7 Form in Architecture

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7.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Understand the differences between function and form in architecture
- Understand how form and function work together in architecture created for different purposes
- Understand different types and uses of architecture

7.2 INTRODUCTION

So far, we have given very little consideration to architecture, yet it is one of the most culturally significant forms of art. Often, with structures that were built for group activities, they reflect the culture, its values, style, purposes, and preferences in the time and place more broadly and deeply than settings where individual choices might predominate. And decoration of such architectural settings, even if individual needs and ideals have been expressed through painting or sculptural themes, generally reflects the greater permanence of a structure expected to serve the group's purposes and needs.

The earliest buildings were likely designed to shelter a family or small group that lived together. Soon group needs came into play, and the community may have wanted to provide for joint activities of several types such as ritual/worship, group protection, government, markets, and other commercial needs. The types expanded as the societies grew, diversified, specialized, and sought ways to meet needs for both individuals and communities. The specific purposes led to diverse designs, and cultural values influenced both practical and stylistic choices. We will survey a small sample of landmark types from across the centuries from several different viewpoints, depending upon the significance of features for the individual examples. Our focus will sometimes be on the plan or layout of the structure, materials used in its creation, or spatial considerations as they relate to purposes and use. At other times, we will look at how the building is situated within a community, or

how patrons, owners, and community members influence its construction and use. We will examine in greater detail the ritual uses, meanings, and significance of architectural settings and their decoration, in Chapter 10 Art and Ritual Life: Symbolism of Space and Ritual Objects.

Before we start our discussion, you should familiarize yourself with the basics of building, that is, how you might create walls and place openings in the walls while supporting the parts of the structure above. The most basic method is the **post-and-lintel** design in which two upright beams support a horizontal one to create a rectangular opening. (Figure 7.1) Before long, builders also devised a variety of **arches**, a curved or pointed structure spanning an opening and supporting the weight above, and then created further modifications of these techniques to develop **barrel vaults**, a series of circular arches that form a ceiling or roof, and **domes**, spherical-shaped ceiling or roof. (Diagram of Roman Arches: https://classconnection.s3.amazonaws.com/520/flashcards/1154520/jpg/untitled-13EF5EB39821CEF88AF.jpg; Domes: http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-jbiaW24DTZI/TVxCBDxxoTI/AAAAAAAAACk/VytZNRg0UK0/s1600/40-typology-dome.jpg) They also made variations that served decorative purposes. Over time, these have been imaginatively used for a tremendous variety of structural and decorative purposes, and you should keep them in mind as we investigate an array of buildings that reflect cultural concerns and human needs of all sorts. We will classify these buildings into several groups, although noting that a great number of them were multi-purpose: residential/housing, community needs, commercial buildings and centers, governmental structures, and those designed for worship.

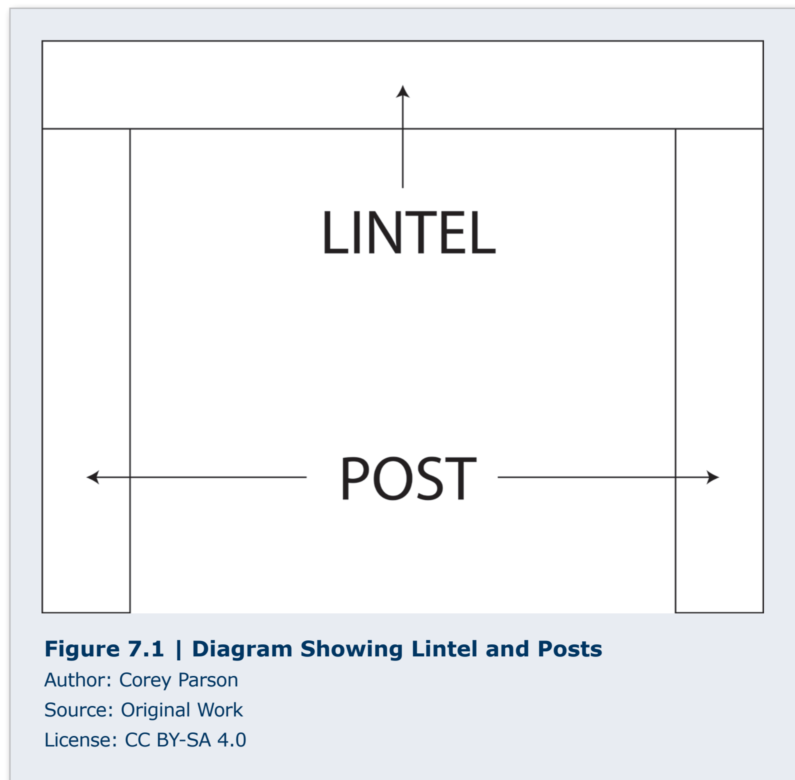

Figure 7.1 | Diagram Showing Lintel and Posts
Author: Corey Parson
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7.3 RESIDENTIAL NEEDS

The earliest types of shelters were likely caves found by humans as they wandered to hunt and gather food and to find refuge from bad weather or pursuing creatures. The first independently standing structures were made of materials that were impermanent, that is, those found in nature—sticks, bones, animal pelts—and fashioned to create a covered space apparently as a protection from the elements. We have little evidence left for us to know fully how they were built and used, but some vestiges do remain that have enabled scholars to make reconstructions. (Figure 7.2)

Figure 7.2 | Reconstructed Jōmon period (3000 BC) houses.
Author: User "Qurren"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.3 | Recreation of a Celtic Roundhouse
Author: User "FruitMonkey"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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As people became more settled, domesticated animals, and cultivated crops, they developed such construction techniques as **wattle-and-daub** (sticks covered with mud), **rammed earth** (moist dirt and sand or gravel compressed into a temporary frame), and clay bricks (unfired and fired that developed alongside their evolving techniques for creating pottery vessels). (Drawing depicting architectural structure of Chinese round houses: http://arthistoryworlds.org/wp-includes/images/nhatau.jpg) (Figure 7.3)

They used these methods for communal living centers such as the village of Catalhöyük in modern Turkey (7,500-5,700 BCE), including common walls so that the clustered houses supported one another. (Figure 7.4) Such building methods addressed security issues by confining entry into living spaces to openings in the roofs, with ladders that could be retracted to foil trespassers. All of these types had certain common features to meet such everyday needs as warmth, cooking, sleeping, and storage, and were usually centered around a hearth with provision for smoke ventilation. Catalhöyük also included rooms that may have been for other common purposes, varying from shrines to serving as bakeries.

Figure 7.4 | Çatalhöyük at the Time of the First Excavations
Author: User "Omar hoftun"
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The use of stone for building structures began in prehistoric times,

Figure 7.5 | Old settlement Sjara Brae in Orkney Island, Scotland
Author: User "Chmee2"
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and an example of such a structure can be seen the Scottish village of Skara Brae (3,180-2,500 BCE). The walls were made of stacked stone while entryways and some of the furniture were created using the post-and-lintel method. (Figure 7.5) Because of the harsh northern climate, the structures were partially underground for protection from the elements. Additionally, covered walkways were created to facilitate movement among its eight units. Seven of these units apparently accommodated a family or small group, while the eighth was a common room, perhaps a workshop. In addition

Figure 7.6 | Inside a house at Skara Brae
Author: User "John Allan"
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to cultivating crops, these villagers likely herded, fished, and hunted for food. Stone furnishing such as seating, beds, storage spaces, and other items within the single-room units were around a central fire pit. (Figure 7.6)

With these basic methods, the humble shelter types of the Neolithic Age (c. 7,000-c. 1,700 BCE) and overlapping Chalcolithic (Copper) Age (c. 5,500-c. 1,700 BCE) provided a foundation for buildings of every sort used throughout history (with considerable elaboration of residential structures for the powerful and wealthy). Material choices eventually expanded to include first wood, brick, and stone, and later concrete and metal.

Residential palaces appeared by the time of the two great early civilizations of the Ancient Near East, Mesopotamia and Egypt, as well as those of the Aegean Sea: Crete, Cyclades, and mainland Greece prior to the development of the Greek Empire. The Palace at Knossos on the island of Crete was a grand residence for rulers of the Minoan civilization; the palace was built c. 1,700 BCE, after an earlier structure was destroyed by an earthquake, and abandoned between 1,380 and 1,100 BCE. (Drawing of Knossos: http://res.cloudinary.com/hrscywv4p/image/upload/c_limit,f_auto,h_900,q_80,w_1200/v1/245626/Palace_Complex_of_Knossos_vsyfng.jpg) The sprawling complex included residential areas, throne rooms, a central courtyard, and food storage magazines for crops and seafood used in the commercial trading, an important industry and mainstay in sustaining the people. (Floorplan of Residential Palace: https://classconnection.s3.amazonaws.com/16/flashcards/3907016/jpg/aafxpid0-1419F6BAD180C1BB19F.jpg) An island civilization, the Minoans were in the rare position of not having to protect themselves from enemies. The Palace at Knossos and similar structures on Crete were not fortified, that is, built behind solid walls and gates to hold off invaders. The palaces were instead built with windows and **colonnades**, or covered rows of columns, on their exteriors, allowing free circulation of light and air.

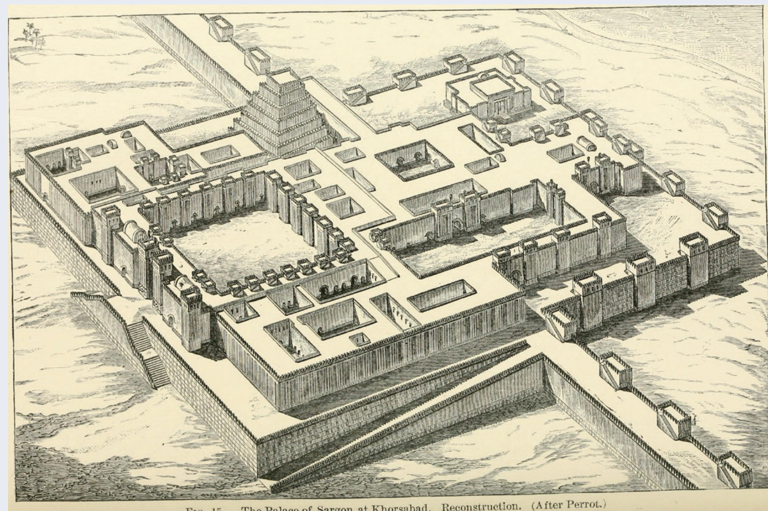

Figure 7.7 | Model of Palace of Sargon at Khosrabad
Author: Internet Archive Book Images
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Another palace complex, that of Neo-Assyrian King Sargon II (ruled 722-705 BCE) at Dur-Sharrukin, today Khorsabad in Iran, was clearly much more militaristic in character, evident by the surrounding defensive walls that strictly controlled access to the royal precincts. (Figure 7.7) Even after passage through a complex and imposing gateway, one had to cross guarded courtyards and passageways to approach the king's throne room. The structural presence was one of imposing

power, as you can see from the enormous towered main portal. (Figure 7.8) To intimidate the visitor, interior decorations further asserted the mighty and ferocious nature of Sargon II with wall carvings depicting victorious battles. The complex also included temples for worship of the deities as well as quarters for high-ranking officials and servants.

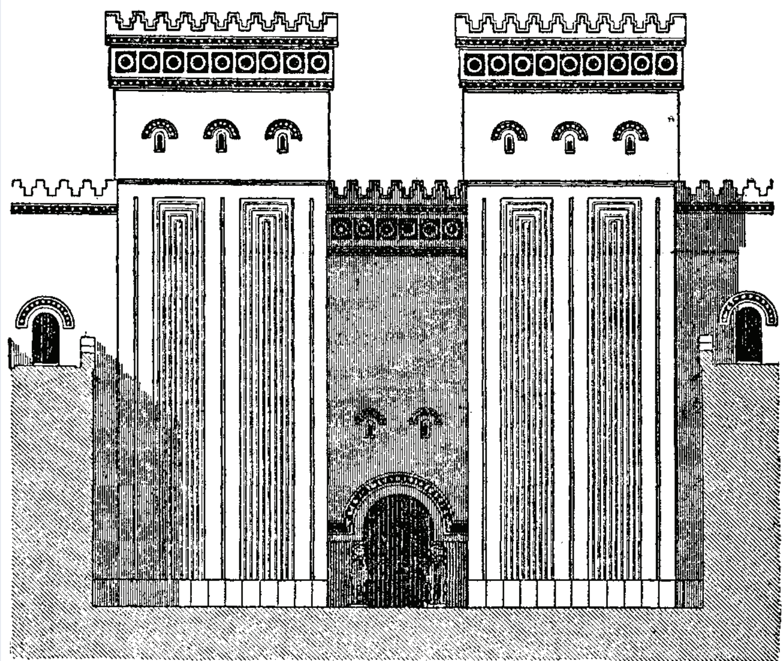

Figure 7.8 | Palace of Dur-Sharrukin
Author: Encyclopedia Britannica
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Later developments for residences include apartment buildings for urban dwellers; such multi-family dwellings have taken many forms over time, and we can view an early type, from the second-century CE Roman port town of Ostia Antica, called an ***insula***, which is Latin for "island." (Figure 7.9) In middle-class "apartments" such as these, there were stores and vendors' stalls on the ground floor facing the street. In some versions, the lower floors were for the wealthier people, while upper floors decreased in cost and desirability. The basic ideas of how to accommodate multi-family living were established by this time and have remained similar since. What has changed over time are the material and decorations used, styles adopted, provisions for electricity, water, and sewage management, and eventually zoning policies that would dictate locations, sizes,

Figure 7.9 | Ostian Insula
Author: User "Nashvilleneighbor"
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required provisions for safety, and density of occupation.

Private homes existed for the middle class and wealthy in towns and in the countryside; the latter were called villas whether they were primary residences or vacation homes. A private home in town might also have shops around its perimeter, but the accommodations for family life, entertainment, and conducting the owner's business were generally contained in a single floor layout. (Diagram of Roman Villa: http://michellemoran.com/CD/Roman-Villa.jpg) After passing through an entry from the street, one entered the **atrium**, a courtyard with a **peristyle**, a row of columns within a building often supporting a porch, left open to the sky with a pool in the center to catch rainwater. A private garden was in a second area open to the elements. The mild climate led to provisions for a good measure of outdoor living as well as fresh air and sunlight during much of the year, even including indoor and outdoor dining rooms. There were rooms for sleeping, storage, and household work off the atrium and garden, as well as a space for worship, known as the ***lararium***. (Figure 7.10) Here, two Lares, or household gods, flank an ancestor figure; the snake below symbolizes fertility and prosperity.

