

# Understanding of the primary contributions of rome to arts, government, engineeri...

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Demonstrate an understanding of the primary contributions of Rome to arts, government, engineering, and philosophy Tiffany McDonald Aasiya Wytch

The Roman's contributed many things to the world. They influenced society, art, government, engineering, architecture, and philosophy. They contribution made by the Roman's throughout history lead to growth and better understanding of the world outside of the empire and a look into the life and minds of the people. Roman's most influential contribution to society has been showed throughout the history and culture of art. Although many characteristics of Roman art have been adopted from the art world of the Etruscans, the Romans' have also had their own unique contributions. One of the most influential contributions that the Romans had on the history of art was their " ability to assimilate ideas and customs from the cultures and societies which they encountered. " (Giovanni Milani-Santarpia) Frescoes, a painting done using watercolor on wet plaster on a wall or ceiling, was a major contribution to artistic world. Frescoes influenced artists to focus more on the landscapes and its features instead of people and figures in their paintings. It also encouraged the artists to paint other things aside from people such as scenery and architectural scenes. Doing so helped artists to give their supporters more of an atmospheric perspective on the world and lessen the focus on people. In an attempt to giving their fresco paintings to life, the artists would apply a pigment mixed with lime directly to the wall while it was still moist. (Giovanni Milani-Santarpia) Murals was another form of art that the Romans helped being into various branches of art. Murals were an idea that came indirectly from the previous Roman creation, frescos. A mural is a piece of art that is painted directly on a wall. Then there are

mosaics, which is an art form where you create an image using tiny pieces of colored stone, glass, and other materials. It has been said that, " the level of detail and finesse achieved was extraordinary and the amount of work required to achieve high quality could make their cost quite prohibitive".

(Giovanni Milani-Santarpia) Mosaics were usually found in places of worships, homes, and even government office simply because they were colorful and extremely detailed. The Romans also helped to develop the use of the arch, dome and the vault and they even discovered concrete which helped to improve architecture. The biggest attribution that concrete has had on architecture has been shown in religious buildings such as the Pantheon in Rome and even the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The fact that the both of these buildings are still standing to this very day shows how talented and resourceful the Romans were when it came to using what they had in order to improve the world. The triumphal arch was another development made by the Romans. A triumphal arch is a " monumental structure pierced by at least one arched passageway and erected to honour an important person or to commemorate a significant event." (Britannica Encyclopedia). It has been said that the triumphal arch, " used relief sculpture and inscription to carry its historic and commemorative messages, and this narrative technique decorated the entire surface of the commemorative Trajan's Column. "

(Shearer West 171) It was because of the Roman's influence on government that helped spread Christianity throughout civilization. " Rome, unified under one government, made possible the passing of information very quickly, thus greatly assisting the spread of Christianity. " (Jonathan Kieffer) This allowed Christianity to evolve from a small group to people to a diverse community

full of people. The Roman Republic also gave the people belonging to a large population a say in political issues by allowing the Senators to represent the people. The Roman Republic also used the checks and balance system to make sure that power did not become too resolute. The Roman law also had a tremendous influence on society, especially when the twelve tables, which just so happens to be the first law code in Roman history. " The U. S. legal system is a ' common law' legal system which is based on law that's developed by judges through decisions of the courts, and is often contrasted to ' civil law' systems which are more closely derived from Roman laws. "

(Danxner ) The Roman law was the basis for what is known today as civil law and it also had a great influence on the development of the civil system. The Romans also had indictments and trials by jury, which are very similar to those today. The idea of innocent until proven guilty came from the Romans as well. It has also been said that, " Roman law developed the division between public law, in which the state is directly involved, such as with issues of treason and taxation, and private law, concerned with disputes between people, such as over contracts. " (Danxner ) The Roman's also had quite the influence on the government as they helped create the basis for the three governmental branches; the executive branch, legislative branch and the judicial branch. The executive branch consisted of two representatives, who were elected by Roman property owners and served for two years. There would be times where the executive branch would consist of a number of bureaucrats who were put in charge of running festivals and performing censuses. It was also common that during times of crises, which were often caused by war, a ruler would be elected for six months to

