

# **British Museum**

London, WC1B  
United Kingdom



Eine Foto-Dokumentation von Josef Rahm Otto

# More than 156 Greek antiquity photos from the

**THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

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## Explore / World cultures



### Ancient Greece

During the Bronze Age (around 3200 – 1100 BC), a number of cultures flourished on the islands of the Cyclades, in Crete and on the Greek mainland. They were mainly farmers, but trade across the sea, particularly in raw materials such as obsidian (volcanic glass) and metals, was growing.

The collapse of Mycenaean civilisation around 1100 BC brought about a period of isolation known as the Dark Age. But by around 800 BC the revival had begun as trade with the wider world increased, arts, crafts and writing re-emerged and city-states (poleis) developed.

By around 500 BC 'rule by the people', or democracy, had emerged in the city of Athens. Following the defeat of a Persian invasion in 480-479 BC, mainland Greece and Athens in particular entered into a golden age. In drama and philosophy, literature, art and architecture Athens was second to none. The city's empire stretched from the western Mediterranean to the Black Sea, creating enormous wealth. This paid for one of the biggest public building projects ever seen in Greece, which included the Parthenon.

Every fourth year between 776 BC and AD 395, the Olympic Games, held in honour of the god Zeus, the supreme god of Greek mythology, attracted people from across Greece. Crowds watched sports such as running, discus-throwing and the long-jump. Ancient Greece also played a vital role in the early history of coinage. As well as making some of the world's earliest coins, the ancient Greeks were the first to use them extensively in trade.

Following the death of Alexander and the division of his empire, the Hellenistic period (323-31 BC) saw Greek power and culture extended across the Middle East and as far as the Indus Valley. When Rome absorbed the Greek world into its vast empire, Greek ideas, art and culture greatly influenced the Romans.

The British Museum collection includes objects from across the entire Greek world, ranging in date from the beginning of pre-history to early Christianity in the Byzantine era.

### Related objects ▶



Black-figure wine jar

1 of 10 Objects [See all ▶](#)

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Room 13: Greece 1050-520 BC

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The myth of the Trojan war

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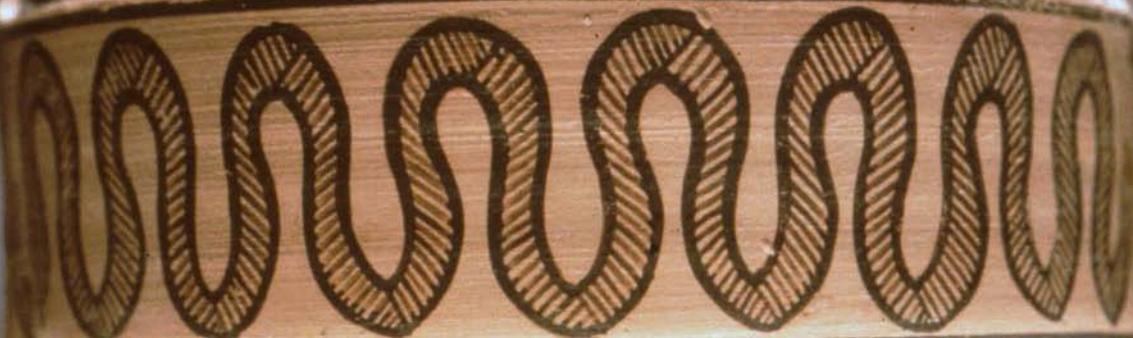