Figure 7.10 | Scene from Lararium, House of the Vettii, Pompeii
Author: User "Patricio.lorente"
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Roman royalty had grand palaces, and we have good evidence of such from the retirement compound created for the Emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305 CE) in Split set on the Bay of Aspalathos in the Roman province of Dalmatia, today Croatia. (Figure 7.11) The walled precincts with defensive watchtowers and fortified gateways included housing for his military garrison, a central peristyle courtyard, three temples, and his mausoleum, the building housing his tomb. The design, perhaps fitting for the aggressive persecutor of Christians and retired general, was quite militaristic in

Figure 7.11 | Diocletian's Palace
Artist: Ernest Hébrard
Author: User "DIREKTOR"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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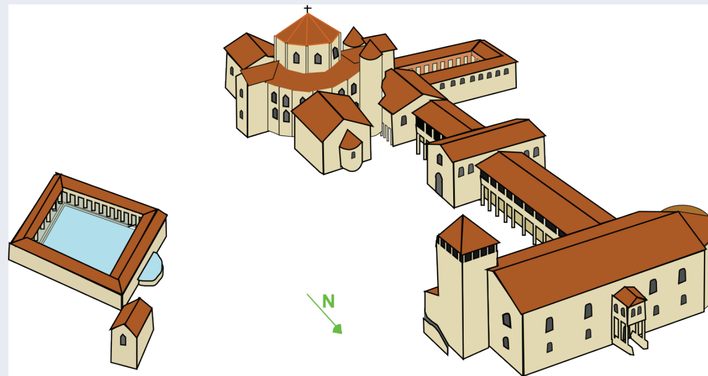

Figure 7.12 | Palace of Aachen
Author: User "Aliesin"
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many ways, resembling a Roman military encampment, or **castrum**. The private and public imperial areas were luxurious by contrast. Like most palace complexes, provisions were made to house soldiers and servants, and it was lavishly decorated throughout with frescos, sculptures, and **mosaics**, images or designs created on a wall or floor made up of small pieces of stone, tile, or glass.

While the locations for palaces were always strategically selected, the rationale was not always defensive in character. When Charlemagne selected Aachen, Germany, as the site for his main palace (he had several), among the attractions were its centralized site within his growing empire and the healing waters of the natural spa there. In examining the reconstruction of his complex, you will notice the baths, shown to the left of the palace complex, are an important feature, as they had been in Roman society. (Figure 7.12) He had a large audience hall, a grand portal, courtyards, housing, and an impressive palace chapel, which is the major structure still standing. (see Figures 3.13 and 7.64)

The church was an important statement for this model Christian ruler, and although it has been enlarged from its original central-plan design, the structure still carries notable features that were both impressive and influential for later medieval church architecture. Charlemagne's throne was positioned on the **gallery** level, an upper level overlooking the floor below. (Figure 7.13) The throne was above the entrance to the church, with an enormous "window of appearance" above the portal facing out into the atrium courtyard, where Charlemagne could address his Christian subjects gathered there. This emphasis on the western entryway was developed into the grand western facades of Romanesque and Gothic churches.

Figure 7.13 | The throne of Charlemagne and the subsequent German Kings in Aachen Cathedral.
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The Doge's (Duke's) Palace in Venice is another impressive statement of rulership wed to Christian leadership. (Figure 7.14) With its façade on the waterfront, the church of San Marco sitting directly be-

hind it, state offices located across from it, and the communal, open-ended **piazza**, or courtyard, between them, the palace literally connects the secular, religious, social, and political realms of Venetian life. (Figure 7.15) Public courtyards at the heart of cities became typical during the Italian Renaissance, as did private, interior courtyards in the center of Italian homes for rulers, wealthy aristocrats, and high church officials. As an official governmental center and residence, this Venetian palace included private quarters for the Doge along with meeting

Figure 7.14 | Doge's Palace and St. Mark's Tower, Venice
Author: User "Rambling Traveler"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.15 | Courtyard of Doge's Palace
Author: User "Benh LIEU SONG"
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rooms and council chambers, all richly decorated with marble, stucco, and fresco and including iconographic themes related to Venice, its history, and civic identity.

In Japan, the fourteenth-century Himeji Castle, built as a fort by the samurai Akamatsu Norimura, was situated dramatically atop Himeyana Hill. (Figure 7.16) Though a defensive posture was its primary motive, the great beauty and lyrical appearance of its curved walls and rooflines are its predominant effects. It has been called the "white heron" in response to the impression it gives of a great bird about to take flight. The complex, again, has many purposes and comprises eighty-three different structures. The grounds include huge warehouses, lush gardens, and intricate mazes. Despite its fairytale looks, its defensive systems are complex and effective, including moats, keeps, gates, towers, turrets, and mounts and brackets for a variety of weapons. It has withstood numerous attacks and natural disasters over the centuries.

Figure 7.16 | Himeji Castle, Japan
Author: User "Bernard Gagnon"
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The final such royal complex we will explore is the Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, established in 1645 by the fifth Dalai Lama; the palace functioned as the spiritual and governmental center for Tibetan Buddhism until the fourteenth and current Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso (b. 1935), fled for political refuge in 1959. (Figure 7.17) The basic purpose of the palace was that of a Buddhist monastery; its original foundation was centered on two chapels of historical and spiritual significance to the order of monks. The palace is named after Mount Potalaka, the mythical abode of the Bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokiteshvara, and the paradisiac implications are meaningful to devotees.

Figure 7.17 | The Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet
Author: User "Xiquinho"
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Figure 7.18 | Chiswick House, London
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As at Himeji, the hillside is a striking component of its appearance, and the enormous complex makes a very dramatic presentation. Indeed, whether intended for defensive purposes or not, its imposing appearance is often a very important feature for royal architecture. The impression of this palace's organic relationship to the mountain is enhanced by its sloping walls, flat roofs, and numerous stairways that lead to its various structures. The complex includes living quarters for the Dalai Lama and the monks as well as governmental offices, a seminary, assembly halls, shrines, libraries, storage rooms, and numerous chapels. It includes statues and portraits of historical and spiritual leaders and many devotional and didactic depictions painted on walls and banners, and works for meditation and prayer. Burial mounds and tombs contain the remains of lamas and important scriptures.

The residential structures of the wealthy of previous eras have often been lost to us; however, we can examine some of the aristocratic family homes of the last several centuries to gain insight into some of the additional trends for creating dwellings that go far beyond the need for simple shelter and that show some of the design ideas devised by artists and architects. The house created for Lord Burlington in 1729 in Chiswick, England, is a good example of the Neo-Palladian style of architecture. (Figure 7.18) Andrea Palladio (1508-1580, Italy), a Venetian Renaissance architect, deeply studied ancient Greek and Roman architecture and architectural theory and developed new designs based on those but better fit to the means, methods, and needs of his day. His ideas were popular and have remained widely influential throughout the West to this day.

Lord Burlington created his neo-Palladian villa design under the influence of Palladio's ideas and those of other related designers. The basic idea here derives from a combination of a Greek temple front and a Roman dome, here supported by an octagonal **drum**, or circular or multi-sided base. Lord Burlington planned the house to showcase his fine collection of pictures and furniture and his architectural library as well as to provide comfort for his family living there. Great attention was paid to the surrounding gardens, and their design was very much a part of the overall scheme. Inspired by Roman gardens, they were designed by his friend William Kent (c. 1685-1748, England), an architect and early landscape architect, and included classicizing statues and miniature temples of a sort that were popular in English gardens of the day, thereby providing interesting and restful stopping points to a refreshing stroll outdoors. The logic and order of the layout of the building and grounds as well as the villa's sense of grandeur led to its admiration and emulation by other builders who sought a similar elegance.

The Neo-Palladian style was carried to the United States by Thomas Jefferson for the campus of the University of Virginia, the state capitol of Virginia, and his own home of Monticello,

Figure 7.19 | Monticello, Charlottesville, VA
Photographer: Matt Kozlowski
Author: User "Moofpocket"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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near Charlottesville, Virginia. (Figure 7.19) Jefferson adapted ideas he gathered while U.S. Ambassador to France by using humbler materials such as the red brick made from local clay that he considered a better choice for a less pretentious statement than marble or limestone. At Monticello, he also brought the structure lower to the ground and added a wooden **balustrade**, a railing supported by upright supports, to the roofline. Nonetheless, its Palladian design origins are clear. The interior of the house is full of provisions for Jefferson's notable intellectual and work habits such as his bedroom that opened into his office, his workrooms, and his collections of American artifacts.

In the United States of the late nineteenth-century Gilded Age (c. 1870-1900), a time of rapid technological, commercial, and economic expansion, wealthy industrialists built enormous

Figure 7.20 | The Breakers, Vanderbilt's mansion in Newport, RI
Author: User "Menuett"
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mansions in cities and at the seaside resorts or mountain retreats they favored. Among these, the Vanderbilt family (whose wealth came from shipping and railroads) commissioned several notable residences, mostly in the French-inspired Beaux Arts style, a period and style known in the U.S. as the American Renaissance (1876-1917).

One of these residences was The Breakers in Newport, Rhode Island, a lavish resort area replete with such structures. (Figure 7.20) The oceanfront house, designed by Richard Morris Hunt (1827-1895, USA), has seventy rooms on five floors and covers nearly an acre of land on a thirteen-acre lot with elaborate gardens. It was built with the most lavish material such as marble and wood from around the world and was decorated with rich and sumptuous furniture, fittings, and valuable artwork, as can be seen here in the library. (Figure 7.21) Clearly a residential structure of this type went far beyond the simple needs of housing to shelter a family from the elements and served to make a very grand and ostentatious statement of wealth and power.

Figure 7.21 | The library at The Breakers
Photographer: Matt Wade
Author: User "UpstateNYer"
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Figure 7.22 | *Fallingwater*, Pennsylvania
Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright
Author: User "Daderot"
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By contrast to design ideas of the architects who catered to the wealthiest Americans, a new conception for providing living space came into being in the early twentieth century with Frank Lloyd Wright, who developed what he called the Prairie Style. He sought to counter the blocky forms that had become the standard for American homes with a structural sweep that hugged the ground, echoed the landscape, and fostered communication between the spaces in the house and the natural elements around it.

Perhaps the epitome of this thinking was realized in Wright's design for Falling Water, a western

Pennsylvania mountain home he created for the Kaufmann family of Pittsburgh. (Figure 7.22) At their request, he incorporated elements of their favorite recreation spot into the design: the rocky outcrop where they held picnics is in the living room, and the adjacent Bear Run waterfall pours out beneath the house's **cantilevered** terraces, self-supporting rigid structure projecting from the wall. Like most of Wright's houses, the place has flowing interior space, a great number of windows, and abundant natural light, as well as carefully coordinated use of stone and wood to incorporate the structure into the natural setting.

7.4 COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENT

Clearly, many of the palaces and complexes we have explored included accommodation of community government needs. There were others throughout history that had somewhat more pointed community needs in mind for their creation but were often combined with other purposes as well. From the time of the rise of the earliest civilizations, the needs for government and religious expression often coalesced.

Figure 7.23 | Ziggurat of Ur, Iraq
Author: User "Hardnfast"
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In the Mesopotamian Valley of the ancient Near East, today Iraq and Iran, we see this exemplified in the structure of the Ziggurat of Ur. (Figures 7.23 and 7.24) With the idea that the deities resided in the heavens, the **ziggurat** was conceived as a man-made mountain that served as a base for the temple, raising it closer to the celestial regions where the deities were. The pathways to the temple at the summit were steep and the approach to the gods was appropriately aggrandized and formalized. At the same time, the basic platform structure was part of a complex that included the provisions for a variety of other community services, record keeping, and commercial and governmental functions. The compact complex was located at the center of the community and in many aspects became the hub of life.

The people of the ancient Near East built with mud brick, sometimes baked, that has not proven to be durable, so the remains of these structures, constructed from around 2,400 BCE until the sixth century BCE, are generally not well preserved. Still, there are sufficient clues in

the ruins to reconstruct the ways they were built and used.

The Romans generally made provisions for community functions in the **forum**, an open public space at the center of each city; the cities were often laid out in a grid plan organized with areas dedicated to various types of industrial, commercial, communal, and residential needs. (The Master Plan of Verbonia: https://classconnection.s3.amazonaws.com/864/flashcards/4000864/jpg/roman_city_plan-141E58EF1FF4A4DE1CC.jpg) The number and types of buildings varied, but they often included temples, libraries, markets, public baths (*thermae*), and judicial structures. The Forum at the heart of Rome was the site of numerous architectural statements and additions for the public good that were created by successive rulers.

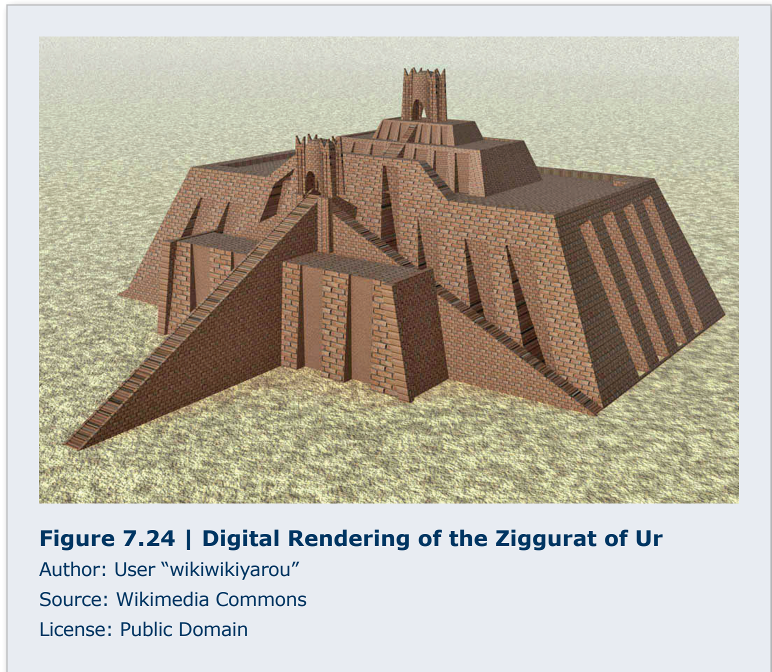

Figure 7.24 | Digital Rendering of the Ziggurat of Ur
Author: User "wikiwikiyarou"
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One of the most influential of the buildings in the Forum of Trajan in Rome was the Basilica Ulpia, a center for law courts, business, and public gatherings. (Figure 7.25) The **basilica** included a long and broad open center space, a nave, flanked by aisles that fluidly expanded the area.

