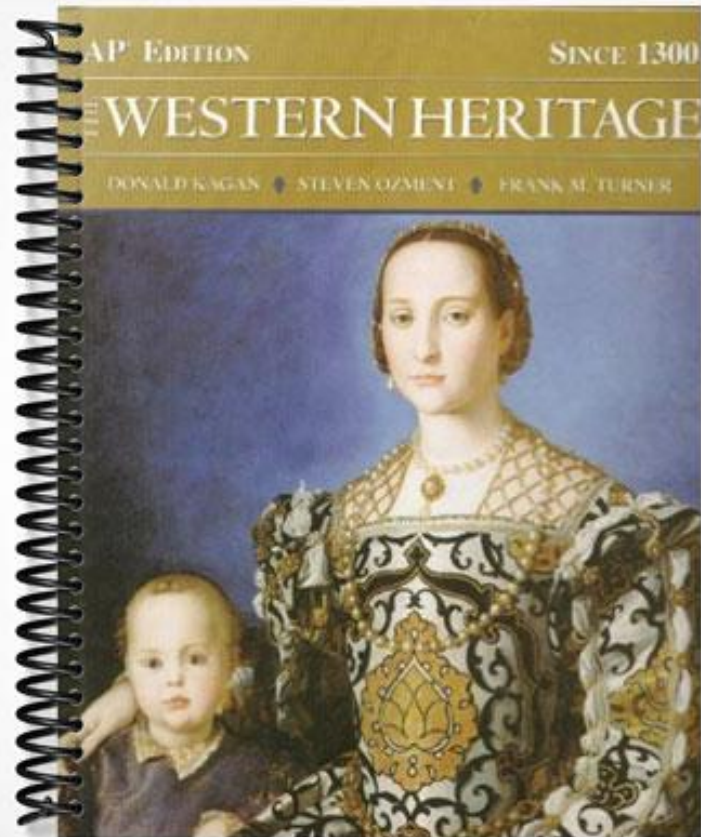


TEST BANK



CHAPTER 2 - THE RISE OF GREEK CIVILIZATION

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter begins by stressing the importance of the ancient Greeks to the history of Western Civilization. Although Greek civilization was centered in the lands surrounding the Aegean Sea, the Greeks spread their culture throughout the Mediterranean area and even into the Black Sea region, coming into contact with the older civilizations of the Near East.

For Greek civilization, the Bronze Age (2900–1150 B.C.E.) was centered in two regions: on the island of Crete and on the mainland of Greece itself. The people of Crete were not Greek, but had a great influence on early Greece. Our knowledge of civilization on Crete (labeled Minoan by its primary excavator Sir Arthur Evans) depends primarily on archaeological evidence obtained at Cnossus and a few other sites in central and eastern Crete. The palace complex at Cnossus is an intricate structure, labyrinthine in nature, but without defensive walls. The evidence reveals a secure, optimistic society whose gaily painted pottery was widely admired and exported.

Three distinct kinds of writing, preserved on clay tablets, have added to our knowledge of Minoan civilization. Most important are Linear A, which is still undeciphered, and Linear B, which was shown to be an early form of Greek. The tablets reveal a civilization ruled by a king with an extensive bureaucracy. Moreover, the use of the Greek language shows that in its last years, ca. 1400–1200 B.C.E., Crete was ruled by invaders from the mainland.

The civilization on the mainland, which flourished from ca. 1400–1200, was centered in the city of Mycenae and is called Mycenaean. The Mycenaeans, in contrast to the Minoans, were more warlike and constructed strong defensive walls. This was a wealthy society that traded with Crete and the eastern Mediterranean; the Mycenaean Greeks probably plundered Troy about 1250 B.C.E., a war that Homer immortalized in his poems.

Between 1200 and 1100 B.C.E., the Mycenaean world was shaken and destroyed by a catastrophe, traditionally attributed to an invasion by a northern people, the Dorians. Greece then entered into a period of decline called the "Greek Middle Ages" (1100–800 B.C.E.). The epic poems of Homer, although written about 750 B.C.E., depict the world of the ninth and tenth centuries, and the earlier Mycenaean world.

Homer's epics provide us with a unique perspective into Greek life, including insight into the government, the social classes, and the code of values. Men were respected for courage and their sense of family honor, and women, like Homer's Penelope, were honored for beauty and faithfulness.

