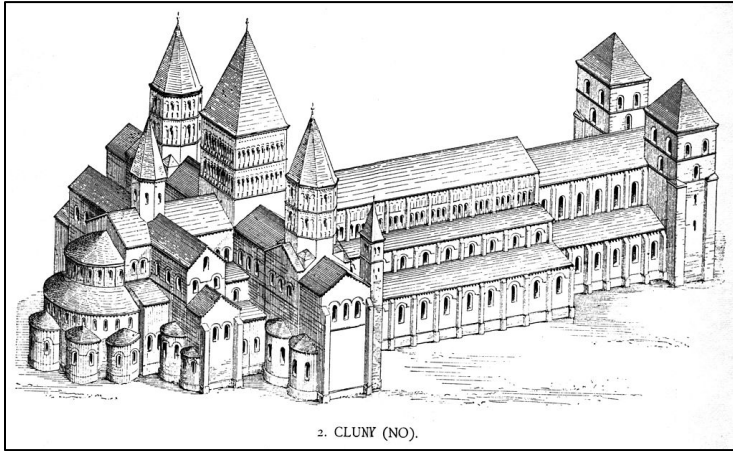
This monastery has a residence for the Abbot, a school, and a hospice for distinguished guests. The quarters for the monks are on the side opposite the administrative buildings and the monks entered the church by the cloister or dormitory using stairs directly into the choir. The church is a basilica with a modular base of 2 ½ feet, which means that all parts are fractions of or multiples of 2 ½ feet. The width of the nave is 40'; the length of the monk's beds is 6'3" and so forth. There is a prominent westwork, which is a façade placed on the west end of the church and includes a structure where the emperor was to sit if he came to visit. This follows the idea of the unity of church and state. There are multiple alters included so that many monks could officiate at the same time.

One of the main influences on monastic life was Saint Benedict. He grew up and was educated in the decaying imperial city of Rome and was probably able to see firsthand the growth of papal rule after Rome was sacked in 546. Benedict lived several years in a cave on the outskirts of Rome, where he taught and converted many pagans to Christianity. His greatest contribution was a written description of how monks should live and how the Abbot should rule his monastery. This is called the Rule of Saint Benedict. This way of life included strict rules that each monk who joined was committed to keep:

- Obedience without delay. Your action is acceptable to God only if it is done without hesitation, delay, grumbling or complaint.
- Silence: It is best to remain silent and you must have permission to speak. If you have to ask for permission you should do it with humility and then listen.
- Humility: a monk should climb the steps of humility until reaching God.
- Poverty: it is not necessary to have personal possessions and a monk should turn to the Abbot for all necessitiesⁱⁱ

The largest and grandest of the Benedictine monasteries was the Abbey church at Cluny. In 909 William, Count of Auvergne and also Duke of Aquitaine gave the land and a Roman villa in Burgundian region of France to a group of monks who wanted to follow the rules of St. Benedict. The Abbey at Cluny was one of the most influential monasteries of the early Middle Ages. It became a powerful "mother house" to which others looked for inspiration. Monks from all over Europe wanted to serve and live in this monastery, so within 30 years after the foundation of the first church on the site, which we call Cluny I, it had outgrown its simple barn-like structure, so a new Cluny II was built. It was a basilica plan with a nave, a transept, and a tower and chapels at the east end. In 1088 a third church was begun, called Cluny III, which was dedicated in 1130. It was 555' long, had double aisles and a double transept and was the largest church in the world until the new St. Peter's basilica was built in Rome in the Renaissance. It had plenty of space for the monks in the choir, radiating chapels, an

ambulatory, and an octagonal tower over the crossing. According to legend, St. Peter designed the church and appeared in a dream to instruct the architect, Gunzo.



10.2 Cluny III, drawing. ⁱⁱⁱ



10.3 Cluny, remaining tower. ^{iv}

The magnificence of this church caused some to disapprove. New monasteries often copied the plan of Cluny, while others purposely built their new monastery to be plain and simple, as a protest against the extravagance of the grand building. Cluny stood until the French Revolution in 1798 when a wave of anti-clericalism swept France and the abbey was sacked and burned. All but a single building was blown up with gun powder. There are illuminated manuscript depictions of the consecration of the main altar at Cluny III, see image 10.4, but all that remains of the building are some of its historiated capitals.



10.4 Consecration of the Abbey of Cluny by Pope Urban II, 1095^v

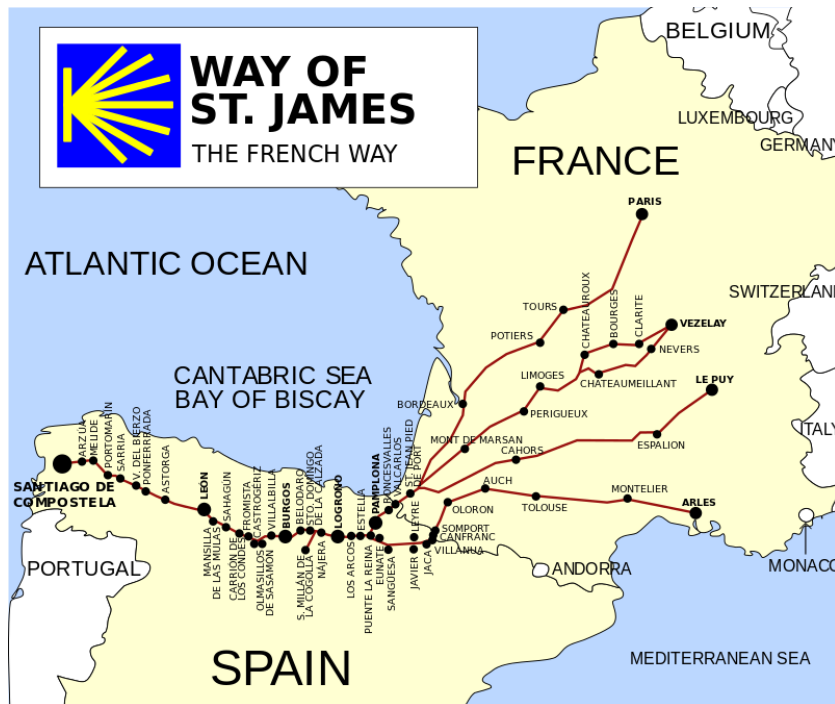
The capitals in Cluny III show the eight tones of sacred music. This capital shows the first tone of plainsong, with David playing his lyre to banish the devil and cast out the evil spirit in King Saul.



10.5 Capital, Cluny III, Plainsong^{vi}

PILGRIMAGE

Another major influence on Romanesque life was the pilgrimage. In the 9th century CE the tomb of St. James the Apostle was discovered in Spain and by the 11th century it became a major destination for pilgrims seeking to be absolved from sin and to show their piety. The tomb of Santiago de Compostela was connected to Europe by four main roads which linked the important cities and unified the area. See image 10.6.



10.6 Main pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela.^{vii}

The roads were maintained by a guild of bridge builders and policed by the Knights of Santiago. In about 1130 a French priest, Aymery Picaud wrote a guidebook which is the Codex Callixtus. It is written for pilgrims and describes the route they should take and the most important shrines to visit along the way. See image 10.7 taken of the portal tympanum which shows the woman taken in adultery.



10.7 Detail of the portal sculpture, Santiago de Compostela, *The Woman Taken in adultery*.^{viii}

Picaud describes her this way:

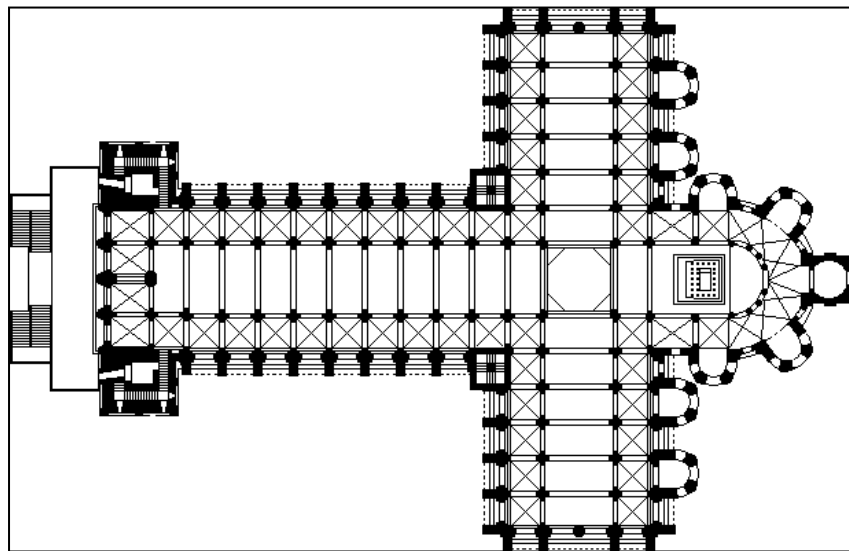
“Nor must we forget to relate the woman standing beside the Temptation of Christ, holding in her hands the foetid (sic) head of her lover, cut off by her own husband, which, forced by her man, she kisses twice a day. What a great and admirable justice to an adulterous woman, to be told to all!”^{ix}

Pilgrims traveling along the routes to Santiago de Compostela and other pilgrimage churches, wanted to see the relics kept in each of the churches. The trade in relics was big business. In 326 CE Constantine’s mother Helena had traveled to Palestine to make an official inspection of the Holy Land and she brought back with her relics of the true cross, nails from the crucifixion and a tunic worn by Jesus before his crucifixion. Since that time churches, monasteries, and individuals have sought to own relics and have encouraged others to want to come view them and touch them too. It was believed that a relic could heal the sick and absolve the pilgrim from sin. A relic can include a part of the body of a saint or something that touched their body or was used by them. A community that had an important relic also gained major economic benefits from travelers who came and spent their money.



10.8 A collection of reliquaries that hold relics of saints, Eglise St. Trophime, Arles, Bouches-du Rhone, Provence, France. ^x

The intense communication between the cities along the pilgrimage route unified the architectural style of the churches they visited and the churches that were built in other areas of Europe. Stone masons and architects probably traveled these same roads and learned from what they saw. The church of Santiago de Compostela was a basilica plan with a transept that creates the shape of a cross and an ambulatory with radiating chapels that could house relics. Pilgrims were able to walk behind the main altar even if the mass was in progress. This was the basic plan of churches built all across Europe.



10.9 Plan of *Santiago de Compostela*.^{xi}

Compostela was supported by rounded arches along the nave and small windows that let in very little light.



10.10 Nave walls of Santiago de Compostela. ^{xii}



10.11 Santiago de Compostela – nave ^{xiii}



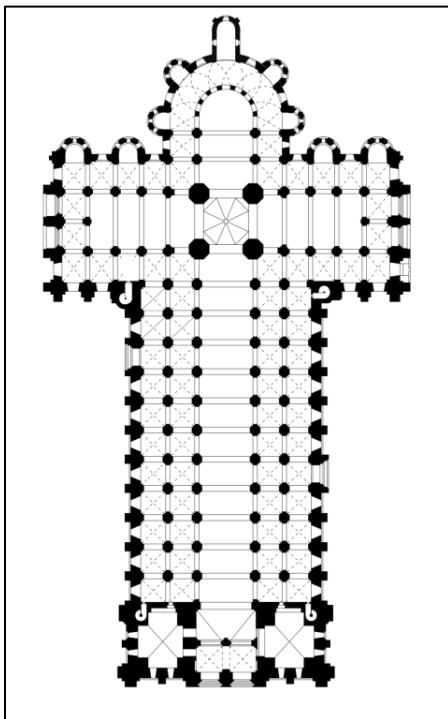
10.12 Santiago de Compostela- aisle. ^{xiv}

These churches needed to be able to accommodate large crowds, house and display the sacred relics, and allow the regular business of the daily office of the mass to proceed uninterrupted. In general pilgrimage churches were built with these basic characteristics.

- They were blocky and were a grouping of large, easily definable geometric shapes.
- The main sections were divided from each other by buttresses or colonnettes.
- The exterior wall surfaces reflect the interior organization of the structure.
- Care was taken to make the structures fireproof, well lit, and acoustically suitable to the music which was becoming more important in the mass.
- They were built large enough to house the growing population of the urban centers as well as the traveling pilgrims that passed through.



10.13 *St. Sernin de Toulouse, 1180-1120,façade* ^{xv}



10.14 *St. Sernin de Toulouse, plan.* ^{xvi}



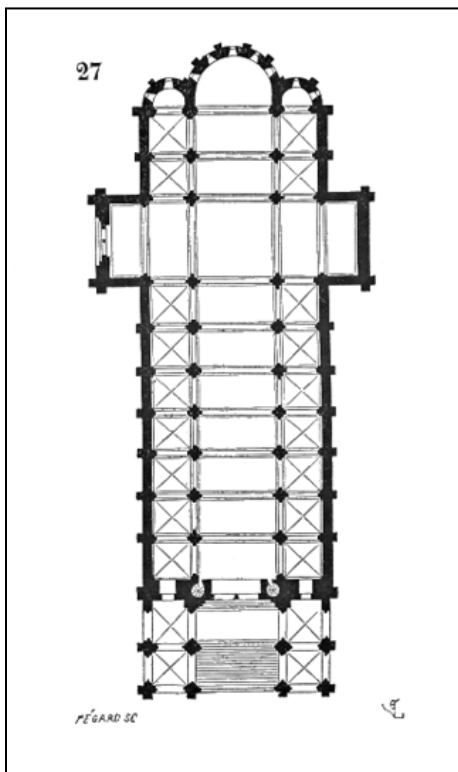
10.15 *St. Sernin de Toulouse, nave.* ^{xvii}

The church at St. Sernin Toulouse, built between 1080 and 1120 is an example of a church built like the one at Santiago de Compostela. The basilica plan forms a Latin cross, the aisles take the pilgrim in a traffic pattern around the main altar to the radiating chapels with their relics. It is a near copy of the church in Compostela. It is made of masonry throughout to lessen the chance of fire. The rounded vaults along the aisle carry the thrust of the ceiling to massive outer walls which are strengthened by buttresses. It looks blocky, severe, grand, and fortress-like. The entrances are practical, allowing many people to enter and exit quickly. The sculpture is impressive and was made to indoctrinate the pilgrims.

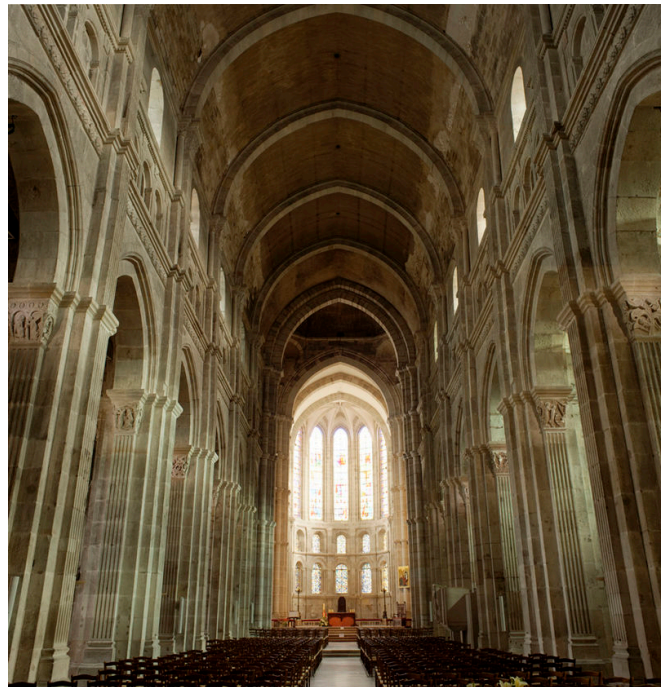
The cathedral at Autun, Saint-Lazare follows the same rules. It was originally built to house the relics of Lazarus, the brother of Mary Magdalene, who was raised from the dead according to the story in the New Testament. The bones of Lazarus were discovered in the 12th century and this church was built to house this important relic.



10.16 Cathedral at Autun, Saint Lazare, 1130 CE. ^{xviii}



10.17 Cathedral at Autun, Saint Lazare. ^{xix}



10.18 Cathedral at Autun, Saint Lazare, nave. ^{xx}

One of the most important things to study at Autun is the amazing sculpture created for it. This is one of the few times that we actually know the name of the man who carved the capitals for a cathedral. His name was Giselbertus, a French sculptor who was active in the 12th century. Giselbertus carved his name on the bottom of the Last Judgment Tympanum with the permission of the Bishop of Autun. We know little of his life, but we think some of his work is also in the Abbey of Cluny where he worked as an assistant to the master sculptor there. His work is some of the most original sculpture we have from this time.



10.19 Autun Saint-Lazare, tympanum, the Last Judgment, 12th century. ^{xxi}

This is the story of the Last Judgment of Christ, with those worthy to return and be with him standing with the angels on his right, and the damned in the company of the devils on his left. Think of the realistically portrayed soldiers on Trajan's column, image 6.47, and compare them to these tall unreal soldiers and enemies of Christ. The entire scene is symmetrical, with Christ in the center. He is elongated, frontal, and seems to be on a different plane. His limbs are twig-like, the draperies cling, but the body does not seem to have any substance. His feet do not seem to stand on anything real, and it is as if he is floating above the door. He floats in a halo above a replica of the City of God. The beings on his right live in a world of order, peace, and calm. The Virgin Mary sits enthroned near the top along with some of the souls who now live in heaven. The demons on Christ's left surround Michael, who weighs the souls of the dead to see if they are worthy to enter heaven. Notice that the demons try to tip the scales in their favor so they can get more souls into hell. An inscription at the bottom reads, "may this terror terrify those whom earthy error binds." The humans in the lintel below are just rising from their tombs and they seem to cower in fear as they realize what could happen to them. Demons even snatch naked victims and pull them into frightening world. See image 10.19 and image 10.20. Images like this were like sermons in stone. Count to the 16th fellow at the bottom of the lintel, under the word "Lucerna" and notice that he is a little more confident as he approaches judgment: he has a shell on his pocketbook boasting that he has been on pilgrimage.



10.20 Autun, Last Judgment, tympanum, detail, 12th century. xxii

Gislebertus's Eve also show's his innovative imagery. See image 10.21. Eve originally floated over the south exterior portal of the cathedral and warns all who enter that they are human and have fallen from God's grace. She is licentious, sensuous and seductive and moves through the Garden of Eden like a serpent. Her left hand picks fruit from a branch on the forbidden tree, which has been pushed toward her by the serpent. She is in a position of penance: stretched out on the floor supported by knees and elbows. Images like this must have terrified those who saw them, but this was the standard way to show how women and other "lesser" beings must be humbled.



10.21 Eve, from the Cathedral of Autun, 12th century. xxiii



10.22 Autun, capital, Suicide of Judas, 12th century. xxiv



10.23 Autun, capital, Flight into Egypt, 12th century. xxv

Giselbertus created many historiated capitals. These are but two: the Suicide of Judas and the Flight into Egypt. Note the deeply carved mouths of the dead Judas and the devils that are glad to have him. In fact they are pulling on the rope around his neck to be sure he doesn't change his mind. The Flight into Egypt shows Mary on the donkey and Joseph leading them to safety away from Herod's murdering guards. Mary has her arm around the young child Jesus, but she hardly seems to be holding him at all. The position of this capital shows them moving intentionally from darkness into the eastern light.

A discussion of the Romanesque age is not complete without a discussion of Asceticism. The monastic way of life demanded seclusion and escape from the cares of reality and the severity of monastic life stimulated the imagination. The Rule of Saint Benedict required that a person attain a high spiritual and moral state by obedience, silence, humility, and poverty. Turning away from the world is expressed in plain exteriors and rich interiors showing that the inside of a man is more important than what he looks like outside. Arts were not intended to mirror the natural world, but to conjure otherworldly visions and aspects of the world beyond. Artists used elaborate symbolism which was addressed to the educated, cloistered community familiar with sophisticated allegories. Although the sculpture found in Romanesque cathedrals was certainly visible to the masses and was intended to be instructive, many Romanesque monastic works were intended to relate to the intense inner life and visionary focus of the religious community that the lay person would not understand.

Think about the Classical Greek and Roman sculptors who conceived the gods as human in form. Since the Christian god was more abstract, so were the representations of Him. Rational proportions were of no use. God was to be felt through faith rather than comprehended by the mind. Life was oriented by deep religious convictions, and those models could not be found in the real world. So architecture was built with fantastic proportions. The human body was distorted. See 10.19. Manuscript illumination revolved around elaborate initials. See 10.53. There were ornate melismas in music. The most admired book of the Bible was Revelations. More real to the monk were the things of the other world. He had never seen them, but they were real to him.

You may also enjoy the following links to additional media information:

"This World With Devils Filled:" Gislebertus at Autun, at <http://counterlightsrantsandblather1.blogspot.com/2014/08/this-world-with-devils-filled.html>

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

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ⁱⁱ <https://christianhistoryinstitute.org/study/module/benedicts-rule/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Georg Dehio/Gustav von Bezold, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dehio_212_Cluny.jpg

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^v Odon de Cluny Bibliotheque de France. Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cons%C3%A9cration_cluny.png

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<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Spain.Santiago.de.Compostela.Catedral.Puerta.Meridional.001.jpg>

^{ix} <https://sites.google.com/site/caminodesantiagoproject/home>

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^{xix} Dictionary of French Architecture from 11th to 16th century, Public Domain.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plan.cathedrale.Autun.png>

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^{xxi} Photo by Gaudry, Daniel. CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autun_saint_lazare_tympan_01.jpg

^{xxii} Photo by Gaudry Daniel, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autun_saint_lazare_tympan_18.jpg

^{xxiii} Photo by Cancre CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autun,_Gislebertus,_Eva.JPG

^{xxiv} Photo by Cancre, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autun,_Judas.JPG

^{xxv} Photo by Christophe.Finot, CC BY-SA 1.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Autun_chapiteau_3.jpg

CHARLEMAGNE – THE CAROLINGIAN RENAISSANCE

Charlemagne, whose name means Charles the Great, spent nearly the entirety of his reign, (r.768-814) leading his army in battle. To the southeast, he destroyed the khanate of the Avars, the nomadic people who had lived by raiding the Byzantine Empire. To the northeast of his realm, he subjugated the Saxons of Central Europe and had them converted to Christianity—a sometimes brutal process. When the Saxons rebelled in 782, he had 4,000 men executed in one day for having returned to their old religion. By the end of the eighth century, Charlemagne ruled nearly all of Western Europe. Indeed, he ruled more of Western Europe than anyone since the Roman emperors of four centuries before.

It was Christmas day in Rome, in the year 800 CE. The cavernous interior of St. Peter’s Church smelled faintly of incense. Marble columns lined the open space of the nave, which was packed with the people of Rome. At the eastern end of the church, Charlemagne knelt before the pope. A tall man when standing, the Frankish king had an imposing presence even on his knees. He wore the dress of a Roman patrician: a tunic of multi-colored silk, embroidered trousers, and a richly embroidered cloak clasped with a golden brooch at his shoulder. As he knelt, the pope placed a golden crown, set with pearls and precious stones of blue, green, and red, on the king’s head. He stood to his full height of over six feet and the people gathered in the church cried out, “Hail Charles, Emperor of Rome!” The inside of the church filled with cheers. For the first time in three centuries, the city of Rome had an emperor. See Image 10.24.



10.24 Friedrich Kaulbach, *Crowning of Charlemagne*, (1822-1903)ⁱ

Outside of the church, the city of Rome itself told a different story. The great circuit of walls built in the third century by the emperor Aurelian still stood as a mighty bulwark against attackers. Much of the land within those walls, however, lay empty. Although churches of all sorts could be found throughout the city, pigs, goats, and other livestock roamed through the open fields and streets of a city retaining only the faintest echo of its earlier dominance of the whole of the Mediterranean world. Where once the Roman forum had been a bustling market filled with merchants from as far away as India, now the crumbling columns of long-abandoned temples looked out over a broad, grassy field where shepherds grazed their flocks. The fountains that had once given drinking water to millions of inhabitants now went unused and choked with weeds. The once great baths that had echoed with the lively conversation of thousands of bathers stood only as tumbled down piles of stone that served as quarries for residents who looked to repair their modest homes. The Coliseum, the great amphitheater that had rung with the cries of Rome’s bloodthirsty mobs, was now honeycombed with houses built into the tunnels that had once admitted crowds to the games in the arena. And yet within this city of ruins, a new Rome sprouted from the ruins of the old. Just outside the city walls and across the Tiber River, St. Peter’s Basilica rose as the symbol of Peter, prince of the Apostles. The golden-domed Pantheon still stood, now a church of the Triune God rather than a temple of the gods of the old world. And, indeed, all across Western Europe, a new order had arisen on the wreck of the Roman state. Although this new order in many ways shared the universal ideals of Rome, its claims were even grander, for it rested upon the foundations of the Christian faith, which claimed the allegiance of all people.

With this ceremony in Rome, Charlemagne became the Holy Roman Emperor and was king of a large part of Europe: France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland. He introduced new ideas that would unite the people under his rule and modernize language, currency, and measurements. This period is sometimes called the Carolingian Renaissance.

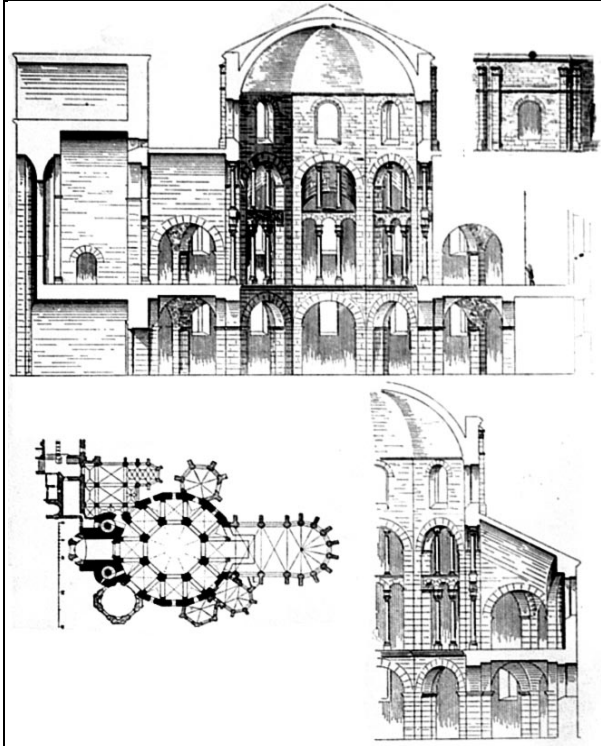
Little is known about the early life of Charlemagne, also known as Charles I and Charles the Great. We know he is the son of Pepin the Short who led an army into Italy, conquered land, and gave it to the pope. This land became the Papal States. Charles reigned from 768 to 814 and we think he was born about 742. He spent much of his life in military campaigns against the Lombards, Avars and Saxons, first conquering them and then requiring that they convert to Christianity and adopt the Nicene Creed or be put to death. We know he had multiple wives and mistresses and as many as 18 children. He was a big man, 6'3" tall, which is much taller than the average man of his time. He was an athletic man who liked to hunt and stay active.



10.25 Portrait of Charlemagne, engraving, 16th century. ⁱⁱ

We remember Charlemagne for his promotion of literacy during his reign. As mentioned earlier, during this time learning was promoted by the church. Monks learned to read and write and schools were supported in the scriptoria where they created illuminated manuscripts. But Charlemagne had very advanced ideas for his time. He brought learned men to his court at Aachen and gave them instructions to begin teaching his subjects. Some of the scholars called to work at Aachen were Alcuin of York (735-804), Theodulf, a Visigoth, Paul the Deacon, a Lombard, and Angilbert and Einhard who were Franks. Einhard was Charlemagne's biographer and it from his writings that we know about the king's life. Alcuin was Charlemagne's tutor and was a grammarian and a theologian. He gave instructions for the church leaders throughout the land to set up schools and teach the children to read and write. The goal was to help his subjects to be able to read the Bible, sing the hymns, and have a better understanding of their Christian beliefs. Even Charlemagne learned to read and write as an adult, which was unusual for a king.

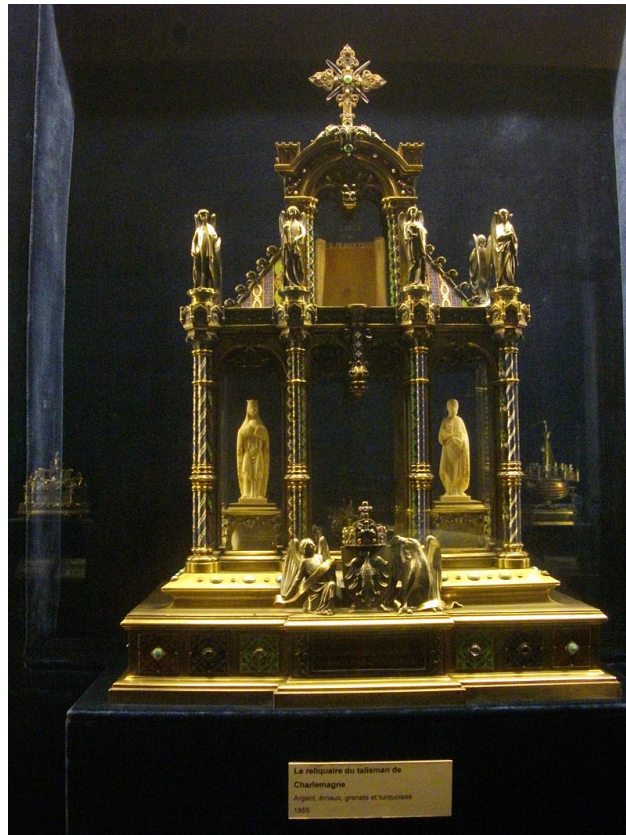
When Charlemagne went to the hot springs at Aachen, also known as Aix-la-Chapelle, he came to love the place. He ordered his church and palace to be built there and spent winters there to take advantage of the pools. He is known to have been a swimmer. The Palatine chapel was based on the Byzantine church at San Vitale in Ravenna. It is an octagonal church and has striped arches, an ambulatory, and mosaics on the dome above.



10.26 Aachen Imperial Chapel, Germany, plan and elevation. ⁱⁱⁱ

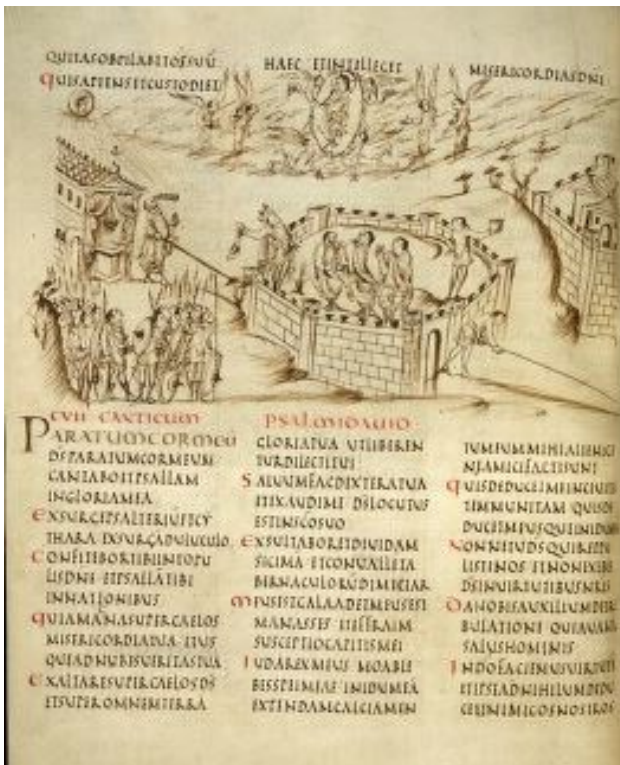


10.27 Aachen- chapel. ^{iv}



10.28 Reliquary of Charlemagne, Palais du Tau, Reims, Marne, France^v

An important change made by Charlemagne’s court was the invention of a new type of writing. Until this time manuscripts were written in a script that used capital letters and did not have spaces between the words, making it difficult to read. The new style added spaces between the words and used lower case letters except for the first letter of a sentence. It also compressed the text and made it easier to read. Compare the two images below (See 10.29 and 10.30). Image 10.29 is Psalm 108 from the Utrecht Psalter made in 825 CE. Next to it is the same psalm from the Harley Psalter, written in 1010-1030. The Utrecht Psalter became available to the scriptorium in Canterbury, where the monks copied it using the new script developed by Charlemagne and his scholars. This new type of text became the standard text used all over Europe and is the forerunner of our modern alphabet.



