



ARTY STORIES

BOOK 1

EGYPT - GREECE - ROME
Empires & Games



**Art and life
across the centuries**

Ian Matsuda, FCA, BA (Hons)

for
Noko

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*Cover: Discobolus of Myron, originally bronze in 450 BC, Roman copy, British Museum, London
Queen Nefertiti, 1345 BC, Laocoon and his Sons, 200BC- 70AD, Greek trireme Warship, c.500BC*

'ARTY STORIES'

Art & Life across the centuries

This series of six books tells the stories of events and lives and the influence of art that reflects these societies.

Designed specifically for younger students to create an interest for complementary studies in both art and history, they provide an easy and accessible introduction to the myriad lives and wonderful art over the centuries.

Together they provide a sweeping framework in which to follow and understand the struggles and triumphs of people in the evolving changes through peace and war from 3,000BC until today.

By taking this holistic approach this book contributes to the UK Educational targets of Key Stage 3, ages 11-14 *'know how art and design both reflect and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation'*.

This also contributes to the educational debates in the USA on the benefits of art to the health of society.

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Book 1

EGYPT – GREECE - ROME

Empires & The 'Games'

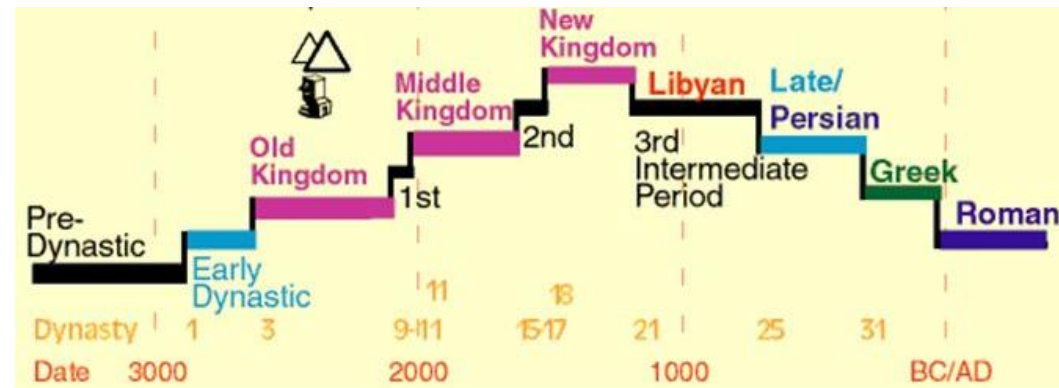
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Ancient Egypt - a perfect paradise

Egyptians saw their Empire and world as a perfect paradise and if they lived a good life then in death they would pass to the same paradise. Unfortunately, their life meant that they would make an early trip to that paradise, but it was a good life, supported by a host of Gods.

Ancient Egypt was a land of remarkable stability with 3 Kingdoms lasting up to 500 years each with short disruptions, after which life would return to the normal 'paradise'. Their frescoes adhere to a strict religious and cultural design, reflecting the unchanging world both now and in the afterlife. Simple lines and flat areas of colour create a sense of order and balance within a composition.

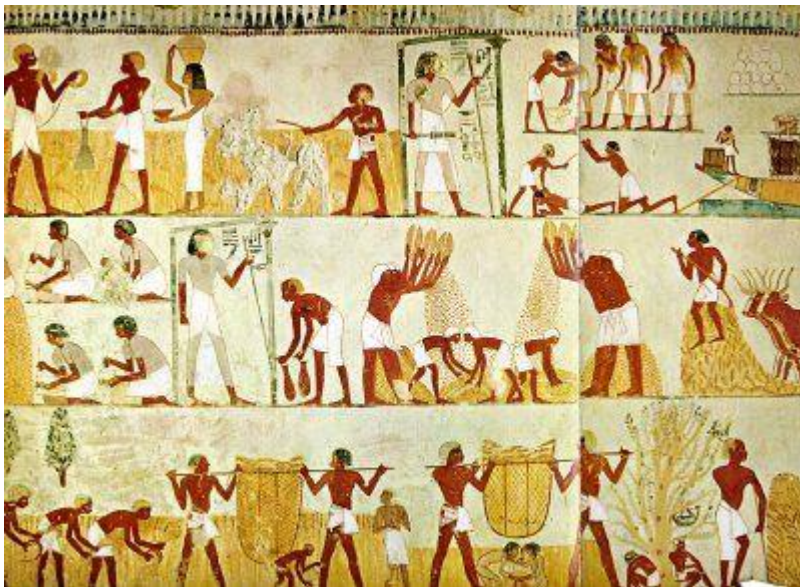


An order and balance fundamental to Egyptian culture, in a society unchanged over 2,000 years. (1)

The Egyptians had a love of life, believing that they lived the best possible life in the best possible of worlds, before and after death. The philosophy was one of living in harmony and in balance with both the community and the world at large. A line from the First Kingdom reads:

*Let your face shine during the time that you live.
It is the kindness of a man that is remembered
during the years that follow*

This philosophy applied to all social classes, where all valued life and enjoyed competing in 'Games'. Board games and sports were popular pastimes and the 'games' were often combined with festivals and national celebrations. Field hockey, rowing, javelin, archery and running were - after 30 years of reign - even the Pharaoh was required to prove his fitness by running a measured course. Fitness was important and weekly routines were designed to encourage not just stamina, but team spirit. This healthy life was reflected in cleanliness both in their homes and personally where all bathed regularly, with men shaving their heads and body hair to avoid lice.



