In every respect the Greek culture differed from Egypt and the Near East.
The Greeks lacked any political unity or a common system of government.
It was a maritime civilization stretching across the Greek peninsula, the Aegean islands, and along the coast of present day Turkey.
Though the individual states were often at war with each other, they were very aware of possessing a single culture.
The Greeks, or Hellenes, referred to those who could not speak their language as barbarians because of what the Hellenes thought of as the unintelligible language the barbarians spoke.
Many Greeks considered themselves superior to the rest of mankind.
It was because of this imposing view that the Romans and others would later consider the Greek tradition the standard of excellence to which all art should aspire.

Key Terms:
Frieze Archaic kouroi tholos
Geometric Kore polis

Learning Objectives:
The similarities of early Greek with ancient Egypt artwork.
The difference in Greek and Egyptian temples.
The widespread Greek influence.
The development of the male body in Greek art.

Archaic Greece
About 800 BC, after a period of total illiteracy, this area showed signs of recovery coinciding with the introduction of iron technology.
The early artwork from this period is generally referred to as Geometric because of the patterns used on the surfaces.
The term, Archaic, is used to distinguish the art works of the late seventh to the early fifth century BC from that of the Classical period.
Dipylon Vase (fig. 4.1)
- This vessel is so large that it was constructed in horizontal bands and fitted together.
- There is a mixture of checkers, chevrons, the squared scroll, humans, and animals on the bands.
- The animals are schematically painted on the surface, and the humans are depicted in a short hand reduction of the ‘Egyptian’ pose.
- The human figures are mourning a corpse, which is laid out on a central bier.

Kneeling youth (fig. 4.4 & 4.5)
- The influence from the Near East is apparent in this carving of the human figure, but the Greeks begin to illustrate their interest in the human form.
- The hair and the eyes show Near Eastern influence, but the detail in the human body is definitely Greek in origin.

Kore (fig. 4.8)
- This statue is much more human in presentation than the statues of earlier cultures.
- The braided hair falls softly around the shoulders and the breasts.
- The Kore’s smile is rather stiff but was used to show life.

The Male Nude
- The majority of statues surviving from the Archaic period are of nude youths.
- They all are in a rigid stance with the head held high and the arms down to the sides with fists clenched.
- In the Archaic period the emphasis is on the broad shoulders, the developed V shaped torso, and the muscle tones of the thighs and calves.
- The Archaic statues emphasized youth at the point of maturity, at their first bloom of youthfulness, which mortals possessed briefly and the gods enjoyed eternally.
- The male statues may have been intended to represent both the gods and their worshippers.
- These statues have an air of self-confidence and an obvious pride in their bodies.
Kritios Boy (fig. 4.10)
• In the early fifth century BC a more naturalistic style emerged.
• The new emphasis was away from the rigid stance of the earlier statues as this sculpture illustrates.
• This statue has the right leg bent slightly and his weight has shifted mainly to the left leg.
• The head of this statue is turned to the right creating a more humanistic visual.
• The torso is very different from the earlier statues with the emphasis on realism.
• This sculpture takes on a life of its own with the softness of the body and the way the sculptor emphasized the shift in balance.

Amphora from Vulci (fig. 4.13)
• The same emphasis on the body found in the statues can be seen in vase painting.
• The earlier practice of arranging the scenes in strips has been abandoned for a single part of a story filling the largest area of the vessel.
• The shape of the vessel is not echoed in the visuals in that they appear to be flat on the widest part of the vessel.

The Polis
• This was a distinctly Greek political unit, meaning self governing state.
• The monarchy gave way to aristocracy—which originally meant rule by the ‘best’ people in terms of riches and birth.
• In the city-state of Athens, a minor role in government was given to a middle class for the first time.
• Each of the city-states had their temples decorated with sculpture and paintings.
• The artists of this period were free to travel in search of patronage which was not as forthcoming as that in Egypt and the Near East.
• The main demand from the patrons was for statues, panel paintings, and small pieces of jewelry.
• Artists, for the first time in history, seem to have competed with each other for commissions.
THE CLASSICAL PERIOD

- This important period in the arts is sandwiched in between two historical events: the Persian war of the early fifth century BC and the temporary unification of Greece in 38 BC.
- After the defeat of the Persians, Athens was almost always fighting with its neighbors.
- In spite of all of the political upheaval, this period was marked by the most extraordinary advances of artistic and intellectual activity the world had ever seen.
- The poetry of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides explored the depths of human passions; the comedies of Aristophanes exposed the absurdities of human behavior; and the teachings of Socrates probed the complexities of man’s predicament.
- Unfortunately, the visual arts from this period have not survived the passage of time as well as its literature.
- The buildings are in ruins and most of their decorations have been either removed or lost.
- Most of the bronze statues were melted down and many of the marble statues were burnt and converted into lime.
- What we know of the arts from this period comes to us through written descriptions and Roman copies.