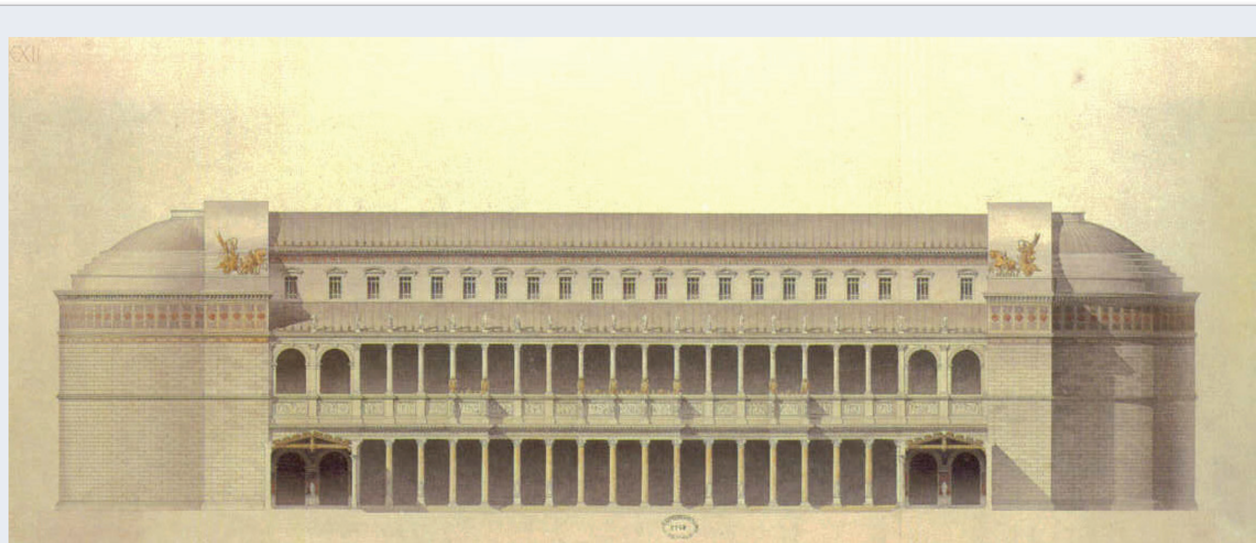

Figure 7.25 | Drawing depicting the Basilica Ulpia, Rome
Artist: Julien Guadet
Author: User "Joris"
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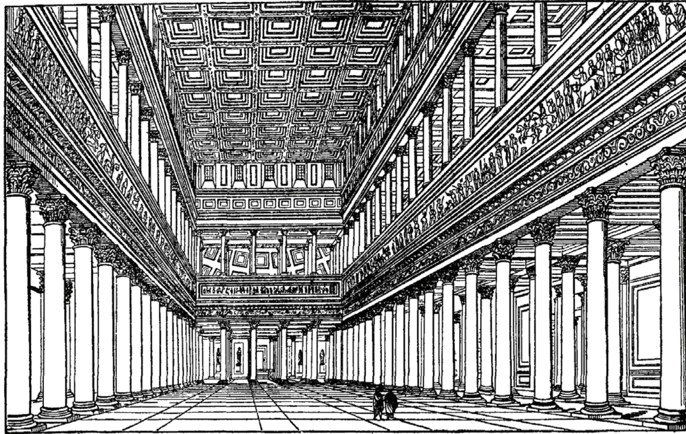

Figure 7.26 | Illustration Depicting the Basilica Ulpia
Author: Encyclopedia Britannica
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.27 | National Mall and Washington Monument, Washington, DC
Author: User "Christoph Radtke"
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(Figure 7.26) This design provided a readily adaptable concept for other purposes, most notably perhaps the congregational space needed for Christian churches that would arise in later centuries as the Christian populace grew.

Significant community spaces sometimes have as their boundaries adjoining but separate architectural structures. These spaces are nonetheless important gathering places that need to be considered as such and in connection with the surrounding architecture that defines them. The National Mall in Washington, D.C., is one such place. (Figure 7.27) We identify it by its location within the capitol city and by its placement among all the government and other public/community buildings that line and define it. One only has to see it as a site for a presidential inauguration celebration or other large public gatherings to realize its significance as a community center.

Figure 7.28 | Theatre of Epidaurus
Author: User "Olecorre"
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Figure 7.29 | Colosseum in Rome
Author: User "Andreas Tille"
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Figure 7.30 | Wawadit'la, also known as Mungo Martin House, a Kwakwaka'wakw "big house", with heraldic pole.
Artist: Chief Mungo Martin
Author: Ryan Bushby
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Community needs for ceremony and entertainment have been addressed with specifically purposed architectural works since antiquity as well. Both the Greek and the Romans designed and built **theaters**, outdoor structures for dramatic performances, and **amphitheaters**, round or oval buildings with a central space for events, that provided models for such structures to this day. (Figures 7.28 and 7.29) While the basic concepts were devised by the Greeks to present religious festivals and ritual dramas, the Romans with their great ingenuity in engineering and material development added considerably to the potential for these designs to cater to changing needs and broader applications.

One of the most important contributions to the history of architecture was the Roman development of concrete for use as building material. Its greater strength, flexibility, and potential for adaptation made concrete far superior to the cut stone used to that point. These advances enabled the Romans to create new architectural forms by expanding the types of vaulting and means of spanning space they had previously used. Both of these important community structures, the theater and the amphitheater, were enlarged and put to new uses because of the Roman architectural contributions.

Pacific Island cultures, as do those of Native Americans, particularly venerate tribal heritage and so celebrate the communal events related to their heritage. Native North Americans of the Kwakiutl Nation created the clan **totems**, objects or animals that hold significance for a group of

Figure 7.31 | Whare at Waitangi Treaty House site
Author: User "Andy king50"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.32 | Waitangi in the Bay of Islands, New Zealand
Author: Phil Whitehouse
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people, at the Wawadit'la, also known as the Mungo Martin House in honor of the chief and artist who built it in Victoria, British Columbia. (Figure 7.30) The recognition and celebration of their shared culture is expressed, as well, in the Meeting House of the Maori people at Waitangi, New Zealand, with its deep front porch and big open hall for group events. (Figures 7.31 and 7.32) Additionally, the carved and painted decorations inside and out have specific iconographic and symbolic significance for the individuals who gather together at such communal sites.

7.5 COMMERCE

Buildings for commerce have appeared over time. Early systems of trade and barter in some places eventually became formalized in ways that required marketplaces and commercial establishments with temporary or permanent housing. While open-air markets with vendor stalls continue to be used in many places, in others shops or full buildings evolved for commercial and service transactions.

Figure 7.33 | Church of the Holy Apostles and Museum of Ancient Agora
Author: User "A.Savin"
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An early example appeared in ancient Athens, Greece, in the area where the open market or **agora**, was also located. The **Stoa** of Attalos, built by King Attalos II of Pergamon (r. 159-133 BCE), was comprised of a two-story covered walkway made of marble and limestone with columns on one side and a closed wall on the other. (Figure 7.33) Along the closed wall, there were twenty-one rooms on each level with each room providing space for a shop. These rooms were similar in character and purpose to those we noted on the ground floors of Roman villas and apartment buildings, but they provided for a more concentrated shopping area.

Figure 7.34 | Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company Building, Chicago, IL
Author: User "Beyond My Ken"
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Our modern provisions for shopping centers and department stores were designed with different ideas about merchandising, sales, and consumerism but, as we have seen

with the rapid rise of on-line shopping for durable and perishable goods, this scenario will likely be ever evolving. Indeed, grocery and department stores may become completely passé. But their development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries presented new possibilities for architectural design.

An example is the Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company Store in Chicago, designed by Louis Sullivan (1856-1924, USA) and built in 1904. (Figure 7.34) One of the early applications for steel frame, or "skeleton frame," construction that made the development of skyscrapers possible, this sort of building also opened new possibilities for retail and office space. Here, the large ground-floor windows and corner entrance could provide a great deal of display space for attracting pedestrians while the expansive multi-story interior offered shoppers a wide array of goods, especially compared to the sorts of small shops and markets that had been its predecessors.

Figure 7.35 | The northwest entrance to the Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company Building
Author: User "Beyond My Ken"
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Not only the structure but also the decorative approach was innovative, as Sullivan combined Beaux Arts ideas with Art Nouveau motifs in the building's surface design. (Figure 7.35) The elaborate, curvilinear, plant-based motifs central to the Art Nouveau movement, c. 1890-1910, in cast metal relief panels above the doors and ground floor windows added to visual appeal for potential customers.

Figure 7.36 | User "Beyond My Ken"
Author: User "Extrawurst"
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New designs emerged for other commercial firms in this era as well. The Austrian Postal Savings Bank in Vienna, Austria, designed by architect Otto Wagner (1841-1918, Austria) has a huge multi-story façade covering a broad open interior space on the ground level; its sleek and modern aesthetic was startlingly new and different when it was completed in 1905. (Figure 7.36) One of Wagner's aims in the design was to create a sense of strength and solidity that engendered trust and a feeling of financial security in customers. The main banking customer area is filled with natural light. Wagner used marble, steel, and polished glass for the simplified decoration of the reinforced

Figure 7.37 | The Top of the Chrysler Building, New York City, NY
Author: User "Leena Hietanen"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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concrete building, turning away from the Art Nouveau aesthetic and replacing it with his sense of modernism.

The use of steel and reinforced concrete that facilitated the advent of the skyscraper truly revolutionized architecture and began a contest for height that continues today. Wealthy entrepreneurs and ambitious developers from around the world have joined in the competition for buildings of modern distinction. One example is the Chrysler Building in New York City, designed by William van Alen (1883-1954, USA). (Figure 7.37) Its décor in the Art Deco style (c. 1920-1940), including the ribbed, sunburst pattern made of stainless steel in the building's terraced crown, celebrates American industrialism and the automobile. At 1,046 feet, the Chrysler Building was for eleven months after its completion in 1930 the tallest in the world. (It was surpassed in 1931 by the Empire State Building at 1,454 feet.)

A more recent example is the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lampur, Malaysia, designed by César Pelli (b. 1926, Argentina, lives USA). (Figure 7.38) Inaugurated in 1999, they were the tallest buildings for several years and remain the tallest twin towers to this day. The buildings' design motifs are inspired by Islamic art and culture; for example, the shape of each tower is the Muslim symbol of Rub el Hizb, or two overlapping squares that form an eight-pointed star. Both structures house commercial and business concerns and symbolize the architecture of modern business.

Figure 7.38 | Petronas Twin Towers, Malaysia
Author: User "Morio"
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In the late twentieth century, architectural ingenuity, new materials, and the potential of computer design led some architects to develop radically innovative approaches to structures that might house any number of different types of needs. Among the most innovative in this regard is Frank Gehry (b. 1929, Canada, lives USA), who has designed buildings all over the world including museums, business towers, residences, and theaters.

In Los Angeles, he created the Walt Disney Concert Hall, completed in 2003. (Figure 7.39) Using titanium sheathing for multiform, swooping curvilinear forms and volumes,

his buildings are sculptural in effect from a visual standpoint. Yet in each case, his buildings have proven effective and dynamic in creating spaces for the activities they house. The acoustics of the concert hall are widely praised as is the beauty of the architectural form in capturing the whimsical spirit of Walt Disney, the creator of so many American comics, cartoons, and movies.

Figure 7.39 | Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles, CA
Author: John O'Neill
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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7.6 WORSHIP

Structures for worship, as we have noted, were sometimes combined with or were near those created for other communal needs. We saw this with the ziggurat, in the Roman forums, and in palaces, among others. But we also have a considerable history of architecture intended solely for religious purposes. From early times, there were two distinctive conceptions for a sacred building: whether it was a house for the deity or a house for the worshippers. Beyond that, it might be for individual devotional activities or for accommodating a congregational group. We can keep these points in mind when examining the types of building designed for these goals.

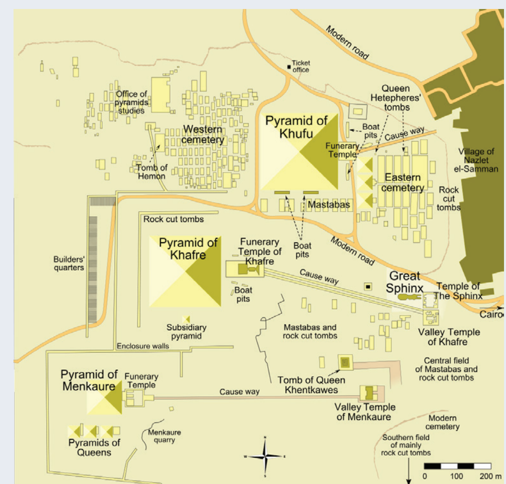

Figure 7.40 | Rendering of the Giza Pyramid Complex, Egypt
Author: User "MesserWoland"
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Among the earliest examples are the pyramid complexes from ancient Egypt. (Figure 7.40) The **pyramids** were tombs composed of millions of

large stones in mathematically regular geometric structures carefully oriented to the stars. Pyramids evolved over thousands of years out of pre-Egyptian burial practices that began with placing heavy stones over gravesites to protect the occupants and their grave goods buried within.

Figure 7.41 | Giza Pyramids
Author: Ricardo Liberato
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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The Egyptians created these elaborate and massive groupings of buildings for the royal dead on the west bank of the Nile River, creating a **necropolis**, or city of the dead. At Giza, the body of the pharaoh or other royal family member was brought down the river from the palace to the valley temple on the edge of the pyramid precinct. After priests mummified the body of the deceased and prepared it for entombment, the body would be taken to a mortuary temple near the pyramid. (Figure 7.41) That temple was the site where ceremonies were carried out at the time of the mummy's placement within the pyramid, as were the perpetual rituals required to honor the king in the afterlife.

There were also temples for the living that the king would have had commissioned and served. One example is the Temple of Horus at Edfu, which has a number of typical features, although it was built relatively late in Egyptian history. It is of the **pylon** type, so named for the two upright structures that form its monumental façade and flank the main ceremonial portal. (Figure 7.42) The approach to temples was often along an avenue of **sphinxes**, imaginative hybrid creatures, part human, part animal, that led to the main door. Beyond the pylon wall was an open courtyard (Figure 7.43) and

Figure 7.42 | Temple of Horus, Edfu
Author: User "ljanderson977"
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Figure 7.43 | Inside the Edfu Temple
Author: User "Than217"
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Figure 7.44 | Temple of Hephaestus, Athens
Author: User "sailko"
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then a **hypostyle hall**, a structure with multiple rows of columns that support a flat roof, leading to the sanctuary. Typical of many sacred structures is this sort of staged progression by which one moves from the public or profane spaces through gradually more sacred, and often more restricted, areas that lead ultimately to the most sacred and reserved part. It is often the case that only priests or otherwise consecrated and dedicated persons are allowed in the **sanctuary**, the innermost and holiest space, while most of the congregation or worshipers are confined to less sacred parts of the temple, and the general public may be denied access to the premises altogether.

Greek temples like that devoted to Hephaestus in Athens, Greece, were not congregational at all. (Figure 7.44) They were designed as houses for the deity with a **cella**, or room, inside that was provided for the cult statue. Sometimes, there was also a cult treasury room within the temple, but ceremonies and sacrifices were conducted outside in the temple courtyard. Like the ziggurats, Greek temples incorporated the belief that the gods were on high, in the celestial realms, so they were often located in an **acropolis**, or sacred city high on a hill.

This can clearly be seen in the case of the Parthenon, dedicated to the goddess Athena, the patron of the city of Athens. (Figures 7.45 and 7.46) As in all Greek temples, a mathematical relation can be found ordering the size and relation of the Parthenon's elements. The length to width of the structure, the height to the width, the diameter of the columns, and their spacing all

Figure 7.45 | The Acropolis of Athens, Greece
Author: User "Salonica84"
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Figure 7.46 | The Parthenon, Athens, Greece
Author: Steve Swayne
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Figure 7.47 | The Pantheon, Rome, Italy
Author: Roberta Dragan
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conform to the golden ratio of 4 to 9. This use of a single relation between the various elements of the structure gives it an aesthetically pleasing, unified, and more solid appearance, as does the use of several optical corrections. The columns lean slightly inward, and the **stylobate**, the base upon which the columns stand, bows upward slightly in the middle, both to give the appearance of being completely straight and flat.

