

LECTURE 006

Greek Culture & Civilization

Ancient Greek Culture was the birthplace of Western civilization about 4000 years ago. Ancient Greece produced many magnificent achievements in areas of government, science, philosophy and the arts that still influence our lives. The Greeks made a wealth of contributions to human culture, especially in the areas of government, philosophy, drama, and the visual arts. The art of ancient Greece has exercised an enormous influence on the culture of many countries from ancient times until the present. There are three scholarly distinctions of Greek art that correspond roughly with historical periods of the same names. These are the Archaic (700 - 480 BC), the Classical (480 -

323 BC) and the Hellenistic (323 – 31 BC) periods. The main physical categories of Greek art are sculpture, pottery, coin design and architecture.



The Greeks used many different types of materials in their **sculptures** including stone, marble and limestone as these were abundant in Greece. Other materials such as clay were also used but due to their brittle nature very few have survived. Greek sculptures are very important as the vast majority of them tell us a story about Gods, Heroes, Events, Mythical Creatures and Greek culture in general. Examples of Greek sculpture that survive and receive worldwide recognition are: the Parthenon Marbles, Agamemnon's Death Mask, stone statues of humans, such as the limestone Kouros (male) and Kore (female) statues (c.590 BC), Discobolos (The Discus Thrower) by Myron, the Venus de Milo and the Winged Victory of Samothrace.

Roman Culture & Civilization

The Roman Civilization came into picture around the 6th century BC. The early Romans adopted culture from their neighbors, the Greeks and Etruscans, in particular, but imprinted their unique stamp on their borrowings. The Roman Empire then spread this culture far and wide, affecting diverse areas of the modern world. For instance, we

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still have colosseums and satire, for entertainment, aqueducts to supply water, and sewers to drain it. Roman-built bridges still span rivers, while distant cities are located along remnants of actual Roman roads. Going further and higher, the names of Roman gods pepper our constellations. Some parts of Roman culture are gone, but remain intriguing. Chief among these are the gladiators and death-games in the arena.



Even the story behind the foundation of the ancient Rome is something of a legend, it's full of myths. But at the height of its power, the Romans ruled over the biggest chunk of land in that era – all the present day counties surrounding the modern day Mediterranean sea were a part of ancient Rome.



Early Rome was governed by kings, but after only seven of them had ruled, the Romans took power over their own city and ruled themselves. They then instead had a council known as the 'senate' which ruled over them. From this point on one speaks of the 'Roman Republic'. Rome also saw the rise and fall of some of the greatest emperors in human civilization, like Julius Caesar, Trajan and Augustus. But eventually, the empire of Rome became so vast that it simply was not possible to bring it within a single rule.

Indus Valley Civilization

Indus Valley Civilization was an ancient civilization that thrived in the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra river valleys, now in Pakistan, along with the northwestern parts of India, Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. Evidence of religious practices in this area date back approximately to 5500 BCE. Farming settlements began around 4000 BCE and around 3000 BCE there appeared the first signs of urbanization. By 2600 BCE, dozens of towns and cities had been established, and between 2500 and 2000 BCE the Indus Valley Civilization was at its peak.



The civilization, which is also known as Harappan Civilization, lasted from 3300 BC to 1700 BC. The discovery of the Ancient Indus River Valley Civilization was made, when the Harappan city, the first city of Indus Valley, was excavated.

Approximately 1052 cities and settlements belonging to the Indus Valley Civilization have been excavated till date, mainly in the general region of the Ghaggar and Indus Rivers and their tributaries. The artifacts discovered in these cities suggest a sophisticated and technologically advanced urban culture. Various sculptures, seals, pottery, gold jewelry and figurines in terracotta, bronze and steatite, etc, have been excavated from the sites of the Ancient Indus Valley Civilization. Other crafts that have been unearthed include shell works, ceramics, agate, glazed steatite bead making, special kind of combs, etc. There is also evidence of seals, toys, games and stringed musical instruments in the Indus Valley.