THE MEANING OF DEMOKRATIA

"Man is by nature an animal intended to live in a polis."

Aristotle (384-322 BCE)

Introduction

In our previous discussion we examined how China centralized under the Qin dynasty. We also traced how Confucianism became China's state ideology. The next two themes in this section will focus on ancient Greece and Rome. It is the Greco-Roman past that laid the foundations for what is referred to as Western Civilization. Our journey through ancient Greece will bring us into contact with two very important classical "traditions" for the West: Demokratia and philosophy. By the end of this discussion you should be able to do the following:

- Identify the sources historians use to reconstruct the ancient Greek world.
- Compare and contrast the socioeconomic and political worlds of Sparta and Athens.
- Explain what philosophy is and how it was represented in ancient Greece.
- Identify what Hellenism was.
- Explain what happened to the library of Alexandria.

I. Periods and Sources for Ancient Greece

A. The beginning of civilization on mainland Greece was represented by Mycenae (C. 1650-1100), in Argolis.

Map 332m01

1. Historians rely on the archeological record and written text to reconstruct the history of this civilization. Linear B tablets inform us about wanax (kings), lawagetas (leader of troops), temenos (estates) and damos (people).

2. Scholars believe that the Mycenaens traveled to vast places in search for tin (Portugal), copper (Cyprus), silver, and lead (Attica) and gold (Trace). In fact, historians argue that the Mycenaens succeeded the Minoans as the new maritime power in the Agean.

3. There is no agreement amongst scholars on what caused the decline of Mycenaean civilization. Some believe decline was caused by internal warfare. Others argue that the Dorian (1200-900 BCC = Indo-European speaking people) invasions brought an end to Mycenaean civilization. Still others suggest it was natural phenomena.
B. The collapse of Mycenaean civilization introduced to ancient Greece a period of depopulation and decline in urbanism. Writing also seems to have disappeared during the "Dark Ages (c. 11th-8th centuries). Consequently, little is known about what transpired at this time.

1. However, by the 9th and 8th centuries, mainland Greece experienced a recovery. Population was on the rise again, pottery design became more complex (Geometric style), and alphabet writing was developed.
   
a) This new system of Greek writing borrowed from the Phoenicians the signs for consonants and vowels to it.

b) Homer, a product of this period, composed the epic poems of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (c. 750 BCE). For many historians, these works allows us to gain a glimpse of the socioeconomic and political characteristics of the "Homeric" world.

c) We learn, for example, all people belonged to an *oikos* (household). We also learn that the power of the *baselius* (king) was not hereditary.

2. This period also served as the foundation for the Archaic Period, a period in Greek history that gave birth to civic communities referred to as *polis* (city-state). The importance of the polis as a form of political organization was emphasized by Aristotle who wrote "Man is by nature an animal intended to live in a polis." The political history of the polis went through different phases: monarchy (rule by one), oligarchy (rule by elite members), and tyrants (popular support = undermined oligarchy to avoid civil war).

   **Map 332m02**

   a) Changes in military tactics are also believed to reflect changes in political organization. The hoplite (named after *hoplon* = round shield) and phalanx (battle formation) were introduced at this time.

   **Image 332i01**: Hoplite

   **Image 332i02**: Phalanx

   b) Thus the military power of the polis came to rely on a broader base than just the elite sector of society.

   c) In turn, this meant that a broader base of society sought to participate in the political process. Aristotle, in his *Politics* explained "Although it is possible for one man or a few men to be superior in virtue, it is difficult for the many to be made perfect in every virtue, but they can be in the virtue of military courage, for this is found among large numbers. Therefore the class that does the fighting for the state wields supreme power in this constitutions, and those who bear arms have a share in its government."

3. The Classical Period (c. 5th-4th century BCE) is the period most of us associate with ancient Greek culture. In fact, mention Classical Greece and the first thing that comes to mind is Athens. This is also the period that witnessed the Persian Wars (c. 499-479 BCE)
and the Peloponnesian War (c. 431-404 BCE). We are fortunate to have a vast array of sources that describe the history of this period in detail.

a) For example, Herodotus of Halicarnasus wrote his *Histories* (c. 450-425). Known by many as the father of history, Herodotus wrote about the Persian Wars. His work also includes details about Egypt, and the past history of Greek city-states.

b) Also surviving are works such as the *History of the Peloponnesian War* by Thucydides (c. 450-400 BCE) and *Hellenica* by Xenophone (c. 428-354 BCE), a history of Greece from 411 to 362.

c) The Classical Period would eventually give way to the Hellenistic period, a time in when Greek culture was diffused throughout the Near East and eventually reaching India. This was made possible by the conquests of Alexander the Great (r. 336-324 BCE).