The isolation and relative calm of the "middle ages" allowed the development of a unique Greek institution. The *polis* began to emerge between 800 and 750 B.C.E. Usually translated as "city-state," it was generally a small independent political unit and was thought of by its citizens as a community of relatives rather than an impersonal state. With the advent of the *polis*, a new military technique, the hoplite phalanx, was developed. This close formation of heavily armed infantrymen depended on the discipline, strength, and courage of each soldier. The *polis* and phalanx emerged together and heralded the decline of kings.

By about 750 B.C.E., the Greek *poleis* responded to population pressure by sending out colonies throughout the Mediterranean. These *poleis* retained only nominal ties with the motherland, but such colonization encouraged trade and industry. The colonies adopted various forms of government, but several eventually fell to tyranny. A tyrant was not necessarily bad for a *polis*; he simply assumed a dominant position in the *polis* extra-legally. By the end of the sixth century, however, tyrants had been driven from all the cities of Greece and the most talented and active citizens were generally encouraged to take a full part in the life of the *polis*.

The two major states, Sparta and Athens, receive close treatment. At first, Sparta was not strikingly different from other Greek *poleis*, but beginning in about 725 B.C.E., the Spartans remedied population pressure, not by colonizing, but rather by invading neighboring Messenia and enslaving its inhabitants. These slaves, who outnumbered the Spartans perhaps ten to one, were called Helots. Their existence, coupled with war against Argos about 650 B.C.E., changed forever the nature of the Spartan *polis*. The Spartans chose to introduce fundamental reforms, attributed to the legendary Lycurgus, that turned their city into a military academy and camp.

The chapter goes on to explain in detail the strict Spartan codes of discipline, ethics, and education. The Spartan government was an unusual mixture of monarchy, oligarchy, and democracy. The state was headed by two kings who commanded the armies, a council of elders, a steering committee of five ephors who were elected annually, and an assembly of citizens (over thirty years of age) who ratified or rejected decisions of the ephors. The Spartan government was admired for its checks, balances, and stability. Eventually, Sparta became head of a Peloponnesian League, which by 500 B.C.E. included every Peloponnesian state but Argos. Such an alliance gave

Sparta security from extreme attack. But the constant threat of a Helot rebellion necessitated a conservative foreign policy. Sparta generally preferred not to get involved with the affairs of other Greek and foreign states.

The city-state of Athens developed quite differently from Sparta. In the seventh century, Athens was a typical aristocratic *polis* whose nobles served first as magistrates (archons) and then on the governing council (*Areopagus*). Towards the end of the century, quarrels within the nobility resulted in bloodshed. Draco's law code of 621 strengthened the hand of the state against the local power of the nobles.

A more serious problem was Athens's agrarian crisis. By planting wheat as a staple crop every year, Athenian farmers exhausted their land and were forced to borrow from wealthy neighbors, pledging first their land and then themselves and their families as collateral. As a result of many defaults, several formerly free farmers were enslaved and some were sold abroad. The poor demanded the abolition of debt and the redistribution of land.

In 594, the Athenians elected Solon as "sole archon" with extraordinary powers to remedy the problems. Solon canceled current debts and freed the debt slaves. His reforms included a division of the citizenry into four classes based on wealth, a new council to serve as a check on the *Areopagus*, and a popular court. He also encouraged the cultivation of a cash crop, olive oil, and fostered the growth of trade and industry.

Solon's efforts, however, were only temporarily successful. By 546, a tyrant named Pisistratus had achieved power in the state. The Pisistratids succeeded in increasing the power of the nobles. These tyrants maintained the institutions of Solon's government, were beneficial to the state, and were very well-liked for the most part.

In 510, however, rival nobles succeeded (with the help of a Spartan army) in driving out the tyrants. With great popular support, Cleisthenes succeeded in overcoming his political opponents and established a democracy. This democracy eliminated many of the old regional rivalries and required that each citizen contribute his time and energy to the governance of the state, including fighting in the military and serving on juries. Cleisthenes also created a new council of 500 and encouraged free and open debate in the assembly. Because his successes would give Athens an even more open and popular government, Cleisthenes can be called the founder of Athenian democracy.

