

Chapter 6

The Rise of Ancient Greece

Section 1

THE RISE OF GREEK CIVILIZATION

Creation...according to the Greeks

- First- nothing
- Then Mother Earth
- Then the gods of Night and Day, followed by the starry Sky
- Earth and Sky created the Twelve Titans- did battle with dad and took his power
- Youngest Titan- Cronos- ruled and had 6 kids
 - Youngest- Zeus- overthrew Cronos

Greece's Geographic Setting

- Country of peninsulas and islands
 - Peninsula (area of land surrounded by water on 3 sides)
- Major landforms- mountains
 - Small patches of farmland (1/5 of mainland for growing crops)
 - Therefore, Greeks were traders and sailors
- People were either secluded on an island, or in a city-state that was like an island- surrounded by mountains
- Often disagreed and fought against each other

Greek Beginnings

- Minoan Civilization
 - 3000-1100 bc (Bronze Age)- island of Crete
 - Crossroads of Mediterranean and Aegean Seas- sea traders
 - Traded with other Greeks, Egyptian, and Syrians
 - Vibrant culture
 - Writing on clay tablets
 - Palace in Knossos- rooms covered in paintings
 - Knossos destroyed in mid-1400s- probably the Mycenaeans from mainland Greece

Greek Beginnings

- The Mycenaeans
 - Mainland and island cultures blended
 - Focus in Mycenae (city)
 - Height of power- 1400 bc
 - Spoke early form of Greek
 - Dominated trade and seas
 - Relied on conquest to spread power

Greek Beginnings

- The Trojan War
 - “Faction”- Greece vs. Troy
 - Greek side inspired by Mycenaean
 - Greeks trick Trojans with wooden horse
 - Two epics (long story-telling poem) tell Trojan War story
 - *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*- credited to Homer- tells story of gods and Greek heroes
 - May have been stories of several poets tied together by Homer

The Dark Ages of Greece

- After Trojan War, (1100s bc- 750bc) Greek civilization collapsed
- No one knows why
- Life went on but people were very poor
- No more trading or writing
- People moved to fertile land to farm- chose places near rocky protected hills
 - Fortified hill- “acropolis”- aka “high city”
- After 800 bc ppl started writing again

City-States Develop

- Historians think around 750 bc- villages under the same acropolis joined to form city-states
- Each had its own government and was independent
- **Aristocracy: Nobles Rule**
 - Early rulers- chieftains or military kings
 - By end of Dark Ages of Greece- ruled by aristocracy (members of rich and powerful families)
 - Could afford horses, the best land, and weapons

City-States Develop

- A New Type of Ruler
 - Middle class of merchants and artisans rose with foreign trade
 - Wanted a say in government- couldn't afford horses and chariots but could afford weapons and armor
 - Formed large armies- power shifted from aristocrats to middle class
 - Aristocratic governments overthrown, tyrants (rulers who seize power by force) came to power
 - Not all tyrants were bad- often supported by middle and working class

Democracy in Greece

- Eventually many c-s overthrew tyrants
- Formed democracy- citizens rule for themselves
- Best example: Athens
 - 595 BC- Athenian leader- Solon- reformed government and economy- fairness
 - Cancelled all debts, freed slaves in debt
 - Male citizens over 18 years could debate new laws
 - Only 1 in 5 Athenians were citizens
 - Must be male, with both parents Athenian