

The Persian Menace

Civilizations of the Ancient World | Meeting #17

1

Four things today

- *Clouds*
- Athenian transformation
- Democratic Athens
- The Persian Threat

2

Questions about whatever



3



The middle part of Clouds

- "Socrates" and the gods
- Hens and roosters
- The chorus

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Clouds essay

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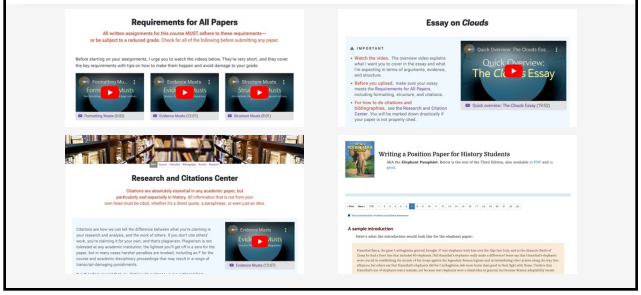


The Clouds Essay

- Goal: Use *Clouds* and one other work to say something about Athens and its culture
- Choice of three topics
- Make an argument (thesis)
- Choose three key moments that illustrate your thesis
- Compare to similar moments in another work from another work from ancient Athens

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Guidance and resources



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Clouds essay options

Choose your topic from one of the three prompts below.

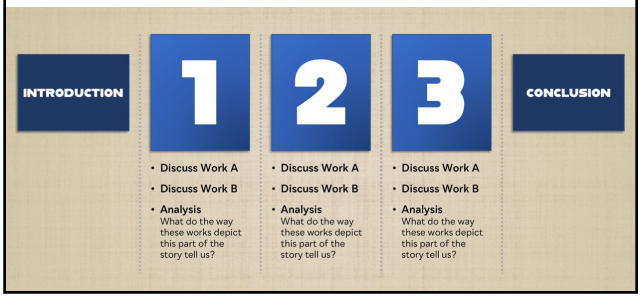
Option A	Option B	Option C
Right and wrong in *Clouds*. *Clouds* emphasizes traditional values throughout the play and then ends with violence. Does *Clouds* offer an internally inconsistent message on morality?	**Aristophanes's agenda.** The surviving plays of Aristophanes range over a long and turbulent period of Athenian history. Do Aristophanes's opinions and technique change over time?	**Socrates vs. Socrates.** The "Socrates" found in Aristophanes's *Clouds* is a deliberate distortion driven by a desire to discredit the real Socrates. What does this version of Socrates have in common with the one depicted in works by Socrates's student, Plato?

Choose a second work to compare with Clouds.

Popular options include: • *Medea* by Euripides; • *Elektra* by Euripides or Sophocles; and • *Antigone* by Sophocles. • There are other possibilities as well.	Popular options include: • *Frogs*, mounted in 405 BCE, 11 years after the revised version of *Clouds*; • *Birds*, mounted in 414; and • *Wealth*, mounted in 388.	Possibilities include: • *Phaedo*, which has Socrates discussing life and afterlife on the brink of his execution; • *Apology*, a version of Socrates's self-defense against charges of irreligion; or • any of the other dialogs that focus on how Plato wanted to show Socrates's methods and beliefs.

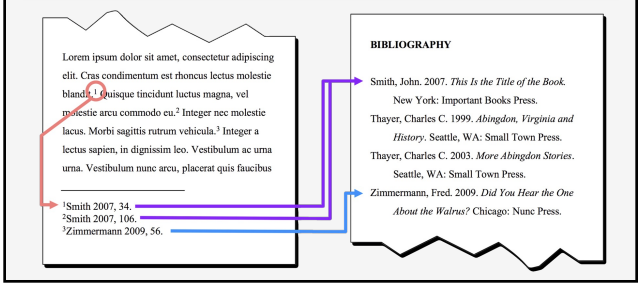
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Structure of the Clouds essay



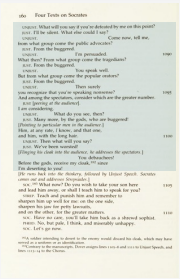
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Citations and bibliography



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Citing a play or poem



Footnote or parenthetical citation:

Clouds, lines 1087–1104

Bibliography:

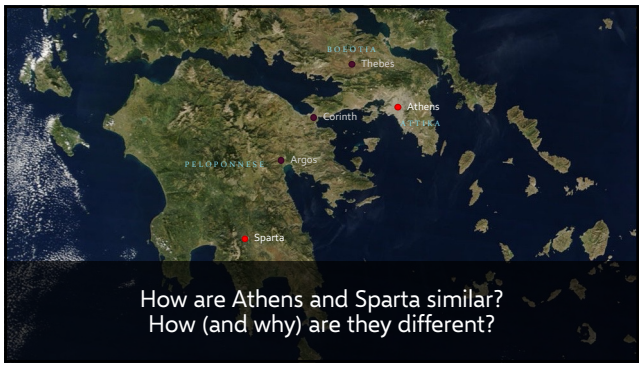
West, Thomas G., Grace Starry West, Plato, and Aristophanes. Four Texts on Socrates: Plato's Euthyphro, Apology, and Crito, and Aristophanes' Clouds (Rev. ed). Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.



