

Representation and design in with amenhotep iv of the eighteenth



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The sole significant challenge (and it proved only a temporary sidestep) to Egypt's consistency of attitude and approach to representation and design in with Amenhotep IV of the Eighteenth Dynasty. As Pharaoh, he closed all the Amen temples, displacing the current ruling deity Amen-Ra, and officially dispensing the plethora of other Egyptian gods. He proceeded with replacing the former polytheistic based religion, with a monotheistic system; worshipping the single god Aten. Aten was the sun disk, he allowed the god Re to be worshipped because he believed Re was part of the sunlight that came from Aten.

In his worship of Aten. This move to a monotheistic culture seemed to have anticipated the ideas of later Hebrews and Christians. Apart from changing the religion base of all of Egypt he moved the current capital from Thebes to a city about 175 miles due north called Akhetaten, " the Horizon of Aten. " Ruins of the city lie near what is now Tell el Amarna. Upon Changing Capitals, Amenhotep IV also changed his name to Akhenaton, " He who is effective on the behalf of Aten. " Just as significantly he liberated Egypt from convention.

He had been described as a " mystic, a dreamer, a religious fanatic, and pacifist. Egypt, having followed its ancient tradition for thousands of years, did not easily accept his revolutionary ideas. Akhenaton's religious reforms, which historians call the Amarna Revolution, led to an outpouring of art and sculpture that glorified the Aton. An example of the new artistic freedom can be seen with limestone relief Akhenaton, Nefertiti, and Their Children Worshipping the Sun. Instead of the traditional idealized bodies, during Akhenaton's reign, bodies were portrayed naturally.

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One is able to see the physical distortions that artist put in. There wasn't an emphasis on rigid and dignified poses, but there was a sort of casualness and intimacy shared within the reliefs. In the relief Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and Their Children Worshipping the Sun, his body is elongated, with wider hips and a slouched back. All depictions of Akhenaten had this physical distortion, so we can presume that it was not exaggerated by the artist. When Akhenaten died, Egypt returned to its polytheistic faith, the capital returned to Thebes and the artist returned to the same routine.

In many ways, America has more in common with Rome than it does with Greece. The Greeks were a practical people, but the Romans raised the idea of practicality almost to a religion. For the Greek, what was good was the ideal; for the Roman, what was good was what worked. In much the same way, Americans pay tribute to the person who accomplishes things, the practical one, the one who can use what is available to solve the problem of the moment. At any rate, Roman civilization had its own unique contributions to make to Western civilization as a whole.

Some of these are reflected in Vergil's Aeneid. Here is that sense of "manifest destiny", a term that is familiar to students of nineteenth-century America. It was Rome's "destiny" to rule the world, and Aeneas's destiny to found Rome. Here also is the no-nonsense, straight-faced seriousness of Aeneas, hot-blooded lover of Queen Dido, who cold-bloodedly leaves her in the lurch with hardly a backward glance. Indeed, the basic character of Rome may be summed up in the comparison of Odysseus and Aeneas.

During most of his wanderings, Odysseus is a solitary man, keeping his own counsel, concerned with returning to his own home and fireside and avenging the personal wrongs done him by the suitors. Aeneas is a public man, pushing his own personal concerns aside to fulfill his governmental duty. Odysseus answers the call of his heart, Aeneas the call of his head. The term that is frequently applied to Aeneas is *pius*, meaning dutiful and devoted. This is the quality that made Rome great. The immense administrative bureaucracy of Rome depended on absolute, often blind obedience to the demands of the state.

One is tempted to compare Rome in some ways to certain modern authoritarian states. At any rate, Rome's primary gift to the world was Order. Roman legions in some isolated area of Gaul or North Africa meant an end to tribal warfare. New avenues of commerce and communication, watched over by carefully drilled and fiercely loyal troops, gave isolated people a window on the world that was Rome. They lived with the hope some day of being able to say " *Civis Romanus Sum*"--I am a Roman citizen. If the price of this gift of order was sometimes repression, most were willing to pay the price.