Tomb relief of ploughing, harvesting and threshing.

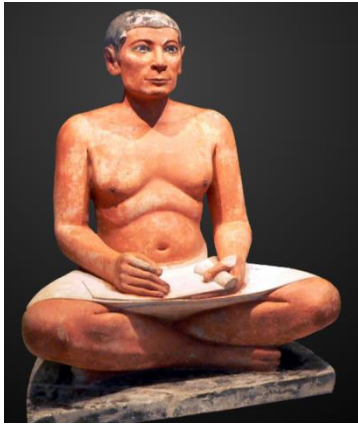
Women had total equality in owning a business or land and initiating divorce. While men laboured in the field, women ran the home, including the vegetable plot and making the bread and a honeyed beer – essential staples of people's lives. The Nile was not clean enough to drink, so a low alcohol beer was consumed by all and 'inns' were in every community. People enjoyed their social lives and also feasts and festivals accompanied by music and dance. (2)

The vast majority were farmers who worked the fields for the state or landowning local nobles, taking a portion of the cereals for themselves. This was supplemented by growing vegetables alongside their homes and supplemented by fishing, regulated by the state. So, all Egyptians enjoyed a vegetarian diet, supplemented by some poultry and fish, particularly on festival days. The Egyptians believed that humans, animals and plants were one of a whole and an essential element of the 'cosmic order'.

An agricultural and environmental system which many people advocate today.



Children had pets and toys including puppets, dolls and mobile wooden toys and storytelling of magic, romance and ghosts provided a history. Children ran naked until the age of puberty at 13 for girls and 15 for boys, when they would normally marry. People wore short linen 'kilts' that were difficult to dye so most were left in their natural off-white colour and all went barefoot.



The Seated scribe, Saqqara

This society ran without coinage, but under a barter system where fixed amounts of agricultural produce could be exchanged into copper, silver or gold. A system that was standardised across Egypt and so which resisted any monetary collapse or inflation and was open to all and supervised by 'scribes', who held a respected position in the administrative and legal bodies.

Rather than applying written legal statutes, disputes were settled on a common sense view of right and wrong. Punishment was swift and all swore an oath to speak the truth.

Slaves were mostly servants kept but unpaid or captured in battle or were criminals. They could earn money and buy themselves out of servitude to be full members of society. Society ran on native Egyptians, not on slavery.

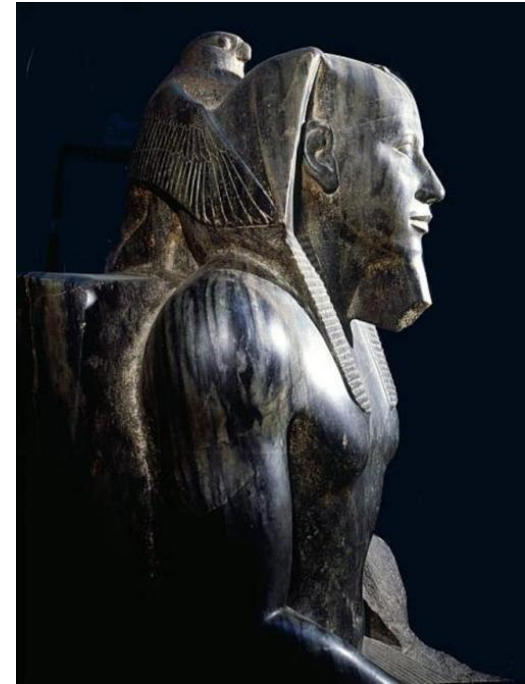
This perfect life had one underlying fault. With the Nile running at the centre of this tropical country to the north of Africa, disease from parasites such as malaria and worms, threatened all those who worked and played outside. One third of children would die, with their father dying at age 30 and their mother at 35. People died young, although with an unshakeable faith in an afterlife. With a life spent pampered indoors the Upper classes lived longer from age 60 anywhere up to 90, ironically providing the stability in Egyptian society.

This long living upper class (3) could take a longer view and undertake monumental buildings, which are astonishing in the remarkable skill and techniques used by artisans.

Ancient Egypt, Sculpture & Architecture

This sculpture of Pharaoh Khafre was one of 13 that stood in a huge pillared necropolis (funerary city) and is carved from an extremely hard and dark stone, related to diorite. To carve and then polish this stone with only a bronze tool and then grind and polish the surface, is a remarkable achievement, particularly in the symmetry and ideal body proportions. His strong face suppresses all motion to create an eternal stillness, in a controlled empire with powerful leadership. He is portrayed as eternal in the universe that all Egyptians lived, underlining the unchanging nature of life, which encompassed all living things. Here the God Horus was depicted as a falcon, spreading its wings to protect the Pharaoh, in an Egyptian Empire.

