

Fall 2008

T Th 11:20-12:35

GREECE AND THE BARBARIANS

This course explores the cultures and policies of the Greeks and their foreign neighbors (especially Lydians, Persians, Egyptians, and Scythians) from the times of the Trojan War to the Persian Wars. We will start with the rise of the Mycenaean civilization in the Late Bronze Age, its collapse into the impoverished and mysterious Dark Age, and the beginnings of historical Greece in the VIII century BC. We will then devote our attention to events and trends of the Archaic period in Greece and the Near East: the rise of the kingdom of Lydia, the origin of the Greek city-state and constitutional governments, the experience of tyranny, the development of the Persian Empire, and the concomitant flourishing of Greek democratic institutions. We will also study the relations of the Greeks with non-Greek powers and how these helped to shape the Greeks' (and our own) perceptions of the East.

Required books:

Pomeroy et al. *Ancient Greece: a Political, Social and Cultural History*. Oxford.

Primary sources (to buy in the bookstore)

Homer, *Iliad*, trans. S. Lombardo. Hackett.

Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. S. Lombardo, Hackett.

Hesiod, *Works and Days and Theogony*, trans. S. Lombardo. Hackett.

Early Greek Lyric Poetry, ed. D. Mulroy. Michigan.

The Landmark Herodotus, ed. R. B. Strassler, Pantheon Books.

Tom Holland, *Persian Fire: The First World Empire and the Battle for the West*. Anchor.

Other primary and secondary materials will be made available in class.

Requirements:

Examinations: Midterm on October 7 (10%) and Final, scheduled by Registrar (30%)

Two papers, each in two drafts (total 40%)

Paper I (first draft due Thursday, Oct. 2; finished paper due Friday, Oct. 24)

Paper II (first draft due Thursday, Nov. 20; finished paper due
Tuesday, Dec. 9)

Presence, preparation and participation in class are important factors (20%).

**PLEASE DO YOUR READING BEFORE COMING TO CLASS AND
BRING YOUR PRIMARY SOURCES TO CLASS.**

Class topics and assignments
(may be subject to modifications)
PRE-HISTORY

WEEK 1

Bronze Age

Topics for week 1: Minoans, Mycenaeans, the Near East and others; Homer
and the Bronze Age.

Thursday September 4

Assignments: Iliad, Books I-VI; Pomery, pp. 1-40.

1. What are the cultural continuities between the "Minoan" and the
"Mycenaean" civilizations?
2. To what extent does the Iliad reflect the Mycenaean world
uncovered by the archaeologists?

WEEK 2

Iron Age

Topics for week 2: The formative role of the so-called Dark Age. Homer and
the Iron Age society.

Tuesday September 9

Assignments: Iliad, Books XVIII-XXIV;
Pomero, pp. 41-53.

[Synopsis of Iliad VII-XVII: Iliad, Books 18 and 22; by the end of
the first day of fighting the Trojans are besieging the Greeks in their camp
on the beach; on the next day (Book XIX) they reach the Greek ships, and

almost burn them; the Greeks are rescued by Patroclus, who leads the Greeks in a successful counterattack, wearing Achilles' armor. Hector kills Patroclus and takes his armor; a fierce battle takes place over Patroclus' corpse.]

1. How is it possible for the Iliad, written c. 750-720 B.C., to contain authentic reminiscences of the Mycenaean world?

Thursday September 11

Assignments: Odysseus, Books I-VIII.

1. What are the most distinctive social and political institutions depicted in the first books of the Odyssey?
2. How different is the social and moral framework of the Odyssey from that of the Iliad?

WEEK 3

Topics for week 3: The Geometric Age. The polis in the VIII century. Trading, traveling and the Phoenicians. Homer, Hesiod and the invention of writing.

Tuesday, Sept. 16

Assignments: Odysseus, IX-XVII;
Pomeroy, pp., 53-63.

Thursday, Sept. 19

Assignments: Odysseus, XVIII-XXIV

1. Be prepared to discuss at least one passage of the Odyssey (preferably but not necessarily in Books XV-XIX) offering evidence for the social world of Greece in the late Dark Age.
2. To what extent is Penelope the heroine of the story? Why does

Odysseus reveal himself to her so late?

WEEK 4

Topics for week 4: Hesiod, the Gods, and the Near East. The human condition and the justice of Zeus. Farming in ancient Greece.

Tuesday, Sept. 23

Assignments: Hesiod, Theogony.

Pomeroy, Ancient Greece, 63-81.

1. To what extent does Hesiod's account of the gods reflect Near Eastern sources?
2. What does the myth of the Theogony tell us about Greek culture?

Thursday, Sept. 25

Assignments: Hesiod, Works and Days.

Semonides in Mulroy (pp. 35-39)

1. Who exactly is Hesiod and why is he writing the Works and days?
2. To what extent do Hesiod's poems contain a view of justice and society that differs from that of Homer?

N.B. Make appointment for September 29-30 to discuss your paper topic.

WEEK 5

ARCHAIC PERIOD

Topics for week 5: Expansion and transformation. The Orientalizing revolution. Aristocrats, farmers, craftsmen and hoplites. Greek tyranny and the Greek notion of equality. Athens and Sparta. The kingdom of Lydia. The 'invention' of love.

