Ancient Greek Civilization

Part I

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Professor McInerney's research interests include topography, epigraphy, and historiography. He has published articles in the *American Journal of Archaeology*, *Hesperia*, and *California Studies in Classical Antiquity*. In 1997 he was an invited participant at a colloquium on ethnicity in the ancient world, hosted by the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington. His book, *The Folds of Parnassos: Land and Ethnicity in Ancient Phokis*, is a study of state formation and ethnic identity in the Archaic and Classical periods, and it will be published by the University of Texas Press in 1999.

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Scope:

The Greeks enjoy a special place in the construction of western culture and identity. Much of what we esteem in our own culture derives from them: democracy, epic poetry, lyric poetry, tragedy, history writing, philosophy, aesthetic taste, all of these and many other features of cultural life enter the West from Greece. The oracle of Apollo at Delphi had inscribed over the temple, "Know Thyself." For us, that also means knowing the Greeks.

In these lectures we will cover the period from the late Bronze Age, c. 1500 B.C., down to the time of Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great, in the late fourth century B.C., concentrating on the two hundred year interval from 600 to 400 B.C. The lectures will proceed chronologically and draw on the rich literary and archaeological sources of Greek history, from Homer's majestic *Odyssey* to Schliemann's excavations and Troy and Mycenae, from Aeschylus' *Oresteia* to the wealthy Greek colonies of Sicily. Lectures introduce the audience to the world of classical Athens, described in the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides and the dialogues of Plato.

The lectures explore the similarities and differences between Greek culture and our own. In a variety of areas, such as in religion and gender, the Greeks seem alien, approaching the world in ways utterly different from our ways. In other facets of social life, on the other hand, such as in politics and war, we find a culture perhaps not very unlike our own. We will examine each of these aspects of Greek culture in an attempt to understand better how Greek culture developed as it did, and why it still resonates for us today.

Lecture One
Greece and the Western World

Scope: This lecture introduces the audience to the role and importance of the Greeks in the formation of Western culture. We will look at the rediscovery of Greek culture in the modern period and discuss how identifying with a classical culture often means ignoring real differences between the Greeks and ourselves. We state the theme of the course, which is to examine both the similarities and differences between ourselves and the Greeks, in order to understand how their culture was formed and how we are connected to it.

Outline

I. Introduction

A. In a host of different ways—in the areas of democracy, poetry, theater, history writing, philosophy, aesthetic taste, and architecture and sculpture—the cultural life of the West derives from Greek models. A good example of this connection is Freud's use of the Oedipus myth to explain a central feature of psychoanalytic theory: the Oedipus complex.

B. Nevertheless, there are crucial differences between the ancient Greeks and modern Western society, difference that have often been glossed over because of the deep attachment we feel to Greek culture. Two areas illustrate the complex relationship between the modern and ancient worlds: democracy and theater.

1. Unlike modern *representative* democracy, ancient Athenian democracy involved the direct participation of every adult male citizen.

2. Although modern theater finds its antecedents in Greek drama, the two also had important differences.

a. Only a few dramatic performances were given in ancient Greece each year.

b. Greek drama was performed in the setting of a religious festival in honor of the god Dionysus.

3. Our versions of both of these institutions are different in important ways from their Greek models.

C. The theme of the course, then, is to explore the complex relationship between the Greeks and ourselves. What made the culture of ancient Greece one to which we feel such affinity? In what ways was it also really quite different from our own?

II. The Rediscovery of the Greeks

A. Even in the Renaissance, classical culture was primarily equated with Roman culture and Latin literature. The rediscovery of the Greeks was the product of German historian and art critic Johannes Winkelmann and the "philhellenic movement" of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

B. Early travellers such as Dodwell and Leake also helped create the Romantic image of an ideal, perfect, classical Greece by describing and drawing its architectural ruins.

C. Since then, Greek culture has helped to define, for better or for worse, a Western canon: a body of thought and art that somehow defines the West.

1. Many have sought to retrieve this ideal image of a beautiful Greece by studying and trying to imitate the ancient Greeks and their culture.

2. Following the battle of Jena, the Prussian minister of education announced that he would reconstruct Prussian society on the ancient Greek model. There was a tendency in German thought to seek perfection by returning to the Greeks.

3. In many respects, the Greeks are the idealized version of what we seek to become. However, they were just as human and imperfect as we are.

III. *Alterité* and Greece as a Forerunner of Western Culture

A. During the last two centuries Western countries, including the United States, have developed national identities through a dual process: seeing themselves as the cultural descendants of the classical Greeks, and as the opposites of other societies, especially those of the East, which are regarded as different and opposite.

1. All too often, classical studies have been put to the service of helping a given society justify its own sense of cultural superiority over other societies.

2. This tendency is evident in our own architecture, poetry, drama, political life, and even popular

entertainment. The television sitcom, for instance, has its roots in the “new comedy” of the Greek playwright Menander.

B. To break this temptation to venerate the Greeks as enlightened demigods, we should try to understand them on their own terms. Their accomplishments remain impressive, and our connections to them remain fundamental, but we may better understand both their culture and our own if we study the Greeks as they actually were rather than as we would like them to have been.

Suggested Reading

Marchand, S.L. (1996) *Down from Olympus. Archaeology and Philhellenism in Germany, 1750-1970*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Cartledge, P. (1993) *The Greeks. A Portrait of Self and Others*. Oxford: Opus Books. ch. 1.

Questions to Consider

1. What do we mean by the term "classical"?

2. In what sense are we indebted to the Greeks?

3. Is it possible to study Greek culture dispassionately, or must we always suffer under what one historian has called "the dead hand of the Past"?

Lecture Two
Minoan Crete

Scope: The second millenium BC witnessed two extraordinary civilizations in Greece: Minoan Crete and the Mycenaean culture of the mainland. In this lecture we examine the first of these two, the civilization of Bronze-Age Crete. The distinctive nature of Minoan sites at Cnossos, Mallia, Phaistos and Zakro has led archaeologists to dub this culture a palatial society, in which the magnificent Minoan palaces served as the administrative, religious, and economic centers of a society that was highly complex and hierarchically structured.

The fact that this society has left no literature and is known entirely through the work of archaeologists poses questions for us. To what extent can archaeology alone recreate the story of a culture? Minoan Crete also demonstrates the degree to which we remain indebted to the work of ninteenth-century archaeologists like Sir Arthur Evans, amateurs in the true sense of the word.

Outline

I. Before the Greeks. As in other parts of the world, a succession of societies of increasing complexity has left traces across Greece.

- **A.** At the Franchthi Cave, excavations reveal a society of hunter-gatherers in contact with the islands.
- **B.** Sesklo and Dimini, Neolithic settlements in central Greece, display complex social organization in the fifth and fourth millennia BC.
- **C.** Cycladic culture, located in the Greek islands, has left evidence of specialized trade and manufacturing in the form of exquisite marble figurines. We know very little about the culture that produced these artifacts.

II. Crete in the Bronze Age.

- **A.** Palatial Society.
  - **1.** The scale of architectural complexity in Bronze-Age Crete, from 1900 - 1400 BC, is unlike anything previously seen in the Greek world, and it has earned the label of "palatial society."

2. The palaces share similarities of design and construction, including a throne room, a ceremonial court, private chambers, storage magazines, controlled points of entry, and multiple levels.
3. Taken together, these point to a highly complex, centralized, and hierarchical society.

B. Minoan religion. The palaces were also part of a complex religious system that included cave sanctuaries, house sanctuaries, and mountain sanctuaries.

1. The belief system behind these structures remains difficult to reconstruct, since we have no sacred texts. However, the figurines, shrines, and cult objects suggest a profound reverence for the forces of the natural world.
2. The paucity of evidence can lead to imaginative conclusions. For instance, the presence of goddess figurines and frescoes has led some to suggest that the Cretans held Chthonic beliefs, although very little hard evidence supports this view.
3. We can say with assurance that Minoan culture was sensitive to human beauty and to the beauty of the natural world.

C. Redistributive Economy.

1. At the same time, palatial society depended on a firm control of economic production, both in the sphere of staples such as grain, wool, and oil, and in more specialized areas such as perfume, metalwork, and international trade.
2. By controlling production, storage, and redistribution, Minoan palaces placed themselves at the very center of every aspect of daily life.

III. A Bronze-Age Commonwealth?

A. The objects found in excavations, such as seals, scarabs, and rings, show that the Cretans were in contact with many other cultures to the east, notably the Egyptians.

B. Cretan influence can also be seen in the Aegean islands, especially Thera, where the Cretans traded and perhaps established colonies. Between 1700 and 1500 BC, the Cretans were the western-most segment of a Bronze-Age world that connected the entire eastern Mediterranean.

C. The Minoan palaces were unfortified, which supports the view that the Cretans relied for their defense on naval power, not on land forces.

IV. Sir Arthur Evans and the rediscovery of Minoan Crete.

A. The discovery of Cretan culture results from the work of one man, Sir Arthur Evans. Fascinated by clay tablets with an undeciphered script, Evans excavated at Cnossos in central Crete, where his workmen immediately began uncovering the remains of the largest and most important Minoan palaces.

B. Evans' discoveries are an excellent example of nineteenth-century archaeology. Like Schliemann at Troy and Layard at Nineveh, Evans was not a professional scholar. Instead, he was guided by Greek traditions that remembered Crete as the home of a powerful naval empire that existed long before the classical age.

C. Evans' work continues to pose questions for archaeologists. To what extent must the archaeologist rely on written sources? Can archaeology recover the history of a society that has left no literature? Or, as many archaeologists now claim, is archaeology a completely separate discipline from history, with its own methods and discourse?

Suggested Readings

Warren, P. (1989) *The Aegean Civilizations*. New York.

Marinatos, N. (1984) *Art and Religion in Thera*. Athens: Ekdotike Athenon.

Question to Consider

1. In what ways is the civilization of Minoan Crete comparable to other Bronze-Age cultures of the ancient Near East?

2. Is there sufficient evidence to regard Minoan Crete as a theocratic society?

Lecture Three
Schliemann and Mycenae

Scope: The second great Bronze Age culture of Greece takes its name from the site of Mycenae, excavated first by Heinrich Schliemann. Taking Homer as his guide, Schliemann uncovered the traces of a powerful warrior society. Unlike the Cretan palaces, the site of Mycenae and other sites of the same period—Tiryns, Gla, and Orchomenos, for example—were protected by massive walls of Cyclopean masonry. Grave goods from Mycenaean sites point to a warrior élite whose trading contacts reached to Crete and beyond, to Egypt and Syria.

At many of these sites, tablets in a script known as Linear B were found. In 1954 Michael Ventris demonstrated that the language of Linear B was a form of Greek. This discovery was of enormous importance, since it helped to establish, after more than fifty years of debate, the relationship between the civilization of Minoan Crete and the Mycenaeans.

Outline

I. Mysterious Origins

A. When in 1876 Schliemann uncovered traces of a wealthy society at Mycenae, he believed that he had found the homeland of Homer's Achaians, the Greeks who had sacked Troy.

1. Subsequent work has shown that he had brought to light a civilization whose roots go back to the middle of the second millennium BC.

2. Schliemann's Mycenae, like Homer's, was "rich in gold." The origins of this gold, as well as the power of the Mycenaeans, remains mysterious.

B. It is likely that the Mycenaeans' ancestors first entered the Greek peninsula around 1900 BC, but the early phases of the culture's development are hard to trace. By the sixteenth and fifteenth centuries BC they were already burying their chieftains in deep shaft graves with rich grave goods, including gold death masks and ceremonial swords of bronze inlaid with silver.

II. An Elite Culture

A. The material culture left by the Mycenaeans evokes a world dominated by an élite class.

1. Massive fortifications, swords, and gems showing warriors in battle or hunting lions point towards the martial prowess of the Mycenaeans.

2. Their grave goods also show a taste for luxury. Finely worked jewelry in gold and precious stones and sumptuous drinking vessels illustrate the wealth of the Mycenaean world.

B. Since Schliemann's time, excavations have added to our knowledge of the Mycenaeans in two important respects.

1. In the first place, we now know that many Mycenaean sites functioned like Minoan palaces. Artisans crafting luxury items in precious metals and workers making perfume lived either within the fortresses or directly below, making the Mycenaean sites proto-towns.

2. Furthermore, many of the vessels, jewels, and frescoes enjoyed by the Mycenaeans reveal the influence of other, older cultures, especially Crete.

III. Cultures in Conflict

A. The deep influence of Minoan culture on the Mycenaean world prompted a long debate.

1. According to Sir Arthur Evans, it was the Cretans who had colonized the mainland. Mycenae was an off-shoot of Crete.

2. Others argued that the Mycenaeans had an indigenous Greek culture that came under the influence of Cretan style through trade and eventually through the conquest of Crete.

B. This debate was finally resolved by the translation of Linear B, the script used in the Mycenaean fortresses to keep accounts of property, such as sheep, chariot parts, and slaves. In 1954 Michael Ventris demonstrated that Linear B was a form of Greek.

C. The relationship between Crete and Mycenae is now clearer.

1. Around 1450 the Cretan palaces were destroyed. Only Cnossos was rebuilt; it flourished for another seventy-five years.

2. The records from Cnossos during this last occupation were recorded in Linear B, not the script used earlier on Crete, which we call Linear A. Since Linear B is

Greek, it looks as if Greek speakers occupied Cnossos in its last phase. These Greeks from the mainland invaded and occupied Cnossos and stayed for three generations, long enough to learn the practice of a centralized palatial economy.

D. Other data confirm the theory that Greeks from the mainland overwhelmed the Cretans.

1. At Miletus and on Rhodes, Cretan colonies founded by the Minoans shortly after 1600 BC had come into the hands of the Mycenaeans by 1400 BC.

2. The myth of Theseus and the Minotaur may be a distant memory of this conflict between the mainland and Crete.

Suggested Reading

Traill, D.A. (1993) *Excavating Schliemann*. Illinois Classical Studies, Supplement 4. Atlanta: Scholar's Press.

Questions to Consider

1. Can Greek myths be used to reconstruct the world of the Bronze Age?

2. What is the significance of Ventris' discovery that Linear B is a form of Greek?

Lecture Four
The Long Twilight

Scope: Shortly after 1200 BC, Mycenaean power declined rapidly. The abrupt end of the Bronze Age in Greece has been a vexed issue in Greek archaeology for more than a century. In this lecture, we review the major explanations that have been put forward. The most dramatic explanation is natural disaster. Did a cataclysm, such as a volcanic eruption or tidal wave, cause the collapse of Bronze-Age civilization? Or did invasions and military conquests bring an end to the cultures of Crete and Mycenae? A third possibility is that internal revolts toppled societies that were too fragile to resist. Finally, we should ask whether we can find an explanation by looking beyond Greece and Crete to the other cultures of the Bronze-Age Mediterranean.

Outline

I. Thera and the Theory of Volcanic Destruction

- **A.** The most romantic explanation for the destruction of Minoan Crete is that it was devastated by a volcanic eruption on Thera.
  - **1.** Thera lies 200 miles northeast of Crete. It was wiped out by a single, massive volcanic eruption.
  - **2.** The excavator Spiridon Marinatos argued that Minoan coastal sites showed evidence of inundation by a massive tidal wave.
  - **3.** Plato's later stories of Atlantis seem to recall a civilization destroyed by a natural cataclysm.
- **B.** But there is strong evidence that counts against the volcanic theory.
  - **1.** Scientific evidence now dates the eruption close to 1600 BC, rather than around 1400, when the Cretan palaces were destroyed.
  - **2.** Marine-style pottery, not found on Thera, is found on Crete and appears to postdate the Thera eruption.
  - **3.** Coastal sites on the Cretan coast at Pseira and Mochlos show signs of habitation after the eruption.
- **C.** Minoan culture was not wiped out by natural disaster overnight. However, if the Minoan palatial system was

weakened by the eruption, it may have been susceptible to a Mycenaean takeover.

II. The End of the Bronze Age on the Mainland

A. A common explanation for the sudden collapse of the Mycenaean world shortly after 1200 BC is an invasion by the Dorians from the northwestern part of Greece.

1. This theory is supported by the distribution of the Greek dialects.

2. Greek myth recalled a population movement into the Peloponnese, the "Return of the Heraclidae."

B. There are, however, strong arguments against the Dorian Invasion.

1. Linguists doubt that the distribution of the Greek dialects in classical times is a reliable guide to population movements during a much earlier period.

2. The material evidence for a Dorian invasion is poor.

3. Only one segment of the Dorian population claimed to be the descendents of Heracles.

C. Internal breakdown

1. A more recent explanation claims that the Dorians were already present as serfs. Linguists point to Dorian elements already to be found in the Greek of Linear B.

2. The Dorian "Invasion," then, is not an external invasion, but the internal collapse of the Mycenaean social order. In this view, the Dorian servile element in Mycenaean society arose and overthrew the warrior élite.

D. The theory of an internal collapse is attractive, and it fits with an historical explanation of the Trojan War.

1. Greek tradition recalled a massive campaign mounted by the Achaians (the Greeks) against the wealthy city of Troy.

2. The strategic position of Troy at the mouth of the Dardanelles would make sense of a campaign to capture it.

3. Archaeology has demonstrated successive destruction levels at Troy, one of which (Troy VI) would be consistent with a siege.

4. Greek tradition also recalled that few of the Achaian princes returned safely to their kingdoms.

5. If the myth has a historical kernel, it may recall an expensive campaign that left the Mycenaean homeland weakened and subject to a wave of revolts.

III. The Sea Peoples

A. The collapse of the Mycenaean world corresponds to the widespread breakdown of civilizations throughout the eastern Mediterranean.

1. The Amarna Tablets (Egypt) speak of invasions by the Sea Peoples c. 1225-1215, and they recall a time of upheaval.
2. The collapse of the Hittite empire in Asia Minor occurs at about the same time.
3. The Amarna Tablets mention tribes known as the Ekwesh and Akewasha, as well as the Denyen, names that seem to echo Homer's names for the Greeks: Achaians and Danaans.

B. Many Mycenaeans may have left Greece during this period of turmoil and joined marauding bands to attack parts of Anatolia and Egypt.

1. The Greek dialect of ancient Cyprus was closest to the Greek spoken in Arcadia, in the heart of the Peloponnese. This curious connection would make sense if Mycenaean Greeks had settled on Cyprus.
2. One of the Sea Peoples, the Peleset, settled southeast of Cyprus. The Bible knows them as the Philistines, and they gave their name to the region of Palestine. The pottery found at the earliest levels of the Philistine cities is Mycenaean.

Suggested Reading

Wood, M. (1985) *In Search of the Trojan War*. London.

Questions to Consider

1. How reliable are the Homeric poems as a guide to the world of the Bronze Aegean?
2. Should the collapse of Myceneaen power be explained by internal factors or is it part of an historical movement affecting the entire eastern Mediterranean?

Lecture Five
The Age of Heroes

Scope: With the passing of the Bronze Age between 1200 and 1100 BC, Greek culture underwent profound changes. Central authority collapsed, to be replaced in most areas by the more humble power of chieftains and clan leaders. The society that emerged during these so-called Dark Ages was organized around neither the palace nor the fortress, but around the *oikos* or household. This would become the principal social unit of the Greeks, and it would underpin the rise of the *polis* or city-state.

All was not chaos and destruction, however. In the last generation, archaeology has supplied surprising evidence of a more rapid recovery than was previously suspected. This was a critical period for the Greeks in another respect, since it was at this time that epic poetry arose. The Greeks would return to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* endlessly. Their codes of honor, their notions of the relation between god and human, man and woman, parent and child—in short, their entire mentality—was conditioned by the imaginative world created by Homer and the epic tradition.

Outline

I. The World of the *Oikos*

- **A.** The evidence of material culture suggests a serious decline in the number and the size of settlements throughout Greece in the period from 1200-900 BC.
- **B.** Population decline is not the only, or even the best, answer. Instead it seems that many people had resumed herding in the hills in order to escape the dangers of an unsettled time.
- **C.** Many of the massive Mycenaean fortified sites were either totally abandoned or occupied by squatters.
- **D.** Replacing the Bronze-Age world was a new type of society, structured around smaller social units dominated by chieftains and clan leaders. The household, known as the *oikos*, was the central unit of Dark-Age society.

II. Signs of Recovery

A. Despite the grim picture of Greece after the Mycenaeans, recent archaeology has demonstrated that in some places recovery came faster than expected.
  1. At Lefkandi, a monumental apsidal building dating to the tenth century was used as a massive funerary structure for a royal pair.
  2. At Elateia, tombs excavated during the 1990s reveal a community already producing fine pottery and metal work, and engaged in trade that went beyond Greece.
  3. At Kalapodi, a sanctuary that goes back to Mycenaean times continued in use down into the Sub-Mycenaean period and throughout the Dark Ages.

B. It is probably no coincidence that these sites are close together in central and eastern Greece. They lie on the outer edges of the Mycenaean world. The worst collapse had been in the Peloponnese, the Mycenaean heartland, but recovery began on the periphery.

C. It is hard to find explicit continuities between the Bronze Age and the Dark and Iron Ages in Greece.
  1. Greeks in both periods spoke Greek, but their writing systems were completely different.
  2. Certain gods and goddesses appear in both Mycenaean and classical records, but other classical-era gods have no Mycenaean roots.
  3. Certain locations remain sacred over time, even though the religious systems t hat endow the spot with sacred meaning might change.
  4. Bronze-age royal palace often became classical-era temples, evidencing continuity of a sort.

III. Epic and the *Polis*

A. Aside from the material recovery that occurred during the Dark Ages, another crucial development took place: the rise of epic poetry.
  1. Epic consisted of cycles of songs concerning the deeds of great warriors.
  2. The songs were highly formulaic, allowing some sections to be reused and newer parts to be composed orally.
  3. Wandering poets performed these songs all over Greece, incorporating the accomplishments of local heroes.

4. The greatest of the poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, were written down around 725 BC. The previously flexible oral tradition thus became solidified in a single, monumental version.
5. By then, the poems had created a consistent legendary world that connected the Greeks to a heroic past, centered on the Trojan War and the return of the heroes.
6. The importance of the poems is that they nurtured a sense of Greek identity even as the Greeks remained politically fragmented.
    a. The poems upheld a heroic code of behavior for superior men, as illustrated by the exchange between the Trojan heroes Sarpedon and Glaucus.
    b. They also link heroism with steadfast adherence to duty in the face of overwhelming odds, as shown by Hector's response to Andromache.