Khafre, enthroned, 2570 BC



The life size bust of Nefertiti also portrays a timeless beauty that will continue into the afterlife and is still with us today, 3300 years later. The bust shows a symmetry in the lines of the wide hat continuing through the forehead, down to the chin and poised on the delicate neck, much as a flower stem. Nefertiti displays a protective kindness and authority with her chin held high. This beauty and realism are in direct contrast to the religious confines of frescoes.

Egypt abounds with a sense of order and a power that is unchallenged and is displayed in the architectural order of the King's tomb on the Giza plateau, adjacent to Cairo.

Bust of Nefertiti, 1345BC, Great Royal Wife on the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten



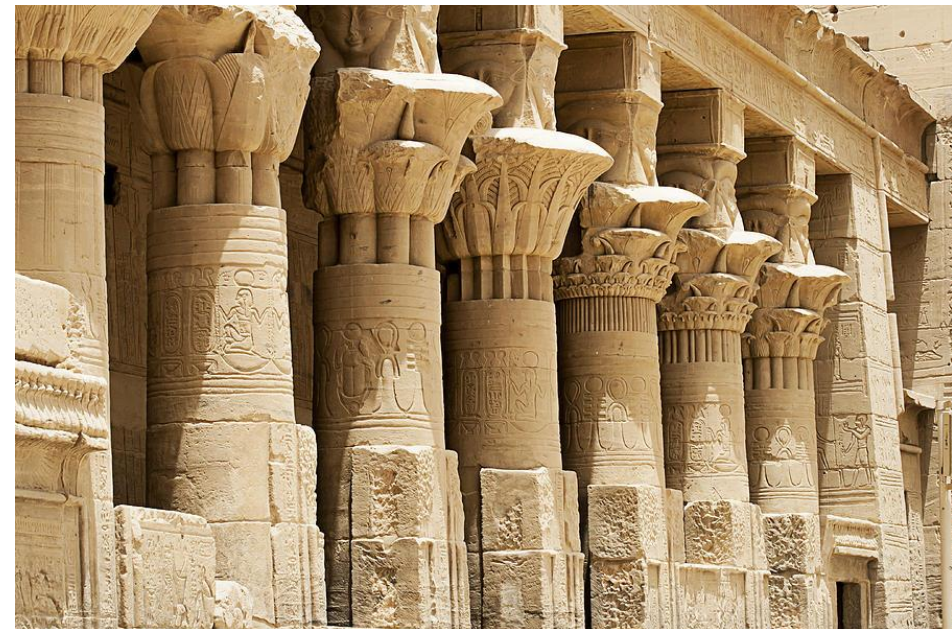
The Giza pyramids were built 4,600 years ago to such mathematical precision, that at 139m high, each base is equal to an error of just 58mm with joints of 0.5mm between each of the 2.9 million two-ton blocks. Over 15 years of building, one would be set every 10 minutes, following a production line of quarrying, shipment and precision cutting. The exterior was clad in highly polished white limestone panels and possibly with a gold capstone. Their past is very sophisticated.

At the same time Northern Europe was building the crude Stonehenge.

Pyramids of Giza, 2589-2504 BC, Pharaoh Khufu

Built over 10-15 years by between 40-100,000 employed workers and artisans, enjoying privileged conditions in an adjacent village and assisted by farmers during the annual flooding of the Nile. To work on any Pharaoh's tomb or temple, was considered an honour. After Giza, pyramids were built much smaller and later pharaohs were buried in underground tombs in the Valley of Kings, hiding sites from later tomb raiders.

Great temple complexes were built to house a Treasury and a series of tombs, dominated by a temple. The carved columns and painted roofs, hide an underground series of chambers and passages, as in a maze. These are a designed to protect tombs and confuse and trap any prospective robber with 20-ton trapdoors. Historical records tell of a fabled lost network of 200 rooms, yet to be uncovered. These inspired the garden mazes we have today.



Hypostyle Hall, Temple of Hathor, Dendera, 2250 BC

Although trading throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, the Egyptian people were not great travellers, regarding other lands as inferior to their 'universe'. They traded across the Mediterranean with 43 metre ships exporting grain and linen and bringing back spices, oil and luxury goods, with ebony gold and ivory from Punt. (North Africa) Their military was primarily for defensive purposes and only extended their empire when threatened by countries to the North. But the Egyptian Empire was to eventually decline and be taken over first by the Persians from Arabia, then the Greeks, to be finally absorbed into the Roman Empire. The Greeks in particular frequently visited and took home the architectural temple designs.

Egypt, extent of Empire, 157-1069BC



Art had underpinned Egyptian society by projecting an unchanging and secure life in which everybody was part, guided by a ruling Pharaoh. Art told their story and was a visible depiction of their culture and beliefs.