10.29 Psalm 108 from the Utrecht Psalter.^{vi}



10.30 Psalm 108 from the Harley Psalter.^{vii}

One of the campaigns Charlemagne fought became the focus of an epic drama. The real event occurred in 778 when Charlemagne’s army, led by his nephew Roland, was ambushed by Saracen Muslims as he returned from Spain. Roland’s men were betrayed by Ganelon, his own step-father, who revealed the route they would be taking through Roncesvals in the Pyrenees. Roland and his 20,000 men were then attacked by 400,000 Muslims and defeated. Charlemagne learned of the treachery and executed Ganelon, then went on to defeat the Muslim army. This story was passed down verbally and finally written down in 1100 as the Song of Roland, an epic drama that probably glazed over the facts. We know it from the singing of the jongleurs that traveled the countryside telling the “chansons de geste” far and wide to the strumming of their lyres.

The Carolingian Renaissance spread a love of learning and new thoughts and ideas throughout Europe. Charlemagne even instituted a new currency when he did away with the gold sou and set a new standard using the livre, which was both a unit of money and weight. He also minted the denier as the coin of the realm. Charlemagne was buried in the choir of his beloved chapel after a short illness. Legends say that Otto III discovered and opened Charlemagne’s tomb and found him sitting on a throne, wearing a crown and holding a scepter. During the reign of Frederick I the tomb was reopened and the emperor was placed in a casket.

Use this reference for thoughts about Otto III discovering tomb of Charlemagne with book on his lap.

<https://brewminate.com/the-ebbo-gospels-fit-for-a-king-charlemagne/>

Betts, Kristine. "Romanesque-Charlemagne and the Carolingian Renaissance" Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

ⁱ Photo by Maximilianeum Gemalde. Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kaulbach_Die_Kaiserkr%C3%B6nung_Karls_des_Gro%C3%9Fen.jpg

ⁱⁱ Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portrait_of_Charlemagne_whom_the_Song_of_Roland_names_the_King_with_the_Grizzly_Beard.png

ⁱⁱⁱ Taken from Georg Dehio/Gustav von Bezold, *Kirchliche Baukunst des Abendlandes*. Stuttgart: Verlag der Cotta'schen 1887-1901, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aachen_Dehio_1887.jpg

^{iv} Photo by CEPhoto, Uwe Aranas, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aachen_Germany_Imperial-Cathedral-12a.jpg

^v Photo by Fab5669, CC BY-SA 4.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palais_du_Tau_-_Tr%C3%A9sor_\(1\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palais_du_Tau_-_Tr%C3%A9sor_(1).JPG)

^{vi} Taken from University of Utrecht Annotated edition. <http://psalter.library.uu.nl/page?p=133&res=1&x=0&y=0>

^{vii} Anonymous, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Harley_Psalter_-_BL_Harley_603_psalms_108_f55v.jpg

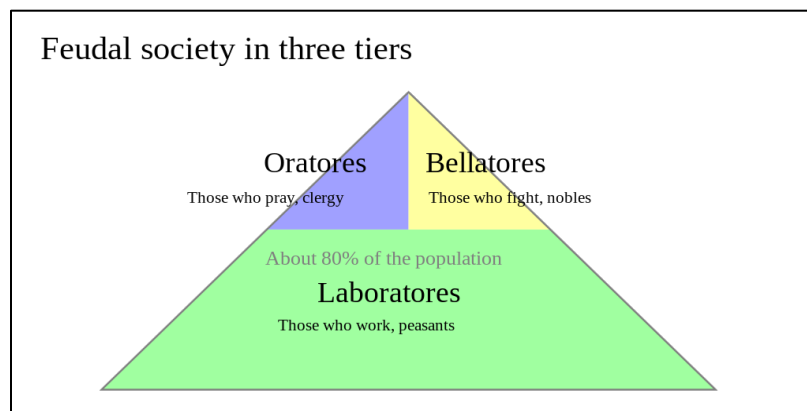
FEUDALISM

Charlemagne was able to rule due to his own personal magnetism, but he was also able to accomplish much because he held those under him to a strict code of service. Chivalry and the feudal system enabled him to extract a pledge of fealty and control those under him. The feudal code was based on a pyramid structure of power. At the top was the feudal lord, in this case Charlemagne, who protected his manor and his possessions. Each vassal owed certain services in battle, financial gifts on specified occasions, and hospitality when the lord passed through his territory. The relationship between the lord and holder of the fief (land) was a moral obligation assumed by ceremony. The lord received his vassal, who knelt before him, offered his hands, and pledged his oath. See an example of a vassal pledging an oath in image 10.31.



10.31 Ramon de'Eiril, *Oath of Fealty*, anonymous, 12th century.ⁱ

Out of the chaos and mayhem of the tenth and eleventh centuries, East Francia—the eastern third of Charlemagne’s Empire that is in roughly the same place as modern Germany—and England had emerged as united and powerful states. Most of the rest of Christian Western Europe’s kingdoms, however, were fragmented. This decentralization was most acute in West Francia, the western third of what had been Charlemagne’s empire. This kingdom would eventually come to be known as France. Out of a weak and fragmented kingdom emerged the decentralized form of government that historians often call feudalism. We call it feudalism because power rested with armed men in control of plots of agricultural land known as fiefs and Latin for fief is feudum. They would use the surplus from these fiefs to equip themselves with weapons and equipment, and they often controlled their fiefs with little oversight from the higher-ranked nobles or the king.



10.32 Feudal societyⁱⁱ

How had such a system emerged? Even in Carolingian times, armies in much of Western Europe had come from war bands made up of a king's loyal retainers, who themselves would possess bands of followers. Ultimate control of a kingdom's army rested with the king, and the great nobles also exercised strong authority over their own fighting men. The near constant warfare of the tenth and eleventh centuries, however, meant that the kings of West Francia gradually lost control over the more powerful nobles and the powerful nobles often lost control of the warlords of more local regions.

As a result of constant warfare, power came from control of the land. Whoever controlled the land and could extract surplus from the occupants could then use this surplus to outfit armed men. The warlords who controlled fiefs often did so by means of armed fortresses called castles. At first, especially in northern parts of West Francia, these fortresses were of wood, and might sometimes be as small as a wooden palisade surrounding a fortified wooden tower. Over the eleventh and twelfth centuries, these wooden castles were replaced with fortifications of stone.



10.33 *Suscinio Castle, 1218, France.* ⁱⁱⁱ



10.34 *Suscinio Castle, aerial view showing the mote.* ^{iv}

Suscinio Castle, in France, is an example of a stone castle. When it was built in 1218 for Peter I, Duke of Brittany, it was first used as an unfortified manor used to manage an estate. In 1229, his son John I fortified it so that it could be used as a castle. A castle had two roles: it would protect a land from attackers and serve as a base for the control and extortion of a land's people. Castles often had a mote filled with water to prevent enemies from entering, a drawbridge that could be raised and lowered, small holes that allowed those inside to fire on attackers and the Keep, which was the highest point of the castle and the center of the defense.



10.35 *Coat of mail, Bayeux museum.* ^v

Knights and castles came to dominate West Francia and then other parts of Europe for several reasons. The technology of ironworking was improving so that iron was cheaper (although still very expensive) and more readily available, allowing

for knights to wear more armor than their predecessors. Moreover, warfare of the tenth and eleventh centuries was made up of raids (both those of Vikings and of other Europeans). A raid depends on mobility, with the raiders able to kill people and seize plunder before defending soldiers arrived. Mounted on horseback, knights were mobile enough that they could respond rapidly to raids. The castle allowed a small number of soldiers to defend territory and was also a deterrent to raiders, since it meant that quick plunder might not be possible.

A knight's equipment—mail, lance, and horse—was incredibly expensive, as was the material and labor to construct a castle. Although knights had originally been whichever soldiers had been able to get the equipment to fight, the expense of this equipment, and thus the need to control a fief to pay for it, meant that knights gradually became a warrior aristocracy, with greater rights than the peasants whose labor they controlled. Indeed, often the rise of knights and castles meant that many peasants lost their freedom. They became serfs, peasants who, although not considered property that could be bought and sold like slaves, they were nevertheless bound to their land and subordinate to those who controlled it. Knights in the eleventh century wore an armor called chain mail, that is, interlocking rings of metal that would form a coat of armor. (See Image 10.35) The knight usually fought on horseback, wielding a long spear known as a lance in addition to the sword at his side. With his feet resting in stirrups, a knight could hold himself firmly in the saddle, directing the weight and power of a charging horse into the tip of his lance.

In theory, the feudal system consisted of those who pray (clergy), those who fight (knights and lords), and those who work the land, see image 10.32. However, there were problems with the feudal system because once the knight made the oath to the lord and had the land and its fruits; there was not much incentive for him to keep his word. He might show up late to a battle, bring fewer knights or less equipment than promised, or not show up at all. The lord had to decide whether it was important enough to go after his vassal and remove him from the land, or just let it go. It was not easy to stage a battle if some of your men and materials did not show up. Although the oaths did not always remain intact, the feudal system was a powerful way to maintain order, gather armies, and wage war.

One of the great battles of the middle ages was the Battle of Hastings fought in 1066, which was the invasion of England by the French king, William the Conqueror. The most important work of art from this era is the Bayeux Tapestry, created to tell the story of the battle from the winner's perspective. It was made to cover a plain strip of masonry over the nave arcade in the Cathedral in Bayeux and was embroidered 20 years after the end of the battle by the women of the household of Bishop Odo. Even though it was housed in a church, it is not religious art, but secular art that tells the story of a battle. The tapestry has 79 scenes and reads from left to right like a comic strip. Sections 1-34 tell the story of William's interactions with Harold, another pretender to the throne. Sections 35-53 show the preparations for battle, and sections 54-79 show the battle. It is not really a woven tapestry but a work of embroidery on coarse linen and is 20 inches high and 231 feet long. There is one copy in England and another in Normandy. A Victorian copy was made that reflected the beliefs of the era, covering the nudity that was present in the original version stitched in the 1080's.

The basic story of this war revolves around who wanted to be the next king of England. Both Harold and William had hereditary claim to the throne. When Edward the Confessor, the current king, died, Harold was sent as a messenger to tell William that he (William) would be the new king and would succeed Edward. See image 10.36 where Harold is shown in the tapestry placing his hands on the reliquaries that sit on two alters. Here he swears to uphold William's claim to the throne.



10.36 Bayeux Tapestry, Harold places his hands on two sacred reliquaries and swears allegiance to William.^{vi}



10.37 Bayeux Tapestry, Edward's burial procession.^{vii}

Notice the hand of God in the clouds above blessing the church where Edward's body is carried for burial. Harold, false to his word and his oath on the reliquaries, has himself crowned king, so William decides to invade England and take back what he considers to be his rightful crown.



10.38 Preparation for battle.^{viii}



10.39 Haley's Comet, which was supposed to be a bad omen for Harold.^{ix}

The registers below the battle scenes are strewn with dismembered bodies being plundered by scavengers, fallen horses and weapons, and men strewn on the battlefield.



10.40 The dead and dying litter the lower register. ^x

Artistically the creators of this work divided the 20 inch fabric into three sections horizontally, placing symbols of the main characters in a narrow section at the top, Latin script describing some of the events, the main action in the center section, and symbols, animal characters, and commentary on the actions in the lower registers. Animal figures from bestiaries, sculptures, and Aesop's fables represent stories that we may not identify easily, but everyone looking at the panels then knew and understood. To begin a new section of the story, the artist might place a tree or a building as a divider. To show an episode apart from the main story, like a dream, the artist might reverse the order of the action so that it moved from right to left, rather than left to right. The scenes are two dimensional and there is little suggestion of space. Color is not natural, but is used for interest, so hair might be blue, horses red or green, and faces are outlined, although there does seem to be some effort at portraiture.



10.41 Detail of a figure.^{xi}



10.42 William lifts his helmet visor to encourage his men.^{xii}

The battle for the crown and throne of England lasted 9 hours, and in the end, Harold took an arrow through his eye and lost. William lost three horses in battle – so he lifted his helmet so his men could see that he was alive and continuing to fight. The last scene is missing from the tapestry, but we know how the story ends. William won the battle and was crowned the king of England. So what can we learn from the Bayeux Tapestry? We can learn about the brutality of the battles they fought, what types of weapons they used, the importance of relics and oaths, and how astronomical events impacted thought. It is an encyclopedia of medieval dress and thought.



10.43 Harold dies with an arrow to the eye.^{xiii}

THE CRUSADES

In addition to the Battle of Hastings, another series of wars and battles had important impact on medieval Europe. We call these the crusades. On 19 August 1071, the forces of the Byzantine Empire met those of the Great Saljuq Empire at the Battle of Manzikert near the shores of Lake Van in Armenia. The Byzantine field army was annihilated. In March of 1095, Alexios Komnenos (r. 1081 – 1118) who had seized control of the Byzantine Empire sent a request to the pope for military assistance. In 1095 the Seljuk Turks also closed Jerusalem to all Jewish and Christian pilgrims. The long-term consequences of this closure and Komnenos's request would be earth-shaking.

From about 1096 knights of most of Western Europe began to fight against Muslims in the Middle East. These battles are generally known as the Crusades. A crusade was a war declared by the papacy against those perceived to be enemies of the Christian faith, and they were usually, but not always, Muslims. Some of the Crusades were also against heretics such as the Arians, the Cathars, and the Albigensians. Though the Crusades lasted into the 16th century, none after 1291 set foot in Palestinian territory. We will look at several reasons the crusades occurred. Urban II (r. 1088 – 1099) was the pope who received Komnenos’s request for help. Urban, an associate of reformers like Gregory VII and other church leaders who were seeking to change society, had been looking to quell the violence that was often frequent in Western Europe. This violence was usually the work of knights. Reformers like Urban and Gregory sought for ways that knights could turn their aggression to pursuits that were useful to Christian society rather than preying upon civilians. Fighting against Muslims in Sicily and Spain would be a way to channel knightly aggression towards Christendom’s external enemies rather than preying on local peasants and other landed families. So one of the reasons the crusades happened was to channel the violent energy of the knights into more productive paths.

A second reason that led to Pope Urban II’s turning much of the military might of Western Europe to the Middle East was the sacred nature of Jerusalem. The city of Jerusalem was where Jesus Christ was said to have been crucified, to have died, and to have risen from the dead. As such, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, built on what was said to be the empty tomb from which Christ had risen, was the holiest Church in the Christian world—and this Church had been under the control of Muslims since Caliph Umar’s conquest of Palestine in the seventh century. The city remained important to Christians, however, and, even while it was under Muslim rule, they had traveled to it as pilgrims, that is, travelers undertaking a journey for religious purposes. When the Seljuk Turks closed Jerusalem to pilgrims, western Christendom sought ways to reclaim it.



10.44 Departing for the Crusades, detail from a miniature. ^{xiv}

There were other reasons the crusades occurred. One was because Christians of the time were seeking forgiveness for their sins. People of this time believed that their sinful acts condemned them to hell, but righteous acts could balance this and remove the punishment. One of the ways to remove the damnation was to make a pilgrimage to an important religious site. The crusaders took seriously their sins and they wanted to have those sins forgiven. They believed that Jerusalem was a holy place and the pope promised them that if they went on a crusade, the punishment they deserved for their sins would be removed so that they could go to heaven. Pope Urban thus conceived of the idea of turning the military force of Western Europe to both shore up the strength of the flagging Byzantine Empire (a Christian state), and return Jerusalem and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher to Christian rule after four centuries of Muslim domination. Participating in a crusade would grant a Christian forgiveness of sins, but there were other reasons people went on crusade: serfs may have been freed from their role in the feudal system enabling them to own land and have some autonomy; taxes may have been forgiven and debt cancelled, and it was an opportunity to take spoils and obtain riches in the new lands.

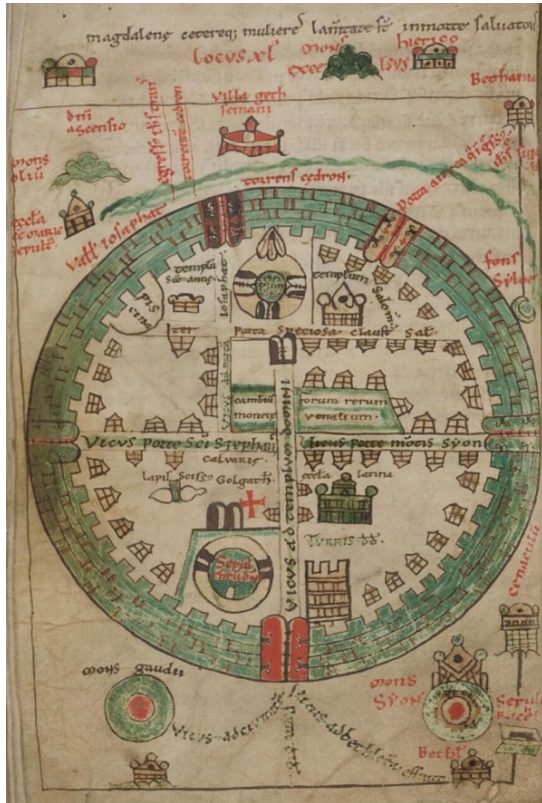


10.45 Pope Urban II urging kings and knights to join a crusade, November 1095, woodcut.^{xv}

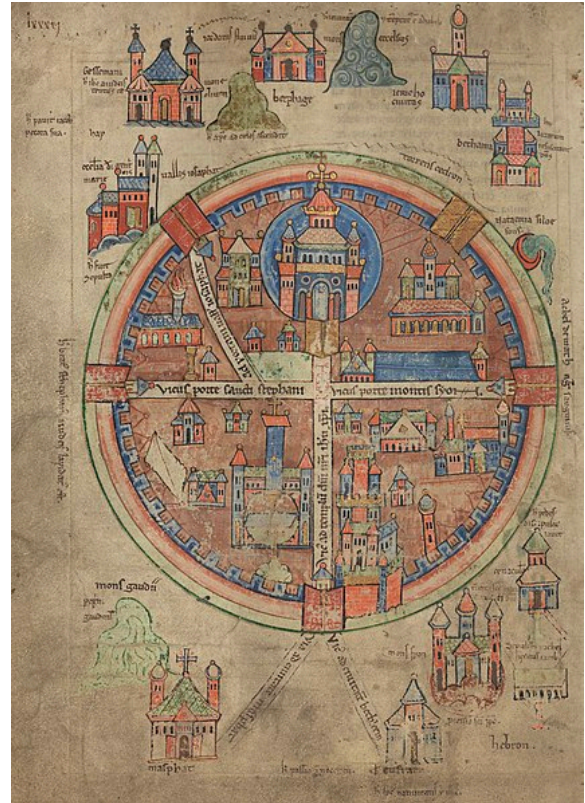
Pope Urban “preached” the first crusade at the council of Clermont in Auvergne, in November, 1095. There are 5 different versions of his speech on the Internet, click this link if you are interested in further reading.^{xvi} Urban encouraged the faithful to take up the cross. The word crusade comes from the Latin word *crux*, meaning cross. To take up the cross meant to become a crusader, so they sewed crosses on their tunics and painted crosses on their shields. As these forces mustered and marched south and east, the religious enthusiasm accompanying them often spilled out into aggression against non-Christians other than Muslims. One group of Crusaders in the area around the Rhine engaged in a series of massacres of Jewish civilians, traveling from city to city killing Jews and looting their possessions before this armed gang was forced to disperse.

The effects of the crusades were diverse. Economically there were new trade routes established and new products were exchanged. Since travel was a little quicker by sea, port cities such as Venice, Pisa, and Genoa gained in importance and size. Feudalism was weakened because knights left to take up the cross, some sold their fiefs to have money to travel and equipment to fight and serfs were given freedom to go, leaving fewer of the working class to do the work. There was also an increased use of portable money needed to pay for travel. This also resulted in banking institutions where crusaders could deposit their money in one place, and withdraw it in another. There were more ships built, more goods manufactured, and improved trade routes. As a result of the crusades, popes gained more power and the Christian church became wealthier.

The Crusades also increased efforts to draw maps of the Holy Land, which would help travelers pass sites in the future. See images 10.46 and 10.47 for two versions of maps of the Holy Land. There were four Crusader states: the County of Edessa, the Principality of Antioch, the Kingdom of Jerusalem, and the County of Tripoli which can be seen in the maps. Sometimes these communities made their own treaties with their Muslim neighbors which angered their fellow Christians.



10.46 St. Omar map of crusader Jerusalem, 1096-1141. xvii



10.47 Upsala map of the Hold Land, by Robert the Monk. xviii

The Templars, a group of knights who could also be called monks, became very powerful during the crusades. Many of them were landed knights who had amassed much wealth. Since they also took vows like the monks did, they were more reliable than other vassals. Templars were more obedient to their leaders and could be counted upon in difficult battle situations. On the other hand, they were not obligated to obey the King of Jerusalem, for instance, and might not honor treaties made by him. Local bishops might resent the Templars because their allegiance was not to them. Templars also had strict rules, which were written down and shared with other Templars. So they were taught where to camp, not to be tricked by a Muslim “feint” that might not be a real attack, and to go to their position, hide, and wait for orders. They were even counseled to bring a spoon, as it might come in handy. So the Templars were military units that were often very wealthy and owed their allegiance to whoever bought their services.

Another influence from the crusades on the Holy Land was the infusion of architectural ideas from Europe. As castles had been built in the west, they were built as places of security in eastern lands too, and with those castles came Romanesque ideas. One example is the Crac des Chevaliers, built in Syria, near the northern border of present day Lebanon. Crac des Chevaliers was built by the Hospitallers, a class of knights that was originally sent to watch after the health of the crusaders, but became a military group much like the Knights Templar. It was begun in about 1142 and was then captured in the middle of the 13th century by the Muslims. It has two thick stone walls and a mote and it was fed by an aqueduct. The cistern within the walls allowed those inside to have access to water even if they were besieged and could accommodate up to 2,000 men. The castle sits atop a high mountain to guard the road from Antioch to Beirut and provides access to the Mediterranean and Lake Homs. Unfortunately, it is now caught in the crossfire of a 21st century Syrian war and has suffered bullet holes, damage to walls and columns, fires, and misuse by the military garrisons living in it.



10.48 Crac des Chevaliers, Syria.^{xix}



10.49 Crac des Chevaliers, cistern.^{xx}

There were several campaigns that might be considered crusades, some more successful than others. Some historians list eight crusades between 1096 and 1291. Some crusades were preached by popes and funded by kings, emperors and princes. Others were less organized might not really fit into the category of a crusade at all. Were the fall of Jerusalem and the Fall of Constantinople “crusades”? What about the Children’s Crusade of 1212, which never really left for Jerusalem and may not have had any children in it. What about the taking of Acre in 1291 by the Mamluks, was this also a crusade?

Use this to reference information in this text.

Betts, Kristine. “Romanesque-Feudalism.” Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

You may also enjoy the following links to video information about Feudalism and the Bayeux Tapestry.

[Bayeux Tapestry](#)

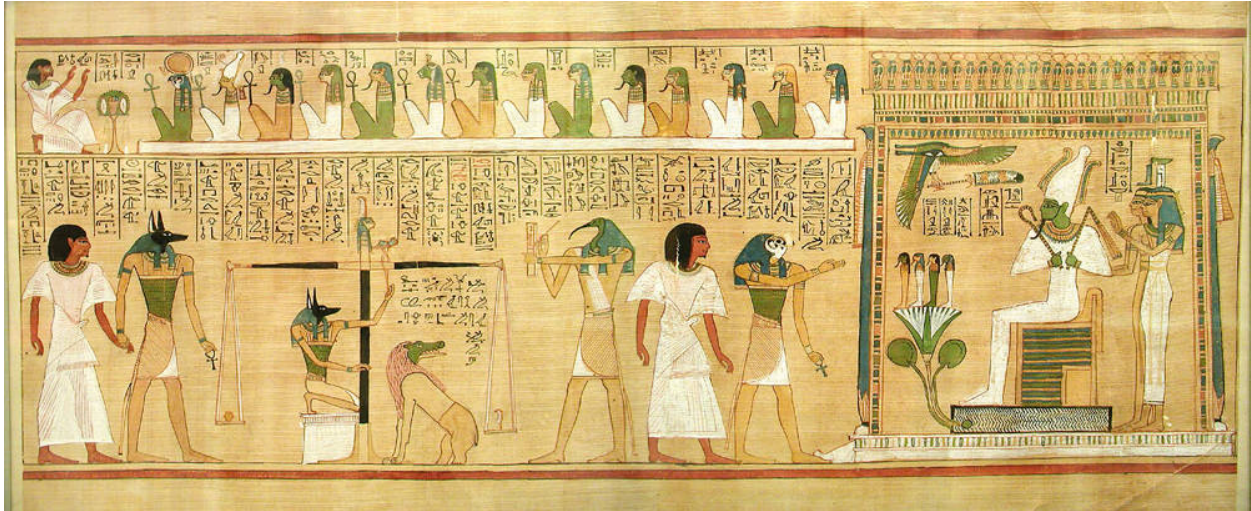
[Bayeux Tapestry 2](#)

[Causes and Effects of the Crusades](#)

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- ⁱ Anonymous, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ArnauMirPal_RamEr.jpg
- ⁱⁱ Nikkimaaria, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Feudal_organization.svg
- ⁱⁱⁱ Fab5669, CC BY-SA 3.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sarzeau_-_Suscinio_\(5\).JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sarzeau_-_Suscinio_(5).JPG)
- ^{iv} Lieven Smits, CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Suscinio_castle_South_aerial_view.jpg
- ^v Photo by Wikigraphists, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bayeux_haubert.JPG
- ^{vi} Photo by Myrabella, Public domain.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bayeux_Tapestry_scene23_Harold_oath_William.jpg
- ^{vii} On the website of Ulrich Harsh, Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BayeuxTapestryScene26.jpg>
- ^{viii} Photo by hs-augsburg.de. Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BayeuxTapestryScene04.jpg>
- ^{ix} Photo by Myrabella, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bayeux_Tapestry_32-33_comet_Halley_Harold.jpg
- ^x Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bayeux_Tapestry_Horses_in_Battle_of_Hastings.jpg
- ^{xi} Public domain. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fleeing_bayeux_tapestry_\(cropped_to_show_details_of_Bayeux_Stitch\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fleeing_bayeux_tapestry_(cropped_to_show_details_of_Bayeux_Stitch).png)
- ^{xii} Photo by Myrabella, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bayeux_Tapestry_scene55_William_on_his_horse.jpg
- ^{xiii} Photo by Myrabella, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bayeux_Tapestry_scene57_Harold_death.jpg
- ^{xiv} From Heine, Heinrich, 1797-1856, Pictures of Travel. Photo by Library of Congress. Flickr no restrictions.
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Embarking_for_the_crusades_\(Miniature_in_a_manuscript_of_the_XIVth_Century\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Embarking_for_the_crusades_(Miniature_in_a_manuscript_of_the_XIVth_Century).jpg)
- ^{xv} Public domain.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pope_Urban_II_urging_kings_and_knights_to_join_a_Crusade,_Nov._1095_LCCN2005692122.jpg
- ^{xvi} <https://www1.cbn.com/spirituallife/calling-for-the-first-crusade>
- ^{xvii} Hugues de Saint-Victor (1096?-1141), Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St_omar_map.jpg
- ^{xviii} From Historia Hierosolymitana, Robert the Monk, 13th century. Public domain.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Upsala_map.jpg
- ^{xix} Photo by Xvlun, CC BY-SA 2.5. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Crac_des_chevaliers_syria.jpeg
- ^{xx} Photo by Effi Schwriizer, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Crac_des_Chevaliers2.JPG

ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

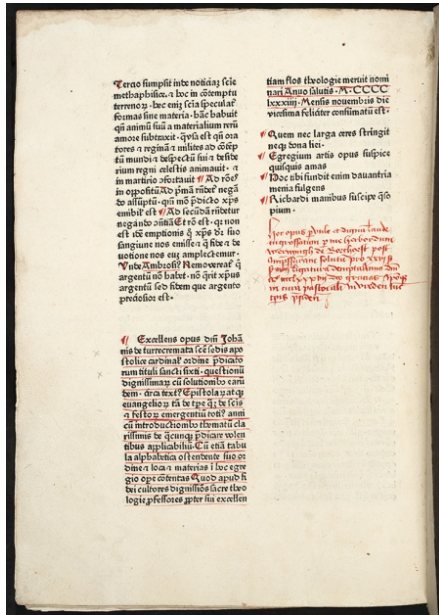
As far as we know for thousands of years of early human history, men did not have the skills to write down their ideas and thoughts and carry them around to read later. It is possible that they inscribed their thoughts on perishable materials, but that would mean that they no longer exist. The earliest illuminated manuscripts that we have are Egyptian papyrus rolls of the 2nd millennium BCE. These are often sacred texts intended for use by the pharaohs in their burial ceremonies, but they also included both painted images of the gods' interactions with humans and hieroglyphic prayers, hymns, instructions and stories. They discuss the progress of the dead through judgment and the afterlife as the dead person strives to become one with the gods. See image 10.50.



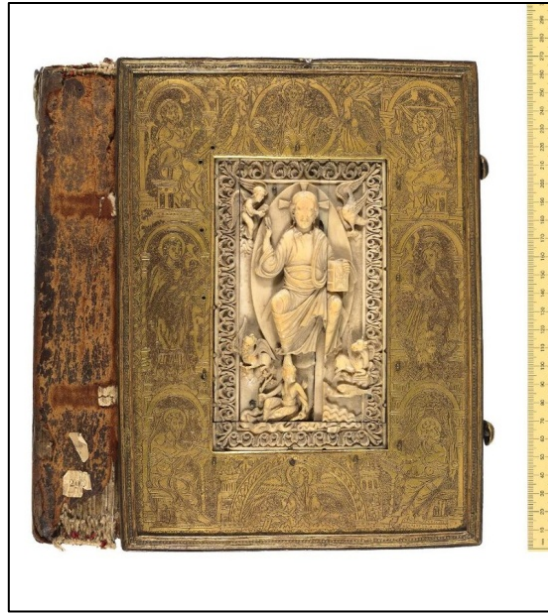
10.50 *Book of the Dead of Hunefer, Opening of the Mouth Ceremony*, papyrus, British Museum, 1275 BCE.¹

It is difficult for us, who can buy a book for a dime, to understand the high regard that people of the past had for books. As the power of the Christian Church grew, leaders sought ways to transmit information, teach believers, and pay homage to god, the saints, and the wealthy patrons who would buy their work. During the middle ages books were made of vellum, which is tanned, split, and polished hide of sheep, goats, or calves. Some manuscripts might take as many as 500 animal skins, so these books were extremely expensive when we consider that the animals could no longer produce valuable wool or milk products. Until the invention of moveable type in the early 15th century, books were only available for royalty, church leaders, and the very wealthy.

The process to create these treasures began in a scriptorium or workshop, which was usually in a monastery. With the rise of the universities lay artists increasingly took over the creation of these manuscripts. Vellum was slightly translucent and durable, and could be reused if the top layer of script was scraped off and new text written in its place. Once the vellum was tanned and ready the pages were laid out with ruled lines. Writing was done by literate men or women, called scribes, who copied texts onto the vellum in black ink. Scribes left spaces to be filled in with titles and chapter headings written in red ink. These were called rubrics, a Latin word for the red earth pigment used to make the ink, and the artists were called rubricators. Normally rubricators do not sign their work. They may underline text, draw beginning letters in a larger and more elaborate font, and add descriptive text. See image 10.53.



10.51 *Questiones Evangeliorum*, 1484.ⁱⁱ



10.52 *Manuscript cover, Bodeleian*, 11th century, Germany, ivory.ⁱⁱⁱ

Other artisans then decorated the manuscripts with small pictures. Sometimes pages were gilded with gold or silver, and then the miniature images were painted using animal, vegetable, and mineral extracts. Paint was gouache, an opaque mixture of pigments and binder like modern poster paint. The most common pigment was a red oxide of lead, called minium and anyone who worked with minium was called a miniator. The small size of the manuscript images led to the present use of the word miniature to mean anything tiny. Books were bound in a heavy cover of precious metals or carvings and often embellished with gems. See image 10.52.

Illuminating manuscripts was an act of piety by the faithful. All faithful Benedictine houses performed this service. Clunian houses fostered it diligently. A monk skilled in his craft would not have been content to copy letters all of his life, so he might graduate to painting miniature images in the small spaces and margins in the book. Perhaps at first he or she drew a few little pen drawings or an elaborate initial at the beginning of a paragraph. The development of this art may have been a small compensation for the tedious life of a monk. A monk or nun might spend a lifetime creating a single book.

Many different types of holy manuscripts existed. They were often used in religious ceremonies and were commissioned by princes and church dignitaries. The book might be placed on the neck and shoulders of the person being invested in a new church or political office to show that God approved of their new calling and was giving His blessing. There many types of holy texts including:

- Psalters- the Psalms of David from the Old Testament
- Books of Hours –private prayer books devised for the use of a specific person
- Bestiaries-facts and fables about animals
- Collections of the lives of the saints
- Missals and Sacramentaries from the Bible for use in the Mass
- Antiphonaries and Lectionaries- to be read aloud

Manuscript illumination was the model for many other types of art that sprung up during this time. Larger versions of the miniature stories were translated to stained glass windows. They also became models for murals and other large paintings on the walls. Some of the same stories can be seen in the tympanums, trumeaus, and other ornate sculpture that filled the cathedrals and churches across the Christian world.