B. From the eighth century on, the political development of the Greeks was focused on the city-state (*polis*) and the tribal-state (*ethnos*).
1. These states emphasized their own autonomy and separateness.
2. The Greeks showed no interest in founding a Greek nation. They were united only in times of crisis.
3. By providing a powerful statement of Greek values, epic made possible the central paradox of ancient Greek culture: being Greek meant being like other Greeks in cultural terms while remaining completely distinct from other Greeks in political terms.

Suggested Reading

Desborough, V.R. d'A. (1964) *The Last Mycenaeans and Their Successors, An Archaeological Survey, c. 1200-c.1000 BC*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

_____ (1972) *The Greek Dark Ages*. New York: St Martin's Press.

Snodgrass, A.M. (1971) *The Dark Age of Greece*. Edinburgh: The University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. How important is a shared sense of the past to the development of a national identity?
2. What are the values that Homer's poems reinforce?

Lecture Six
From Sicily to Syria:
The Growth of Trade and Colonization

Scope: From a very early date the Greeks vigorously colonized both the Mediterranean and Black Seas. The first wave of colonization, from the mainland to the Ionian coast (the eastern seaboard of the Aegean) occurred shortly after 1000 BC, and it reflected the upheavals occurring in the unsettled period following the end of the Mycenaean world. Then, during the seventh and sixth centuries, a fresh wave of colonization took place. This resulted in Greek colonies being established as far away as Olbia in Ukraine, and Massilia on the south coast of France.

In this lecture we consider the causes of this colonization. Did Greece suffer from massive overpopulation which was then siphoned off by dispatching unwanted sons to new lands? Did land hunger drive many Greeks to abandon a homeland where good soil was at a premium? Or did trade open new vistas to the Greeks as they searched for raw materials and markets?

We will also consider the impact on the Greeks of becoming colonists. Many of the colonies grew much richer than their "mother-city." What was the impact of this wealth on the colonies and the homeland? Colonies also had a profound influence on the Greek world, being responsible, among other things, for the introduction of writing to Greece.

Outline

I. Where, When, and Why?

A. The Greek colonies established during the Archaic period (c. 700-480 BC) where not dispatched at once but in successive waves.

B. The Greeks planted their colonies wherever conditions were favorable and local resistance could be overcome. Since much of the eastern Mediterranean was unavailable, they concentrated on the Black Sea, the western Mediterranean and parts of North Africa.

C. Most of the colonies were founded close to the sea, not inland, invariably close to reliable sources of fresh water and large stretches of fertile land.

1. By contrast, in Greece, mountains reduce the amount of fertile land in the plains to a minimum.

2. Colonies were therefore a useful way of easing the hunger for good land in Greece.

3. Inheritance by eldest sons encouraged younger sons to seek their fortunes overseas.

4. Colonies were also a safety-valve for mounting pressure and conflict (*stasis*) within many emerging city-states.

D. Although a single city provided the official founder of the colony, most colonies were a mixture of Greeks from different towns and regions. Foundation legends and the approval of the Delphic Oracle helped establish a common identity for the colonists.

II. The Role of Trade

A. While land-hunger and social pressure in Greece spurred the growth of colonies, trade also played an important role. At sites such as Pithecoussae (Italy), Al Mina (Syria), and Naucratis (Egypt), Greeks traded with, and settled next to, non-Greeks, especially traders from the Phoenician cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Carthage.

B. Trade therefore established routes along which the Greeks sailed and helped determine where the Greeks looked to colonize.

1. The Greek colonies of southern Italy and Sicily demonstrate this confluence. The earliest Greek settlements in the Bay of Naples were at the intersection of trade routes from west and north. Soon they were followed by agricultural colonies established in Sicily and southern Italy (Magna Graecia).

2. In Magna Graecia the rich opportunities for trade and colonization resulted in a region of phenomenal wealth that would far outstrip old Greece.

III Colonization and Culture Contact

A. Colonies are usually modeled on the society from which they originate. Through contact with other cultures, however, colonies can exert a profound influence on their homeland. The close connection between trade and colonization

confirmed this. Through trade, the Greeks came in contact with other cultures.

1. This is illustrated by the introduction of writing. The Greek alphabet is adapted from a Semitic script, and the earliest examples of written Greek came from the Greek colonies in southern Italy.
2. It is likely that the Greeks acquired their alphabet from contact with Phoenician traders whom they met in the eastern Mediterranean (Al Mina) and in the west (Pithecoussae and the Bay of Naples).

B. Colonies exposed the Greek world to new ideas and religious systems, as well as new styles of art. The influence of Near Eastern, particularly Syrian culture, on the Greeks is so profound that this period is often referred to as the Orientalizing Period.

1. This influence can be seen in the poetry of Hesiod (c. 700), who incorporates Near Eastern myths and religious ideas into his treatment of the Greek gods.
2. This is also evident in Greek vase-painting and the plastic arts, both of which borrow heavily from Syrian models.

C. For the past fifty years, the most fruitful area of classical Greek studies has been the examination of Greek linkages to the civilizations of the ancient Near East.

Suggested Reading

Graham, A.J. (1964) *Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece*. New York: Barnes & Noble.

Malkin (1987) *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece*. Leiden: Brill.

Dougherty, C. (1993) *The Poetics of Colonization. From City to Text in Archaic Greece*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways did contact with non-Greek cultures influence the subsequent development of the Greeks?
2. What role do indigenous peoples play in the world of the Greek colonies?

Lecture Seven
Delphi and Olympia

Scope: The two most important institutions to emerge in Greece before the Classical period were the oracle of Apollo at Delphi and the Olympic Games. Both were Panhellenic institutions, open to any person or community identified as Greek. Such institutions were crucial in fostering a Greek identity in the face of political fragmentation.

At the same time, both institutions reinforced the strong tendency towards separatism among the Greeks by favoring a highly competitive, "agonistic" environment. The *agon*, or contest, became a dominant feature of the Greek experience. It influenced the Greek conception of both personal relations and political life.

Together these institutions fundamentally shaped what it meant to be a Greek.

Outline

I. Delphi and the Oracle of Apollo

A. The sanctuary of Apollo was far more than a single temple or altar.

1. It was not comparable to a church. Rather, it was a sacred space that included both temple and altar, as well as temples of other gods, treasuries, dedications, and offerings.

2. The Greeks regarded Delphi as the center of the universe.

3. The god possessed and spoke through the priestess.

B. After 800 BC, the number and value of the offerings at Delphi increased dramatically, demonstrating that the sanctuary was quickly gaining prestige beyond its immediate area. Treasuries were established there to store the goods contributed by various Greek communities.

C. Located in the center of Greece, Delphi attracted suppliants from all over the Greek world. As city-states grew and colonies were established, Delphi came to play the role of mediator in Greek affairs.

1. Official embassies requested oracles on behalf of their states. The oracle shaped the policies of state officials who consulted it.
2. Delphi grew in status and authority as it authorized the founding of colonies.
3. Delphi offered judgments in interstate disputes and settled quarrels over borders.

D. This mediation was made possible by Delphi's neutrality. The sanctuary was administered by the priestly clans of Delphi in conjunction with a religious confederation of the Greek states. Delphi served the entire Greek community, not just one particular state.

II. Olympia and the Panhellenic Games

A. The Olympic Games were the first of a series of four Panhellenic contests, founded in 776 BC and open to all Greeks.
1. Like Delphi, Olympia was a religious sanctuary (to Zeus) and therefore neutral. It grew into a religious and athletic complex. The Games were protected by a Sacred Truce.
2. The modern Olympics, by contrast, have a nationalist focus, and they are heavily affected by international politics.

B. Although less tied to the foundation of colonies or the settling of disputes, Olympia became Delphi's equal in prestige for its athletic competitions.

C. The Olympic Games express the agonistic spirit of the Greeks at both the individual and communal level.
1. Athletes competed to display their *arete* or excellence, the same quality valued by Homer's warriors. Athletes sought the Homeric prize of *cleos aphthiton*—undying glory—for themselves, their families, and their communities.
2. The games were originally the venue for aristocratic competition between men (and boys) who explicitly modeled themselves on Homer's heroes.
3. As city-states emerged, athletes competed on behalf of themselves and their community.
4. As with Homeric heroes, the deeds of these victors are commemorated in verse, winning them "undying glory." The Boeotian poet Pindar wrote odes celebrating Olympic victors and the exploits of their

relatives. The odes connected the contemporary winner to an antique "golden age."

5. The Homeric code was enacted and displayed at Olympia.

III. Unity, Competition and Strife

A. The Panhellenic Contests allowed Archaic Greek society to define itself not as a nation, but as a culture made up of separate and distinct political units, united by their participation in these common contests.

1. The Greeks became Greek by competing with other Greeks. Inclusion in the Games confirmed one's Greekness.
2. According to Herodotus, those are Greek who share a common blood, language, religion, and customs. Only the first of these, however, is exclusive. The idea gradually emerged that to be Greek, one must live and act as a Greek—especially by engaging in competition with others.
3. Hesiod distinguished between "good" *eris* or strife, which encourages one to do well for himself in a way that does not hurt others, and "bad" *eris*, which encourages envy. Both are at the core of Greek life.
4. The Greeks needed to find institutions and cultural forms that would help them to move beyond their addiction to competitive strife. They failed to develop these institutions at the international level.

B. Delphi represents the reverse of the coin. The oracle at Delphi was the only permanent institution of the Greeks capable of mediating the permanent state of conflict that existed among the Greeks.

Suggested Reading

Morgan, C. (1990) *Athletes and Oracles. The Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the Eighth Century BC*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rolley, C., Jacquemin, A. and Laroche, D., eds (1990) *Delphes. Oracles, Cultes et Jeux*. Les Dossiers d'Archaeologie 151 Dijon.

Questions to Consider

1. What is the relationship between the panhellenism implicit in Homer's poems and the agonistic spirit institutionalized at Olympia?
2. How successful was Delphi in providing mediation to the interstate conflicts of the Archaic period?

Lecture Eight
The Spartans

Scope: From the eighth century onwards the Greek world underwent many far-reaching changes: colonization, panhellenism, and the growth of city-states shaped the future course of Greek civilization. These rapid and dramatic developments also led to profound tensions within many Greek communities. Conflicts between regional groups, clans, and even entire classes led to political violence often bordering on civil war.

Different communities found different solution to the threat of *stasis* (civic violence). In many parts of Greece tyrants, unelected leaders, seized power and quelled political conflict by imposing autocratic rule. Sparta followed a different course. By creating a rigidly hierarchical society dominated by a warrior elite, and by enslaving the neighboring region of Messenia, Sparta fashioned a society unique among the Greek states. In this lecture we will examine Spartan society and attempt to explain how it took shape.

Outline

I. Early Sparta

A. Down to the sixth century, Sparta had all the hallmarks of a vibrant, open society. The arts flourished and displayed sophistication in many genres.

1. The poetry of Tyrtaeus and Alcman shows that the Spartans composed beautiful hymns and that Spartan choruses of young girls participated in choral contests.

2. Terra-cotta masks from the temple of Artemis Orthia point to a lively tradition in the plastic arts.

3. Funeral *stelae*—grave markers—from Sparta show men and women sitting side by side as partners and equals.

B. Over a long period from the late eighth century down to the middle of the seventh, Sparta engaged in a protracted struggle with the neighboring region of Messenia.

1. This struggle culminated in the subjugation of the entire Messenian population c. 650-600 BC.

2. The Spartans became the masters of Messenia and reduced the native population to the rank of helots, or

serfs. The Messenians thenceforth worked the land on behalf of their Spartan overlords.

C. The conquest of Messenia constitutes the defining episode of Spartan history.

1. By incorporating Messenia within the area of their direct control, the Spartans made themselves masters of a vastly larger servile population.

2. Subsequently, fear of the helots encouraged the Spartans to develop a close-knit social order directed mainly toward maintaining the status quo. All Spartan institutions were devoted to keeping the helots in subjection.

II. *Eunomia* and the Foundation of the Spartan State

A. Traditionally associated with the legendary law-giver, Lycurgus, the Spartan constitution was regarded by conservative Greeks as an example *eunomia*, good order. This social order was enshrined in the Rhetra.

B. The Spartans had distinctive political institutions.

1. Alone among the various Greek states, the Spartans retained a dual kingship.

2. Administration was handled by 5 *ephors*.

3. A Council of 30 Elders advised the kings and served as a court.

4. All adult male citizens deliberated in a general assembly.

III. Spartiates, Perioici, and Helots

A. Sparta had a more exclusive definition of citizenship than other Greeks had. Full citizenship was restricted to the élite, known as the Spartiates. The other inhabitants of the region, known as Laconia, were relegated to a variety of inferior statuses.

B. Other social groups had subordinate political status.

1. Many neighboring communities, the *Perioici*, were allowed local autonomy but were subject to service in the Spartan army.

2. Spartiates unable to meet their obligations to the community were relegated to the status of Inferiors, without citizen rights.

3. Supporting the entire Spartan system was a class of serfs, the helots. Each Spartiate was allocated helots who worked his land, leaving him free to train for war.

The Spartiate's helot would accompany him into warfare.

IV. The Institutions of the Spartan State

A. After the enslavement of Messenia, Sparta became a closed society. Social cohesion was maintained by raising boys away from their families and in age-cohorts.

1. The *agoge*, or educational system, trained boys to grow up as warriors.

2. The *crypteia*, or secret commission, dispatched boys to live off the land and learn physical endurance. During this period, the boys could kill with impunity any helot they came across.

3. Men continued to live with their peers, dining together in common messes called *syssitia*. Every member was required to contribute the produce of his own land to the mess; those who failed to keep up their contributions were removed from the *syssition*.

4. The ideology of equality within the Spartan élite is summed up by their collective name: *homoioi*, or equals. Their own equality was supported by the dramatic inequality prevailing throughout the rest of Spartan society.

B. The closing of Spartan society is also demonstrated by other changes.

1. On various occasions the Spartans formally expelled all foreigners (*xenelasia*), probably in order to prevent infection by new ideas.

2. Commerce was severely restricted by the use of cumbersome bars instead of coins. The Spartans feared that international trade would introduce new ideas into their state.

3. Laconian pottery was soon eclipsed by Attic pottery.

4. The vigorous tradition of choral poetry in Archaic Sparta failed to develop in the classical period, unlike at Athens.

Suggested Readings

Cartledge, P. (1979) *Sparta and Lakonia: a Regional History 1300-362 BC*. London: Routledge.

Questions to Consider

1. To what extent is it correct to describe ancient Sparta as a totalitarian society?
2. How did Sparta avoid the civil strife and tyranny that afflicted most other Greek states in the sixth century?

Lecture Nine
Revolution

Scope: The sixth century BC was a period of rapid change throughout Greece. More manufacturing, increased wealth, and a greater volume of trade fueled the growth of towns such as Athens and Corinth. These changes also contributed to social upheaval and widespread instability. Factional strife (*stasis*) was rife in many towns. Regionalism and clan-based conflicts produced anarchy and in many places made it possible for tyrants to seize power.

In Athens the population attempted to forestall such a crisis by electing one man to overhaul the existing laws and to mediate between the various groups in conflict. Solon would be remembered as the father of the Athenian constitution. As we shall see in this lecture, he met with mixed success, but he deserves nevertheless to be regarded a great statesman.

Outline

I. Conflict and Class

- **A.** In the sixth century we begin to hear of entire groups calling themselves *aristoi*, the "best men."
  - **1.** This occurs at a time when the constant theme of Greek poetry is *stasis*, civil conflict. For Marxist historians, this suggests that the Archaic period was a time of class struggle.
  - **2.** But where we have details of this *stasis*, it usually turns out to involve competing groups of aristocrats and their friends.
- **B.** Although the Archaic period was not a time of class warfare, the growing wealth of a few and the impoverishment of many poor farmers fueled agitation for political and economic change. The tensions of the period operated both horizontally (between competing factions) and vertically (between classes).

II. Solon and the *Seisachtheia*

- **A.** In Athens we have evidence of such a crisis in the poems of Solon. Elected *archon* in 594, he claimed to stand as a shield protecting both the people and the powerful.

1. Solon refers to removing the marker-stones that enslaved the land. This statement probably refers to his abolition of a system by which land was mortgaged, causing many farmers to fall into debt.
2. Solon claims to have freed many who had been enslaved by the rich.
3. He also claims to have brought back Athenians who had been sold abroad in slavery.

B. His reform program was called the *Seisachtheia* or the "Shaking-Off of Burdens."

1. Many poor farmers had been reduced to the status of tenant-farmers, owing a share of their produce to the wealthy land-owners to whom they were in debt.
2. If land were inalienable, as many suppose, the poor secured their debts with their own person, and were subject to seizure if they defaulted.
3. It was this system of serfdom and the real threat of slavery that Solon abolished.
4. There is no evidence that Solon redistributed land, but he did cancel debt-bondage, reduced or cancelled existing debts, and probably confirmed the ownership of land by the poor.

III. Constitutional Reform

A. Although he had been elected to deal with an economic crisis, Solon used his time in office to promulgate a series of far-reaching constitutional reforms designed to strengthen the rule of law.

B. Solon attempted to formalize the rights and privileges of each class according to its wealth. Wealth, not birth, would be the criterion for a citizen's access to public office. Four census ratings were created (or perhaps more clearly defined) based on the produce of the citizen's land.

1. Pentakosiomedimnoi > 500 measures (wet and dry)
2. Hippeis (Knights) > 300
3. Zeugitai (Yeomen) > 200
4. Thetes (Labourers) < 200

C. A second constitutional reform was the publication of Athens' laws. As with the census ratings, some of which may have existed before Solon, this codification introduced regularity and clarity. There now existed a comprehensive code of Athenian law.

IV. Taking advantage of his authority, Solon introduced a slew of reforms designed to contribute to Athens' prosperity.

A. He supported the agricultural sector by banning the export of all agricultural produce from Attica except olive oil.

B. He supported the manufacturing sector by offering citizenship to foreign craftsmen who moved to Athens.

C. He adopted the Euboean system of weights and measures, making it easier for Athens to trade throughout the Aegean.

D. He formalized the distinction between public and private law.

V. Revolution and the Rule of Law

A. If Solon's work was meant to be a revolutionary response to the crisis of Archaic Athens, then it was a moderate revolution. It can be viewed in terms of its short-term goals and long-term effects. As a solution to *stasis* and conflict, Solon's reforms were a failure, since in the immediate aftermath Athens underwent a further period of faction-fighting, anarchy, and eventually tyranny.

B. In the long term, Solon's reforms set Athens on the road to democracy by strengthening the rule of law. Public life, public office, the legal system, and many areas of economic life as well had been given a more formal basis, making possible the emergence of a strong Athenian state, and finally, the Athenian democracy.

Suggested Reading

Hignett, C. (1952) *A History of the Athenian Constitution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. Is there a consistent theme running through all the reforms attributed to Solon?

2. How compelling is the evidence for class conflict in Archaic Athens?

Lecture Ten
Tyranny

Scope: The term "tyranny" conjures up images of cruel despots terrorizing a frightened population. In the world of ancient Greece, especially in the sixth century, tyranny meant something quite different. Tyrants were ambitious men who took advantage of the upheavals of the age to seize power. Some, like Policrates of Samos, were great builders. Many, like Cypselus of Corinth, ruled during a time of prosperity. By ending the factional disputes that afflicted the city-states of Greece, many of them brought stability.

The Athenians were ruled by the tyrant Pisistratus and his sons for half a century. Far from being a time of fear, this was a period during which the Athenians enjoyed peace at home and growing influence abroad. In this lecture we will examine the tyranny of Pisistratus and its legacy for Athens.

Outline

I. After Solon

A. The period after Solon's departure from Athens (593 BC) saw no improvement in the bitter factional fighting that had afflicted the city.

1. For two years the violence was so bad that no archon was elected, causing Athens to lapse into a period of literal anarchy.

2. A leading politician named Damasias was elected and refused to give up office. He was expelled after two years.

B. In the next generation, three factions emerged in Athenian politics: the Men of the Shore, the Men of the Plain, and the Men from Beyond the Hills.

1. Each corresponded loosely to one of the regions of Attica.

2. Each faction was dominated by aristocratic leaders.

3. The leader of the Hill faction, from the eastern part of Attica, was Pisistratus.

II. Pisistratus made three attempts to establish himself as tyrant. The details of these attempts shed light on the weakness of the Athenian state.

- **A.** In 561 Pisistratus made his first attempt to become tyrant.
  - **1.** Appearing in the marketplace dishevelled and bruised, he claimed to have been attacked by his enemies.
  - **2.** Given permission to raise a bodyguard, he occupied the Acropolis, the citadel of Athens.
  - **3.** Shortly thereafter, he was driven out.
- **B.** In 558 he made his second attempt at establishing a tyranny by means of a marriage alliance with another leading family.
  - **1.** His young wife complained that Pisistratus was uninterested in properly consummating the marriage.
  - **2.** They separated, the alliance ended, and Pisistratus withdrew from Athens to the region of Thrace, where he enriched himself by opening gold and silver mines.
- **C.** In 546 Pisistratus returned to Athens richer, better equipped, and supported by the goddess Athena.
  - **1.** Accompanied by a six-foot-tall Athenian girl called Phye dressed as Athena, Pisistratus and a private army marched on Athens.
  - **2.** His opponents were defeated at the battle of Pallene, and Pisistratus finally became the tyrant of Athens.

III. Pisistratus' Accomplishments

- **A.** Fifty years after the expulsion of the last of Pisistratus' family, Herodotus investigated the tyranny and came to the conclusion that Pisistratus had ruled mildly, had obeyed the law, and had generally done a great deal to benefit the Athenians.
- **B.** Some modern historians would go further and say that Pisistratus was actually more important for the establishment of democracy than Solon. Consider his record:
  - **1.** He maintained existing laws and allowed elections to take place every year.
  - **2.** He appointed rural magistrates so that poor farmers could get legal redress without having to quit their farms.
  - **3.** He embarked on a building program that included construction of a temple to Athena on the Acropolis, a fountain house in the market-place, and the temple of Olympian Zeus
  - **4.** He made loans to the poor at low interest.

5. He introduced a 10% tax on produce to give the Athenian state financial revenues.
6. He expanded the mining of silver at Laurium and in Thrace, helping to make Athens the center of a trading and mercantile realm that encompassed the Aegean.

IV. Pisistratus and the Creation of Athens

A. Along with this impressive record, Pisistratus was responsible for the cultural transformation of Athens. Festivals such as the Dionysia and Panathenaia, which involved athletic and musical contests, made Athens into the preeminent cultural center of the Greek world.