II. A Tale of Two City-States: Sparta Toward Militarism and Athens Toward Demokratia

A. The Spartans settled in Laconia. By 600 BCE Sparta had emerged as the most powerful state in ancient Greece. Sparta's political development focusing on militarism was unlike any other city-state in Greece making it a formidable land power.

Map 332m02

1. Sources (Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus*) state that Lycurgus introduced the Great Retra (enactment/decrees) after consulting the Delphic oracle. These reforms emphasized the importance of hoplites, it allocated land to its citizens, and it created a warrior elite in Sparta. In essence, it eliminated the primary causes of political turmoil.

Table 1: Spartan Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Kings</th>
<th>Taken from Agiad/Eurypontids who become part of the Gerousia</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gerousia</td>
<td>Thirty members = twenty-eight elected from the Assembly who</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directed policy and as served as the high court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Ephors</td>
<td>Elected from the Assembly to oversee the Assembly and the Agoge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(state education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly</td>
<td>Composed of Spartan citizens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a) Spartan citizens were known as Equals (*homoioi*). Citizenship was established in the following way: an aspirant's father had to be a citizen, an aspirant had to complete the *agoge* (state education), and an aspirant needed to be 30 years of age and contribute to the *syssition* (dining club). Citizens were given a *kleros* (parcel of land). They did not work the land, but instead became part of Sparta's elite.
b) *Perioeci* (those who dwell nearby) were subjects allowed to live freely within Spartan domains. They did not hold the status of citizenship and usually labored as peasants, craft persons, and traders.

c) *Helots* were those individuals who had been reduced to serfdom by the Spartans.

2. The Spartans emphasized state education (*agoge*). The objective of the *agoge* was to develop the ideal qualities of a first class soldier-citizen. Obedience, loyalty, comradeship, community in spirit and uniformity were reinforced in the *agoge*. How was this accomplished?

   a) At age six, every male child was removed from its parents and joined other children in communal groups. For the next fourteen years they acquired training insuring discipline, physical strength and fighting skills.

   b) Once having served in the *agoge*, they joined a *syssition* (dining club). The syssition emphasized the qualities needed to be a Spartan (service to state, community, education).

   c) By the age of 30 they had become a full citizen eligible to attend the assembly.

B. One historian has noted that "Classical Athenians were the first to articulate and implement the notion that ordinary citizens of no particular affluence or education could make responsible political decisions." Demokratia (*kratos* = rule - *demos* = of the people) was forged in Athens through a series of political reforms. Various leaders enacted these political reforms in response to the socioeconomic pressures experienced by Athens. Three of the most important reformers were Solon (c. 630-560 BCE), Cleisthenes (b. 560 BCE), and Pericles (495-429 BCE).

**Map 332m02**

1. By 594, civil strife between notables and the plenitude reached a critical point in Athens. Solon was appointed mediator to resolve this class struggle. How Solon addressed this is recorded in the *Constitution of the Athenians*. Here is what this sources states, "Solon, having gained full control of Athenian affairs, set the people free both in present and for the future by making illegal to give loans on the security of the person, and he passed laws, and he carried out cancellation of both private and public debts, which was called Seisactheia (the Shaking off of Burdens) as the people shook off their heavy load. . . . secondly, that it was possible for anyone who wanted to prosecute on behalf of those who were wronged; and thirdly, which is said to be the chief power of the people, there was appeal to the dikasterion (the People’s Court)."

   a) He also introduced a timocratic system in which income/property decided political privilege (estates producing 500 measures of grain wine and olive oil = highest offices, then 300 measures, 200 measures, and the rest).

2. The Reforms of Cleisthenes (508 BCE) are believed by many to have introduced demokratia to Athens. It was his reforms that undermined the traditional power base of Athenian nobility. How? The *Constitution of the Athenians* explains that, "He first
divided everyone into ten tribes instead of the old four tribes, wanting to mix them up so that more citizens would have share in the running of the state . . . .He made those who lived in each of the demes, fellow demesmen of each other so that they not would reveal the new citizens by calling them by their father’s name, but by their deme name . . . ."