Some of the earliest examples of illuminated manuscripts in the Christian medieval world had strong influences from the wandering tribes of the north. Missionaries sought to stabilize and subjugate the tribes and convert them to Christianity, and yet they brought with them their artistic influences. One of the most important examples is the influence

of the Irish culture. From 400 CE to 750 CE the British Isles sank into conflict and confusion, but monasteries were established in Britain, Italy and Germany. This encounter between Irish and Germanic Christianity resulted in Hiberno-Saxon manuscripts. These are examples of syncretism, as is discussed in the cultural values section of this text. The Book of Durrow is an example of this type of art. Notice the intricately twined decoration on the first letter of the text. Compare the twisting shapes in the manuscript to the clasp of a purse found in a burial at Sutton Hoo. Notice the intertwined filigree.



10.53 Book of Durrow- Beginning of the Book of Mark.^{iv} 10.54 Purse clasp, Sutton Hoo, 6th and 7th centuries CE.^v

Another example from this same culture and the same place is the Lindisfarne Gospel, made in the late 7th century in a monastery off the coast of Northumberland. It is 13x10 inches and is now housed in the British Library in London. It is still complete with prefaces, canon tables, and commentaries. In the back of the book is a list, compiled by Aldred, prior of Lindisfarne, which is a history of the efforts of many predecessors who made the book. The list says that it was written by Eadfrith (698-721), Bound by Ethelwald, adorned with ornaments of gold and jewels by Billfrith. It was glossed (translations written on the page) in English by Aldred. Each book was preceded by a carpet page with an intricate cross and abstract tiny animal designs. See image 10.55.



10.55 Lindisfarne Carpet page, 710-21.^{vi}

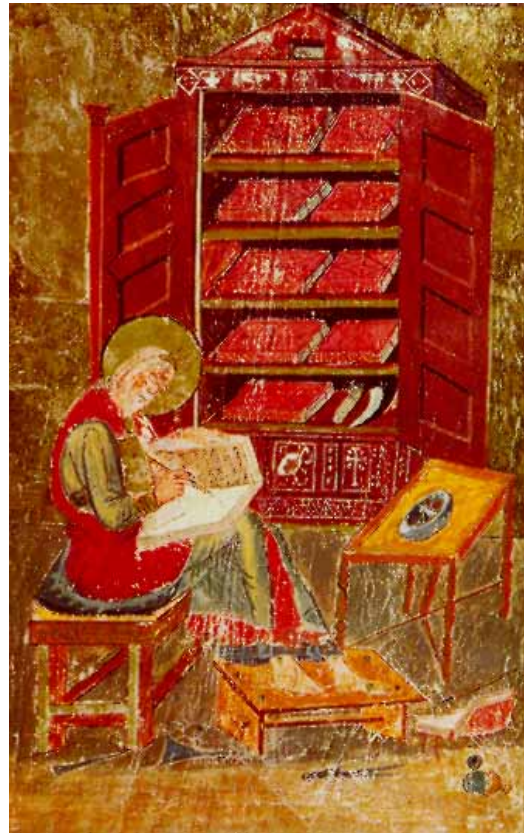


10.56 Lindisfarne Chi Rho page.^{vii}

Often the manuscripts had an image before the beginning of each book. In the Lindisfarne book, Matthew sits on a pillow on a wooden stool with the scriptures on his lap and a goose feather quill pen in his hand. His name is written in Greek. Above him is his symbol, an angel blowing a horn to announce the coming of the gospel.^{viii}



10.57 Lindisfarne Matthew, 710-21 CE, British Library.^{ix}



10.58 Ezra, Codex Amiatinus, 700 CE.^x

Compare the Ezra page from the Codex Amiatinus (see image 10.58) which was penned at almost the same time and in a place very close geographically to the Lindisfarne gospel. Note how similar they are. There is speculation that the persons writing both of these works were looking at the same source. But take note that Matthew is much flatter and there is no real attempt to create space. Note that the lines of his clothing are hard and there is no modeling or shading. The differences could be based on the flat, decorative style from Hiberno-Saxon culture and the more natural style found in Roman influences.^{xi}

Notice the clean lines of the St. Mark page and the St. John page from the Echternach Gospels, written in about 700 CE. See images 10.59 and 10.60. The manuscript was probably taken by Willibrord to the monastery at Echternach which is now in Luxembourg, when he founded it and may have been used in missionary efforts as he traveled. The lines used by this artist are simple and straight rather than the writhing, tangled snakes we just saw in the Lindisfarne Manuscript. It looks as though it has been drawn with the aid of a compass. The rectangular background pattern which controls the apostle's ascent through space also binds them to the confines of the page.



10.59 St. John page from Echternach Gospels, 700 CE^{xii}



10.60 St. Mark page from Echternach Gospels, 700 CE.^{xiii}

The gospel of Ebbo, also known as the Book of the Gospel of the Archbishop of Reims, was created between 816 and 835 CE in Hautvillers, France. See images 10.61 and 10.62. It is 10 ¼ x 8 1/4" and is tempera on vellum. These images are packed with an energy that amounts to frenzy. The folds of their drapery writhe and vibrate. Their hair stands on end. The landscape in the background almost rears up. Matthew appears to be hastily writing the inspiration he is receiving, his body tense, his shoulders hunched, his head thrust forward. Their symbols, taken from the Book of Revelation, are in the upper right corners: Matthew is the man with the horn announcing the gospel and Mark is the lion.



10.61 Gospel of Ebbo, St. Matthew, 816-35 CE, France^{xiv}



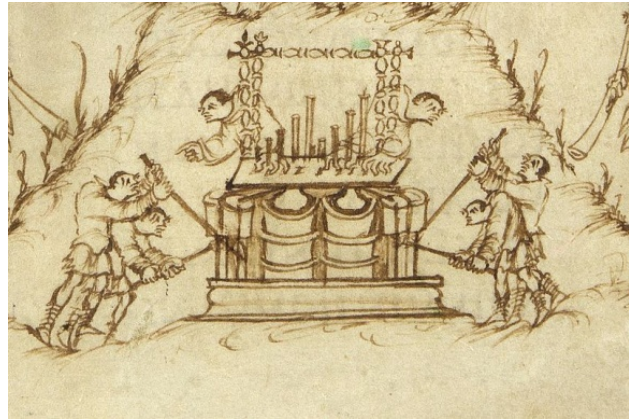
10.62 Gospel of Ebbo, St. Mark 816-35, France.^{xv}

The Utrecht Psalter has much in common with the Gospel of Ebbo, and was also made in the monastery of Hautvillers near Reims in about 830 CE. See images 10.63 and 10.64. It is drawn rather than painted and may have been created in a monastic scriptoria that was not supported by a wealthy court. The psalms are not easily translated from written language to pictorial language because they are poetic verses intended to be sung during religious services. The artist could solve that

problem in several ways: he could repeat the main character in multiple positions on the page, choose a single instant from the psalm to represent the general message, or illustrate key words or phrases and somehow tie them together. The Utrecht artists chose to depict multiple groups of words depicted on the page for each psalm. The 63rd Psalm for instance shows the hand of God: “thy right hand upholdeth me”. The image of the 149th Psalm shows an organ: “Praise ye the Lord with a new song”.^{xvi}



10.63 Utrecht Psalter, Psalm 63, detail, circa 850.^{xvii}



10.64 Utrecht Psalter, Psalm 149, detail, circa 850.^{xviii}

The Book of Kells is the most richly illuminated Celtic manuscript preserved to our day. It was created in the 8th century and was saved from Viking attack in 802 CE when it was carried to the Irish monastery of Kells. It is believed that many artists worked on this masterpiece.



10.65 Chi Rho page from the Book of Kells, 8th century CE.^{xix}



10.66 Book of Kells, Incipit page of Mark.^{xx}



10.67 Detail, *Book of Kells, Cats and Mice with the host.*^{xxi}

Image 10.65 and 10.66 are incipit pages, meaning that they are the first few words of a chapter in the scriptures. The Chi Rho page is abbreviated text for “Christi autom generatia” meaning The Book of the Generations of Jesus Christ. The letters are subdivided into panels filled with interlaced animals and snakes as well as spirals and knots. In spite of the intricacy, it is possible to trace every line as a single thread. To the right of the Chi’s tail (image 10.67) two cats pounce on a pair of mice as they nibble on a Eucharistic wafer, an allegory referring to the fight between good and evil.

The *Registrum Gregorii* is a collection of letters written by Pope Gregory the Great. The book was compiled in 983 in Winchester and illuminated by the “Gregory master”. It was presented by Archbishop Egbert to his cathedral and shows Pope Gregory sitting on a golden throne, working at his desk. The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove sits on his shoulder providing inspiration, while a clerk peeks through a curtain. Perspective is not linear and it is difficult to tell whether he is in the building or outside. See image 10.68.



10.68 *Registrum Gregorii*, 983 CE, Master of the *Registrum Gregorii* ^{xxii}



10.69 *Registrum Gregorii*, 986 CE. ^{xxiii}

The *Psalter of St. Louis* is a late manuscript that was painted by an unknown miniaturist between 1250-1270. It is parchment with ink tempura and gold and was made for Louis IV of France by craftsmen who were associated with the builders of the cathedral at St. Chapelle in Paris. It may have been made by the same artisans who made the stained glass windows.



10.70 *Psalter of St. Louis, Deborah and the Elders* 1252-1270, ^{xxiv}



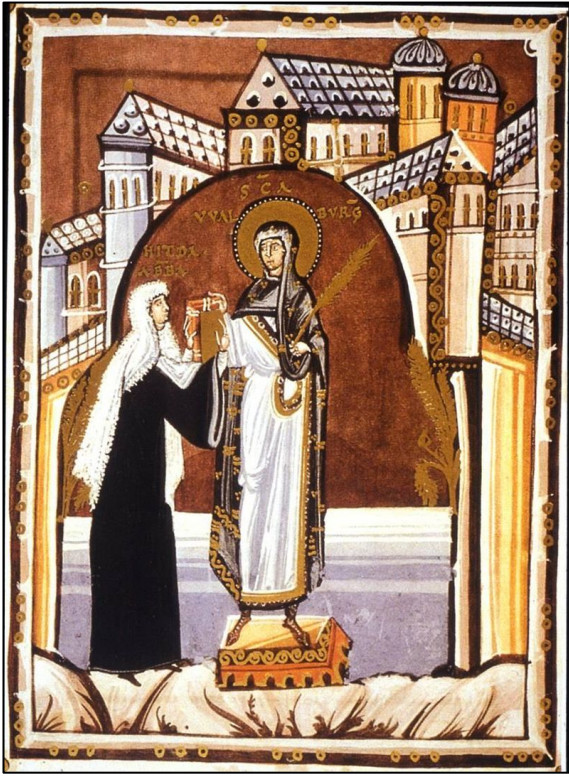
10.71 *Psalter of St. Louis, Bibliotheque Nationale de France.* ^{xxv}

WOMEN IN MONASTIC LIFE

Gender roles during this time reflected a patriarchal society. The Christian religion generally taught that wives were to submit to their husbands, and the men who wrote much of the religious texts often thought of women in terms of weakness and temptations to sexual sin. "You," an early Christian writer had exclaimed of women, "are the devil's gateway...you are the first deserter of the divine law...you destroyed so easily God's image, man..."^{xxvi} The warlike values of the aristocracy meant that aristocratic women were relegated to a supporting role, to the management of the household. Both Roman and Germanic law placed women in subordination to their fathers and then, when married, to their husbands.

However, women did enjoy certain rights. Although legally inferior to men in Roman Law (practiced in the Byzantine Empire and often among those peoples who were subjects of the Germanic aristocracies), a wife maintained the right to any property she brought into a marriage. Women often played a strong economic role in peasant life, and, as with their aristocratic counterparts, peasant women often managed the household even if men performed tasks such as plowing and the like. And the Church gave women a fair degree of autonomy in certain circumstances. We often read of women choosing to become nuns, to take vows of celibacy, against the desires of their families for them to marry. These women, if they framed their choices in terms of Christian devotion, could often count on institutional support in their life choices. Although monasticism was usually limited to noblewomen, women who became nuns often had access to an education. Certain noblewomen who became abbesses could even become powerful political actors in their own right, as did the Abbess of Hitda in the 11th century.

The Abbess of Hitda is shown in image 10.72 presenting an expensive book to St. Walburga, the female patron saint of Meschede, a large female monastery in the diocese of Cologne, Germany. This manuscript was created in about 1000-1020 CE and is in Darmstadt, Germany. The Abbess belonged to a group of women who were the daughters and nieces of the aristocratic leaders. Since she is presenting the codex to the saint, this shows her position and her authority. She has the right to be in the presence of the saint and to represent the monastery. This means she has more power than the male clerics and leaders who lived and worked with this community of sisters. ^{xxvii}



10.72 Abbess Hitda Gives Codex to St Walburga, 1000 CE.^{xxviii}



10.73 Abbess Hitda Codex, Storm on Galilee, circa 1000-1020.^{xxix}

(See image 10.73) The Storm on the Sea of Galilee shows the artist's gift of storytelling. The boat forms a diagonal line from upper left to lower right, the sail is whipped by the fierce wind, and the boat and its passengers plunge through the sky and the water, even going over the outer frame of the manuscript page. Note the agonizing expressions of the gold haloed apostles looking toward heaven and trying to awaken Christ. He sleeps on; the long folds of drapery draw our eyes to him. This work was not necessarily created by women artists, but it was women who most likely paid for it and made a gift of it to the saint protecting the women of the monastery.

One of the most important women in monastic life was Hildegard of Bingen. She was the Abbess of the monastery at Bingen, overlooking the Rhine River in Germany. Hildegard was born in 1098 into a noble family and became a Benedictine nun at the age of 18. She was an artist, author, and composer and was said to have had many visions beginning at the age of three. She often wrote letters to people who asked her for advice and she talked with popes, emperors, and other leaders of the church. She wrote letters about natural science, the treatment of diseases, and music. Image 11.74 is a facsimile of a page showing Hildegard's receiving inspiration for her collection of revelations called *Scivias* "Know the Ways of the Lord" which were accepted as divinely inspired by the church. The original image was lost during World War II.^{xxx}



10.74 Hildegard of Bingen, 1150-1200 CE. ^{xxx}

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

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Betts, Kristine. "Romanesque-Illuminated Manuscripts." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱ Photo by Hunefer, John Bodsworth, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BD_Hunefer.jpg

ⁱⁱ Flickr's The Commons.

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ⁱⁱⁱ Bodleian Libraries, Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bodleian_Libraries,_Manuscript_of_the_first_two_Gospels_only_Matthew_and_John.jpg

^{iv} Dsmdgold at English Wikipedia, Public domain.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BookOfDarrowBeginMarkGospel.jpg>

^v Photo by Geni, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Sutton_hoo_purse_lid02017.JPG

^{vi} Photo by anonymous, Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_des_Book_of_Lindisfarne_002_2.jpg

^{vii} Photo by anonymous, Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:LindisfarneChiRiho.jpg>

^{viii} <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYds0dsratI>

^{ix} Photo by British Library, Public domain. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St._Matthew_-_Lindisfarne_Gospels_\(710-721\),_f.25v_-_BL_Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:St._Matthew_-_Lindisfarne_Gospels_(710-721),_f.25v_-_BL_Cotton_MS_Nero_D_IV.jpg)

^x Photo by monks, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ezra_Codex_Amiatinus.jpg

^{xi} <https://smarthistory.org/codex-amiatinus/>

^{xii} Photo by Gallica Digital Library. Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Evang%C3%A9liaire_d%27Echternach_-_BNF_-_f176v_aigle.jpg

^{xiii} Photo by the Yorck Project, Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Meister_des_Evangeliars_von_Echternach_001.jpg

^{xiv} Photo by Giraudon/Art Resource, Public domain. Bibliotheque municipale de Epernay.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint_Matthew2.jpg

^{xv} Photo by Sailko, Public domain.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vangeli_di_ebbone_\(evangelista_marco\),_epernay,_Biblioth%C3%A8que_municipale,_Ms._1_f_18_v.,_20,8x26_cm,_ante_823.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vangeli_di_ebbone_(evangelista_marco),_epernay,_Biblioth%C3%A8que_municipale,_Ms._1_f_18_v.,_20,8x26_cm,_ante_823.jpg)

^{xvi} <https://smarthistory.org/utrecht-psalter/>

^{xvii} From Utrecht University Library, Public domain.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Utrecht_Ps63_\(cropped\)_cropped2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Utrecht_Ps63_(cropped)_cropped2.jpg)

^{xviii} Ibid, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Utrechts-Psalter_PSALM-149-PSALM-150_organ.jpg

^{xix} Photo anonymous, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book_of_Kells_ChiRho_Folio_34R.png

^{xx} Photo anonymous, Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KellsFol130rIncipitMark.jpg>

^{xxi} Photo anonymous, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book_of_Kells_34r_-_Katzen_und_Maeuse.jpg

^{xxii} Photo courtesy of Trier Stadtbibliothek, Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Registrum_gregorii,_san_gregorio_magno_ ispirato_dalla_colomba,_983_miniatura,_treviri_stadtbibliothek,_19,8x27_cm.jpg

^{xxiii} Photo courtesy Conde Museum, Public domain.

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:D%C3%A9bora_et_Baraq_BnF_Latin_10525_fol._47v.jpg

^{xxv} Photo courtesy of Web Gallery of Art. Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:13th-century_painters_-_Psalter_of_St_Louis_-_WGA15850.jpg

^{xxvi} Tertullian, On the Apparel of Women, 1:1.

^{xxvii} https://inpress.lib.uiowa.edu/feminae/DetailsPage.aspx?Feminae_ID=34059

^{xxviii} Photo courtesy StudyBlue, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hitda_Codex_-_dedication_miniature_f6r_-_DarmBib_1640.jpg

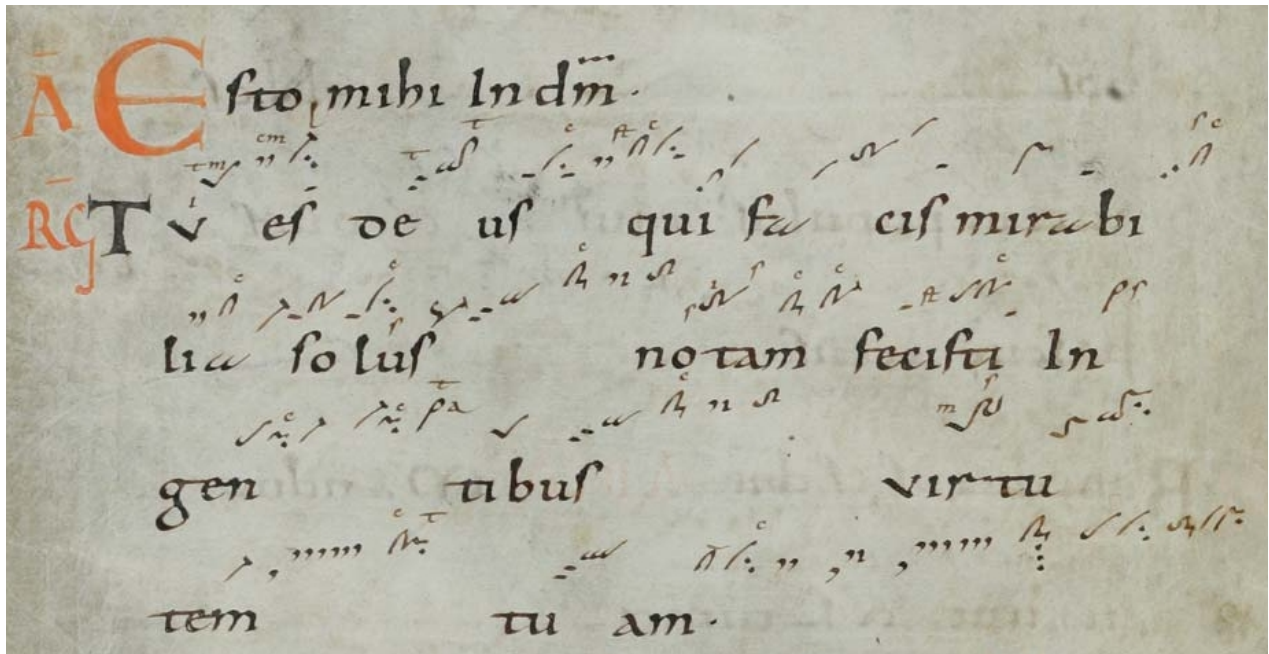
^{xxix} Photo anonymous, Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hitda-codex.jpg>

^{xxx} <https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-hildegard-of-bingen/>

^{xxxi} Photo anonymous, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hildegard_von_Bingen.jpg

MEDIEVAL MUSIC

The music of the Medieval Ages was most heavily influenced by the church. When Constantine made it legal to be a Christian with the Edict of Milan in 313, music in the church was still tied to Roman ideas. But when he built St. Peter's Basilica there was now a new sacred space to which Christians could gather. When Rome fell in about 476, the church was an institution that survived and provided some order and security. We have made references to musical instruments in previous cultures, such as the Lyre in the cemetery at Ur, trumpets found in King Tut's Tomb, and the Pythagorean Theory of music. Certainly children could whistle mothers sang to their children and shepherds had flutes, but the only music which has survived is that of the church. Different areas of the Christian world developed different music to meet their local liturgical needs. The liturgy is the form of service used to celebrate the mass, and there were several forms of worship including those of St. Jerome, the Ambrosian liturgy for St Ambrose, and an Augustinian liturgy used by St. Augustine.



10.75 Early music, St. Gall, 922, before the innovation of notation, St. Gallen Codex, ¹

A major reformer of the early Christian church was Pope Gregory I (590-604) also known as Saint Gregory. The son of wealthy residents of Rome, Gregory did not seek the office of Pope, but spent his early life as a monk in a quiet monastery. During this time the Lombards were attacking, there were terrible floods, and the plague killed about a third of the population of Italy. Against his wishes, Gregory was appointed pope and because of his efforts, we call the music that comes out of this time "Gregorian Chant", although much of this type of music could also have been written by later popes. Another term for this type of music is Plainchant.

Early music was syllabic, meaning that each note was assigned to a single syllabic of the text. Later, neumes were used to indicate the number of notes that should be sung to each syllable of text. There would be musical gestures to indicate whether the music went up, or down, or up and then down. This helped, but you had to hear the music to learn it. This music was meant to be sung by people who already knew it. So it could be used to study and memorize the music, but not for performance. There were theoretical writings about music, but no one had yet determined how to write it down. See image 10.75 for an example of what early music looked like before the invention of musical notation.



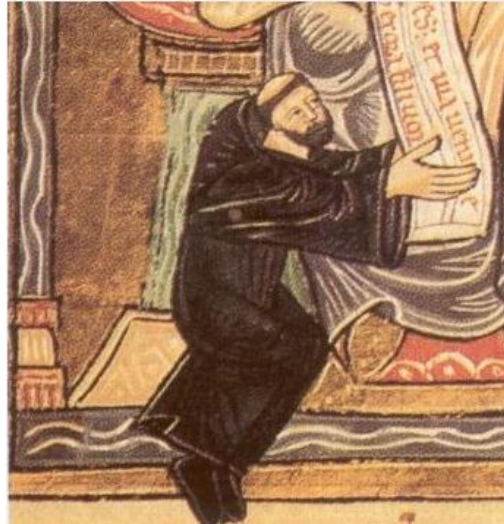
10.76 Pope Gregory I Receiving Inspiration, St. Gall.ⁱⁱ



10.77 Pope Gregory I Receiving Inspiration.ⁱⁱⁱ

As part of Charlemagne's interest in the liturgy, changes were again made to the music of the church. He set about to simplify, codify, and unify the liturgy for all western Christians. This was quite a task, since the liturgy was based on the psalms of David and could be different depending on many factors. There could be specific music for holidays that were fixed on the calendar, such as Christmas, and other music for holidays that moved on the calendar, such as Easter, or specific music for a saint's day. This is described by the term **proper**. The term **ordinary** in western liturgies refers to music and text that does not change and is constant. The monasteries at St. Gall and Cluny continued to play a part in the music of the time. Images 10.76 and 10.77 are two of many artists' renderings of the inspiration Pope Gregory received to make changes to the chant. Later in his life Pope Gregory was beatified and designated a saint.

One important contributor to the changes in music was Odo of Cluny, 927-942. He was the son of Abbo and his father wanted him to become a knight, so he sent him to live with a military man and his family, William, the Duke of Aquitaine. Eventually he convinced his father that he should serve in the church so early in his life he went to Paris where he studied music and poetry. Eventually Odo went to the Abby of Cluny where he is credited with writing dozens of choral pieces based on the Old Testament Psalms. As he traveled to other monasteries he set up choirs, which required that he find a way to teach music to the new choir members. This was Odo's great gift to music: he arranged the notes into an orderly progression from A to G, proposed a method to measure intervals, which is the difference in pitch between the notes, and used an instrument called the monochord to demonstrate how the notes sounded and how they related to each other. His writings on these ideas opened the door for later innovators to take the next step.



10.78 Odo of Cluny, 11th century codex.^{iv}

Even though Odo's innovations made music available to monasteries all over Europe, it was Guido of Arezzo that made the biggest leap in musical notation. He was born some time at the end of the first millennium and became a Benedictine monk. Guido is credited with devising musical syllables and assigning those syllables to specific lines on a musical staff. He named the notes with letters of the alphabet and placed the same note on the same line, making it easier to transmit and learn music. It was no longer necessary for a singer to hear someone sing music, instead they could learn by the notation. See image 10.79 for an example of Guido's idea.



10.79 Lettrines, Abbey of St. Evroult^v



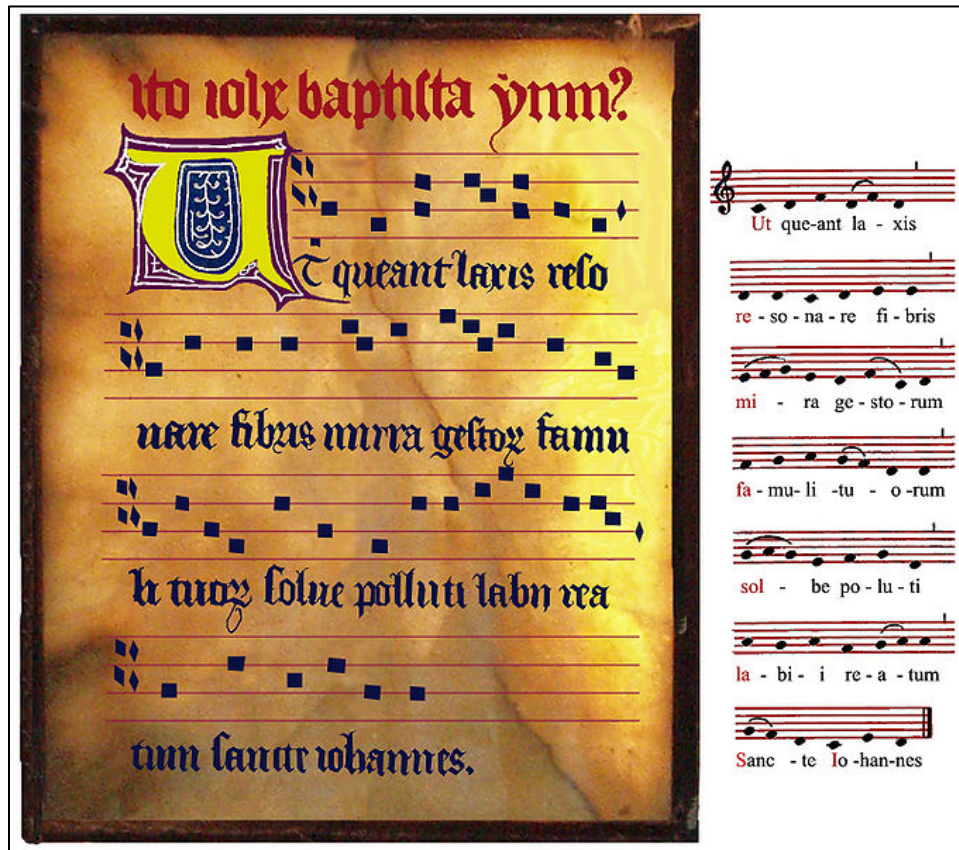
10.80 The Guidonian Hand, 15th century Mantuan Manuscript.^{vi}



10.81 Guido of Arezzo^{vii}

Guido is also known for developing the Guidonian Hand which could be written on the student's hand and referred to when learning a musical number. Watch this video to see how it works.^{viii} Or watch this one to see it in action.^{ix} The idea of the Guidonian hand is that each portion of the hand represents a specific note within the hexachord system, which spans nearly three octaves. In teaching, an instructor would indicate a series of notes by pointing to them on their hand, and the students would sing them. There have been several variations in the position of the notes on the hand, and no one variation

is definitive but, as in example 10.80 the notes were mentally superimposed onto the joints and tips of the fingers of the left hand. [GUIDO'S MUSICAL INNOVATIONS](#)



10.82 The hymn *Ut Queant Laxis*, which was the basis for Guido's musical notation.^x

This device allowed people to visualize where the half steps were, and to visualize the interlocking positions of the hexachords (the names of which—ut-re-mi- fa-sol-la—were taken from the hymn *Ut queant laxis*). Ut was later changed to “do”, which is what modern musical notation still uses. In image 10.82 see that the names of the notes are shown in red, and you can see that each note is one step higher on the scale. Watch this short video to see how the hymn to St. John was the basis of Guido's system.^{xi}

So plainsong, also known as Gregorian chant has very specific characteristics. This type of medieval music is simple by modern standards. There is a short lecture included for this lesson. To study the music, first read this section, and then listen to the lecture. You will hear the basic musical elements and learn why the music sounds the way it does. The basic elements of Plainsong are:

- **Monophonic.** This means that all of the voices sing the same melody simultaneously in block harmony. This helps to express the unity of the church.
- **Vocal only.** No musical instruments were normally used.
- **Unmeasured.** In western music, the strong beat is on the first note in a measure. Since there were no measures, there were no strong and weak beats.

These three basic elements caused the music to have a calm other-worldly feeling. Gregorian chant is pure melody, and because of its lack of meter, it seems to wander indefinitely. This is one of the values of this religious music. Because it is religious and it deals with the eternal, it removes the temporal element of measured time from the mundane world. It also

makes the music soothing, hypnotic, and ethereal. Gregorian chant was intended to draw your mind and heart closer to God. The great Romanesque churches were built with high stone vaults to reflect the monophonic music sung by the choirs.

We spoke of the Abbess Hildegard (1098-1179) of the nunnery of Bingen when we talked about illuminated manuscripts. See image 10.74. It is also appropriate to mention the Abbess here because of the great contributions she made to the music of her time. She wrote plainchants to go with the poetry she also composed. One example of this is “Columba Aspexit” written to celebrate Saint Maximinus:

Her poem reads:

The dove peered in
Through the lattices of the window
Where, before its face,
A balm exuded
From incandescent Maximinus.

The heat of the sun burned
Dazzling into the gloom;
Whence a jewel sprang forth
In the building of the temple
Of the purest loving heart. ^{xii}

Click the link below to listen to a modern rendition. Note the continual chord played behind the singing of the chant. ^{xiii}



10.83 Hildegard of Bingen, Convert Chapel stained glass window, Suffolk, England. ^{xiv}

The cathedral schools in Paris were also very active in producing and changing the music of the times. When the cathedral school was built at the new cathedral of Notre Dame of Paris, it became the center of intellectual growth. Much of what we know of this school and its students and masters comes from the notes of a student at the university in 1280. The monophonic music of plainchant was evolving to something much more complicated. Writers and performers of music had been experimenting with polyphony, singing two or more melodies at the same time, for years. At first, the original melody was sung with an additional melodic line added and sung at the same time with the same free flowing rhythm of

the plainchant. We call this organum. As innovation increased there were soon changes in the added line, perhaps it went up when the main melody went down, or maybe more notes were added. Then perhaps another counterpoint melody might be added, or the writer may have added different rhythms. In 1160 Master Leonin is thought to have added a faster line above the tenor melody which was called the descant. While the tenor holds the note, the descant increases in speed. In 1180, Master Perotin added new words above the slow, almost plodding tenor melody. He also caused the tenor line to move faster in certain sections, and called it the descant clausula. Now both the tenor and the line above are moving faster.

Keep in mind that often ideas and values appeared in more than one medium. So for instance, you might look at the Roman gate at Autun to see an example of Organum duplum that might have been written by Leonin. See image 10.84. Notice the upper layer of stones has more windows with rounded arches than the lower register. This could be compared to the upper notes in the music moving more swiftly over the longer-held tenor notes in the bottom register. Also, as time passed architecture became more complicated, just as the music added more parts, more notes, and more instruments.