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Athens and the art of society

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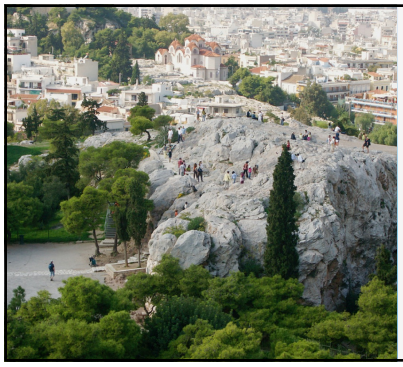
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Attica

- Athens is not just the city-state
- Local identities vs. unified identity
- Urban vs. rural
- Distance

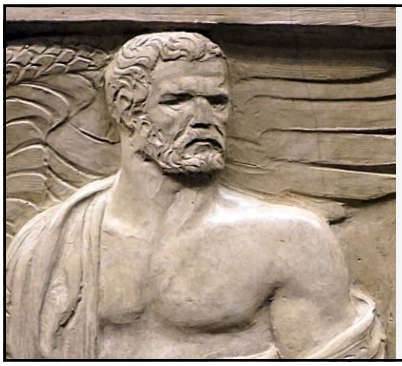
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Eupatrids

- Early Athens was an oligarchy
- Eupatrids = 'good families'
- Controlled Athenian government
  - Only eupatrids ran for archon
  - Council was made up of ex-archons

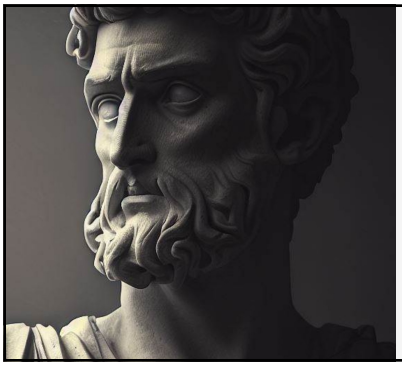
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Draco: Draconian laws

- Strict, publicly known law code
- Often involves disputes between citizens
  - In the past handled privately
  - Now a matter of public concern
- Shared rather than local identity
- Consistency of justice
  - Citizens know what to expect
  - Judges can't decide arbitrarily
  - Faith in central authority

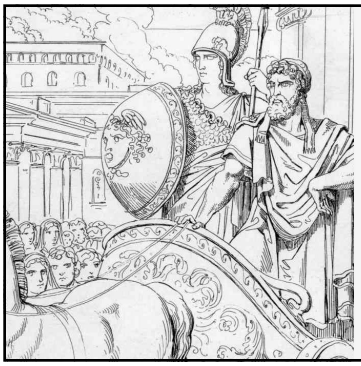
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Solon: wealth, not blood

- Trusted by nobles and masses
- Enacts many economic and political reforms
- Eligibility for voting and office by wealth rather than blood
- Athens as a trading culture
  - Transactions represent change
  - Accumulation of wealth indicates skill and acumen
  - Social mobility valuable for bringing new ideas

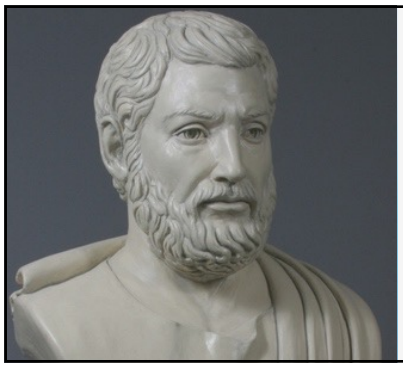
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Peisistratos

- Champion of the people
  - Men of the Plain: large landowners
  - Men of the Coast: fishermen and craftsmen.
  - Men of the Hill
    - poorer residents of Attic highlands
    - cities of Attica
- Formalized unification of Attica
- Took power, was forced out, took power again
- Rode into Athens in a chariot with Athena at his side

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Kleisthenes

- Reformers came to power after a failed pro-noble coup
- Established radical democracy
  - Tribes repopulated to include citizens from across Attica
  - Council chosen by lot from a pool of eligible citizens

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Athens and democracy

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Athenian Democracy

- Citizen Assembly — ekklesia
  - Quorum of 6,000
  - Legislation, election, decrees, trials
- Council of 500 — boulē
  - Prepares measures for the Assembly
  - Executes will of Assembly (administration)
  - Chosen by lot
- Archons — archontes
  - Chosen by lot
- Military magistrates — strategoi
  - Elected by Assembly

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What are the problems with democracy?