Roman temples were often built in emulation of those of the Greeks, but they made many practical changes to the designs and often placed them in the center of the community, as opposed to the separated locations preferred by the Greeks. An important and very innovative temple design was created during the early Imperial era to honor the **pantheon** of nine planetary deities. To address the honor of the group, rather than individual gods, this temple, the Pantheon, took a different form. (Figure 7.47)

The building had a traditional temple front made up of columns supporting a triangular **pediment**. Rather than continuing into a rectangular, gable-roofed structure, however, the interior was an open circle with cult statues arrayed around its perimeter, each in a separate **niche**, or shallow recess in the wall. (Figure 7.48) That circular interior, acting as a drum, supported a huge domed space with an **oculus**, a circular opening, at its summit. Combining the circles of drum and dome creates a perfect sphere (diameter = height). (Figure 7.49) The whole of the structure was constructed using the ingenious Roman concrete, which allowed the creation of an unsupported dome—greatly facilitated by the use of **coffers**, or recessed squares, which tremendously reduced the dome's weight. The circle and square are not only featured in the ceiling construction, the repetition of those shapes is carried out in all of the architectural and decorative elements of the Pantheon's interior and exterior.

Figure 7.48 | Interior of the Pantheon, Rome
Artist: Giovanni Paolo Panini
Author: Google Cultural Institute
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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In addition to these singular features, the Pantheon was the first temple structure the congregation was allowed to enter. Once Christianity supplanted the ancient Roman religions, spaces with large, open interiors would be needed to house the faithful attending mass. The Pantheon served the needs of a Christian church well, and it was converted in 609 CE. Its adaptation as a Christian church prevents our viewing it as it was intended to be used, but the Pantheon still stands in well-preserved condition and with little alteration to the structure and basic décor of fine marbles for the floor and interior columns, due to its continuous service as a house of worship since it was built in the second century CE.

Figure 7.49 | Cross-section of the Pantheon in Rome
Author: User "Cmglee"
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Some of the earliest evidence of worship in India shows that it was conducted in caves; we also see attempts to create worship spaces by excavating the living rock and creating larger caves for this purpose. While rock-cut architecture exists in many places around the world, its extent in India over the centuries is unsurpassed and, due to its great durability, many fine examples of it are preserved.

Figure 7.50 | Lomas Rishi Cave
Author: User "Neilsatyam"
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A very early example is the Lomas Rishi Cave in the Barabar Hills from the third century BCE. (Figure 7.50) Because it is unfinished, we have a good idea of the methods and plans for the excavation, which included the addition of a large rectangular chamber leading into a smaller circular one. The sculptural treatment of the frame of the portal is a good example of the ways in which early architecture and decoration in stone imitated prior work in impermanent materials such as wood, as was the case for early architectural design around the world. Here, the designs simulate lattice, beams, and bentwood construction.

Later Indian worship structures such as the Brihadeshwara Temple dedicated to the Hindu god

Shiva, from the eleventh-century Chola Dynasty era, show the great complexity of conception of this type of worship space. (Figure 7.51) The tower at the far end is over the **garba griha**, or sanctuary, and as with the Temple of Horus at Edfu, there is staged progression from the profane (everyday) space to the most sacred. The whole is raised on a platform, a feature also seen in many sacred structures. Here, one must begin the approach by entering a gated courtyard, then ascend the stairs, and pass through the **mandapa**, or audience hall, before approaching the sanctuary. Outside the main temple but within the courtyard are subsidiary temples and shrines, as the worship is **polytheistic**, that is, with a great number of diverse deities.

Figure 7.51 | Brihadeshwara Temple, India
Author: User "Abhikanil"
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As is the case with most Hindu and Buddhist temples, although there are certainly ceremonial and ritual functions that are priestly duties, there is no restriction for lay people entering the sanctuary as the relationship to the deity is generally considered to be a personal one, not mediated by a priesthood.

The coexistence of Hindu and Buddhist deities evidenced by their shrines appears at many sites, though usually one or the other predominates at a given site. In addition to temples, another basic structure associated with Buddhism is the stupa. (Figure 7.52) One of the oldest stupas is in India where Buddhism first arose, at Sanchi in Madya Pradesh. Established in the third century BCE, it was conceived as a burial mound of a type, as it was believed to contain part of the earthly remains of Sakyamuni, founder of Buddhism. Surrounded by a tall stone fence, it is designed for the devotee to enter the fenced area and circumambulate, or walk around, the stone-faced, rubble-filled mound.

Figure 7.52 | Sanchi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh
Author: User "Ekabhishek"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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A great deal of symbolism is associated with the form including a **yasti**, or mast, rising from the center of the dome that stands for an **axis mundi**, or axis of the world, separating the earth from the sky above. The fence and gateways are also covered with mythological carvings related to Buddhist and Hindu beliefs. (see Figure 4.23) When the Buddhist stupa form

Figure 7.53 | Sultan Ahmed Mosque, Istanbul, Turkey
Author: User "Dersaadet"
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migrated to China, Japan, and elsewhere, the design evolved to include native architectural traditions resulting in the stupa form becoming the multi-tiered **pagoda**, a Hindu or Buddhist sacred building.

Centers for Islamic worship are housed in architectural structures known as **mosques**. While churches and temples associated with other faiths are generally oriented to the four cardinal directions, usually with the altar toward the east where the sun rises, the mosque will always be situated so that the worshippers face in the direction of the **qibla**, a fixed wall aligned to face Mecca, the city that is the epicenter for Islam. This orientation remains consistent regardless of where in the world the building is set. While several different standard architectural forms exist for a mosque, its most common distinguishing exterior feature is the **minaret**, the slender tower from which the call to prayer is issued. The Sultan Ahmed Mosque shows six minarets while four are common at other sites. (Figure 7.53)

The most basic architectural form for Christian congregational churches is the **basilica**, a structure of longitudinal plan adapted from the Roman public building form. (Figure 7.54) The Roman basilica had an entrance on one long side that led to the large open interior space, the nave. The **Christian basilica**, unlike that used by the Romans, has an entrance on one end, is divided into a center nave and side aisles along its length, and holds a semi-circular **apse**, or recess, containing the altar at the opposite end of the longitudinal building from the entrance. (Figure 7.55) As in other centers for worship we have seen, the holiest part of the church is farthest away from the most profane or public spaces. The progression from one end of the church to the other is a processional ritual, enhanced by the long rows of columns flanking the nave, the long exterior walls, that were often heavy wood or masonry structures until the Gothic era, and the filtered light that played among the structural components.

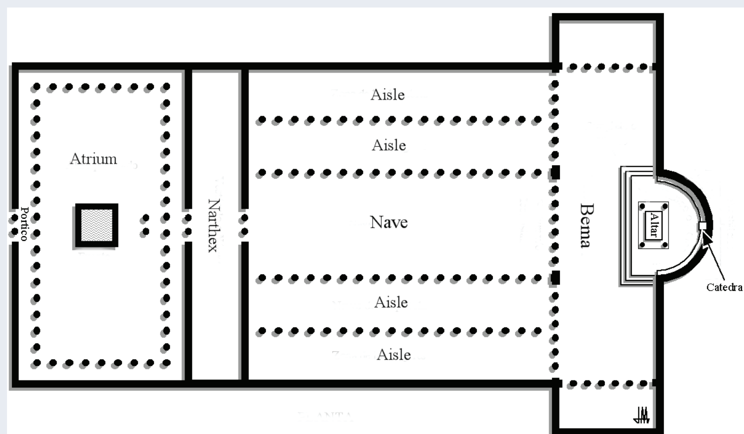

Figure 7.54 | Diagram of old St. Peter's Basilica
Author: User "Locutus Borg"
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Figure 7.55 | Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, Italy
Author: Angela Rosaria
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This was the case in Old St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, (Figure 7.56) built in the fourth century CE on the model of the Roman basilica type. Also based on the Roman secular model was an atrium that was placed before the entrance. The original St. Peter's was the center of the Christian world for centuries and a model for church architecture, but it was replaced during the Italian Renaissance and Baroque periods with the much grander structure that exists today in Rome.

Christians in the Western Roman Empire used the basilica, or Latin cross, plan, but those in the Eastern Roman Empire, more commonly known as the Byzantine Empire, also employed the central plan, which had its origins in the circular plan, such as that used for the Pantheon. In the West, however, the circular, or central plan, church was used for a palace church such as Charlemagne's at Aachen, (Figure 7.57) mausoleum (tomb building), or **martyrium** (site marking the death of a **martyr**, someone who died for their faith), where the placement of the altar does not need to address large crowds.

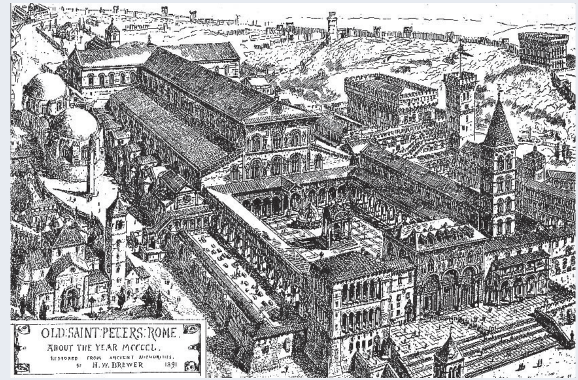

Figure 7.56 | Drawing and reconstruction of the Constantinian Basilica, Rome
Artist: H. W. Brewer
Author: User "Lusitana"
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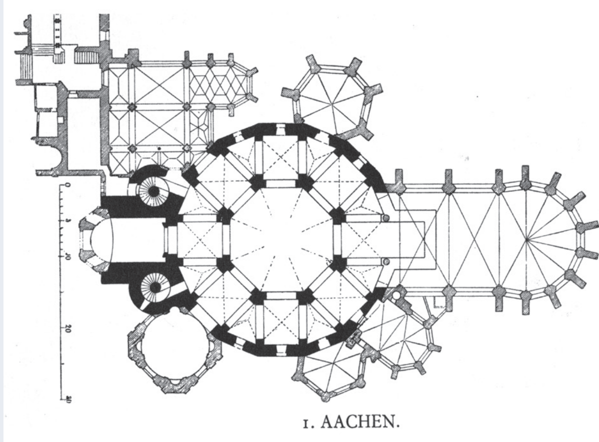

Figure 7.57 | Floorplan of Aachen Chapel
Artist: Georg Dehio
Author: User "Fb78"
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Perhaps the most familiar basilica or Latin Cross churches are those in the Gothic style in Europe that began in 1144. (Figure 7.58) When these structures were being built, they were not called "Gothic." Instead they were called "opus francigenum" or "work of

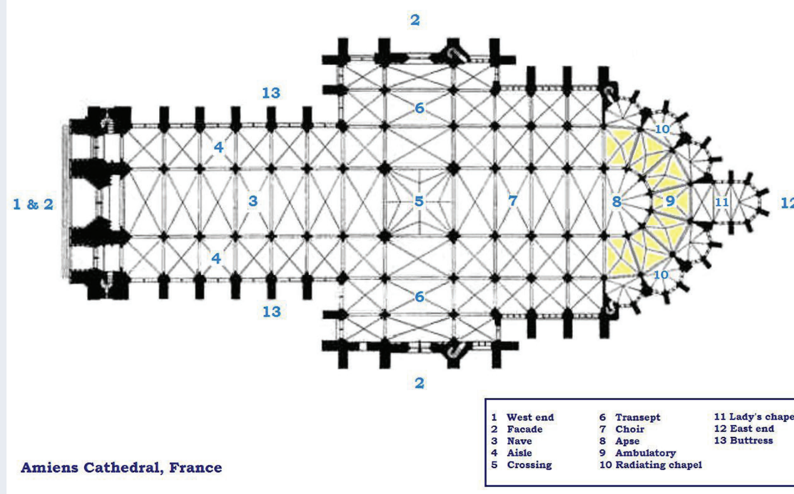

Figure 7.58 | Floorplan of Amiens Cathedral
Artist: Georg Dehio
Author: User "Mattis"
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Figure 7.59 | Basilica of St. Denis
Author: User "Ordifana75"
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the Franks" because of its origination at the Abbey of Saint-Denis. The term "Gothic" was coined in the sixteenth century, originally meant as an insult, by artist and historian Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574, Italy). He wanted to distinguish the architectural style, based on forms from ancient Greece and Rome at that time practiced in Italy, from medieval Christianity and its associations with the destruction of classical learning and culture. The Goths were Germanic tribes that he believed had invaded and destroyed the refined culture of ancient Rome. His pejorative name has persisted but without its originally negative connotation.

That first Gothic architecture was seen in the rebuilt choir at that Abbey Church of St. Denis, outside Paris, France, that was designed by the Abbot Suger and completed in 1144. (Figure 7.59) Several of the defining features of the Gothic cathedral were used there: the pointed arch, the ribbed vault, flying buttresses, and stained glass windows. Unlike the Roman circular arch, the **Gothic or pointed arch** is formed by two arcs with parallel sides. (Figure 7.60) A **ribbed vault** is formed at the intersection of two barrel vaults, with stone ribs sometimes

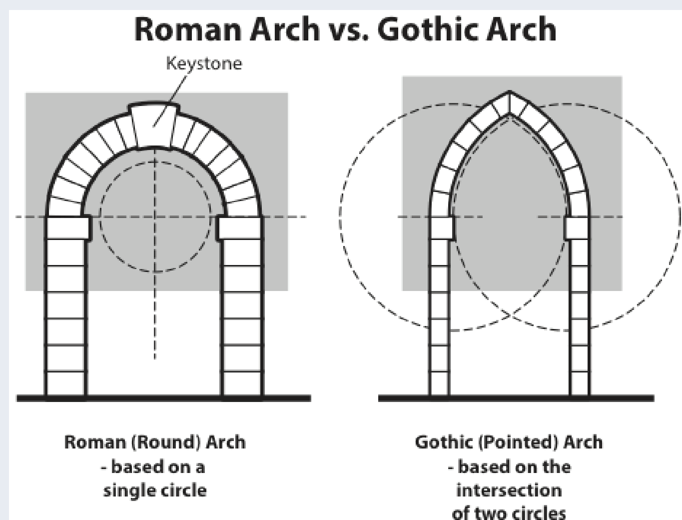

Figure 7.60 | Roman Arch/Gothic Arch Diagram
Author: Jeffrey LeMieux
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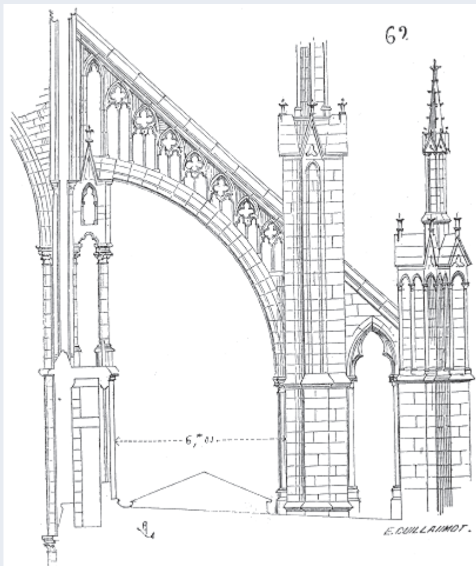

Figure 7.61 | Diagram of flying buttress of the Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Amiens
Author: User "BuzzWikimedia"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.62 | Bourges Cathedral
Author: User "sybarite48"
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Figure 7.63 | Reims Cathedral, France
Author: Magnus Manske
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added to support the weight of the vaults. The **flying buttress** is a load-bearing component located outside the building, connected to the upper portion of the wall in the form of an arch. (Figures 7.61 and 7.62) The combination of the pointed arch, ribbed vault, and flying buttress allowed the height of the interior spaces to be dramatically increased and the thickness of the outside walls dramatically decreased. This development led to the widespread use of stained glass throughout the church and the addition of the **rose window**, a circular stained glass window dedicated to the Virgin Mary, usually found above the main portals. (Figure 7.63) The much larger number and size of windows allowed natural and multicolored light to flood the interior of formerly dark churches as was the case at St. Denis. (Figure 7.64)

Gothic churches were built throughout continental Europe and England, with regional variations, in the center of their communities usually, especially if they were cathedrals, or Bishop's churches. Whether viewed from a distance approaching a town or standing within the cathedral itself, the building soared above all others as it reached to the heavens. They were filled with architectural and sculptural ornamentation to teach the

Figure 7.64 | Ambulatory of the Basilica of St. Denis
Author: User "Beckstet"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.65 | Martyrs, Chartres Cathedral
Author: User "Ttaylor"
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doctrines of the Church, Bible stories, and the accounts of Mary, the Apostles, and the other saints. Portals were especially the focus of sculptural effort. Standing figures in high relief of prophets, kings, and saints graced the sides of the **jambs**, or upright supports to either side of a door. (Figure 7.65) And many other sacred and secular figures, relief sculptures, often of Jesus and symbols of the Four Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were included in the tympanum above the doors. (Figure 7.66) The architects, masons, and sculptors responsible for these monumental buildings were highly skilled and creative, and Gothic cathedrals remained the dominating forms of the Western urban landscape until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when the modern structural steel skyscraper surpassed them in height and scale.