**Table 2: Tribal Reorganization unde Cleisthenes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demes</th>
<th>New local units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 Trittys</td>
<td>Demes were grouped into 30 trittyes (10 coast, 10 city, 10 interior)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Tribes</td>
<td>Each tribe was composed of three trittyes (1 coast, 1 city, 1 interior). Broke the hold of the nobility and regional ties. 50 citizens from each tribe were chosen by lot to serve in the Boule</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Pericles (495-429) shaped Athens into a maritime power, center of learning, and a site of architectural wonders. His contribution to Demokratia came in the form of *misthophoria*. The *Constitution of the Athenians* explains that, "Pericles was the first man to provide payment for jury service as a political measure . . . . For when the people are masters of the vote in court, they become masters of the state."

**Image 33203: Pericles**

a) Plato's *Gorgias* noted the following about *misthophoria*, "Socrates: But tell me this: are the Athenians said to have become better because of Pericles or exactly the opposite – to have been corrupted by him? I’ve heard that Pericles made them lazy, cowardly, talkative and greedy, by being the first to introduce state pay."

4. The fundamental ideal Athenians associated with demokratia was liberty (political and private).

   a) The Athenian citizen had the liberty to participate in the political process.

   b) The Athenian concept of equality was limited to the political sphere and not extended to the socioeconomic sphere.

   c) In fact, political rights were reserved only for Athenian adult males. Women, foreigners, and slaves were excluded.

**Table 3: Athenian Government**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nine Archons</th>
<th>Annual magistrates serving one year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Athenians will full political rights - 30 years of age or older)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Council of the Areopagus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Council composed of previous archons</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Council of 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drew fifty members from each tribe elected by the demes, prepared business for the assembly and directed the financial administration of Athens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
C. Athen's rise to power came as a result of its involvement in the Persian Wars. The war between Greece and Persia (499-479 BCE) originated in Ionia. In 546 BCE the Persian ruler Cyrus (r. 559-529 BCE) overthrew Croesus, King of Lydia, and added Asia Minor to the Persian Empire. Under the leadership of Darius I (r. 524-486 BCE), Persia sought to expand into Thrace, a policy that posed a threat to Athens since it relied heavily on Thracian grain to feed its population. Persian imperial policy next sought to extend its authority into the Cyclades.

**Map 332m03**

**Image 332i04: Persian War**

1. Athens took leadership in the war against the Persian Empire when Sparta refused to embark on a distant military offensive. Athens, along with other city-states, established the Delian League. Eventually, the Athenians transferred the treasury from the island of Delos to Athens. Treasury funds were used by Athens to fortify its navy. Athens was slowly transforming the Delian League into a maritime empire led by Athens itself.

   a) Many city-states became concerned with the growth of Athenian power. Corinth, as Thucydides explains, made its case to Sparta by warning, "Those of us, who have already had dealings with the Athenians, do not need to be taught to be on our guard against them. But those who live inland and not on the trade-routes must learn that, if they do not help those by the sea, they will experience greater difficulties in the transportation of their own produce to the sea and the bringing back of imports from the sea."

   b) On the causes of the war, Thucydides wrote, "I think that the truest explanation, but the one that was least made public, was that the growth of Athens’ power and the fear that this caused among Spartans made war inevitable."

   c) Thucydides also records the military strategies adopted. In the case of Athens, he noted that, "Pericles gave the same advice as before that they . . . should avoid battle with the enemy but come inside the city and guard it; that they should ensure the efficiency of the fleet . . . .The good-will of men was for the most part directed towards the Spartans, especially because they declared that they would free Greece."

2. The funeral oration of Pericles is recorded in the work of Thucydides. It is an eulogy given for Athens's fallen citizens. This oration also serves as a testament to the greatness of Athenian Democracy and the Athenian way of life. Below is the funeral oration.

   a) What did "democracy" mean to Pericles? What form of citizen did Athenian "democracy" produce?

   b) How did Pericles describe Sparta? How did he compare to Athens?
c) What did Pericles appear to have in mind when he described of Athens as a model for all of Greece?