Ancient Greece - Wars

Ancient Greece, land of Gods and wars. For an incredible thousand years, war and peace swept across the lands and seas between Sparta, Athens and Troy and finally facing the Persian Empire. Their world was a mixture of peace and turmoil, of victory and defeat, where the Gods held sway.

Life was dominated by the Greeks' belief in their Gods overseeing and rewarding their lives, although they did not share the Ancient Egyptian belief in a continued paradise after death. Gods were fundamental to religious culture and life, but it was a male dominated society.



For 500 years the individual city states of Sparta, Athens and Troy fought on land and sea. Greece was a place both of beauty and brutality. Children in Sparta, both rich and poor, were trained for war from the age of seven and later required to serve in the army. Each state was afraid that the other would become too strong and then by monopolising resources, overpower all the states around. During one siege the Spartan warriors were massed at the gates of Athens, but they were never to enter. Each state depended on their harvest to feed their citizens and most people worked in the fields. The warriors were also farmers and had to return home for the harvest!

But threats also came from across the sea where the great Persian Empire in Asia Minor, was massed at the doors and set to invade.

Classical Greece was not to emerge until the Persian threat had been overturned and it would take two great battles for that to happen. Persia invaded in 480BC at the Battle of Marathon where 10,000 Athenians faced some 20,000 Persians and a Persian fleet of 600 'triremes' (galleys) with transport ships for soldiers, horses and provisions.



Great battles at sea would see 170 oarsmen in each galley, smash and crash their great pointed bows into the enemy. On land, their armies would line up to face each other and charge to crash with their shields. Then tear into each other with long spears and use short swords to cut and slash when the spears broke. These were fierce and bloody hand to hand battles.

Although outnumbered 2:1 the Athenians triumphed, surrounding and destroying the Persian army soon after their landing on the beach. Persia's empire was dealt a mighty blow with a loss of 6,400 men against just 192 Athenians. The runner Phillippides ran the famous 25 miles from Marathon to Athens to announce the victory and with his very last breath exclaimed *'Joy, we win'* and the legend of the Olympic marathon was born.

10 years later a unified Spartan and Athenian army faced a second even larger Persian force of 100-150,000, facing just 7,000 Greeks. But superior Greek strategy drew the Persian army into a narrow pass between cliffs and the sea, squeezing the Persians against a Greek wall of bronze shields. They resisted for 3 days, until - with the dead piled high for the Persians to clamber over - just 300 Spartans and 700 Athenians were surrounded by the Persian army in a brave, but futile defence.



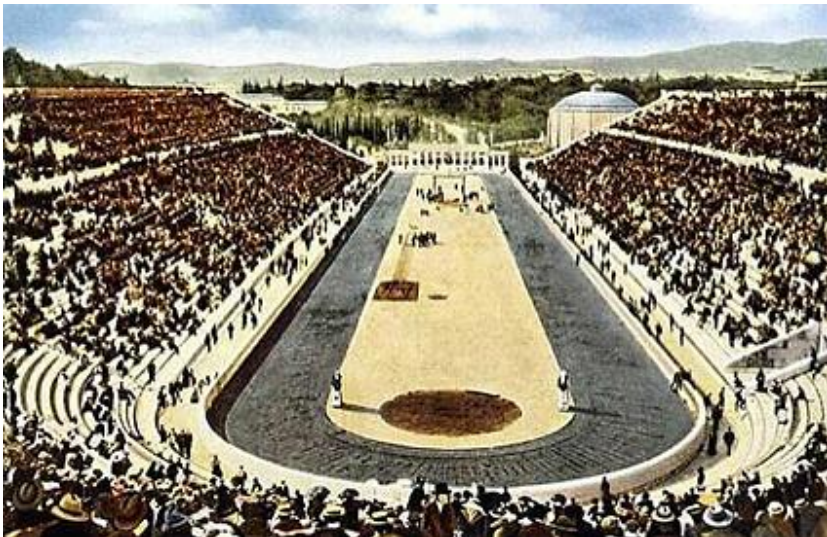
Finally beaten, Athens was evacuated and then burned to the ground. But at sea the Greeks had simultaneously trapped and decimated the larger Persian fleet, again by luring them into a narrow stait, cutting off their escape home. With the bulk of their 3,000 transport ships destroyed, the Persian army withdrew on a long overland march home, where most were lost to disease and starvation. Persia never again regained its strength. (4)

This great victory left the Greek states to dominate the Eastern Mediteranean, bringing huge trade and great wealth to its people and leading to a unified Empire formed by Alexander the Great. This strength formed the seeds for classical Greece, bringing democracy and the great art and culture that we still admire to this day.

Ancient Greece - The Olympics

Amazingly there was one thing that would stop all wars – the Olympics! Winning at the Olympic Games was as important as it is today, bringing great fame and prestige and wealth to the athlete and to his home city and state. The greatest games of the ancient world. But to enter each state had to sign a truce that no wars would be fought during the ‘Games’ – sport wins over war! Their dominance was then asserted through sport.