The overall effect of walking into a Gothic cathedral is to be drawn upward into a vast, light, and airy space, and to be dislocated from the physical and drawn into the spiritual. (Figure 7.67) This effect is the epitome of the Gothic Christian view that the physical and sensual world is to be ignored or even disdained in favor of chastity, spiritual awareness, and religious devotion.

Figure 7.66 | Central tympanum of the Royal portal of Chartres Cathedral
Author: Guillaume Piolle
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Christian churches of all denominations today generally follow the basilica model, but the sanctuaries vary considerably for diverse ceremonial practices. The **Gothic** type, with its pointed arches and glass windows that filter mystical light into the interior, is still common.

One example of an updated version is Thorncrown chapel, designed by E. Fay Jones (1921-2004, USA). Jones created a number of elegantly simple nondenominational chapels set into nature that let in diffuse light. (Figures 7.68 and 7.69) A pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright, Jones was inspired by Wright's principles of using simple, local materials to thoroughly integrate structure and setting. The most striking feature at Thorncrown, located in Eureka Springs, Arkansas, is the structure's light airiness. The whole of the interior for each of Jones's chapels is a small sanctuary that seems entirely at home in the forest.

Figure 7.67 | Nave of the Salisbury Cathedral, Wiltshire, UK
Author: User "Diliff"
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Figure 7.68 | Thorncrown Chapel
Architect: E. Fay Jones
Author: Clinton Steeds
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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Figure 7.69 | Inside the Thorncrown Chapel
Architect: E. Fay Jones
Author: User "Bobak"
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7.7 BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Key Concepts

We have seen architecture change throughout history in style, concepts, and purpose. However some aspects remain the same: its use for different purposes, expression of different types Specific in each instance to the particular patron or designer and to the purposes for the structure. Its uses for residential, commercial, communal or religious purposes, spiritual ideas, and sentiment.

This chapter allowed you to understand a broader range of methodologies in context of issues in modern art that evolved over time and with a world that became more complex. Architecture, other forms of art, has experienced great change in the designs of contrasting skyscrapers, incorporating more functionality and fluidity for the lives of modern people. Especially notable, perhaps, from our current perspective, are developments in art and architecture that occurred after World War II, when art's focus moved from Europe to New York. With the focus on the West, art changed to incorporate more freedom in technique and style as opposed to rules that governed art and structures. Artists and architects are now committed to societal issues and personal expression in art and architecture, using all aspects of society to define and explain. This new construct reflects tradition and non-tradition, gives more voice on societal issues, expresses more culture, and resonates individual expression and identity and society's aesthetic personality. Postmodern art focuses on public attention and its role in contemporary society by defining, questioning, and examining art's function, form, content aesthetics, and value.

Test Yourself

1. Describe at least three different examples of architectural work – each built for a different purpose, and discuss specific features of the work that are designed to meet certain distinctive needs.

2. Discuss two different structures built for religious use, explaining how form is related to purposes, and how the form is used by that religious group. Be specific about how it meets particular ritual or other needs of the group.

3. Select four different types of architectural structures and explain the type of architecture and the purpose of each building. Discuss characteristics of each façade, and how the façade addresses the user of the building.

4. Describe different features of temple/church structures that reflect specific beliefs about the deity/deities of the people who use it for worship. Discuss why those particular features are logical and suitable for the ways they are used.

7.8 KEY TERMS

Acropolis: "high city" – a hilltop setting such as that reserved for the temple complex in ancient Athens associated with Classical Greece, including several temples to Athena and other sacred

sites and structures. The elevated location is associated with greater proximity to the gods who were believed to reside in the celestial realms.

Aesthetics: the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with the definition of beauty and with considerations of the purposes and value of art.

Aisle: one of the longitudinal divisions of a basilica building. Basilica form churches usually have either three or five aisles, the central one being called the nave.

Amphitheater: a round or oval building with tiers of seats around a central area used for performances and sport events.

Arcade: a colonnade with arched spaces between the columns.

Art Functionalists: believe that form follows function and that the value of art consists in its function or performance.

Avatar: an embodiment of a deity on earth.

Avant-garde: new, original, and experimental.

Basilica: a building of longitudinal plan, originally designed for Roman law courts and public meetings, later adopted for Christian usage because of its suitability for accommodation of large congregations and processional ritual.

Bodhisattva: a Buddha-to-be; a being who has achieved enlightenment but has postponed Nirvana in order to help fellow seekers in their spiritual quests.

Cantilever: a long beam or other horizontal prop projecting from a wall to support a balcony, stairs, or similar structure.

Castrum: a Roman military encampment or fortress, specifically designed on a grid plan, with specific zones related to activities/uses.

Colonnade: row of columns supporting a roof or entablature.

Deity: a religion's god or goddess.

Form: the structural components of a work of art or architecture.

Forum: open public space in Roman cities that served social, commercial, religious, and political needs of the residents.

Function: the meaning or purpose a work of art.

Gallery: a balcony or upper floor of a church or hall.

Garba Griha: Literally, the "womb" or most sacred precinct in a Hindu temple -- the sanctuary.

Gothic: a late medieval ($12^{th-14th}$ centuries) architectural style that may include pointed arches, ribbed vaults, and flying buttress. Gothic churches have very tall structures, high interior

spaces and, increasingly, the walls are filled with stained glass windows that filter mystical colored light into the interior.

Hypostyle hall: structure consisting of a “forest of columns” arranged in numerous rows that support a flat roof.

Iconography: the subject matter and/or symbolism of an artwork, including reference to religious or other narrative meaning.

Insula: an apartment building in the ancient Roman civilization.

Logo: a design used by an individual or organization to identify itself or its products.

Mandapa: an audience hall in Indian architecture, often a porch-like ante-room to a temple, but also a free-standing gathering hall.

Mausoleum: a building containing one or more tombs.

Middens: refuse heaps, often of kitchen waste, but also for other discarded materials.

Minaret: a tower, usually tall and slender, associated with a mosque and signifying Islamic presence in a location.

Oculus: “eye”; an opening in an architectural structure, to let in light, located in a ceiling, a dome, or on a wall.

Peristyle: a row of columns that surrounds a space such as a courtyard.

Post-and-lintel: basic architectural means of creating an opening in a wall by placing two vertical members (posts) to either side of the opening and spanning the upper part of the space with a horizontal member.

Propaganda: biased, and sometimes misleading or hidden, information intended to influence views, beliefs, or behavior.

Qibla: a wall in an Islamic mosque that is situated so that prayer is oriented towards Mecca.

Rammed earth: dampened earth mixed with sand, gravel, or clay that is compacted into a temporary frame to create a wall.

Sphinx: a hybrid human/animal sculpture.

Stele: an upright stone slab often serving as a grave marker or public monument.

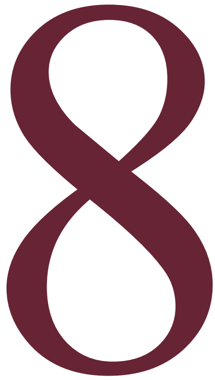
Stoa: a covered walkway in a public area, often fronting market stalls or other commercial spaces.

Stupa: a domed, hemispherical structure that functions as a Buddhist shrine. The conception is of a burial mound, designed for ritual circumambulation.

Tympanum: the semicircular area above a doorway, often decorated with sculptural artwork, especially as noted in Romanesque and Gothic church portals.

Wattle and daub: branches intertwined with twigs and straw, then coated with a substance such as plaster or clay to create a wall.

Ziggurat: a man-made mountain, designed to be the platform for a temple, raising it closer to the heavens where the gods were believed to reside.



Art and Identity

Peggy Blood and Pamela J. Sachant

8.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Name and categorize ways that artists explore the concept of identity
- Understand how art serves as a commentary on society
- Analyze how politics and societal concerns may influence art
- Understand how art expresses individual and group identity
- Understand how art preserves national culture and personal identity

8.2 INTRODUCTION

One of the more important themes emerging from the last century has been the individual's search for identity. For example, genealogical websites have proliferated and special television programs are devoted to the subject. Since it first aired on PBS in 2012, Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s *Finding Your Roots* has been a popular program. The British version, *The Guardian*, has been successful since 2006.

Some anthropologists suggest that the deep-rooted interest in identity or ancestry is partly shaped by evolutionary forces dating back to early humans supporting each other in extended family groups. Anthropologist Dwight Read theorizes that the Neolithic people were the first to understand the concept of the family tree and the perception of self in a family unit and in society.[1] If connected through blood, people have the tendency to be more willing to care for each other; a common interest and support system is readily realized within a clan or a group.

Early humans created two- and three-dimensional likenesses of themselves in their environment to help understand who they were in relation to the other members of their group. Contemporary humans do the same; they make records of themselves with family members, most

1 Ghose, Tia (Oct. 26, 2012). Why we care about our ancestry, Live Science. http://www.livescience.com/24313-why-ancestry.html

commonly in photographs and Selfies, and on Instagram. It is the same fundamental concept and placement in an environment that collectively identifies who we are in society, for example, in social gatherings, organizations, and religious settings. This means, above all, that we must place ourselves within the world in order to obtain identity. Children search for their identity at a very young age by observing and recognizing their parents and family members. Their markings within a simple drawing of self and family—similar to those of early humans—help them to vindicate and confirm who they are and how they are perceived by their family group.

Like children, artists sometimes explore their identity through self-portraits and symbolically in works of art that relate to ancestry or culture. Doing so allows them to take a look inside their core and see how they fit within their contemporary culture; this investigation of self plays an important role in how artists understand their environment and the world.

Vincent van Gogh is known as a person who spent much of his time in solitude. He painted more than thirty self-portraits between the years 1886 and 1889, placing him among the most prolific self-portraitists of all time. Indeed, some of his most respected works are his self-portraits that trace his image throughout the last years of his life, the most crucial to his career. (Figures 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3) While Van Gogh used the study of his own image to help develop his skills as an artist, these self-portraits also give us insights into the artist's life and well being, how he fit in society, and his place among the groups with whom he associated.

Like Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso painted a number of self-portraits. Throughout his career, Picasso painted various likenesses that reflected changes in himself, his style, his artistic development, as well as in his life style and beliefs—all of which may be viewed closely from the content of his

Figure 8.1 | *Self-Portrait with Straw Hat*
Artist: Vincent van Gogh
Author: Met Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

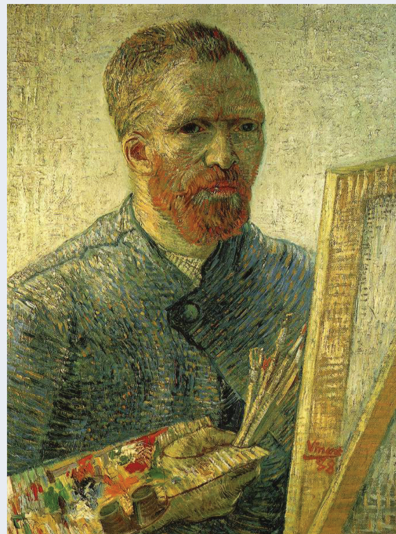


Figure 8.2 | *Selt-portrait as a painter*
Artist: Vincent van Gogh
Author: Web Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Figure 8.3 | *Self-portrait with a bandaged ear*
Artist: Vincent van Gogh
Author: The Courtland Institute of Art
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

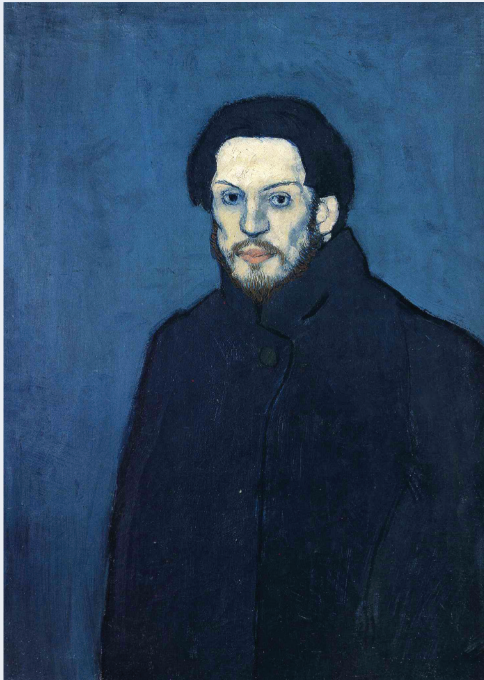


Figure 8.4 | *Self-portrait*
Artist: Pablo Picasso
Source: WikiArt
License: Public Domain

Figure 8.5 | *Self-portrait*
Artist: Pablo Picasso
Source: WikiArt
License: Public Domain

paintings. (Figures 8.4 and 8.5) The first self-portrait, painted in 1901 while he was establishing himself as an artist in Paris, France, and still spending time in Barcelona, Spain, reflects the somber mode and tones of his Blue Period (1901-1904). The second, dated to 1906, at the very end of his Rose Period (1904-1906), Picasso depicts himself as the artist who by that time was moving in artistic circles, gaining respect, and acquiring patrons.

Frida Kahlo (1907-1954, Mexico) used the iconography of her Mexican heritage to paint herself and the pain that had become an integral part of her life following a bus accident at the age of 18 in which she suffered numerous injuries. She identified as a group member of her country, with Mexican culture and ancestry, and as belonging to the female gender. Kahlo's self-portraits are dramatic, bloody, brutal, and at times overtly political. (*Self-Portrait*, Frida Kahlo: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/1/1e/Frida_Kahlo_%28self_portrait%29.jpg) In seeking her roots, she voiced concern for her country as it struggled for an independent cultural identity. She spoke to her country and people through her art. Kahlo's art was inspired by her public beliefs and personal sufferings; she wanted her art to speak from her consciousness.

