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## Final Project: Option 1 The Big Shift: Humanism

In the very early years of history, art has been a way to capture a certain time period and communicate the way of life, which include traditions, values, power and manly religion, to generations and generations after. Religion being so fundamental people would revolve around the acts necessary to please their gods. This focus limited individual thought, inquiry and advancement. However once the center of thought revolved around man, then man was able to question, observe, understand and control. This is Humanism. The shift to humanism abled man to advanced in areas of leadership, intellect, and architecture which is reflected through artists' skill and their artwork. The slow change over thousands of year paved the way to what we have today in areas of art, mathematics, philosophy and capitalism.

Thousands of years ago in Egypt mans daily life involved surviving and following rituals that will get them closer to their divine deities and then reaching to a good afterlife. This nature was transferred on to the wall or stone carvings. *The Temple of Dendur*, is from Egypt completed in 10 BC is the perfect example of man's relationship to the divine. The temple is a large structure made to have a variety of religious ceremonies. The picture you see on the right is a carving on the side of the temple. We know there are two deities and the pharaoh making his offerings. We can identify the deities by the elevated thrones and headpieces. There is a clear distinction between man and God. The deities are holding scepters and the ankh, the symbol of life. Around 380-246BC, we also have the wooden figure below which is set in a position of worship, the *Ritual Figure*. These figures were made to show the deities that they were being worshipped all the time. The position of the upward



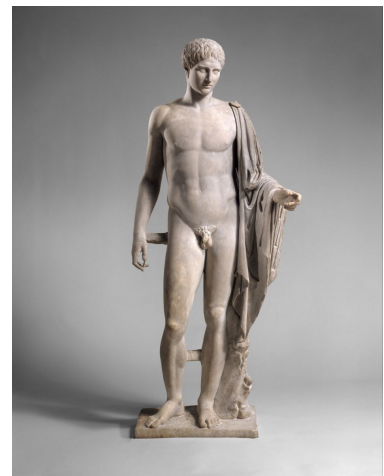


arm and beating of the chest is a performance done before the arrival of a God, a pharaoh or rise of the Sun. The figures were set around shrines to accompany the deities when people were not able to physically be by the shrines during a certain time. So we can tell from these art works that God is in the center of how man act, think, and believe.

Next, we can move to see a transition of man thinking more about their ability beyond just hunting and surviving. There is a start of artistic expression and perfection of a man. The two statues below may be seen as the same type of sculpture of a young man with an athletic build. However, we have a statue of a man and one a God. The image on the right is the *Marble statue of Hermes*, God of trade and commerce. The image to the left we have *Polykleitos, Doryphoros*, 450 BC. the spear bearer. Here you can't tell the difference between man and God compared to the Egyptian carvings where as we always have an identifier of God or pharaoh. The statue has leveled out man and God. The focus is now of the perfection of a warrior's build to show strength, capability and power of man. Humanism's main focus is on mankind, rather than divine. Both statues are made from marble, from the Roman classical period. We have both statues in standing in contrapposto, which shifts the weight on to one leg and there is a movement throughout the whole



body from shoulders, hips and feet in a Z form. The emphasis in the artwork is no longer on images of the divine. We have full male nude. The body language of the statue on the left is of a warrior the hand is in a formation of holding a weapon. The hair is very detailed and the face has an aloof expression. We are not able to tell apart man Hermes apart without further information.



Austin Cline stated "it was materialistic in that it sought explanations for events in the natural world, it valued free inquiry in that it wanted to open up new possibilities for speculation, and it valued humanity in that it placed human beings at the center of

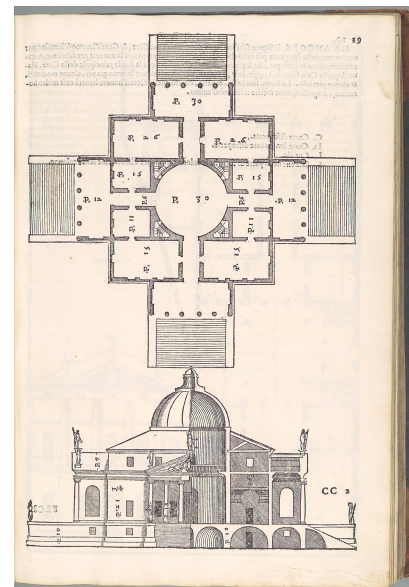
moral and social concerns”, people started to ask the hows and whys of the way things are done this brought up innovation and invention artist mathematicians,



architects, and philosophers all began to want more information to develop theories and better solutions to prosper as a society rather than following only set rituals for the divine. We have new techniques in paintings like linear perspective, landscape, portraits. The image above is Raphael's fresco, *The School of Athens*, was painted between 1509-1511. The painting has everything that

accumulated from the development of humanism. We have to important philosophers in the center of the fresco Plato and Aristotle who emphasize the need to know why and finding wisdom. We also have other highly regarded individuals in history that lead to our current mathematical fundamentals. You see can also see the linear perspective being applied the center position being the two scholars. This allowed our eyes to move into the depth it created.

The change from complete religious temples dedicated to the deities to modern european styles building show the growth of human creativity and innovation to develop more structures for society its government, churches, schools. In the *School of Athens* fresco you can see the arches and the vaulted ceiling and the round dome ceiling are great invocation in architecture because man become to formulate the world to what is needed for better things for the human civilization. The book to the right by Andrea Palladio is a guide for the construction of buildings he is known for around Europe. “Palladio translated the language of classical antiquity into a flexible and distinctive vocabulary that was used internationally by architects well into the nineteenth century” passion of information and teaching is how man improves society. Man has come from simple wall carving to intricate painting, statues, and large beautiful building that have lasted for thousands of years and that is because man become the center of thought. Humanism was the catalyts to such impactful changes.



## **Bibliography**

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**Austin Cline, “Humanism in Ancient Greece”**