

Ancient Greece



3 Major Periods of Ancient Greece Civilizations

1. Early Civilizations: Minoans (Crete) and Mycenae (mi se ne)
2. Classical Greece (flourishing of arts, literature, philosophy; domination by Sparta and Athens)
3. Hellenistic Age: Macedonia Empire and Alexander the Great

What are the characteristics of Ancient Greece's geography?



Geographic Features

1. Sea: heavy influence on physical environment of Greece (Aegean Sea, Ionian Sea)
2. Mountains (with narrow valleys): cover more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of Greece's surface area and islands: more than 2000 islands (Crete being the largest)
3. No major rivers on Greek mainland but fertile soil
4. Climate: winter= mild climate; summer= hot climate with rainfall from October to March = long growing season

Resources and Crops

RESOURCES

- grain
- fine cheese made of goat's milk
- timber
- wild game
- wool of sheep = cloth

MOST IMPORTANT CROPS

- olives = oil
- grapes = wine
- grain
- clay = pottery

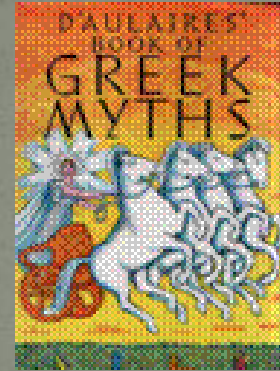
Effects of Geography

- Seafaring tradition: reliance on navy and fleets for power and protection
- Sea provided link to trade and cultural exchange with Mediterranean communities
- Isolationism: protection but lack of effective communication
- Greece was organized into polis (independent city states) separated by seas and rugged mountains
- Emergence of dominant city states (Athens, Sparta)

Greek Myths

FUNCTIONS

- Explained the world
- Means of Exploration
- Provided authority and legitimacy
- Entertainment



Early Greeks: The Minoans

c. 3200 -1100 BCE

- Lived on island of Crete
- Great navigators and farmers
- Palace led political, social and economic organization at Knossos
- Artistic expressions and grand construction
- Advancements in bronze
- Built sanctuaries



Minoan Culture

- Art work (drawings, murals or frescoes) at Knossos shows dangerous sports such as leaping over the backs of charging bulls as well as dancing, athletics, and festivals



Myth of the Minotaur



- Minoan Myth of King Minos at Knossos
- Theseus defeats the Minotaur (half man half bull) and escapes from the maze like structure called the labyrinth, saving the youth of Athens

THEORIES FOR DECLINE OF MINOANS

- 1750 BCE- earthquake destroys Minoan palaces
- 1628 BCE- volcano erupts at Thera
- 1400 BCE- War between Minoans and Myceneans led to decline of power



Enter the Mycenaeans

c. 1700 – 600 BCE

- 1490 BCE- Minoan palaces had been rebuilt however all were destroyed except at Knossos by Mycenaean warriors
- Mycenaeans took control of Crete at Knossos by 1500 BCE
- Mycenaeans controlled mainland Greece = main political centre was Mycenae
- More interested in war as pottery and grave sites reflect hunting, weapons, armour and war as well as fortified palace walls
- Slowly Minoan culture and traditions disappeared



THEORIES FOR DECLINE OF MYCEANEANS

- Shift in climate leading to drought forcing Myceanans to migrate to more fertile lands
- Tribe of nomadic warriors from north of Greece (Dorians) destroyed Mycenaeanans

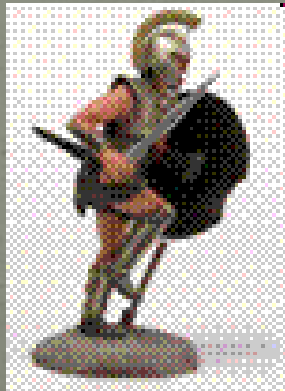
Trojan War

- *Was the Trojan War a real historical event or merely a legend in Mycenaean history?*