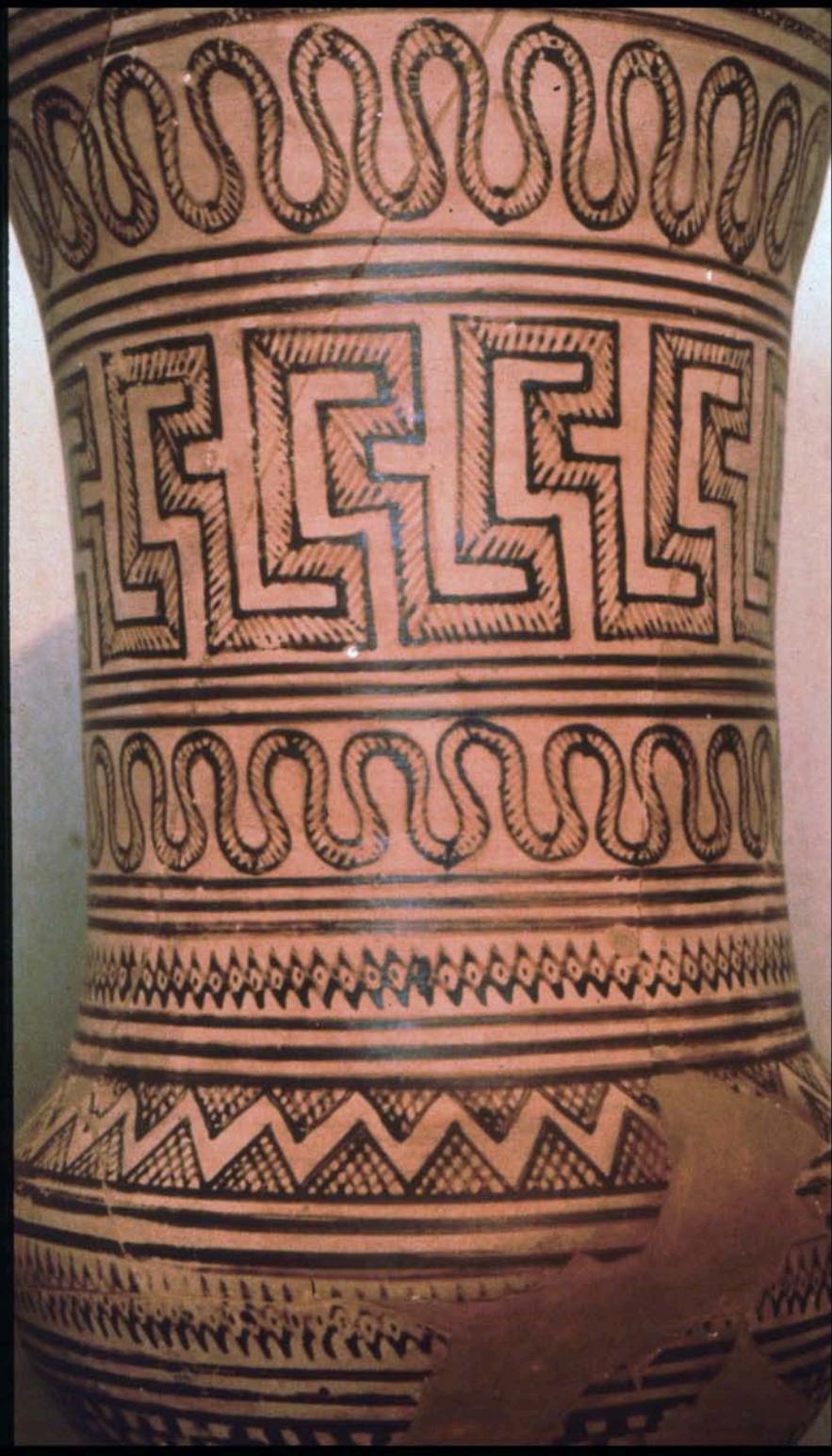






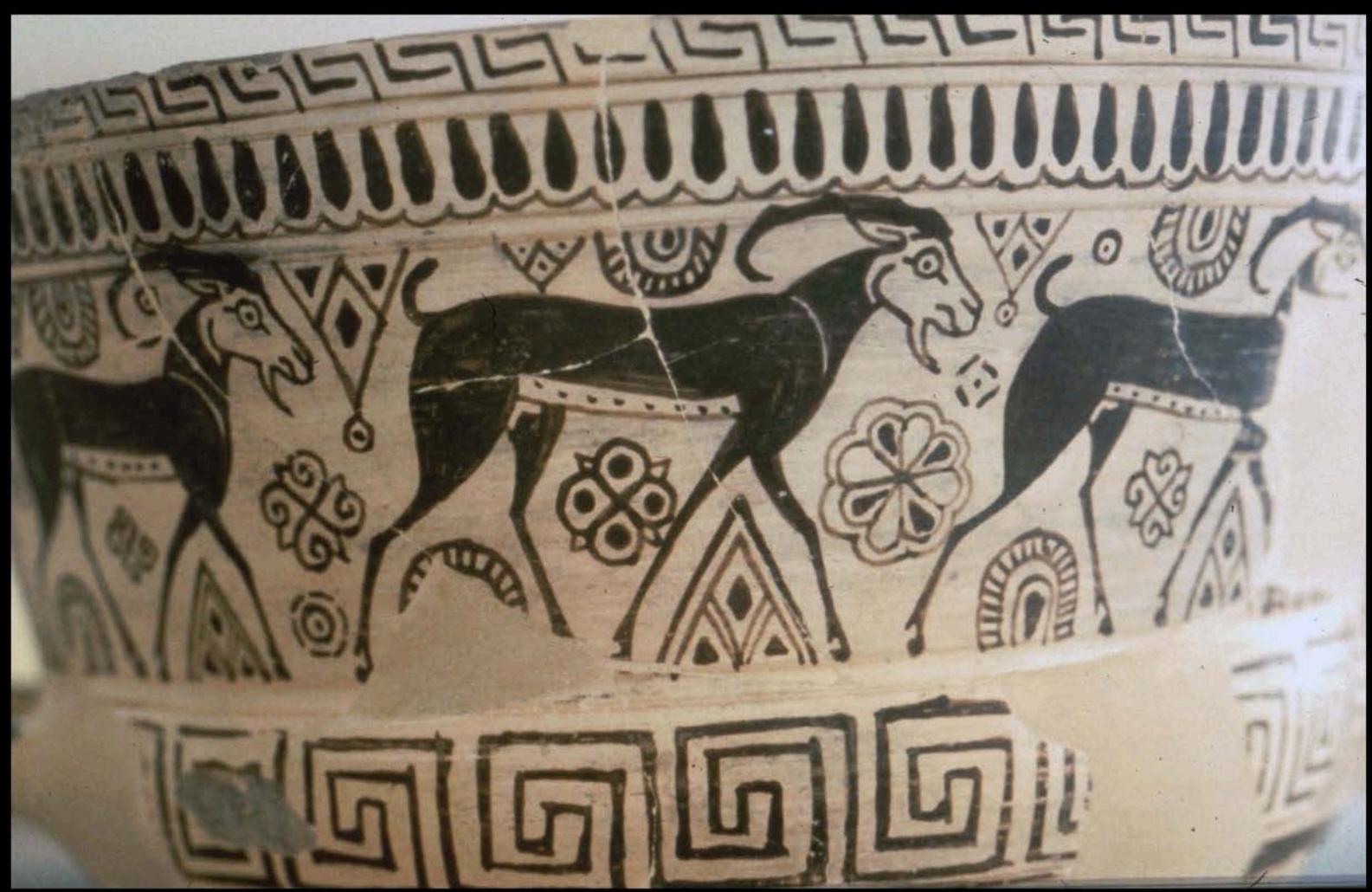


























































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