10.84 Roman Gate at Autun. ^{xv}

We have spoken of the music played in the monasteries, churches, and cathedrals, but there was also secular music played at the time. Secular music was likely improvised because performers probably had neither the knowledge required to commit their songs to paper, nor any desire to share what they wrote with potential rivals. The courts were especially interested in having some control over music and they supported noble composers who wrote poetry to be performed in their castles, manors, and halls. These courtly performers were called troubadours in southern France, trouveres in northern France, minnesingers in Germany and Austria and cantigas in 13th century Spain. Their topics were courtly, although platonic, love. They sang of crusaders, knights, and praise for ladies. See images 10.85 and 10.86.

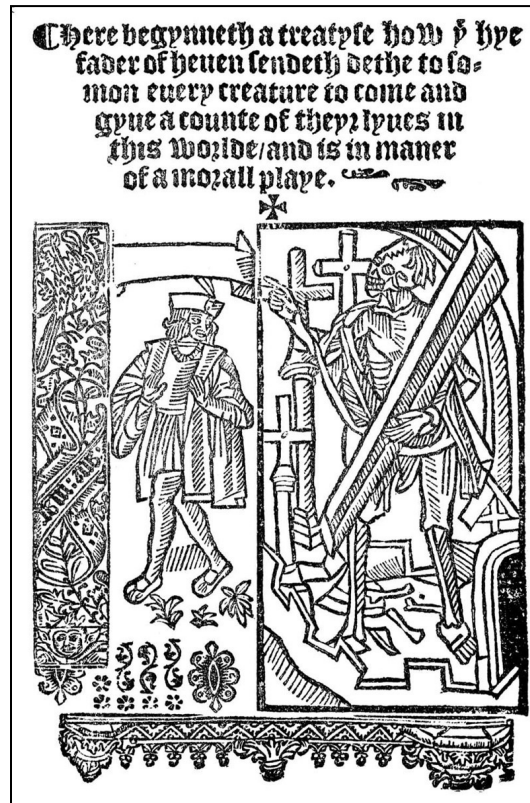


10.85 Troubadours, Berlin, 14th century.^{xvi}



10.86 Minnesinger, Master of the Codex Manesse, 1305.^{xvii}

These were songs to enliven parties, performed in public squares on feast days, and may have been paid for by craft or merchant guilds. We might also think of these as the next logical step to morality plays such as *Everyman*, a 15th century story of a man who encounters allegorical characters that force him to look at how he has lived his life. Death informs him that he will soon die and when he is deserted by unfaithful friends, beauty, knowledge, and wealth, he learns that he can only count on the Good Deeds he accomplished in life. This very short, 900 line play can be read on the Internet.^{xviii}



10.87 Frontispiece from a version of *Everyman*, 1530.^{xix}

Use this to reference information in this text.

Betts, Kristine. "Romanesque-Medieval Music." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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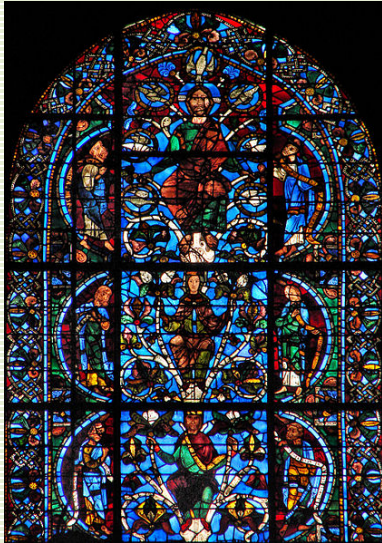
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- ⁱ Photo by Unbekannter Schreiber, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tu_es_deus.jpg
- ⁱⁱ From Antiphony of Hartker, 997 CE, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gregory_I_-_Antiphony_of_Hartker_of_Sankt_Gallen.jpg
- ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by Vassil, CC0. 10th century ivory from the cover of a sacramentary, In the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kunsthistorisches_Museum_10th_century_ivory_Gregory_the_Great_2306_2013.jpg
- ^{iv} Anonymous photographer, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Odo_Cluny-11.jpg
- ^v Photo by Jchancerel, Public domain. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AbbayeSaintEvroultLettrines_\(2\).png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AbbayeSaintEvroultLettrines_(2).png)
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- ^{vii} From Dutch Wikipedia, Robbot, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Guido_van_Arezzo.jpg
- ^{viii} https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-symantec-ext_onb&hsimp=yhs-ext_onb&hspart=symantec&p=guidonian+hand#id=1&vid=f873eee31362e0098af1204c9b17a9df&action=view
- ^{ix} https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-symantec-ext_onb&hsimp=yhs-ext_onb&hspart=symantec&p=guidonian+hand#id=6&vid=fe5d4418ab799675a05db4c898e18af7&action=view
- ^x Photo by GRosa, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Escala_musical.jpg
- ^{xi} https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-symantec-ext_onb&hsimp=yhs-ext_onb&hspart=symantec&p=ut+queant+laxis#id=3&vid=8581ddf14d33b423cab1b094ab0e1e1e&action=click
- ^{xii} Listen. Joseph Kerman, University of California, Berkeley, Worth Publishers, 1992, p 68.
- ^{xiii} https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-symantec-ext_onb&hsimp=yhs-ext_onb&hspart=symantec&p=columba+aspexit#id=2&vid=edb0c6fea066a9f2d496a0ebe71fc793&action=view
- ^{xiv} By Evelyn Simak, CC BY-SA 2.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_convent_chapel_at_Old_Hall_-_stained_glass_window_-_geograph.org.uk_-_665582.jpg
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- ^{xviii} <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/basis/everyman.asp>
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11.15 Ambulatory, St. Denis



11.34 Jesse Tree, Chartres Cathedral



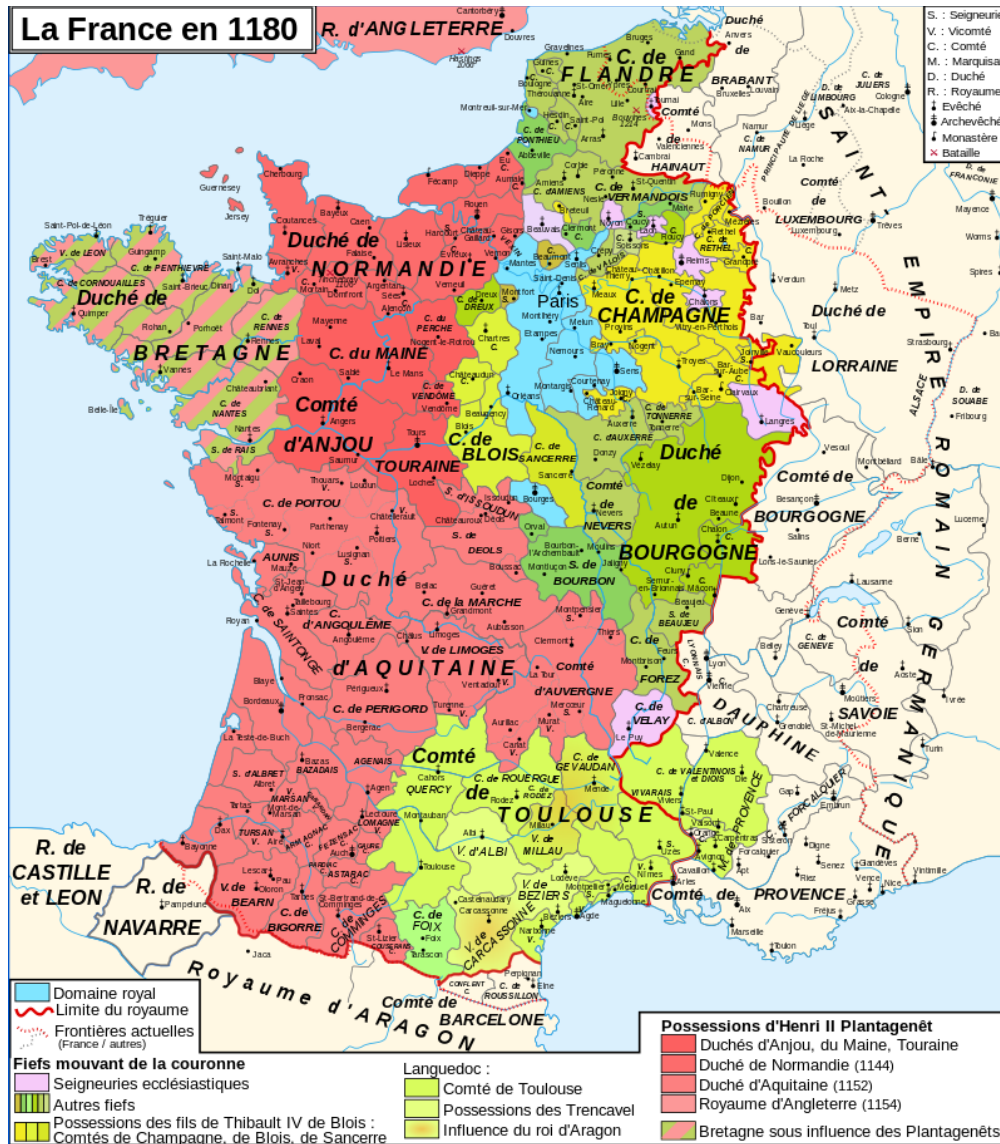
11.42 Chartres Cathedral, Martyrs

Chapter 11

Gothic Age

INTRODUCTION TO THE GOTHIC AGE

The eleventh century would see the beginnings of Western Europe's re-urbanization. Compared to the cities of the Mediterranean such as Athens, Northern Europe was unpopulated and provincial. Few large cities existed in the area. In those lands that had been part of the Western Roman Empire, city walls often remained, even if these cities had largely emptied of people. During the chaos and mayhem of the tenth and eleventh centuries, people often gathered in walled settlements for protection. Many of these old walled cities thus came to be re-occupied.



11.1 France in the 12th century.¹

One reason for the growth of towns was a revival of trade in the eleventh century. This revival can be traced to several causes. In the first place, Europe's knights, as a warrior aristocracy, had a strong demand for luxury goods, both locally manufactured products and imported goods such as silks and spices from Asia. Bishops, the great lords of the Church, had a similar demand. They sought olive oil and spices from the East as well as wax, amber, fur and timber from the north. As such, markets grew up in the vicinity of castles and thus caused the formation of towns that served as market centers, while cathedral cities also saw a growth of population.



11.2 Thomas de Saluces, *Paris Market, Le Chevalier Errant*, by ca. 1403.ⁱⁱ

Further south, in the Mediterranean, frequent raids by pirates (most of whom were Arab Muslims from North Africa) had forced the coastal cities of Italy to build effective navies. One of the chief of these cities was Venice, a city in the swamps and lagoons of northeastern Italy. Over the eleventh century, the city (formerly under Byzantine rule but now independent) had built up a navy that had cleared the Adriatic Sea of pirates and established itself as a nexus of trade between Constantinople and the rest of Western Europe. Likewise, on the western side of Italy, the cities of Genoa and Pisa had both built navies from what had been modest fishing fleets and seized the strongholds of Muslim pirates in the islands of Corsica and Sardinia. This clearing of pirates from the Mediterranean led to an increase in maritime trade and allowed the renewed growth of the old Roman towns that had in many cases remained since the fall of the Western Empire. The cities of Genoa and Venice were able to prosper because they stood at the northernmost points of the Mediterranean, the farthest that goods could be moved by water (always cheaper than overland transport in pre-modern times) before going over land to points further north.



11.3 *Map of Venice*, Nuremberg Chronicles, 1492.ⁱⁱⁱ

The people living and working in towns came to be known as the **bourgeois**, or middle class. These were called a middle class because they were neither peasant farmers nor nobles, but rather a social rank between the two. Kings and other nobles would frequently give towns the right to self-government, often in exchange for a hefty payment. A self-governing town was often known as a commune. Eleventh-century Europe's economy was primarily agricultural. The eleventh and twelfth centuries saw a massive expansion of agricultural output in the northern regions of Europe, which led to a corresponding growth in the economy and the population. The same improvement in iron technology that allowed the equipping of armored knights led to more iron tools: axes allowed farmers to clear forests and cultivate more land, and the iron share of a heavy plow allowed farmers to plow deeper into the thick soil of Western Europe.



11.4 *Medieval Ploughing*, ca. 1300.^{iv}

In addition, farmers gradually moved to a so-called three field system of agriculture: fields would have one third planted in cereal crops, one third to crops such as legumes (which increase fertility in soil), and a third left uncultivated either to serve as grazing land for livestock or simply rebuild its nutrients by lying unused. More iron tools and new agricultural techniques caused yields to rise from 3:1 to nearly 8:1 and in some fertile regions even higher. Another factor in the rise of agricultural yields was Europe's climate, which was becoming warmer in the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries. As a result of both climate change and new agricultural tools and techniques, food supplies increased so that Western Europe would go through the majority of the twelfth century without experiencing a major famine.

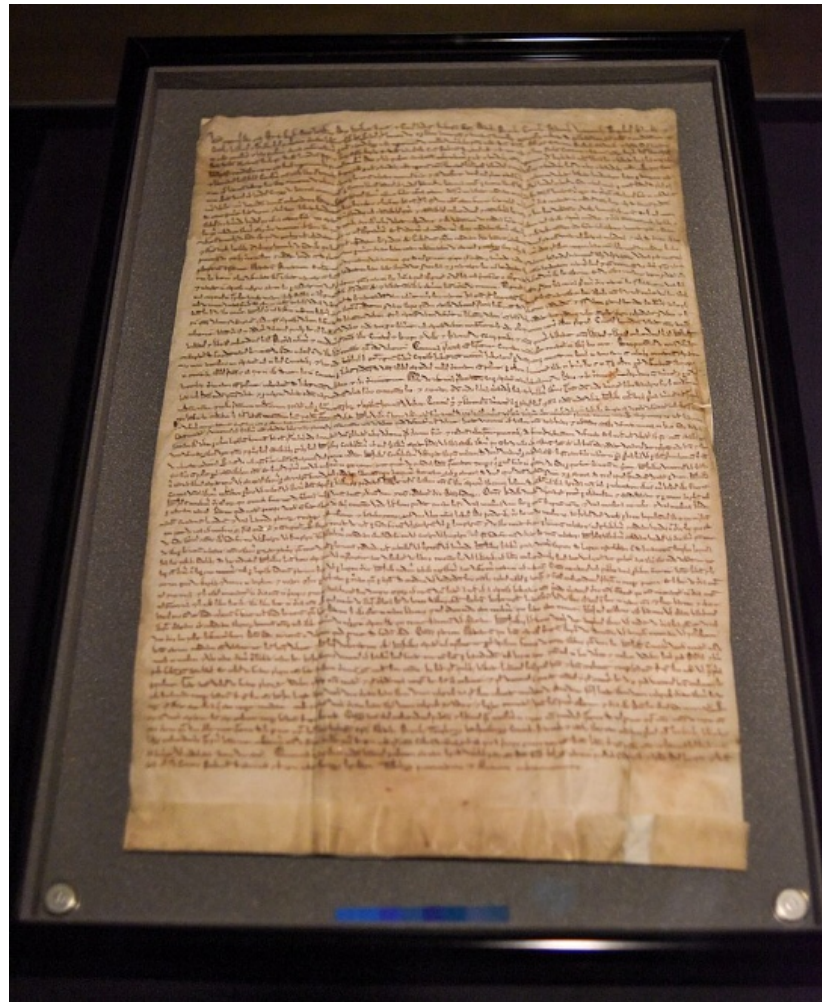


11.5 *Medieval Peasant Meal*, *Politiques et économiques*, 15th century Paris.^v

In the years between 1203 and 1214, the French King, Philip Augustus managed to dispossess the English king of almost all of his territory held in France. He was also increasingly successful in using a set of recognized laws to enhance his legitimacy. He made sure that he had a strong legal case drawn up by expert lawyers before he dispossessed England's King John. Likewise, he created a royal court that was a court of final appeal—and that meant that, even in parts of the

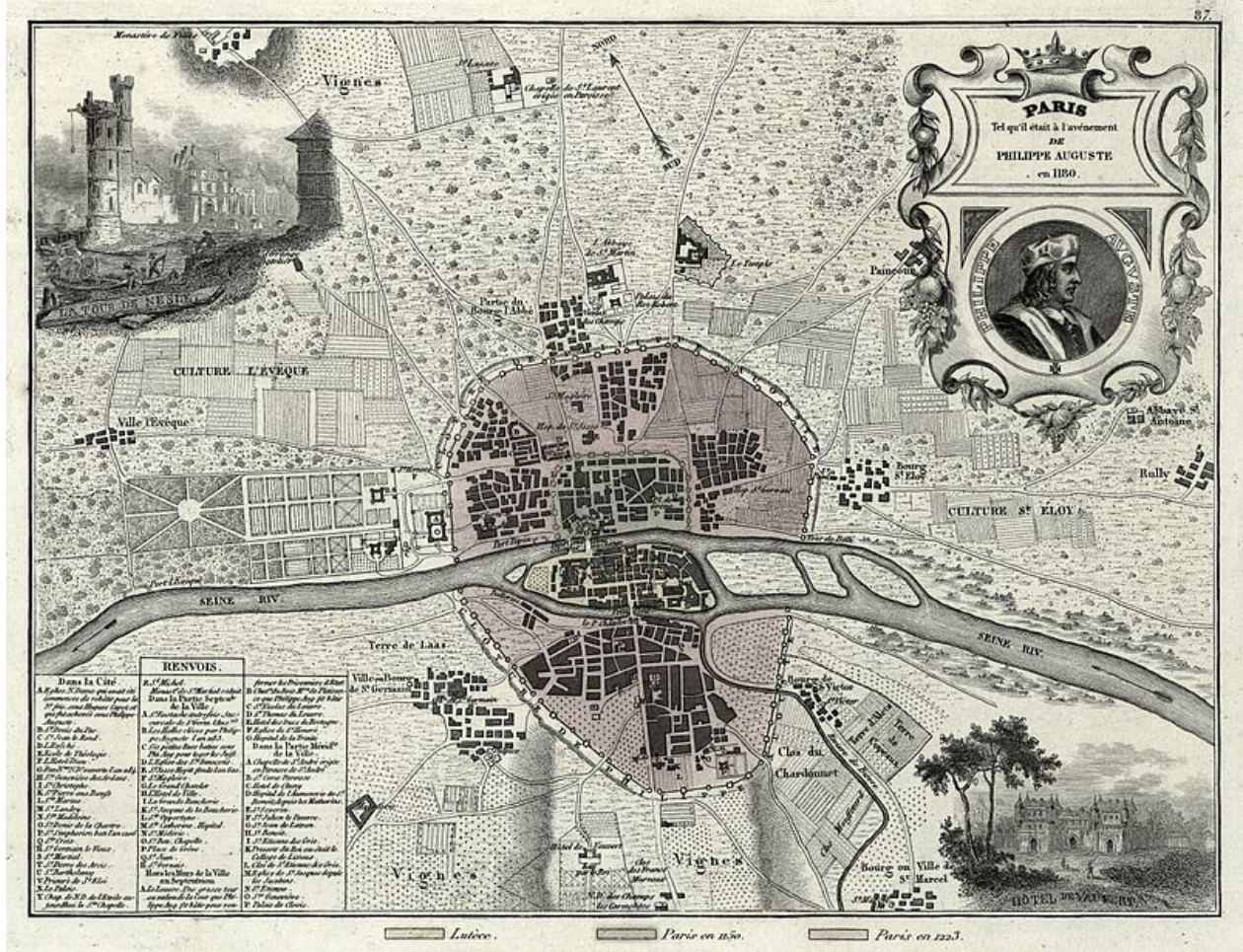
kingdom where great lords exercised their own justice, the king had increasing authority. As the Capetian kings gained stronger control over French territories a more sophisticated and accurate royal budget also developed.

When England's King John (r. 1199 – 1216) lost to Philip Augustus, his outraged nobles rebelled, resulting in a civil war from 1215 to 1217. One temporary treaty of this civil war, a treaty known as Magna Carta (signed in 1215), would have a much further-reaching impact than anyone who had drafted it could have foreseen. One particular provision of Magna Carta was that if the king wanted to raise new taxes on the people of England, then he needed to get the consent of the community of the realm by convening a council. The convening of such councils, known as parliaments, would come to be systematized over the course of the thirteenth century, until, by the reign of Edward I (r. 1272 – 1307), they would have representatives from most regions of England and would vote on whether to grant taxes to the king. The Magna Carta was a landmark instrument that influenced states and governments for centuries. It was the basis of law and the standard to which governments and princes were held.



11.6 1217 Hereford Cathedral's edition of the *Magna Carta*.^{vi}

Toward the end of the twelfth century, Philip Augustus, as king of France, began promoting Paris as the capital city. He paved streets and enclosed it with protective walls. In many areas towns began to grow and take on more importance as social units. The Ile-de-France area, with Paris as its center, was the royal domain under direct control of the French kings. The rest of France was still under the dominion of various feudal lords. By heredity, marriage, conquest, and purchase, the Ile-de-France had grown into the nucleus of the future French nation. It was about 100 miles across and included the cathedral towns of Amiens, Beauvais, Rheims, Bourges, Rouen and Chartres.



11.7 Vuillemin and Migeon, Map of Paris, 1180.^{vii}

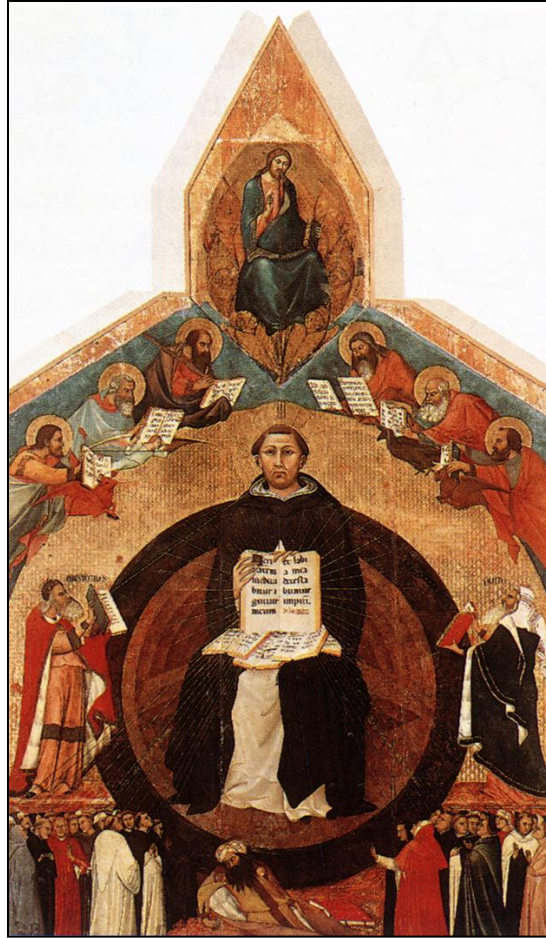
In 1150 a major university grew around the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris and it attracted well known teachers such as Abelard, Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura. Jacques de Vitry, (c. 1170–1240) wrote extensively about the immoral life led by students at the university in Paris. Most of them were very young, were away from home for the first time, and were without supervision. He accused them of lewd behavior, neglecting their studies, and wasting their time.^{viii} The great thinkers that taught in the university at Paris were changing the way Europeans thought and learned.

We generally call the movement to reconcile Christian theology with human reason through the use of logic **scholasticism**. As more and more works of ancient Greek and Muslim philosophy became available to Western European Christians, the question of how to understand the world acquired more urgency. The philosophers of the ancient Greek and Muslim worlds were known to have produced much useful knowledge. But they were not Christians. How were Christians to understand the world? Should they look for divine revelation as it appeared in the Bible? Or should they find it through the human reason of philosophers? These questions are reminiscent of similar questions taking place in the Islamic world, when thinkers such as al-Ghazali questioned how useful the tools of logic and philosophy were in understanding the Quran.



11.8 Meeting of doctors at University of Paris, 16th century, ^{ix}

This controversy had raged since at least the twelfth century, when certain devout monks had said, “Whoever seeks to make Aristotle a Christian makes himself a heretic.” Out of this controversy, medieval Europe produced its greatest thinker, St. Thomas Aquinas (1224 – 1274). St. Thomas was a Dominican friar. Friars were those churchmen who, like monks, took vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. Instead of living in isolated monasteries, though, friars spent much of their time preaching to laypeople in Europe’s growing towns and cities. These friars, whose two major groups were the Franciscans and Dominicans, had schools in most major universities of Western Europe by the early thirteenth century. Aquinas, a philosopher in the Dominican school of the University of Paris, had argued that human reason and divine revelation were in perfect harmony. He did so based on the techniques of the disputed question. He would raise a point, raise its objection, then provide an answer, and this answer would always be based on a logical argument. Aquinas was only part of a larger movement in the universities of Western Europe. See image 11.9.



11.9 Lippo Memmi, *Triumph of St Thomas Aquinas*, 1340.^x

Under the peaceful reign of the Capetian Kings, artists crystallized medieval architecture into what we call the Gothic style. Generally the Gothic period is considered to be between 1150 and 1450, although in some areas it began later and lasted until the 1650's. The term Gothic has nothing to do with the Goths. Italian writers of the 15th and 16th centuries called art of the Middle Ages "maniera die Goti" because they considered all art from the fall of Rome to their own time as crude and barbaric or "Gothic". Scholars of the 18th and 19th centuries saw an anti-classical style expressive of native genius, hence the change from derogatory reference to one of respect.

The period not only saw successes in the field of speculative philosophy and theology, but also in the practical application of science. The master masons who designed Western Europe's castles and cathedral churches built hundreds of soaring cathedrals that would be the tallest buildings in Europe until the nineteenth century. These cathedrals were in many ways made possible by the prosperity of Europe's towns, whose governing councils often financed the construction of these magnificent churches. Within a single generation Gothic cathedrals rose in St. Denis, Chartres, Paris, Laon, Noyon, and Canterbury under the patronage of kings, nobles and the urban middle class. The Gothic cathedral was the center of the medieval town. Cathedral is a term used to denote the seat, or throne of a bishop. So a cathedral has more prestige than a simple church or chapel. Whereas a monastery church may rise from an empty plain or on top of a secluded hill, the Gothic cathedral is built to soar above the rooftops and gables of a city. Often houses and businesses were built against the walls of the cathedral itself. Cities vied for prestige as they sought to produce bigger and grander cathedrals than their neighbors.

Societal changes occurred spurred the growth of large cathedrals in cities all over Europe, but especially in France. Patronage moved to lay and ecclesiastical courts. Wealth moved from landed nobility to manufacturers and merchants in

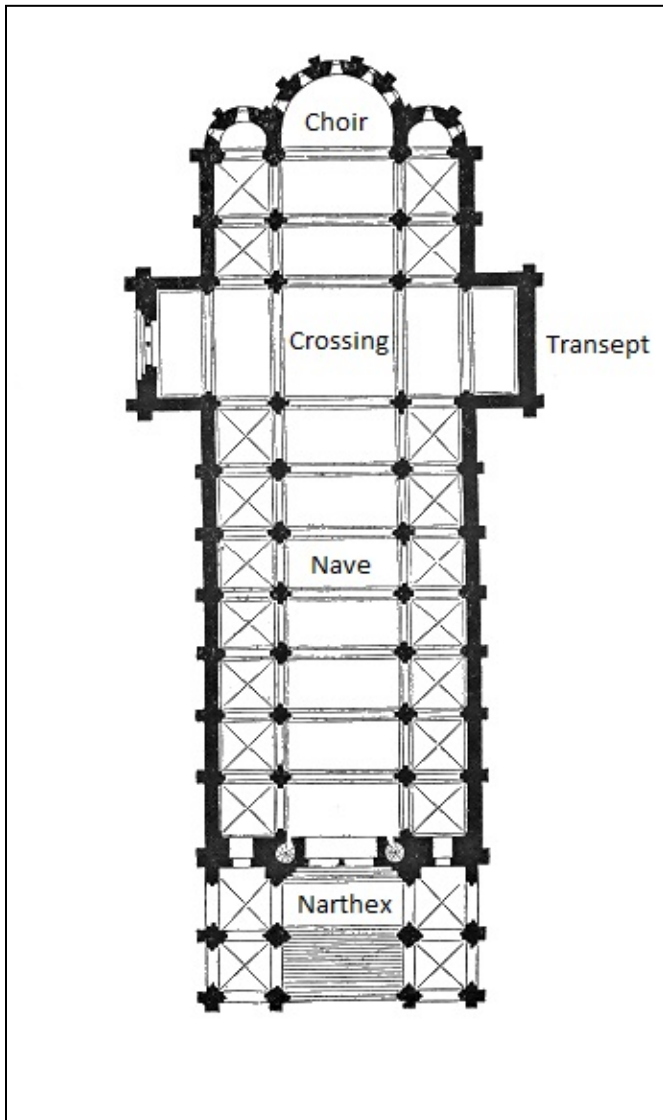
the city. Community pride as well as growing wealth allowed Gothic cities to cooperate in the erection of these soaring stone buildings.

To begin a discussion of what makes a cathedral “gothic”, let’s look at the first building that has all of the basic characteristics: That distinction belongs to the Cathedral of St. Denis which is in the suburbs of Paris.

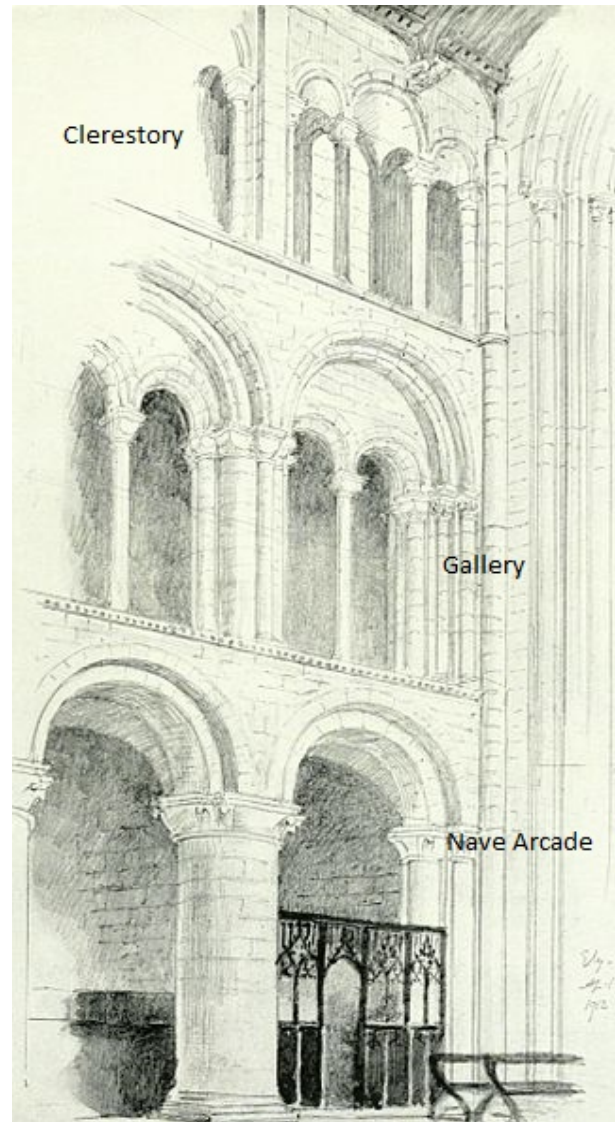


11.10 Jean Fouquet, *View of Paris with St. Denis*, 1455.^{xi}

Sometimes we call St. Denis the prototype of gothic cathedrals. It was originally a monastery under the direct patronage of the French kings and was the royal burial place. In fact today you can walk down into the crypt of St. Denis and see the tombs of most of the kings of France. St. Denis was important partly because Charlemagne had been crowned there in 754 CE, and the royal regalia (crown, tunic, sword, spurs, and banner) were there. Between the years 1130 and 1140 the man responsible for St. Denis was Abbot Suger. He was a poor orphan who had been given to the monks at the abbey at about the age of 9 and raised by them. He was educated at the Abbey alongside the future King Louis VII, and when the king left on the second Crusade he left Suger as Regent of the kingdom. Suger was very successful in preserving the stability and solvency of the realm and he was willing to experiment with innovative techniques. When he became abbot, he evaluated the old Romanesque church to see what needed to be done to repair it. As regent he gathered an international assemblage of masons, carvers, metal-workers, mosaicists, jewelers, enamel workers, and he gave lavish commissions. His changes were so innovative that other architects and masons came to see what he had done and took ideas with them to their own building projects. We can best see the changes implemented by Suger by comparing St. Denis to older Romanesque churches. Remember that the characteristics of Romanesque churches include a plan in the shape of a cross with a transept, thick stone walls, and rounded arches.



11.11 The parts of a Romanesque basilica style church. ^{xii}



11.12 The elevation of a Romanesque church. ^{xiii}

As we discuss churches of this era, it will be easier to refer to the proper names of the building sections. See image 11.11 as an example of a basilica church. It also has aisles on either side of the nave. See image 11.12 as an example of the elevation, or interior walls of a Romanesque church. The bottom row is the nave arcade, the second level is the gallery, and the top layer is the clerestory. See image 11.13 which is an example of the elevation of the abbey church at Mont St Michel. Notice that the walls are thick and because of that, the windows are small. The vaults of the nave are rounded and are supported by heavy pillars.