Trojan War

- Two epic poems by Homer “Iliad” and “Odyssey” describe the Trojan War
- Approximately 1194-1184 BCE
- Greeks vs Troy
- Helen of Sparta + Paris of Troy “the face that launched a thousand ships”
- Achilles, Odysseus, Hector, Agamemnon and the Trojan Horse
 - Archaeologist- Heinrich Schliemann (claims that he found Troy and the early Greek civilization of Mycenaean)

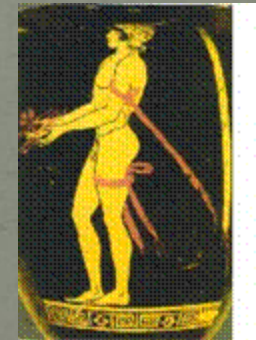


Archaic Period

750 – 500 BCE

Significant events

- 1) national literature (Homer)
- 2) resurgence of trade
- 3) colonization of Sicily and Italy
- 4) [Olympic Games](#) -776 BCE
- 5) Stone sculptures of human figures
- 6) rise of city states (polis)



Classical Greece (500 – 336 BCE)

- Polis (city states) = all had its own form of government, laws and money (Corinth, Thebes, Athens, Sparta)
- Dominance of Athens as political power (Delian League)
- Construction of Parthenon and Acropolis
- Full development of democracy under Pericles of Athens
- Classical age of Greece produced great literature, poetry, philosophy, drama, philosophical thinkers and art

Amphitheatre



Athenian Democracy

“Demos” = people; “kratos” = rule

- Monarchy and Kings
- Rise in power of aristocracy & oligarchy
- Hoplites c. 675-650 BCE
- Age of tyrants
- Democratic Reforms by Solon and Cleisthenes
= Three Pillars of Athenians Democracy:
 1. Council of 500
 2. Assembly
 3. Courts
- Athens lived under a radically democratic government from 508 until 322 BCE. The People governed themselves, debating and voting individually on issues great and small, from matters of war and peace to the proper qualifications for ferry-boat captains

How effective was Athenian Democracy?

- Ancient Athens is often referred to as the cradle of democracy
- Democracy flourished during the Golden Age of Athens (4th Century BCE) under Pericles Direct Democracy= All the male citizens would gather, discussed the issues, and then voted on them.
- However, Athenian democracy was flawed. Only male citizens were allowed to take part in running the government (made up approx. 10% of population). Women, slaves, and foreigners were excluded from public affairs. The policy of ostracism also created some instability as the Assembly could exile a speaker / leader by vote if they feel they are too powerful

Daily Life in Athens

MEN

- Only men could be citizens; men ran government
- Advancements in culture, thinking, literature, philosophy, wealth, expansion, trade
- Reliance on slaves and women opened up free time for men to discuss philosophy and participate in politics

WOMEN

- Women could not vote, hold office or own property and did mostly household duties
- Education involved spinning, weaving and domestic arts
- At 15 years old, girls were considered ready for marriage

SLAVES

- •Ratio of slaves to free men was quite high as historians estimate that as much as 40% of people in Athens area were slaves
- Slaves were household servants; had few rights; some could gain freedom from generous owners

Spartan Government:

Democratic Timocratic Monarchial Oligarchy

- Government ruled by a Council= made up of 2 kings (aristocracy) and 28 nobles (over age of 60) who made most political decisions and foreign policy and was supreme criminal court
- Assembly of the Spartiate (democracy)- Spartan males over the age of 30 who could veto and approve decisions made by Kings and Council
- 5 Ephors (oligarchy)- led the council, ran the military and educational system and could veto any ruling made by the Council or Assembly
- Spartan government was considered one of the most stable in all of Ancient Greece = led to a warrior and military state (state above individual)
- Aries- God of war was a patron god of the city, of wars, battles, and warriors, and also of fearlessness in battle.