1. Archaic sculpture in Athens reached a new level of excellence.
2. Attic Black-Figure vases now outstripped Corinthian pottery as a luxury item and were traded as far away as Etruria.

B. Pisistratus conducted an aggressive foreign policy that added to Athens' prosperity.

1. He conducted peaceful relations with other tyrants such as Lygdamis of Naxos and Policrates of Samos.
2. Under Pisistratus' leadership, the Athenians annexed the island of Delos, acquiring control of the prestigious sanctuary of Apollo.

C. The effect of all this was the creation of Athens.

1. Before Pisistratus, Athens consisted of warring clans competing for political power just as they competed in war and in Olympic competition.
2. Although Pisistratus was himself an ambitious aristocrat, he managed to bequeath to the Athenians a state that had a far more clearly defined sense of Athenian identity.

D. After the death of Pisistratus (528/7 BC), his sons continued to hold power, probably through alliances with some of the leading families. The sons, however, were not the equal of the father. In 514, one of Pisistratus' sons, Hipparchus, was assassinated, and four years later his brother, Hippias, was driven from the city.

V. The man who emerged from the next round of civil *stasis* would be the man who profited from Pisistratus' legacy, the man who would recognize that the common Athenian was a more potent political force than the most powerful aristocrat. His name was

Cleisthenes, and it was he more than any other who finally established the Athenian democracy.

Suggested Reading

Andrewes, A. (1956) *The Greek Tyrants*. London: Methuen.

Questions to Consider

1. Was tyranny a necessary stage for the political development of the Greek states?
2. Was the Panathenaia the most important legacy of the Pisistratid tyranny?

Lecture Eleven
The Origins of Democracy

Scope: Although Solon and Pisistratus paved the way for Athens to become a full democracy, it was the aristocratic leader Cleisthenes who devised the democratic system under which Athens flourished for two centuries. In this lecture we examine the conditions under which democracy came into being. We then look in detail at the complex system set in place by Cleisthenes. By creating new tribal and local divisions, he forever weakened the aristocratic hold on Athenian politics. We will review some of the major interpretations that have been advanced to explain the Cleisthenic system.

Outline

I. The End of the Pisistratid Tyranny
- **A.** Popular tradition maintained that two Athenian aristocrats—Harmodius and Aristogeiton—slew Hipparchus in 514 BC and ended the tyranny. In fact, Hippias continued to hold power for four more years.
- **B.** Certain leading Athenian families—especially the Alcmeonidae—claimed to have opposed the tyrants throughout their rule. This, too, is false. Epigraphic evidence discovered in 1939 demonstrates that supposed opponents of the tyrants were in Athens holding office in the 520s, in the midst of the period of tyrannical rule.
- **C.** It is likely that Hippias, the other son of Pisistratus, ruled with a heavy hand only in the years after his brother's assassination, in 514.
  - **1.** Resistance to the tyranny began to solidify only during the regime of Hippias.
  - **2.** In 510 Hippias was driven out by the Spartans.

II. The Ascendancy of Cleisthenes
- **A.** Newly liberated, the Athenians faced the question of how to conduct their own affairs. At first, they returned to the same factional strife that had marked the period before the tyranny.
- **B.** Two leaders emerged in 510: Isagoras and Cleisthenes.

1. As tension increased, Isagoras called for the banishment of Cleisthenes and his clan.
2. Isagoras also called on the Spartans to assist him, but the Athenians resisted this external interference and rose up against the Spartan force led by Cleomenes. The Spartans were allowed to withdraw, and Isagoras went into exile with them.

C. Cleisthenes' success was due to the fact that he had proposed a popular plan to reform the Athenian constitution.
1. Cleisthenes was a demagogue who appealed directly to the people.
2. Herodotus says that Cleisthenes took "the people into his political club," which suggests that Cleisthenes promised the whole Athenian population a more direct voice in political affairs.

D. The plan called for redrawing the political map of Attica.
1. Four existing tribes were replaced by ten new tribes (*phylae*).
2. Each tribe was divided into three thirds (*trittyes*).
3. Each of these thirds was located in one of the three regions of Attica: coast, inland, and city.
4. Each third was composed of a varying number of demes, i.e., villages or municipalities, of which there were a total of 140. These demes varied widely in size.

E. Cleisthenes also created a Council of 500 to supervise and prepare the work of the popular Assembly.
1. The composition of the Council changed every year.
2. Each tribe supplied fifty councillors who served for one month.
3. Each deme was allocated a quota of council positions which it filled by lot each year.
4. In this way, every Athenian was likely to serve on the Council at least once, and usually not more than once, in his life-time.

F. The reforms were intended to break the dominance of the old aristocratic clans and spread power as widely as possible throughout Athenian society. Both the tribal reform and the composition of the new Council reflect important principles that remained central to the democracy:
1. The annual rotation of power.
2. The sharing of power.
3. The preferability of sortition (choice by lot).

III. The Cleisthenic system looks and is complicated. Historians are compelled to ask, what plan lies behind this? Who profited from it? There are three main theories:

A. Military Levies

1. Many scholars note that Cleisthenes' reorganization of the political boundaries of Attica has military implications. Athenians fought in tribal regiments; their officers were elected as tribal officers; and so, the argument goes, the Cleisthenic system resulted in a more regular, reliable muster.

2. Yet this seems to confuse results with intention. The division of the army into ten tribal units hardly requires or explains the extraordinary complexity of the Cleisthenic system.

B. A second theory is that Cleisthenes, an Alcmeonid, designed an elaborate system to spread the influence of the Alcmeonid family over three separate tribes.

1. The theory is based on extremely suspect evidence concerning the deme affiliations of the Alcmeonidae.

2. Nor is it clear that spreading the family's members across three tribes would mean three times as much influence. It may have had the opposite effect—i.e., diluting the family's influence.

C. The third argument is that Cleisthenes' plan was to break the political power of the old, regionally based clans. By mixing up different demes in a trittys, breaking old ties, and connecting trittyes from different parts of the state, he was making it harder for old families to organize their supporters into a coherent political faction.

IV. The Result

A. The democracy, therefore, was not simply created by chance, nor did it involve the simple shedding of aristocratic influence. It required something both more dramatic and complicated, a revolutionary new order in which every man could be proud of his birth and proud of his citizenship.

B. If you asked an Athenian of the democracy his name, he replied in three parts: his given name, his father's name, and the name of his Cleisthenic deme. The Athenians were now forced to identify themselves by their place, literally, in the democracy.

Suggested Reading

Eliot, C.W.J. (1962) *Coastal Demes of Attika: A Study of the Policy of Kleisthenes*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Bicknell, P.J. (1972) "Kleisthenes as Politician: An Exploration," in *Studies in Athenian Politics and Genealogy* (= *Historia Einzelschriften* Heft 19).

Questions to Consider

1. Is it necessary to look for a partisan motive behind the reforms of Cleisthenes?

2. How important for the emergence of a full democracy was the creation of the Council of 500?

Lecture Twelve
Beyond Greece: The Persian Empire

Scope: Throughout the Archaic period, contact between Greeks and non-Greeks occurred as a result of trade and colonization. By the late sixth century, however, the Persian Empire had grown so vast and powerful that the Greeks of the Ionian Coast came into direct contact with the Persians, in some cases even becoming tributary states to the Persians. This set the stage for the epic confrontation between Persia and the Greeks which would change Greek history forever.

In this lecture, we will look at the Persian Empire, its origins under Cyrus the Great, and its territorial expansion. We will discuss the accomplishments of the Persians, attempting to avoid the bias of the Greek sources. What emerges is a great and sophisticated society, which, by historical accident, became a negative image of the Greeks' view of themselves.

Outline

I. The Origins and Development of the Persian Empire

A. From the fourth millennium before Christ onwards, Mesopotamia (the region of modern Iraq) produced a succession of complex civilizations, including Sumer, Akkad, and the Assyrians. Cycles of growth, invasion, destruction, and regeneration followed each other for two thousand years.

B. The Persians came from the periphery of this cultural zone.

1. Their language was Indo-European, unlike the Semitic languages of Mesopotamia.

2. Originally semi-nomadic, they came out of the great open steppes of southern Russia. Mesopotamia was neither their origin nor the heartland of their eventual empire.

3. They settled in the high Iranian plateau early in the first millennium BC, and they achieved political unification only in c. 700 BC.

C. In 558 BC Cyrus the Great came to the throne. Soon he established the basis of the Persian empire by conquering the

Medes, a neighboring people. From here he continued the aggressive expansion of Persian power east and west.

1. With the conquest of Babylon, Cyrus transformed the Persians from outsiders into the greatest imperial power of the ancient Near East.
2. At the time of his death in 530, the Persian domain reached from Afghanistan to the Ionian coast.

II. Territorial Expansion Under the Achaemenid Dynasty

A. Cyrus' conquests brought the Greeks of Asia Minor into direct contact with Persian power. With the conquest of Lydia, Persian control extended virtually to the Aegean.

1. As illustrated by Herodotus, many Greeks sought to derive moral lessons from the rise of Persian power.
2. Asia Minor was divided into a series of *satrapies* or provinces, often corresponding to the territory of the various pre-Persian kingdoms.
3. The Persian King usually assigned the *satrapy* to a friend or relative. These governors, or *satraps*, enjoyed a great deal of independence.

B. Cyrus was succeeded by Cambyses (530-522), much of whose reign was taken up with the conquest of Egypt.

C. After the death of Cambyses, Darius came to the throne.

1. According to Herodotus, the death of Cambyses was followed by a constitutional debate over possible new forms of government for the Persian empire. This debate among various regimes—aristocracy, democracy, and monarchy—was more relevant to fifth-century Greece than to sixth-century Persia.
2. Darius renewed the western expansion of the Persians. By c. 514, the Persians had reached the islands of the Aegean.
3. The Greek cities along the Ionian coast came under Persian control.
4. The Persians were generally content to leave the cities under the control of a cooperative tyrant.
5. Persian rule was, for the most part, neither cruel nor onerous.

D. The final confrontation of Persia and Greece, in 490 and 480-79 BC, should be seen as the culmination of Persian territorial expansion.

E. The idea that the wars represented a grand cultural clash between East and West emerged in fifth-century hindsight.

At the time, the Greeks and Persians did not view their systems as antithetical.

1. In the sixth-century context, the Greeks were insignificant vis-à-vis the Persians in terms of territory, empire, and power.
2. Many Greeks lived and worked in the Persian empire and did not view the Persians as alien.
3. At the time, few if any Greeks thought that Greece and Persia were bound inevitably to clash.

III. Iranian Culture and Society under the Achaemenids

A. The Achaemenids favored the traditional Persian religion centered on the worship of the elements and natural forces, principally the sky, sun, moon, earth, fire and water. The Achaemenid kings especially honored the great Sky God, Ahura-Mazda, with whose authority they identified their own.

B. The Achaemenids were also tolerant of other religious systems. A letter of Darius to one of his *satraps* threatens him with punishment for cutting down trees sacred to Apollo.

C. Persian society was hierarchical.

1. This was demonstrated by the act of obeisance, performed before a superior. Equals were greeted with a kiss.
2. The King's friends and relatives constituted the ruling class. This mixed, Persian-Median aristocracy ruled over an empire that embraced tribes and peoples that differed greatly in speech, culture and manners.
3. An imperial post and a system of roads crossing the empire created the finest communications network of the ancient world.

D. Military prowess was highly prized, with hunting and archery considered the proper training for warriors.

1. Major military expeditions drew on contingents from all over the empire: the Phoenician fleet, horsemen from the Steppes, Greek and Carian heavy infantry, Assyrian chariots.
2. Commanders invariably came from the ranks of the King's Friends.

E. The quality and refinement of Achaemenid jewelry, especially in gold, recalls something of the Persians' nomadic origins. At the same time, Achaemenid art

synthesizes earlier Iranian traditions with the styles and techniques of the areas conquered. The Persians borrowed freely, and they employed artisans from all over their empire. Many Greeks, for example, from Ionia served as doctors, engineers and masons in the Persian royal city of Susa.

F. Before the Achaemenid kings the Persians had virtually no tradition of monumental architecture. Under the Achaemenids, however, extraordinary palaces at Persepolis and Susa were built to express the majesty of this ambitious people. The Persians bring together much that is best in the long cultural development in the ancient Near East.

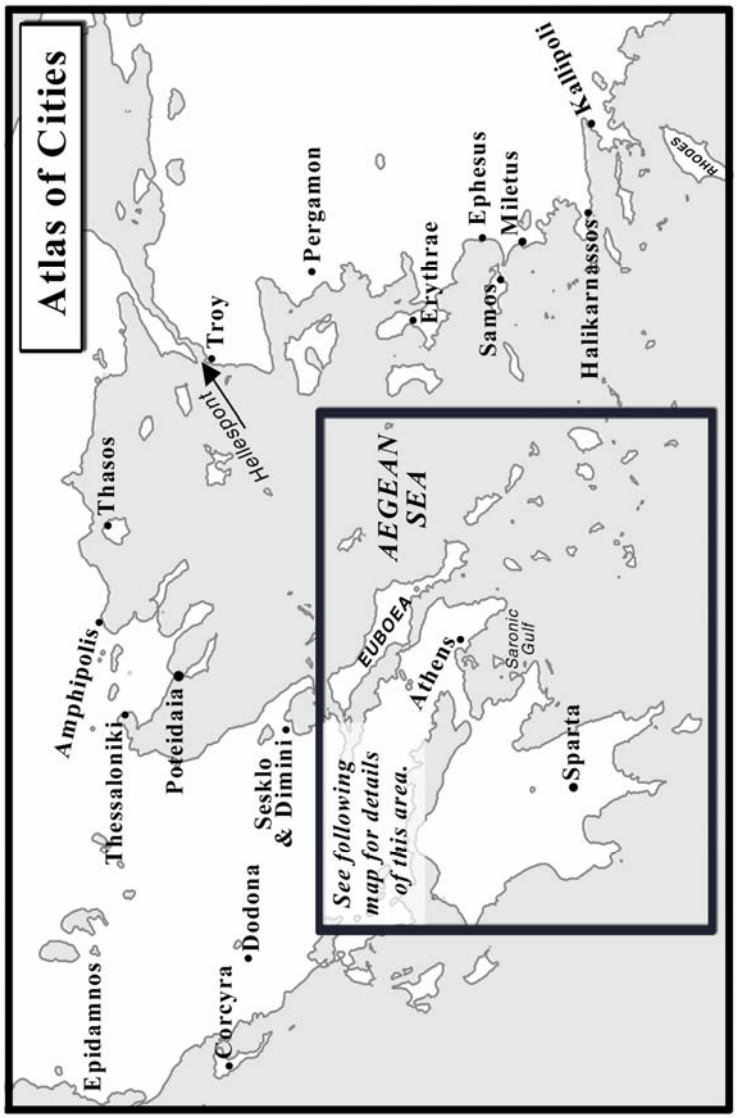
Suggested Reading

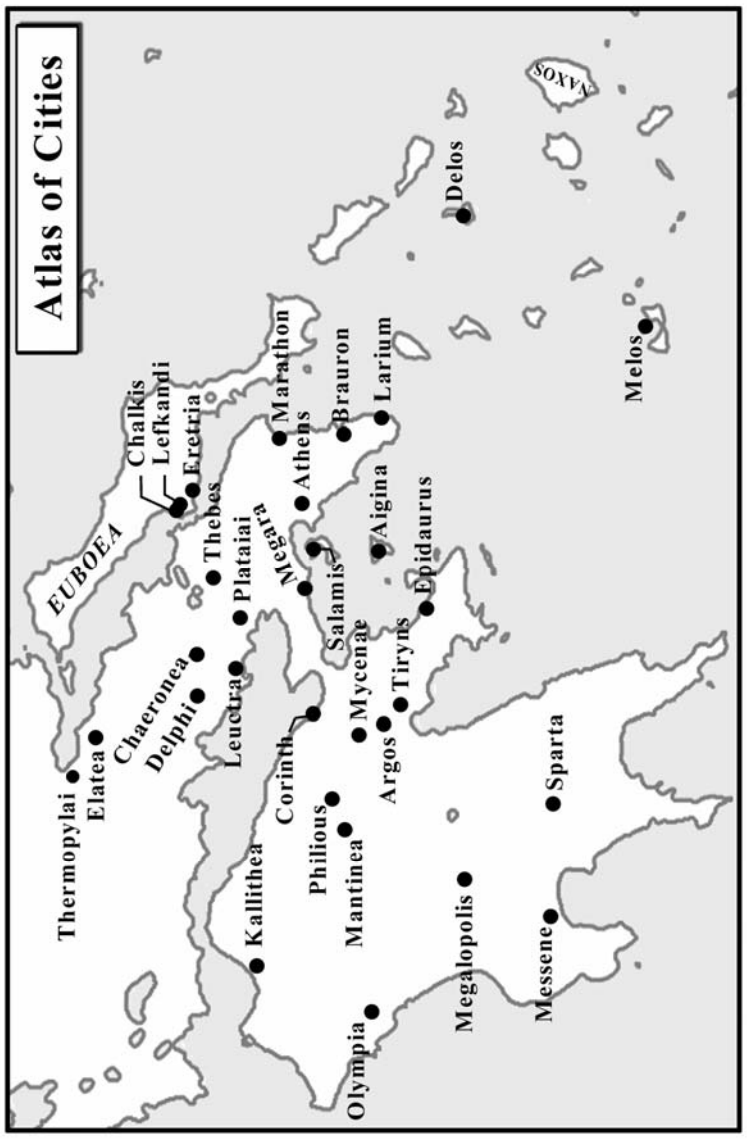
Cook, J.M. (1983) *The Persian Empire*. London.

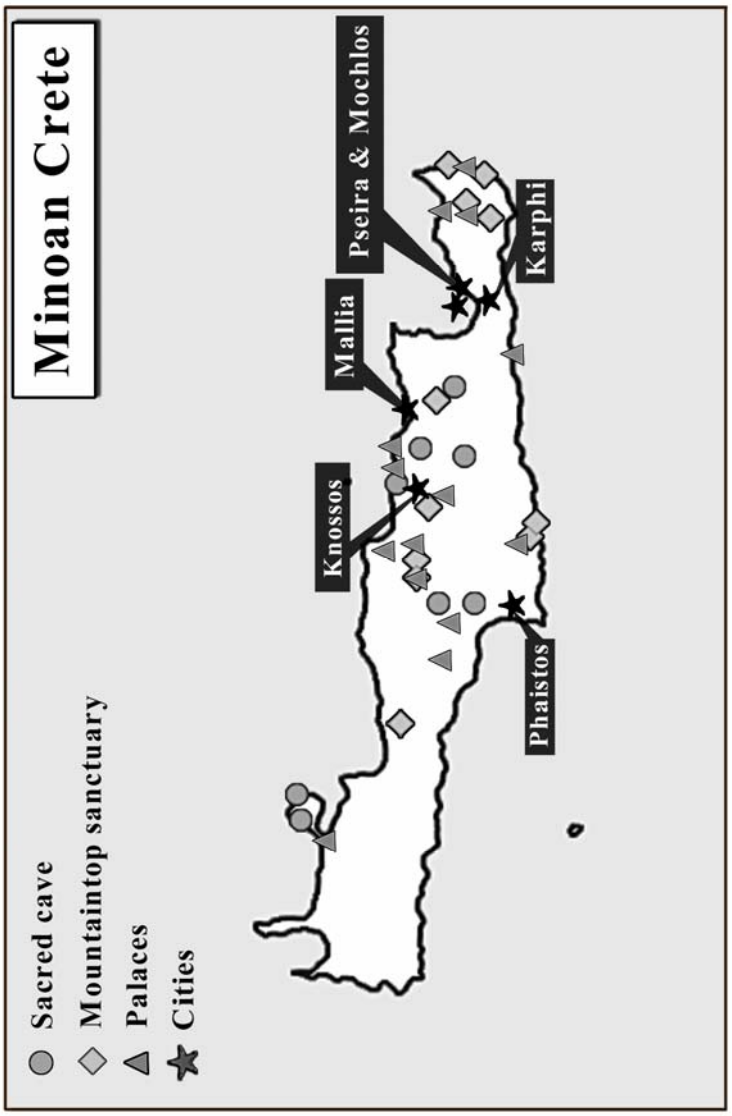
Questions to Consider

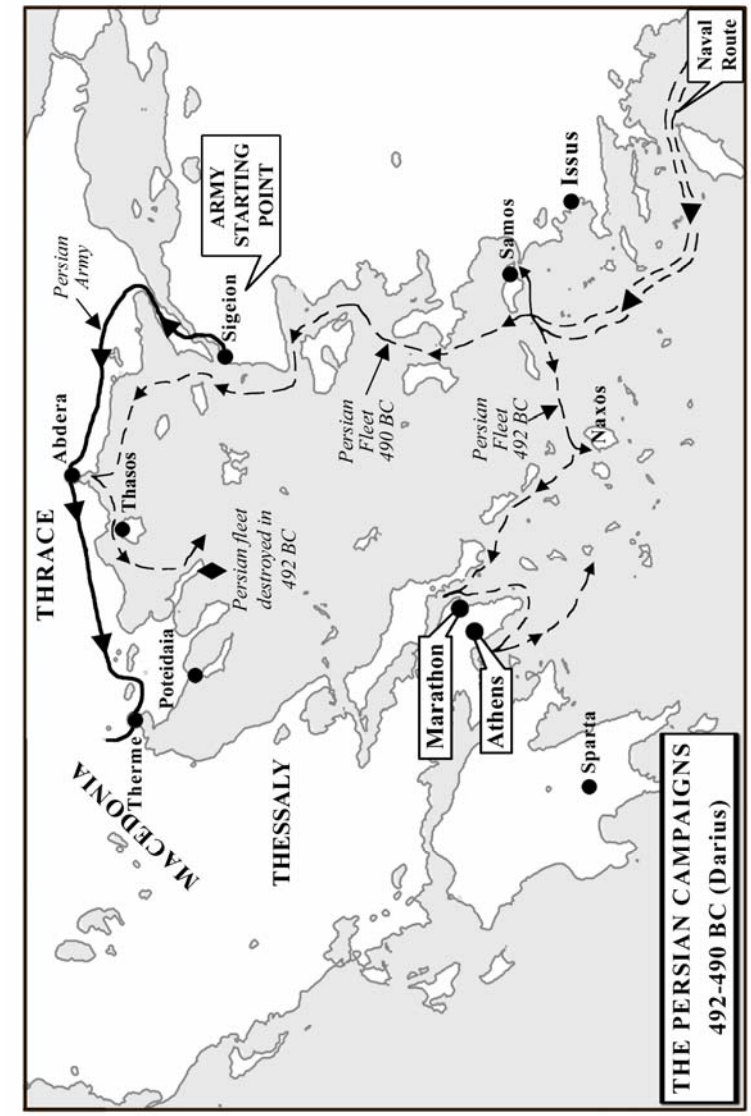
1. To what degree has understanding of the Persian Empire been skewed by our reliance on Greek literary sources?