11.13 *Abbey Church of Mont St. Michel* has rounded arches, heavy support columns and tiny windows.^{xiv}

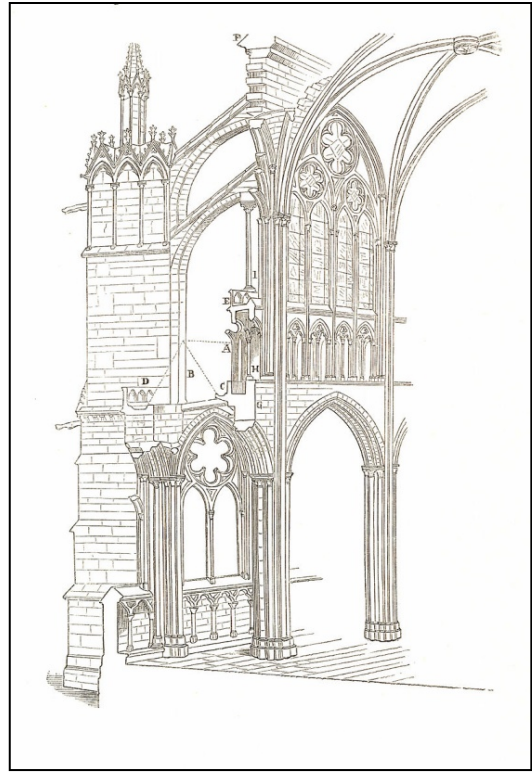


11.14 *Romanesque Church at Autun*.^{xv}

When Abbot Suger rebuilt the church at St. Denis he made major changes. First he added an ambulatory in the choir and seven radiating chapels. He chose to use pointed arches instead of round arches because the pointed arch has two keystones, rather than one. This point support system allowed him to open the interior space of the ambulatory so it was more spacious and it also allows the vaults to take on different shapes. He also used ribbed vaults to lighten the weight of the heavy vaults. See the ribbed vaults in image 11.15. These innovations enabled him to replace some of the thick stone walls with glass windows that also let in more light. The drawing of the elevation of one bay in St. Denis, image 11.16, makes it easier to see how the walls were supported by flying buttresses so that windows could be enlarged.



11.15 Ambulatory behind the choir of St. Denis.^{xvi}



11.16 Drawing of one bay of St. Denis nave.^{xvii}

Suger's writings explain his theories of aesthetics and light. Through the colored light created by walls of stained glass, the interior of the church could be transformed into a heavenly city, a residence for God. The more light was present, the more God was present. God is light and space. The architectural structure was simply a means to create the spacial and lighting effects which would recreate the celestial light of heaven. Suger wrote that a mundane material would not be appropriate for the house of God. Many of his ideas about light and space come from the Bible. John 8:12 reads "Then spake Jesus again to them, saying, I am the light of the world, he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."^{xviii} Ephesians 5:14 says "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."^{xix} For Abbot Suger, the cathedral could be the abode of God, if it was removed from the darkness of the old Romanesque basilica and transformed with light and space.

The cathedral of St. Denis introduced many new elements to form the "gothic style". These are the basic elements that make a cathedral gothic:

- Pointed arches to allow more varied configurations in the vaults, choir, transept and nave and aisles
- Ribbed vaults to remove the weight from the ceiling and lessen the pressure pushing down to the ground. This also enabled beautiful designs to be created in the vaults.
- Walls of stained glass to let in the light, create a heavenly space, and tell stories. This not only let in more light, but was a way to control the color of the light.
- Flying buttresses to add support to the outer walls without requiring thick walls of stone
- Ornate, sculptured portals that told biblical stories that created a Bible in stone for the masses.
- Clustered colonnettes were used as interior supports instead of heavy wood or stone pillars.
- A westwork or west façade. This had been added during Carolingian times to provide a place for the ruler to sit during church.
 - The westwork was usually divided into three parts to represent the trinity and was topped by two towers
 - The westwork also had a rose window to represent the all-seeing eye of God, the circular universe of Plato, and Mary the Rose.

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

Use this to reference information in this text.

Betts, Kristine. "Gothic Style-Introduction to the Gothic Age." Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

ⁱZigeuner, CC By SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_France_1180-de.svg#/media/File:Map_France_1180-fr.svg

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^{vii} David Rumsey Historical Map Collection, Public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vuillemin_and_Migeon,_Paris_in_1180,_1869_-_David_Rumsey.jpg

^{viii} <https://sourcebooks/fordham.edu/source/vitry1.asp>

^{ix} Etienne Colaud, BNF Francais, from the Chants royaux manuscript. Public domain.

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^x Photo by Web Gallery of Art, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lippo_Memmi_-_Triumph_of_St_Thomas_Aquinas_-_WGA15020.jpg

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^{xii} Text added By Kristine Betts to image from wikimedia. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plan.cathedrale.Autun.png>

^{xiii} Jackson, Thomas Graham, Byzantine and Romanesque Architecture, 1913. Online book posted by Flickr The Commons.

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Byzantine_and_Romanesque_architecture_\(1913\)_14595804018.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Byzantine_and_Romanesque_architecture_(1913)_14595804018.jpg)

^{xiv} Photo by Jorge Lascar, CC By 2.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_nave_of_the_abbey_church_-_Mont_St_Michel_\(32106381443\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_nave_of_the_abbey_church_-_Mont_St_Michel_(32106381443).jpg)

^{xv} Photo by Kathy J. Hartman, CC BY-NC-4.0 License.

^{xvi} Photo By Pierre Poschadel, CC BY-SA 3.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint-Denis_\(93\),_basilique_Saint-Denis,_d%C3%A9ambulatoire_3.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Saint-Denis_(93),_basilique_Saint-Denis,_d%C3%A9ambulatoire_3.jpg)

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^{xviii} King James Version, New Testament

^{xix} Ibid.

THE CATHEDRAL OF CHARTRES

One of the most magnificent of Gothic cathedrals and the earliest truly Gothic cathedral is located in Chartres a small commercial town about 56 miles southwest of Paris. The original cathedral was built in the 4th century, but when Charles the Bald, grandson of Charlemagne, presented Chartres with “the tunic of the Virgin” the town began to draw huge crowds for the feast of the Virgin. The relic was supposed to have been worn by the Virgin Mary when she gave birth to Christ. In 1194 the existing Romanesque church was almost totally destroyed by a huge fire. The story is told of the monks who quickly grabbed the relic and took it into the crypt beneath the church while the fire raged. After three days they were able to find their way out of the building. The townsfolk believed that the relic and the westwork had been saved by divine design, so they determined to build another church at the same site. The site was on a hill in the city, which, like Acropolis in Athens causes the viewer to look up to it.



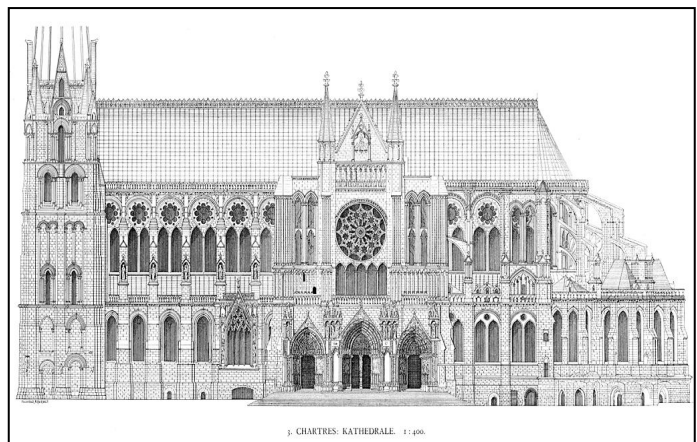
11.17 Chartres- Tunic of the Virgin Reliquary.ⁱ



11.18 Chartres Cathedral from the Eure River.ⁱⁱ



11.19 Chartres Cathedral from the south.ⁱⁱⁱ

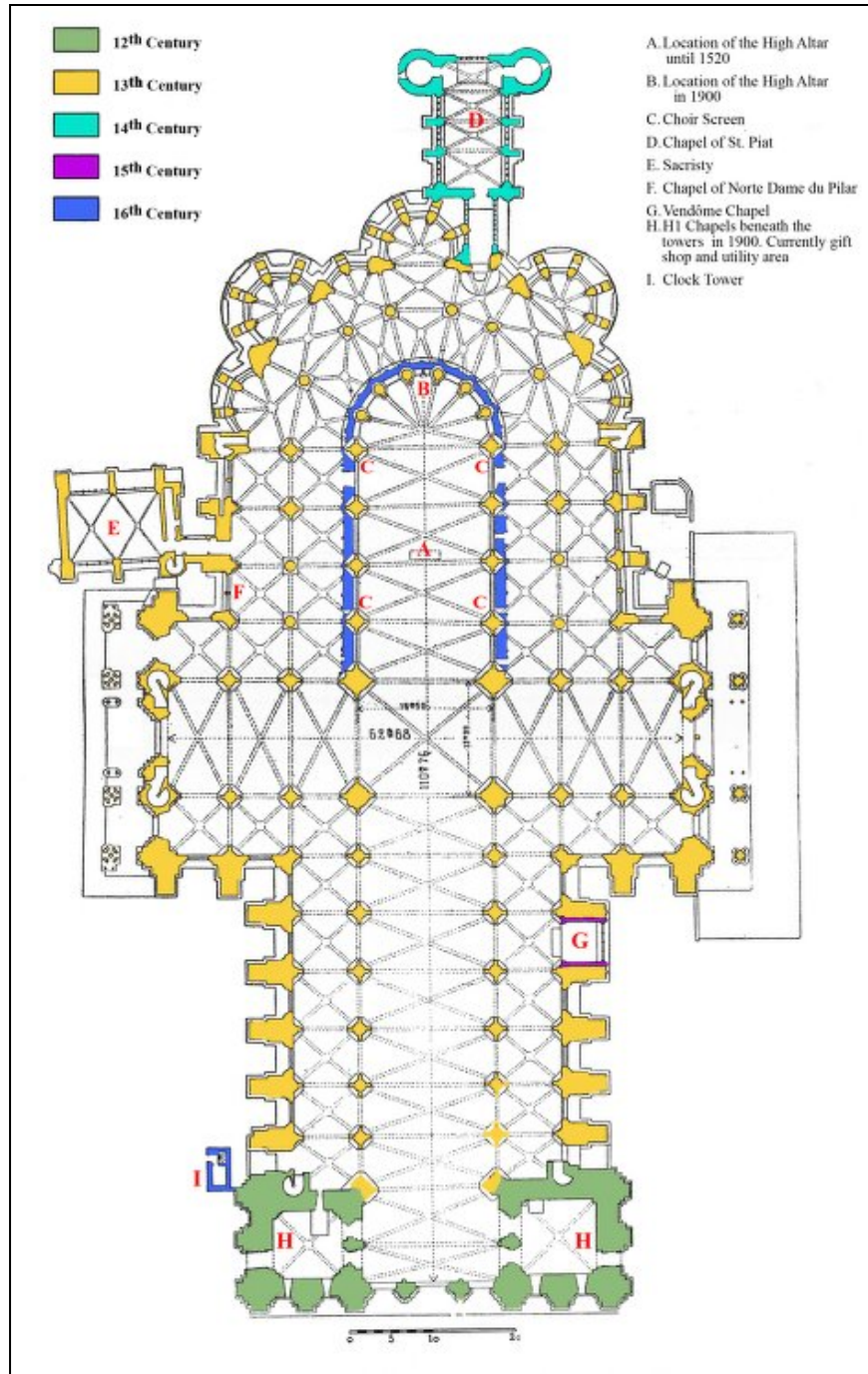


11.20 Chartres, drawing of south external view.^{iv}



11.21 Chartres, Romanesque westwork.^v

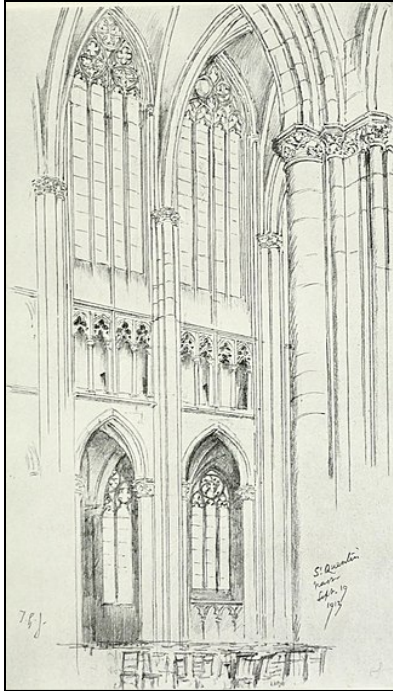
The westwork is nearly all Romanesque with rounded arches, simple entrance doors, and a few pieces of stained glass. The rest of the cathedral was rebuilt in the new Gothic style that architects had seen in St. Denis. So Chartres is the first Gothic cathedral to be built almost entirely as a new Gothic building. The present cathedral was built from the 12th to the 16th century. The two uneven towers are the result of a fire in 1506 that destroyed the north tower. A new “flamboyant” tower (on the left in image 12.21) was built to replace it. Chartres is a typical basilica style cathedral with a transept crossing the nave about midway, a large choir with radiating chapels, and piers along the arcade consisting of a strong central column with four attached slender colonnettes. See image 12.22 with a key to the floor plan in 1900.



12.22 Plan of Chartres Cathedral in 1900, Anonymous.^{vi}

Internal Characteristics of Chartres

The nave arcade is built with tall pointed arches on the bottom, a narrow triforium in the middle, and a tall clerestory at the top consisting of two lancet windows unified by a rose window at the top. This type of configuration allowed the walls to have more windows and less stone. The pointed arches and the height of the windows draw the eyes upward to the heavens.



11.23 Drawing of a Gothic elevation.^{vii}



11.24 Elevation of Chartres, nave arcade.^{viii}

The vaults of Chartres are 122 feet high and 53 feet wide. The builders used ribbed vaults to lighten the weight of the stone between the ribs and lessen the thrust pushing down the walls.



11.25 Ribbed Vaults^{ix}

The use of pointed arches and point support, as we saw in St. Denis, allowed for more complicated plans where the choir meets the ambulatory, the nave, and each of the radiating chapels. See image 12.26.



11.26 Point support and collonettes in the choir. ^x



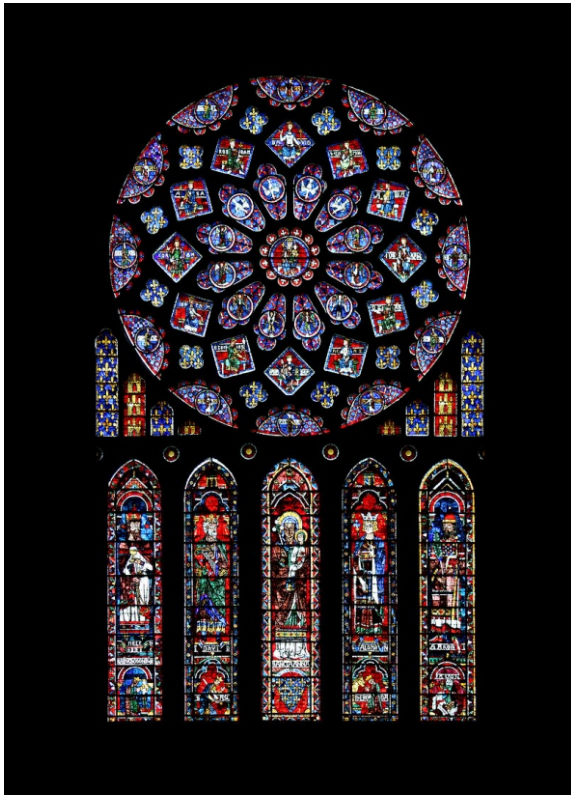
11.27 Chartres ribbed vaults in the nave. ^{xi}

The Cathedral of Chartres has more than 2,000 windows that add up to 7 acres of glass. Stained glass of the 12th century was a very time consuming process. Windows were made by the glass makers' guild and paid for by various groups or individuals. We used to think that the images of cobblers, tanners, and shoemakers were evidence that those guilds donated the windows, but the exorbitant cost of the windows likely prohibited that.

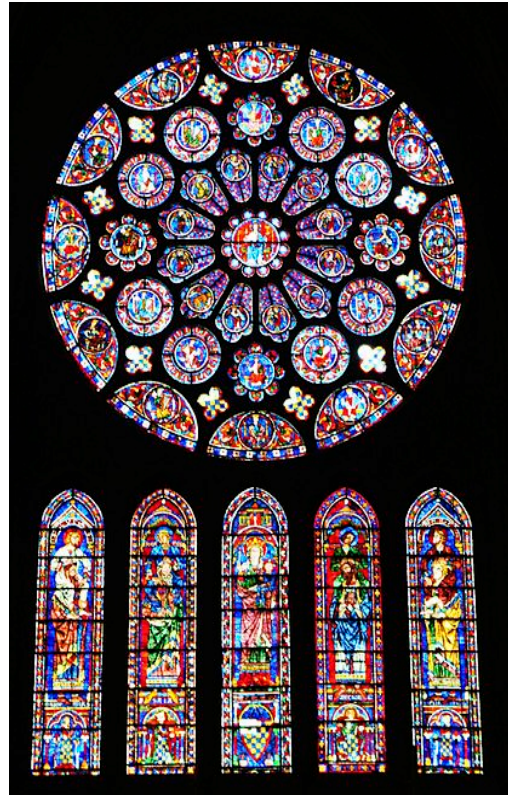


11.28 Chartres window: Shoemakers at work. ^{xii}

Patrons of the cathedral were princes and kings and they often donated windows. For instance, the North Rose was made in 1223-1226 was donated by Blanche of Castille who was Spanish. See image 12.29 and note the castles included in the lower corners surrounding the rose. These are a combination of Spanish and French royal castles. Not to be outdone, Blanche's rival, the family of the Count of Dreux, see image 12.30, also donated a rose window exactly opposite her rose window on the south wall. So now they will stare at each other across the transept forever.



11.29 Rose window, north, donated by Blanche of Castille. ^{xiii}

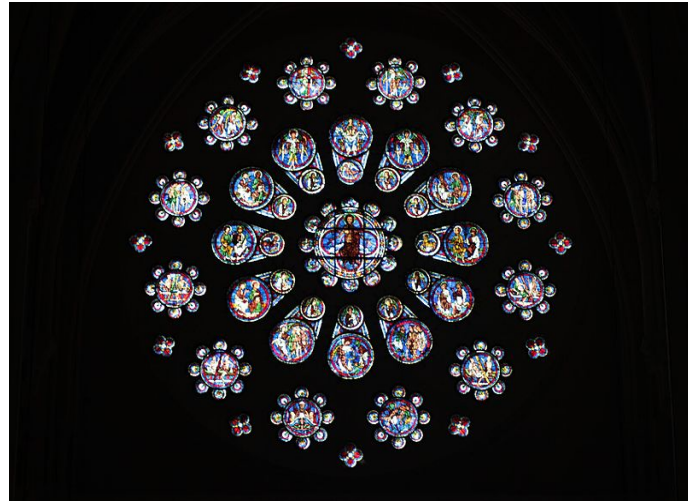


11.30 Rose window, south, donated by Count of Dreux. ^{xiv}

Rose windows are supported by stone tracery which allows the light to enter through intricate patterns. Compare the interior and exterior views of the West Rose in images 12.31 and 12.32.

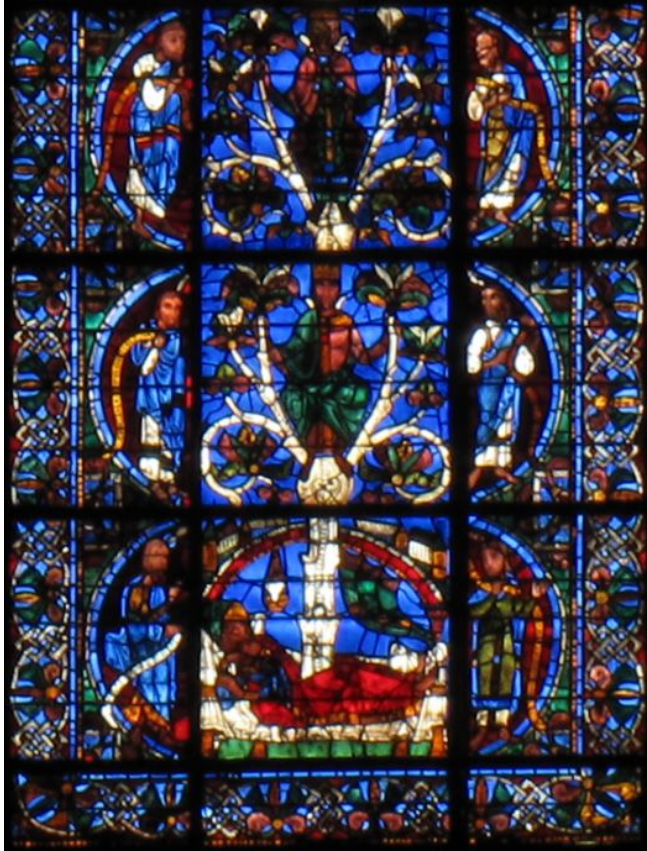


11.31 West Rose, exterior view. ^{xv}

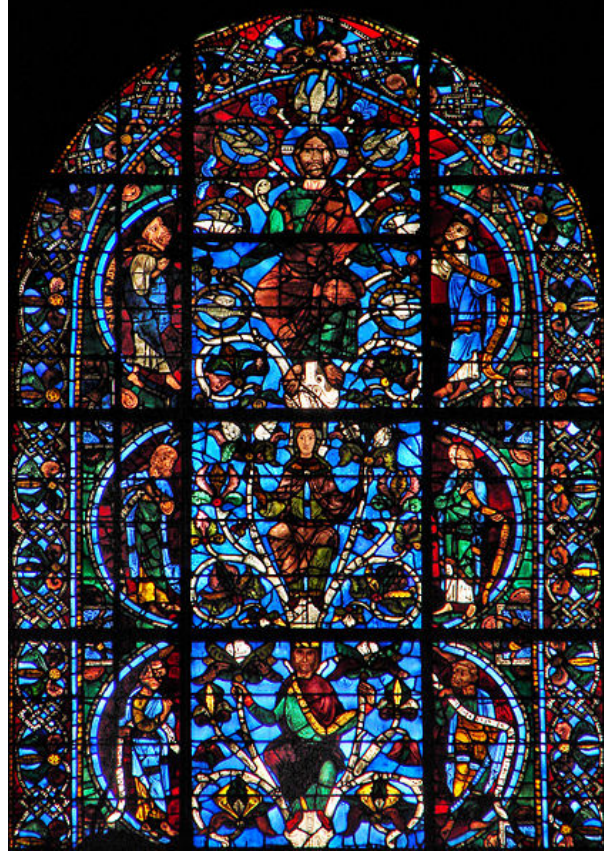


11.32 West Rose, interior view. ^{xvi}

Most of the windows of Chartres were installed in the early 13th century. They tell stories of the Old and New Testament to acquaint the illiterate peasants with the scriptures and were literally glass Bibles. For instance, the Tree of Jesse explained the genealogy of Christ. On the bottom we see Jesse, lying on a couch, with a large tree growing from his body. Each succeeding branch of the tree is another generation of the family tree, until we see Mary and then Christ at the top. See image 12.33 and 12.34.



11.33 Jesse Tree, family of Christ, bottom section.^{xvii}

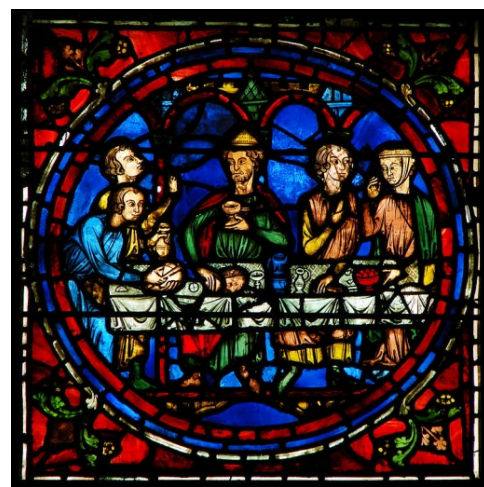


11.34 Jesse Tree, top section, Mary and Christ.^{xviii}

Many of the stories and parables from the Bible are included in the windows. Image 11.35 and 11.36 show the story of the Good Samaritan and the Marriage of Cana.

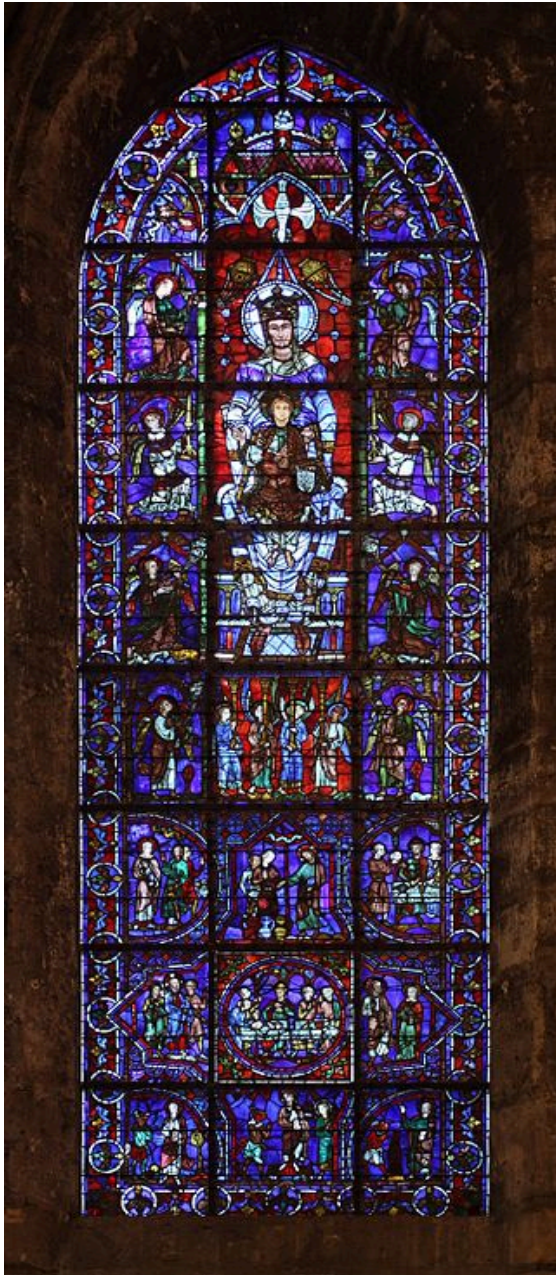


11.35 Christ telling the Good Samaritan parable.^{xix}



11.36 The Marriage at Cana.^{xx}

The oldest window in Chartres is the Notre Dame de la Belle Verriere which survived the fire of 1194 with minimal damage. It was moved to the south end of the building when it was rebuilt and was a symbol to the people of Chartres that the Virgin Mary had protected it and therefore wanted the church to be rebuilt. It has 24 sections that tell the story of the temptation of Christ, his first miracle at Cana, and several views of Mary and Christ enthroned. See image 11.37 and image 11.38



11.37 *La Belle Verriere, Madonna of the Beautiful Window* ^{xxi} 11.38 *La Belle Verriere, detail of Christ on Mary's lap.* ^{xxii}

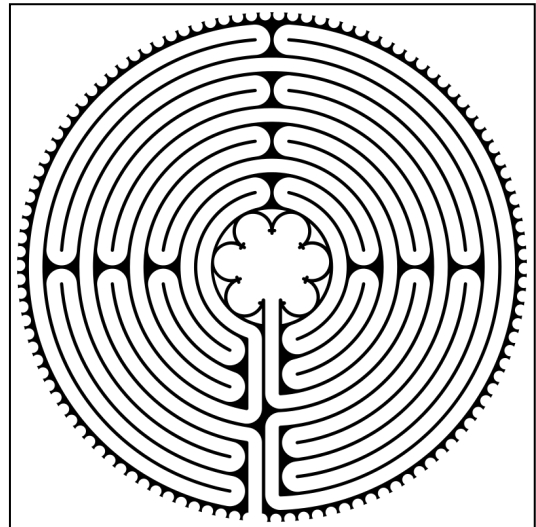
One of the great treasures of Chartres is the labyrinth built into the floor of the nave. The oldest existing labyrinth in the world is in Sardinia and was probably built about 2500 CE, but many medieval churches added labyrinths to their areas of worship. The circumference of the labyrinth at Chartres is just over 42 feet, and the path is 16" wide. A pilgrim walking the path travels 861.5 feet and it was the largest labyrinth made in the Middle Ages. Labyrinths are replete with symbolism. Today, as in the twelfth century, visitors walk the eleven concentric circles toward the six petaled rosette in the center, which could symbolize the six days of creation. The rosette may be a symbol of Mary, but it could also relate to Aphrodite and Isis. The 28 lunation's on the outside of each quadrant relate to the cycles of the moon. It is likely that the labyrinth was inspired by the Knights Templar and the free masons, who were involved in the building of the cathedral. The path consists of three parts: walking in to the labyrinth is a time to let go and purge oneself, a release. Arriving in the center is a time to

receive, to reconnect with your spiritual self, to find illumination and clarity. The walk out of the labyrinth is a time to resolve to return a better person and to be unified with God and self.

From the 17th century on, the labyrinth was covered with chairs in an effort to hide it. Some thought that it was associated with the pagans and wanted to pretend it was not there. Many other cathedrals that had labyrinths removed them from their naves during this time. The depth of the black stone that was used to create this labyrinth was installed so deep beneath the nave that removing it would have damaged the floor, so it was determined to cover it with chairs instead. It was only in the 1990s that a movement was begun to allow pilgrims to again walk its path. ^{xxiii}



11.39 Walking the labyrinth at Chartres. ^{xxiv}



11.40 Pattern of the labyrinth at Chartres. ^{xxv}

External Characteristics of Chartres Cathedral

As was the case with Gothic cathedrals, Chartres had a westwork. See image 12.21. However, remember that there is a small section of the westwork at Chartres that retains some Romanesque features because it was leftover from the before the 1194 fire. The lancet windows are more rounded than pointed, the doors are nearly flat, and the ornamentation is fairly simple. As the decades passed the builders of Chartres added more complicated sculpture courses on the porches to the entrance doors on the north and south elevations. Sculpture became more natural, more human, and less attached to the pillars or the walls. Compare image 12.41 and 12.42 to see the changes that occurred in exterior sculpture. Notice that the Jamb columns of the west façade, commonly called the Royal portal, are abnormally tall, straight, and thin and their feet point down, much like the feet of the characters in Byzantine paintings. Note the more rounded and fleshy forms of the martyrs of the south portal. The statue of St. Theodore on the left of the group has a slight **contrapposto** weight shift and his right knee bends as though he is ready to step down and leave on a crusade. The folds of the hem of his tunic are deep and represent real fabric that could move in the breeze. The fabric worn by the other royalty is static and almost sticks to the bodies of the wearers.

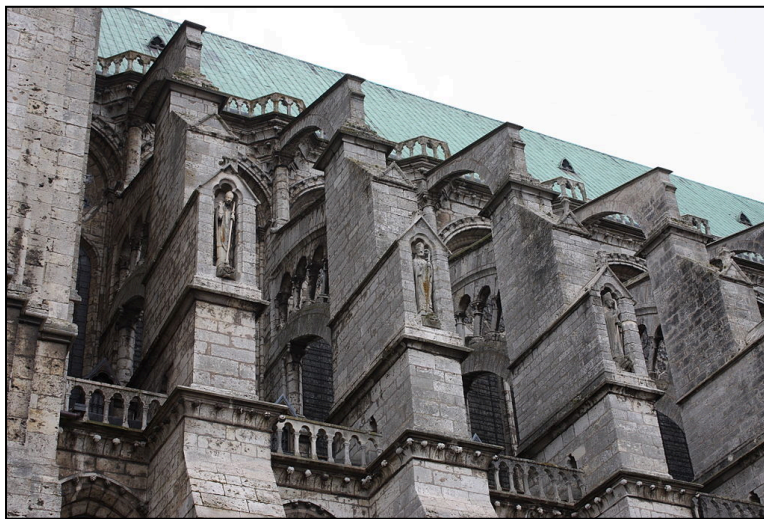


11.41 *Jamb columns, west façade, 1145-1170.*^{xxvi}



11.42 *South portal martyrs, 1215-1220*^{xxvii}

Flying buttresses were an integral part of the support system of the cathedral of Chartres. Circular flying buttresses were added to the walls on the exterior of the nave. See image 12.43. Compare these nave buttresses to the thinner and longer buttresses built to support the walls of the choir and ambulatory on the east end. By the time the builders began working on the east end of the cathedral, newer, thinner buttressing was being tested and proven save in other places, so they built Chartres with the thinner walls and the more delicate buttresses. These were attached to the walls at the point where the greatest thrust began pushing downward protecting the walls from collapse, and adding a beautiful element to the exterior of the building.