The chapter goes on to discuss the social structure of the period 750–500 B.C.E. Special attention is given to Hesiod (*Works and Days*) and his depiction of peasant life, and to the aristocratic values as represented by the *symposium* and athletic contests. An overview of Greek religion is provided that emphasizes its importance as a unifying factor among Greeks. While the Olympian gods offered Greeks little comfort or transcendent hope, Greeks also turned to other deities and rites, including the Cult of Apollo, the Cult of Dionysus, and the Orphic Cult. The great changes of the Archaic Age were also reflected in the poetry. The lyric style, encouraging personal expression, predominated.

In the late sixth century, Greece not only faced foreign ideas, but also the threat of foreign conquest. The Persian Empire had been created by Cyrus the Great in the mid-sixth century. His successors invaded Greece after Athens aided a rebellion in Ionia in 499 B.C.E. The Greeks repelled two invasions by the Persians in 490 and 480 B.C.E., and succeeded in defending their homeland and lifestyle; the stage was set for the achievements of Classical Greece.

OUTLINE

I. The Bronze Age on Crete and on the Mainland to about 1150 B.C.E.

- A. The Minoans
- B. The Mycenaeans

II. The Greek "Middle Ages" to about 750 B.C.E.

- A. Greek Migrations
- B. The Age of Homer

III. The Polis

- A. Development of the Polis
- B. The Hoplite Phalanx
- C. The Importance of the Polis

IV. Expansion of the Greek World

- A. Magna Graecia
- B. The Greek Colony
- C. The Tyrants (ca. 700–500 B.C.E.)

V. The Major States

- A. Sparta
- B. Athens

VI. Life in Archaic Greece

- A. Society
- B. Religion
- C. Poetry

VII. The Persian Wars

- A. The Ionian Rebellion
- B. The War in Greece

VIII. In Perspective

KEY TOPICS

The Bronze Age civilizations that ruled the Aegean area before the development of Hellenic civilization

The rise, development, and expansion of the *polis*, the characteristic political unit of Hellenic Greece

The early history of Sparta and Athens

The wars between the Greeks and the Persians

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How did the later Bronze Age Mycenaean civilization differ from the Minoan civilization of Crete in political organization, art motifs, and military posture?
2. What are the most important historical sources for the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations? What is Linear B, and what problems does it raise for the reconstruction of Bronze Age history? How valuable are the Homeric epics as sources of early Greek history?
3. What was a *polis*? What role did geography play in its development, and why did the Greeks consider it a unique and valuable institution?
4. What insights are we given into everyday Greek social and political relationships by works such as Hesiod's *Works and Days* and Homer's epics?
5. What were the fundamental political, social, and economic institutions of Athens and Sparta in about 500 B.C.E.? Why did Sparta develop its unique form of government?
6. Describe the life that an ordinary Spartan male or female could anticipate.
7. What were the fundamental beliefs and practices of the Greek religion?
8. What were the main stages in the transformation of Athens from an aristocratic state to a democracy between 600 and 500 B.C.E.? In what ways did Draco, Solon, Pisistratus, and Clisthenes each contribute to the process?
9. Why did the Greeks and Persians go to war in 490 and 480 B.C.E.? Why did the Persians want to conquer Greece? Why were the Greeks able to defeat the Persians and how did they benefit from the victory?