supervise the expansion of Roman happiness. The legislative branch consisted of senators who were assigned by the two representatives from the executive branch. The representatives in the legislative branch would decide on how the state money would be spent and what projects were needed in order to receive funding for their state. The legislative branch also had control of the foreign policy. The Roman judicial branch is very similar to the courts, especially the Supreme Court, of present day America. However, unlike the judicial system of modern times, the Roman judiciary system was able to construct sentences and hand out punishments instead of following sentences that had previously been handed down in the past. Engineering was just another contribution for the Romans to add onto their already growing list. Despite the limited amount of resources that the Romans had, they managed to contribute a lot to society. It has been said that, " Many of the engineering and architectural designs used in Rome two thousand years ago are still used today. However, the accomplishments that are made back then were phenomenal. Only modern day technology and machinery would allow us to construct some of these marvelous structures in the time it took the Romans. " (cite personal website) Engineering was another area where the Romans adopted the ideas of the Ancient Greeks to help further their knowledge and contribution to society. It has been said that, " Engineering was a key component to the development of a great empire, which produced unthinkable structures and designs that are present in the world today. " (cite personal website) Without the advances that the Romans made towards engineering who knows where we, as a modern society would be right now. " Engineering was used as a way of improving the lifestyle of the Romans even

on day-to-day issues such as frequent water supply. " (cite history learning website) The issue that the Romans previously had with supplying their people with water was solved by the development of aqueducts. For example, there is an aqueduct in Segovia, Spain that is said to be 60 meters high. The fact that this aqueduct is still intact to this day is bulletproof evidence that the Romans were skilled when it came to engineering. Another example of Roman's engineering abilities, are the numerous roads that are still present throughout Europe. Roads were created to increase the effectiveness of traveling to nearby or far away cities and provinces. The Romans were smart enough to create roads that " used three levels of substructure beneath the paving stones, and a prescribed angle for the uplift of the center of the road, allowing rainwater to drain off. " (Danxner) After constructing the roads they took their new development a couple of steps further and " they used numbered sign posts every Roman mile, which indicated such things as the distance to the next town and which construction Battalion had built the road. They also had extensive networks of underground lead pipe, supplying clean water. They also utilized the concepts of parks, public libraries, and plazas. " (Danxner) It was also in Rome that several well known building were constructed. Two of the most noteworthy structures built by the Romans would have to be the Coliseum and the Pantheon. The Coliseum was a big oval shaped arena that was built for a variety of events such as animal fights and gladiator battles. The Coliseum was about fifteen stories high and could accommodate over 50,000 people. The Romans made sure to include a number of entrances, bathrooms, and water fountains. It took about eight years for over 12,000

people to build it. Then there's the Pantheon, which is another structure built by the Romans that is still intact to this day. The Pantheon has a distinctive dome shaped roof that was new to the public and even looked down upon because it was so different. However, that did not stop the architects from building it with a dome shaped roof. " The engineers created thick walls to act as a solid base for the roof. The sides of the domed roof decreased in thickness as it neared the top. In order to decrease more weight and add some artistic appeal, coffering was done to the sides of the dome. At the top, the dome actually has an opening called an oculus that allows in sunlight and greatly reduces the roof's weight. " (cite personal website) The Roman's also contributed to philosophy. The single most important philosophy in Rome was Stoicism, which originated in Hellenistic Greece. This philosophy was particularly interesting to Romans because of their world view, since the Stoic view was an acceptance of all situations, including adverse ones, which seemed to reproduce Roman values such as their crowning achievement: *virtus*, or " manliness, " or " toughness. " The center of the Stoic philosophy was the *logos*. The universe is ordered by God and this order is the *logos*, which means " rational order" or " meaning" of the universe. In the Stoic view, the only thing a person could control was his/ her own judgment and perception, ands/he should not concern their self with things outside his/her control. Later toward the end of the Roman Empire, around the third century CE, the philosopher Plotinus popularized Neo-Platonism. Neo-Platonism is a school of philosophy which attempted to combine doctrines of Plato, Aristotle, and the Pythagoreans. Roman stoicism and Neo-Platonism were considered pagan philosophies, yet it is evident that they greatly influenced

Christian thought and practice. (cite Book). These are some of the contributions made by the Romans over the years. Many of these contribution made the world what it is today. Such as the philosophies that shaped Christianity.