Although self-portraits of today may be slightly different from those of earlier decades, they still depict self-exploration and identity through society and groups that communicate who we are. Cai Guo-Qiang (b. 1958, China, lives USA) exploded small charges of gunpowder to create an image of himself. (*Self-Portrait: A Subjugated Soul*, Cai Guo-Qiang: http://www.caiguoqiang.com/sites/default/files/styles/medium/public/1989_SelfPortrait_0389_001ltr-web.jpg) Different from those by Van Gogh, Picasso, and Kahlo, Cai's self-portrait does not have any likeness or resemblance to his personal features, but it too sends a message about our society and how Cai relates to it. For example, the artist associates the lack of identifying information, rendering him anonymous, with contemporary society, and the fired gunpowder with both chaos and transformation.

Despite the distance in time that separates early and modern humans, the search for their place in society and who they are remains of fascination and a mystery to all humans regardless of their time in history.

8.3 INDIVIDUAL VS CULTURAL GROUPS

Often when one thinks of an artist, the image is of someone doing solitary work in a studio. During the Romantic period of the late eighteenth century until around 1850, artists, writers, and composers were associated with individualism and with working alone; this trend continued to develop up until recent times. The Romantic period valued and celebrated individual originality with musical and literary geniuses such Ludwig van Beethoven, Frédéric Chopin, Robert Schumann, John Keats, Edgar Allen Poe, and Mary Shelley. The visual arts boasted such geniuses as Francisco Goya, Eugène Delacroix, William Blake (1757-1827, England), and Antoine-Jean Gros (1771-1835, France). (Figures 8.6 and 8.7) Artists of the period exemplified the Romantic values of the expression of the artists' feelings, personal imagination, and creative experimentation as opposed to accepting tradition or popular mass opinion. Artists in the period broke traditional rules; indeed, they considered it desirable to break the rules and overthrow tradition.

Figure 8.6 | *Oberon, Titania and Puck with Fairies Dancing*
Artist: William Blake
Author: Tate Britain
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Figure 8.7 | *The Battle of Abukir, 25 July 1799*
Artist: Antoine-Jean Gros
Author: User "DcoetzeeBot"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

From the Medieval to the Baroque periods, however, artists worked together in

workshops and guilds, and schools were formed that stressed the importance of preserving heritage and history through rigorous and systematic artistic training. Large-scale commissions often required numerous hands to complete a work, emphasizing collaboration. Nevertheless, the artwork was expected to have a consistent style and quality of craftsmanship. To satisfy those various needs, artists often specialized in a particular type of subject matter. For example, Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640, Germany, lived Flanders) and Jan Brueghel the Elder (1568-1625, Flanders) collaborated on more than twenty paintings over twenty-five years. (Figure 8.8) In their *Madonna in a Garland of Roses*, Rubens's celebrated skill as a figurative painter can be seen in the serenely glowing face of the Virgin Mary and energetic cavorting of the cherubs surrounding the circular arrangement of flowers painted with accuracy and delicacy by Brueghel, who was known for his lively nature scenes.

Figure 8.8 | *Madonna in a Garland of Flowers*
Artist: Peter Paul Rubens and Jan Brueghel the Elder
Author: The Bridgeman Art Library
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

A recent study by a Yale University researcher found the perception of high quality art today is that it is produced by a single individual. If produced by two or three people, as in a mural or public work projects, the value of the art drops. For creative works, perceptions of quality therefore appear to be based on perceptions of individual, rather than total effort. Nevertheless, a new trend across the world in general suggests that this tradition, which first arose in the West during the Renaissance, is not the norm around the globe; that is, the value of art as located in the single artist who produces art individually and alone may be more specifically based in certain cultures. Artists in the twenty-first century are collaborating with others through social media and/or face-to-face encounters. It is interesting to remember that the word "art" derives from a root that means to "join" or fit together. A whole constellation of ideas and practices can be accomplished through networking and collaboration as artists participate in group residencies and apprenticeships similar to workshop traditions of centuries ago to learn the customary methods and advanced techniques of their art.

8.3.1 Nation

The Kingdom of Benin, located in the southern region of modern Nigeria and home to the Edo people, was ruled by a succession of **obas**, or divine kings. It grew from a city-state into an empire during the reign of Oba Ewuare the Great (r. 1440-1473). From 1440, obas ruled the kingdom until

Figure 8.9 | Head of an Oba
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

it was taken over by the British in 1897. Remarkably, the obas and people of Benin remained in control of their trading relations with Europeans and without interference from the rulers of the nations they traded with until the second half of the nineteenth century, prior to foreign rule. The city of Benin prospered and grew through trade with the Portuguese, Dutch, and British.

One of the benefits of dealing with merchants-sailors who traveled the seas was the variety of goods they brought with them and were eager to trade for foodstuff grown or refined by the Edo people. In particular, the Edo treasured brass and coral, along with the ivory they acquired through elephant hunts. Those materials were reserved for the oba and his court, and were used in abundance in the wide array of ceremonial and sacred objects created under each ruler. Kingship was passed from father to firstborn son, and, upon ascending to the throne, the new oba was expected to create an altar made of brass for his father, as well as one for his mother, generally in ivory, if she had attained the status of queen mother. The new oba also created a brass head to honor his predecessor. (Figure 8.9) Over time, objects such as plaques, bells, masks, chests, and additional altars made of brass or ivory, some adorned with coral, were added. Some were used to commemorate momentous events and honor heroes, but the majority of royal objects were used in ceremonial and symbolic support of the oba, his ancestors and subjects, and the kingship itself.

This nineteenth-century brass head of an oba, for example, is not meant to be a portrait of an individual king so much as a representation of the divine nature and power of being king. The oba derives his power from his interactions with and control over supernatural forces. He is allied with and assisted by his deified ancestors, whom he honors through rituals, offerings, and sacrifices. In stressing this continuity of kingship and his rightful place in that unbroken chain, the oba strengthens his own power and that of his people and nation.

The welfare of the kingdom rests on the oba's head, a heavy burden, which is emphasized in representations of him using a proliferation of objects weighing upon him (Oba Erediauwa: https://olivernwokedi.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/10993492_326911840841133_1374574355846860660_n.jpg). But, he does not bear the weight of ruling alone; he works with and relies on his advisors and subjects as they support him. That support is shown literally when the oba is in full ceremonial regalia. In this photograph of the current oba, Erediauwa, the King is shown in his royal garb, heavily beaded in coral with ivory bracelets and plaques at his waist; an attendant, supporting his right arm, is helping Oba Erediauwa bear the weight of kingship on behalf of the nation of Edo people.

Following George Washington's celebratory visit to Charleston, South Carolina, in May 1791, the Charleston City Council voted to celebrate the national hero by having John Trumbull (1756-1843, USA) paint a life-size portrait of the President and hero of the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) to "hand down to posterity the remembrance of the man to whom they are so much indebted for the blessings of peace, liberty and independence."[2] Having been Washington's aide-de-camp during the War of Independence, Trumbull chose to portray Washington as the steadfast and majestic general at the start of the Battle of Trenton, a pivotal engagement for colonial troops discouraged in the aftermath of several recent defeats. (Figure 8.10) The painting depicts clouds in a dark, overcast sky turning pink with the rising sun juxtaposed with the general's horse, frightened by the ongoing battle, held tightly by his aide. Washington stands with confidence, one glove off to hold a spyglass in his right hand, looking in the distance as if heeding a faraway call for victory.

Figure 8.10 | *General George Washington at Trenton*
Artist: John Trumbull
Source: Art Gallery at Yale
License: Public Domain

Trumbull was pleased with "the lofty expression of his animated expression, the high resolve to conquer or to perish" that he captured in *George Washington before the Battle of Trenton*.[3] His patrons in South Carolina were not, though, and rejected the portrait when he presented it to them in 1792. Speaking on behalf of the people of Charleston, South Carolina Congressman William Loughton Smith "thought the city would be better satisfied with a more matter-of-fact likeness, such as they had recently seen him calm, tranquil, peaceful."[4]

This was not an isolated occurrence: the question of how a statesman and military hero should be represented had not been resolved to the satisfaction of artists or patrons in the eighteenth century, in the years both before and after the founding of the United States. As a representative democracy, the country's leaders should be depicted as a commander-in-chief who is also one of the people, many argued. But American artists unfortunately had no clear model for a "matter-of-fact likeness" in the portraits of European royalty and heads of state that they used as examples. Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641, Flanders), who was court painter to the King of England, around 1635 painted *Charles I at the Hunt*. (Figure 8.11) The informal yet

Figure 8.11 | *Charles I at the Hunt*
Artist: Anthony van Dyck
Author: User "Tetraktys"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

2 *George and Martha Washington: Portraits from the Presidential Years*, exhibition, National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC, 1999, accessed July 6, 2015, http://www.npg.si.edu/exh/gw/trenton.htm
3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.

dignified stance van Dyck adopted for his image of the sovereign, a gentleman out in nature, quickly became the favorite pose for aristocrats and other dignitaries sitting for a non-ceremonial portrait. The pose still remained a standard at the time Trumbull painted *George Washington before the Battle of Trenton*, but, as indicated by the painting's reception, it was not considered appropriate in a representation of the leader of a democratic nation. In addition, as the portrait was to commemorate Washington's visit to Charleston, townspeople thought the battle setting should be replaced with a view of that city.

Trumbull took note of his patrons' wishes and painted another version. (*General George Washington at Trenton*, John Trumbull: https://www.flickr.com/photos/35801169@N00/6612343749) While Washington's pose remains virtually unchanged, Trumbull lightened the sky and inserted a view of Charleston Bay with the city on the far shore. Charleston leaders were satisfied and Trumbull promised delivery of the painting after some minor additions. The addition turned out to be the General's horse, but reversed from the original painting, with its hindquarters prominently displayed in the space between Washington's canary yellow breeches and his walking stick, and the distant city visible between the horse's legs. The painting still hangs in the Historic Council Chamber of Charleston City Hall.

8.3.2 Cultural Heritage and Ethnic Identity

One important aspect of cultural and ethnic identity is shared histories or common memories. Such histories are our heritage. However, heritage is not the full history. It connects to culture and ethnicity in order to convey the full story about who we were and who we have become as a society or individual. Self or national identity is built on its foundation. Defining terms will help in understanding how each interplay to identify who we are as an individual or nation.

Christian Ellers, a popular contemporary writer on cultures, defines identity as whatever a person may distinguish themselves by, whether it be a particular country, ethnicity, religion, organization, or other position. Identity is one way among many to define oneself. Ellers defines ethnicity as a group that normally has some connections or common traits, such as a common language, common heritage, and or cultural similarities. *The American Dictionary* defines culture as the way of life of a particular people, especially as shown in ordinary behavior, habits, and attitudes toward each other or one's moral and religious beliefs ("Culture"). We will look at these terms as they relate to artists, the visual documentarians of society.

Kimsooja (b. 1957, South Korea), a multi-disciplinary conceptual, reflects on her group identity by exploring the roots of her Korean culture. She draws upon tradition and history by selecting familiar everyday items such as fabric to communicate her message. Fabric wrapped into a bundle known as a "bottari" is commonly used to transport, carry, or store everyday objects in Korean culture. What is different is Kimsooja's use of fabric as an art form. Since 1991, Kimsooja has used fabric, sometimes in the form of a bottari, in an on-going series, *Deductive Objects*, exploring Korean folk customs, daily and common activities, and her cultural background and heritage in relation to her life and experience. (*Bottari Truck-Migrateurs*, "Je Reviendrai", Thierry Depagne and Jaeho Chong: http://farm8.staticflickr.com/7368/12236788126_2d99de3e56_z.jpg) In this example, she

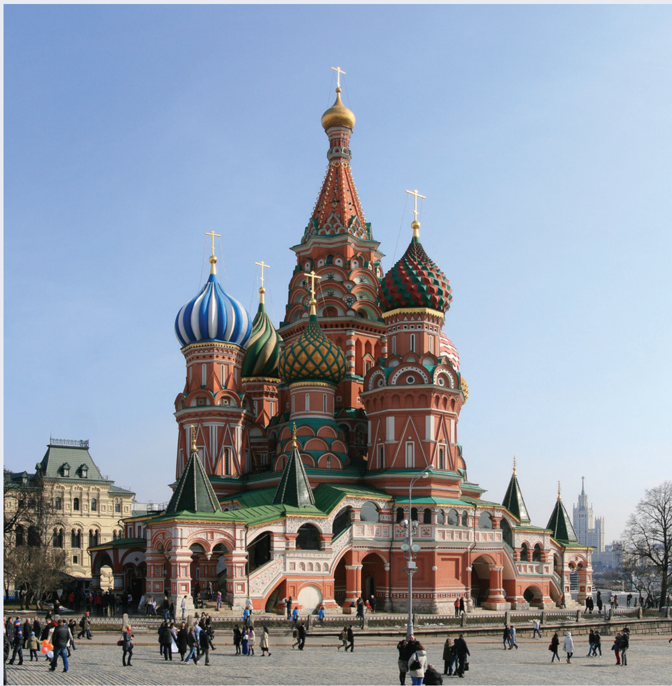


Figure 8.12 | St. Basil Cathedral, Moscow
Author: User "Ludvig14"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

photographed figures draped in Korean printed fabric that conceals their ethnicity, culture, and identity. Their identity is left to the viewer's imagination, and their culture is left for the viewer to consider, using the print of the fabric as a clue.

A number of artists such as Kimsooja choose to communicate through their art who they are in relation to their culture and ethnicity. Their art becomes a means of validating their self-identity. Her Korean heritage represents a treasury of symbols that commemorates who they are as a people and a distinct culture with a common artistic sensibility. Their national self-image is, on one level, unambiguously defined by the convergence of territorial, ethnic, and cultural identities. The geographical conditions of the Korean Peninsula provide a self-contained nautical and continental environment with plenty of resources with which to create and be innovative. These conditions have given the people since prehistoric times a rich and unique culture to draw from and make contributions to humanity. Koreans take great pride in their homogeneous culture, and in their heritage.

Russia, similarly self-contained, for many centuries developed cultural characteristics and ethnic identities distinctly their own, as well. Russia's rich cultural heritage is visually stunning, from its vivid folk costumes to its elaborate religious symbols and churches. (Figure 8.12) Most Russians identify with the Eastern Orthodox (Christian) religion, but Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism are also practiced in Russia, making it a rich land of diverse ethnic groups and cultures. St. Basil's Cathedral, located on the grounds of the Kremlin in Moscow, and hundreds of other orthodox churches symbolize Russia's heritage; indeed, citizens proudly place pictures of the cathedrals in their homes and offices. The churches in Russia are astonishingly beautiful and very much a part of Russia's heritage.

Ironically, then, in light of such a rich internal history, why did Russia's rulers look to western European artists and artistic traditions to develop a new artistic identity in eighteenth century?

Carlo Bartolomeo Rastrelli (1675-1744, Italy, lived Russia), an Italian sculptor who moved to St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1716, is associated with the formation of Russia's "new" culture. As a young artist, Rastrelli moved from his native Florence during an economic downturn to Paris in search of greater opportunities. The lavish and majestic works he created there in the late Baroque style did not earn him the success he sought, but did bring him to the attention of Tsar (and

Figure 8.13 | Peter I
Author: User "shakko"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

later Emperor) Peter the Great (r. 1682-1725), who lured him and his son Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli (1700-1771, France, lived Russia) to the Russia court.