LECTURE TOPICS

1. The End of the Mycenaean World: The cause of the disaster that occurred about 1200 B.C.E. and sent the Greek world into decline cannot be known for certain. The Greeks spoke of an invasion by Dorians, but the lack of archaeological evidence has led some to suggest a social revolution as the cause for destruction. There is evidence, however, from the Linear B tablets that the Mycenaeans were expecting some kind of invasion from the Northwest; also, the population from Greece drained to the eastern islands and the Ionian coast. It's certain, however, that Greece was not isolated in this catastrophe. The Hittites in Anatolia were eradicated and the Egyptian records relate attacks from "Sea Peoples" and others both before and after 1200.
2. Development of the polis: The *polis* was an independent unit ruled by a variety of governments: monarchy, oligarchy, democracy, tyranny, etc. In Athens, where the government progressed from monarchy to oligarchy to tyranny to democracy, the *polis* had an ethical purpose. As Aristotle noted, only in a *polis*, living under law, could man curb his baser instincts and fulfill his potential.
3. Athens and Sparta: Each of these had great power and influence, though they developed drastically different forms of government and social structure. Sparta emerged as a formidable military state, while Athens underwent a series of evolutions that eventually became the beginnings of what we would recognize as democracy.
4. The Tyrant: It is important to remember that tyranny was not necessarily a pejorative form of government. Tyrants often came to power, supported by hoplites (heavily-armed infantrymen) and discontented aristocrats. Tyrants often redistributed the land of the ruling aristocrats, encouraged trade, sponsored public works projects, introduced new festivals, and patronized poets and artists. They usually promoted a policy of peace (for fear of having to arm the citizenry) with the result of prosperity for the people and popularity for the regime. By the end of the sixth century, however, the situation was reversed and the people of most *poleis* demanded a greater voice in government.
5. Political Instability: A key theme that runs through this period is political instability or *stasis*. The Greeks had an aversion to it and much of their history is concerned with attempts to achieve political stability. Hence, the stability of the Spartan constitution was widely admired by many Greeks. Yet instability was perhaps a necessary, if unfortunate, prerequisite to progress. The Athenians especially dominate the history of the era in this regard with the disturbances leading to the archonship of Solon, the tyranny of Pisistratus, the constitution of Clisthenes, and, finally, the Persian wars. Perhaps it was Athenian success in dealing with potential chaos (which is implied in democracy itself) that enabled it to establish the progressive society of the fifth century.
6. Athenian Democracy: It should be emphasized that Athenian democracy was truly "rule by the people" and each citizen had rights and responsibilities under law that demanded full participation in the government. Thucydides, the Athenian historian, later remarked that those people who kept to themselves and shirked their political responsibilities were worthless to the state. It is interesting that the Greek word for "private person," *idiotes*, can be transliterated as "idiot," with all its pejorative connotations. Athenian democracy, therefore, was very different from modern conceptions of democracy.
7. The Persian Wars: These wars were viewed by the historian, Herodotus, and others as well, as a test of strength between two distinct cultures, lifestyles, and systems of government. The defeat of the Persians meant relatively little to the internal administration of their empire; but for the Greeks (or at least the Athenians), victory against such odds implied sanction of the gods and inspired confidence and creativity. The importance of the resounding Greek victory for the subsequent achievements of the fifth century should not be underestimated.

SUGGESTED FILMS

Journey into the Past: The Story of the Ancient Civilizations of the Mediterranean. Boulton-Haruker Films. 21 min.

The Glory That Was Greece: The Age of Minos. Time-Life. 40 min.

The Aegean Age. Coronet. 14 min.

Ancient Phoenicia and Her Contributions. Atlantis Productions. 14 min.

A Prince in Crete. Ziller. 15 min.

The Search for Ulysses. Carousel Films. 53 min.

Ancient Greece. Coronet. 11 min.

The Ancient World — Greece. New York University Film Library. 66 min.

From Doric to Gothic. Macmillan Films. 20 min.

Greek Pottery (1500–400 B.C.E.). Time-Life. 19 min.

The Glory that Remains: The Sudden Empire — Persia. Time-Life. 30 min.

Ancient Persia. Coronet. 11 min.

ATLAS OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Mycenaean Greece

The Mediterranean World 700–300 B.C.E.

ASSET DIRECTORY

Images

A Greek *hoplite* attacks a Persian soldier. The contrast between the Greek's metal body armor, large shield, and long spear and the Persian's cloth and leather garments indicates one reason the Greeks won. This Attic vase was found on Rhodes and dates from ca. 475 B.C.E.

Greek. Vase, Red-figured. Attic. ca. 480–470 B.C.E. Neck amphora, Nolan type. Side 1: "Greek warrior attacking a Persian." Said to be from Rhodes. Terracotta. H. 13-in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1906. (06.1021.117) Photograph © 1986 The Metropolitan Museum of Art

This statuette of a female with a snake in each of her hands is thought to represent either the Minoan snake goddess herself or one of her priestesses performing a religious ritual. It was found on Crete and dates from around 1600 B.C.E. Max Alexander/Dorling Kindersley © Archaeological Receipts Fund (TAP)

The citadel of Mycenae, a major center of the Greek civilization of the Bronze Age, was built of enormously heavy stones. The lion gate at its entrance was built in the thirteenth century B.C.E. Joe Cornish/Dorling Kindersley © Archaeological Receipts Fund (TAP)

