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| 2 | The Ancient World |
| The ancient world, from stone-age cultures to the urban civilizations of the Near East, Egypt, Asia, and the Americas |
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Transition guide for images

# Images Removed from 6th Edition

Fig. 2.2 Hall of Bulls

Fig. 2.3 Stonehenge – image still in 7th edition, but a different picture is used

Fig. 2.7 Woman from Willendorf

Fig. 2.12 Reconstruction of the Great Bath

Fig. 2.13 Dancing figure, Harappa, India

Fig. 2.14 Ritual wine vessel or *hu*

Fig. 2.15 Colossal head, from San Lorenzo

# Images Added to 7th Edition

# Fig. 2.4 The Standard of Ur

Fig. 2.6 Ceremonial Lion Hunt

Fig. 2.10 Akhenaten and his family receive the blessing of the sun god Aten

Fig. 2.12 Seal Impression of an ecstatic yogi in seated meditation

Fig. 2.13 Figure of young dancer, Mohenjo-Daro

Fig. 2.14 Torso of a “Priest King.”

Fig. 2.15 Ox bone inscribed with written characters

Fig. 2.16 Covered ritual wine vessel or *fang-yi*

key topics

Megaliths.

Mesopotamia

Sumerian writing and a war of the gods.   
Sacred mountains.   
Near Eastern empires, from Babylon to Persia.

Ancient Egypt

Pyramids and temples.  
Akhenaton’s brief revolution.   
Art of the afterlife.

Ancient Asia and America

Indus Valley cities.   
The mystic Vedas and Hindu epic.   
Bronze Age China.  
Ancient America.

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Key Names & Terms

megalith

Stonehenge

Near East

Mesopotamian

Sumerians

cuneiform

*Enuma Elish*

ziggurat

myth

archetype

Hammurabi

Nebuchadnezzar

Persepolis

polytheism

pharaoh

pyramid

Amarna

Nefertari

Mohenjo-Daro

Veda

Upanishad

Shang

Zhou

taotie

Mesoamerica

Olmec

Tenochtitlán

Andean civilization

## CRITICALLY THINKING

Death and Human Civilization

Using examples from this chapter, invite students to discuss the awareness of death and the belief in a life after death as factors in the development of human civilization. Begin the discussion by asking students to jot down something they believe about the meaning or the experience of death and the life that may lie beyond. Affirm that these thoughts may be connected to religious beliefs and that those beliefs are welcome in this discussion.

Next, have students examine one example of a work of art in the text related to death and the afterlife. Ask students to consider the following questions:

*What beliefs about death can they deduce from this example?*

*How do the beliefs of ancient peoples compare to their own?*

Invite students to share their answers informally in pairs or small groups. On the chalkboard, record comparative insights from the small-group discussions. Finally, propose to students that a belief in the life after death is one of the greatest inventions of the human species and one of the practices that most clearly distinguishes humans from other animals. Invite students’ responses. At the end of the discussion, ask students to summarize by recording in their notes or journals: 1) a new insight or understanding from this discussion, and 2) one question that remains perplexing or confusing to them.

### The Truth of Myth

Assign students to review or re-read the definition of myth in the KEY CONCEPT in Chapter 2. Encourage them to set aside, for the purposes of this activity, the common definition of myth as an illusion, falsehood, or mistaken belief. Emphasize that myths functioned in the ancient world as professions of collective belief and allegiance, more like today’s religious creeds and political constitutions.

Ask students to think of a story that they have been told that they take as true and that has some importance in their lives. Their story may be religious, scientific, political, educational—any important story that is connected to their life and aspirations. In pairs or threes, invite students to tell their stories to each other. With each story, students should explain briefly how this story is significant to them.

In the whole class, solicit a sampling of your students’ stories. Compare these stories to the great mythic tales that characterized ancient civilizations. Also, compare the reasons that students affirm their stories as true with the accounts of the *Enuma Elish, Epic of Gilgamesh,* the biblical patriarchs, and other mythic traditions you may be able to cite. Leave students with this question:

*Why might a reasonable person believe or affirm this story as true for him- or herself and for the culture as a whole?*

### Civilizations and Progress

Ask students to consider these questions:

*Which of the world’s civilizations are relatively more or less advanced at this moment in human history?*

*What factors are most important in explaining these different states of advancement?*

Direct students to write out answers to these questions in their notes. Then divide the class into small groups and direct them to brainstorm as many different possible answers to these questions as they can. Remind the groups that brainstorming is intended to generate ideas, not to organize or evaluate ideas.