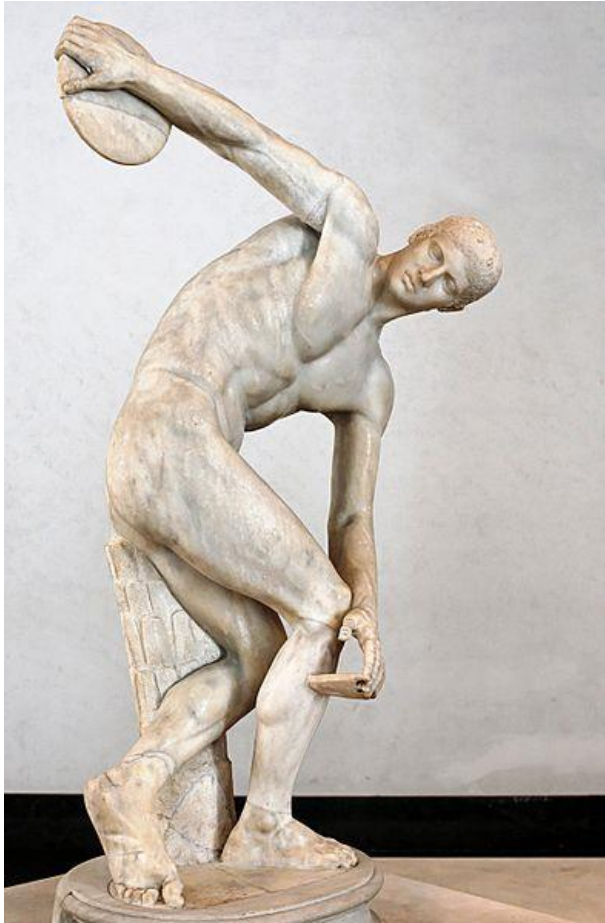
Competitors came from near and far with some making a long journey, including a 2-day boat voyage from the islands and lands around the mainland. In those days, this could be a dangerous voyage with storms driving the boats on to rocks and many drowning.



On arrival the stadium stretched before them, high up in a ravine, in the hills north of Sparta. Under clear blue skies, a white oval with tiers of seats for 50,000 people from all the states. A sea of white robes, all cheering and singing.

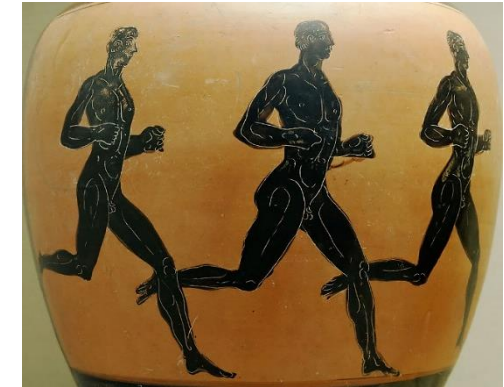
The athletes would line up to enter the arena, each naked and glistening with olive oil rubbed in to their skin to display their muscles. (Women were banned from the stadium, to have their own games) Striding down the entrance steps, through a line of life-size bronze statues celebrating past champions - also polished and shining in the sun - to parade around the arena, as each state cheered their champion. (5)

With the games so important, cheating was banned, as with doping today. Any athlete found cheating would have his name published and shown at the entrance, to the great shame of both himself and of his state. This reinforced the bonds in society and the cultural values of honour and loyalty.



One event was the discus and that can still be seen in one of the statues commemorating a past champion. Today that bronze statue has long gone, but the Romans had made a marble copy known as 'Discobolus' – the 'Discus Thrower'. In the long jump competitors swung two weights in front of themselves, to throw their arms and body further forward. (5)

A major aspect of the Olympics was artistic expression, where Greeks described these athletes as 'beautiful' and admired their strength and elegance, which reflected their 'ideal' culture. Their fame was celebrated on vases and jugs where their balance is artistically portrayed



Discobolus, originally bronze in 450 BC, Roman copy, British Museum, London

The Games continued for another 700 years and grew to some 50 events of running, jumping, javelin, boxing and wrestling, with even soldiers in heavy bronze armour running two laps, and the famous chariot races. (5)



All the Greek city states shared a winged goddess of victory called 'Nike' who stood at the entrance to the Games.

Now we have running shoes made by 'Nike' using the same wing:



Winged Nike, c. 200 BC, Louvre Paris

Ancient Greece - Sculpture & Beauty

As we have seen the ancient Greeks admired a natural beauty, but additionally the beauty of their character - how beautiful they were as a person and sculptures gave this a physical expression. Women did not enjoy the same rights of women in Ancient Egypt, but as Gods they were admired for their grace, beauty and compassion, typified in the sculpture: *'The Three Graces'*, handmaidens to the goddess of beauty Aphrodite.



Each girl represents a grace with the first for elegance, the second for beauty and the third sister for joy. They welcomed everyone, reminding the Greeks of a world of goodness and charity.

Displayed at the centre of public baths, the towels are shown on either side over water jars. The public baths were very popular in ancient Greece and were originally part of the athletes' 'gymnasium'. They became a community spa where all people could come to socialise and philosophise - a national obsession.