Peter the Great co-ruled with his brother, Ivan V, and other family members until 1696, when he was twenty-four years old. At that time, Russia was still very much tied to its internal religious, political, social, and cultural traditions. Peter the Great set out to modernize all aspects his country, from the structure of the military to education for children of the nobility. The Tsar traveled widely in Western Europe, implementing governmental reforms and adopting cultural norms he saw there. France was the model for sweeping changes he had carried out in court life, fashion, literature, music, art, architecture, and even language, with French becoming the language spoken at court over the course of the eighteenth century.

Carlo Bartolomeo Rastrelli and his son Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli were among the painters, sculptors, and architects, then, who were instrumental in introducing to Russia the new conventions and styles that supplanted Russia's cultural heritage and identity. For example, Carlo Rastrelli's portrait bust of Peter the Great bears a striking stylistic resemblance to a portrait bust of French King Louis XIV (r. 1643-1715) by sculptor and architect Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680, Italy). (Figures 8.13 and 8.14) Bernini's bust, created during a visit to Paris in 1665, shows Louis XIV as a visionary and majestic leader who is literally above vagaries of human existence such as the wind that billows his drapery. Carlo Rastrelli's portrait of Peter the Great, completed posthumously in 1729, draws upon the same traditions—dating back to images of Roman emperors such as Augustus (see Figure 3.23)—of showing absolute authority through such devices as the lift of the head, eyes scanning the distance, and wearing of military armor.

Figure 8.14 | Bust of Louis XIV of France
Artist: Gian Lorenzo Bernini
Author: User "Coyau"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

His son Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli was an architect who also worked in the Baroque style. He received his first royal commission in 1721, at the age of twenty-one, but he is

Figure 8.15 | Winter Palace, St. Petersburg
Author: User "Florstein"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 4.0

mainly known for opulent and imposing buildings he designed after Peter the Great's death in 1725. Continuing the modernization and transformation of St. Petersburg, Francesco Rastrelli's structures are associated with luxurious exuberance of the Baroque, and Russia's Romanov rulers of the eighteenth century. One of Francesco Rastrelli's most famous buildings is the Winter Palace, also bears a striking stylistic resemblance to a French palace: Versailles, built for Louis XIV by architects Louis Le Vau (1612-1670, France) and Jules-Hardouin Mansart (1746-1708, France). (Figures 8.15 and 8.16)

Figure 8.16 | Versailles
Author: Marc Vassal
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: CC BY-SA 3.0

8.3.3 Sex/Gender Identity

Kehinde Wiley (b. 1977, USA) is a contemporary portrait painter. In his work, he refers back to poses and other compositional elements used by earlier masters in much the same way that Trumbull did in his portrait of George Washington. Wiley means for his viewers to recognize the earlier work he has borrowed from in creating his painting, to make comparisons between the two, and to layer meaning from the earlier work into his own. Due to the strong contrasts between the sitters in Wiley's paintings and those who posed for the earlier portraitists, however, this comparison often makes for a complex interweaving of meanings.

Wiley's 2008 painting *Femme piquée par un serpent*, or *Woman bitten by a serpent*, (*Femme Piquée par un Serpent*, Kehinde Wiley: http://hyperallergic.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Wiley-NewRepublic.jpg) is based upon an 1847 marble work of the same name by French sculptor Auguste Clésinger (1814-1883, France). (Figure 8.17) When Clésinger's flagrantly sensual nude was exhibited, the public and critics alike were scandalized, and fascinated. It was not uncommon in European and American art of the nineteenth century to use the subject of the work as justification for depicting the female nude. For example, if the subject was a moral tale or a scene from classical mythology, that was an acceptable reason for showing a nude figure. In Clésinger's sculpture, the pretext for the woman's indecent writhing was the snake bite, which, coupled with the roses surrounding the woman, was meant to suggest an allegory of love or beauty lost in its prime rather than simply a salacious depiction of a nude. Unfortunately, the model was easily recognized as a real person, Apollonie Sabatier, a courtesan who was the writer Charles Baudelaire's mistress and well known among artists and writers of the day. Clésinger defended his sculpture as an artful study of the human form but, having used the features and body of a contemporary woman, his sculpture's viewers objected to the image as too real. Wiley's painting is the opposite: it is clearly intended to be a portrait of one individual, but he is clothed and inexplicably lying with his back to the viewer while turning to look over his shoulder. In his painting, Wiley retains the extended arms, and twisted legs and torso of Clésinger's figure, but the sculpted woman's thrown back head and closed eyes are replaced by the man's turned head and mildly quizzical gaze.

Figure 8.17 | *Femme Piquée par un Serpent*
Artist: Auguste Clésinger
Author: User "Arnaud 25"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Wiley takes that pose and its meanings—indecency, exposure, vulnerability, powerlessness—and uses them in a context that seemingly makes no sense when the subject is a fully clothed black male. Or does it? By using the conventions for depicting the female nude, Wiley asks us to examine the following: what happens when the figure is clothed—with a suggestion of eroticism in the glimpse of brown skin and white briefs above his low-riding jeans; what happens when a young man gazes at the viewer with an unguarded expression of open inquisitiveness; and what happens when a black male presents his body in a posture of weakness, potentially open to attack? The artist uses these juxtapositions of meaning to challenge our notions of identity and masculinity. By expanding his visual vocabulary to include traditions in portraiture going back hundreds of years, Wiley paints a young black man at odds with contemporary conventions of (male) physicality and sexuality.

Ideas about gender identity, that is, the gender one identifies with regardless of biological sex, have developed scientifically and socially, and have in recent years become both more complex and more fluid in numerous cultures. Within other cultures, however, in addition to male or female, there has traditionally been a third gender, and gender fluidity has been part of the fabric of society for thousands of years. Among the ancient Greeks, for example, a hermaphrodite, an individual who has both male and female sex characteristics, was considered "a higher, more powerful form" that created "a third, transcendent gender."[5] In Samoa, there is a strong emphasis on one's role in the extended family, or *aiga*. Traditionally, if there are not enough females within an aiga to properly run the household or if there is a male child who is particularly drawn to domestic life, he is raised as *fa'afafine* or "in the manner of a woman." Thus, *fa'afafine* are male at birth but are raised as a third gender, taking on masculine and feminine behavioral traits.

In India, those of a third gender are known as *hijra*, which includes individuals who are eunuchs (men who have been castrated), hermaphrodites, and transgender (when gender identity does not match assigned sex). The role of *hijras* is traditionally related to spirituality, and they are often devotees of a god or goddess. For example, the *hijras* or devotees of the Hindu goddess Bahuchara Maja are often eunuchs, having had themselves castrated voluntarily to offer their manhood to the deity. Other *hijras* live as part of the mainstream community and dress as women to perform only during religious celebrations, such as a birth or wedding, where they are invited to participate and bestow blessings.

Although *hijras* had been a respected third gender in much of Southeast Asia for thousands of years, their status changed in late nineteenth-century India while under British rule. During the twentieth century, many *hijras* formed their own communities, with the protection of a guru, or mentor, to provide some financial security and safekeeping from the harassment and discrimination under which they lived. In 2014, the supreme court of India ruled that *hijras* should be officially recognized as a third gender, dramatically changing for the better the educational and occupational opportunities for what is estimated to be half a million to two million individuals.[6]

Tejal Shah (b. 1979, India) is a multi-media artist who often works in photography, video, and installation pieces. She began the *Hijra Fantasy Series* in 2006, (*Southern Siren* - Maheshwari from Hijra Fantasy Series, Tejal Shah: http://tejalshah.in/wp-content/themes/tejalshah/lib/timthumb.php?src=http://tejalshah.in/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Image-03.jpg&w=0&h=197&zc=1) creating "tableaux in which [three *hijras*] enact their own personal fantasies of themselves."[7] Shah was interested in how each woman—they all had transitioned from male to female—envisions her own sexuality, separate from the perceptions and projections of others. As described by Shah, "In *Southern Siren—Maheshwari*, the protagonist envisions herself as a classic heroine from South Indian cinema in the throes of a passionate romantic encounter with a typical male hero."[8]

5 Aileen Ajootian, "The Only Happy Couple: Hermaphrodites and Gender" in *Naked Truth: Women, Sexuality and Gender in Classical Art and Architecture*, ed. Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow and Claire L. Lyons (New York: Routledge, 1997), 228.

6 http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2014/04/18/304548675/a-journey-of-pain-and-beauty-on-becoming-transgender-in-india

7 Tejal Shah, Artist Statement, *Hijra Fantasy Series*, accessed July 7, 2015, http://tejalshah.in/project/what-are-you/hijra-fantasy-series/

8 Ibid.

In the **tableau**, or staged scene, Masheshwari sees herself as resplendently dressed in a blue sari, a traditional Indian draped gown, an object of admiration and desire. In this photograph and the others in the series, Shah found it noteworthy that each *hijra*, participating fully in the creative process, expressed feelings about herself by using visual cues and types from mainstream sources such as, in this example, Indian popular culture. How each hijra represented herself was the stuff of universal human fantasies, Shah found, regardless of sexual or gender identity: "being beautiful, glamourous and powerful, having a family, giving love and being loved in return."[9]

8.3.4 Class

Maria Luisa of Parma was a member of the highest circles of European royalty. Born in 1751, she was the youngest daughter of Phillip, Duke of Parma, Italy, and his wife, Princess Louise-Élisabeth of France, the eldest daughter of King Louis XV. In 1765, she married Charles IV, Prince of Asturias. She was the Queen consort of Spain from 1788, when her husband ascended to the throne, until 1808, when King Charles IV abdicated his throne under pressure from Napoleon.

Royal marriages were intended to foster allegiances and cement alliances. The bride and groom generally did not meet one another until after lengthy negotiations were completed and the wedding date was near. It was not uncommon for portraits of the prospective couple to be exchanged; in addition to the descriptions by the negotiators and others, an artist's representation was the only way to learn what one's possible spouse looked like at a time when journeys were not easily or quickly undertaken. At the time of their engagement, Laurent Pécheux (1729-1821, French) painted this portrait of Maria Luisa (Figure 8.18) in 1765 for Princess Maria Luisa fiancé's family.

Figure 8.18 | *Maria Luisa of Parma*
Artist: Laurent Pécheux
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

Maria Luisa of Parma depicts the fourteen-year-old bride-to-be holding a snuffbox in her right hand containing a miniature portrait of her future husband inside its lid. This detail was a formula in formal engagement portraits: the sitter holds a gift such as this finely made and costly trinket to express appreciation and budding affection for one's betrothed. Additionally, to demonstrate her wealthy and cultured family background, Maria Luisa is posed within an

9 Ibid.

interior setting displayed in a silk brocade gown trimmed with lengths of delicate, handmade lace, a medallion of the Order of the Starry Cross suspended from a diamond-encrusted bow on her breast, and diamond stars in her powdered hair. While this is indeed a likeness of the princess, the portrait is meant to convey far more than the color of her eyes or shape of her nose. This portrait is a statement about the prestige and power she will bring to the marriage, and a congratulatory note to the groom's family on the beauty and worth of the mutually beneficial asset they are gaining.

Figure 8.19 | *Maria Luisa of Parma Wearing Panniers*
Artist: Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes
Author: Prado Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Maria Luisa's dress is the exclamation point to that visual statement. She is wearing a style known as a mantua or robe *a la française* (in the French style), a dress for formal court occasions, of silk brocade woven into alternating bands of gold thread and pink flowers on a cream field. This very costly fabric, probably made in France, is stretched over panniers, or fan-shaped hoops made of cane, metal or whalebone extending side-to-side. The panniers create a horizontal but flattened silhouette that allowed the tremendous quantity of magnificent fabric required to be fully displayed. To wear such a gown was a pronouncement of one's wealth and status, a sign of which was one's comportment, that is, one's bearing and behavior. And, it was indeed a challenge to stand or move with the grace expected of a highborn woman in eighteenth-century society while wearing such cumbersome, restrictive, and heavy clothing. Maria Luisa, however, is depicted as poised and charming, the perfect consort for a king.

Twenty-four years after her portrait by Pécheux, Maria Luisa was thirty-eight years old and had borne ten children, five of whom were still alive, when Francisco Goya created this portrait, *Maria Luisa Wearing Panniers*. (Figure 8.19) , Francisco Goya was named painter to the court of Charles IV and Maria Luisa in 1789, and in celebration of Charles IV's ascension to the throne, created a portrait of the King, to go along with the Queen's portrait. Neither the years nor Goya were kind to Maria Luisa. (Between 1771 and 1799, she would have fourteen living children, six of whom grew to adulthood, and ten miscarriages.)

In Goya's depiction, she is even more richly dressed than in her earlier portrait, but her elaborate and sumptuous costume serves only to provide an unflattering contrast with the Queen's demeanor. Goya depicts Maria Luisa with her arms awkwardly held to each side to accommodate her

rigid, box-like tontillo (the Spanish variation of panniers); her plain, expressionless face is almost comically topped by a complexly constructed hat of lace, silk, and jewels. The hat represents one extravagant trend in women's fashion of the 1780s, and Goya did paint its proliferation of textures and surfaces with great skill and sensitivity, but the contrast between the Queen's hat and her features makes them appear even more coarse and unrefined, regardless of her wealth and class.

Figure 8.20 | *The Third Class Carriage*
Artist: Honoré Daumier
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

What explanation could there have been for the court painter to create such an unflattering representation of Maria Luisa, Queen consort of Spain? In her years of living in her adopted country, she had not endeared herself to members of court or her subjects. Considering that the King preferred to hunt, running the country fell largely on the shoulders of Maria Luisa, who was vain and bad-tempered. Goya's presentation does not, in fact, contradict that assessment. The emphasis on her luxurious and elegant attire and on the robe and crown to Maria Luisa's right—signaling her status as Queen consort—represent that she is the individual who is literally in touch with the robes of state. This work and her engagement portrait of nearly twenty-five years earlier were not so much depictions of her as a person as they were means to communicate the power and prestige of her place and her role.

Figure 8.21 | *The First Class Carriage*
Artist: Honoré Daumier
Author: Walters Art Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

Honoré Daumier (1808-1879, France) in 1864 painted a different sign of

Figure 8.22 | *The Second Class Carriage*
Artist: Honoré Daumier
Author: Walters Art Museum
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

prestige, or lack thereof, in *The Third-Class Carriage*; it was one of three paintings in a series commissioned by William Thomas Walters. (Figure 8.20) The other two paintings were *The First-Class Carriage* and *The Second-Class Carriage*, the only one in the series thought to be finished. (Figures 8.21 and 8.22) Walters, an American businessman and art collector, would later found the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland, with work from his collection, including these three paintings.

When Daumier created the works, he had been working prolifically as a painter, printmaker, and sculptor for forty years. In his lifetime, he would create approximately 5,000 prints, 500 paintings, and 100 sculptures. From the beginning of his career, he was interested in the impact of industrialization on modern urban life, the plight of the poor, the quest for social equality, and the struggle for justice. He was especially known for his biting satire of politics and political figures, and his less stinging, ironic commentary on current society and events. Because of the subject matter he chose—everyday people, contemporary life—and the straightforward, truthful, and sincere manner in which he depicted them, Daumier is considered to be part of the Realist movement or style in art.

