Classical Greece: Political and Military Heritage

The Rise of Greece
- Rapid Growth between 800-600 B.C.E.
- City States
  - Single political entities
    - Ruled by either a Tyrant or aristocratic Council
- Inter-Civilization Trade
  - Trade between city states strengthened relationships
    - Economic
    - Culturally
    - Athletic Competitions
      - Olympics
    - Language adopted from Phoenicians

Sparta
- Militaristic Society
- Constitutional Government
  - Two kings
    - So not too much power
    - Performed ceremonial, judicial, and military roles
    - Hereditary
      - Descendants of Heracles
  - Ephors
    - Decided Civil and Criminal Cases
  - Gerousia
    - 28 elders
    - Discussed state policy
  - Spartan Men all served military
    - Women’s job to produce Spartan men
  - Slavery
    - Helots did all manual labor

The Persian Wars
- The First Persian War (490 B.C.E.)
  - Persians angry at Athens for supporting Ionians in uprising
  - Persian King Darius I sends large invasion fleet to burn down Athens
  - Battle of Marathon
    - Greeks, heavily outnumbered by Persian forces, rush at Persian lines (10,000 Greeks Vs 100,000 Persians)
    - Take the Persians by surprise and force Persians to retreat to their boats
    - About 193 dead Athenians, about 6400 dead Persians
    - Namesake of the famous 26 mile race
      - Two possible stories of origins
        - Greek runner Pheidippides runs 26 miles from Marathon to Athens to announce Greek victory (Plutarch)
        - Greek army has to run 26 miles back to Athens at end of battle to prevent Persian naval attack (Herodotus)
  - Results of First Persian War
    - Persians retreat back to Persia
    - Darius I dies before he can raise another army to attack
    - Greeks united
    - Themistocles knew Persians would come back
- Built large navy to protect Athens

- The Second Persian War (480 B.C.E.)
  o Darius I's son Xerxes returns with another army
  o Meets small Greek army at Thermopylae
  o Battle of Thermopylae
    ▪ Spartan King Leonidas and his 300 “Bodyguards”
    ▪ Athenian General Themistocles led naval battle at Artemisium
    ▪ Max – 8,000 Soldiers
    ▪ Min (Day 3) – Spartans, 700 Thespians, and 400 Thebans
    ▪ Persian army numbers about 1,000,000
    ▪ 3 day battle but Persians win
  o Result of Second Persian War
    ▪ Persians burn empty Athens to the ground
    ▪ Move on to Sparta
    ▪ Athenian navy ambushed Persians and destroy Persian navy at Salamis
    ▪ Persian army defeated one year later at battle of Plataea

Golden Age of Ancient Greece
- Greeks assured of dominance
  – Believe reason they won is because of their gods
- Era of cultural and economic prosperity in Athens
  – Led by Pericles
- Create Delian League
  – An alliance against future attacks
  – Turns into Athenian led empire

Athens
- Grew to prominence after Persian Wars under Pericles
  o Funded many public works projects
    ▪ Including many of the buildings in the Acropolis
      • Including Parthenon
  o Used Delian League to build up Athenian Empire
    ▪ Challenge to Spartan Power
  o Funded by silver mining
    ▪ Slavery common
  o Political, Literary, Philosophical, Artistic Golden Age
- One of world’s first democracies
  o Direct Democracy
    ▪ Free Males allowed to vote and participate
    ▪ Easily swayed by theatrical satires
  ▪ Three Councils
    • Assembly
      o Made executive decisions (ex. go to war)
      o Participation by all
        ▪ Voted by hand
    • Council
      o Ran daily affairs of city
  • Courts
    o Tried public and private suits
The Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.E.)
- Sparta jealous of power of Athens
- Spartan backed Peloponnesian League vs Delian League
- Sparta marches army north and forces Athens to hide inside city
  - Crowded conditions = Plague
- Sparta allies with Persians and eventually captures city
- Outcome of Peloponnesian War
  - Left Greece weakened
  - Recovered economically, but spirit and unity was dead

Warfare in Greece
- Phalanx
  - Soldiers are packed together, heavily armored with interlocking shields, and longs spears
  - Soldiers called Hoplites
    - Armored with chest plate, shin guards, helmets, and shields bronze
    - Equipped with spears and swords
- Companion Cavalry
  - Mounted soldiers used to attack at the flanks of enemy position