

Architecture

Greek architecture developed from a heavy and ponderous appearance in the Archaic period to a light and airy feel in the Classic period. Most Greek architectural construction was focused around temples. Because the public generally was not allowed into the temples, architects designed impressive exteriors.

The concern of the Greeks for harmony and proportion is evident in their architecture. They saw public buildings as organic units that must be organized into orderly arrangements of parts. This attitude led to definite systems of construction that were called "the orders" (fig. 6-20). The *Doric order* developed in mainland areas. The *Ionic*

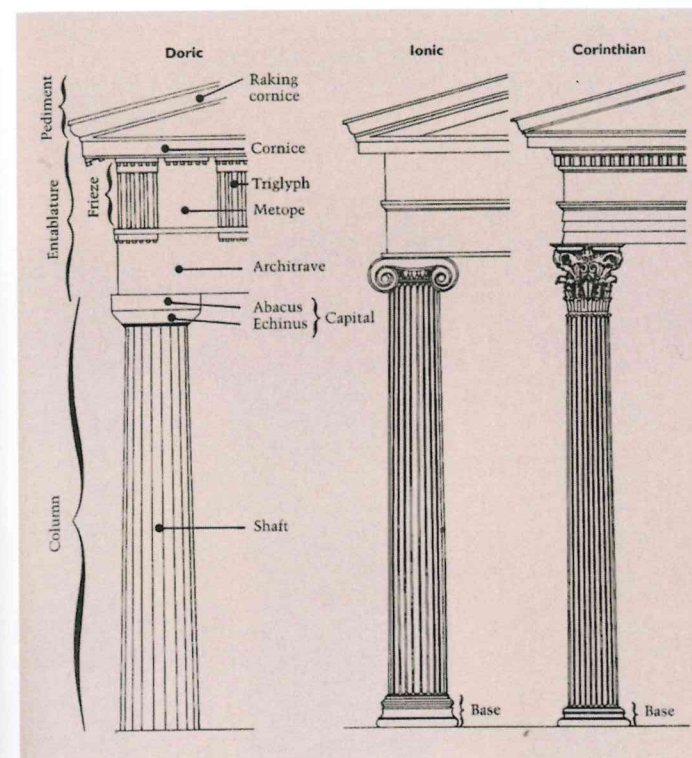
order evolved in the islands and the coast of Asia Minor. The *Corinthian order* was used in Hellenistic times and later in Roman civilization. The orders consisted of detailed rules for construction, based on proportions and an integration of the parts of the buildings. They were a means of breaking down complex forms into simple units that made up the whole.

In the Doric order, for example, the shaft of the column rests on the topmost step. It tapers toward the top in a slightly swelling curve. Atop the shaft is the capital, which has a round cushion-like molding capped by a square block. Resting on the capitals are the *architrave*, *frieze* and *cornice*. The architrave is the lintel that stretches horizontally

above the columns. The frieze consists of oblong panels (*metopes*, often carved) and square blocks with upright channels (*triglyphs*). The crowning member of the superstructure is the cornice. The wide flat band of the cornice casts a shadow on the frieze below. The flat triangular space under the cornice is the pediment, which was often filled with sculpture.

Archaic Doric temples were powerful structures, and heavy in appearance. The *Temple of Hera* (called "The Basilica") at Paestum (fig. 6-21) was built about 550 BC. The temple has very heavy columns that bulge and taper toward the top. The capitals are huge and flat.

The Doric style reached maturity during the Classic period in the



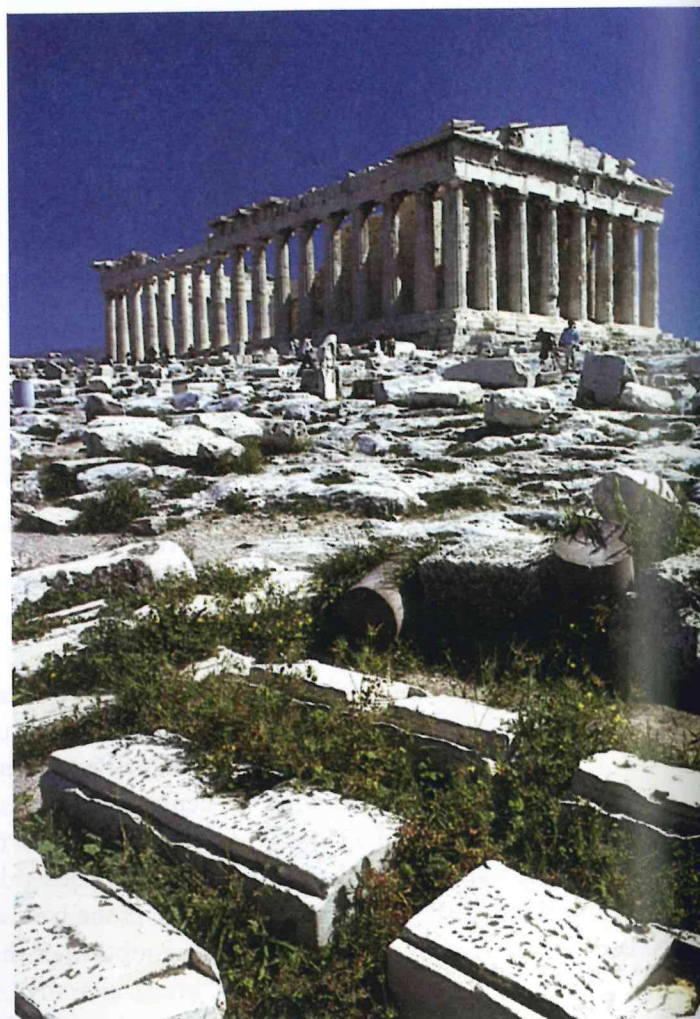
6-20 While the idea of an organized system is the same for all three orders, the particular details differ from one order to another.