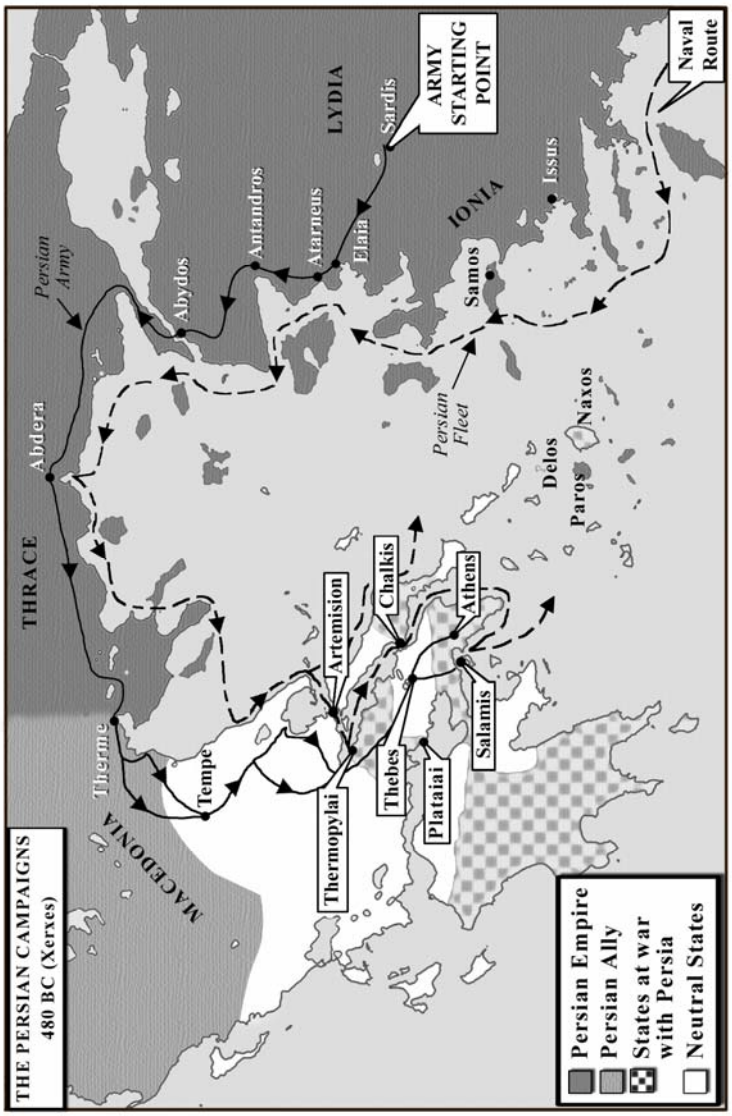
2. What elements in Greek and Persian culture contributed most to the confrontation which resulted in the Persian Wars?

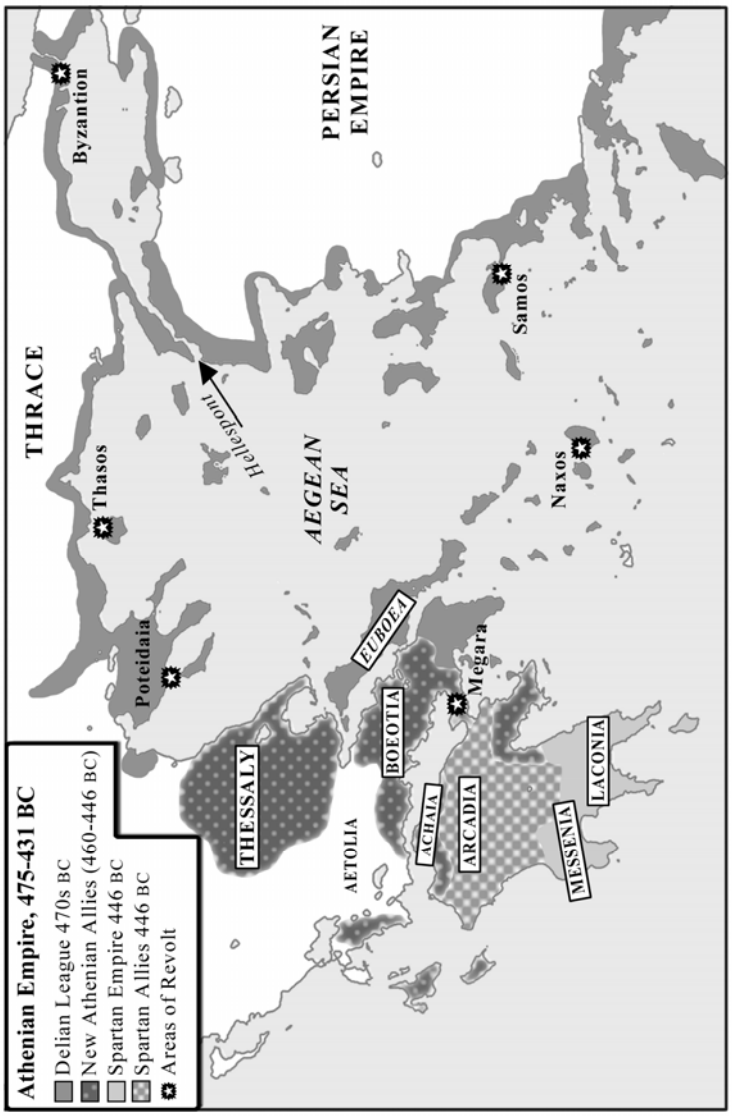


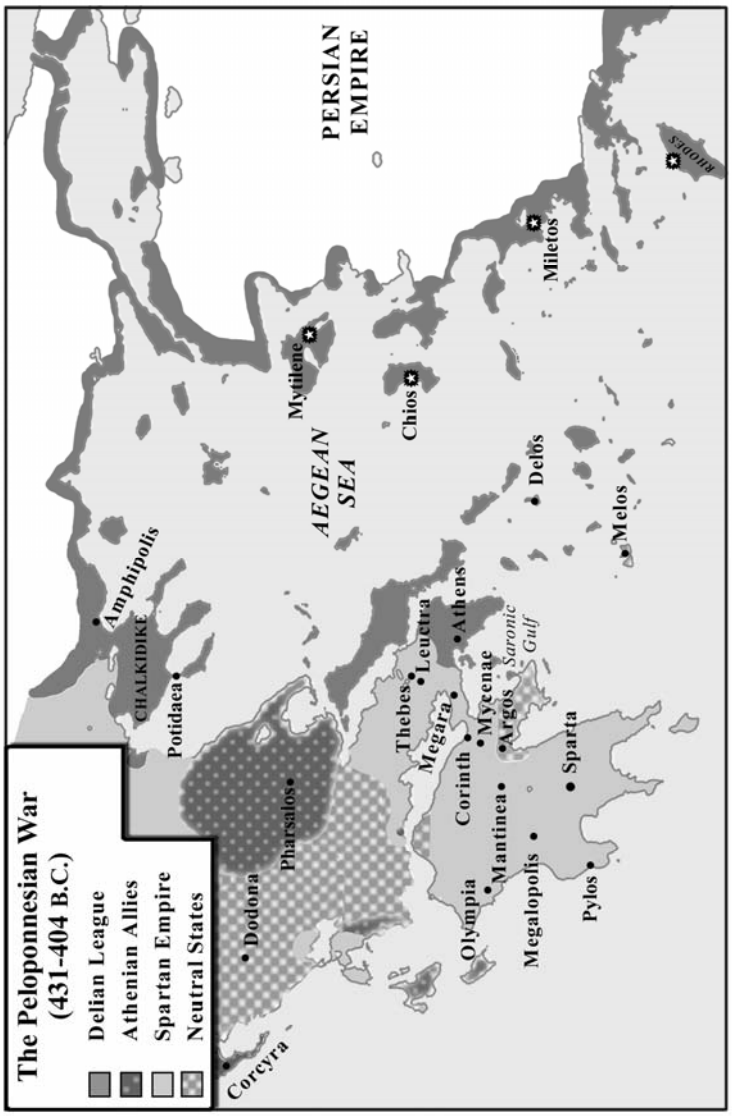


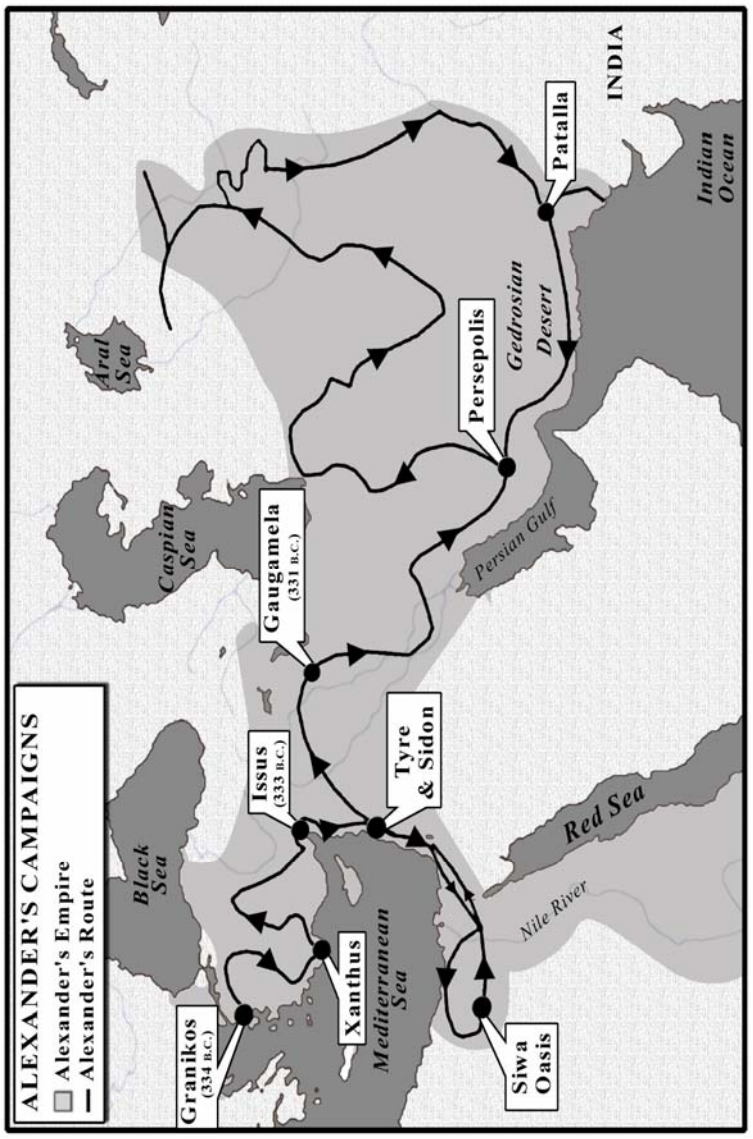





THE PERSIAN CAMPAIGNS
480 BC (Xerxes)
Persian Empire
Persian Ally
States at war with Persia
Neutral States
THRACE
MACEDONIA
LYDIA
IONIA
Persian Army
Persian Fleet
Abdera
Therme
Tempe
Thermopylai
Artemision
Chalkis
Thebes
Plataiai
Athens
Salamis
Abydos
Antandros
Atarneus
Elaia
Sardis
ARMY STARTING POINT
Samos
Issus
Delos
Paros
Naxos
Naval Route







Ancient Greek Civilization
Time-Line

c. 6000-2800	Neolithic Period
c. 2300-1900	Early Helladic Period (mainland)
c. 1900-1600	Middle Helladic Period (mainland)
c. 1900-1700	First Palatial Period (Crete)
c. 1700-1450	Second Palatial period (Crete)
c. 1600-1100	Late Helladic Period (mainland); Mycenaean civilization
c. 1450-1375	Mycenaean occupation of Cnossus
c. 1100-1000	Sub-Mycenaean Period.
c. 1000-900	"Dark Ages," but signs of recovery at Lefkandi and Elateia
c. 900-700	Geometric Period
c. 800-700	Orientalizing Period
776	First Olympic Games
c. 750	Beginning of Greek colonization of Sicily, Italy, and the Black Sea
c. 725	Homer's poems written down
c. 700	Composition of Hesiod's poems
c. 650	Second Messenian War
594/3	Solon's archonship in Athens
561/0	Pisistratus' first attempt at tyranny
545-28/7	Pisistratus' tyranny at Athens
525	Cleisthenes' archonship
514	Assassination of Hipparchus, son of Pisistratus
510	Expulsion of Hippias, son of Pisistratus
508/7	Democratic reforms of Cleisthenes
490	Battle of Marathon
480	Battles of Thermopylae and Salamis
479	Battle of Plataea

478/7	Formation of the Delian League
472	First production of Aeschylus' *Persians*.
471	Ostracism of Themistocles
464-61	Earthquake in Sparta and ensuing Helot Revolt
461	Democratic reforms of Ephialtes; pay for jury service.
460-445	First Peloponnesian War
460-457	Construction of "Long Walls" from Athens to Piraeus
c. 454	Transfer of Delian League Treasury to Athens
449	Peace of Kallias (?)
447-438	Construction of the Parthenon
445	Thirty Years Peace between Athens and Sparta.
437-432	Construction of the Propylaea
431-404	Peloponnesian War
430/29	Plague in Athens; death of Pericles
421-408	Construction of the Erechtheum
415-413	Athenian invasion of Sicily
405	Battle of Aegispotami
404	Athens surrenders
404-403	Thirty Tyrants at Athens
399	Death of Socrates (born 469)
395-387	Corinthian War
386	Foundation of Plato's Academy
382	Sparta seizes Cadmeia, citadel of Thebes
378	Second Athenian Confederation founded
371	Thebes defeats Sparta at Leuctra; end of Spartan hegemony
362	Battle of Mantinea; end of Theban hegemony
359-336	Reign of Philip II of Macedon
347	Death of Plato (born 429)
338	Battle of Chaeronea; Philip conquers Greece
336-323	Reign of Alexander the Great

Biographical Notes

Alexander the Great: Son of Philip II and remembered for the Greek conquest of the Persian Empire before his sudden death in 323 BC.

Aristotle: Student of Plato and third of the great Greek philosophers, influential in a variety of areas, from ethics to biology.

Cimon: Leading politician in Athens in the generation after the Persian Wars.

Cleisthenes: Constitutional reformer whose innovations included the Council of 500, the ten tribes and system of demes and trittyes.

Cleon: the leading Athenian politician from c. 429 - 422 BC.

Cyrus the Great: Persian king who ruled from 558-530 BC, conquered the neighboring Medes and brought about the expansion of Persian power from Afghanistan to the Ionian coast.

Darius I: Persian king whose army was defeated at Marathon in 490 BC.

Darius III: Persian king defeated by Alexander the Great. The last Achaemenid king of Persia.

Dionysus: God of Ecstasy, known to the Greeks as the One who Binds and Releases. Tragedy was performed in his honor.

Evans, Sir Arthur: British excavator of Cnossus and proponent of the view that Minoan Crete had colonized the mainland, giving rise to Mycenaean civilization.

Hippias and Hipparchus: Sons of Pisistratus. Hippias ruled from 528/7 to 510 BC**.**

Isagoras: One of the leaders of the factional strife afflicting Athens from 510-508 BC. Isagoras was supported by the Spartans, but defeated by his rival, Cleisthenes.

Leonidas: Spartan king at the time of the Persian invasions, he died at Thermopylae (480 BC).

Lycurgus: Legendary law-giver of Sparta.

Menander: Popular late 4th century playwright whose New Comedy blended romance, comedy and domestic situations.

Nicias: Unwilling and unlucky Athenian commander during the Sicilian Expedition (415-13 BC).

Pisistratus: Sixth century tyrant of Athens, responsible for unifying the Athenians and encouraging prosperity.

Pericles: Leading Athenian politician and general from c. 450 - 429 BC.

Philip II: King of Macedon, 359-336 BC, and responsible for the unification of Macedon, its expansion and the conquest of southern Greece.

Plato: Student of Socrates and perhaps the most influential of the Greek philosophers, especially associated with the theory of forms.

Protagoras: Best known of the sophists, he advocated a form of agnosticism.

Schliemann, Heinrich: German excavator whose work on Ithaca and at Troy and Mycenae constituted the first major excavations of the Aegean Bronze Age.

Socrates: Provocative Athenian philosopher who was executed in 399 BC on charges of impiety and corrupting the youth of Athens.

Solon: Athenian lawgiver responsible for wide-ranging political and economic reforms.

Themistocles: Athenian leader at the time of the Persian invasions, he was remembered for convincing the Greeks to stay and fight at Salamis.

Xenophon: Athenian gentleman, soldier, and writer whose literary works included history, biography, and political pamphlets, as well as instruction manuals on cavalry tactics, hunting and household management.

Xerxes: Persian king whose invasion of Greece in 480-79 BC was defeated at Salamis and Plataea.

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Ancient Greek Civilization

Part II

Jeremy McInerney, Ph.D.

THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

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Jeremy McInerney received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1992. He was the Wheeler Fellow at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, and has excavated in Israel, at Corinth and on Crete. Since 1992 has been teaching Greek History at the University of Pennsylvania , where he held the Laura Jan Meyerson Term Chair in the Humanities from 1994 to 1998. He is currently an associate professor in the Department of Classical Studies and Chair of the Graduate Group in the Art and Archaeology of the Mediterranean World. Professor McInerney also serves on the Managing Committee of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Professor McInerney's research interests include topography, epigraphy, and historiography. He has published articles in the *American Journal of Archaeology*, *Hesperia*, and *California Studies in Classical Antiquity*. In 1997 he was an invited participant at a colloquium on ethnicity in the ancient world, hosted by the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington. His book, *The Folds of Parnassos: Land and Ethnicity in Ancient Phokis*, is a study of state formation and ethnic identity in the Archaic and Classical periods, and it will be published by the University of Texas Press in 1999.

Ancient Greek Civilization
Table of Contents

Ancient Greek Civilization

Scope:

The Greeks enjoy a special place in the construction of western culture and identity. Much of what we esteem in our own culture derives from them: democracy, epic poetry, lyric poetry, tragedy, history writing, philosophy, aesthetic taste, all of these and many other features of cultural life enter the West from Greece. The oracle of Apollo at Delphi had inscribed over the temple, "Know Thyself." For us, that also means knowing the Greeks.

In these lectures we will cover the period from the late Bronze Age, c. 1500 B.C., down to the time of Philip of Macedon and Alexander the Great, in the late fourth century B.C., concentrating on the two hundred year interval from 600 to 400 B.C. The lectures will proceed chronologically and draw on the rich literary and archaeological sources of Greek history, from Homer's majestic *Odyssey* to Schliemann's excavations and Troy and Mycenae, from Aeschylus' *Oresteia* to the wealthy Greek colonies of Sicily. Lectures introduce the audience to the world of classical Athens, described in the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides and the dialogues of Plato.

The lectures explore the similarities and differences between Greek culture and our own. In a variety of areas, such as in religion and gender, the Greeks seem alien, approaching the world in ways utterly different from our ways. In other facets of social life, on the other hand, such as in politics and war, we find a culture perhaps not very unlike our own. We will examine each of these aspects of Greek culture in an attempt to understand better how Greek culture developed as it did, and why it still resonates for us today.

Lecture Thirteen
The Persian Wars

Scope: The Persian Wars (490-479 BC) were the culmination of the territorial expansion of the Persian Empire to the edges of the Greek world. We rely almost exclusively on Greek sources for our understanding of these events, and it is highly likely that the Persians did not regard their war with Greece as the epic confrontation that the Greeks felt it to be.

From the Greek point of view, however, these were event that changed history. In this lecture we will examine the Persian Wars, with special attention to the significance of the battles at Marathon and Salamis. The legacy of the Persian Wars remains with us today. From them the Greeks learned to articulate a notion of freedom that is still deeply embedded in us. Less fortunately, the Persian Wars also mark the beginning of the great divide between East and West, also still deeply embedded in us.

Outline

I. The Ionian Revolt and the Origins of the Persian Wars

- **A.** As the Persian realm expanded, it was only a matter of time before it would come into conflict with the mainland Greeks.
- **B.** In 499 the various cities of the Ionian coast of Asia Minor revolted against the Persians and the tyrants whom the Persians had installed.
- **C.** The revolt culminated in the burning of Sardis in 498 BC, with a contingent of Athenians joining the other Ionians.
- **D.** The Ionian revolt petered out around 492.
- **E.** The Persians responded to the uprising by replacing many of the tyrannies with democracies.
- **F.** When Athens liberated many of these cities in 479-478, they exacted taxes at exactly the same rate as the Persians had.

II. Marathon

- **A.** No Persian king would tolerate outside interference, revolt, and insurrection. In 490 Darius sent ambassadors to Athens demanding earth and water as tokens of submission. Darius then sent an expedition across the Aegean to punish the Athenians.

1. The Persians landed at Marathon, 26 miles from Athens.
2. According to Herodotus, the Persians were pushed back into the sea, with the loss of 6,400 men. Historians have raised questions, however, about the veracity of the Herodotean account.
3. The Persians had probably mounted a punitive expedition rather than an effort at territorial conquest.

B. Marathon marked a turning-point in Greek history. The victors of this battle were known as the Marathonomachoi, the men who fought at Marathon, and they were treated for the rest of their lives as living heroes, veterans of Athens' finest moment.

III. Xerxes and the Invasion of 480-479

A. Darius died before he was able to mount a second expedition against the Greeks.
1. His son, Xerxes, was first occupied with quelling revolts after he came to the throne.
2. By the late 480s, however, plans had been laid for a massive assault of Greece by land and sea. No punitive raid, this was a full-scale invasion to conquer and annex all Greece.