"Pericles . . . was chosen to give the funeral oration for the first who had fallen. When the proper time arrived, he advanced from the tomb, and spoke as follows: "I shall begin with our ancestors . . . They dwelt in this country without interruption from generation to generation, and handed it down to the present time by their bravery . . . . "Our constitution does not copy the laws of neighboring states; we are rather a model for others than imitators ourselves. Its administration favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look at the laws, they afford equal justice to all in settling private differences. As for prestige, advancement in public life goes to men with reputations for ability: class considerations are not allowed to interfere with merit, nor again does poverty bar the way. If a man is able to serve the state, he is not hindered by obscure origins or poverty. The freedom we enjoy in our government extends also to our private life."

"There . . . we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbor for doing what he likes, or even to indulge in those injurious looks which cannot fail to be offensive, although they inflict no actual harm. But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens. We obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly those for the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace."

"Further, we provide plenty of means for the mind to refresh itself from business. We celebrate games and sacrifices all the year round, and the elegance of our private establishments forms a daily source of pleasure and helps to banish our cares. Then, too, the magnitude of our city draws the produce of the world into our harbor, so that to the Athenian the products of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of his own."

"If we turn to our military policy, there also we differ from our antagonists. We throw open our city to the world, and never pass laws to exclude foreigners from any opportunity of learning or observing, although the eyes of the enemy may occasionally profit from our liberality. We rely less on secrecy than on the native spirit of our citizens. In education, where our rivals from their very cradles seek after manliness through a very painful discipline, at Athens we live as we please, and yet are just as ready to encounter every legitimate danger. And yet if with habits not of labor but of ease, and with courage which is not artificial but real, we are still willing to encounter danger, we have the double advantage of escaping the experience of hardships in anticipation and of facing them in the hour of need as fearlessly as those who are never free from them."

"We cultivate refinement without extravagance and knowledge without effeminacy; wealth we employ more for use than for show, and place the real disgrace of poverty not in admitting the fact of it but in declining the struggle against it. Our public men have, besides politics, their private affairs to tend to, and our ordinary citizens, though occupied with the pursuits of industry, are still fair judges of public matters. Unlike any other nation, we regard a man who takes no part in these duties not as unambitious but as useless. Instead of looking on discussion as a stumbling block in the way of action, we Athenians consider it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all."

"In generosity we are equally singular, acquiring our friends by conferring, not receiving,
favors. Yet, of course, the doer of the favor is the firmer friend of the two, in order by continued kindness to keep the recipient in his debt; while the debtor feels less keenly from the very consciousness that the return he makes will be a repayment, not a free gift, and it is only the Athenians who, fearless of consequences, confer their benefits not from calculations of expediency, but in the confidence of liberality."

"In short, I say that as a city we are the school of Hellas; while I doubt if the world can produce a man who is equal to so many emergencies where he has only himself to depend upon, and who is graced by so happy a versatility as the Athenian. For Athens alone of her contemporaries is found when tested to be greater than her reputation, and alone gives no occasion to her assailants to blush at the antagonist by whom they have been worsted, or to her subjects to question her title by merit to rule. Rather, the admiration of the present and succeeding ages will be ours, since we have not left our power without witness, but have shown it by mighty proofs; and far from needing a Homer for our panegyrist, or another poet whose verses might charm for the moment only for the impression which they gave, to melt at the touch of fact, we have forced every sea and land to be the highway of our dating, and everywhere, whether for evil or for good, have left imperishable monuments behind us. Such is the Athens for which these men, in the assertion of their resolve not to lose her, nobly fought and died; and well may every one of their survivors be ready to suffer in her cause."

"If I have dwelt at some length upon the character of our country, it has been to show that our stake in the struggle is not the same as theirs who have no such blessings to lose, and also that the praise of the men over whom I am now speaking might be confined by definite proofs. My speech is now largely complete; for the Athens that I have celebrated is only what the heroism of these and others like them have made her, men whose fame, unlike that of most Hellenes, will be found to be only proportionate to what they deserve. And if a test of worth be wanted, it is to be found in their last scene, and this not only in the cases in which it set the final seal upon their merit, but also in those in which it gave the first intimation of their having any. For there is justice in the claim that steadfastness in his country's battles should be as a cloak to cover a man's other imperfections, since the good more than outweighed his demerits as an individual. And while committing to hope the uncertainty of final success, in the business before them they thought fit to act boldly and trust in themselves. Thus choosing to die resisting, rather than to live submitting."