In the whole class, focus on their answers to the second question, the factors in progress. Record some of each group’s ideas on a chalkboard. Note when one group reinforces an idea already contributed by another. Try to generate a list of at least ten factors.

Direct students individually to rank order their top five, in order of importance. Ask them whether their primary factors can explain the relative advancement of different human civilizations to 1,000 B.C. (about the latest date covered in this chapter).

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FOCUS ON THE ARTS

1. Introduce a study of ancient architecture by examining the surviving examples of megalithic and early urban building (Stonehenge, Sumerian ziggurats, and Egyptian pyramids). Challenge students to find the closest equivalents in structures still being built in contemporary society. Ask students to interpret the differences and similarities of function and design between ancient and modern building.
2. Consider the ziggurat and pyramid as sacred mountains, built to remove humans from the everyday plane of existence and bring them closer to the gods—to enter what the scholar C. Norberg-Schulz calls the vertical or “sacred” dimension. Encourage students to brainstorm about other sacred stories or sites involving mountains (Sinai, Olympus, and Sermon on the Mount). Ask students to consider how mountains and other high places still appeal to worshipers and adventurers, and what attractions draw people to such places.
3. In examining the statue of Mycerinus and Queen Khamerernebty (Fig. 2.9), what conclusions can students draw about the relative roles and significance of the male ruler and his female consort in ancient Egyptian religion and politics? Compare this relationship in depictions from ancient Greece and Rome.
4. Invite students to consider the circumstances of the bull’s-head lyre discovered in a Sumerian tomb. How should modern people regard the connection here between artistic beauty and human blood sacrifice? Encourage them to consider other instances of human sacrifice in ancient societies (see the discussion of the Hebrew story of Abraham and Isaac in Chapter 5 or the example of Maya blood sacrifice in Chapter 6).
5. Invite students to explain the appeal of Egyptian art and civilization in the contemporary age. Cite historical examples of Egyptophilia (Napoleon’s expeditions, the Art Deco craze of the 1920s, and the tour of King Tut’s sarcophagus in the 1970s).
6. In light of the example of the Indus Valley civilization, ask students to consider historical instances when human civilization has regressed. Compare the example of the Maya decline (see Chapter 6). What trends in art or society as a whole could they cite as premonitions that civilization might be regressing today?

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## IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

### Egyptian and Greek Sculpture

As the text explains, Egyptian sculpture provides an interesting counterpoint to the more familiar ancient Greek sculpture discussed in Chapter 3. Egyptian sculpture reflects the conservative character of ancient Egyp­tian civilization, while Greek sculpture was remarkable in its rapid development of an idealized naturalism. Illustrate these differences by a discussion and slides or book illustrations, depending on available resources.

The Egyp­tians often used sculpture to honor or memorial­ize particular individuals. Egyp­tian pha­raohs, for example, are portrayed as recog­nizable individuals, often in the guise of a god, such as Horus, the hawk. The fune­real function of Egyptian sculp­ture is related to their elaborate view of the after­life. Prominent individuals would have portrait sculptures prepared for their tombs, often portraying husband and wife together. While these sculptures were stylized in stance and dress, they provided recognizable depictions of their subjects. As the text explains, such standing portrait sculptures probably were the model for the first Greek *kouroi*.

Ancient Greek sculpture tended to deal in idealized or generic types, such as gods and warriors, rather than in portraits. Greek sculpture in the archaic and classi­cal periods usually was placed in or near a temple, and this religious function influ­enced its style, much as the memorial function influenced Egyptian sculpture.

Egyptians also used sculpture to repre­sent daily life, as in the groups of figu­rines found in Egyptian tombs or realistic fig­ures of slaves performing everyday tasks. In the history of ancient Egyptian civiliza­tion, sculptors depicted a much wider variety of subjects than the ancient Greeks, and often paid greater attention to the details of human experience.

A brief survey of ancient Egyptian sculp­ture can be used to raise a number of questions:

*Does Western civilization tend to prize rapid development and innovation over consistency and the preservation of tradition, and therefore prefer the classical Greek arts to Egyptian art?*

*Is Egyptian portraiture more "humanistic" than the idealized gods and athletes of classical Greek sculpture?*

*How do we explain the popular fascination with Egyptian tombs and the arts that decorated them?*

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resources

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