12.43 *Circular flying buttresses along the nave at Chartres.*^{xxviii}



11.44 *Flying buttresses of the choir at the east end of the cathedral of Chartres.*^{xxix}

Due to their Romanesque origin, the portals on the west end of the cathedral were shallow, but they tell a story that is one of the most unified in all of the Gothic cathedrals. The sculptures found in each of the three portals tell the story of Christ. On the left is Christ before he was born with angels in the lintel at the bottom and the earthly prophets below, not able to communicate well with Christ. In the door on the right is the story of Mary and her role in bringing Christ to earth. We see the annunciation to Mary that she is expecting a child, Mary and her cousin Elizabeth talking about the coming birth of Jesus and John, Mary in the stable with the swaddled child above her, and Mary with the Christ child sitting on her lap. She is now the throne of wisdom, and he is wisdom. See image 11.45 which is a detail of the central portal and its tympanum above it which show Christ at the Second Coming, surrounded by his apostles Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and the twelve apostles in the lintel below. See figure 11.41 for a detail of the kings and queens on the jamb columns below these doors.



11.45 *West portal showing the life of Christ in the sculptures above the doors.*^{xxx}



11.46 West portal, detail of central tympanum. ^{xxx1}



11.47 Royal portal, right bay. ^{xxxii}

The right bay of the west portal shows each of the liberal arts personified as a female character and a person who excelled in that art at work. See Aristotle in 12.48 and Pythagoras in 11.49. If you look you can see: Pythagoras for music, Boethius for arithmetic, Cicero for rhetoric, Archimedes or Euclid for geometry, Aristotle for philosophy, Ptolemy for astronomy, and Donatus for grammar. These seven liberal arts were the topics studied in the famous Cathedral of Chartres.



11.48 Detail of Aristotle.^{xxxiii}

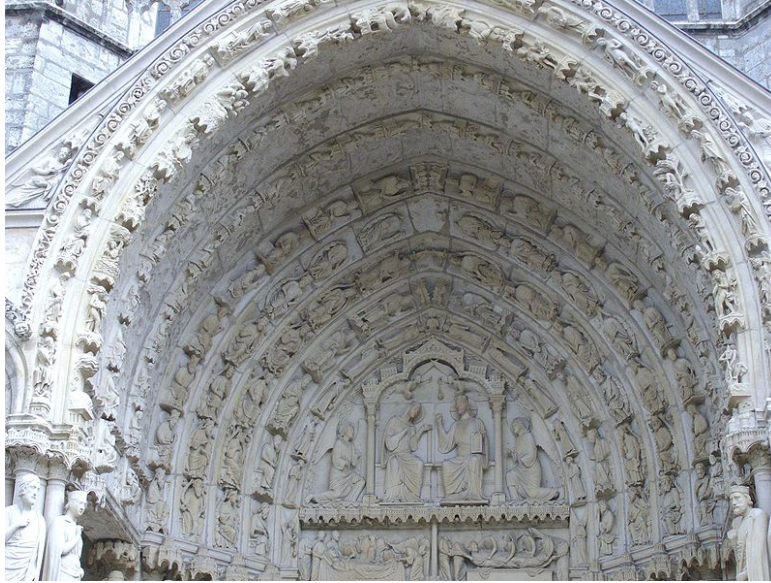


11.49 Detail of Pythagoras.^{xxxiv}

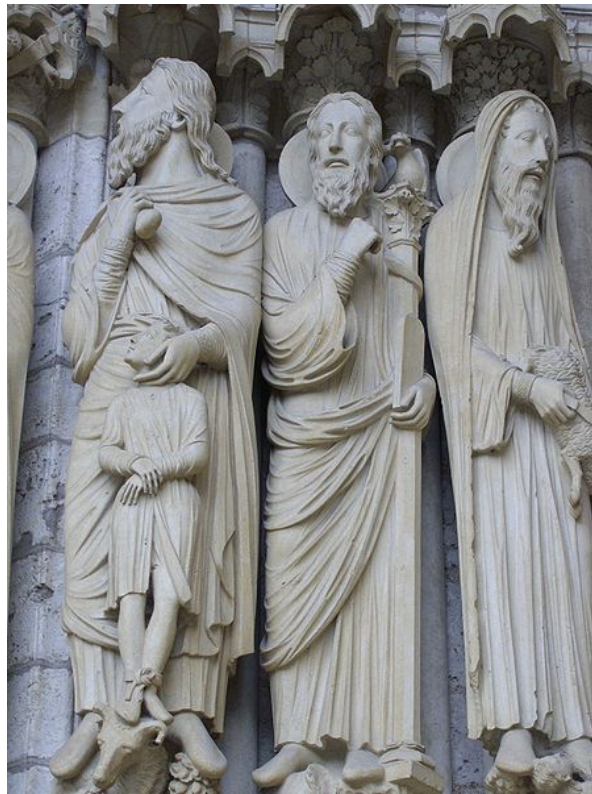
By contrast, look at the north portal at Chartres. Notice how deep the carving is and how many layers there are in the archivolts. There are two or three rows of archivolts in the doors of the west façade, and there are eight layers in the archivolts of the north portal. These deep passages are filled with stories that the visitor would have “read” as they passed into the cathedral.



11.50 Chartres, North Portal.^{xxxv}



11.51 Chartres, North Portal detail ^{xxxvi}



11.52 Chartres, North Portal detail, Abraham. ^{xxxvii}

Image 11.52 shows a close detail of the prophet Abraham holding his son Isaac and clutching the sacrificial knife in his right hand. Isaac is bound hand and foot, and Abraham stands on the ram that will become the sacrifice once the father has shown his willingness to obey God's commandment to offer his son. Abraham looks upward to where the voice of God warns him not to harm the boy, and he gently cradles his son's chin in a protective, fatherly gesture.

In addition to the role the cathedral played in religious life, it was also the center of economic and political life. Within the walls of the cathedral on any given market day it was possible to find money changers, merchants selling wine, meat,

fuel, or cloth. Of course the church charged a tax to those who sold there, but the both parties benefited from the arrangement. The cathedral was a place to nurse the sick and a place where a traveler could find shelter from the sun and the storms. The floor is slightly slanted to allow water to be used to wash away the refuse. Even though this was a cathedral, it was also a pilgrimage church because of the tunic of the Virgin. So the additional doors added to the north and south transept allowed foot traffic to pass through easily. The nave was also used for political events, town meetings, musical performance, and trials. In short, a Gothic cathedral afforded space to conduct all of the business a town might have. Chartres was the first fully Gothic cathedral built in the new style, and just as visitors had “copied” the innovations at St. Denis, those who came to Chartres learned new things and took them home to their cathedrals that were being built. Merchants would also set up booths outside, on the warmer south side of the cathedral, just as they do today for the Christmas markets! The porch on this side is considerably wider; the courts of Justice and morality/mystery plays were performed outside. Imagine someone placed on trial standing in this place, with the saints who died for the faith directly overhead. We can imagine swearing to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We would not be holding our hands on a Bible but pointing to those figures that are “present” with us!

Some thoughts were taken from:

Berger, Eugene; Israel, George; Miller, Charlotte; Parkinson, Brian; Reeves, Andrew; and Williams, Nadejda, "World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500" (2016). History Open Textbooks. 2.

<https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/history-textbooks/2>

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Betts, Kristine. “Gothic-The Cathedral of Chartres” Humanities: New Meaning from the Ancient World. Colorado Springs, CO: Pikes Peak Community College, 2020. CC BY-NC 4.0 License.

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[Chartres Cathedral 1](#)

[Chartres Cathedral 2](#)

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ⁱⁱⁱ Photo by MathKnight, CC BY-SA 3.0. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres-Cathedral.jpg>

^{iv} Drawing by G. Dehio, 1932, Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ChartresSouthDehioVonBezold.jpg>

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^{vi} Anonymous, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres-Cathedral-Floor_plan_1900.jpeg

^{vii} Jackson, Thomas Graham, Sir, 1915, Gothic architecture in France, England and Italy. Flickr's The Commons, no known restrictions.

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^{viii} BT, from German Wikipedia-Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Triforium_Chartres.jpg

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_Cathedral_Ambulatory_Vault_2007_08_31.jpg

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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_Cathedral_South_Aisle_View_into_Nave_2007_08_31.jpg

^{xi} Photo by MMensler CC BY-SA 3.0. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_Cath%C3%A9drale_\(2012.01\)_03.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_Cath%C3%A9drale_(2012.01)_03.jpg)

^{xii} Photo by JBThomas4, CC BY-SA 4.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_Bay_44_Good_Samaritan_Panel_02.jpg

^{xiii} Photo by Guillaume Piolle. Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_cath%C3%A9drale_-_rosace_nord.jpg

^{xiv} Loic LLH, Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cath%C3%A9drale_de_Chartres_-_Vitrail_Transept_Sud.jpg

^{xv} Photo by Guillaume Piolle, CC BY 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cath%C3%A9drale_de_Chartres_-_rosace_ouest_ext%C3%A9rieur.JPG

^{xvi} Photo by Micheletb, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vitrail_Chartres-rosace_143.jpg

^{xvii} Photo by Micheletb, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_49_-001.jpg

^{xviii} Photo by Vassil, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vitrail_Chartres_210209_18_brighter.jpg

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- ^{xix} Photo by JBThomas4, CC BY-SA 4.0-- South aisle bay 044.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christ_telling_the_Good_Samaritan_parable_to_a_couple_Pharisees.jpg
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- ^{xxi} Photo by Guillaume Piolle, public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_cath%C3%A9drale_-_ND_de_la_belle_verri%C3%A8re.JPG
- ^{xxii} Photo by Vassil, Public domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vitrail_Chartres_Notre-Dame_210209_1.jpg
- ^{xxiii} https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrWnXE7Z9Vd7i0ANAgPxQt.;_ylu=X3oDMTByZDNzZTI1BGNvbG8DZ3ExBHBvewMyBHZ0aWQDBHNIYwNzYw--?p=labyrinth+at+chartres+cathedral&fr=yhs-symantec-ext_onb&hspart=symantec&hsimp=yhs-ext_onb#id=11&vid=d021b4e25fda3cc0d907b83902c2d029&action=view
- ^{xxiv} Photo by Marcimarc- Public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Labyrinthchartres.jpg>
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- ^{xxvi} Photo by Cancre, CC BY-SA 2.5. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cenral_tympanum_Chartres.jpg
- ^{xxvii} Photo by TTaylor CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_cathedral_023_martyrs_S_TTaylor.JPG
- ^{xxviii} Photo by Florestan, CC BY 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_cath%C3%A9drale_-_arcs-boutants_de_la_nef.JPG
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- ^{xxxii} Photo by Fab5669 CC BY-SA 4.0 [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_cath%C3%A9drale,_ext%C3%A9rieur_\(37\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_-_cath%C3%A9drale,_ext%C3%A9rieur_(37).jpg)
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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aristotle,_stone_carving,_Chartres_Cathedral_Wellcome_M0008873.jpg
- ^{xxxiv} Photo by Jean-Louis Lascoux, public domain. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pythagore-chartres.jpg>
- ^{xxxv} Photo by TTaylor, Public domain.
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres_cathedral_porch_of_BVM_N_TTaylor.JPG
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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cathedrale_nd_chartres_nord017.jpg
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https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cathedrale_nd_chartres_nord043.jpg

Chapter 12

Analysis and Reference

Documents

BASIC ELEMENTS OF ART

EXPRESSIVE CONTENT : The expressive content of a work of art is its total emotional and intellectual effect based on the relationship of the five following aspects of analysis to one another.

1. Subject matter
2. Organization of basic elements
3. Historical events and concerns
4. Associated values
5. Viewer's reaction

SUBJECT MATTER: This is also called Iconography . A statue of a young nude male will have a different meaning in different cultures, for example, Apollo in Classical Greece, David in the Renaissance. Subject matter also includes the symbolic meaning of the subject; for example, David was not merely the ancient king of Israel in Renaissance art, but was also a symbol of political freedom against tyranny.

BASIC ELEMENTS: The basic elements that an artist employs to create a work of art include color, light and shadow, line, texture of the medium, space and perspective and shape. The relationships of those elements to one another and to the work of art as a whole determine the formal organization of that work. The Basic Elements include

1. Color
2. Light and shadow
3. Line
4. Shape and form
5. Medium
6. Texture
7. Space

1. COLOR: Paintings may be monochromatic or polychromatic. A painting is termed **monochromatic** when colors derive from one primary color. A **polychromatic** painting includes several contrasting colors. In paintings, color can define form and organize space. It can direct the eye from one place to another by shifting the emphasis from one color mass to another. It can add to the sense of motion by expanding and contracting space, when dark colors are used to suggest contraction and light colors expansion. **Chiaroscuro** is the graduation of lights and darks to create three-dimensional forms.



Jan Van Eyck, Ghent Altarpiece, 1432, Oil on wood. Saint Bavo Cathedral, Public domain, MGA73bot21
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Genter_Altor.jpg

Monochromatic, polychromatic and chiaroscuro techniques may be observed in Jan Van Eyck's *Ghent Altarpiece*. The front, or cover, is painted in **monochrome** colors to resemble Gothic statues. When the cover is opened, we can see the bright **polychromatic** colors of the inside of the polyptych. The **chiaroscuro** shading of light and dark values is easily observed on the robes of the figures.

2. LIGHT and SHADOW: Light and shadow can create volume or three-dimensional forms and space. They can also create a sense of movement and often suggest naturalism or dramatic realism.

3. LINE. A line is an identifiable path created by a point moving in space. It is one-dimensional and can vary in width, direction, and length. Lines often define the edges of a form. Lines can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved and straight. Lines may vary in thickness, clarity, smoothness, and direction. They lead your eye around the composition and can communicate information through their character and direction



Obelisk at Luxor, Egypt, Photo by Marion Golsteijn, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/>

Vertical lines are perpendicular to the earth; they suggest strength and draw the eye upward. In the *Obelisk of Rameses II* at Luxor in Thebes vertical lines suggest spirituality, rising beyond human reach toward the heavens.



Jan Vermeer, oil on canvas, 1660. oil on canvas, Public domain, Jan Arkensteijn, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/View_of_Delft,_by_Johannes_Vermeer.jpg

Horizontal lines suggest a feeling of rest or repose because objects parallel to the earth are at rest. In *A View of Delft*, by Vermeer horizontal lines also imply a continuation of the landscape beyond the picture plane to the left and right.



Giotto, Lamentation, fresco, 1304-1306, Chapel of Scrovegni all'Arena, public domain, the Yorck Project. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Giotto_di_Bondone_009.jpg

Because **diagonal** objects are neither vertical nor horizontal, they are either about to fall or are already in motion; therefore, diagonal lines often suggest dynamism or movement. The rock cliff in Giotto's *Pietà* serves to move the viewer's eye toward the figure of Christ at the base of the cliff.



Allegory of Lust, Angelo Bronzino, 1540, oil on panel, public domain, JarektUploadBot

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo_Bronzino_-_Venus,_Cupid_and_Time_\(Allegory_of_Lust\)_-WGA3296.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Angelo_Bronzino_-_Venus,_Cupid_and_Time_(Allegory_of_Lust)_-WGA3296.jpg)

Soft, shallow **curves** recall the curves of the human body and often have a pleasing, sensual quality and a softening effect. Confusion may be created by a mixture of various types of line and direction. Bronzino's *Allegory of Venus* includes both sensuous body curves as well as the inconsistency of a mixture of lines.

4. SHAPE and FORM define objects in space. **Shapes** have two dimensions—height and width—and are usually defined by lines. **Forms** exist in three dimensions: height, width, and depth. The shape of an object may be defined by color, line, texture, or medium.



Cycladic Early Bronze II, Athens, photo by Zde, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Idol_ECII_NAMA_080774.jpg,

Artists seeking perfection often build their designs on various **geometric** shapes -- triangle, pyramid, circle, cylinder – on mathematical proportions. We see an example of this in the *Cycladic Bronze age sculpture from Athens*.



Aphrodite of Cnidus, Praxiteles, Public domain, Daderot, CCO 1.0 https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aphrodite_of_Cnidus_-_Vatican_Museums_-_DSC01264.jpg

Artists influenced by naturalism, humanism, or individualism usually base their designs on **natural (organic)** forms such as the human weight-shift pose or contrapposto. Praxiteles' *Aphrodite of Knidos* demonstrates both an organic form as well as the contrapposto position.

5. MEDIUM: All works of visual art are made of some material -- metal, marble, glass, fiber, and wood, oil or water based paints applied to paper, canvas, or wood.

6. TEXTURE is the surface quality of an object that we sense through touch. All objects have a physical texture. In a two-dimensional work of art, texture gives a visual sense of how an object depicted would feel in real life if touched: hard, soft, rough, smooth, hairy, leathery, sharp, etc. In three-dimensional works, artists use actual texture to add a tactile quality to the work. The texture of a work of art is either inherent in the medium or developed from it by the artist's technique. In painting, brushstrokes, either blended or painterly, affect texture.



Life of Saint James, furrier, public domain, photo by Micheletb, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chartres-005_A1.jpg, Ambulatory, Chartres Cathedral, a stained glass window showing the texture contrast of the fur and other clothing.

7. SPACE. Real space is three-dimensional. Space in a work of art refers to a feeling of depth or three dimensions. The perfect illusion of three-dimensional space in a two-dimensional work of art is something that many artists labored to achieve.

Several techniques may be used to achieve a feeling of **three-dimensional space**. These include

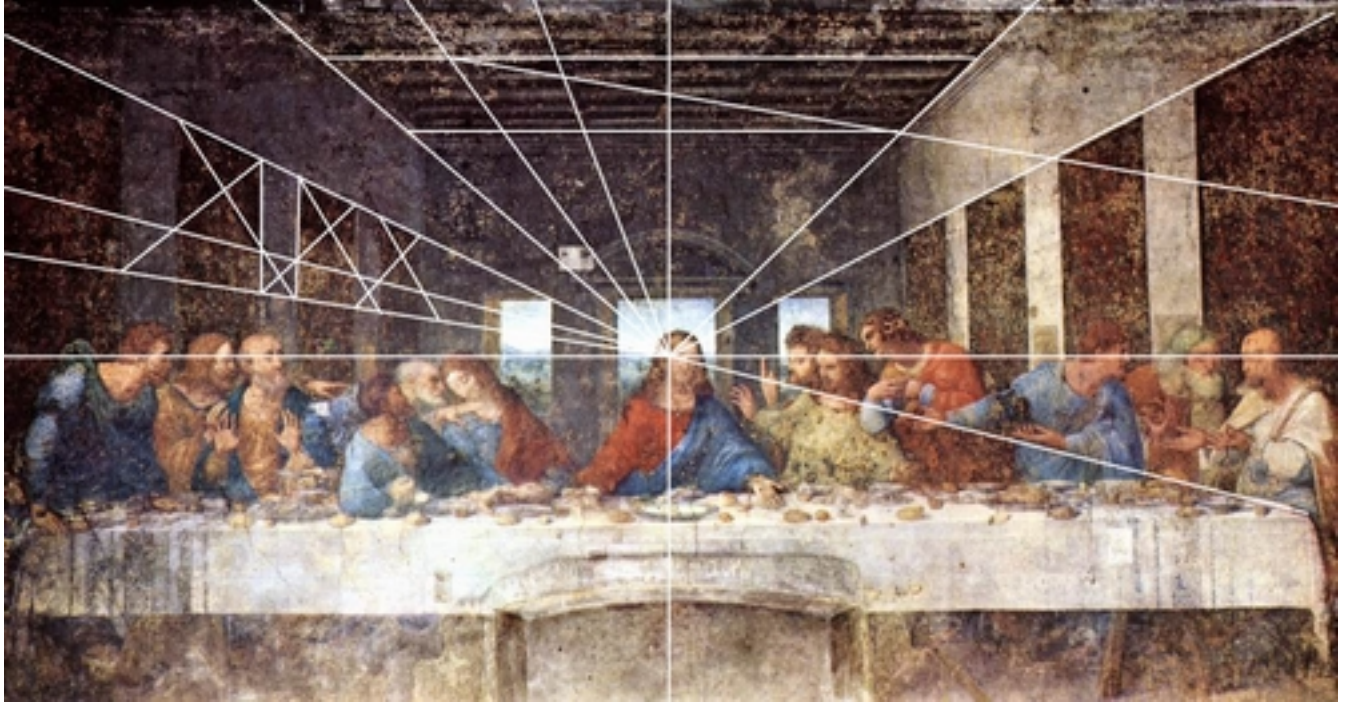
- Overlapping
- Foreshortening of isolated objects
- Chiaroscuro (displaying a “sculptural” form through the use of light and dark)
- Relative position from ground line
- Background
- Linear Perspective (transforming entire picture into a “window”). All objects are represented as seen from a single point of view called the vanishing point at which all orthogonals (lines perpendicular to the picture plane) seem to converge. Associated objects diminish in size as their distance from the observer increases.
- Intuitive Perspective
- Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective (the apparent change in color and distinctness of objects as they recede from the picture plane; objects in the foreground are painted in detail and with relatively clear, bright colors; objects in the background are rendered in less detail and in grayed colors).

Space can also refer to the artist’s use of the area within the picture plane. The area around the primary objects in a work of art is known as **negative space**, while the space occupied by the primary objects is known as **positive space**. The relationship of positive to negative space can greatly affect the impact of a work of art.



Portinari Altarpiece, Hugo van der Goes, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hugo_van_der_Goes_Portinari_01.JPG Uffizi Gallery, MiguelHermoso Cuesta, CC-BY SA-.4.0

In the *Portinari Altarpiece*, the Christ child occupies the **positive** space, while the space surrounding him is the **negative** space. The disproportionate amount of negative space around the Christ child accentuates the figure’s vulnerability.



Leonardo daVinci, Last Supper, Milan, Italy, public domain, Baibob, fresco <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Obr3.jpg>

The perfect illusion of **three-dimensional** space in a two-dimensional work of art is something that many artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci in his painting the *Last Supper* labored to achieve. This work is a good example of **linear perspective**. Space, in a work of art, is the most difficult element to analyze because it may be defined by any or all of the other elements of visual art. During most historical eras, a typical approach to spatial form emerges. Space may be defined as open or closed depending upon the physical and psychological aspect of the work of art.

Closed	Open
Verticals and horizontals dominate	Verticals and horizontals obscured
Clearly felt central axis	Central axis absent
Frame seems to contain	Spills out over frame
Posed, deliberately placed in frame	As if cut out of the visible world
Stable and balanced	Unstable equilibrium
Frontal plane dominates	Subjects at angles to frontal plane
Dense	Penetrated by space
Static	Dynamic
IDEALISM	REALISM

SPACE in SCULPTURE and ARCHITECTURE: Sculpture and architecture relate to space in similar ways, although in architecture both the interior and exterior must be considered.



Pyramid of Khafre, Giza Egypt, photo by kallerna, CC BY-SA 3.0,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pyramid_of_Khafre_Giza_Egypt_in_2015_3.jpg

Closed Form is based on solid masses of material largely reflecting the block(s) from which the work of art is carved or constructed. The composition is formed to some extent by geometric shapes and/or compact masses in static balance. Closed art, such as the Pyramid of Khafre at Giza, emphasizes repose or relaxation, harmony and completion. Statues lacking weight-shift are already in repose and should, thus, be termed closed. Many of Michelangelo's statues are designed, almost as a tightly coiled spring, to illustrate tension and pent-up energy. While the potential for movement is present, since the body is wound into a compact mass, tension and emotion are contained; the form is, therefore, considered closed.



Disney Concert Hall, photo by Carol Highsmith, public domain,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Disney_Concert_Hall_by_Carol_Highsmith_edit2.jpg

Open forms are incomplete, projecting into space or penetrating the environment. Their focus is usually external. A figure or a building, such as the Walt Disney Opera House in Los Angeles, California, which acts on its surroundings or interacts with its environment, is generally considered open. Statues are considered open because they are about to release tension and have yet to return to a relaxed position.

SPACE in PAINTING:



Rembrandt van Rijn, Self-Portrait, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rembrandt_van_Rijn_-_Self-Portrait_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg, Google Art Project, CC BY-SA 4.0

Paintings that have an obvious frame and a central focus and emphasize repose, certainties and finalities are considered **closed**. Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait of 1659* is an example of a closed work.



The Night Watch, 1642, Rembrandt, Dennis Jarvis, CC-BY-SA-2.0, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Netherlands-4167_-_The_Night_Watch_\(11715123333\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Netherlands-4167_-_The_Night_Watch_(11715123333).jpg)

Paintings that seem to spill over the edges in any direction, lack clear boundaries, have multiple focal points and emphasize action, emotion, uncertainty and incompleteness are termed **open**. In Rembrandt's *Sortie of Captain Banning Cocq's Company of the Civic Guard*, diagonal and curved lines direct the viewer from place to place inside and outside of open paintings. In painting, space is an illusion of three-dimensionality which has been created by the recession of an object into the distance or by the projection forward of an object. In contrast, space may be denied by placing figures or objects on a flat plane. Space can be constructed in numerous ways: by receding planes, by overlapping of figures or objects, by light and shadow, by foreshortening (extending an object at an angle to suggest decrease in size). In some paintings the space is contrived from a fixed point of view unifying the parts of a painting; others suggest space by shifting the viewer's attention from one area to the next with lines, color, and/or light.

HISTORICAL CLIMATE: A work of art is the product of the past and the present of the culture in which it was created. Products of culture can, therefore, only be studied within a historical context. Not all aspects of history, however, influence every work of art. It is, therefore, necessary, after the history of an era has been studied, to select the known historical trends or facts which probably influenced a particular artifact (primary source). Analysis or interpretation of primary sources in the arts is not a science. It does, however, teach the skills of critical thinking because it allows the interpreter to make connections, to make choices based on facts and patterns and to use her or his eye.

1. What was the **geographical location** of the culture? Did it have regular contact with other, different cultures? Did the geography affect the economic base of the culture?
2. What was the basis for the culture's **economy**? Was the country wealthy or poor? Why?
3. What was its **political system**? Was it hierarchical or democratic? Was there a revolution? What was its effect?
4. What **religions** were followed? Which were the most popular and why?. Were religious monuments built and in whose honor? How was information about this religion conveyed to the people?
5. What were the major **scientific** developments during this time? In what ways did they impact the culture?
6. What were the **moral and ethical standards** of the time? Did most people adhere to them? How did they impact the culture? Was the art of the period based on a philosophical concept?
7. What **arts** were **popular** in this culture? Why was one art more popular than others?
8. What styles or forms from the **preceding period** were strong enough to influence the following era?
9. What is the **function** of the art in question? For whom was it created? Who commissioned and paid for it?
10. Who was **responsible** for the design of the art? If the artist had autonomy, what was his background and experience? Who were the patrons?

ASSOCIATED VALUES: Cultural values, which are influenced by the historical climate, are reflected in the arts of a culture. They can be defined as:

1. Those things which are valued and revered by a socio-economic group
2. Ideas that underlie a culture
3. Attitudes about the world and humanity characteristic of a particular group or milieu.

VIEWER'S REACTION:

- Art is supposed to wake you up, taking us where we haven't been before. When we add our ideas to those of the creative thinker from another era, we are lead to dazzling new possibilities and experiences as well as new ways of looking at the world.
- Art leads the observer to contemplate life by looking through the eyes of another.

CULTURAL CONTEXT VALUES

The cultural context values are the over-arching values associated with a specific era or period. They are generally influenced by the historical climate or the dominant philosophical ideas of the time. They can be defined as:

- that which is valued or revered by the dominant group, which often determines the kinds and style of art produced;
- the culturally inherited assumptions which underlie a culture,
- internalized attitudes characteristic of a particular group or environment.

The arts of a culture usually reflect these values in different ways, and this is particularly true in the art of earlier eras. Such values may be absent in the case of individual artists who work against the prevailing values; this is probably more common in more recent times. In Humanities courses, we are always looking for the recurring themes: the two or three major cultural context values that are embraced by the majority of a culture's members. The following cultural context values are common to Humanities 121 and 122.

ASCETICISM. The monastic way of life demanded seclusion and escape from the cares of reality and the severity of monastic life stimulated the imagination. Monastic rules required that a person attain a high spiritual and moral state by obedience, silence, humility, and poverty. Turning away from the world is expressed in plain exteriors and rich interiors showing that the inside of a man is more important than what he looks like outside. Arts were not intended to mirror the natural world, but to conjure otherworldly visions and aspects of the world beyond. Artists used elaborate symbolism which was addressed to the educated, cloistered communities familiar with sophisticated allegories. Although the sculpture found in Romanesque cathedrals was certainly visible to the masses and was intended to be instructive, many Romanesque monastic works were intended to relate to the intense inner life and visionary focus of the religious community that the lay person would not understand.



Berze-la-ville, Fresken in der Chapelle des Moines.ⁱ

ANIMISM. Animism is the belief that the forces of nature are inhabited by living spirits. These spirits or forces reside in each animate and inanimate object. We still hear echoes of Animism today: skies still “threaten,” seas and fires “rage,” forests “murmur” and Mother Earth beacons us to “rest.” Both Animism and Spiritualism are present in the Cro-Magnon caves.



Animism and Spiritualism are present in Cro-Magnon Caves, *Lascaux Cave*.ⁱⁱ

ANTIQUARIANISM. For our purposes, the cultural context value of Antiquarianism shows up most clearly in Republican Roman culture. Seeking heroic origins, patrician and land-owning Roman aristocrats claimed descent from Greek heroes, and emulated the popular Greek styles of the past. (Think “nostalgia”). We see evidence of this in Rome’s interest in copies of Classical and Hellenistic art, architecture, theatre and philosophy.



Farnese Hercules, 3rd century CE. Greek god found in the Roman Baths of Caracallaⁱⁱⁱ

AUTHORITARIANISM (AKA ABSOLUTISM). Because the human authority figure is either divine, or a sanctioned representative of the divine, his or her power is unquestioned and immune to human judgment. This absolute authority is reflected in the arts because that “divine figure” tends to be the major patron of those arts, and most of the cultural expression is in support of that authority. Hierarchical messages of power and propaganda, often displayed in fearful imagery, tend to show up in authoritarian cultures. By the time of the Emperor Justinian (r.527-565) no official word could be spoken unless justified by a quotation from an earlier authority. This court was so conservative that the word “originality” was considered an insult. King Louis XIV also replaced natural spontaneity with the “Sun God’s” form of cosmic law and order. Just as French statehood was unified under an absolute ruler, so were the arts brought together in a single rational plan.



Narmer's Palette, 3000 BCE.^{iv}

CALVINISM. While Calvinism is a result of the Reformation, rather than a cultural context value, the doctrines of Calvinism are clearly reflected in the arts. Original sin, predestination and the recognition of the transience of life are key components of Calvinistic teachings.



Steenwyck, Pieter, Ars Longa, Vita Brevis.^v

CLASSICISM. Italian respect for classical antiquity had two sources. The first was the continuation of the cultural tradition inherited first from the Romans: Latin was still the language of the educated elites, and Roman constructions (such as the coliseums) were prominent in the cities. The term “Greco-Roman” suggests the classical respect for both Greek and Roman sources. The second source of respect came from archaeological discoveries made during the Renaissance. For instance, the late 4th century B.C.E. Hellenistic sculpture of the *Apollo Belvedere* was discovered when Michelangelo was on his first visit to Rome in 1489-90.



Apollo Belvedere, Vatican Museums, Rome, Italy^{vi}



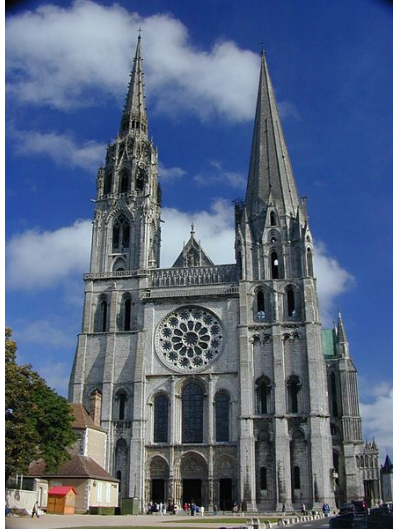
Michelangelo, *David* 1501, Florence, Italy^{vii}

DOMESTICITY. Domesticity celebrates the material reality of everyday life, especially as demonstrated in the comforts of home. The basis of a just society is piety and private devotion, as demonstrated by an ordered and tranquil household. The subjects of paintings will be expanded to include “genre” scenes of everyday life, portraits, still-life, and the natural landscape.



Pieter DeHooch, *Woman With a Child in a Pantry*, 1658^{viii}

DUALISM. This term suggests the opposition of two conflicting, yet coexisting, principles. Examples of this contrast are demonstrated by the Zoroastrian opposition of truth v. deceit, in the polarity of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, in Augustine’s Heavenly City of God as contrasted to the Earthly City of Man, in the divinity and yet fully human nature of Jesus, and the thrust and counterthrust of a Gothic cathedral. Keep your eyes open: you will see many more similar contrasts. Reason v. emotion. Body v. soul. Flesh v. spirit. The 13th century theologian Thomas Aquinas will suggest that all apparent conflicts are harmoniously unified by God. The Gothic age, as exemplified by the Cathedral of Chartres shows Dualism.