"So died these men as became Athenians. You, their survivors, must be determined to have as unaltering a resolution in the field, though you may pray that it may have a happier outcome. You must yourselves realize the power of Athens, and feed your eyes upon her from day to day, till the love of her fills your hearts; and then when all her greatness shall break upon you, you must reflect that it was by courage, sense of duty, and a keen feeling of honor in action that men were enabled to win all this, and that no personal failure in an enterprise could make them consent to deprive their country of their bravery except as a sacrifice of the most serious contribution they could offer. For this offering of their lives made in common by them all, each of them individually receives that renown which never grows old, and for a tomb, not so much that in which their bones have been deposited, but that noblest of shrines wherein their glory is laid up to be eternally remembered upon every occasion on which deed or story shall call for its commemoration. Take these as your model, and recognize that happiness comes from freedom and freedom comes from courage; never decline the dangers of war. For it is not the miserable who have the most reason to risk their lives; they have nothing to hope for:
instead, it is they to whom continued life may bring reverses as yet unknown, and to whom a fall, if it came, would be most tremendous in its consequences. Surely, to a man of spirit, the degradation of cowardice must be immeasurably more grievous than the unfelt death which strikes him in the midst of his strength and patriotism."

"Comfort, therefore, not condolence, is what I have to offer to the parents of the dead who may be here. Numberless are the chances to which, as they know, the life of man is subject; but fortunate indeed are they who draw their lot a death so glorious as that which has caused your mourning, and to whom life has been so exactly measured as to terminate in the happiness in which it has been passed. If I must say anything on the subject of female excellence to those of you who will now be in widowhood, it will all be comprised in this brief exhortation: great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character; and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men whether for good or bad. My task is now finished. I have performed it to the best of my ability, and in words at least the requirements of the law are now satisfied. If deeds be in question, those who are here interred have received part of their honors already, and for the rest, their children will be brought up till manhood at the public expense: thus the state offers a valuable prize as the garland of victory in this race of valor, for the reward both of those who have fallen and their survivors. And where the rewards for merit are greatest, there the best citizens are found."

"And now that you have brought to a close your lamentations for your relatives, you may depart."

III. The Search for Knowledge

A. Historians believe that Greek or Western philosophy (the search for knowledge) began in the coastal city-states of Ionia. The assertions of Greek philosophers were dictated by reason or thought.

1. Many historians believe that the nature of Greek religion made the search for knowledge a necessity. The characteristics of Greek religion included a combination of polytheism (many deities), animism (the worship of deities associated with natural forces), and anthropomorphism (attributing to deities human characteristics such as human form or temperament). It revealed characteristics of human nature, but did not instill deep spiritual insight.

2. Others point to Greek exposure to eastern sciences and world-views as possible motivators for this shift in thought.

B. The Pre-Socratic Philosophers

1. Thales of Miletus (c. 624-546 BCE) is considered by many to be the first philosopher, or first pioneer of philosophy in the ancient Greek world. Unfortunately, no works of Thales have survived.

   a) We know about him through the works of other ancient philosophers and writers such as Herodotus and Aristotle.

   b) Aristotle's *Metaphysics* explains that Thales made water the material source of all things.
2. Pythagoras of Samo (c. 571-496 BCE), another Ionian, founded a community in Croton (southern Italy) that would have a "strong scientific" spirit.

   a) Aristotle writes the following of Pythagoras and his followers, "the Pythagoreans . . . devoted themselves to mathematics, they were the first to advance this study, and having been brought up in it they thought its principles were the principles of all things . . . " They believed all things were numerable, and consequently, numbers were the principle for all things.

3. The ultimate end of the Sophist was practical and not speculative. Sophists acted as an instrument of teaching.

   a) The Sophists are said to have traveled throughout the Greek world providing lectures and instruction. The focus of their teaching was rhetoric, politics, grammar, history, and mathematics.

   b) They accepted pay for their services. Because of this philosophers such as Plato criticized the Sophist.

   c) Free citizens who played a role in political life sought their services. They equipped their students for an active life in the political arena.

IV. Questions, Forms, and Substances

   A. Socrates (c. 469-399 BCE): Questions get Answers

      Image 332i05: Socrates

   1. Unfortunately, Socrates left no written works. The main sources for his views are found in Plato's dialogues.

   2. What is most characteristic of Socrates is a method of inquiry aimed at helping individuals attain self-knowledge.

      a) Socrates was also devoted to search for truth in everything. In Plato's Apology, Socrates is attributed with saying, " . . . to talk every day about virtue and the other things about which you hear me talking and examining myself and others is the greatest good to man, and that the unexamined life is not worth living."