B. Because of disagreements within their ranks, the Greeks were slow to organize their resistance.
1. Themistocles proposed using the Athenians' Laurium silver windfall to fund the construction of a fleet.
2. Otherwise, the Greeks failed to prepare for the Persian onslaught.
3. They abandoned northern Greece and did not take a stand until the Spartan king Leonidas, along with his royal guard of 300 men, denied the Persians access to the narrow pass at Thermopylae for three days.
4. For the Greek forces, Thermopylae was a formal defeat but a moral victory.

C. The Greek fleet, commanded by a Spartan but dominated by the Athenian contingent, fought an inconclusive engagement at Artemisium and then fell back to Salamis, near Athens.
1. Further dissent split the Greek camp, with many suggesting that the Greeks fall back to the Peloponnese.
2. Through a combination of threats, bribes, and tricks, the Athenian Themistocles managed to keep the Greeks

at Salamis, where they engaged and defeated Xerxes' navy.

D. Although Xerxes withdrew and his navy was destroyed, the Persians did not abandon their plans.
  1. The army withdrew to winter quarters in northern and central Greece. It returned the following summer and sacked Athens again.
  2. In 479, at the battle of Plataea, Xerxes' army was comprehensively beaten by the Greeks, led this time by Sparta.

IV. The Dual Legacy

A. Victory had far-reaching consequences for the Greeks.
  1. It is at this time that freedom (*eleutheria*) enters the political language of the Greeks.
  2. Conditioned by the events of the Persian Wars, the Greek conception of freedom primarily entailed the freedom of a community to remain autonomous and free from outside interference. This remains a powerful idea.

B. The victory of the Greeks also provoked a reevaluation of Greek and non-Greek identity.
  1. Although the Persians were a brave and warlike people, they were now cast as weak, effeminate, and inferior to the Greeks.
  2. From this time we can trace "the invention of the Barbarian" and the beginnings of an all too familiar split between East and West.

Suggested Readings

Hartog, F. (1988) *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways does the mutual misunderstanding of East and West still manifest itself today?

2. What explanation does Herodotus offer for the victory of the Greeks?

Lecture Fourteen
The Athenian Empire

Scope: Emerging triumphant from the Persian Wars, Athens quickly took command of a new alliance of Greek states. The Athenians' intention was to continue the war against Persia. This they did, driving the Persians from the Aegean and liberating the Greek cities of Ionia. Within a short time, however, this Delian League became the basis of an Athenian naval empire embracing the entire Aegean Sea. In this lecture we will examine the transformation of the Delian League from a free alliance into an Athenian Empire.

As Athens became an imperial city, it underwent dramatic changes. Relations with Sparta grew strained, the Persian threat receded, and a new generation of democratic politicians came to power. All of these developments shaped the course of Athenian society, and we will examine the emergence of imperial Athens.

Outline

I. Delian League: From Free Alliance to Athenian Empire

A. Athens had emerged from the Persian Wars with great prestige. The Athenians had seen their city sacked by the Persians, yet they had provided both leadership and a navy that had contributed to the defeat of Xerxes. Immediately after the war, they took command of the newly formed Delian League, an alliance of Aegean city-states eager to carry the war back to Persia.

B. Between the formation of the League in 478 and the defeat of the Persians ten years later at the Battle of the Eurymedon River, the record of the League shows its rapid transformation into a tool of Athenian policy.

1. In 476-475 the League expelled the Persian garrison from Eion in the Thrace region and enslaved the island of Skyros, making it an Athenian colony.

2. In 473 the city of Carystos on Euboea was forced to join the alliance.

3. In 470 an allied state, Naxos, revolted from the League. It was subsequently besieged and captured.

4. More revolts followed, notably that of Thasos (465-462 BC). The island was rich in trees valuable to the Athenian navy.

C. The transformation of the alliance into an empire was helped by various institutions, notably the tribute paid by allied states. They could choose to contribute ships or money. Most chose to pay money, thereby, says Thucydides, paying for their own enslavement.

1. Many of the allied states were so small that it made sense for them to commute their contributions into tribute, paid in silver.

2. For the Athenians, this meant that their shipyards and arsenals were always in use, turning out new triremes or refitting older boats, much of it paid for not by the Athenians but by their allies.

3. Athens' imperial role caused it to emerge during this time as a trade emporium for the whole region.

D. Three other important institutions also strengthened the Athenian grip on their allies.

1. Every year Athens sent out 700 magistrates to oversee the collection of tribute.

2. These magistrates were supported by fleets and garrisons of Athenian troops and sailors.

3. Furthermore, the Athenians frequently seized the land of uncooperative states and gave it to Athenian colonists, called *cleruchs*, who moved to the new territory.

II. Cimon, Pericles, and the Athens of 460

A. By 460, fifty years had passed since the founding of the democracy and twenty years since the Persian Wars. A new generation of politicians emerged, men who were committed to the democracy and Athens' naval empire. Foremost among these was Pericles, and his rise marks a new direction in Athenian policy.

B. In the years after the Persian war, the leading politician in Athens had been Cimon, of an old aristocratic family, devoted to the anti-Persian cause.

1. Cimon saw the Spartans less as rivals and more as partners in power.

2. So in 464, when an earthquake at Sparta led to a revolt by the Messenian helots, Cimon offered to lend assistance. At first the Spartans accepted his offer, but in 462 they dismissed Cimon's army. The following year the Athenians, still furious at this rebuff, ostracized Cimon.

C. Also from an aristocratic family, Pericles moved the Athenians into a more aggressive stance against the Spartans. He sought to contain Spartan power by expanding Athenian influence on the mainland in central Greece.

1. Pericles completed the construction of Athens' long walls, intended to allow Athens to withstand future sieges.

2. The immediate result of this was the so-called first Peloponnesian War, fought sporadically between 460 and 446.

3. Overseas, however, the Athenians suffered a serious reversal when an expedition to Egypt in support of an anti-Persian rebellion ended in disaster.

D. Revolts by Erythrae and Miletus in 454, and fear of a possible renewal of the war with Persia, resulted in a symbolic but significant event: the transfer of the treasury of the Delian League to Athens. This signalled that the Delian League was now no more than an Athenian naval empire.

III. The Imperial City

A. As Athens grew more powerful and successful, the discrepancies between Athens and the Allies grew more and more acute, making real resistance less and less possible.

1. As Athens came to dominate the Aegean, the volume of trade and shipping increased, and Athens became a great emporium, attracting businessmen, traders, and merchants.

2. Political exiles from other parts of Greece brought their wealth and expertise to Athens, where as metics they could set up factories and do business.

B. The most visible sign of Athens' transformation into an imperial city is the building program associated with Pericles.

1. In 449 BC Pericles proposes the creation of a fund of 5000 talents from the reserve funds of the Delian League.

2. From 447 to 438 the Parthenon is constructed.

3. From 437 to 432 the Propylaea is constructed.

4. In 435 work begins on the Erectheum.

5. From 421 to 408 the Erectheum is completed.

Suggested Reading

Meiggs, R. (1972) *The Athenian Empire*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways does the career of Pericles illustrate the new directions of Athenian policy in the second half of the fifth century?
2. What part did Persia play in Greek affairs in the period from 478 to 431 BC?

Lecture Fifteen
The Art of Democracy

Scope: Throughout the fifth and fourth centuries BC, the Athenians practiced a form of democratic political life rarely equaled in any other time or place. Although participation was restricted to adult male citizens, excluded women and foreigners, and depended on the existence of a slave population, the democratic system of Athens nevertheless remains a remarkable achievement.

In this lecture we will examine in detail the institutions of the Athenian democracy in an attempt to reconstruct the democratic experience of the ancient Greeks. We shall also consider the relationship between democratic politics and the other public institutions of Athenian society.

Outline

I. The Organs of Government

A. Sovereign power lay with the Assembly or *ecclesia*, open to all male adult citizens.

1. The Assembly met four times per month, forty times per year. In the fourth century, citizens were paid to attend. Here they debated issues ranging from legislation to financial and foreign policy. Important decisions of the assembly were recorded, then inscribed on stone stelae and erected in a prominent part of the city.

2. Although an executive board ran the meetings, discussions were frequently rowdy and tumultuous. Any citizen had the right to address the Assembly, but in practice only skilled speakers dared to do so.

3. The assembly had the right to hold an ostracism once per year. In such cases, provided there was a quorum, the least popular candidate was expelled for ten years.

4. Ostracism was first used during the 480s, in the wake of Marathon. Its first victims came from the relatives and friends of the tyrant, Pisistratus.

B. Preparing the agenda for the Assembly was the Council of 500, or *Boule*. It was composed of 10 groups of 50 men from each tribe.

1. Their work was smoothed by an executive council of nine, with a chairman and secretary.
2. Councillors were nominated by their demes, and following their service they were not eligible for selection for another ten years. In practice the vast majority of Athenian men must have served on the Council at least once in their lives.
3. The governing principles of the Assembly included collegiality, rotation of power, and annuality.

II. Magistracies and Offices

A. In addition to these organs, there were numerous officials, beginning with the chief magistrate of the city, who was known as the *archon* or ruler.

1. The *archon* appointed the *choregos*, who organized the dramatic festivals.
2. He conducted preliminary investigations in many legal cases, especially those that involved the state.
3. The *archon* was responsible for the protection of orphans and heiresses with no family to protect them or their interests.

B. The *archon* was supported by the *archon basileus*, who was responsible for most religious matters.

1. The *basileus* was in charge of the Eleusinian mysteries.
2. All sacrifices and all trials for homicide fell under his authority.

C. Third came the *polemarch*, technically the commander in chief of the Athenian armed forces, although in fact real power lay in the hands of generals who were elected, not chosen by lot.

1. The *polemarch* was in charge of the borders of Attica and the training of young men who served as a kind of border patrol.
2. In the classical period he was the chief judicial officer overseeing the affairs of *metics*, the resident aliens who lived and worked in Athens.

D. Aside from these senior magistracies, we also know of dozens of lesser positions, including overseers of the market-place, revenue collectors, and officials in charge of public contracts. All were chosen by lot from among the citizen body of Athens to serve for one year.

III. The Courts

A. Aside from these officials, the Athenians also chose by lot six judges—the Thesmothetae—each year to preside over the courts. These judges exercised little direct power. The Athenians preferred their justice, like their political assemblies, to involve mass participation.

1. Private suits in Athens were judged by juries of 501.

2. More important suits involving public officials were judged by a panel of 1,001 jurors.

3. The most grave charges—such as treason, unconstitutional behavior, or the subversion of an official embassy—were entrusted to a panel of 1,501 jurors.

B. The selection of these panels lay with the Thesmothetae, but final decisions lay with the juries, who voted by secret ballot.

1. Jury service was also paid in the fourth century at the rate of 3 obols a day, less than a skilled workman's day wage, but a decent stipend for those men who were too old to work.

2. Aristophanes' comedies reflect the popular belief that the juries were all-powerful. The courts were considered a central feature of the democracy.

IV. Politics and Public Life

A. The political institutions of the democracy are reinforced by other aspects of social life. Politics was not separate from the rest of the individual's social life. Instead, politics was one expression of public life.

1. The military organization of Athens relies on the same tribal divisions as the Council of 500.

2. The theater assembled the same groups of men who served together on the juries.

B. Together, these institutions produced the tightly interwoven fabric of democratic society. They also reinforce the exclusivity of Athenian democracy.

1. It takes time to attend the Assembly, to attend the theater, and to make oneself available to the jury system. Athens made democracy a full-time occupation by introducing pay.

2. This public life also depended on the secondary status of women, slaves, foreigners, and the allies of Athens.

C. To what do we compare the Athenian democracy?
   1. To Sparta, where participation was even more rigidly controlled?
   2. To Persia, in which all authority finally lay in the hands of a single, all-powerful monarch?
   3. To Macedon, where local barons vied for power over their mountain clans?
   4. Judged by the standards of the ancient world and by every other community in the eastern Mediterranean, the Athenian democracy was an extraordinary achievement.

Suggested Reading

Cartledge, P. (1993) *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others*. Oxford: Opus Books.

Questions to Consider

1. Is there a qualitative difference between oligarchy and democracy, or is it simply a matter of a more or less exclusive political class running society?

2. How important was it to the survival of democracy for the Greeks to articulate a theory of democracy?

Lecture Sixteen

Sacrifice and Greek Religion

Scope: The belief systems and religious practices of the Greeks reveal a great deal about the differences between us and them. In this lecture we will examine Greek religion, giving special attention to the question of the function of religion in the ancient community. We will discuss the importance of sacrifice and the nature of various religious festivals. These ranged from initiatory rites to civic festivals. Finally, we shall also consider the popularity of mystery cults, which offered direct contact between human worshippers and their gods. The cult of Demeter and Kore and Eleusis, in particular, remained popular throughout antiquity and offered a model for Christianity as it moved from its Jewish roots to reach a wider audience.

Outline

I. The Athenian democracy was an extraordinary achievement.

- **A.** To it we owe the concept of equal rights, which the Greeks called *isonomia*.
- **B.** The Athenians introduced the notion of accountability in office, in routinely investigating the accounts of officials.
- **C.** The Athenians pioneered the notion that the function of government was to guarantee justice through legislation, the judiciary, and even in the marketplace.

II. Cosmology and Dogma

- **A.** Greek cosmology was fluid. Hesiod wrote about the origins of the gods, but there were other gods not included in his cosmogony, and competing stories existed about some of the gods.
- **B.** This was possible because without a sacred text there could be no credo, no profession of faith. No single set of beliefs could be elevated to the level of orthodoxy.
  - **1.** Therefore there could be no heretics, no theological debates than ran the risk of incurring the wrath of an Inquisition.

2. In this respect, the trial of Socrates is absolutely exceptional, an aberration produced by the political conditions of the time.

III. Sacrifice

A. For the Greeks, faith was a personal matter, while religion was a public affair.

1. Greek religion was essentially a public performance conducted for the good of the entire community.

2. The principal act in ancient religion was sacrifice. The killing of an animal by the entire community was an action that deeply bound the participants together.

B. The fundamental architectural expression of Greek religion is the altar, not the temple. It is not unusual to find sanctuaries containing an altar but not a temple or statues of the gods.

IV. Sacrifices were conducted in the ritualized context of a religious festival, a time out of the ordinary and devoted to a god.

A. Festival calendars evolved out of seasonal festivals, astronomical festivals, and harvest and grape-picking festivals. As celebrations embracing the community, they came to function in a way that went beyond their origins.

B. Young men passing from adolescence to manhood in Athens were feted at an initiation ritual called the Apatouria. After this religious initiation, young men were then introduced to their fathers' fellow demesmen and inscribed on the citizen role. Young girls of about the age of twelve to fourteen took part in an initiatory festival to Artemis at Brauron.

C. The Anthesteria was a civic ritual designed to ward off evil spirits from the household. It was performed by everyone at the same time, generating the sense of community throughout the entire city.

D. Another important festival for the entire community was the Panathenaea. A procession involving all of Athens would take place, forming up outside the Dipylon Gate, crossing the agora by the Sacred Way and winding its way up to the Acropolis, where dozens if not hundreds of cattle would be slaughtered on the altar of Athena.

V. Religion and Faith

A. It has often been argued that pagan religion could not withstand the onslaught of Christianity precisely because it

did not address the inner needs of pious men and women. In fact, there is plenty of evidence to show that ancient religion did spring from a profound sense of awe, the truest basis of religion.

B. Aside from the many small figurines and shrines found in private homes, there is also evidence of so-called mystery-cults, in which the initiate experienced an epiphany by the god or goddess.

1. The most popular one in Greece—the cult of Demeter and Core, centered at Eleusis—has its roots in the Dark Ages. Its enduring popularity over the centuries suggests the presence of real faith in the presence of the divine.

2. Other shrines that offered direct contact with the divine were Apollo's oracle at Delphi; Zeus at Dodona, whispering through the leaves of the oak trees; the cult of Amphiareus outside Athens; Apollo Clarius in Asia Minor; and the many shrines of Asclepius, where the god came in a dream to the sick and explained their cure.

Suggested Reading

Burkert, W. (1985) *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. How were the Greeks able to reconcile so many different beliefs concerning the gods?

2. In what ways can Greek religion be described as a matter of performance rather than belief?

Lecture Seventeen
Theater and the Competition of Art

Scope: In the fifth century, the confidence and assurance of Athenian society expressed itself in the cultural flowering of the Classical period. Imperial Athens became the home of a dramatic tradition that was relentless in its search for truth, in exploring and laying bare the soul of humanity on stage. Although they are structurally simple, these plays achieved a power to move audiences. That power is still evident today.

Familiar as many of these plays seem to be, their roots lay in religious celebrations, and they remained part of an institution that bound the entire community together and connected it with the realm of the divine. Although Greek tragedy deals with bloodshed, murder, and passion within the family, these plays were watched by the entire city. It is a democratic art form that reinforces the egalitarian spirit of Athens.

Outline

I. Experiencing Greek Theater

- **A.** Visitors to Greece still visit Epidaurus and its magnificent theater where the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides continue to move audiences as they did two thousand years ago.
- **B.** But is it possible for a twentieth-century audience to experience Greek theater in the same way that the Greeks of the fifth century experienced it? To answer that question, we have to look at the plays themselves and at the settings in which they were performed.

II. Origins and Structure

- **A.** Structurally most Greek plays are straightforward. The origins of drama are in the dithyramb, sixth-century songs sung to Dionysus by choir and single voice.
  - **1.** With the addition of a second single voice, and later a third character, the basics were established: protagonist (first actor), antagonist (second actor), and chorus.
  - **2.** In its fully articulated form, drama consists of three single actors and a chorus.

B. The form is relatively straightforward.
  1. After an introduction by a character, the chorus enters and sings an ode.
  2. Between the choral odes are pieces of dialogue between characters and the chorus, or between two characters.
  3. More often than not, there is a strong element of hostility between the two characters. Agon—conflict and competition—was an important part of the theater.

C. The theaters themselves are straightforward in structure.
  1. The audience sat in a semicircle around the orchestra.
  2. Behind the orchestra was a stage backdrop, which was originally a tent, called the s*kene*.

III. Technique and Art

A. Yet in this simple format the Greeks created an art form of extraordinary subtlety. How? In part the answer lies in the formality of performance.
  1. The mask makes realistic action impossible.
  2. The heavy robes limit and disguise, so that three actors can play all roles.

B. The performance becomes fixed on two features of the drama, the dance-like movement of the actors, and the sound of the spoken word. The plays are all composed in a variety of meters, and the Greeks listened with open ears not just to the message of the words but to the sound and rhythm of each line.

IV. Nothing to do with Dionysus?

A. The nearest artistic form we have to this is opera, yet even this comparison misses a crucial ingredient of the performance, for ancient Greek plays were performed in the context of religious festivals.
  1. The plays were performed as part of a competition held in conjunction with the festival in honor of Dionysus, held just three days each year.
  2. Three poets presented their work, one poet each day for the three days of the festival. The agonistic or competitive aspect of ancient Greek theater is very different from modern theater.
  3. Each poet presented a trilogy, followed by a burlesque satyr play.

B. The association of tragedy with Dionysus was important.
  1. Dionysus is the god who binds and releases.

2. Greek theater is a space for transgression, dealing with the human drives and passions that threaten order and society.
3. Theater creates a setting in which the Greeks can explore the worst, most anti-social psychoses.
4. By enacting the very worst possible human crimes—incest, matricide, murder—theater seeks to purge these drives, in a process that Aristotle identified as *catharsis* or cleansing. This is especially seen in Euripides' *The Bacchae*.
5. The plays also examine the dilemmas facing a community in transition.
    a. Sophocles' *Antigone* examines how one should balance his or her conflicting obligations to the family and to the city.
    b. Aeschylus' *Oresteia* asks how to resolve bloodshed and internecine fighting within the family. Athena finally decrees that the state—embodied by the Areopagus—will resolve this intrafamilial crisis.
6. Theater reinforces the role of religion in binding the community together.

C. Comedy
1. The comedies do not examine the psychology of individuals, as the tragedies do.
2. Aristophanes' plays address daily life; they lampoon contemporary political figures; and they are firmly rooted in the contemporary world.
3. In these grotesque and obscene plays, the Athenians ridiculed themselves and the gods.
4. The comedies are "located" in the city, while the tragedies are "located" in individual psychology.
5. The "new comedy" of the fourth century—such as the plays of Menander—are disappointing in comparison with the vibrant "old comedy." The former are divorced from public life and show no sense of connection between public and private.

Suggested Reading

Zeitlin, F. and Winkler, J., eds (1990) *Nothing to Do with Dionysos?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the differences between the depiction of violence in our popular media and the presentation of this in Greek tragedy?
2. Why is it that audiences still respond to plays as gruesome as *Oedipus the King* and *The Bacchae*?

Lecture Eighteen
Sex and Gender

Scope: Greek society displayed attitudes towards human sexuality that differ markedly from those of modern society. This is especially apparent in the Greek conception of masculinity, which linked homosexuality to the training of youths. Rather than viewing such relationships as an alternative to heterosexuality, the Greeks viewed them as part of the youth's coming of age.

Attitudes to women were also markedly different from our own society's attitudes, and they were often rooted in deep suspicion. The role of women as mothers of citizens and as productive members of the household limited the position of women in society. The lack of a female voice in ancient literature makes the task of recovering women's voices especially difficult.

Outline

I. Understanding Sex and Sexuality

- **A.** What is the difference between male and female, masculine and feminine? What is normal desire? The Greeks answered these questions very differently from the way we do.
- **B.** Greek attitudes toward homosexuality reflect the deep gulf between ourselves and the Greeks when it comes to the question of sex and gender.
  - **1.** The Theban Sacred Band, it was believed, consisted of lovers who were said to fight more fiercely than any other unit because each man was anxious to prove his worth before his lover.
  - **2.** "Calos" ("beautiful") cups celebrating the beauty of young men were a popular part of drinking parties.
  - **3.** Greek culture had a long tradition of celebrating male beauty in life-size statues of marble or bronze.
  - **4.** Their temples even celebrated the attraction of youths, showing, for example, Zeus carrying off young Ganymede.
  - **5.** Greek myth valorized this celebration. Iolaus, for example, was both the young companion and lover of Heracles.

II. Homosexuality, Courage and the Making of Men

A. It is not just in attitudes to homosexuality that we witness a difference between ourselves and the Greeks, but also in conceptions of masculinity. In a particular way, homosexuality and masculinity were thought to go hand in hand.

B. The Greeks were very clear about the respective roles in such a relationship.

1. The older, active partner was the *erastes* (lover).

2. The other—younger and passive—was the *eromenos* (beloved).

C. The view of gender which underlies this system is one in which masculinity is equated with action, initiation, and superiority, while the opposite—passivity, acquiescence, femininity—is figured as either female or boyish.

