Chapter 4 Notes: Ancient Greece
A. Early Greeks

- **Minoans** settled on island of Crete.
- **Mycenaeans** settled on mainland Greece.
- Great civilizations – artwork, writing, running water.

**Frescos** - paintings on wet plaster walls
B. 2000 to 1200 B.C.E.

The Greek Dark Ages

- Abandoned cities
- No sign of invasion, war, disease
- Writing disappears from Greece
- 800 years of silence

It may have been due to a volcanic eruption

NEWS FLASH
C. Geography of Greece led to development of city-states

- Poor quality land and not much of it
- Mountainous
- Water on three sides
- Many Islands
- On European continent but right next to Asia
- City-states grew up separate from one another
Greek City-States

- **Polis (city-state)** formed around a fort, so farmers were protected. All had: small size and population, hilltop, agora. Each had: own personality, laws/gov’t, customs.
- **Agora: market place** was center of life (not the temple)
- City-states were very unique but all Greeks spoke same language and shared religious beliefs.
1. Troy (the Age of Homer)  
1000 to 700 B.C.E.

- Homer, an author/poet, gathered stories together in 2 epics (poems): The Iliad and The Odyssey,
- earliest surviving examples of Greek literature
- record of men's interactions with various gods and goddesses
- Troy is the setting, plot centers around Trojan War between Troy and Mycenaean Greece
- These stories influenced the ancient world and largely formed the foundation of Greek and Western civilization (fields of philosophy, science, history, drama, medicine, art, etc.)
a. Ancient Greek religion

- Polytheistic, based on many gods and myths
- Myths explained the origins of gods and their relationship with mankind.
- Gods protected and guided city-states
- Appeared in human form yet were endowed with superhuman strength and ageless beauty.
- Mount Olympus, highest in Greece, was their home.
- Not a system of morality
- Not interested in salvation, afterlife, or reincarnation.
- Olympic Games were held to honor gods and included a day of sacrifices, foot races, wrestling, boxing, horse/chariot-racing, discus, javelin, long-jump
Greek Gods and Goddesses

1. Zeus: king of the gods
2. Poseidon: god of the sea
3. Athena: goddess of wisdom
4. Aphrodite: goddess of love and beauty
The term **acropolis** means upper city. Many of the city-states of ancient Greece were built around an acropolis where the inhabitants went as a place of refuge in times of invasion. It's for this reason that the most sacred buildings were usually on the acropolis. It was the safest, most secure place in town.” - Athens Guide
a. Solon

- Began the attack on the idea that only those born to the upper classes in Athens are allowed to have power
- Solon based rights on what a man makes of himself
- created a Council of Four Hundred to represent the ordinary citizens, and initiated reforms in many other areas of law, such as debt relief and taxes.
b. Cleisthenes

- Established the 1st **Democracy** - Gov’t. in which all citizens take part.
- only men could vote in Athens
- Direct democracy – people participated directly in decision making.
- U.S. today has representative democracy, in which we elect representatives to run the gov’t. for us.
c. Age of Pericles

- Democracy at its highest point.
- Athens: greatest power and prosperity.
- Government offices opened to all male citizens
- Officeholders receive salaries

**HOWEVER:** women didn’t participate and slavery was allowed.
3. Sparta

- The most Militaristic society ever known
- Men served in the military from 20 to 60.
- Perfected the use of the “phalanx” style of fighting
- Used Infanticide to maintain racial purity
- Individual freedom minimal. Had to serve the polis militarily and then publicly.
- Great warriors but no art, science, literature produced. No Democracy!
- Women were more equal in Sparta than anywhere else until the 20th century.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McwmRQl
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XR1l01cZ
1. The Persian Wars (500-479 B.C.E.)

- Darius the Great (Persia) wanted to control Greece.
- Sent son Xerxes (with 100,000 men) to conquer, but Greeks resisted.
- King Leonidas (Sparta) led “the 300” and others to meet Persian army at Thermopylae.
- Spartans fought to the death but inspired others to continue fighting.
- Xerxes destroyed Athens but was defeated at sea.
- Athens/Sparta later combined to defeat Persians.

Xerxes encourages Leonidas to surrender.
2. Peloponnesian War

• After the war with Persia, Sparta and Athens fought each other over who controlled Greece.
• Sparta won
• Democracy continued but Greece was politically unstable.
D. Greek Accomplishments

1. Architecture: The Parthenon Temple for goddess Athena
2. Painting
3. Sculpture

Phidias

Myron
Phidias’ Statue of Zeus (king of the Gods) at Olympus - site of the most famous Olympic games
4. Philosophy or love of wisdom

a. **Socrates** - Question everything and learn much. Favored a gov’t made up of intellectual aristocracy (smartest people rule).

b. **Plato** - 3 classes of people, smartest at top, regular people aren’t smart enough to govern themselves. Smartest should rule, regulate all aspects of citizen’s lives

c. **Aristotle** - different views than others, supported middle class and a limited democracy; founded the school at Athens; worked on physics, logic, too.
5. Math and Science

- Pythagoras: geometry and triangles
- Hippocrates: founder of medicine

- Oldest “Computer” found in Mediterranean Sea in 1901 dates back to 200 BC.
- 3D scans studied in 2006 found that it’s a complex scientific calculator used by ancient astronomers.

30 gears and 2,000 inscriptions were used to calculate motions of sun, moon, planets.
Herodotus- First Historian

- Visited Babylon, Egypt, Phoenicia and wrote stories about them.
- distinguished between Primary and Secondary Sources.

500 BCE
7. Drama: plays containing dialogue, conflict, emotion

• Tragedies
  Struggle against fate or excessive pride.
• Comedies
  mocked ideas or people.
• Great Play-writes:
  - Aeschylus
  - Sophocles
  - Euripides
E. Non-Democratic Greek Rulers

1. Philip II of Macedonia

- Learned techniques like phalanx from being a hostage of the Greeks
- Combined cavalry and advanced infantry to conquer Illyria, Thrace, and Greece.
- 338 B.C.E. Philip II united Greece but democracy ended
- assassinated at daughter’s wedding in 336 B.C.E., possibly by his wife.
2. Alexander the Great

- **Son of Phillip II** – trained in military tactics, continued his conquering tradition.
- **Student of Aristotle**
- **Highly skilled/brave military commander** – his soldiers would follow him anywhere.
- **Conquered most of the known world** – didn’t lose a battle in 13 years, wanted to be seen as a god-king, feared by those around him for his paranoia and dangerous temper.
- **Most lasting achievement = Spread Greek culture**, integrated people
- **Died at 32, in 323 BCE; cause is one of history’s great mysteries, possibly alcohol poisoning, fever (malaria/typhoid), or murder.**
Alexander’s Empire

Greece, Persia, Mesopotamia, Syria, Tyre, Egypt and a large part of India

336-323 BCE

One of the largest empires in the ancient world, the largest of his time — covered 3,000 miles.
a. Hellenistic Age

• Alexander spread Greek or Hellenistic culture wherever he traveled creating a culture which combined Greek with other conquered societies.

• Established over 70 cities, many named after him: modern, public buildings, libraries. (including Alexandria, Egypt)

• Many advancements using very simple instruments. (calculation of pi, geometry, brain function and surgery, understanding the earth was round.)

• great example of cultural diffusion
Hellenistic society after Alexander

- Empire was divided by his 4 top generals
- Constant war
- In 200 BCE Rome conquered Greece and eventually most of the Alexandrian empire
- The Golden Age of Greece was over.
- The Age of Rome had begun.