Without a doubt, affiliation with Rome meant a rise in the standard of living. And on the other hand, non-affiliation meant certain destruction and death. The Greeks gave us the intangibles, the ideas, the philosophies; the Roman contribution has been largely physical. Democracy is a Greek idea. Plato gave us the very idea of the ideal. And that important Roman concept of stoicism wasn't Roman at all; it was borrowed from the Greeks. But without the Roman arch which made possible the Coliseum and the great aqueducts, the breathtaking cathedrals of Europe could never have existed.

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The portrait sculpture of Rome has never been excelled in its intense realism. History and biography were also important to a people who believed in conforming to acceptable moral and ethical patterns, and such men as Polybius and Suetonius set patterns in these genres that strongly influenced writers up until the time of the founding of the United States and are still important today. Polybius spent years examining documents in Rome and watching the functioning of Roman government. What he writes in his Histories is extremely practical.

But the most important monument Rome erected was the set of laws that made possible the smooth functioning of its tremendous military, civil, and commercial machinery, including ancestors of the modern multinational business corporations. It is often observed, in fact, that the organizational virtues of Rome contributed mightily to the eventual success of Christianity. The organization called Christianity, with its headquarters in Rome, managed to exist somehow through centuries of the Dark Ages.

Whatever its defects may have been, the Church managed to keep alive a spark that might otherwise have been extinguished. All in all, one must be impressed with a people who could develop and maintain a certain style of life through eight centuries. This is certainly not an inconsiderable achievement. But one must also be impressed by the singular lack of humor in the Romans. As L. R. Lind has observed: " Not only the language but the mental processes of the people who once wrote and spoke Latin seem at this distance rigid and inflexible.

A tolerably comprehensive description of the typical Roman would give us a personality remarkable for its wrote and spoke Latin seem at this distance rigid and inflexible. A tolerably comprehensive description of the typical Roman would give us a personality remarkable for itsstubborn conservatism, its concentration upon warfare, power, and law, its respect for birth status and family. To the Romans, race and clan meant more to the preservation of the state than did the individual; the gifts and talents of the Roman were his to use only for the common good. Everything is businesslike. Gone is the sense of adventure and wonder we find in the Greeks. Gone is the vanity of humans wanting to be like the gods. Romans function on a totally human scale, without the wonderful vain boasting of the Greeks. Everything is ordered, controlled. As Cicero writes in his advice to his son Marcus, " Not but that jesting and diversion are allowable, provided we use them but as we do sleep, and other such necessary refreshments of nature, that is, after the discharge of our serious and more important duties.

And even then we must see that our jesting be neither excessive nor immodest. " The Romans are good to learn from but often, ultimately, a little hard to like. Rome's Contributions to Later Civilizations L. R. Lind has admirably summarized many of Rome's contributions to later civilizations: " Rome preserved Greek culture from its barbarous enemies; her ancient peace maintained other native cultures until the Middle Ages, under Christianity and the national states of Europe, could continue to protect them.

Roman law became the sheltering matrix for much later law; her political organization was copied, among other features of Roman life, by the Holy <https://assignbuster.com/representation-and-design-in-with-amenhotev-iv-of-the-eighteenth/>

Roman Empire and by the Catholic Church of Rome. Her ethics deeply influenced Christianity by way of Cicero and the Church Fathers. Her language was the foundation of the Romance languages and provided a grammatical model for other languages; her alphabet became universal in western Europe outside Russia.

Her roads, bridges, public and private buildings are still a testimony to the vision and skill of her architects and engineers; her roads were, in fact, the best in the world until the nineteenth century. Roman commercial methods, coinage, handwriting and shorthand, weights, measures, calendar, science, and military medicine were only a few of the models that Europe was to follow. Her capacity for purposeful action and cooperation were not transmitted so fully to some of the later peoples, nor were certain other admirable traits of Roman character. "