1. Boys were courted, publicly and openly.

2. The older man brought presents for the boy, sought out his company at public places such as the gymnasium, and tried to win his favor.

3. If successful, the relationship was supposed, ideally, to be educational.

4. The older man instructed the youth about morality, loyalty, and physical endurance.

5. Importantly, it entailed a recognized end point. It was dishonorable for an adult of marriageable age to continue as the passive partner.

D. This was probably an upper-class behavior. A farmer trying to eke a living out of the soil did not have the time to devote to seduction. However, Greek culture had an aristocratic temper and valorized the activities and values of an elite. Homosexuality was one such socially constructed behavior associated with the elite.

III. Cultural attitudes towards women were also striking.

A. Hesiod's poems presented women as a source of evil. The myth of Pandora, for instance, portrayed women as a punishment given to men for their evil behavior.

B. Homer offers both a positive (Penelope) and a negative (Helen) depiction of women. In the Homeric poems, women both caused the Trojan war and made it worth fighting.

C. The latent and deep-seated misogyny of the Greek view was explored much more fully by Simonides of Amorgos.

1. For Simonides, there were many different types of woman, all analogous to some animal: the sow, the bitch, and so forth.
2. The bee alone is industrious, blameless, and modest. The metaphor of the bee recurs in Greek literature, offering a model of the ideal woman, one who is devoted to her family and household.

IV. The Prosperous Household and the Silence of Women

A. The bee metaphor is employed by Xenophon in *The Economicus* to explain the role of women.

1. The queen bee takes note of what is brought into the hive, sees to its preservation, dispenses supplies to others in the hive, has authority over making the honey-comb, raises offspring, and then sees them off to a new colony.
2. Similarly, the good woman is tireless about the house, spinning and weaving, supervising slaves, and bearing children.

B. The good wife is like a queen bee in another way: she does not leave the house. Xenophon supports this by claiming that the female constitution is naturally weaker and unsuited to the outdoor life of men.

C. Pericles offers a moral interpretation of this belief when he claims that the greatest glory of women is not to be talked about by men, for good or ill. The best thing you can say about a woman is that there is nothing to say about her.

D. Speeches of the Athenian law-courts reflect these same elements: the fear of women, the seclusion of citizen women, and their importance to the creation of a self-sufficient household.

V. Associated with this perception of women is the belief that women are a threat, a volatile set of emotions and passions that might erupt at any minute. The Greeks, both men and women, gave expression to this, by devoting a special cult to Dionysus.

A. Maenads, or Bacchants, were worshippers of Dionysus, who experienced Dionysiac frenzies in honor of the god of ecstasy.

B. Bands of Bacchants roamed across wild mountain paths, tearing animals limb from limb while possessed by the god. Plutarch personally knew the high priestess of one such cult.

VI. Women's Voices

A. Between the two extremes of the dutiful wife and mother tied to the house and the frenzied worshipper of Dionysus raving across the hills, we actually know little of the life of Greek women. Grave markers erected in memory of dead women offer some evidence of real individual relationships.

1. The epitaph put up by a loving husband to his wife in which he acknowledges her qualities as a homemaker and her skill as a doctor is curiously modern in tone.

2. All too common are the heart-breaking epitaphs of women who died in childbirth, often along with the child.

3. Just as men's epitaphs record their accomplishments as warriors or statesmen, women's epitaphs habitually present the web of familial relations as the woman's glory.

B. The common denominator behind nearly all our sources is that they originate with men: historians, poets, legislators, and speechwriters. Few actual women's voices can be heard from the world of the ancient Greeks. Among them, however, is one of the greatest lyric poets of any language: Sappho.

Suggested Reading

Winkler, J.J. (1990) *The Constraints of Desire: the Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece.* London.

Questions to Consider

1. Given the relative seclusion of Athenian citizen women, what explains the fascination of the Greeks with the Amazons?

2. What attitudes towards women are reflected in the plays of the great Athenian tragedians?

Lecture Nineteen
The Peloponnesian War (I)

Scope: Between 431 and 404 BC the Greek world was convulsed by the monumental confrontation of Athens and Sparta. Most of the Greek states were involved as allies of one or the other superpower, and the war produced suffering on a scale previously unknown to the Greeks. By the time the war ended, Athens had been defeated, her navy destroyed, and her empire dissolved. In this lecture we shall examine the causes of the war and its first stage, the Archidamian War (431-421 BC).

The entire war was witnessed by Thucydides, one of the most important and influential historians ever to analyze human affairs. In examining Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War, we will also look at the growth of history as a literary genre.

Outline

I. Empires and Hegemony

A. By the second half of the fifth century BC, Athens and Sparta had emerged as the two most powerful states in Greece. Although formerly allied against the Persians, the two superpower of ancient Greece had followed very different courses in their development.

B. Although Athens was democratic, it was also overtly an imperial power.

1. The Athenian navy dominated the Aegean and ensured the military dominance of Athens in the islands and on the coast of the Aegean.

2. Athens exacted tribute from the allied states, and it dispatched governors, garrisons and tax collectors throughout the Delian League.

3. The Athenians suppressed revolts by allied states and often seized land in allied territory which was handed over to Athenian colonists: *cleruchs*.

4. By the time war broke out, Pericles could say openly what everyone knew—that Athens possessed an *arche*, an empire embracing most of the Aegean.

C. Spartan influence in the Peloponnese was more loosely organized.
  1. Sparta was tied by alliances to a number of other Peloponnesian states.
  2. The Peloponnesian states were not subject to tribute, but they paid into a collective war fund.
  3. The Peloponnesian League was primarily an alliance of land-powers and did not emphasize naval supremacy.
  4. Sparta's allies included powerful states such as Thebes and Corinth.
  5. Spartan power was also balanced by a powerful hostile neighbor, Argos.

D. Tensions grew between Athens and Sparta in the years following the Persian Wars.
  1. The first armed conflict between Athens and Sparta—the First Peloponnesian War of 460-446—coincided with Cimon's departure from Athens and the ascendancy of Pericles.
  2. When Cimon returned in 451, Athens reversed course again, signing a five-year armistice with Sparta.
  3. Following Cimon's death in Cyprus, his anti-Persian policy was abandoned and the party favoring war with Sparta regained ascendancy in Athens.

E. The Peloponnesian War arose in the agonistic climate of Greek culture.
  1. The ancient Greeks emphasized *eris*; they viewed life as a perpetual zero-sum struggle for advantage.
  2. One Socratic interlocutor in *The Republic* defines justice as doing good to one's friends and evil to one's enemies.
  3. As a result, warfare among Greek states was the natural condition; peace was exceptional.
  4. The Peloponnesian war was exceptional in that it was truly international; it involved most of the Greek states, which separated into two large blocs.

II. Thucydides and the Causes of the War

A. According to Thucydides, the growing power of Athens alarmed the Spartans. This he calls the truest cause of the war.
  1. Thucydides' case is persuasive. After all, he was a contemporary of the events he describes. He himself

was an Athenian general and he knew many of the participants on both sides.

2. He was also concerned with understanding the underlying tensions and conflicts that made the conflict, in his view, inevitable.

B. Despite Thucydides' weighty arguments, some modern scholars have placed the responsibility for the war with another state, Corinth.

1. Corinth was a wealthy city-state located at the strategically important isthmus, where trading routes from all points converged. The case for seeing Corinth as one of the prime movers towards war depends on an examination of events immediately before the outbreak of war.
2. In 433 BC, Corcyra (Corfu) became an Athenian ally, hoping to gain support for its efforts against its rebellious colonists at Epidamnus. The Epidamnians in turn allied themselves with Corinth, the mother-city of Corcyra. The alliance of Corcyra and Athens joined two of the three largest navies in the Greek world. For Corinth, between the two allies, this was an ominous development.
3. In 432 BC, the Athenians ordered the city of Potidaea to dismantle part of its walls and dismiss its magistrates. Potidaea was an Athenian ally and a Corinthian colony. The city was besieged by an Athenian force. Despite the help of 1,600 Corinthian hoplites, the Potidaeans were defeated in battle, and in 430 their city was captured.

C. A third crisis on the eve of the war was the so-called Megarian decree, by which Athens barred the people of Megara from the Athenian market place and the ports of the Athenian empire.

1. This was an attempt to compel the Megarians to become members of the Athenian empire. Only after they became tribute-paying allies, it was understood, would they be allowed into the ports of Athens.
2. The Megarian Decree represents an attempt by the Athenians to create a trade zone embracing the entire Aegean. Beyond the Saronic Gulf, lay the Corinthian Gulf, northwest Greece, southern Italy, and Sicily.
3. This may not have troubled the land-oriented Spartans, but it threatened Corinth, located strategically at the

Isthmus, and traditionally associated with the wealthy colonies of Magna Graecia.

III. Thucydides and the Archidamian War.

A. The war broke out when Athens rejected the ultimatum of the Spartans.

1. During the subsequent Archidamian War, the Spartans invaded every year and laid waste the countryside of Athens.

2. Each summer, the Athenians would pack their bags, collect their sheep, and come inside their walls, watching the Spartans destroying their crops and cutting down their trees and vines.

B. This pattern was interrupted by two developments. In 430, in the second year of the war, Pericles died. The Athenians were robbed of a commander who combined good generalship with cautious policy. In that same summer, Athens was hit by the Plague.

C. Thucydides was deeply affected by these two events.

1. The death of Pericles suggested to the historian the passing of all that was finest in Athens. The physical suffering of the Plague presaged the moral breakdown that Athens would undergo.

2. Thucydides artfully suggests this shift in Athens' fortune by juxtaposing two important sections of his work: Pericles' Funeral Oration and Thucydides' own description of the Plague.

D. The first of these rightfully stands as the clearest statement of the Athenians' sense of their own accomplishments. The second is a ringing denunciation of human bestiality. This complexity is part of the abiding appeal of Thucydides to modern generations. We are all too familiar with the gap between our ideals and the realities of power.

E. After Pericles' death, according to Thucydides, the Athenians were led by a new generation, hungry for power and unscrupulous. Foremost among these was Cleon who led the Athenians to victory at Pylos, bringing to a close the first phase of the war.

Suggested Reading

Kagan, D.W. (1969) *The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Ste Croix, G.E.M. de (1972) *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. How does Thucydides go about demonstrating that growing Athenian power and the fear it inspired in Sparta made war inevitable?
2. In what ways does Thucydides' work represent a departure from the style of history composed by Herodotus?

Lecture Twenty
The Peloponnesian War (II)

Scope: In this lecture we continue our discussion of the Peloponnesian War. Hostilities resumed in 421 BC following the Peace of Nicias, and the war expanded into the Aegean, as Spartan fleets challenged Athenian supremacy. Eventually the Athenians would embark on the disastrous invasion of Sicily, creating a second front when their resources were already beginning to reach the breaking point. Although Athens survived the destruction of its invasion force, the Athenians were severely weakened by their losses, and they fought the last campaigns of the war primarily in the very waters in which formerly they had been unchallenged. In 404 BC, a Spartan fleet sailed into the Piraeus, the port of Athens, and the Athenians capitulated.

Thucydides' treatment of the Peloponnesian War, and the Sicilian Expedition in particular, represents the attempt of a thoughtful historian, familiar with the major events of the day, to identify the causes of Athens' final collapse. In Athens' defeat he saw the lessons of war and history played out with the inevitability of tragedy. Athens' daring, the key to the city's success, would finally bring about her fall.

Outline

I. Thucydides and the Lessons of History

A. Thucydides attempted to analyze the Peloponnesian War in such a way that it would teach his audience about fundamental truths of history. For Thucydides, the war was both an event that needed explanation, and also itself an illustration of the laws of history.

B. Before Thucydides, Herodotus had articulated the idea of history as research into the causes of notable events, but for Herodotus history still included heavenly intervention, cosmic justice, and divine retribution. His concern is to tell a good story.

C. For Thucydides, history was to be sober and scientific—no stories to entertain, only accounts of events to illustrate the way human affairs always follow the same patterns.

1. Weakness invites the domination of the stronger.

2. Power always seeks to increase.
3. Necessity is the engine of history.
4. Leaders must impose their will on those they lead.

II. Scientific History

A. As a member of the Athenian elite, Thucydides was well educated. He was familiar with the latest developments in education, oratory, logic, and science. His intellect was shaped in the climate of intellectual ferment that constituted Athens in the mid to late fifth century.

B. With Athens' prosperity came a traffic in ideas, in teachers, and in philosophers who also poured into the imperial city. These teachers included:

1. Gorgias of Leontini, whose lessons in rhetoric emphasized oppositions—antitheses.
2. Protagoras of Abdera, who claimed that "Man is the measure of all things."
3. Hippocrates, the founder of scientific medicine.

C. Thucydides shows many of the hallmarks of training in this sophistic tradition.

1. Like Gorgias he is interested in antitheses: Athens vs. Sparta; Pericles vs. Cleon; Alcibiades vs. Nicias, even Athens the ideal versus Athens the barbaric. His description of the plague is a text-book Hippocratic report.
2. His treatment in Book Three of the *stasis* at Corcyra reflects this training.
3. The historian, like the doctor, observes political events as if t hey were the symptoms of a disease in the body politic.
4. The more accurate the observation, the more accurate the understanding. He is examining the pathology of war and teaching his readers how that pathology might be avoided.

D. This is a fundamentally amoral analysis. For Thucydides, tribute, garrisons, and the apparatus of empire are simply a fact, neither good nor bad in themselves.

1. Cleon scolds the Athenians for failing to recognize that they possess an empire which is a tyranny over both those who plot against them and those who are ruled against their will.
2. Pericles uses almost the same words, comparing the Athenian empire to a tyranny. Perhaps it was wrong to

take it, he says, but you would relinquish it at your peril.

3. A central dictum of this Thucydidean view is uttered by the Athenians to the Melians, "The strong do what they will; the weak suffer what they must." It is as if the Athenians are driven to acquire more power, and to increase their dominion.

III. Empire, History, and Tragedy

A. The process of growth and imperial domination charted by Thucydides finds its climax in the Sicilian Expedition, begun in 416. He intended the Sicilian Expedition to be read as an account that illustrated the constant, underlying factors of history.

1. The weaker Egestaians call upon the Athenians for help, exemplifying the Thucydidean dictum that the weak need the help of the strong, and they invite the very domination against which they later chafe.
2. Even more typical is Thucydides' emphasis on false pretenses and true motives. The Athenians say they will help the Egestaians because they are related to them, but in fact the real reason, as Thucydides says on more than one occasion, is that the Athenians were ambitious to conquer the island because they believed it was fabulously wealthy.

B. But there is another side of Thucydides. As a literary artist he framed the Sicilian Expedition in much the same way that a poet would have written a tragedy. Just as in a Euripidean play, there is a psychological drama played out as a conflict between diametrically opposite characters, here Nicias and Alcibiades.

1. Nicias is the voice of reason, common sense, and sober judgement, whose advice echoes the words of Pericles when he says a man should not try to acquire a second empire before he has secured his first.
2. Alcibiades is ambitious for command. His position among the people, says Thucydides, led him to indulge his tastes beyond his means. Alcibiades is, in fact, the very spirit of Athens unrestrained: he embodies what Athens can be when there is no restraining influence upon the great leader.

3. Ironically, because of a mysterious episode in Athens on the eve of the expedition, Alcibiades never made it to Sicily, and soon after he defected to Sparta.

IV. Dissent and Disaster

A. Thucydides' account begins with the capture of some smaller Sicilian cities and the defeat of the largest Sicilian army at Syracuse in the winter of 415. But gradually the Syracusans grow in confidence, and we watch the Spartan general Gylippus become more daring. The entire focus of the campaign narrows down to the one position that must be taken, the high ridge of Epipolae, above Syracuse.

B. For the next two campaign seasons, both sides build and sap a succession of walls across the ridge in order to gain the upper hand. So critical is it that in 413 the Athenians dispatch an entirely new fleet even at a time when the Athenians were faced with a permanent Spartan garrison at Deceleia, twenty miles north of Athens. The war was coming down to this one battle for the heights above Syracuse.

C. The climax comes on a night in the summer of 413, when Demosthenes leads an attack that ends in disaster, as the Athenians rush about, dazed and confused in the darkness.

1. The Syracusans recover their old confidence, while the Athenians are racked by doubt and dissension. Demosthenes thinks they should cut and run; Nicias thinks they should stay and take their chances.
2. Gradually, as sickness from the marshy terrain decimates the ranks of the Athenians, they decide to leave. Fatefully, an eclipse takes place, leading most of the men to urge the generals to wait.
3. In the delay that follows, the Syracusan fleet sails up and seals off the harbor to prevent the Athenians from escaping. The Athenian ships sent out to lift this blockade are defeated, and the Athenian mood grows increasingly frantic.

D. Finally, in one desperate engagement fought on land and sea, most of the Athenian fleet is destroyed as the army looks on.

1. The Athenians, shocked, forget even to ask for their dead to bury.
2. The army slowly breaks camp, hoping to march out of Syracuse, but the disorder that has threatened them

disrupts the retreat: the army splits into two groups, harassed by the Syracusans.

3. The column led by Nicias is cut to pieces, while the last 6,000 men under Demosthenes surrender. Most would die in the quarries at Syracuse.

E. As Thucydides describes it, the Athenians were incompetently led while the Spartans were effectively led. The Athenians were also undermined by their own greed and hubris.

V. Coda

A. The war would continue until 404, and Thucydides would live to see the end of the war. He has left us a work of astonishing subtlety and complexity, one that applies the most rigorous standards of historical analysis and yet tells a story as dramatic and tragic as any Greek drama.

B. What Thucydides leaves us with is a potent vision of history in which individuals both express the spirit of their time and shape the events of their time. It is a psychological reading of history that looks for the underlying causes behind the politicians' excuses, and yet it turns on missed opportunities and bad calculations. The historian I read in Thucydides is one who can never quite reconcile the demand for clear understanding with the need to produce an artful, elegant story. That is the historian's dilemma.

Suggested Reading

Pouncey, P.R. (1980) *The Necessities of War: A Study of Thucydidean Pessimism*

Questions to Consider

1. In what ways does Thucydides shape his narrative to prove his thesis?
2. In what sense can Nicias be seen as a tragic hero?

Lecture Twenty-One
Socrates on Trial

Scope: In this lecture we will examine the career of Socrates, the most influential of Greek philosophers. He marks the meeting of two philosophical traditions: the Ionian tradition of speculation and inquiry, and the sophistic tradition of teaching. To understand Socrates it is also important to look at conditions in Athens at the end of the fifth century. The trial of Socrates, as we shall see, was the culmination of pressures created by Athens' defeat in the Peloponnesian War. The crisis of democracy, fear of oligarchy, and popular suspicion in relation to higher learning all combined to make Socrates into a scapegoat.

Outline

I. Greek Philosophy before Socrates

A. In the sixth century Greek thinking was revolutionized by a number of remarkable men, nearly all of whom came from Ionia. They are known collectively as the philosophers of the Ionian enlightenment, or the Presocratics. What distinguishes these men is that they were dissatisfied with explanations of the world that relied on stories. Rejecting anthropomorphic gods, these philosophers investigated nature (*physis*) in order to understand the principles governing the universe.

1. Heraclitus of Ephesus proclaimed "all is flux," emphasizing the impermanence of nature.

2. Anaximander explored the notion that there was a single, imperishable, uniform substance out of which everything in the universe was constructed.

3. Thales spoke of the *logos* (measure or proportion), detectable in the natural world. He stressed the wholeness and the interrelatedness of the world.

B. These natural philosophers proceeded by observation and inquiry. They produced startling results that combined elements of what we would call science, philosophy, and even theology.

1. Democritus and Leucippus argued that everything was made up of tiny, invisible particles moving in a void.

Their observations anticipate atomic theory and nuclear science.

2. Anaxagoras suggested that the universe was blended of an infinite number of elements. This mixture was controlled by *Nous*, divine intelligence.

C. The Ionian cosmologists were also revolutionary in that they used prose rather than poetry as their language of inquiry. Gradually, prose would come to be associated with the language of investigation, and *logos* would come to stand for scientific inquiry. From this meaning derives our English use of the word "logic," the rules of rational thinking.

D. For many of the Presocratic philosophers, the physical world was only a reflection of a fuller, deeper reality.

1. The senses are untrustworthy because they only give rise to *gnome* (opinions), while true *episteme* (knowledge) comes after *gnome* has been surmounted.
2. Hence the aim of Greek philosophy was to achieve a clearer understanding of the world by distinguishing between the external appearance of things and an underlying reality.
3. This resulted in a close connection between natural science, based on observation of the world, and a moral philosophy that asked the question, "how should I live in the world?"

II. Sophists and the New Learning

A. Along with this scientific revolution, the fifth century BC also witnessed the appearance of a new class of teachers, called the sophists. Their philosophical interests included epistemology, language, geometry, astronomy, and biology, but they were associated in most people's minds with rhetoric and eristics, the study of argumentation.

1. The sophists were professional teachers who charged money for their lectures. The best known example is Protagoras.
2. Although tolerated in Athens, they were associated with the upper classes, and were treated with a combination of awe, suspicion, and derision by most Athenians.
3. In *The Clouds*, Aristophanes derided the sophists.

B. Socrates came from the same intellectual milieu that had produced both Ionian philosophy and the sophistic movement. Some features of his teaching show his relationship to the two traditions.

1. He moved away from speculation about the natural world to concentrate almost exclusively on moral philosophy. What is the nature of goodness?
2. He attracted a circle of followers that included prominent Athenians such as Critias, Plato, and Xenophon, yet he seems never to have charged for his teaching.
3. He wrote nothing, and he resisted formulating a coherent philosophical system.
4. Unlike the Ionian philosophers and sophists, Socrates was an Athenian. He served both in the Athenian army and on the Council.
5. Some episodes in his life suggest that his philosophy was influenced by a strongly mystical sense of the divine.

III. The Socratic Circle

A. Socratic philosophy is largely known to us through the writings of his pupil, Plato.

1. From Plato's dialogues a picture emerges of Socrates hammering away at the definitions of goodness, beauty, courage, and justice put forward by his countrymen.
2. It becomes clear that his thinking was based on the belief in the unity of all virtues. He returns to this theme over and over, in order to demonstrate people that their assumptions get in the way of a genuine understanding of the world.