Parthenon (fig. 4.15)

- This building was designed so that all of the parts were intimately adjusted in scale and size to one another and to the whole.
- The present building was begun around 447 BC and finished in 438 BC with the sculpture in the pediments being set into place in 432 BC.
- The architects of this project were Callicrates and Ictinus, with the main promoter being Pericles, who gave Athenian democracy its definitive form.
- The aim of Pericles was to glorify the city of Athens and to honor its divine protectress, Athena.
- Pericles diverted funds, which were meant for Athen’s allies to pay for the construction of the Parthenon.
- The Parthenon, meant to house the cult statue of Athena, is a great example of a Doric temple.
- The offerings to the goddess were done on open-air altars, which were generally in front of the cult temple.
The visitor to this temple would pass around and into, not through, the temple.
The emphasis of the Greek temple was on the exterior differing from the Egyptian concentration on the interior.
The use of post and lintel was learned from the Egyptians, yet the Greeks used the columns to mainly support the outer framework of the roof.
The Greeks would first build a stepped platform, on which the columns were placed, and then the blocks of the entablature were set up.
The Doric order created an appearance of structural soundness and coherence.

The Propylaea (fig. 4.18)
- Due to the Peloponnesian War, this ceremonial entrance way was never finished.
- The complex was made up of two Doric buildings which were linked by an Ionic colonnade.

Fallen Warrior (fig. 4.22)
- The sculpture used in the temples was placed above eye level and was treated very differently from Egyptian, Assyrian, and Persian reliefs.
- The body of this piece displays muscles and pays attention to the effect gravity has on a body in this particular position.
- The face portrays more of thought than previously seen in the statues from the Archaic period.

Apollo (fig. 4.24)
- This statue was carved to be seen from a distance and from one vantage point.
- Apollo’s body was rendered in flat planes.
- The emphasis was placed on the Greek ideal of physical beauty at its simplest and severest.
- The figure has the remote aloofness and arrogant self-assurance of the Olympian gods.

West Pediment of the temple of Zeus (fig. 4.25)
- All of the figures in this pediment were rendered with traces of an Archaic hardness of form and rigidity of pose.
- The female’s drapery seems to have been made of thick, heavy material that falls in regular folds.
The Fates (fig. 4.32)
- The garments here were carved very differently from that of Apollo in fig. 4.24.
- The figures were carved in ridges and deep furrows in order to catch the light, hold the shade, and reveal the shape of the body rather than conceal them.
- The soft fullness of the breasts was emphasized by the use of swirling lines.
- The Greek sculptors realized that if they carved the drapery counter to the direction of the body that it would indicate movement as well as form.

NATURALISM AND IDEALIZATION
- During the Classical period, a new approach to the depiction of the human figure was now invested with the appearance of life.
- Socrates remarked at the ability of the sculptors to give the statues ‘the quality of seeming alive....’. Whereas Plato found that to be a negative.
- The information we have about the statues come from Roman copies, which were done in marble instead of the original bronze.

Discobolus (fig. 4.34)
- The sculptor of this statue is said to have been Myron.
- Even in this copy it is a great example of the limbs balancing one another.
- The idea of movement had rarely been expressed in static terms as seen here.
- The composition of this statue is confined to a single plane as if it were a relief.

Doryphorus (fig. 4.35)
- The sculptor of this statue was Polyclitus.
- This statue appears to be striding forward with his weight almost entirely on his right leg.
- Polyclitus’s statue is said to illustrate his theories about bodily proportions, which will become very influential in Roman times.
Warrior from Riace (fig. 4.36)
- Greek bronze statues, though few in number, show the amazing naturalism and detail which was missing from the marble Roman copies.
- This statue was rendered with the most minute delicacy such as lips and nipples made of copper and bared teeth of silver.

Aphrodite of Cnidus (fig. 4.39)
- This copy depicts the Greeks concept of the ideal female beauty.
- The statue is the first complete nude female in ancient Greek and created the classical Western image of the female nude.
- The statue’s weight is on her right leg with the left knee slightly advanced and left foot withdrawn.
- The thighs are held tightly together and emphasize the roundness and softness of her limbs.
- The female is presented in a very different manner from the nude male, in that she is slightly shy and averts her gaze from the viewer.

The Late Classical Period
- This was a period of change in art and architecture.
- Two new architectural structures were found at Epidaurus: the theater and the tholos, which was a circular structure whose function is unknown.
- The tholos was said to have been designed with much more decoration than the theatre.

Theatre (fig. 4.44)
- The theatre was among the most spectacular construction as was seen with this one at Epidaurus.
- The structure crystallized the ideal architecture as pure geometrical yet simple form.
- The theatre included a vast auditorium, which was 387 feet in diameter, composed of 55 tiers of marble benches.
- There was also a circular orchestra platform or dance space for the chorus, and beyond that was a long, narrow structure for the stage.
Corinthian capital (fig. 4.45)
- This style of capital was first devised in Athens in the fifth century BC.
- The Corinthian capital was a prominent new style in this period of Greek architecture.
- The new style was more decorative than Ionic capitals. Having all four sides alike made it more pleasing from all angles, whereas the Ionic did not.