   3. Socrates believed that recognizing one's own ignorance was a first step to achieving knowledge.

   B. Plato (429-347 B.C.E.): Forms/Idealism

      Image 332i06: Plato

   1. Plato was a student of Socrates. He established the Academy, a school of philosophy that followed the traditions of Socrates.
2. Plato believed that knowledge must be knowledge of eternal values that are not subject to the shifting and changing impressions of senses.

   a) His philosophy was based on the theory of Forms. Forms are ideal exemplars that provide standards of judgment.

   b) Plato also believed that human souls were immortal and are reborn into different bodies.

   c) This gives humans the ability to judge things by standards more perfect than are experienced. This ability must precede human senses. Thus we had contacts with the Forms when our souls were out of our human bodies.

   d) Somehow, in the process of transmigration we have forgotten the Forms.

   e) We recollect them by using our senses and through questioning in order to bring out the knowledge the student already has.

3. In the case of Plato, a vast number of his works have survived to the present.

   a) Some of his most known dialogues include *Apology* (philosophical life of Socrates), *Phaedo* (introduces theory of forms), and *Republic* (ideal society).

C. Aristotle (c. 384-322 BCE)

   **Image 33207: Aristotle**

1. Aristotle was a pupil of Plato, served as Alexander's tutor (342 BCE), and established his own school in Athens called the Lyceum.

   a) His students were called *Peripatetics* because of Aristotle's habit of strolling during his lectures.

   b) Aristotle's philosophical interests covered a wide range of subjects and many of his works (lectures) have survived to the present.

   c) Some of the major studies he composed focused on logic, ethics, physics, natural history, metaphysics, and politics.

2. Unlike other philosophers, Aristotle did not distrust his senses. Instead, he used them to observe and experiment.

   a) He was very interested in the nature of the universe and the things that make-up the universe.

   b) Central to Aristotle's philosophy is teleology (the purposiveness of things).

   c) Unlike Plato, Aristotle did not believe that a world of Forms existed. On the contrary, what existed were the individual things of this world. This view was known as the theory of substance.
V. **The Creation of a Hellenistic World**

A. Macedonia was politically and geographically unified under the leadership of King Perdicas I (c. 7th century BCE). The history of Macedon, however, was filled with dynastic conflict. In 360 BCE a new dispute arose with the death of Perdicass III. Philip II, the monarch's brother, was to act as regent for latter's son. After a few years Philip II murdered his nephew and gained control of Macedon.

**Map 332m03**

1. To better defend his territories, Philip (r. 359-336 BCE) began a policy of internal colonization (transplanting population). This served the purpose of severing local ties. He also introduced military reforms. At the core of this military reform program was the phalanx system. What he added to it was an extremely long pike called sarissa. He also introduced a cavalry to his military.

2. Philip’s designs were to gain both access to the interior of Greece and the coastline. Many argue that he hoped to bring unity to this fragmented region. It was obvious to Athens, no longer the power it once was, that the only way to stop Macedon was to form an alliance with Thebes. At the Battle of Chaeronea (338 BCE), Philip II defeated Athens and Thebes thus making Macedon the new power in the region.

3. Philip II now had physical control of Greece. His next aim was to liberate those Greeks under Persian control (in Asia Minor). To accomplish this plan, Philip II established the League of Corinth. Philip’s plans for the invasion of the Persian Empire were cut short by an assassin's dagger in 336 BCE. The death of Philip has caused much speculation about who was behind it. Some scholars suggest that the assassin, Pausanias, committed this act in a fit of jealousy. Other historians believe that Pausanius assassinated Philip at the order of the Persians. Still others believe that it came at the orders of Alexander's (r. 336-324) followers.

**Image 332i08: Alexander**

B. Philip II's death and rumors that Alexander had been killed in battle prompted both Athens and Thebes to rebel. Alexander responded by completely destroying Thebes. He next set his sights on the Persian Empire. Why did Alexander wish to conquer Asia Minor? Some historians argue that he was fulfilling his father’s vision of empire while others suggest it was because the Aegean Sea had always been vulnerable to the Persian threat. Alexander crossed into Persia with an infantry of about 30,000 and a cavalry of about 5,000. From 333 BCE to 324 BCE, Alexander embarked on campaign that would witness the creation of one of the largest empires in the Ancient world.