B. Other great teachers throughout history have chosen various means of getting their message across—e.g., speaking in aphorisms or telling parables. Socrates' technique was known as *elenchos*, or cross-examination. This technique could be infuriating, since its goal was to force Socrates' interlocutor to admit his ignorance. In the eyes of many of his contemporaries, this clever technique revealed that Socrates was not a true philosopher at all, but a sophist, a smart-aleck.

C. Socrates was associated with the education of the upper class of Athenian youths. They too used *elenchos* to baffle their friends and family.

1. Many in Athens began to feel that they were losing their children to this newfangled education and that Socrates' ideas and habits were corrupting the young.

2. His tendency to speak of the *daimon* or spirit that talked to him could be interpreted as an attack on the established religion.
3. The fierce loyalty of his acolytes seemed vaguely cultish, and the aristocratic tendency toward pederasty suggested to some that this circle of rich young men was immoral.

IV. Democracy in Crisis

A. At first Socrates was treated as a figure of caricature. Events in 404 BC changed everything.
1. After losing the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians were occupied by the Spartan army. Democracy was suspended, and a pro-Spartan oligarchy—the Thirty—was installed.
2. Unfortunately, among the Thirty were a number of men, including Critias, the uncle of Plato, who had been students and friends of Socrates. Socrates began to look more like the intellectual center of a plot to disband the democracy.

B. After a short period of civil war, the Thirty were driven from power and the democracy was restored. The official policy of the restored democracy was to avoid vengeance, but there were hard feelings still. In Athens, Socrates was arrested, nominally on a charge of having corrupted the young and for impiety, for supposedly denying the gods, but really for having been the teacher of Critias.

C. Was Socrates a martyr to philosophical freedom? Yes and no.
1. We cannot underestimate the anxiety over sophistic education.
2. Consider too the self-proclaimed intellectual and moral superiority of the Socratic circle.
3. There was also a combative and provocative streak in Socrates' own character.
   a. He opposed the trial of the Arginusae generals in 406.
   b. When called upon the defend himself, he claimed that Apollo himself had declared Socrates the wisest man alive.
   c. At the hearing to decide his punishment, he argued that he should be given free dining privileges for life.

d. He refused to escape when the opportunity was offered him.

e. We have to ask, what kind of moral courage is it that seeks its own martyrdom? At what point does prudence become as real a virtue as courage? That is a question worthy of Socrates.

Suggested Reading

De Romilly, J. (1992) *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. Should Socrates be classified as a sophist?

2. Can the picture of Socrates in Aristophanes' and Xenophon's writings be reconciled with Plato's Socrates?

Lecture Twenty-Two
Slavery and Freedom

Scope: Some years ago a leading ancient historian asked whether Greek democracy was based on slave labor. In this lecture we will examine slavery in the Greek world and attempt to answer that question. We will examine the types of work performed by slaves and their importance both to the ancient economy and society.

In addition, we should also look at attitudes towards slavery, and in particular the question of how the Greeks reconciled the notion of democracy with the ownership of slaves.

Outline

I. Slaves in the Economy

A. Slaves were found throughout Athens performing all manner of tasks. In the earliest Greek literature—the poems of Homer and Hesiod—female slaves are regularly taken as prizes of war. Even earlier, in the documents of Mycenaean Greece, lists of slaves are a common feature of the inventory of the great palaces.

B. In classical times, even the poorest Athenian citizen expected to be able to own a slave.

1. Speeches from the law courts show that not being able to afford a slave was a sign of destitution.

2. A free man might set slaves up in a workshop or a factory under the supervision of a bailiff, or he might work alongside one or two slaves in a small shop of his own.

3. In private homes, female slaves worked alongside the mistress, spinning, weaving, cleaning, and cooking.

C. The Athenian state owned some slaves and leased others from wealthy citizens. These public slaves were put to work in a variety of ways.

1. Some performed menial tasks such as removing refuse and dung from the streets.

2. Others assisted public officials and performed minor clerical functions.

3. By far the worst possible work performed by slaves was mining. The Athenian state and its wealthiest

citizens relied on revenues from the silver mines at Laurium. Slaves in the mines worked under the most gruelling and dangerous conditions.

D. Outside the city, farmers relied on slave labor in every sector of the rural economy.
  1. Slaves were sent out to watch flocks and herds.
  2. Slaves worked in the fields, harvested crops, stamped grapes, and picked olives.

II. Attitudes to Slavery

A. Slaves were ubiquitous.
  1. From before 700 BC the Greeks had access to a permanent supply of slaves, and they regarded slaves as a natural component of the household.
  2. There was a causal connection between slavery and democracy. Democracy depended on the principle of autarchy, or self-rule, and it was predicated on the participation of the greatest number of citizens. Assemblies and jury service take time, and thus most citizens sought to create the greatest amount of time for themselves to take part in politics.
  3. This meant freedom from work. The Greeks called this *schole*, the free time not to work but to play the part of the free citizen. The existence of a world of citizens depended on the existence of a world of slaves.

B. How can you glorify the potential of free men without recognizing that all men are potentially free? The Greeks were untroubled by this question. Aristotle, for example, offers a philosophical justification for slavery that begins from the proposition that slavery is a natural institution.
  1. In Aristotle's thinking, the universe exists in a state of tension between the dominant and the subordinate.
  2. Nature is best served, and it achieves its purpose or function (*telos*), when two conditions are observed. First, the stronger should rule the weaker. Second, the better the parties involved, the better the function that will be served.
  3. Harmony exists when men rule women; domesticated animals are better than wild animals because they exist in a state of subservience to men, and it is better to rule another man than to rule an animal. Slavery is not wrong; it is the ultimate application of the principle of domination.

4. Which men are fitted to rule, and which are fit to be ruled? Aristotle claims that a man who works with his body—and is capable of nothing better than that—is worse than a man who has cultivated his mind. Now slaves, he claims, have access to reason but don't use it, so all they are good for is work, while slave owners have active souls and are therefore above work.
5. The only conclusion possible is that a slave is a man who by nature is capable of belonging to another and therefore does. The final proof that certain men deserve to be slaves is that they are slaves.

III. From *Schole* to School

A. To distance themselves from this natural inferiority, free men cultivated those pursuits that marked them out as superior, as not having to work. As a result, the leisure activities made possible by owning slaves—philosophy lectures, poetry recitals, festival participation, attendance at court or in the assembly, in short all the typical activities of citizens—became the living proof that you were naturally superior to slaves. *Schole* was not the mark of an idle man, but of a free man.

B. From free time it came to mean the activities pursued during free time, such as exercise at the gymnasium or taking classes with some smart teacher, and ultimately it would become the name of the place in which you pursue the activities of a free person. School was where you cultivated your soul and affirmed your natural superiority over those whose only value was their capacity to work.

C. Land was still regarded as desirable, and farming was still viewed as the most legitimate source of wealth, but the value of actual manual labor was demeaned, better left if possible to bailiffs and slaves. In fact, many farmers were free and hard-working, and not all farming was done by slaves. In terms of mentality, however—the web of values, assumptions, and attitudes that make up the outlook of a society—the Greeks had begun to see culture and labor as separate and largely irreconcilable pursuits.

D. This is the origin of the distinction between high and low culture.

1. Weaving, quilting, folk music, and folk-dancing are the arts of working folk, while opera, ballet, and paintings

that go on exhibition are the creation of artists for people to look at or experience in their leisure time.

2. Why is it that Bach is more highly esteemed than banjo music? In part the answer lies in the fact that we have absorbed a notion of cultural value that esteems professional art but relegates folk art to the second rung.
3. We have inherited the belief that work pays for our leisure time. The paradox and the tragedy of classical civilization is that it created a magnificent culture, but that it was paid for by the work of slaves.

Suggested Reading

Finley, M.I. (1980) *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*. London.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the principal differences between ancient and modern forms of slavery?
2. To what degree should Aristotle's defense of slavery in the *Politics* be read as a response to what have been called the "logical contradictions" of slave-owning?

Lecture Twenty-Three
Athens in Decline?

Scope: In this lecture we survey the history of Greece during the fourth century. Sometimes dismissed as a less important age than the fifth century, it was, in fact, a time of important developments in art, philosophy, drama, and literature. We shall examine these changes by studying some of the leading figures of the century, including Plato, Xenophon, and Menander.

Towards the end of the fourth century, Greece would come under the domination of the Macedonian kings, and we will need to look at political developments. Was this the century in which the *polis* exhausted its potential as a social and political unit? Or did it remain a vigorous and dynamic community?

Outline

I. Power, Politics, and Hegemony

A. During the fourth century, the Greeks remained mired in an endless repetition of wars and broken alliances, lasting from the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404-403 until their collective defeat by Philip of Macedon at Chaeronea in 338. Traditional rivalries were fueled by Persian money, used to keep the Greeks fighting among themselves.

1. The Corinthian War (396-387 BC) was subsidized by Persian satraps, who paid for Greek states to revolt against Sparta.

2. Resentment against Sparta united former enemies and even allies who felt mistreated.

3. The war was concluded by the Peace of Antalcidas (387/6), the first example of a Common Peace available to all the Greek states.

B. Throughout the 380s Sparta continued to interfere in the affairs of neighboring states: towns were forced to tear down their walls, accept pro-Spartan exiles, or break up into villages. A Spartan army even seized the citadel of Thebes, a former ally. This period of Spartan hegemony culminated in two critical episodes in fourth-century history.

1. In 379/8 BC, the Athenians issued a call to all their current and former allies to resuscitate the Delian

League. Quickly, Athens resumed its position as the leading Aegean power.

2. In 371 BC, the Spartan army was defeated by the Thebans at Leuctra, after which Sparta was invaded and forced to set free the Messenian helots. Spartan power never recovered from this defeat.

C. Sparta's defeat coincided with the emergence of Thebes under Epaminondas as the most powerful Greek state.

1. As before, however, Thebes was not sufficiently powerful to dominate or unite the rest of the Greek states.
2. When in 364 the various states allied themselves against Thebes and brought her to battle at Mantinea, the result, in Xenophon's memorable phrase, "produced more confusion than there had been before."
3. The Greeks had finally fought themselves to a standstill, and in the 350 and 340s their continual disputes would be overshadowed by the emergence of a new player on the scene, Philip of Macedon.

II. Culture in a Time of Change

A. Politically, the first half of the fourth century presents a depressing picture of endless strife. And yet, viewed in other ways the very turbulence of the period is exciting, and there are developments in Greek cultural and political life that deserve more attention than they have traditionally received.

B. Greek philosophy reached new heights in the fourth century in the schools of Plato and Aristotle. Both produced many volumes of philosophy, covering topics as diverse as biology, political theory, ethics, and metaphysics. Western philosophy takes much of its strength and direction from these two men.

1. Plato, a student of Socrates, advocated the theory of forms, according to which the visible world is only a pale reflection of an ideal, perfect world. Platonic philosophy would later produce a strongly mystical Neo-Platonic tradition that influenced Christian mysticism.
2. Aristotle, the student of Plato, displays a more empirical tendency. He and his students proceeded deductively, collecting data on the weather, plants, animals, political constitutions, and so on, in order to develop theories concerning every aspect of experience.

C. In Greek prose we are fortunate to have the work of some men who were witnesses to, and participants in, many of the major political and military affairs of the day.

1. The Athenian gentleman Xenophon was not only a soldier but also a writer who developed many of the genres of prose that we now take for granted: history, biography, and political pamphlets, as well as instruction manuals on cavalry tactics, household management, and hunting.

2. Demosthenes and Aeschines were bitter political opponents, divided over the question of how to deal with Philip of Macedon. Their speeches represent the absolute pinnacle of ancient oratory, and they are invaluable sources for events in the period from 355 to 338 BC.

D. Greek art continued to explore the beauty of the human form. Among the sculptors of the age, Scopas and Lysippus showed the new interest in individuality and the inner soul. In the Hellenistic period, the last three centuries BC, artists would develop this much more fully, expressing anguish and uncertainty in their portraits, and not just the Olympian calm of earlier works of art.

E. Growing interest in the lives of ordinary men and women marks the fourth century. This is expressed in literature as well as in art.

1. Aristotle's student, Theophrastus, produced a series of character sketches: the Angry Man, the Superstitious Man, the Mean Man, and so forth. Although these are types, they arise from a fascination with personality and individuality that sees men as more than citizens and members of the *polis* or *oikos*.

2. The popular late fourth-century playwright Menander produced a style of drama called "New Comedy," which blended romance, comedy, and domestic situations. The backdrop for this theater was not the city, but the individual's family.

Suggested Reading

Davies, J.K. (1982) *Democracy and Classical Athens*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Questions to Consider

1. Why were the Greeks unable to find a way beyond the endless waves of wars that continued to engulf them during the fourth century?
2. In what ways do the visual and literary arts of the fourth century reflect a society undergoing rapid?

Lecture Twenty-Four
Philip, Alexander, and Greece in Transition

Scope: In our last lecture we will look at the careers of Philip and Alexander, and the end of Greek independence. Although the Greeks experimented with federalism in some forms during the fourth century, the system of classical city-states proved incapable of permanent unification. This allowed the emergence of a powerful monarchy in Macedonia that exploited the disunity of the Greek world.

Anxious to make their conquests legitimate, Philip and Alexander used the dream of Panhellenism to unite the Greeks against a common enemy—Persia. As a result, the Macedonian conquest of Greece itself became the prelude to the Greek conquest of Persia. That campaign, begun by Philip and triumphantly completed by his son, led to the creation of Graeco-Macedonian kingdoms stretching from Asia Minor to the Hindu Kush. Greek culture would take root across central Asia.

Outline

I. Philip II and Macedonian Expansion

A. Macedon is a land of inland mountains and valleys, and a broad fertile plain extending to the sea. It was a feudal territory, ruled by local barons whose loyalty depended on the strength of the king. Philip's early reign was taken up with border wars involving various northern tribes whom he pacified.

B. He was a pure opportunist, expanding wherever he found an opening. This expansion brought him into conflict with Athens, which regarded the northern Aegean as its own sphere of influence. Through a combination of shrewd negotiations and quick campaigns, he annexed all the territory as far as the Hellespont.

C. In the late 350s, he intervened in a civil war in Thessaly, the region between Macedon and southern Greece. He was appointed *tagos* or commander in chief of the Thessalians. The opportunity to move still further south came during the Sacred War (357-346 BC), fought over control of Delphi. In 350, he set out to liberate Delphi, but the Athenians blocked him at Thermopylae. For the time being he retreated.

II. From the Peace of Philocrates to Chaeronea

A. Athens was weakened at this time by the revolt of many of her allies. Unable to stop Philip militarily, the Athenians

sought peace. Again exploiting Athens' weaknesses through protracted negotiation and a lightning campaign, Philip succeeded in forcing the Athenians to sign the Peace of Philocrates (346 BC).

1. Athens abandoned her allies in central Greece.

2. Philip gained control of Delphi and, more importantly, easy access from the north to southern Greece.

B. Philip again withdrew to settle affairs in the north.

1. In 338 BC, he came south once more, but with the specific intention of conquering the rest of the peninsula.

2. At Chaeronea in 338 BC, the combined armies of Athens and Thebes were defeated by Philip, whose sixteen-year-old son, Alexander, commanded the Macedonian left-wing.

III. Panhellenism

A. Rather than present himself as a conqueror, Philip attempted to win support from the Greeks. Assembling the Greeks at Corinth, he declared the creation of a new League, designed once more to wage war on the Persians in revenge for the suffering of the Greeks in 480-479 BC. He himself would serve as captain-general of the League.

B. The idea of a crusade against Persia was not Philip's creation. Aside from the fifth century, more recent years had seen a reemergence of the idea. In particular, the influential Athenian orator, pamphleteer, and teacher Isocrates had promoted the idea of a panhellenism in which the Greeks would overcome their differences by engaging in a common campaign against Persia.

1. Philip was assassinated in 336, before he could undertake the Persian campaign.

2. At the time of his death, advance units of the Macedonian army had already secured a bridgehead into Asia.

IV. Alexander the Great and the Conquest of Persia

A. Alexander's youth left him with dreams of proving himself a new Achilles. His campaign against the Persians represents a combination of fulfilling his father's ambitions and his own.

1. Alexander was tutored by Aristotle and may have acquired from him the belief that all "orientals" were naturally inferior to the Greeks (including the Macedonians).

2. The example of Xenophon and the march upcountry of the Ten Thousand (401 BC) was powerful proof that Greek hoplites were more than a match for lighter-armed Persian troops.

B. Assuming his father's position as captain-general of the Greek forces, Alexander undertook a campaign that led to two quick defeats of the Persians, at the Granicus River in Asia Minor and at Issus in northern Syria.

1. Before continuing into Persia, Alexander marched south into Phoenicia and Egypt, securing his flank and rear before the final assault on Persia.

2. Greeted as the son of Zeus by the oracle at Siwah, Alexander began thinking of himself as much more than a Macedonian king or Greek captain.

3. Henceforth he styled himself "Lord of Asia" and began merging Greek and Persian styles of royal authority.

C. After defeating the Persian king, Darius, at Gaugamela, Alexander effectively took over as the Persian king. He continued marching east, conquering all territories as far as the Indus river, until his army refused to go on. Returning to Babylon, he died of fever in 323 BC.

III. A New World Order?

A. After Alexander's death, his generals spent the next thirty years carving up his empire. Eventually three great kingdoms would emerge: Antigonid Macedonia, Ptolemaic Egypt, and Seleucid Syria, as well as a host of smaller kingdoms, including the Greek kingdoms of Pergamus and Bactria.

B. The cultural impact of this expansion of Greek power is much debated.

1. In most areas it relied heavily on the creation of Greek-style cities, many of which survive until this day: e.g., Samarkhand, Khojend, Merv.

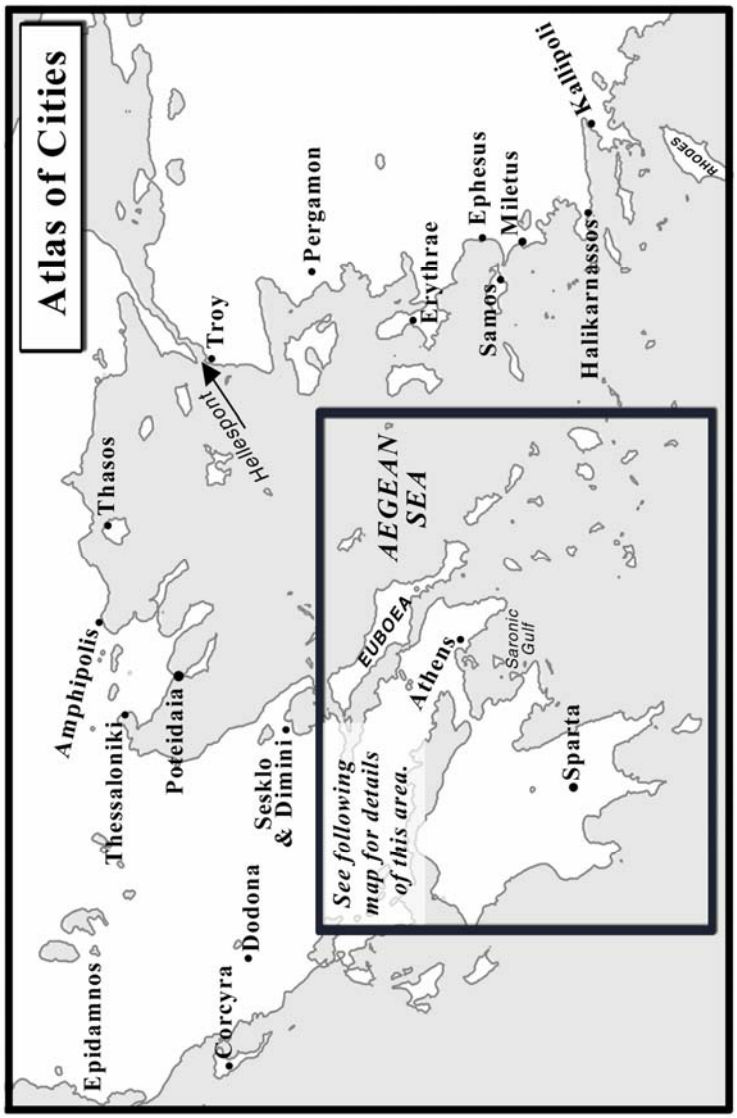
2. The most lasting influence was felt in those areas closest to the Mediterranean coast, where a sense of common Greek culture survived until the Arab conquest.
3. All these territories were annexed by Rome, but the distinction between a Latin west and a Greek east remained a part of the Roman empire and deeply influenced the course of history in both halves of the Mediterranean world.