Tuesday September 30

Assignments: Archilochus (Mulroy, 23-34), Callinus (M, 41-42), Mimnermus, 43-45), Hipponax (M, 113-117), Solon (M, 63-75), Xenophanes (M, 119-25), Bacchylides, Victory Ode 3 (M, 148-50).
Fragments of Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus (handouts)
Herodotus, 1.1-94 (that is, the first ninety Chapters of Book I).

1. What does Herodotus promise his subject will be, and what is he up to in his first five chapters?
2. How are the Lydians different from the Greeks? How are they similar?

Thursday October 2

Assignments: Herodotus, 4.147-159 (that is, Book 4, chapters 147-159);
Alcman (M 55-61), Tyrtaeus (47-53), Alcaeus (M 77-85), Sappho (M 87-98);
Pomeroy, pp. 84-106.

N.B. First draft of the first paper is due today. Make appointment to discuss it for Oct. 9-10.

WEEK 6

Topics for week 6: Pre-Achaemenid Persia. Cyrus and the foundations of the Persian Empire. The Greeks of Asia: Ionians, Aeolians and Dorians. The beginning of Greek ethnography and philosophy.

Tuesday, October 7

MIDTERM EXAMINATION

This will probably be composed of two parts;

1. A section with identifications or factual questions (including map quiz based on identification of maps in Pomeroy)

2. A section where you will be given excerpts from the primary sources to identify and you will be asked specific or general questions on the quotations.

Thursday, October 9

Assignments: Herodotus 1.95-216.

1. How does Herodotus represent the Persians?
2. Gyges, Deioces, Cyrus, Peisistratus: what do they have in common?

WEEK 7

SEMESTER BREAK

WEEK 8

Topics for week 8: Greek sages and intellectuals at home and abroad. The Greeks' view of Eastern barbarians (Persians, Babylonians, Egyptians) and northern barbarians (Massagetae and Scythians). The Ethiopians and other Africans. The primitives at the edges of the world. The development of the Persian kingship.

Tuesday October 21

Assignments: Herodotus Books 2 and 3.

Anacreon (M. 127-34).

Behistun Inscription (handout)

Holland, Persian Fire 1-62.

1. What do the Greeks learn from Egypt?
2. What does Herodotus mean when he says that 'Custom is king of all'?

Thursday October 23

Assignments: Herodotus Book 4.

1. How does Scythia compare to Egypt?
2. Why couldn't Darius conquer the Scythians?

N.B. The first paper is due tomorrow (Friday, October 24).

WEEK 9

Topics for week 9: The alternatives to tyranny in Athens. Sparta and her (two) kings. The Ionian revolt.

Tuesday, October 28

Assignments: Herodotus Book 5.

Holland, Persian Fire 63-142.

1. Why did the Ionians revolt?
2. What were Cleisthenes' reforms, and how did they change the nature of politics in Athens?

Thursday, October 30

Assignments: Herodotus 6.1-93.

1. What is wrong with Cleomenes?

WEEK 10

Topics for week 10: The coming of the Persians. Marathon. Xerxes prepares his expedition, and some Greeks prepare their resistance. Herodotus and religion.

Tuesday, November 4

Assignments: Herodotus 6.94-140 (i.e., finish Book 6)

Holland, Persian Fire 143-201.

Thursday, November 6

Assignments: Herodotus Book 7.1-144.

Holland, Persian Fire 202-259.

1. How does the divine communicate with men, according to Herodotus?

WEEK 11

Topics for week 11: Choral lyric and the beginning of tragedy in Greece. Athletic competitions and epinician poetry. Medizing Greeks. Thermopylae.

Tuesday, November 11

Assignments: Herodotus Book 7.145-197.

Bacchylides (M, 147-56), Pindar (M, 157-65)

1. What is the significance of Olympic and other games in Archaic and Classical Greece?
2. How do the mythical past and the present combine in Bacchylides and Pindar?

Thursday, November 13

Assignments: Herodotus Book 7.198-239 (i.e. finish Book 7)

Holland, Persian Fire 260-296.

Simonides (M, 135-46).

1. How does Herodotus' account of Thermopylae compare with Homer's battle narratives?
2. What is the Greek definition of courage?

WEEK 12

Topics for week 12: Salamis. A retrospective look at women.

Tuesday, November 18

Assignments: Herodotus 8.1-107.

Holland, Persian Fire 296-326.

1. Why is Artemisia mentioned so prominently in Herodotus' narrative?

Thursday, November 20

Assignments: Herodotus 8.108-144 (i.e. finish Book 8);
9.1-15.

1. What kind of politician is Themistocles?

N.B. The first draft of the second paper is due today. Make appointment to discuss it for Nov. 21, 25-26.

WEEK 13

Topics for week 13: Plataea. The victory of the Greeks. Spartans and Athenians, Greek and non-Greeks again. The future of the Persian Empire. Orientalism.

Tuesday, November 25

Assignments: Herodotus 9.16-121.
Holland, Persian Fire 296-355.

Thursday, November 27

THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14

Topics for week 14: From defense to offense. The end of the Histories. :
Reading Herodotus retrospectively: what he and his audiences knew.

Tuesday, December 2

Assignments: Aeschylus Persians (hand-out);
Holland, Persian Fire 355-72.

CLASSICAL PERIOD

Thursday, December 4

Assignments: Thucydides: selections (hand-out)

WEEK 15

Topics for week 15: The Athenian Empire. Peloponnesian War and its aftermath. Greeks and non-Greeks in the IV century.

Tuesday, December 9

Assignments:

N.B. The second paper is due today