the art of building that arose on the shores of the Aegean Sea and flourished in the ancient world.

**Origins of Greek Architecture**

Palaces of the Minoan civilization remain at Knossos and Phaestus on Crete. Of the later Mycenaean civilization, surviving examples are the Lion's Gate at Mycenae and palaces at Mycenae and Tiryns. When the Dorians migrated into Greece (before 1000 B.C.), true Hellenic culture began, and the architecture that eventually developed seems to have borrowed little from the preceding civilizations.

In Greece the Dorians developed their building forms with such rapidity that between the 10th and the 6th cent. B.C. a definite system of construction was established. However, prior to the creation of the great marble temples of the 5th cent. B.C., there were undoubtedly evolutionary stages in which walls were made of sun-dried bricks and roofs, columns, and uprights of wood. The Heraeum at Olympia, considered one of the most ancient temples yet discovered, represents such a stage; in its later alterations (7th cent. B.C.), it is illustrative of the beginnings of the Doric temple of stone.

**The Flowering and Decline of Greek Architecture**

Between 700 B.C. and the Roman occupation (146 B.C.) all the chief works of Greek architecture were produced. The period in which all the major masterpieces were erected extended from 480 B.C. to 323 B.C. That incredibly productive era includes the reign of Pericles in Athens, in which the architects Callicrates, Mnesicles, and Ictinus flourished and in which the Parthenon and other great works were produced.

After the passing of power from Athens and Sparta to Asia Minor the pure traditions of the mainland were lost. The products of the following Hellenistic period show a decline from the Athenian tradition and reveal Asian influences. The Hellenistic architecture (see Hellenistic civilization) that thus arose (4th–3d cent. B.C.), exhibits florid and opulent elements and more complicated design. City planning, ignored by the mainland Greeks, was cultivated by the Hellenistic architects, among them Hippodamus; from them the Romans doubtless acquired their concepts of monumental civic design.

**The Orders of Greek Architecture**

Of the three great styles or orders of architecture (Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian), the Doric was the earliest and the one in which the noblest monuments were erected. Theories of the origin of the Doric order are numerous. The great remaining examples of the 6th cent. B.C. are found chiefly in Sicily and at Paestum in Italy. After 500 B.C. the archaic features of the Doric disappeared; harmonious proportions were achieved; and the final exquisitely adjusted type took form at Athens, in the Hephaesteum (465 B.C.), the Parthenon (c.447–432 B.C.), and the Propylaea (437–432 B.C.).

The Greek colonies of the Asia Minor coast had evolved their own special order, the Ionic order, stamped with Asian influences. This style appeared in temples in Greece proper after 500 B.C., challenging with its slenderly proportioned columns and carved enrichments the supremacy of the simple, sturdy Doric. The most magnificent Ionic temples were those at Miletus. In Greece proper the Ionic appeared in only one temple of major importance, the Erechtheum at Athens, and otherwise the form was restricted to minor buildings, as the temple of Nike Apteros, Athens (438 B.C.), and to...
interiors as in the Propylaea, Athens.

The third Greek order, the still more ornate Corinthian order, appeared in this period, reached its fullest development in the mid-4th cent. B.C., but was comparatively little used. The chief examples, both at Athens, are the choragic monument of Lysicrates (c.335 B.C.) and the Tower of the Winds (100 B.C.–35 B.C.). Later, the Romans used the Corinthian order extensively and adapted it into their widely used composite order.

Ancient Greek Construction Methods
The Greeks laid their masonry without mortar but with joints cut to great exactness. Marble was not generally used until the 5th cent. B.C. Where coarse stonework or crude bricks were used, a coating, composed of marble dust and lime rubbed and highly polished, was applied to them. Even marble itself was sometimes so treated. Although it was long thought that buildings in ancient Greece retained the unbroken white of the marble, in fact colors and gilding were customarily applied to emphasize decorative sculpture and certain details; remaining traces of these have been found. Having discovered in the simple column and lintel an adequate method of construction, they used it exclusively, drawing from it the maximum of dignity and beauty.

The Greek Temple
Greek cities were often built in the vicinity of a steep hill called an acropolis that served as a citadel and upon which the principal temples were located for safety. The Acropolis at Athens is the most celebrated example. Throughout Greece numerous temples were built. Many illustrated the most rudimentary temple type—a simple rectangular chamber called the naos, the side walls extending to the front to form terminations for an open entrance porch containing two columns. This loggia was sometimes repeated at the other end. The next stage was the forming of freestanding porticoes, then a continuing of columns, flanking sides and ends, the naos thus being completely surrounded by a colonnade. This type was termed peripteral and was exemplified in most of the important monuments of the great period. In dipteral temples the surrounding colonnade was doubled.

No public mass worship took place within the temples, the naos being designed primarily to house the statue of the deity. The structures of the culminating period are unique for the subtle proportionings and refinements of all the members, which are integrated into a superbly adjusted whole. To prevent an appearance of sagging, as in the temple platform (stylobate), or of concavity, as in the outlines of columns, subtly curved or slanting lines were substituted for straight or vertical ones and served as optical corrections. To insure the desired proportions and delicate relationships, a body of traditional formulas was accumulated, using mathematical and geometrical devices.

Other Structures
In addition to temples, the Greeks also built a number of other kinds of structures. Their public spaces included monumental tombs; agoras, or public meeting places; stoas, or colonnaded shelters; stadiums; palaestrae, or gymnasiums for athletic training; propylaea, or entrance gateways to cities; and amphitheaters.

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