Pectoral from Ordzhonikidze (fig. 4.47)
- The Greek goldsmith’s work can be found throughout the region and all the way into southern Russia.
- The animals were rendered with a naturalism which made the griffins as credible as the horses and cattle.
- This piece also incorporated four men who were portrayed in the same naturalistic style as the animals.

BARBARIAN ALTERNATIVES: SCYTHIANS AND THE ANIMAL STYLE
- The Scythians were groups of mounted nomads with related cultures, who occupied the steppe stretching from the Danube to the Gobi desert in Mongolia.
- There is not much known of these people, yet what we do know comes from the objects found in their tombs.
- The climate conditions of the region necessitated constant moving, and the nomads exploited the technologies from the new areas they occupied.
- The Scythians valued the Greek goldsmiths’ work and included those objects along with objects from other cultures in their tombs.
- The Animal style was developed by the cultures of the steppes, but its origin is not known.
- The style seems to have first emerged on the western steppes in the seventh century BC.
- The use of the Animal style was found almost exclusively on small objects, mainly metal to be attached to clothing, arms, armor, chariots, and the harnesses of horses.

Recumbent stag (fig. 4.52)
- This piece was modeled in relief but with an extraordinary feeling for the full bodied form.
- The gold piece was meant to decorate an iron shield or a breast plate.
**HALLSTATT AND LA TÉNÉ**

- These are the names of the phases of the Iron Age in Europe, both names come from villages, the former in Austria and the latter in Switzerland.

**Cult wagon (fig. 4.57)**

- This object was found in a tomb, with the figures closely resembling those of the Geometric art of Greece.

**Flagon from Basse-Yutz (fig. 4.59)**

- La Téné art was probably less influenced by the Greeks than that of Hallstatt.
- The handle is in the shape of a wolf like animal, and along with the two animals on the lid, has an Asian influence.
- The shape of the vessel is basically Greco-Etruscan, but it has been given a more elongated body.
- The design above the foot and the decoration below the spout derive from Greek motifs.

**IBERIAN AND SARDINIA**

- There were other European cultures, which the Greeks considered barbarian.
- On the south coast of Spain, the Iberian civilization developed from the mid sixteenth century BC under Greek influence.
- This was a literate class, whose writing derived mainly from Greek.
- Though not much of their cities remain, a number of bronze and terracotta figures of women did survive.
- These images may have been used as votive offerings to deities.
- There is not much information about early Sardinia; however, ruins of defensive towers remain on the island.
- Under ground chambers were built around wells and springs and were believed to have had some religious significance.

**Head of a man (fig. 4.61)**

- This sculpture has short hair and bulging eyes, unrealistic ears, and a pronounced chin.
- This ideal human head was very different from those of ancient Greece.
Man from Sardinia (fig. 4.62)
- Several hundred bronze statuettes, mainly of the human figure, survived from Sardinia.
- This figure's arms have been reduced to simple, rubbery bent rods.
- The face also has bulging eyes and seems to be speaking or shouting.

THE ETRUSCANS
- The Etruscans were an Iron Age culture and by the mid eighth century BC were becoming the best-organized inhabitants of the Italian peninsula.
- Their language was different from the other cultures of early Italy who spoke dialects closely related to a primitive form of Latin.
- The Etruscans were not a political unit in spite of the fact that they shared a common language and religion and were less frequently at war with themselves than the Greeks were.
- Their fleet was perhaps the most powerful in the Mediterranean.
- The Etruscans bought Greek artifacts in large numbers, such as pottery, which was decorated with images from Greek mythology.
- This culture has been described as one which was obsessed with death and as one wholly devoted to the pleasures of living.

She-Wolf (fig. 4.63)
- This statue is unlike any previous Greek animal sculpture.
- The sculptor used realism to show the tense, watchful stance with the ears pricked, the brow furrowed, the mouth snarling, and the hackles rising.

Apollo of Veii (fig. 4.68)
- This Etruscan statue has the familiar Archaic Greek braided hair, smile, and face.
- The drapery was taken from the Greek kore instead of the Greek male statues, which were nude.
- The motif on the pier, between the legs, comes from Greek architecture.
- The pose of the statue is very different from the graceful qualities found in Greek statues.
• A major difference between this statue and the Greeks is that it was part of a group, which was originally placed on the roof of a temple.

Interior of the *Tomb of the Reliefs* (fig. 4.70)
• Our knowledge of Etruscan domestic dwellings comes from their tombs.
• The tombs were regarded as habitations for the dead and within them were the reproductions of interior architecture, furniture, and furnishings.

Sarcophagus from Cerveteri (fig. 4.73)
• Most of Etruscan dead were cremated and the remains were placed in cinerary urns.
• For bodies that were inhumed, this type of sarcophagus was developed in the sixth century BC.
• This coffin was probably influenced by Egypt and the Near East.
• The two figures were presented as if they were alive.
• There are still Archaic Greek influences, which can be found in the hair and with the smile on both faces.