This Roman copy is just 4 feet tall and made in marble, but originally, they may have been made in baked terracotta clay, when they could then be painted in natural colours, displaying their make-up.

'The Three Graces', Roman copy of a Greek statue from c.300BC, The Louvre, Paris



Heavy make-up was seen as a lower social status. Their hair was carefully braided each day and the fashion was for pale white skin, signifying a status of not working out in the sun. Poisonous lead was used to whiten their skin and their face creams were made with honey. They liked to colour their naturally black hair, to golden, using vinegar and the sun to lighten it. (6)

A world of colour in cities

The ancient Greek world was full of colour, on buildings and sculptures – everywhere. Most sculptures were made in bronze or in clay terracotta and then painted in bright colours, but the colours have long since worn off.



This statue of 'The Archer' compares how he looks today, uncoloured with how he could have looked when painted, alive and vibrant. Colour ran throughout the city, fostering a great pride in the citizens for their society and for its culture.

Art can influence our views of life and in Athens the arts helped to create an identity. A pride and loyalty to support and defend the state in times of war.

A Trojan archer, Temple of Aphaia, c. 490BC. Sackler Museum, Harvard, USA. Vinzenz Brinkmann & Ulrike Kohn-Brinkmann

In Athens the public buildings were painted, shining out from the hills over Athens and showing the sophisticated culture of Athens to the ancient world. For an informative animation of Athens at this time, go to:

<https://www.greece-is.com/assassins-creed-odyssey-stuns-incredible-recreation-ancient-athens/>

The temple of the Parthenon stands in ruins today high up on a hill in the centre of the city, but was very different when originally painted.



The Parthenon, Athens, illustration of possible original colours



The temple strongly resembles the Ancient Egyptian multi-pillared temples and like them was used as a Treasury. The frieze allows for an angled roof and when painted, brings the figures to life where otherwise they would be difficult to see. The classic style of the Parthenon has been replicated over centuries and remains to this day a statement of wealth, power and culture and used by banks and government buildings.

Dominating and looking down on the city of Athens, the temple was designed to bring a pride to the Athenians and gave rise to a high culture of art, philosophy and democracy, although only half of the citizens could vote. The temple held a colossal 35m statue of the goddess Athena, who represented a host of qualities from wisdom, law and the arts through to strategic warfare. Brightly painted and adorned with gold and ivory, the statue towered over the interior.

Ancient Greece, Alexander the Great - the Greek empire

Alexander the Great was the most famous Greek warrior and was the first King to rule all of Greece in 336BC. But as a shooting star, his glory and reign were to be tragically short lived.

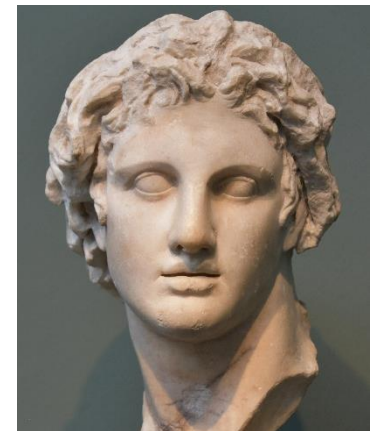


Rising to the throne at just 20, he brought the states together as one Greek empire. In just 4 years he conquered most of the countries around the Mediterranean and the Middle East. In deadly battles he overcame all, including the Persians and was welcomed as a saviour into Egypt. By 27 he had fought and won against overwhelming odds, to rule over 3 continents as far as India, founding 70 cities, but then dying of a fever aged just 33. (7)

Battle with Persia, 331 BC. Mosaic from Pompeii, c. 100BC

After the Emperor Alexander died in 323BC, his empire fell back into fighting between the city states. From being united, each state looked to defend itself, rather than to act together as one in solidarity. This allowed the Romans to invade each of them in turn and conquer the Greek states one by one until. By some 200 years later in 146BC, they had ransacked the last major Greek city of Corinth, 50 miles west of Athens. This was a dreadful battle where they put the entire male population to the sword and sold all the women and children into slavery. A custom of all Emperors.

Alexander the Great, Roman copy, original bust 3rd Century BC



Rome went on to overcome the North African and Spanish empire of Carthage, heralding the Roman Empire.

The Roman Empire



The Roman Empire 150 AD

Rome now dominated the Mediterranean and so as the Greek empire collapsed, another Roman rule sprung up. As the Roman Empire became bigger and stronger, they swept even farther across all of Europe from Egypt to England, defeating all the armies in their path.

This sprawling Empire needed transport and the Roman network of roads, rivers and sea was comparable to those of the much later 18th C Europe. Trade between the provinces was needed to supply the huge occupying armies, which consumed 70% of state expenditure.