Chartres Cathedral, West Facade, Chartres, France.^{ix}

EMPIRICISM. Empiricism promotes direct experience with the material world. Instead of an idealistic (see Idealism) and abstract system of logic to explain the mysteries of the universe, Empiricism emphasizes that decisions be based on evidence collected by the senses and observation. Empirical evidence can be experienced through sight, smell, touch, etc. The result of this “observable experience” is that the viewer will have empathy for the subject. A culture or period dominated by an Empirical world view will promote a Realistic style of art. Not only can you see and perhaps touch the action; you can almost smell, hear and taste the surroundings. The first century Roman poet Lucretius’s discussion of the material nature of the “mind” and “soul” provides a good demonstration of Empiricism in art. Visualize the *Dying Gaul* as you read Lucretius’ words from *On the Nature of Things* (Book III):

“You see that our mind suffers along with the body, and shares its feelings together in the body. If the shuddering shock of a weapon, driven within and laying bare bonds and sinews, does not reach the life, yet faintness follows, and a pleasant swooning to the ground, and a turmoil of mind which comes to pass on the ground, and from time to time, as it were, a hesitating will to rise. Therefore it must needs be that the nature of the mind is bodily, since it is distressed by the blow of bodily weapons.”

Keep in mind that Imperialism is a policy of extending a country's power and influence through diplomacy or military force. Imperialism must not be confused with empiricism.



Dying Gaul, Capitoline Museum, Rome, Roman copy of a bronze ca 220 BCE^x

HUMANISM. Humanism assumes that life here and now is good and meant to be enjoyed. The cultural context value appears in three major ways. The first is a celebration of living with dignity in this world. Humanism does not focus on a sinful, fallen world; rather, it promotes the exercise of our will to live autonomously and challenge the limitations of earthly existence with strength and resilience. Rising above the ignobleness of daily experience, we become responsible for our own fate. The exaltation of humanity is so completely a part of the Western habit that we are scarcely aware of the antiquity of this influence and of its origin in the minds the Greeks.

Second, and no less important, is the understanding, as the pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Protagoras stated, that “man is the measure of all things.” Humankind, in this case, becomes the most important authority. In humanistic cultures, the search for truth begins with humans themselves. The design of the Parthenon, for instance, was based on average measurements of the human body.

The third way that Humanism is most often seen is in the belief that a civic life (with concern for the common good) is nobler than a life lived for the benefit of personal aspirations. In this sense, at its best, democracy is considered humanistic. Many humanists believe that individual sacrifice is appropriate if it benefits the larger community. Humanistic thought addresses questions that are basic to all humans. While the Egyptian Pharaoh is clearly a human, his authoritarian rule does not support the cultural context value of Humanism.



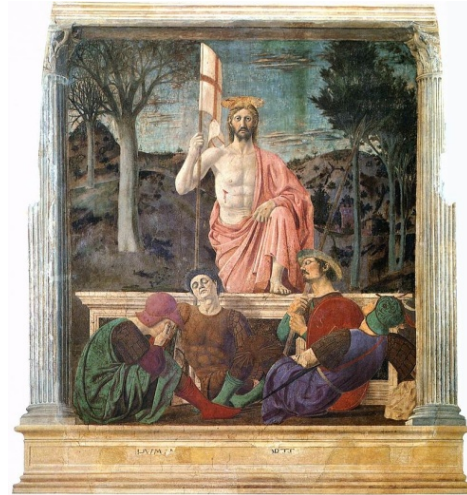
Polyclitus of Argos, *Doryphorus*, 450-440 BCE^{xi}

FRANCISCAN HUMANISM. Still in the shadow of medieval mystical beliefs, the 12th century monk Francis of Assisi turned humankind’s attention back to this earthly life by focusing on the humanized relationship of the Madonna and Christ. Franciscan Humanism promoted the belief that God resides in the world we know, in his Creation, and could be understood by the contemplation of that Creation and the imitation of Christ’s virtues.



Giotto, *Pieta* (detail), 1305-06^{xii}

CLASSICAL HUMANISM celebrates two great discoveries: Classical antiquity and the correlative discovery of themselves. The Renaissance version of Humanism was sparked by a revival of interest in classical Greek and Roman literature, culture, and language. In particular, the three essential cultural contest values as taught by Plato (Humanism, Idealism and Rationalism) were combined with the values of Aristotle (Realism and Individualism) to reconcile Greek thought with Christian beliefs. The Classical skills of mathematical proportion, objects spatially bound together in linear perspective, contrapposto, as well as the expressive power of the nude were utilized to express Classical Humanism. During the Medieval period, human accomplishment had been seen as a reflection of divine will and this present life was seen merely as preparation for a future life. During the Renaissance people ceased to believe that the afterlife was superior to the here and now. Civic Humanism was seen in the promotion of free republics (especially in Florence and Venice) in the competition among great cities.



Piero della Francesca, *Resurrection*, 1463^{xiii}

NORTHERN HUMANISM is also known as **CRITICAL HUMANISM** or **CHRISTIAN HUMANISM**. Northern Renaissance Humanism placed Christian symbols (rather than Classical traditions) in a humanistic setting. The most modest parts of God's creation came under intense scrutiny, requiring the viewer to study each detail in order to comprehend the message of the divine in the everyday world. Under the philosophy of Metaphysical Transparency all objects in the created world are symbols of a higher unseen reality; they are manifestations of divine creation. We must absorb these objects detail by detail to comprehend the total message.

There are at least three strong distinctions to be observed when comparing Northern Humanism to Italian Humanism. As had been the case in earlier Christian art, light suggests divine truth, whereas a specific light source is suggested in the Italian tradition. Secondly, linear perspective is unimportant to Northern artists; they utilized intuitive perspective. Additionally, Northern artists usually depicted common bourgeois people rather than the aristocrats who were featured in Italian paintings.



The Annunciation, Robert Campin, *Merode Altarpiece*, 1425^{xiv}

BAROQUE HUMANISM adds movement in time and space to the qualities of Humanism. In similar manner to Byzantine (aka Reverse) perspective, the image enters the world of the viewer. Taking influence from the Mannerist artists the viewer is engaged, frequently in a confrontational manner. And, taking influence from Northern Humanism, common people are included.



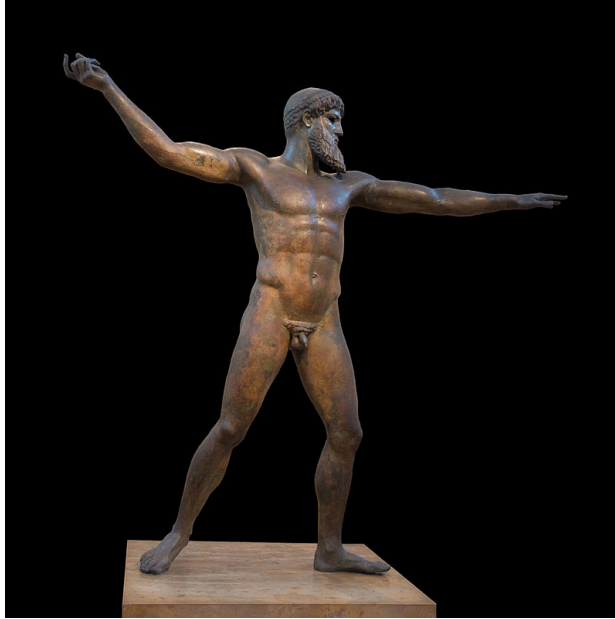
Caravaggio, *The Calling of St. Matthew*, 1597-98.^{xv}

HUMANITARIANISM is not the same as HUMANISM. Humanitarianism suggests an interest in philanthropy. While St. Francis was concerned about the souls of urban dwellers, he chose a life of chastity, poverty, and obedience. Similarly, while Michelangelo's work is very humanistic, his Florentine sculpture of David suggests a disdain of baseness and injustice rather than a concern for human kindness. Many of the world's largest religions were taught the following precept: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Historically it is difficult to find cultures that regularly practiced Humanitarianism.



St. Louis Feeding the Poor. Chronicles of St. Denis.^{xvi}

IDEALISM. Based on Humanistic values, Idealism seeks the eternal perfection of pure ideas. Abstract ideas such as self-control, order, and denial of change exist only because human minds have created a mental image of these ideas. Idealistic thought represents the world not as it appears to one's physical eye, but as it appears to the imagination of the mind's eye. The idealized form does not exist in this physical world, and probably never will, but that does not lessen the value of contemplating and discussing ideas. Idealism places the search for then abstract ideals of truth, goodness and beauty above all other ideas. Idealistic art will eliminate all which is not essential to the pure idea of a perfected form. Because the imaginary image of the form (the Absolute) is understood to be more "real" than any historical details of circumstance, individual features, extremes of age (which would imply incompleteness), and violence will be avoided. Even in death, a human figure will be depicted as vital, in the prime of life, and defying fate. Greek Gods were modeled after the ideal human (as opposed to the half animal gods of Egypt), another sign of both Humanism and Idealism. See the chart comparing Idealism and Realism is at the end of this document.



Zeus (Poseidon?), c. 460-450 BCE^{xvii}

NEOPLATONISM. Neoplatonism was the Renaissance merging of the idealistic ideals of Plato with the mystical ideas of Christianity. As we saw with Idealistic thought, the material world was devalued in preference to the abstract ultimate reality of a higher, perfect, and divine mind. For Christians, this ultimate reality was interpreted, of course, to be the mind of God. You may have heard the term *Mind over Matter*. The source of that phrase is in Neoplatonic thought! Because that intellect existed prior to this physical realm, it was the First Cause, the *Mind*. Hence, it is more “real” than the *Matter*; this material world is just a shadow of that Divine Mind. The artistic intention of Neoplatonic art was to purify the world of matter, erasing its flaws and approximating it to the perfection of the Divine Mind. Neoplatonic thought can be seen in the works of several Renaissance artists, including Botticelli, Michelangelo and Poussin.



Michelangelo, *Pietà*, 1498-99, St. Peter's, Vatican City.^{xviii}

IMPERIALISM. A policy of extending a country's power and influence through diplomacy or military force. Artistically, Imperialism is generally depicted in grandeur: the greater the proportions, the greater is the power! Imperialism should not be confused with **EMPIRICISM**.



Hall of Mirrors, Versailles, France.^{xix}

INDIVIDUALISM. Individualism focuses on the specific person and his plights, rather than the challenges of a group of people. Individualism tends to celebrate successful individuals as opposed to large group efforts. Facial features, emotional expression, and humor are often seen in arts that reflect Individualism. This makes sense, as a focus on Individualism is a focus on human differences, including ethnic and cultural differences, rather than similarities. Individualism sometimes (such as during the Hellenistic Era) appears when individuals have little control over their government and/or religion. What they can control is themselves and perhaps their families.



Alexander the Great^{xx}

RENAISSANCE INDIVIDUALISM. While the medieval era viewed life as controlled by capricious fate, the Renaissance stressed the kind of life whose direction was charted by personal choice. Privately commissioned portraits will elevate the individual's social status and artists, philosophers and scientists will enjoy an elevated social status.



Lorenzo Ghiberti, self-portrait. Baptistery doors on Florence Cathedral.^{xxi}

MERCANTILISM. Mercantile practices exhibit an interest in trade, goods and industry. Imported goods suggest the owner's erudition and achievements. The Dutch were far more interested in trade, which is the primary reason the Dutch East India Company held exclusive trade relations at Nagasaki, Japan between 1639 and 1854, while Portuguese and Spanish missionaries were not permitted. The bounty provided by trade is celebrated in the subject matter of painting as well as in the changes that develop in the professional art world as a result of it.



Johannes Vermeer, *The Geographer*, 1668-69^{xxii}

MYSTICISM. Mysticism is the view that there is an ultimate reality, hidden from the ordinary channels of knowledge, which can be revealed only to an individual mind in certain moments of insight. It is not only the intuition of what is beyond-empirical but of what is often alleged to be timeless or eternal, of something which ordinary experience is impotent to reveal. Mystical, complex ideas (such as the nature of God and the Trinity) are often expressed by means of metaphors and symbols. Symbols are thought to have power, and must be interpreted to be understood. In the Baroque era, Mystical acceptance "by faith" will develop. Any religion, ancient or modern, involves Mysticism. Cultures that place high importance on religion (and/or who share a common approach to that religion) tend to embrace Mysticism as a major cultural context value. Since all cultures show evidence of religion, it is important to keep in mind that we are applying this value to cultures whose focus on religion is of **major** importance.



Andrea Pozzo, *Triumph of St. Ignatius Loyola*, 1685, Rome. ^{xxiii}

BYZANTINE MYSTICISM. Four illusionistic devices are unique to Byzantine Mysticism. First, because the viewer is taking a glimpse into the perfection of heaven the light is not a natural light but a dematerialized light. The mystical sparkle of a gold background denies depth to the figures so they seem silhouetted in space. Secondly, with their wide-open eyes they present an out-of-this-world image. Naturalism and true-to-life details have no place here. Third, there is no foreground or base or contrapposto stance—in essence, there is no movement. Byzantine figures are eternal; they will always be present to receive the worshipper’s prayers and supplications. And yet, for device number four, they do enter our world through a technique known as **reverse perspective**. Images appear to project forward into the space between the observer and the image.



Theotokos and Child, Apse mosaic at Hagia Sophia, dedicated 867.^{xxiv}

MILITANT MYSTICISM. Militant Mysticism is the attempt to force orthodox teachings (correct thinking) on an outside heretical group. Militancy was promoted by the Byzantine Emperor Justinian as well as by both Reformation and Counter-Reformation theologians. During the Baroque period, Militant Mysticism was practiced by both the Catholic church under Pope Paul III with the 1540 Bull “Regimini militantis ecclesiae” (“For the Rule of the church militant”) and by the Protestant leader John Calvin, who promoted the concept that the “ecclesia militans” could become victorious here on earth.



El Greco, *Purification of the Temple*, 1600.^{xxv}

NATIONALISM. Devotion to the interests or culture of one's nation. In contention with ecclesiastical authority, the hometown can be the ideal paradise.



Ruisdael, *Winter Landscape*, 1670.^{xvii}

NATURALISM. These works show the physical world as it might be seen; the depiction of the appearance of nature as exactly as possible. Naturalism will feature both true-to-life details and light from a specific source. Neither symbolic meaning nor scientifically developed perspective is employed. Note the fly in Bosschaert's work.



Floral Arrangement, Ambrosius Bosschaert, 1618^{xviii}

NOMINALISM. In the tradition of Platonic philosophy, concepts such as the *Annunciation*, the *Crucifixion* and *Judgment* were eternal truths. God would always be entering the human world, Christ would continually be crucified for the sins of mankind, and humans were continually being offered the choice of salvation or damnation. They were like the abstract ideas of truth, goodness and beauty. No amount of work, or resistance, would affect absolute ideas. The Cultural Context Value of Nominalism challenges this philosophy. Nominalism holds that these terms of theological jargon exist only as names or words (from Latin, *nomen*, "to name"). By means of inductive reasoning, we want to understand the mysteries. What was it like when God entered this world? How did the witnesses respond to the crucifixion? What is meant by "salvation" and "damnation"?

The artistic result of Nominalistic thought is a renewed interest in this physical world. Artists and poets (such as Dante) seek to understand the divine through the world that we know. Instead of remaining remote and eternal, theological subjects enter a world that we recognize. Figures are shown in natural surroundings, with anatomical accuracy, modeled by means of light and shadow and with attention to the perception of this world in three dimensions.

The rapid development of both naturalistic and Nominalistic thought during the Middle Ages may be seen in a comparison of paintings by Cimabue and Duccio. Compare the ears of the Christ child in each depiction. Cimabue paints the child with two ears because he thinks the child must certainly have had two ears. With attentiveness to this natural world, Duccio paints only what he sees—thus, the child is shown with only one ear! Nominalistic philosophy will lead to the experimental method of modern science.

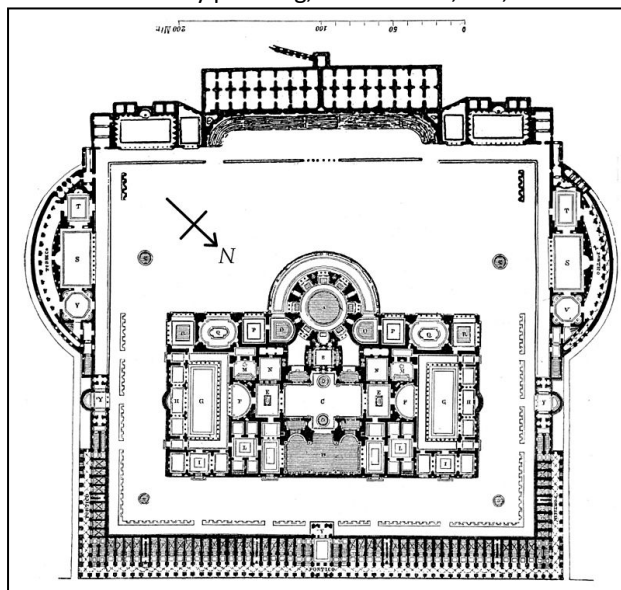


Cimabue, *Madonna Enthroned*, detail, 1280-90.^{xxviii}



Duccio, *Rucellai Madonna*, detail. 1308-1311.^{xxix}

ORDER AND ORGANIZATION. The Romans, for instance revered the value of order. They believed that truth could be found in order. The creation of orderly systems such as laws, roads, and water projects kept the Republic, and then the Empire together. The orderly system of government maintained control even under mad emperors so that order sustained the law and benefited citizens despite upheavals caused by individuals. This allowed Rome to rule a large area with military organization, city planning, aqueducts, and bureaucracy. The Roman capacity for order and efficiency is expressed not only in their military organization, but also in Roman city planning, architecture, law, and bureaucratic government structure.



Drawing of *The Baths of Caracalla*.^{xxx}

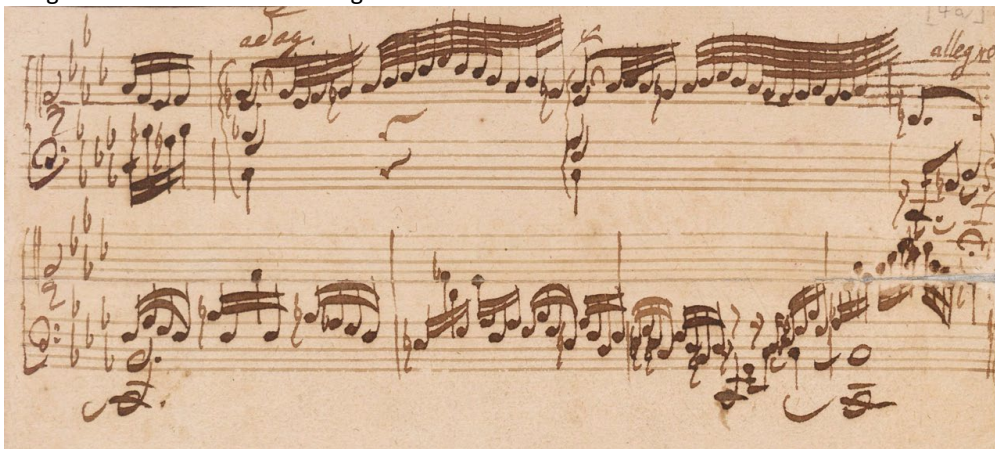
RATIONALISM. As proposed by Pythagoras, the universe has an order, regularity, and an intelligible pattern which humans can comprehend. Rationalism is the application of **pure** reason (no physical evidence required). When many ancient humans started to appreciate their capacity for reason, they began to define themselves by it. They identified the use of logic as that which separates humankind from the other animals. The workings of human society (including the production and consumption of manufactured goods, the social organization of families and towns, the functions of national government, and even the arts) were understood to be governed by universal laws.

Some cultures considered the application of reason to be the only reliable path to truth. It was assumed that correct application of reason could guide a culture toward progress and improvement. As a consequence, this cultural context value often meshes nicely with Idealism (a combination seen in both Egypt and Greece). Cultures that embrace Rationalism have a tendency to measure beauty by using mathematics (balance and proportion are of great importance). Think “ratio!” Rationalism is most often seen in the creation of systems based on logic. These systems may involve formulas for art, approaches to philosophy that are dependent on logic and formulas for architecture that are based on mathematic ratios. Rationalists tend to reject emotion, preferring instead, the control of reason. They will often reject physical evidence preferring, instead, logical argument. Be aware that the modern mind (yours, for example) needs physical evidence, in addition to reason, to consider it “rational.” This was **not** necessarily the case in early civilizations.



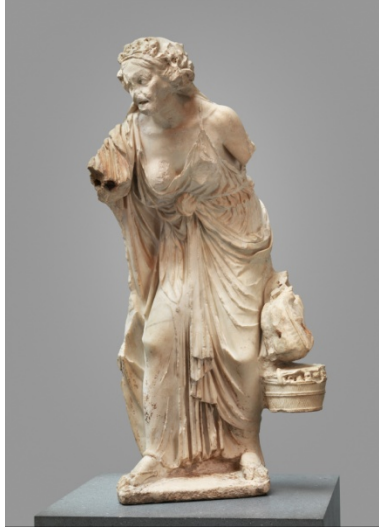
Pythagorean Theorem in a medieval manuscript, Vaticanus Palatinus.^{xxx1}

BAROQUE RATIONALISM. During the High Renaissance, artistic creations generally produced a sense of balance, symmetry and equilibrium. During the later Baroque era, the previous unmoving, terracentric universe swirled with dynamic space, time and light in motion. It could be advanced that the whirling motion of navigators, astronomers and inventors culminated in the logical conclusion of a Bach fugue.



Bach, BWV 847.^{xxxii}

REALISM. Realism is the apparent representation of things and experiences as they appear to be in recognizable, visible reality. Even if the depiction represents an imagined or supernatural figure, it has a surface reality; the artist appears to be recording exactly what he or she is seeing. However, Realism may be deceptive as there is often an emotional or psychological overlay. Realism may include trompe-l'oeil and the illusion of depth using perspective. A good comparison chart of Idealism as contrasted with Realism is at the end of this document.



Old Market Woman, Hellenistic Greece. xxxiii

VERISM. Derived from the Latin *veritas* (“truth”), this form of **REALISM** is an accurate and faithful portrait of an individual personality, with every wrinkle and imperfection depicted. Some Roman portrait busts are good examples of Verism.



Roman Portrait Bust, Metropolitan Museum of Art., 2nd century CE. xxxiv

SCIENTIFIC NATURALISM. During the early Renaissance, both human and physical nature was subjected to study and research, as it had been in ancient Greece. While allegorical explanations of the world had often been sufficient during the Middle Ages, Renaissance patrons desired correct anatomy, realistic proportions and psychological insight. Discovery of the principles of linear perspective, already known to the ancient Greeks and Romans, would satisfy the Renaissance craving for an exact and mathematically accurate description of an orderly world. The discovery of *D’Architectura*, a book on architecture written by the ancient Roman, Vitruvius, propelled such men as Filippo Brunelleschi to develop a system whereby accurate depictions of the natural (and man-made) world could be

reproduced in two dimensions. This is the system of linear perspective. Aerial perspective was also developed at this time (or, more accurately, redeveloped) at this time. It was used primarily in images of idealized landscapes painted as though seen from one of the many private towers that could be found in cities of the day. The last type of perspective is atmospheric perspective. This is where the colors and sharpness change as objects move away from the viewer. (Think of the Blue Mountains that do not look, from a distance, as though they have individual trees).



Masaccio, *Tribute Money*, 1427^{xxxv}

SPIRITUALISM. Spiritualism literally means the communication with the dead through a medium or psyche. The medium could be a device such as an Ouija board, spirit voices, levitating tables or automatic writing. Neither the Egyptians, nor Old Testament Hebrews, nor Christians believed in this type of communication; their beliefs would more accurately be termed **MYSTICISM**.

SYNCRETISM. Syncretism is the synthesis or layering of different forms of belief or practice into a single philosophy or religion. Christianity was open to anyone who wished to be initiated and it was **syncretistic**: it accepted and adapted itself to many elements of the prevailing culture. For example, Christianity initially accepted the Jewish prohibition on the creation of images of God, but the weekly day of worship was set on Sunday (rather than the Sabbath), perhaps in recognition of the sun god Mithras (whose birthday was on December 25). Alexander the Great spread Greek beliefs and ideas wherever he traveled. Christian conquerors imposed their beliefs on indigenous peoples throughout the Americas.



Yuan Stone in China with a Christian symbol.^{xxxvi}

UTILITARIANISM. “Yes it is lovely but, what does it do? What is it good for?” These would be questions that a utilitarian culture would ask. Pragmatism is the key to Utilitarianism. This cultural context value focuses on the functional, the practical as opposed to the ideal. Potential is NOT as important as what works. Aesthetics are fine, but usefulness is the key. Utilitarianism can be seen in the multiple uses of Roman buildings. Caesar Augustus’ Idealized face on coins in a Roman validation of his rule is another good example.



Divi Pater Patriae, 13-14 CE^{xxxvii}

IDEALISM AND REALISM COMPARED
Characteristics

Idealism	Realism
Importance of abstract ideas	importance of a specific story
universal and timeless or eternal qualities, flawless forms, no specific individual, youth or age	particular, peculiar, timely qualities; individual qualities of specific people, times and situations without glamorization
harmonious proportions—forms based on precise mathematical measurement; concern for geometrical measurement; concern for the whole	Lack of measured proportions; concern for separate parts
restrained stable and / or static; total control	active
closed; self-contained composition	more open; often acting on the surrounding space
impassive features; serene and contemplative expressions	individual reactions and expressions
clarity of lines	loss of clear-cut lines; accuracy of textures; manipulation of light and shadow; use of contrasts

Objectives

Idealism	Realism
to depict an ideal toward which human beings might strive	to describe contemporary life as it really is
to depict universal, eternal qualities by representing the essence or purest aspect of an idea	to represent the particular rather than the imaginative or visionary
to represent the best in nature by eliminating the imperfections of particulars or peculiar	to faithfully represent the reality of what is seen and experienced, including imperfections

Typical Subject matter

Idealism	Realism
deities (gods and goddesses): or ordinary people depicted as such	any subject or contemporary life

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Humanities 121 and Humanities 122

Basic Elements of Music

MELODY. The tune we remember. Melody is the *horizontal* aspect of music; it is similar to an artistic *line* in that the succession of tones of different pitches is organized so as to guide the listener through the composition.

The melody can be a single melodic line we sing along with, or a complex melody that is difficult to follow.

The melodic line is unique to each piece of music, as is the length of the melodic line.

2 measure melodic line: *Battle Hymn of the Republic (Mine eyes have seen the glory. . .)*

4 measure melodic line: *I've Been Working on the Railroad*

8 measure melodic line: *Home on the Range*

Legato: smooth and connected melody line

Staccato: detached, crisp, jagged melody line

HARMONY. Tones played simultaneously rather than in succession. Harmony is the vertical aspect of music; it is similar to artistic *texture*. All music stems from vocal origins, so “voice” refers to an individual part or line, even when we speak of instrumental music.

Monophony (“one voice”). Music with a single melodic line; unaccompanied, without harmony.

Homophony (“single melody with chords”). A single principal melodic part supported by chordal accompaniment.

Simple harmony. A vocalist singing along with a guitar accompaniment; the guitar creating harmony against the vocalist.

Block harmony. *Vertical* pillars of tone with little independent movement by underlying voices; two or more tones moving up or down in pitch together; a unifying feeling (i.e. church hymns, or music by Peter, Paul and Mary or Boyz 2 Men).

Polyphony (“many voices”). Music with more than one melodic line, each of equal importance, sounded simultaneously.

Counterpoint. Two or more melodies sounded simultaneously whose tones move independently of each other.

Separate voices along a melodic course, each on its own, less unified, acting in a more dynamic manner.

Imitative Counterpoint (repeating of an idea). A motive or subject is presented in one voice and then restated in another.

Canon. Repetition of an entire length of a melodic line.

Round. A canon for voices at the same pitch or in octaves.

Inversion. Melody is turned upside down, following the same intervals but in the opposite direction.

Combined harmony. Combined harmonies, such as block harmony with a vocal melody.

Consonant (or Concordant) harmony. Harmony that is intentionally pleasant to the ear of the listener.

Dissonant (or Discordant) harmony. Harmony that is intentionally harsh, conflicting, unpleasant. Used for expression.

METER. A pattern of regularly occurring strong and weak beats. We impose meter even on regular beats (i.e. the rolling of a printing press or a railroad car). The strong beat (the down beat) is usually louder.

We desire to release the tension in a series of strong beats; a 2/4 meter allows little time to relax between the strong beats.

Examples-- 2/4 or 4/4 (duple meter; accented every two or four beats): *America, the Beautiful (O beautiful for spacious skies..)*

3/4 (triple meter; accented beats every three beats): *My Country, 'Tis of Thee; Happy Birthday*

RHYTHM. The pattern by which notes are arranged within the metric structure; the pulse, the beat of the music.

The pattern may follow the meter closely, or it may work against the meter by placing strong beats (accents) where the meter places weak beats.

Rhythms include: straight time, jazz, blues, rags, simple, complex, syncopation (placement of accents between beats or on weak beats where we do not expect an accent), and rock.

The interruption of a rhythm leads to uneasiness.

When rhythm accentuates the meter we have a **dance** tune; when the rhythm breaks away from the meter we get a vague, dreamy, uncertain feeling.

Depending on the MELODY, HARMONY, METER and RHYTHM, music may be either OPEN (i.e. Star Spangled Banner) or CLOSED (i.e. *Mary Had a Little Lamb*). CLOSED music has little space between melody notes, monophonic harmony, an unchanging meter, and even rhythm.

TEMPO. How fast or slow the music is played; the relative speed of the strong beats, which may vary within a piece. Can be measured on a stop watch. Tempos include:

<i>largo</i> or <i>grave</i>	extremely slow, relaxing, solemn	<i>allegro</i>	lively, cheerful, quite fast; the usual tempo of the 1 st movement in a symphony or sonata
<i>adagio</i>	slow		
<i>andante</i>	walking pace; literally, "going"	<i>vivace</i>	very fast (vigorously)
<i>moderato</i>	moderate	<i>presto</i>	extremely fast, extreme tension
<i>allegretto</i>	a little fast	<i>prestissimo</i>	superfast

DYNAMICS. The volume at which the music is performed; the relative loudness may vary within a piece.

An increase or decrease in intensity may be produced by the addition or subtraction of instruments or sections of instruments.

<i>pp</i>	pianissimo (very softly)	<i>FF</i>	fortissimo (very loud)
<i>p</i>	piano (softly)	<i>SF</i>	sforzando (abruptly louder) -- loud noise produces tension
<i>mp</i>	mezzo-piano (moderately soft)	<	crescendo (little by little growing louder)
<i>mf</i>	mezzo forte (moderately loud)	>	decrescendo (little by little growing softer)
<i>F</i>	forte (loud)		terraced dynamics: abrupt alterations from one passage to another

DESCRIPTIVE ADJECTIVES: light, heavy, gently, sweet, eerie, happy, joyful, peaceful, uplifting, sad, melancholy, evil, royal, regal, powerful, bright, cheery, even, uneven, huge, tiny, swinging. **ITALIAN ADJECTIVES** (for the musically sophisticated!): *Agitato* (agitated, nervous), *Bellicoso* (angry, warlike), *Giocoso* (humorously, like a joke), *Grandioso* (grandly, proudly), *Grazioso* (gracefully), *Lacrimoso* (tearfully, as if crying), *Misterioso* (mysteriously), *Raposo* (calmly, sleepily), *Tempestoso* (stormily).

PITCH. Location of a musical sound in the tonal scale. Exact pitch is determined by the number of vibrations per second (frequency).

Rapid vibrations produce a high tone, slow vibrations a deep one. The pitch of a child's voice is higher than that of an adult. High notes produce more tension, as do jagged, abrupt changes.

Range of notes Narrow (all notes are within the range of one hand position on the piano, i.e. *London Bridge*)
Wide (requiring the wider range of the keyboard, i.e. *Dixie*)

ORCHESTRATION. The use of one instrument or a group of instruments to sound each voice within a piece of music. Groups of instruments in an orchestration may include brass, winds, strings, percussion and 20th century electronic instruments. Each group has its own voice (*timbre*), while each instrument has its own quality of sound (*color*).

Brass instruments are most easily distinguished by a metallic timbre and generally a sharp attack.

Woodwinds are distinguished by a reedy timbre and a gentler attack.

String instruments generally offer prolonged tones and smooth (legato) movement from one tone to the next.

Percussion instruments usually emphasize the rhythm.

A **band** excludes strings; an **orchestra** is made up of strings, in conjunction with various woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

A **symphony** includes all of the instruments. Don't forget the **human** voice is an instrument.