Daily Life in Sparta

MEN

- At 30 men became citizens and could vote in Assembly, marry, own a house
- Educated in reading, fitness and use of weapons
- Boys started military training at the age of 7; joined military at age of 20; end of military service at the age of 60
- Soldiers given land which was farmed by the helots

WOMEN

- Girls taught reading and writing
- Participated in running and wrestling, foot races, staged battles
- Wives of Spartan soldiers supervised farms
- Expected and driven to produce strong and healthy children and be loyal to the state
- Spartan women could own and control property but held no political rights

SLAVES

- Slaves were called helots (agricultural slaves / peasants) made up 2/3 of population = defeated Messenian peoples
- Attempted revolt in 640 BCE but was crushed (this forced Sparta to create a stronger army)

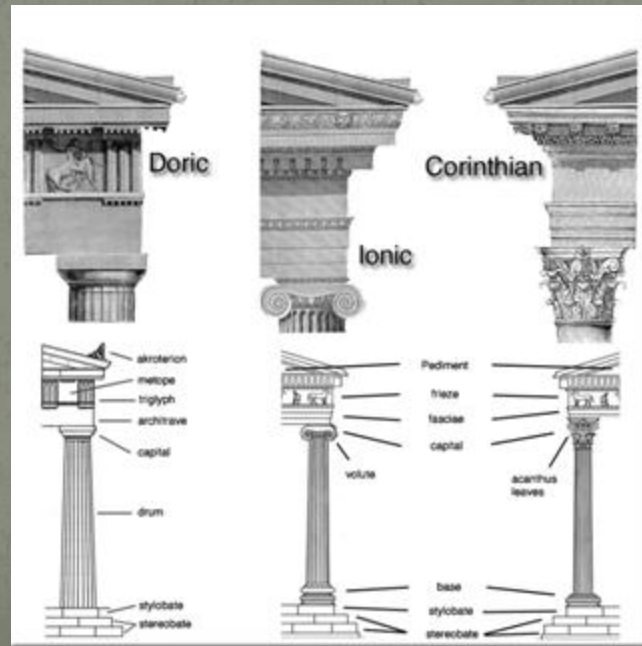
Greek Architecture

- Parthenon
- Acropolis
- Statue of Athena
- Public buildings
- Columns
- Marble
- Frieze



Greek Columns

- Greeks developed three different orders
- Doric & Ionic = 6th century BCE
- Corinthian= 5th century BCE and was further developed and used by Romans



Greek Art

- First to use 3-D on a flat surface by using different shades to give illusion of depth
- Focus on the concept of the “ideal” (beautiful, life like youthful, calm expression)
- Depictions of gods
- Statues of nude forms (detailed and proportional)
- Emphasis on elaborating on existing styles
- Money devoted to building theatres, stadiums, gymnasiums, tombs

Greek Philosophers and Thinkers

- Philosophers: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle
- Establishment of philosophical schools that examine issues such as true knowledge, the soul, love, beauty and scientific learning
- Logical thinking, rhetoric, politics
- Playwrights: Sophocles, Euripides, Aeschylus
- Other: Hippocrates, Epicurus, Archimedes, Pythagoras



Hellenistic Era: Greece

- Period between conquest of Persian Empire by Alexander the Great to establishment of Roman supremacy
- The word, Hellenistic, is derived from the word, Hellene, which was the Greek word for the Greeks. The Hellenistic age "hellenized" the world
- Spread of Greek culture and language throughout Near East, Mediterranean and Asia Minor
- Exported Greek culture: architecture, politics, law, literature, philosophy, religion, and art as models of perfection

Trade and Coinage



- Most important crops: olive and grapes
- Items traded: olive oil, wine, silver, white marble, pottery, furniture, jewelry, textiles for grain, glass, ivory, timber
- Trade by barter system
- Coinage emerged from metallurgy that was weighed
- 8th and 7th century BCE, silver pieces were stamped by government
- First mints 7th BCE in Lydia
- By 5th century BCE, most common coinage in Mediterranean was Athens coin with owl on one side and Athena on other

Legacies of Greece

- City states (polis)
- Thought & Philosophy
- Greek Language
- Politics
- Democracy
- Great Thinkers
- Art and architecture
- Myths and literature