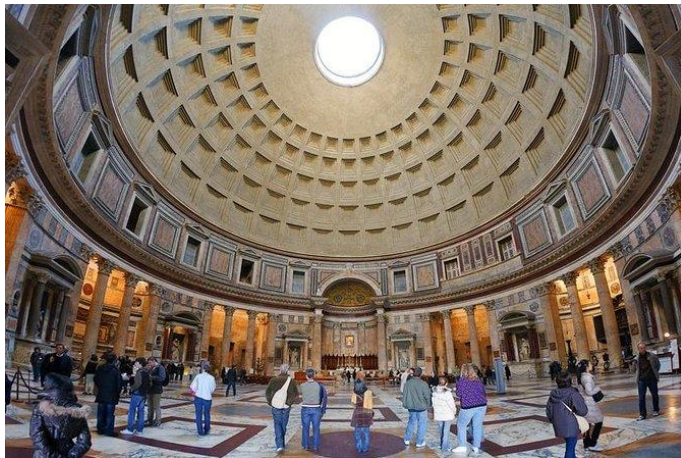
With these demands there was central control of trading with a state merchant fleet where the majority of grain was imported from North Africa. Specialities such as oil and wine came from Spain and Greece to supplement local supplies. This trade was financed by bankers and facilitated by the early use of coinage. The Upper classes stayed clear of this commerce, preferring to invest their money in land, supplying foodstuffs to the capital.

The Romans looked to project this power and superiority through their own great cities with an art that drew on ancient Greece and provided a unifying culture from East to West. (8)

Architecture

Throughout their empire the Romans built splendid cities to rival and exceed those of Greece. The greatest of these was Rome. The capital of the Roman Empire and then the largest and most sophisticated city in the world. Where the Greeks were master sculptors, the Romans were master engineers and in their great public buildings and temples they adopted the Greek style of architecture, complete with the columns of the Parthenon.

Illustration of how the ancient Roman Senate may have looked



The Pantheon, built in 126AD

The Romans' building technology still remains a mystery as to their use of a concrete, where some buildings such as the Pantheon temple, still stand after 2000 years and is still the world's largest unreinforced concrete dome.

The dome diameter and height are both equal at 43 metres and the Corinthian columns and frieze at the front, are borrowed directly from Ancient Greece.



External Corinthian columns and frieze

Paintings and sculpture



Paintings are largely confined to frescoes in private villas and so have suffered decline over the years. But one unique source of the artists' skill is found in portraits buried with their owners' coffins to represent their face in life.

Painted on wood, they were originally folded into the bands of cloth used to wrap the bodies. The naturalism and use of light and shade demonstrate a high level of skill, that was to be rediscovered more than a thousand years later in the Renaissance. (Book 2)

Mummy portraits, Roman-Egypt, 1st - 3rd century AD

Sculptures drew on Ancient Greece and were plentiful. This statue tells the ancient story of a Greek priest Laocoon. He tried to warn the defenders of Troy that the Greeks were planning to hide soldiers inside a gift of a giant wooden horse. Having battled over a fruitless 10-year siege, this offering persuaded the Trojans to finally open the gates, allowing the Greek army to burst into the city. For his attempted betrayal of the Greeks, Laocoon was punished with serpents that killed his two sons, but not Laocoon who was left to grieve alone.

The sculpture shows the strength of the State, overcoming all traitors and enemies.

This realism and vitality was to inspire the Renaissance, where sculpture was also used to influence society as to the power and authority of the state. (Book 2)



Laocoon and his Sons, 200BC-70AD, Vatican Museum

Entertainment & the 'Games'

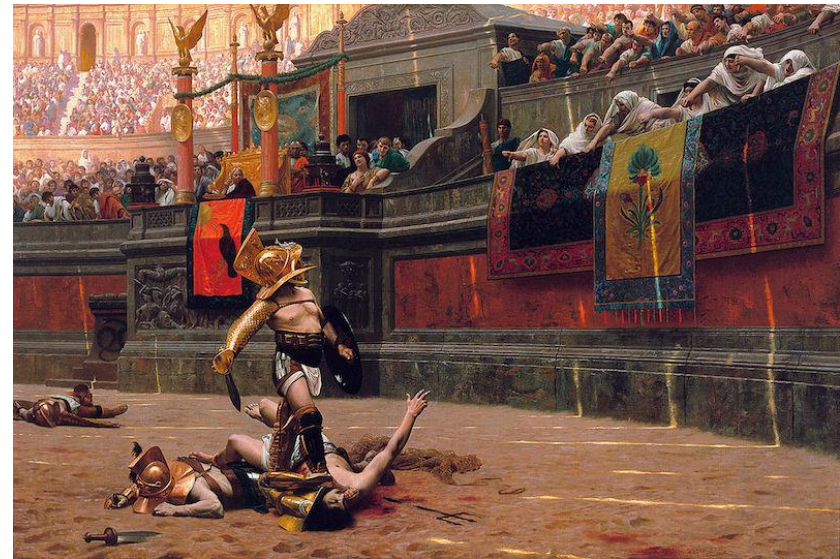
Entertainment and religion were both seen as maintaining a social order. The Romans attributed their great success to their many Gods, with prayers forming a mutual contract with the Gods: 'I give that you might give'.

They allowed local religious beliefs to continue throughout the conquered lands. But when the Emperor Constantine sought to secure his universal power in 312AD, he chose to conduct his political propaganda through Christianity, with one God and one Emperor. Christianity spread throughout the Empire. With its centre in Rome, Christianity has since dominated European and the World's religions.