This Attic water jug depicts a famous scene from Homer's *Iliad*. Achilles is dragging the body of the slain Trojan hero Hector around the walls of Troy. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

This earliest depiction of the new method of warfare we call the **hoplite phalanx** appears on a wine jug known as the Chigi vase. It was made at Corinth in mainland Greece, around 650 B.C.E. It shows the two armies of heavily armed infantrymen in battle order ready to fight. The flute player set the beat for each army to keep in step and formation. Hirmer Fotoarchiv, Munich, Germany

Aristogeiton and Harmodius were Athenian aristocrats slain in 514 B.C.E. after assassinating Hipparchus, brother of the tyrant Hippias. After the overthrow of the son of Pisistratus in 510 B.C.E., the Athenians erected a statue to honor their memory. This is a Roman copy.

Aristogeiton and Harmodius of Athens (“The Tyrant Slayers”). Roman copy of Greek original. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Italy. Photograph © Scala/Art Resource, NY

Greek houses had no running water. This **scene painted ca. 520 B.C.E.** shows five women carrying water home from a fountain.

“Hydria (water jug).” Greek, Archaic period, ca. 520 B.C.E. Attributed to the Priam Painter. Greece, Athens. Ceramic, black-figure, H: 0.53 m diam (with handles): 0.37 m. William Francis Warden Fund. © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Accession #61.195

This terracotta figure from the sixth century B.C.E. portrays a farmer plowing his field behind a team of oxen. Farmer ploughing with oxen. 1st half 6th B.C.E.. Greek terracotta group from Thebes, Boetia. 11 × □22 cm. Inv.: CA 352. Photo: Herve Lewandowski. Louvre, Paris. Reunion des Musees Nationaux/Art Resource, NY

A foot race, probably a sprint, at the Panathenaic Games in Athens, ca. 580 B.C.E. Panathenaic Prize Amphora (Foot Race), Euphiletos Painter. Greek, Attic, ca. 530 B.C.E. Terracotta, 62.23 cm (Ht.) The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1914. (14.130.12)

The Trireme The trireme was the warship that dominated naval warfare in the Mediterranean in the fifth and fourth centuries, B.C.E. The naval battles of the Persian Wars and the Peloponnesian War were fought between fleets of triremes—light, fast, and maneuverable ships powered by oars. This is a picture of the *Olympias*, a modern reconstruction of an ancient trireme, commissioned by the Greek navy. © AAAC/Topham/The Image Works

This Attic cup from the fifth century B.C.E. shows the two great poets from the island of Lesbos, Sappho (right) and Alcaeus. Hirmer Fotoarchiv

Maps

Map 2–1 THE AEGEAN AREA IN THE BRONZE AGE The Bronze Age in the Aegean area lasted from about 1900 to about 1100 B.C.E. Its culture on Crete is called Minoan and was at its height about 1900–1400 B.C.E. Bronze Age Helladic culture on the mainland flourished from about 1600–1200 B.C.E.

Map 2–3 THE PELOPONNESUS Sparta’s region, Laconia, was in the Peloponnesus. Most nearby states were members of the Peloponnesian League under Sparta’s leadership.

Map 2–4 ATTICA AND VICINITY Citizens of all towns in Attica were also citizens of Athens.

Map 2–5 THE PERSIAN INVASION OF GREECE This map traces the route taken by the Persian king Xerxes in his invasion of Greece in 480 B.C.E. The gray arrows show movements of Xerxes’ army, the purple arrows show movements of his navy, and the green arrows show movements of the Greek army and navy.

Interactive Maps

Map 2–2 GREEK COLONIZATION The height of Greek colonization was between about 750 and 550 B.C.E. Greek colonies stretched from the Mediterranean coasts of Spain and Gaul (modern France) in the west to the Black Sea and Asia Minor in the east.

Timelines

CHRONOLOGY OF THE RISE OF GREECE

KEY EVENTS IN THE EARLY HISTORY OF SPARTA AND ATHENS

THE GREEK WARS AGAINST PERSIA

Documents

HUSBAND AND WIFE IN HOMER'S TROY

TYRTAEUS ON THE CITIZEN SOLDIER

HESIOD'S *FARMER'S ALMANAC*