In *The Third-Class Carriage*, the artist presents four figures in the foreground, bathed in light, with numerous, less individualized figures crowded in the background. The young mother nursing her baby, an elderly woman sitting with folded hands, and a boy sleeping with his hands in his pockets encompass four generations, as well as different stages of life. Although the passengers sit near one another, they appear isolated from each other. They, including the boy, are probably traveling to or from work in the city, and both their body postures and facial expressions convey the toll of hard labor and long hours. Daumier shows compassion for these workers whose lives hold nothing but repetitious drudgery.

Forever changing the mainly agricultural society that existed in much of Europe and the United States prior to the second half of the eighteenth century, the Industrial Revolution is the start of the mechanization and manufacturing that would lead to people shifting from country to city life, and from farms to factories. While the shift to an industrial, money-based society improved the lives of many and created the middle class as we know it today, Daumier was well aware that others were being left behind and were essentially trapped in a cycle of little education, unskilled labor, and low wages.

The artist represents different life expectations based on class through the way he paints the windows and through his use of light in each of the three paintings. In *The Third-Class Carriage*, the figures in the foreground have light shining on them from a window to the left, outside the picture plane. There are windows in the background, as well, but nothing can be seen outside of them. Daumier is implying there is nothing to be seen, especially in the case of the literally non-existent window. In *The Second-Class Carriage*, a landscape can be seen through the window, and one of the figures looks out intently. The other three, paying no attention to the world outside, are cocooned in their winter clothes in an attempt to fend off the cold in their unheated train car. But the man who leans forward to observe the passing scenery appears to be younger and is perhaps more eager and capable of adapting to and moving upward in the world of business—suggested by the bowler hat he is wearing, which at the time was associated in city life with civil servants and clerks. In *First-Class Carriage*, the passengers are all alert, each attending to their own business. One young woman looks out at a green landscape; considering her lightweight outerwear, it appears this is a springtime scene, which is suggested, as well, by the colorful ribbons on the two women's fashionable bonnets. With their relaxed postures and placid, composed expressions, these first-class passengers give the impression of confidence. They are more secure in themselves and their places in the world than either the second-class or third-class passengers.

8.3.5 Group Affiliation

Figure 8.23 | *The Syndics of the Amsterdam Drapers' Guild, known as the "Sampling Officials"*
Artist: Rembrandt
Author: Google Cultural Institute
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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History suggests that the quality of human survival is best when humans function as a group, allowing for collective support and interaction. Social psychological research indicates that people who are affiliated with groups are psychologically and physically stronger and better able to cope when faced with stressful situations. Gregory Walton, a social psychologist who studies group interaction, has concluded that one benefit individuals receive is the satisfaction of belonging (to a group, culture, nation or) to a greater community that shares some common interests and aspirations. The unity of groups is achieved through members' similarities or their having experiences based on the history that brought them together.

Artists throughout history have been associated with groups, movements, and organizations that protect their interests, forward their cause, or promote them as a group or as individuals. The most visible groups during the Renaissance period in Italy, for example, were people belonging to the Catholic Church and other religious organizations, wealthy merchant families, civic and government groups, and guilds, including artists' guilds. (Figures 8.23 and 8.24)

Figure 8.24 | *Officers of the St. George Civic Guard, Haarlem*
Artist: Frans Hals
Source: Wikimedia Commons
License: Public Domain

8.3.6 Personal Identity

The city of Palmyra, in modern Syria, had long been at the crossroads of Western and Eastern political, religious, and cultural influences, as it was a caravan stop for traders traveling the Silk Road between the Mediterranean and the Far East. In the first century CE, the city came under Roman rule and under the Romans, the city prospered, and the arts flourished. Following a rebellion by Queen Zenobia of Palmyra in 273 CE, Roman Emperor Aurelian destroyed the city, ending the period of Roman control.

The Palmyrenes, or people of Palmyra, built three types of elaborate, large-scale monuments for their dead called houses of eternity. The first was a **tower tomb**, some as high as four stories. The second was a **hypogeum**, or underground tomb, and the third was a tomb built in the shape of a temple or house. All were used by many generations of the same extended family and were located in a necropolis, a city of the dead, what we today call a cemetery. Inside the tombs were **loculi**, or small, separate spaces, each of which formed an individual sarcophagus, or stone coffin. Inside the opening to the tomb, the first sarcophagus held the remains of the clan's founder; it was often faced with a stone relief sculpture depicting him as if attending a banquet and inviting others to join him. Surrounding the founder in the *loculi*, on the face of each family member's sarcophagus would be a relief portrait of each person interred there. (Loculi: http://romeartlover.tripod.com/Palmyra5.html)

This stele, a portrait of a father, his son, and two daughters, dates to between 100 and 300 CE, sometime during the era of Roman rule. (Figure 8.25) The man is reclining on a couch decorated with flower motifs within circles and diamonds. He holds a bunch of grapes in his right hand and, in his left, a wine cup decorated with flowers similar to those on the couch. His two daughters

Figure 8.25 | Funerary Relief
Source: Met Museum
License: OASC

flank his son in the background; the son holding grapes and a bird. The son and daughters all wear necklaces. Additionally, the daughters wear pendant earrings and brooches holding the drapery at their left shoulders. The chiton, or tunic, and himation, or cloak, that each daughter wears has some affinities with Greco-Roman types of clothing, but the style of the ornamented veil covering their heads is a local type of garment, based on Parthian, or Persian, styles. Also wearing local garments, the two males wear a loose fitting tunic and trousers, each with a decorative border. The fine fabrics indicated by the embellished borders of both men and women's clothing indicate goods and wealth amassed from trade, as does the abundant use of precious metals and gems in the variety of jewelry adorned by the Palmyrenes. Thus, the stele is a blend of Greco-Roman and Palmyrene (and larger Parthian) styles and cultural influences.

Coupled upon many Palmyrenes grave steles are inscriptions of text in both Aramaic and Latin that give the person's name and genealogy, markers of distinctive individual and family traits. While many of the depictions of the frontal-facing, wide-eyed figures—a defining feature of Palmyrene art—show little individualization of features, the coupling with such inscriptions are evident signs that each stele was intended to denote the characteristics of the person entombed within. The figures actively engage the viewer, and provide the reminder that personal identity is an amalgamate of individual, socio-cultural, spiritual, and historical influences.

In July 2015, the city of Palmyra, its people, and its art were again in danger. In April of 2015, Islamic State (ISIS) forces overtook the 3,000-year-old Assyrian city of Nimrud and destroyed its buildings and art. On May 21, 2015, ISIS overtook the city of Palmyra, inducing fear that they would destroy buildings and art there as they did in Nimrud. On July 2, 2015, ISIS was reported to have destroyed grave markers similar to the one discussed here. (Grave Marker Reliefs, http://www.timesofisrael.com/is-destroys-iconic-lion-statue-at-syrias-palmyra-museum/) They lined up six bust-length reliefs of people who lived in Palmyra nearly 2,000 years ago, and smashed them, obliterating the visual and written record of each person. So many have had their portraits made for posterity with the hopes of staying alive, against the odds. And, this is why we need art: it gives us memories of ourselves and our deeds, who we identify with, and how we identify others.

8.4 BEFORE YOU MOVE ON

Key Concepts

National and personal identities do not magically happen; they are built on and influenced by immediate and past events, environments, traditions, and cultural legacies. Artists capture and document not only the physical conditions of a society but also the emotional and mental conditions. They construct a sense of who we were and are as a person and as a nation. Society's identity is always fluid. When we see identity as static, we record people with stereotypes and do not see them for who they are. Art is one way to challenge static notions of identity by engaging the viewer in visual narratives that are unfamiliar to them, and that educate and challenge their previously held notions.

Since the 1970s, postmodern theories have challenged historical and traditional notions of ethnic and cultural identity by developing a model that views identity as being multifaceted, fluid, and socially constructed. Some scholars contend that we are in a period of post-identity and post-ethnicity, repudiating the old essentialist view of identity. Globalization of people, the Internet, and travel have all brought about fluid cultures—which may have contributed to people's more fluid sense of identity, and also to their interest in researching their heritage, culture, and ethnic identity. Heritage is the treasure and symbols of pride for an individual, country, and nation. Many works of art are seen as part of national heritage because they help citizens appreciate their past. Art provides life to the past, something that can be visualized, touched, walk through, and identified as being part of a legacy and culture.

Test Yourself

1. On the surface Kim Sooja's art seems simple, but underneath it is an enigma of traditions that make a metaphoric identity statement; for example, her use of fabric as an art form evokes intimacy and honor of her culture and history. Discuss and identify at-least two artists whose work makes a personal and historical statement. Be specific as you reference each image associated with your essay. (minimum of 500 words).

2. A number of circumstances throughout history have compelled artists to confront the context of social issues, select at-least two works of art that best describe an event or issue. Discuss the problems associated with the issue, and how the event and art shaped the legacy or identity of the country or nation. Describe the power the work communicates, discuss the significance of the work and how it convey a message, and identity of the people in that period of time. At the end of your essay make commentary on why you selected the art works what you think about the art. (Attach selected work with captions.) Answer to the question is located throughout the chapter)

3. Throughout history building were constructed in a manner to symbolize power; spirituality; and godlessness. Structures house institutions that guide, influence and shape a society's morals, values, politics, religious and social conditioning. Select 4 structures that best symbolize the

identity or culture of a society. Describe its impact on influencing a nation, significance to the nation and how the structure contributes to national or individual identity. At the end of your essay discuss why you selected the structures and the aesthetics of the building. (Attach selected structures with captions.)

4. Compare and contrast four works of art that best describe a personal or national identity. Discuss with specifics how the artist is able to capture the character of the person or nation. At the end of your essay add a commentary why you selected the works and their significance. (Attach selected works with captions.)

8.5 KEY TERMS

Baroque: a style of architecture and art that originating in Italy in the early seventeenth century

Bottari: Cloth wrapped and tied around clothes , fabric, or/and items into a bundle for carry

Grave stele: is a stone or wooden slab, generally taller than it is wide, erected usually in Greek cemeteries as a monument, for funerary or commemorative purposes.

Hypogeum: an underground prehistoric burial site

Impressionism: is a nineteenth-century art movement that developed in France during the late nineteenth century by a group of artists called the Anonymous Society of Painters, Sculptors

Impressionist: A painter whose painting have characteristics of the impressionism movement, emphasizing accurate depiction of light in its changing qualities, uses small, thin, yet visible brush strokes, open composition,

Individualism: emphasizes potential of man and self development own beliefs. The Individualism during the Renaissance period became a prominent theme in Italy

Industrial Revolution: period during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in western Europe and the United States when industry quickly developed due to the invention of steam-powered engines and the growth of factories. Fundamental changes occurred in agriculture, textile and metal manufacture, transportation, economic and policies, and had a major impact on how people lived

Obas: The title of "oba," or king, is passed on to the firstborn son of each successive king of Benin, Africa at the time of his death

Renaissance Period: a period of time from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century in Europe. The era bridged the time between the Middle Ages and modern

Tableau: is an incidental scene, as of a group of people

Tower tomb: are mausoleums, built in 1067 and 1093

9 Art and Power

Pamela J. Sachant and Rita Tekippe

9.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this chapter, you should be able to:

- Describe why and how art and artists have in some cultures been considered to have exceptional power.
- Distinguish between images of persuasion and propaganda, and specify characteristics of each.
- Recognize how and why images are used for such purposes as to display power, influence society, and effect change.
- Indicate ways that images establish and enhance a ruler's position and authority.
- Identify changes in images of conflict, heroic action, and victims of violent confrontation in various cultures and time periods, including the artist's intentions as well as the public response.
- Distinguish between and describe the prohibition of images enforced within some religions.
- Describe why protestors or conquerors might destroy images and monuments of a past or defeated culture.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

Art has always been associated with power. At times in history, the individuals who made art were seen as having special powers. They could conceptualize shapes and forms and then bring them into being. They could create images and objects from dirt, ashes, and stone that looked like living creatures. These individuals were set apart—they could transform, they could give life. And the images and objects they created held powers, as well. They were a means of communication with an unseen world, of exerting influence over the well-being and actions of humans. So both the

artists and their art were considered to be magical in that they were out-of-the-realm of everyday, common, and shared existence: they were super-natural and extra-ordinary.

The ancient Greeks believed the creativity artists possessed came to them from a **muse**, a personification of knowledge and the arts that inspired them to write, sculpt, and compose. The ancient Romans, who strongly believed in the family as the most basic and essential hub of societal organization, called its guiding spirit the *genius*, from the Latin verb meaning *genui* or "to bring into being or create." The word **genius** came to be associated with the arts during the Renaissance, when it took on the meaning of inspiration and ingenuity visited upon the artist, often as a form of possession, setting the artist apart from, and at odds with, non-geniuses.

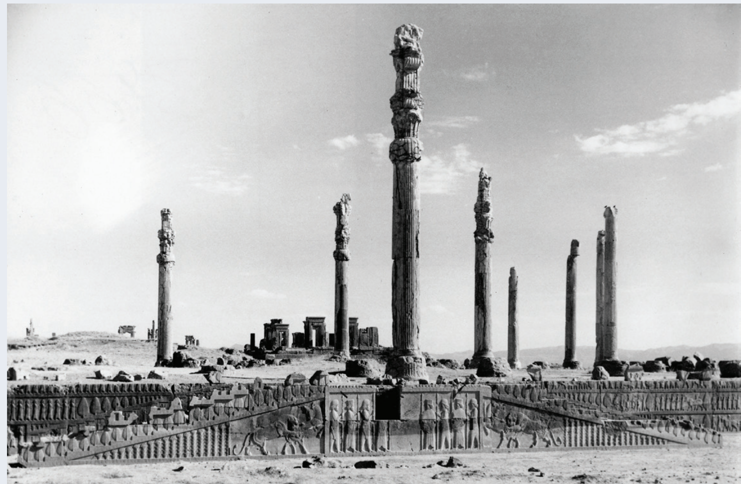

Figure 9.1 | Apadana staircase, Persepholis, Iran
Author: User "Fabienkhan"
Source: Wikimedia Commons
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In addition to the power of the artist, there is the power of the art itself to imitate or mimic life. Again, according to the ancient Greeks, art's power resides in its ability to represent nature; the closer, more real, and more natural the representation, the closer the art work is to truth, beauty—and power. Among other cultures, especially those that avoid representation, art is still a means of aesthetic expression with considerable power, but with abstracted forms. For example, in Islamic cultures the human figure and forms based on direct observation are not used in religious art and architecture as only God has the ability to create living things. Instead, elaborate ornamentation based on the written word and human, animal, and plant forms is used to decorate surfaces with intricate motifs, or patterns.

The visual force of the image or object, whether representational or non-representational, has been used throughout the ages by those in power to give form to and communicate messages about themselves, their wishes or dictates, their accomplishments, and their very right to rule. Literacy has, until the recent past, in human history been a skill few had the means to develop, but leaders in secular and religious roles have fostered among their subjects and followers a visual literacy, the ability to "read" and understand images through a common "language" of subjects, symbols, and styles. Those who wish to use their art as a means of protest against an established power have traditionally used the same "vocabulary" to visually communicate their messages, as well. Especially in times of war and during periods of oppression, art has been used as a tool to protest, document, provide an alternative version, and communicate to others about people and events that become our historical record.