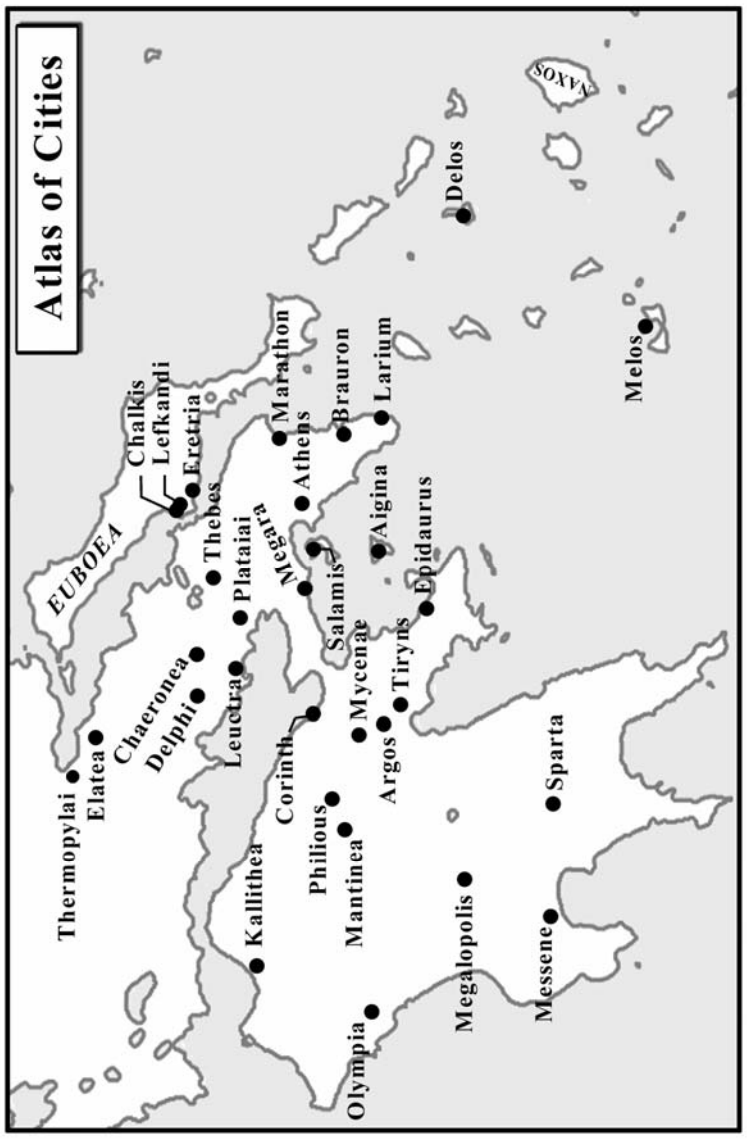
Suggested Reading

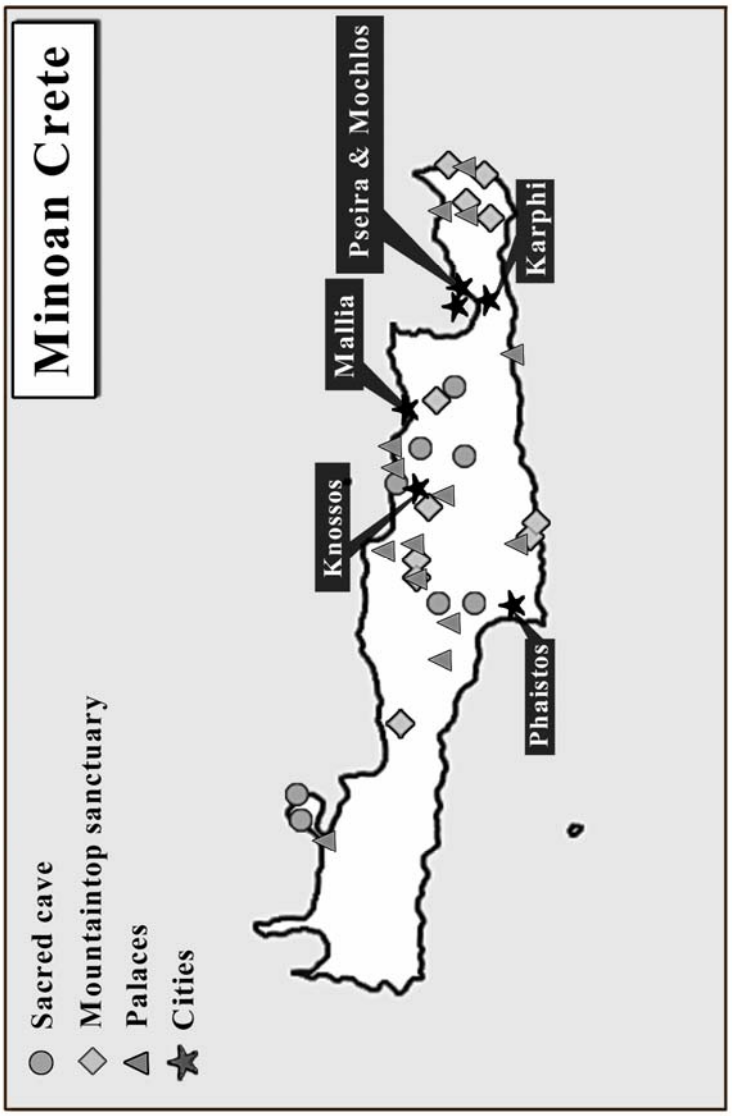
Green, P. (1990) *Alexander to Actium*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

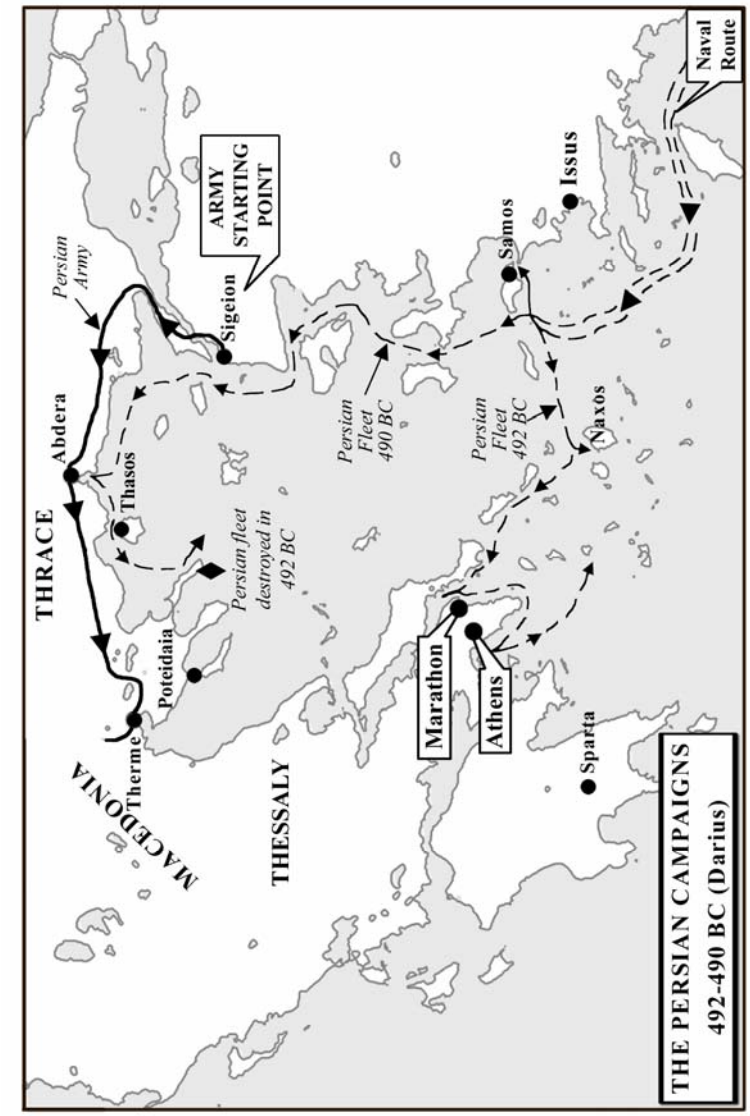
Questions to Consider

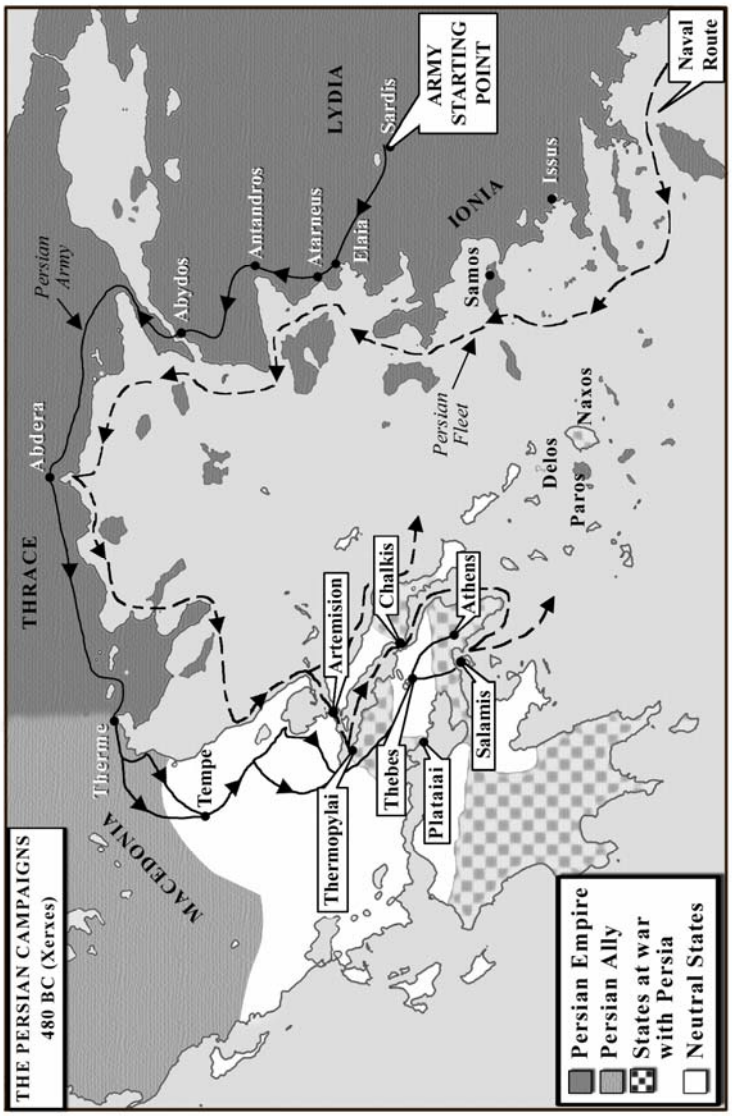
1. What, if any, were Philip's goals, beyond the conquest of as much territory as possible?
2. What evidence is there to support the notion that Alexander believed in the unity of all mankind?

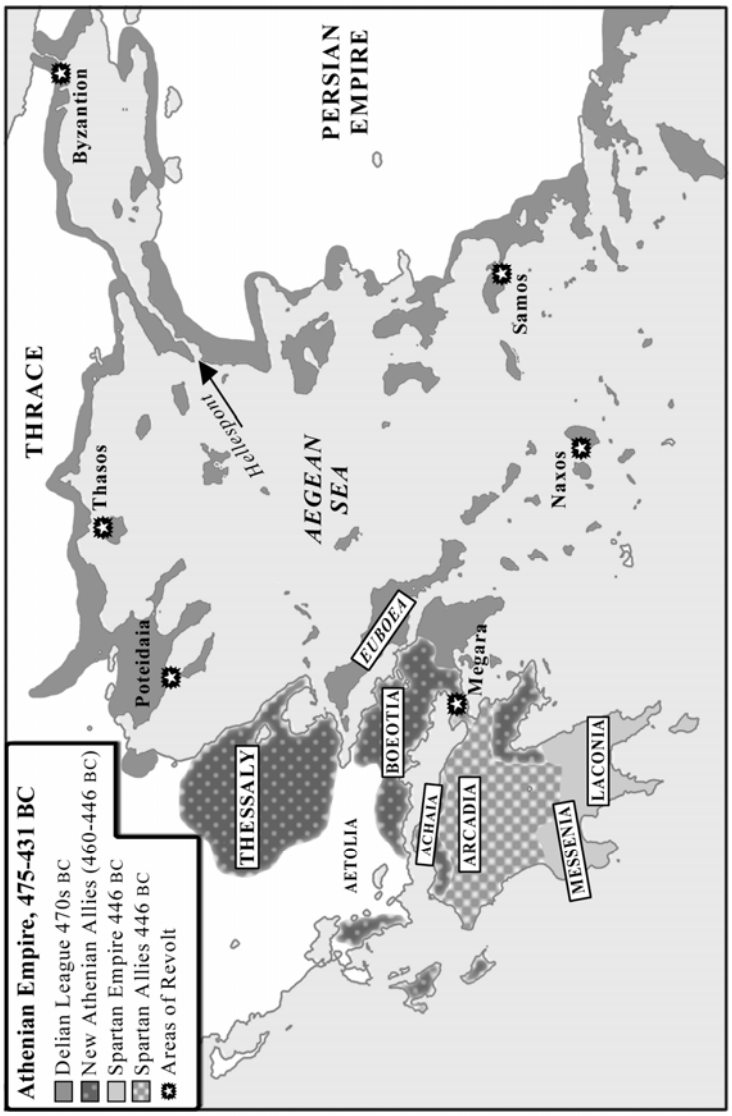


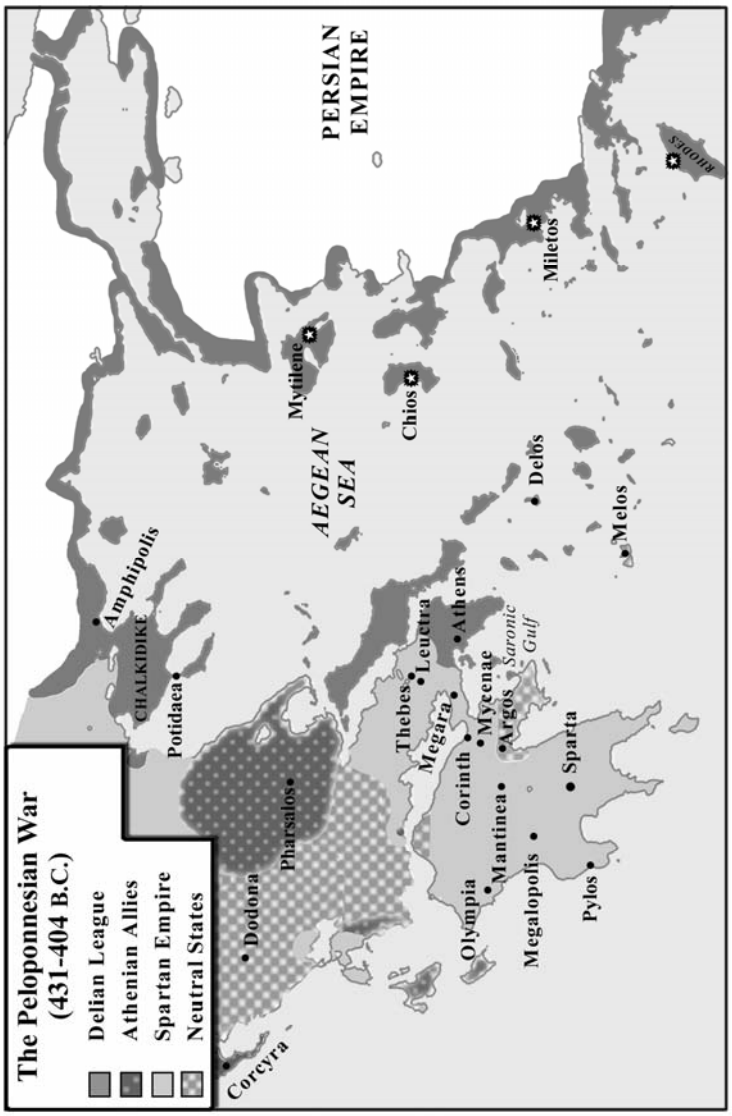


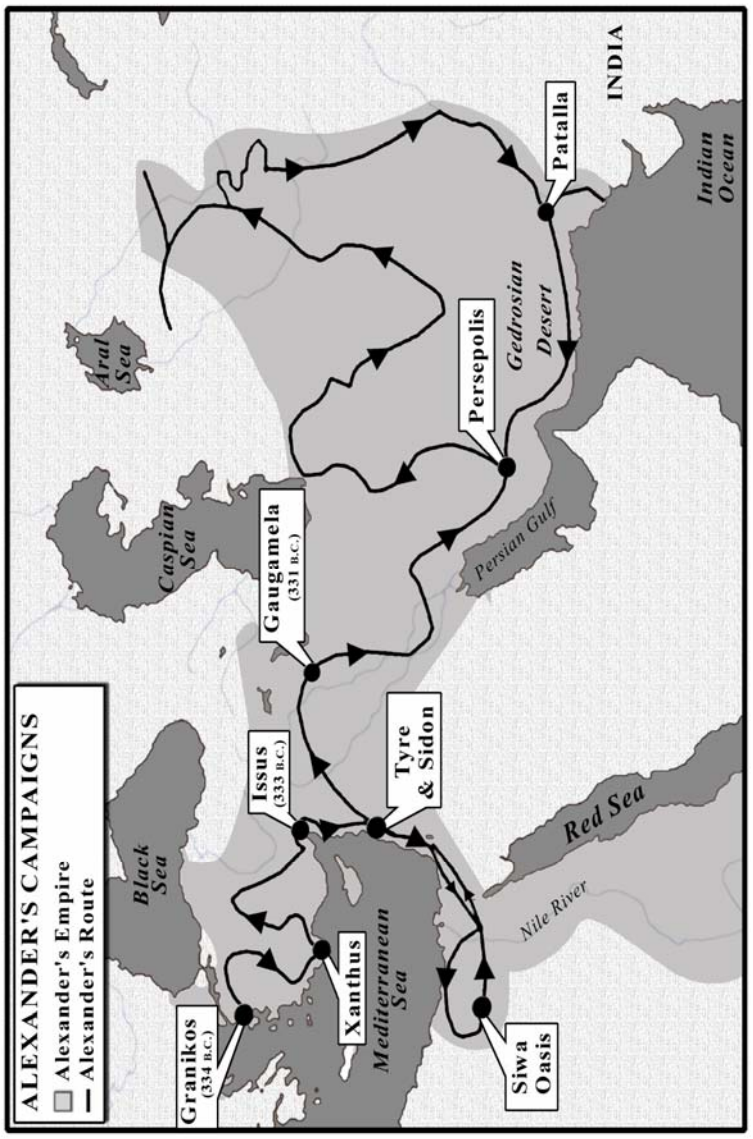












Ancient Greek Civilization

Time-Line

c. 6000-2800	Neolithic Period
c. 2300-1900	Early Helladic Period (mainland)
c. 1900-1600	Middle Helladic Period (mainland)
c. 1900-1700	First Palatial Period (Crete)
c. 1700-1450	Second Palatial period (Crete)
c. 1600-1100	Late Helladic Period (mainland); Mycenaean civilization
c. 1450-1375	Mycenaean occupation of Cnossus
c. 1100-1000	Sub-Mycenaean Period.
c. 1000-900	"Dark Ages," but signs of recovery at Lefkandi and Elateia
c. 900-700	Geometric Period
c. 800-700	Orientalizing Period
776	First Olympic Games
c. 750	Beginning of Greek colonization of Sicily, Italy, and the Black Sea
c. 725	Homer's poems written down
c. 700	Composition of Hesiod's poems
c. 650	Second Messenian War
594/3	Solon's archonship in Athens
561/0	Pisistratus' first attempt at tyranny
545-28/7	Pisistratus' tyranny at Athens
525	Cleisthenes' archonship
514	Assassination of Hipparchus, son of Pisistratus
510	Expulsion of Hippias, son of Pisistratus
508/7	Democratic reforms of Cleisthenes
490	Battle of Marathon
480	Battles of Thermopylae and Salamis
479	Battle of Plataea
478/7	Formation of the Delian League

472	First production of Aeschylus' *Persians*.
471	Ostracism of Themistocles
464-61	Earthquake in Sparta and ensuing Helot Revolt
462	Democratic reforms of Ephialtes; pay for jury service.
460-445	First Peloponnesian War
460-457	Construction of "Long Walls" from Athens to Piraeus
c. 454	Transfer of Delian League Treasury to Athens
449	Peace of Kallias (?)
447-438	Construction of the Parthenon
445	Thirty Years Peace between Athens and Sparta.
437-432	Construction of the Propylaea
431-404	Peloponnesian War
430/29	Plague in Athens; death of Pericles
421-408	Construction of the Erechtheum
415-413	Athenian invasion of Sicily
405	Battle of Aegispotami
404	Athens surrenders
404-403	Thirty Tyrants at Athens
399	Death of Socrates (born 469)
395-387	Corinthian War
386	Foundation of Plato's Academy
382	Sparta seizes Cadmeia, citadel of Thebes
378	Second Athenian Confederation founded
371	Thebes defeats Sparta at Leuctra; end of Spartan hegemony
362	Battle of Mantinea; end of Theban hegemony
359-336	Reign of Philip II of Macedon
347	Death of Plato (born 429)
338	Battle of Chaeronea; Philip conquers Greece
336-323	Reign of Alexander the Great

Biographical Notes

Alexander the Great: Son of Philip II and remembered for the Greek conquest of the Persian Empire before his sudden death in 323 BC.

Aristotle: Student of Plato and third of the great Greek philosophers, influential in a variety of areas, from ethics to biology.

Cimon: Leading politician in Athens in the generation after the Persian Wars.

Cleisthenes: Constitutional reformer whose innovations included the Council of 500, the ten tribes and system of demes and trittyes.

Cleon: the leading Athenian politician from c. 429 - 422 BC.

Cyrus the Great: Persian king who ruled from 558-530 BC, conquered the neighboring Medes and brought about the expansion of Persian power from Afghanistan to the Ionian coast.

Darius I: Persian king whose army was defeated at Marathon in 490 BC.

Darius III: Persian king defeated by Alexander the Great. The last Achaemenid king of Persia.

Dionysus: God of Ecstasy, known to the Greeks as the One who Binds and Releases. Tragedy was performed in his honor.

Evans, Sir Arthur: British excavator of Cnossus and proponent of the view that Minoan Crete had colonized the mainland, giving rise to Mycenaean civilization.

Hippias and Hipparchus: Sons of Pisistratus. Hippias ruled from 528/7 to 510 BC**.**

Isagoras: One of the leaders of the factional strife afflicting Athens from 510-508 BC. Isagoras was supported by the Spartans, but defeated by his rival, Cleisthenes.

Leonidas: Spartan king at the time of the Persian invasions, he died at Thermopylae (480 BC).

Lycurgus: Legendary law-giver of Sparta.

Menander: Popular late 4th century playwright whose New Comedy blended romance, comedy and domestic situations.

Nicias: Unwilling and unlucky Athenian commander during the Sicilian Expedition (415-13 BC).

Pisistratus: Sixth century tyrant of Athens, responsible for unifying the Athenians and encouraging prosperity.

Pericles: Leading Athenian politician and general from c. 450 - 429 BC.

Philip II: King of Macedon, 359-336 BC, and responsible for the unification of Macedon, its expansion and the conquest of southern Greece.

Plato: Student of Socrates and perhaps the most influential of the Greek philosophers, especially associated with the theory of forms.

Protagoras: Best known of the sophists, he advocated a form of agnosticism.

Schliemann, Heinrich: German excavator whose work on Ithaca and at Troy and Mycenae constituted the first major excavations of the Aegean Bronze Age.

Socrates: Provocative Athenian philosopher who was executed in 399 BC on charges of impiety and corrupting the youth of Athens.

Solon: Athenian lawgiver responsible for wide-ranging political and economic reforms.

Themistocles: Athenian leader at the time of the Persian invasions, he was remembered for convincing the Greeks to stay and fight at Salamis.

Xenophon: Athenian gentleman, soldier, and writer whose literary works included history, biography, and political pamphlets, as well as instruction manuals on cavalry tactics, hunting and household management.

Xerxes: Persian king whose invasion of Greece in 480-79 BC was defeated at Salamis and Plataea.

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