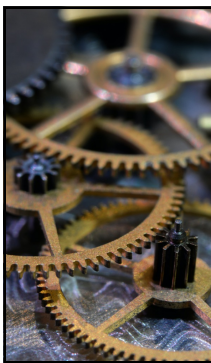




Wars of the Greeks

Civilizations of the Ancient World | Meeting #18

1



Upcoming Dates

- Monday, April 27
Clouds Essay Due
- Monday, May 18
Images Essay Due
- Sunday, April 19
Responses for Week 11 Due

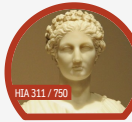
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Fall 2026 courses in Ancient History



History of Ancient Greece

The unfolding and culmination of civilization in Greece, through key transformations of Greek culture and city-states from the Bronze Age up through the Hellenization of the east.
Thurs 9:00-9:45 p.m.
Prof. Wilson 3 credits W/Res Intensive



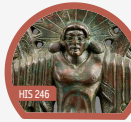
Women in Antiquity

Examination of the image, role, and status of women in Ancient Greek, Ancient Roman, and other societies as seen through the important literary works of antiquity.
Tues 6:00-6:45 p.m.
Prof. Wilson 3 credits W/Res Intensive



Classical Myth and Society

A comparison of the origins and development of classical mythology and heroic legend as religious beliefs, their relation to other mythologies, and their adaptation in literature and art from Mesopotamian and Homer through the present.
Fri 12:15-1:00 p.m. (DYN) 3 credits W/Res Intensive



Civilizations of the Ancient World

A survey of the Mediterranean world, tracing the development of civilization from Mesopotamia and Egypt to ancient Greek, City-States and the dominion of Rome.
Tues 9:00-9:45 p.m.
Prof. Wilson 3 credits

3

Four things today

- Clouds
- The Persian Threat
- The undeclared war
- The Peloponnesian War

4



5

Quiz #8 | Wars Between the Greeks

- Pericles's strategy for dealing with the Spartan threat to Athens was to
 - march out and fearlessly fight the Spartan army
 - evacuate the farmers and bring everyone within the city walls
 - sail to Sparta and attack the city
 - surrender and hope for the best
- People who taught the skill of arguing a question from any or all positions, as part of the art of rhetoric, in classical Athens were called
 - sapient
 - solons
 - socialites
 - sophists
- Sparta's victory over Athens was made possible by all of the following [EXCEPT](#):
 - Sparta's deal with India for naval assistance
 - the devastating effects of plague in Athens
 - The crippling losses from Athens's expedition to Syracuse
 - The defection of an Athenian general, Alcibiades, to Sparta after accusations of religious desecration
- The aftermath of the Peloponnesian War included
 - Athens and its empire rising stronger than ever
 - the Persians reconquering Greek lands in Ionia
 - decades of peace allowing the Greeks to recover
 - the philosopher Socrates being hailed as a hero of Athenian cultural achievement
- Famous tragic or comic plays from classical Athens include all of the following [EXCEPT](#):
 - Lysistrata by Aristophanes, about the women of Greece denying their husbands sex until they stop the war
 - The Orestes by Aeschylus, about Orestes seeking revenge for the murder of Agamemnon by his wife
 - Medea by Euripides, about a sorceress who gets even with her cheating husband, Jason, by killing her children
 - Helian by Thucydides, about the murder of fellow historian Herodotus by a vengeful noble

Extra Credit:

EC: In your opinion, why did Sparta and Athens really go to war with each other in the Peloponnesian War?

6



7



8




The debate

- Famous turning point in *Clouds*
 - Rewritten to be more emphatic
- Scathing indictment
 - of sophists (who teach people to speak falsely)
 - of philosophers like Socrates (who teach people to abandon tradition and the gods)
- Different tactics
 - Just Argument uses logic and expected beliefs
 - Unjust Argument uses attacks and emotional response
- Unjust Argument wins
 - Declares the Athenians to be already morally corrupted
 - Just Argument: "I can't argue with that"

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The Persian Threat


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Darius and Xerxes

- Systems and institutions, not personal rule
 - Civil service
 - Infrastructure
- Continuity and stability across reigns

