

The Ancient City: Life in Classical Athens and Rome

By Peter Connolly

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In this superbly illustrated volume, Athens and Rome, the two greatest cities of antiquity, spring to life through the masterful pen of Peter Connolly. For the first time ever, all the evidence has been painstakingly pieced together to reconstruct the architectural wonders of these mighty civilizations. By re-creating their public buildings, their temples, shops, and houses, Connolly reveals every aspect of a person's life in glorious detail, including religion, food, drama, games, and the baths.

The first part of *The Ancient City* covers the development of Athens in the hundred years following the Persian Wars, which began in the 4th century B.C. These chapters encompass the Golden Years of Athens; the establishment of democracy; the building of the Parthenon, the Erechtheum, and the municipal buildings of the Agora; a typical Athenian workday; and the construction of the Long Walls.

Part II examines the development of Rome in the hundred years from Nero (emperor of Rome from A.D. 54 to 68) to Hadrian (emperor of Rome from A.D. 117 to 138)--the great building period of Rome. Visit Nero's Golden Palace and the buildings subsequently built over it, the Colosseum, the Flavian Palace, the Baths of Trajan, the Temple of Venus and Roma, as well as other buildings such as the Circus Maximus, the Theatre of Marcellus, and Trajan's Forum and Market.

In addition to reading about the great monuments and moments of classical Greece and Rome, readers learn about a typical day in the life of an Athenian and a Roman. They read about--and see--the houses people inhabited; attend 5-day festivals and go to the theatre; fight great battles and witness the birth of Rome's navy; visit temples and spend a day at the races. The fascinating artwork and vivid descriptions provide a window into the great history of these two extraordinary cities and civilizations.

The Ancient City is the crowning achievement of Peter Connolly's distinguished career. His illustrations and reconstructions have a unique authority, providing the starting point for a fascinating exploration of these cities and the lives of the people who inhabited them.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Peter Connolly's marvelous full-color drawings of the public and private structures of Athens and Rome are the perfect illustrative counterpart to his detailed description of city life (cowritten by Hazel Dodge) in the classical era. *The Ancient City* covers the Greece of the golden years of Athens (approximately the 4th to 3rd centuries B.C.), and the Roman Empire from the reign of Augustus to the reign of Septimius Severus (27 B.C. to A.D. 211). In addition to such monuments as the Parthenon and the Colosseum, adolescent readers--and adults just beginning to study the ancient world--can learn about the two era's different forms of government, contemporary fashions, home life, and entertainment.

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up--For anyone assigned a report on the design, construction, and use of the Parthenon or the Roman Colosseum, it would be hard to find a better source than this one. The full-page color drawings are stunning and include a wealth of detail not often found in other sources. Readers may not be aware, for example, of the lively use of color that prevailed on Greek temples and sculpture, but it is well portrayed here. Numerous photographs and reproductions also illustrate the text. The daily life, history, and architecture of Athens and Rome are extensively covered, in more detail than most students will be able to absorb. Advanced readers with a background in ancient history may find some interesting topics for in-depth research. An up-to-date bibliography and a useful index are appended.

David N. Pauli, Missoula Public Library, MT

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From [Booklist](#)

Connolly and Dodge have done a remarkable job resurrecting the golden years of classical Athens and ancient Rome. Focusing exclusively on Athens during the fifth century B.C. and Rome during the second century A.D., the authors provide a comprehensive overview of the economy, political climate, governmental structure, popular culture, and magnificent architecture that uniquely defined each of these two majestic cities at the pinnacle of its golden age. Although the narrative is informative and lively, the elaborate maps and lavish illustrations that grace every page most vividly communicate the tenor and the texture of classical antiquity. In particular, Connolly's minutely detailed renderings of both the inside and the outside of homes, theaters, public buildings, temples, bathhouses, and palaces provide the reader with intimate access to daily life in Athens and Rome. A superior historical, sociological, and architectural survey.

Margaret Flanagan

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