

Title:

Having a Good Time in the City-States of Early Greece

Word Count:

436

Summary:

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Keywords:

greece, greeks, city, state, olympics, fun, civilization, history, street, artists, bards, poets, mimes

Article Body:

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Having a Good Time in the City-States of Early Greece

People in Greece had a remarkable veneration for their gods and goddesses. As a result, most of the early group activities focused on the deities and, in particular, praising them. This was accomplished through a bevy of religious festivals held throughout the year. In truth, there is a bit of a question as to whether these festivals were more for political aims than fun and worship. Given this fact, we will leave it at that.

Sports played a large role in the city-states. To this end, the modern Olympics were founded during the time. Any real comparison, however, ends there. Unlike modern times, the ancient Olympics were mostly about showing up and/or killing rivals as political statements. The battles and events often replaced war between two city-states and it was not uncommon for the loser to die in his efforts. While we hold the modern Olympics as two separate events, summer and winter, the city-states called for four different Olympics each and every year. No, they did not hand out gold medals and certainly not bronze medals.

One area of the popular activities of the city-states that lives on today can be seen in most major cities. In this case, we are talking about street artists. In the city-states of ancient Greece, it was popular to come upon street poets and singers of all variety and ability. This form of artistry was translated to the future through bards and on to street mimes and such. If you visit Europe today,

you can still find street artists in many cities with Venice, Vienna, and Paris having a vast array of talented people plying their trade.

In ancient Greece, the public performers served a unique function when compared to modern street artists. The Greek public entertainers were itinerant artists traveling from one place to another. This made them an excellent resource for news from far away locations. Keep in mind there was no Internet or newspapers during those times. In there stead, traveling street artists delivered the news even if it was a little out of date - and you thought dial up was slow!

Having a good time in the city-states of Greece was both mild in the form of street artists and vicious in the form of the Olympics. Nonetheless, it is interesting that many these events and practices have survived to these modern times, some 2,500 years later.