- Burden on voters
  - Travel required
  - Free time required
- Faction
- Demagoguery
- Tyranny of the Majority
- Ostracism

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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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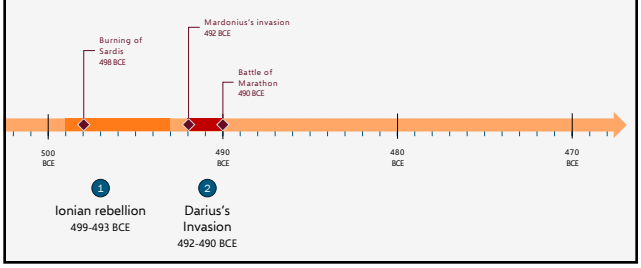


Vassals and satraps

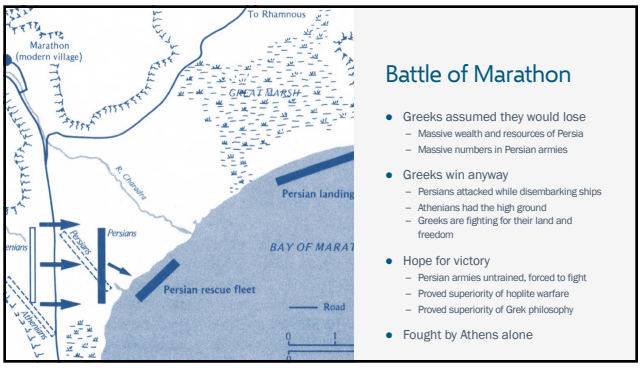
- Satraps = provincial governors
- Means of preventing oppression
- Other powers in a satrapy
  - Garrison commander
  - King's eyes

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Wars with Persia



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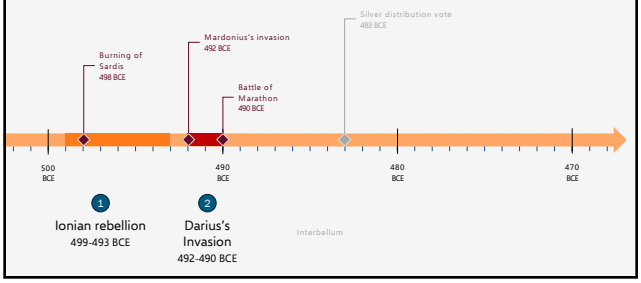


Battle of Marathon

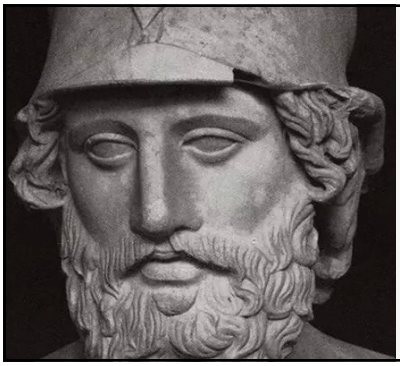
- Greeks assumed they would lose
  - Massive wealth and resources of Persia
  - Massive numbers in Persian armies
- Greeks win anyway
  - Persians attacked while disembarking ships
  - Athenians had the high ground
  - Greeks are fighting for their land and freedom
- Hope for victory
  - Persian armies untrained, forced to fight
  - Proved superiority of hoplite warfare
  - Proved superiority of Grek philosophy
- Fought by Athens alone

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Wars with Persia



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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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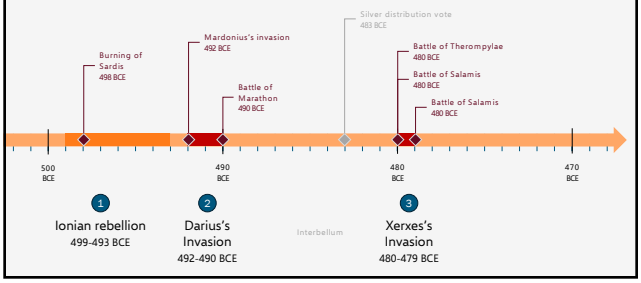


Triremes

- 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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Wars with Persia



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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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