Doric, Ionic and Corinthian orders. Reproduced by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., from *Art in Perspective: A Brief History* by Henri Dorra.



6-21 Look at the drums of the columns. What order is the temple?

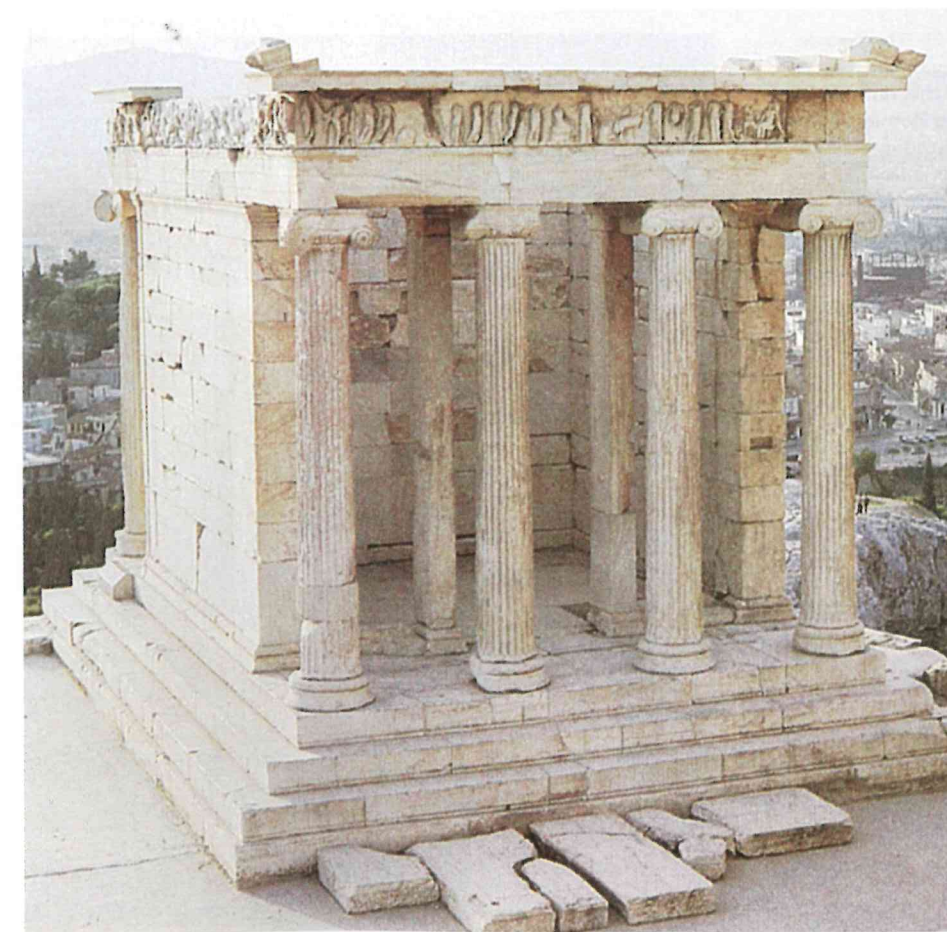
"The Basilica" (*Temple of Hera*), about 550 BC. Paestum, Italy.



6-22 The Athenians' celebration of their patron goddess Athena focused on ceremonies held here. Iktinos and Kallikrates, *The Parthenon*, 448-432 BC. The Acropolis, Athens.

Parthenon (fig. 6-22) in Athens. The architects Iktinos and Kallikrates built it from 448 to 432 BC, a short time for so huge a project. It is the central building of the Athenian Acropolis, which contains several other temples and Classic structures. Compare it with the *Temple of Hera* at Paestum. It is larger, but seems less massive. Proportions have been carefully readjusted. The columns are more slender, and the space between columns is wider. The slightly curved tapering (or *entasis*) of the columns is less pronounced. Capitals are smaller and less flaring, and the cornice projects less. The columns lean slightly inward, and the corner columns are closer to their neighbors than the rest of the columns. All these visual refinements help give the structure a feeling of great harmony, balance and organic unity.

Although the ruins of the building are clean marble, originally many areas were painted, especially where sculptures were present. The cella contained a huge statue of Athena.



6-23 This small Ionic temple is very well preserved. Most temples are now only ruins. Kallikrates, *Temple of Athena Nike*, about