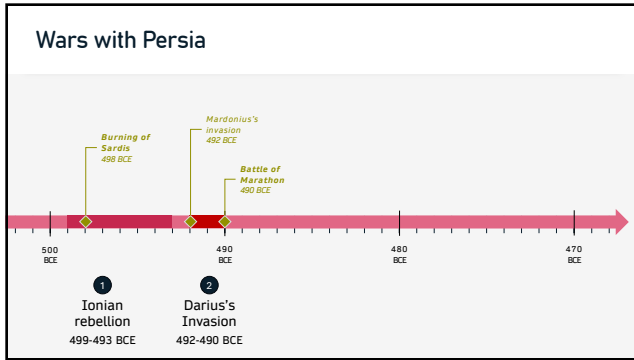
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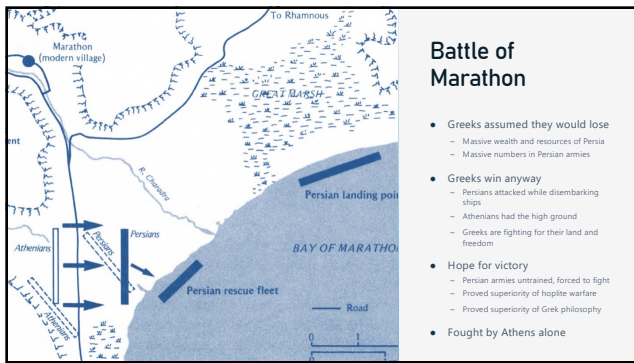
Vassals and satraps

- Satraps = provincial governors
- Means of preventing oppression
- Other powers in a satrapy
 - Garrison commander
 - King's eyes

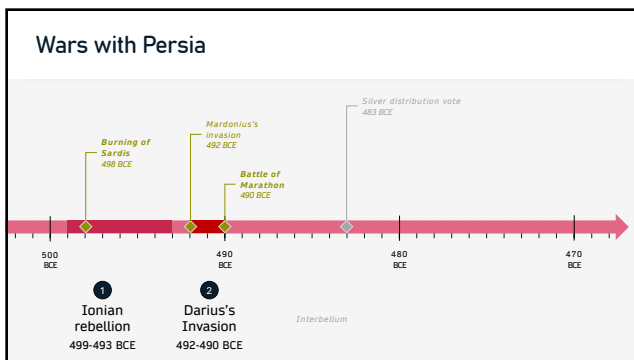
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Themistocles

- Knows Persia will invade again
- Silver windfall enriches Athens
- Themistocles persuades voters to invest in 200 ships of war

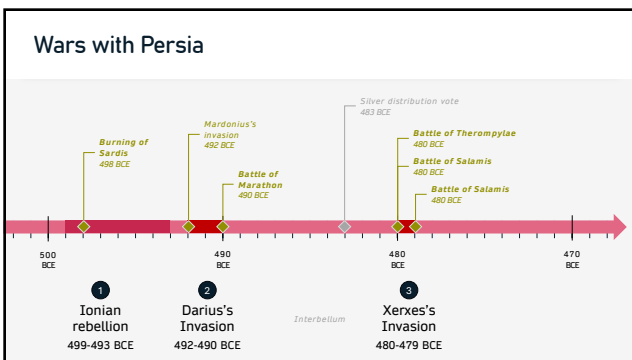
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Triremes

- Huge innovation in naval warfare
- Naval battles rely on ramming to destroy enemy vessels
- Triremes faster and more nimble
- 30 rows of oars
 - Muscle power of 180 men
 - Secret high-tension cables to brace ship when ramming

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 A black and white illustration of the Battle of Salamis. It depicts several ancient Greek triremes (galley ships) with their distinctive three masts and oars, engaged in combat. The ships are crowded together in the narrow waters of the Saronic Gulf.