1. Beginning in 333 BCE he fought major battles against the Persians at the Granicus River (Asia Minor), Issus (Asia Minor), and Gaugamela (Assyria). He also conquered the city of Tyre after a seven-month siege.

   a) In Egypt (332 BCE), he was viewed as the liberator from the Persians and was hailed as Pharaoh. He established the city of Alexandria in 331 BCE, which became the capital of the western region of his empire.
b) In 331 BCE he met the Persian forces once again and defeated them at Arbela in Mesopotamia.

c) Alexander was prevented from further penetrating India when a mutiny at the Hyphasis River (326) forced him to return to Babylon. It is in Babylon where he died of a fever in 324.

**Map 332m05**

2. Alexander's death caused the fragmentation of his empire. Between 323-275 his generals established three kingdoms.

**Map 332m06**

a) Ptolemy Soter I (367-283 BCE) established a kingdom in Egypt called the Ptolemeic.

b) Seleucus Nicator I (358-280 BCE) established a kingdom in Mesopotamia called the Seleucid.

c) Antigonus Gonatar I (382-301 BCE) established a kingdom in Asia Minor and Macedon called the Antigonid.

d) The Roman Empire would bring an end to these Hellenistic kingdoms.

C. The campaigns of Alexander introduced Greek culture to the Near East, and Near Eastern culture to the Greeks. The fusion of Greek culture with local cultures produced what historians call Hellenism.

1. New philosophies developed as a consequence of this fusion.

a) For example, **Diogenes of Sinope** (c. 412-323 BCE) spread the philosophy of the Cynics.

b) **Epicurus** (c. 340-270 BCE) introduced a view that would later be called Epicureanism.

c) Finally, Zeno (c. 335-262 BCE) founded a school of thought known as **Stoicism**. For a more detailed overview, please review the following link: [Hellenistic Philosophy](#).

2. Science also made major advancements during the Hellenistic Age.

a) Euclid (c. 300 BCE) compiled *The Elements of Geometry.*

b) Archimedes of Syracuse (c. 287-212 BCE) focused on mathematics and mechanics.

3. Eratosthenes of Cyrene (c. 285-204 BCE) focused on geography.
VI. A Library is Lost

A. It was Macedonian force that made Greeks rulers of a vast amount of territory. To better rule over their new subjects, royal libraries were created in the new Hellenistic capitals. Their purpose was to collect the written works of those subjected with the end of better understanding them.

1. In particular, the Ptolemies sought to retrieve the "world's" works and have them translated into Greek. There were two libraries that rivaled each other in the Hellenistic world. These were the libraries of Pergamum (f. 196 BCE) and Alexandria.

Image 332i09: Pergamum

2. Isidore of Seville's (c. 560-636 CE) Etymologies gives some insights on libraries:
"Library, bibliotheca, is a word of Greek origin . . . biblion , for books, theke, depository." He further notes that the library of Alexandria housed 70,000 volumes.

B. The Library of Alexandria got its push from Ptolemy II "Philadelphus."

1. Epiphanius's Patrologia Graeca provides some details on how the library was started as he explained, "The second sovereign of Alexandria after Ptolemy . . Ptolemy Philadelphus, was a man who loved beauty and culture. He founded a library in the same city of Alexandria . . . and put Demetrius Phalerus in charge of it, instructing him to collect together all the books of the world . . . "

C. What happened to this library?

1. For an answer, some historians turn to the Alexandrian War (47/48 CE).
   a) Julius Caesar led this war.

   Image 332i10: Julius Caesar
b) Aulus Gellius (2nd cent. CE), in his Attic Nights (collection of notable events, historical lives, points of law philosophical issued - 7.17) explained that, "Afterwards a very great many books were collected or made in Egypt, by the Ptolemies: as many as seven hundred thousand scrolls. But in the course of the first was of Alexandria, during the sack of the city, all these thousands of scrolls were given to the flames . . . accidentally, by the auxiliaries (Pergamum)."

2. Yet Suetonius (c. 70-130 CE) in his Life of Domition notes that the emperor "sent emissaries to Alexandria charged with copying and correcting the texts."

3. Others try to find answers in the dialogue between John Philoponus and the Emir Amrou Ibn el-Ass.

   a) The source for this dialogue is Ibn al-Kifti's History of Wise Men.

   b) It was in 640 that the forces of Islam reached Alexandria and conquered this city.

   **Map 332m07**

   c) He notes that all books were destroyed except those of Aristotle.