FORM. Music may be structured in a simple or very complex form; be sure to check the title for a clue to the form.

Theme and variation. A melody (theme) is played, then repeated in altered form (variation) a number of times.

Song form. Originally derived from vocal music. In the *ternary* form a melody is played, a new melody is played, and the original melody is repeated again (may be varied). A-B-A is a common shorthand for this form.

Sonata form. From the Italian *sonare* (to sound), the sonata form employs the song form as the basis of an extended composition for one instrument or several. Sonatas are usually in three or four movements. Most rock music is in sonata form.

Concerto form. From the Italian *concertare*, or "coming together; a group of instruments playing in unison. In the Baroque period this form, modified as a **concerto grosso**, featured an orchestra in contrast with a small group "Roman" style) or solo instruments ("Venetian" style). After the solo-cadenza, the orchestra reassuringly brings us back to the basic material.

Symphonic form. A large scale work for orchestra designed to explore a range of moods. The first movement is generally lively and robust; the second slower, sometimes melancholy; the third faster and dance-like; and the last even is more spirited and rhythmic. The roots to the symphony are in the *concerto ripieno*, a late Baroque style of concerto-writing that used the entire ensemble, rather than just one or a few soloists, as the main melodic voice.

GENRE. Music is written and performed to fit particular social occasions. Before the 1700s, music served one of three functions—

Chamber Music (played by small ensembles in the salons and drawing rooms of the aristocracy)

Church Music (masses, motets, anthems and hymns)

Theater Music (incidental music played between acts of a play or opera)

Ballet (*ballet d'action*). An outgrowth of 14th century Italian courtly dances, this style of public dance was dominant in Paris by the 18th century.

Cantata (“that which is sung”). A composite sacred or secular vocal form consisting of solos, spoken recitatives duets and choruses, interspersed with instrumental interludes; shorter than an oratorio.

Chamber music. During and after the classical era, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven set the standard for how chamber music should sound, its structure, and the ensembles it should utilize (string quartet, piano trio, small wind ensembles, etc.).

March. Piece of music with strongly marked rhythm suitable for marching; generally in 2/4 or 4/4 meter.

Mass. A musical setting of the words of the Roman Catholic Mass. The five sections of the Ordinary are Kyrie (Lord have mercy upon us....), Gloria (Glory be to thee....), Credo (I believe in God the Father....), Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy....) and Agnus Dei (O Lamb of God...). Lutheran masses set only the Kyrie and the Gloria to music. Masses were usually for unaccompanied voices before 1650; thereafter, soloists, chorus, and orchestra were often included.

Minuet. French dance in triple meter at a moderate tempo. Ranging from stateliness to a lively pace and whimsical character, the minuet embodied the grace of the aristocratic age in Baroque dances. It was used as the third movement of a sonata in ¾ time during the 18th Century. (Form = A-B-A, minuet-trio-minuet.)

Opera. Theatrical staging, passionate singing, orchestral music, and oft-poetic librettos (scripts) put together to tell a story.

Oratorio. Essentially an opera on a dramatic religious story drawn from scripture rather than the liturgy of the Mass; has several acts, but without scenery, action or costumes.

Overture. A short orchestral piece generally preceding an opera or ballet, although from the 19th century onward they can be works in their own right.

Prelude. An introductory, instrumental work, often to an opera. Also a short, self-contained piece for piano, or, less often, for orchestra.

Rondo (Rondeau). A form of medieval French music that reflected folk-dance elements. The vivacious, good-humored, lively movement is characterized by recurrence of a central idea alternating with contrasting elements. An instrumental musical form, the common shorthand was A-B-A-C-A-B-A.

Suite. Multi-movement work that incorporates dances or other short instrumental types; may be arranged to tell a programmatic story.

PERIODS IN MUSIC HISTORY.

Medieval	c. 1000-1490	Thomas of Celano, Vogelweide, Machaut, Dunstable, Dufay, Isaac
Renaissance	1490-1620	des Près, Taverner, Tallis, Palestrina, Lassus, Victoria, Sweelinck, Byrd, Dowland, Gibbons
Baroque	1600-1750	Monteverdi, Gabrieli, Corelli, Purcell, Lully, Vivaldi, Telemann, Bach, Handel
Classical	1750-1820	Haydn, Mozart, Gluck, Weber, Beethoven
Romantic	1820-1900	Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, Tchaikovsky, Wagner, Mendelssohn
Contemporary	1900 to present	Rachmaninoff, Vaughan Williams, Sibelius, Elgar, Gershwin, Stravinsky, Ravel

ASSOCIATED VALUES: How do the dominant musical elements express the moral, ethical, philosophical or political values of the composer?

Your first and last name

Instructor's name (spelled correctly)

Course (number and section number)

Assignment (Type or Name)

Date

How to Format and Cite an Essay
(a specific, original title goes here [centered]: do not use **bold** font)

This is the way your papers should look according to the MLA format. Use this format for all essays this semester. As you can see, you do not need a cover sheet (a title page). All the necessary information goes in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Indent each new paragraph using the TAB key (an automatic indent of one-half inch). Notice that the paper is double-spaced, that the page has one-inch margins all around, and that there are no extra blank lines between paragraphs. Use a 12 point font; it is easy to read and not too big. For your essay, use Arial, Times New Roman, Courier, or a similar font. To put your last name and page numbers in the top right corner, look under "Insert" or "View" in your word processing program for a function titled "Headers." You can also use this function to put your instructor's name in the "Footer."

You will need to refer to specific works in the critical analysis essays for this class. When you quote or paraphrase from a text, you should include an in-text citation as well as a Works Cited page with your paper. An in-text parenthetical citation should follow the quotation. Use the speaker/author's name in the signal phrase that introduces the quotation and identify the location of the reference in parenthesis at the end of the quote. Here is an example from *The Prince*: Machiavelli recommends the "conqueror must arrange to commit all his cruelties at once" (1). Note that the period that would normally end the sentence is moved after the

parenthetical citation. It is also a literary convention (customary practice) to use the present tense when referring to a quoted passage in a text.

Drama and poetry citations require some other elements. Use a slash to indicate the end of a line of verse for both drama in verse or poetry. Greek tragedy is written in verse, so use slashes to indicate ends of lines. Here's an example from the play *The Bacchae*: In the Prologue Dionysus warns, "I'll show myself to him and all of Thebes/a god indeed. /And when everything has happened as I wish, /I'll remove myself to another land /" (80.46-49).¹ Notice that in the citation you will need to include the page and line numbers so a reader curious to read the entire passage can more easily and quickly locate it. Here is a second example from *The Canterbury Tales: The Wife of Bath* wherein the wife confesses, "And thereupon I hit him on the cheek/" (123).

The titles of short works (short poems, short stories, essays) are normally indicated by quotation marks around the titles. According to the revised MLA documentation guidelines, long works (entire books, dramas [*The Bacchae* for example] epic poems, the titles of works of visual art and musical compositions) should be italicized. Consult a handbook such as *The Everyday Writer* if you aren't sure. (This has an orange cover with a green medallion on the cover indicating that it includes the 2009 MLA Update.)

Works Cited (or Bibliography) entries are in alphabetical order and without numbers. Use a hanging indentation (indent second and subsequent lines one-half inch). Double space between entries and between lines of individual entries. Another recent change is that you should specify the medium of your source. For hard copy sources, include the word "Print" at the end of the entry. For sources you access electronically, include the word "Web" and then

¹Euripides. *The Bacchae*. Trans. Paul Roche. *Three Plays by Euripides*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1974. Print.

the date of access. You are no longer required to include the URL. See the examples below, and consult *the Everyday Writer* 4th edition with the revised MLA Update for more examples.

With this handout I've tried to show, rather than just tell you, what papers for this class should look like. If you have further questions, don't hesitate to ask me or go to the PPCC Writing Center for assistance. The Writing Center also has copies of *The Everyday Writer*, 4th ed. with the revised MLA Guidelines.

Works Cited(examples)

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Community College, 2020.

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HOW TO WRITE AN ESSAY?

An essay is expository prose (informs, illustrates, or explains) that attempts to communicate an idea to a reader. Since a writer and a reader's frame of reference are not the same, no real communication can take place unless terms are defined (especially abstract terms). All good essays have a beginning, middle, and end (introduction, body, and conclusion). In order to facilitate communication, there are certain recommended procedures to be followed.

Introductory Paragraph--All communication begins by introducing the subject matter. Students often "throw" the idea at the reader, so that the reader's natural response is, "who cares?" It is the writer's job to make the reader care. If, in his introduction, a writer involves humankind in a general fashion, then he also involves the reader. Other types of introduction include quoting an authority, asking a question, or using an attractor sentence.

Thesis Statement--The introductory paragraph is a narrowing down to the assertion statement, otherwise known as the THESIS STATEMENT. This persuasive statement is the KEY TO THE ESSAY; it states the argument, assertion, or proposition to be defended throughout the essay. The Thesis statement is usually found as a transitional sentence at the end of the introductory paragraph.

Body or Middle of Essay--Theses paragraphs (minimum of three in a 500-word essay) are the concrete support for an essay. The student should SHOW the reader what he means--by examples, illustrations, comparison and contrast, to name a few. Never merely tell the reader by generalizations--SHOW him by examples.

Topic Sentence-- Each paragraph in the body of the essay should begin with a topic sentence. The topic sentence is the "mini-argument" which relates back to the thesis statement and also signals the reader what to expect in this particular paragraph. The body paragraphs are the attempt at proof for the thesis statement.

Transitions--Good essays always have a flow of ideas that are unified, coherent, and logical. Each paragraph should be linked to the preceding one by a valid transition. Transitions are the bridge or connections between ideas and may be a word, ("however"), a phrase ("on the other hand"), or a sentence.

Conclusion--Every unit of good communication must lead logically to a conclusion. The student might ask him/herself the following questions when creating a conclusion: What was my purpose in writing this essay? What did I attempt to support? What are far-reaching effects of my topic? Will something be better (worse) if my arguments are not heeded? Is there a solution to the arguments presented in the essay?

	What is Cultural Value #1? How is it expressed?	What is Cultural Value #2? How is it expressed?	What is Cultural Value #3? How is it expressed?	
Description of Music				
Description of Music element use				
Example 1 of Imagery				
Description of Art Element use				
Example 2 of Imagery				
Description of Art Element use				
Example 1 of Architecture				
Description of Art Element use				
Example 2 of Architecture				
Description of Art Element use				

Additional notes:

This worksheet is designed to help you approach a work of art critically, to figure out what are the right questions to ask about an image, and how to find the answers to those questions. Using a marker or pen, draw the dominant lines and shapes on a photocopy of the work. Doing so will help you to observe these elements of art more easily. Ask these key questions about each work.

	1. Title (<i>Italicize</i> titles of works of art)	
	2. Who was the artist?	
	3. Where and when was this work made?	
	4. What is the SUBJECT MATTER?	
	When and for what purpose was the work of art created?	
	Who “paid” for it (the issue of patronage)?	
	Explain who or what is depicted as fully as possible. You should do some information-gathering or research in order to answer this question since knowing who or what is depicted will help you connect the basic elements and cultural values to the work’s expressive purpose.	
	What was the source of the artist’s inspiration? It might have been the natural world, literature, mythology, Biblical, etc.)	
	Why was this work created?	
	Did it belong to a larger set or series?	
	If so, how does this knowledge advance our understanding of this particular work?	

	Is there a historical precedent to the work?	
	How was the work possibly influenced by, or inspired by, an earlier work?	
	If there are figures, what is the relation of the viewer's and artist's gaze to the gaze of the figures?	
	If the work is a PORTRAIT, does the work present a strong sense of an individual or does it represent a generic type of person?	
	Do you see the figure from the front, or from a three-quarter view, or in profile?	
	Is the viewer meant to see it from a fixed point of view?	
	Do you look up, down, or across at the figure?	
	What do the clothing, furnishings, accessories and background contribute?	
	What does the facial expression say?	
	Are certain bodily features distorted?	
	If a self-portrait, what image does the artist project?	
	If the work represents a DEITY, what ideas or attitudes of divinity are expressed?	
	If the work is a LANDSCAPE, the artist is not making an objective presentation of earth, rocks, green, water and sky.	
	Study the horizon, the season, the time of day, the weather. Do you look up, down, or across at the landscape?	
	Is the artist close or far away? Is the painting sharp and clear, or is only	

	one part in focus?	
	Did the artist paint every leaf on the tree?	
	What is the relation between human beings and nature?	
	Do natural objects reflect the emotions of the figures?	
	What does this say about the society?	
	If the work is a STILL LIFE, the artist is showing inanimate objects in a restricted setting.	
	What is the chief interest (perhaps a symbolic or moralistic intent, or humble domesticity, or a study of relationships between shapes and textures)?	
	Do you look up, down, or across at the objects?	
	How is the HISTORICAL CONTEXT, geographical, economic, social, political, religious, intellectual or scientific reflected in this specific example?	
	5. The ELEMENTS OF ART are the visual indicators of the values associated with this culture. Be attentive to the elements, as discussed on D2L <i>Using the Paradigm and the Basic Elements of Art</i> as you consider how this work demonstrates “what it is to be human.”	
	Describe the obvious and implied LINES in the work. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Are the lines vertical, horizontal or diagonal? •Are they curved or straight? •Is contrapposto evident? •What does the pose imply? •Explain how the lines reinforce the subject matter or ideas communicated by the work. 	
	Describe both the geometric (idealistic) and the	

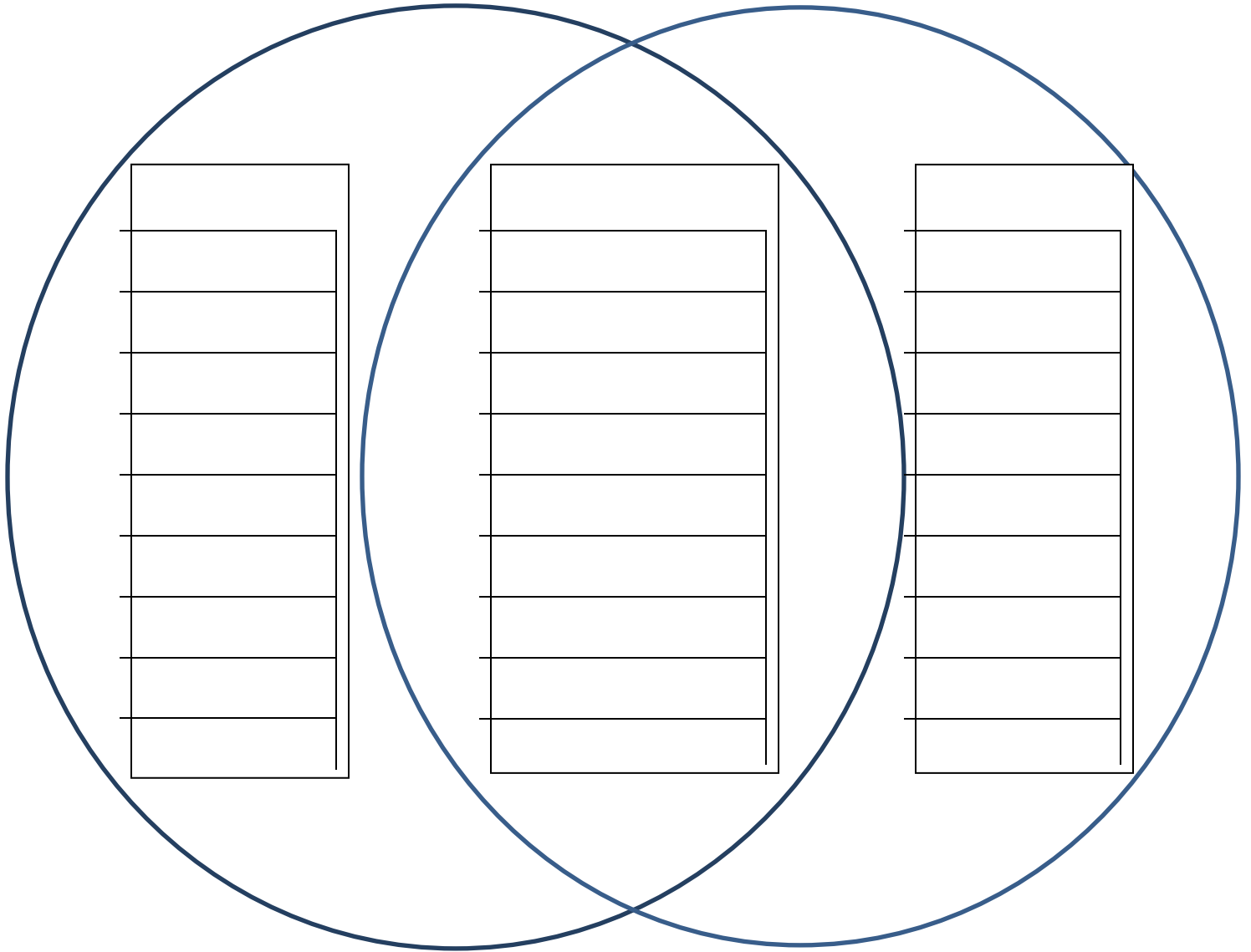
	<p>human (organic) SHAPES that form the work, and explain where you see them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Is the overall effect geometric or naturalistic? 	
	<p>What MEDIUM is used?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Why was this particular medium chosen? •Would the work have the same effect if it had been made in a different medium? <p>All painting and sculpture has a physical TEXTURE and COLOR. Describe the textures and colors of the work.</p>	
	<p>Describe the SPACE. •Is it open or closed? Defend three reasons as to why this is open or closed.</p>	
	<p>What is the SIZE of the original? How does the size reinforce the subject matter or ideas communicated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Are certain bodily features or forms distorted? Why? 	
	<p>6. What have you DISCOVERED? Art is intended to lead you to contemplate life by looking through the eyes of another. It is supposed to wake you up, taking you where you have never been before.</p>	
	<p>How would viewers of that era have understood this work? What did it communicate to them?</p>	
	<p>How does the <u>artist's philosophy</u> or background affect this work?</p>	
	<p>What distinguishes this from another culture, making this uniquely of the Renaissance (rather than, say, Byzantine or Baroque)?</p>	
	<p>What is your personal reaction?</p>	

	What effect does this work have on you as a viewer from another age?	

Now you may write your essay! You will not want to discuss each and every point on this worksheet, but you will discuss the key distinguishing features. Your essay should include:

- An **introduction** which culminates in your **thesis**.
- Informative **body paragraphs** that demonstrate the validity of your thesis statement.
- A **conclusion** that sums up how these works use the pictorial conventions to illustrate what it is to be human.

I'm looking forward to reading about these amazing works!



Subject:

Subject:

ART ANALYSIS ESSAY— CLASSICAL GREEK SCULPTURE Work sheet

This assignment is designed to help you approach a work of art critically, to figure out what are the right questions to ask about an image, and how to find the answers to those questions.

Directions:

- Choose a free-standing Classical Greek sculpture that you like.¹ If possible, view it from several different angles and in different light conditions.
- Using a marker or pen, draw the lines and shapes on a photocopy of the work. Doing so will help you to observe the elements of art more easily.
- It is your task to write an essay that explains **how this sculpture demonstrates the Humanistic, Rationalistic, and Idealistic values of the Classical Greek era.**
- Introduce quoted or paraphrased information with signal phrase(s) and include a parenthetical citation with page or paragraph number. At the end of your analysis include a Works Cited listing. [See the *Essay Formatting Sheet* under Introductory Materials for Studying the Humanities on D2L. You may ask me if you have questions, or take your paper to the Writing Center for assistance with this.]
- An annotated bibliography with the publishing information and a short description of how you used the source to form or support your thesis must be included on every Humanities paper.
- Please submit this worksheet with your essay.

Key Questions to Ask About a Work of Art.

1. **Title** (*Italicize* titles of works of art) _____

2. **Who** was the sculptor? _____

3. **Where and when** was this work made? _____

4. **What is the SUBJECT MATTER?** Explain who or what is depicted as fully as possible. You should do some information-gathering or research in order to answer this question since knowing who or what is depicted in the sculpture will help you connect the basic elements and cultural values to the work's expressive purpose. _____

•What is the source (the natural world, literature, mythology, religion, etc.) of the artist's inspiration? _____

¹ Appropriate images may be found in several locations. An initial search might begin with the PowerPoint notes from your HUM 121 class on Classical Greek Sculpture (under D2L Contents). You could also look at related web-links (under D2L Tools) as well as ARTstor (go to www.pgcc.edu/search/ then to Library Access; then to Data Bases; then Humanities; and finally you select ArtStor). Web sites whose URL's end in org. or edu. are appropriate places to consult, as are major museum websites. Wikipedia, Answers.com and Encarta are not academic sources.

•Why was this sculpture created? What was its original purpose?

•Did it belong to a larger set or series? If so, how does this knowledge advance our understanding of this particular work?

•Is this a copy of an earlier original?

•How was the work possibly influenced by, or inspired by, an earlier work?

•When and for what purpose was the work of art created (the issue of patronage)? Who “paid” for it?

•Where would the work originally have been seen?

•Was an illuminating source of light important to that original installation?

•If the work is a portrait, does the work present a strong sense of an individual or does it represent a generic type of person?

•If the sculpture represents a deity, what ideas of divinity are expressed?

5. Creation does not generally occur in a void.

Using cited sources, **discuss the HISTORICAL CONTEXT FACTORS** (geographical, economic, social, political, religious, intellectual or scientific) **that are reflected in this specific sculpture.**

•How would viewers of that era have understood this work? What did it communicate to them?

•How does the artist’s philosophy or background affect this work? (Even if the name of the artist is not known, what might you surmise about his or her status, background and education?)

•What distinguishes this from another culture, making this uniquely Classical (rather than, say, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Archaic Greek or Hellenistic Greek)?

6. The **ELEMENTS OF ART** are the visual indicators of the values associated with this culture. Be attentive to the elements, as discussed on D2L *Using the Paradigm and the Basic Elements of Art*, as you consider how this work demonstrates Humanism, Rationalism and Idealism.

A. **Lines** give directions and organize the space.

- Draw, and then describe the action lines at the shoulders, hips and knees.
- Draw and then describe other significant lines.
- Are the lines vertical, horizontal or diagonal?
- Are they curved or straight?
- Is contrapposto evident? Which foot is bearing most of the weight?
- What does the pose imply?
- Explain how the lines reinforce the subject matter or ideas communicated by the sculpture.
- What cultural value is suggested by the artist's choice of these lines?

B. **Shapes** are closed lines. They must have length and width.

Draw and then describe both the geometric (idealistic) and the organic (human or natural forms) shapes that form the sculpture.

- Is the overall effect geometric or naturalistic?
- Explain how the dominant shapes suggest the culture that produced this sculpture.
- What cultural value is suggested by the artist's choice of these shapes?

C. What **medium** is used?

- Why was this particular medium chosen?
- Would the sculpture have the same effect if it were in a different medium?
- How does the medium help you to classify the work?

D. **Texture** suggests the sensation of touch.

All sculpture has a physical texture and color!

- What is the message told by the texture?
- How does the texture indicate the culture that produced it?
- If drapery is included, what does it contribute to whatever the work expresses?

E. **Color** conveys information and emotion. It may have a sacred or symbolic function.

- We know that most of these works were originally painted! Does your selection have any lingering paint, or has a contemporary artist reworked the sculpture with a modern interpretation of the colors?

F. **Space** suggests the relationships between shapes or forms.

•Is the space open or closed? What three criteria

Of open or closed space does this possess?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

•Does a mathematical canon of proportions influence this sculpture?

•How does the element of space reinforce the values associated with the culture that produced it?

G. What is the **size** of the original?

•How does the size reinforce the subject matter or ideas communicated by the sculpture?

•Are certain bodily features or forms distorted? If so, why?

7. Identify three **VALUES** that are apparent in this work and support your answer by referring to specific features of the work, or what you know or have learned about the culture. (Don't automatically assume that it does demonstrate the traditional values; works of art have a way of eluding easy generalizations.)

8. What have you **DISCOVERED**? Art is intended to lead you to contemplate life by looking through the eyes of another. It is supposed to wake you up, taking you where you have never been before.

•What is your personal reaction?

•What effect does this work have on you as a viewer from another age?

•Do you think the artist shares the traditional values of his/her culture? How do you know this?

Now you may write your essay! You will not want to discuss each and every point on this worksheet, but you will discuss the key distinguishing features which make this a work from Classical Greece.

- Your three-and-a-half to four-page (3 ½ - 4) essay should include the essential components of an essay, including an **introduction** which culminates in your **thesis**. The thesis will assert what makes this a Classical Greek sculpture, and what the sculpture says about Greek culture at this time.
- Informative **body paragraphs** will demonstrate the validity of your thesis statement.
- The **conclusion** should sum up how this sculpture effectively utilizes the pictorial conventions of its time and place and exhibits the values associated with the Classical Greek era.

I'm looking forward to reading about this amazing sculpture!

ART ANALYSIS FORM - ARCHITECTURE

Student's name: _____ Title of Work: _____

Artist: _____ Historical period: _____

Dates: _____

SUBJECT: _____

As you begin to study your selected work, consider how the work relates to its historical and or cultural period. You will answer this question at the end of your assignment, once you have taken the time to look at and answer the questions below about the basic elements, the associated values, and the expressive content of the work.

I. BASIC ELEMENTS:

A. **Exterior** of the architecture

- a. Describe the different types of line used in the building
- b. What effect do the different types of lines have on the architecture?
- c. What shapes are used?
- d. How do the shapes relate to one another?
- e. What effect do the shapes have on the viewer?
- f. How is the spatial element organized? Is it self-contained?
- g. Does it seem active or static?
- h. What effect does the spatial organization have on the viewer?
- i. What aspects of the culture are reflected in the spatial organization?
- j. What colors are used?
- k. What effect do the colors have on the architecture?
- l. What textures are evident?
- m. How do the various textures affect the viewer's feelings about the architecture?

B. Respond to the following questions if the **interior** differs from the exterior in design.

- n. Describe the different types of line used in the building.
- o. What effect do the different types of lines have on the architecture?
- p. What shapes are used?
- q. How do the shapes relate to one another?
- r. What effect do the shapes have on the viewer?
- s. How is the spatial element organized? Is it self-contained?
- t. Does it seem active or static?
- u. What effect does the spatial organization have on the viewer?
- v. What aspects of the culture are reflected in the spatial organization?
- w. What colors are used?
- x. What effect do the colors have on the architecture?
- y. What textures are evident?
- z. How do the various textures affect the viewer's feelings about the architecture?

II. ASSOCIATED VALUES

- a. What is the purpose or function of the building?
- b. Cite examples of influences from previous styles
- c. Based on your analysis, what seem to be the values of this culture?
- d. What geographical, economic, social, political, religious, intellectual (philosophical) or scientific events or concerns of this or the previous historical era might have contributed to this particular style?
- e. What evidence do you find that these are reflected in this building?
- f. Does the artist's philosophy or background affect this work? If so how?

ART ANALYSIS FORM-PAINTING

Student's name _____ Section _____

Title of work _____

Artist _____ Historical Period _____

Dates _____

As you begin to study your selected work, consider how the work relates to its historical and or cultural period. You will answer this question at the end of your assignment, once you have taken the time to look at and answer the questions below about the basic elements, the associated values, and the expressive content of the work.

I. BASIC ELEMENTS

- A. Describe the dominant lines used in the painting.
- B. What effect do the different types of lines have on the work of art?
- C. What colors are included?
- D. Describe the use of light and shadow in the painting, if any. Is there a natural or supernatural source of light?
- E. What effect do the colors and the light and shadow have on the painting?
- F. How is the spatial element organized? Open? _____ Closed _____? How do you know?
- G. What type of perspective is used? (linear, atmospheric, bird's eye)
- H. What effect does it have on the painting?
- I. What concerns of the historical era are suggested by the type of perspective used?
- J. Identify and describe both geometric and human shapes and their significance to the painting?

II. ASSOCIATED VALUES

- A. What is the function of the work?
- B. Give examples of influences from previous styles.
- C. Based on your analysis, what values of the period seem to be reflected in the painting?
- D. What geographical, economic, social, political, religious, intellectual or scientific events or concerns of the historical era might have contributed to this particular style?
- E. What evidence do you find that these are reflected in the work of art?
- F. Does the artist's philosophy or background affect this work? If so, how?
- G. Does your background affect your reaction to this work? How?

III. EXPRESSIVE CONTENT – How is the work organized to suggest or illustrate the artist's intent?

ART ANALYSIS FORM - MOSAIC

Student's name _____ Section _____

Title of the work _____ Artist _____

Historical period _____ Dates _____

Subject _____

As you begin to study your selected work, consider how the work relates to its historical and or cultural period. You will answer this question at the end of your assignment, once you have taken the time to look at and answer the questions below about the basic elements, the associated values, and the expressive content of the work.

I. BASIC ELEMENTS

- a. Describe the different types of line used in the mosaic.
- b. What effect do the different types of lines have on the work of art?
- c. What colors are included?
- d. Is any shading used in the mosaic?
- e. What effect do the colors and the light and shadow have on the mosaic?
- f. How is the spatial element organized? Is it open? _____ Is it closed? _____ How do you know?
- g. Is there an illusion of depth, or is the picture flat?
- h. What effects does it have on the mosaic?
- i. What concerns of the historical era are suggested by the illusion of depth or lack thereof?
- j. What shapes are important?
- k. In what ways are the shapes significant?
- l. What effects do the tesserae, when illuminated; have on the appearance of the mosaic?

II. ASSOCIATED VALUES

- a. What is the function of the work of art?
- b. Give examples of influences from previous styles.
- c. Based on your analysis, what seem to be the values of the period?
- d. What geographical, economic, social, political, religious, intellectual and scientific events or concerns of this or the previous historical era might have contributed to this particular style?
- e. What evidence do you find that these are reflected in this work?
- f. Does your background affect your reaction to this work? How?

III. EXPRESSIVE CONTENT. How is the work organized to suggest or illustrate the artist's intent?

ART ANALYSIS FORM – SCULPTURE

Student's name _____ Section _____

Title of the work _____ Artist _____

Historical Period _____ Dates _____

I. Subject _____

II. Basic Elements

- A. Describe the lines in the sculpture.
- B. What effect do the different types of lines have on this work of art?
- C. What shapes are evident (They will not necessarily be geometric.)
- D. What effect do the shapes have on the statue?
- E. How is the spatial element organized? Open? Closed?
How do you know that it is open or closed?
- F. Does the sculpture appear to act on the space surrounding it? What concerns of the period does the spatial organization reflect? (i.e. Why is it open or closed?)
- G. What medium is used?
- H. Why was this particular medium used at this time in this location?
- I. Does the texture or color of the statue affect the meaning of the work?

III. Associated Values

- A. What is the purpose or function of the work?
- B. Give examples of influences from previous styles.
- C. Based on your analysis, what seem to be the values of this culture?
- D. What geographical, economic, social, political, religious, intellectual or scientific events or concerns of this or the previous historical era might have contributed to this particular style? What evidence do you find that these are reflected in this work?
- E. Does the artist's philosophy or background affect this work?

IV. Expressive Content - How is the work organized to suggest or illustrate the artist's intent?

EVALUATION OF AN EVENT

Student's Name _____

Title of Work _____

Date Work was created _____ Artist _____

Date of Performance _____

- Directions:
- Attach the program.
 - Choose ONE musical selection, one dance including the music, or one act of a play.
 - Each question requires one or more complete paragraphs.

1. Relate the work to its historical and/or cultural period. Discuss the ways in which the work's content and/or style are characteristic of that historical period. Explain why this work is being performed today.
2. Describe three of the basic elements used in the development of the work. Support your descriptions with examples from the work itself. (You may mix or match elements from the following five categories.)

Art elements: line, shape, space and perspective, color and light and shadow, media and texture

Musical elements: meter, rhythm, tempo, dynamics, melody, harmony, form

Theatrical elements: lighting, set design, sound effects, acting, direction

Literary elements: characterization, theme, tone, atmosphere

Dance elements: space, lines, shapes, theme, relationship of music to movement

3. Explain and defend how these specific elements suggest three cultural values that are important in the work. Provide examples from the work to support your answer.
4. Describe your reaction to this event. Your reaction must be based on basic elements of the work, on the quality of the performance or execution, on the performance setting (visual, acoustic, comfort level), on the nature of the audience, on the values you perceived in the work or its performance, or on all of the above or other factors.

Please note any sources used in studying the work.

MUSIC ANALYSIS

Student's Name _____

Composer _____ Musical Work _____

Responses must be in complete sentences and as thorough as possible. Type or word process the form according to the amount of space you require.

Melody (describe it) Range of notes?

Length of melodic line?

Steps between notes:

Jagged or smooth:

Effect of melodies on the listener and the music

Harmony (Consonance or Dissonance?) Block, Counterpoint, Combined?

_____ Effects of the different types of harmony on the music

Orchestration (Instruments or Voices) Which ones play melody one and melody two?