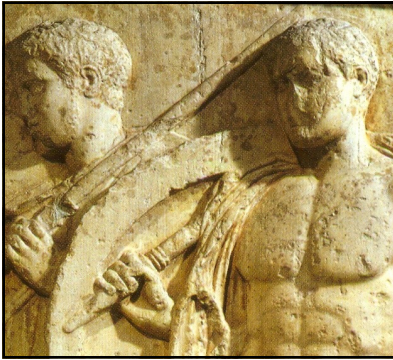
Battle of Salamis

- Athens has the advantage
 - Persians outsource navy to Phoenicians
 - Athenians superior in naval strategy
 - Newer ships
- Persian navy tricked into ambush
- Athens now a viable rival with Sparta for leadership of the Greeks

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Wars Between the Greeks

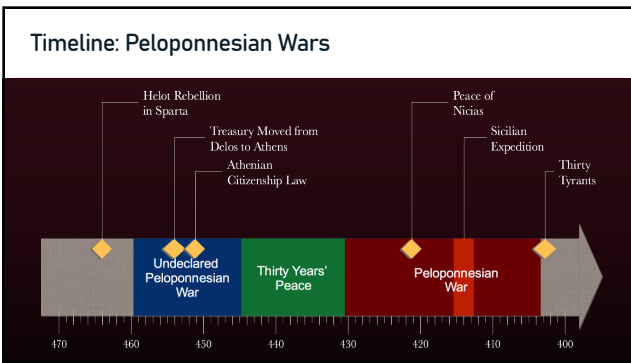
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The Peloponnesian Wars

- Two or three wars
- Several parallel conflicts
- The name of the war

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The Undeclared War

- Sparta dragged into war by Corinth
- Athens could have sued for peace
- Instead overextends itself in Egypt

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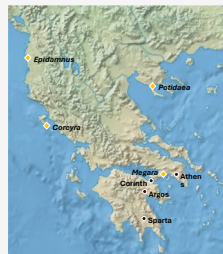
The Thirty Years' Peace

- Neither side interferes with allies of the other
- Neutrals free to join either side
- Arbitration of disagreements
- No one can switch sides
- Sparta and Athens can use force within their alliances

25

Breakdown of the Peace

- Epidamnus and Corcyra
- Potidaean Ultimatum
- Megaran Decrees



26



Corinth appeals to Sparta

- Corinth is allied with Sparta
- Corinth declares war
- Demands Sparta join them in doing so
- Sparta reluctant

27

Strengths and weaknesses



Athens and allies

- Wealth
- Undisputed advantage at sea
 - Number and quality of ships
 - Training



Sparta and allies

- Undisputed advantage in infantry
 - Number and quality of troops
 - Training

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Perikles's strategy

- Sparta has the advantage on land
- Athens can't be besieged (because of the Long Walls)
- Bring everyone inside the walls of Athens

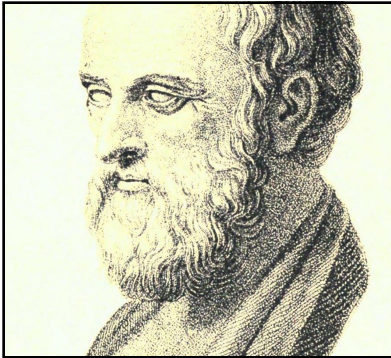
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The Plague at Athens

- Ancient cities are not meant to hold large populations
- Human and animal waste, no major river
- Killed ~75,000 to 100,000 people, ~25% of the population
- Economic and military disaster
 - Massive loss of manpower for war and labor
 - Many key figures killed including Pericles
 - Disillusionment with the gods and morality
 - Population polarized over the war


30



Peace of Nicias

- Kleon and Brasidas both die
- Nicias leads pro-peace faction
- Nicias arranges a truce
 - Athenians give up captured bases
 - Sparta gives up Athenian ex-allies
 - Megara and Corinth reject treaty


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Alkibiades

- Popular and sexy
- Leader of the faction demanding defeat of Sparta
- Proposes bold expansion of war to Sicily
- Violation of the herms


32



The Sicilian Expedition

- Expedition to create a second front in Sicily
 - 200 triremes
 - ~15,000 troops
- Disastrous leadership
- Disastrous tactics
- Troops and ships all lost


33



Decelea

- Alkibiades defects to Sparta
- Advises creation of permanent Spartan base in Attica
- Minor part of Sparta's end game to win war

34



Battle of Aegospotami

- Athens must be defeated by sea
- Sparta must hire a navy
- Persia agrees...
- ...in exchange for Ionia and Caria

35



Post-war Athens

- Abolition of democracy
- Thirty Tyrants
- Damage to Athens
 - Loss of many men and women
 - Rancor and disillusionment
 - Huge economic cost and loss of resources
- Trial of Socrates

36



Fourth Century Crisis

- Peloponnesian War solves nothing
- Followed by more decades of war

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