In an empire of power and hedonism with entertainment night and day, Rome was packed with bars and brothels. This was a society based on slaves serving their privileged masters, with lesser citizens packed into slums of apartment blocks. An urban population of between 1.0 and 3.6 million, required an endless supply of food from the surrounding network of farms owned by the upper class and worked by slaves. (9)

This Roman Empire was based on war where triumphs in battle were celebrated in the bloody battles enacted in the Colosseum in Rome for over 390 years, in their version of the 'Games'. Up to 60,000 spectators would witness land and mock sea battles and chariot races. Additionally, trained gladiators would fight to the death and religious martyrs would be thrown to the lions. In all some 400,000 people and a million animals were to be slaughtered. (10) Their fate as to whether they should live or die, was in the hands of the crowd, with a 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down'. They cheered each brutal and bloody death.

Sports of running, swimming, wrestling and hockey were played on ground outside of the stadium, mainly by the young.



Pollice Verso, (turned thumb) 1872,
Jean-Léon Gérôme, Phoenix Art Gallery

Some 230 of these amphitheatres were built in cities across the empire to both entertain the citizens and to establish the all-powerful Roman Imperial superiority.

But in the Roman Empire, as in Greece before, the states eventually fell into fighting between themselves and between the east and west of the Roman empire, causing it to divide in 395AD.

By the 5th century the western empire of Rome had grown weaker allowing the armies of the Visigoths; who they called 'Barbarians'; to sweep down from the northern plains of Germany. In 410AD they ransacked Rome, taking its treasures and destroying its great buildings. Across Europe the Western Roman Empire was lost.

Soon, with the power of the Caesars gone, the people left Rome and the city crumbled, leaving the wind to blow through the ruins of the once grand buildings and much of the art and culture were lost for centuries.

The eastern empire with its capital in Constantinople - named after its first Emperor - was to last for a further thousand years until the Ottomans (from today's Turkey) conquered the city in 1453. It was renamed Istanbul in 1923. The Ottomans went on to wage wars across Europe for some 200 years as wars between Kings and Emperors – The Four Princes - swept across Europe during the Reformation. (11) (see Book 3)

The loss of these great empires meant the loss of their societies – how people lived, worked and their great art. Slowly, over decades cultural life declined or was destroyed in wars. In states like Florence the people now lived poor lives in dark wooden houses. So far from the grace of the splendid buildings of ancient Rome.

In *Book 2*, we look to the re-birth; or the 'Renaissance'; of this culture, but only after a thousand years!

Summary



In Ancient Egypt there was a deliberately unchanging culture and society over 3,000 years. People lived in harmony in the sure and certain belief that the after-life would continue this paradise. But for the common man, with disease and parasites primarily from the Nile, life expectancy was short and so this belief was important in maintaining social order, under a panoply of benevolent Gods.

This unchanging world is reflected in the unchanging religious art, making the past as recognisable as the present, reflecting the certainty of their world and their future paradise.



A ruling class had greater longevity and built monumental temples and tombs to both their glory and to society's culture of an unchanging and perfect world.

These sculptures display a beauty and natural realism, sculpted from both hard rock and in painted terracotta. They exhibit a stillness as if looking out over the centuries and to the paradise beyond, protecting and guiding the people to paradise.



Wars waged between the Greek states for centuries before coming together against a mighty Persia where their strategy overcame far superior forces.

Although unity had saved Greece, it was to be 150 years before they were brought together again.



Then to the hills of ancient Greece with the Olympic Games and how they even caused the Spartan wars to pause. The competition, national pride and values still resonate in today's Olympics.

All of these events established a Greek society and culture that was to be seen as a golden civilisation, where our own democracy was to be born.



The Greeks made beautiful sculptures to bring the spirit and virtues of their Gods into everyday lives, which were displayed in the public baths.

These were so revered that the Romans copied them centuries later to bring their beauty into Roman lives.



Then the colour that the Greeks brought into their sculptures and buildings, bringing civic pride and art into all their lives. Athens became the sophisticated centre of culture.

A realism in art was important and was to be re-introduced more than a thousand years later, in the 'Renaissance'. (see Book 2)



Then the Emperor Alexander the Great, unified the states and built a great Greek Empire across Europe and Asia, founding 70 cities in just 13 conquering years. Then with his early death, it all fell apart, to separate and then themselves to be conquered by the new Roman Empire.



The Romans were master builders and some of their techniques with concrete construction are unknown today. They inherited sculpture from the Ancient Greeks and copied these in long lasting marble taking all their realism and vitality into their own sculptures.



A Roman life was full of active and self-indulgent pleasure, where the amphitheatres staged regular battles – termed ‘The Games’ - where the spectators decided the killing. This life was supported by slaves in an Empire that was to fall into division and destruction as the edifices of an all-powerful Empire were lost.

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A Trojan archer, Temple of Aphaia, c. 490BC

Sackler Museum, Harvard, USA Vinzenz Brinkmann & Ulrike Kohn-Brinkmann