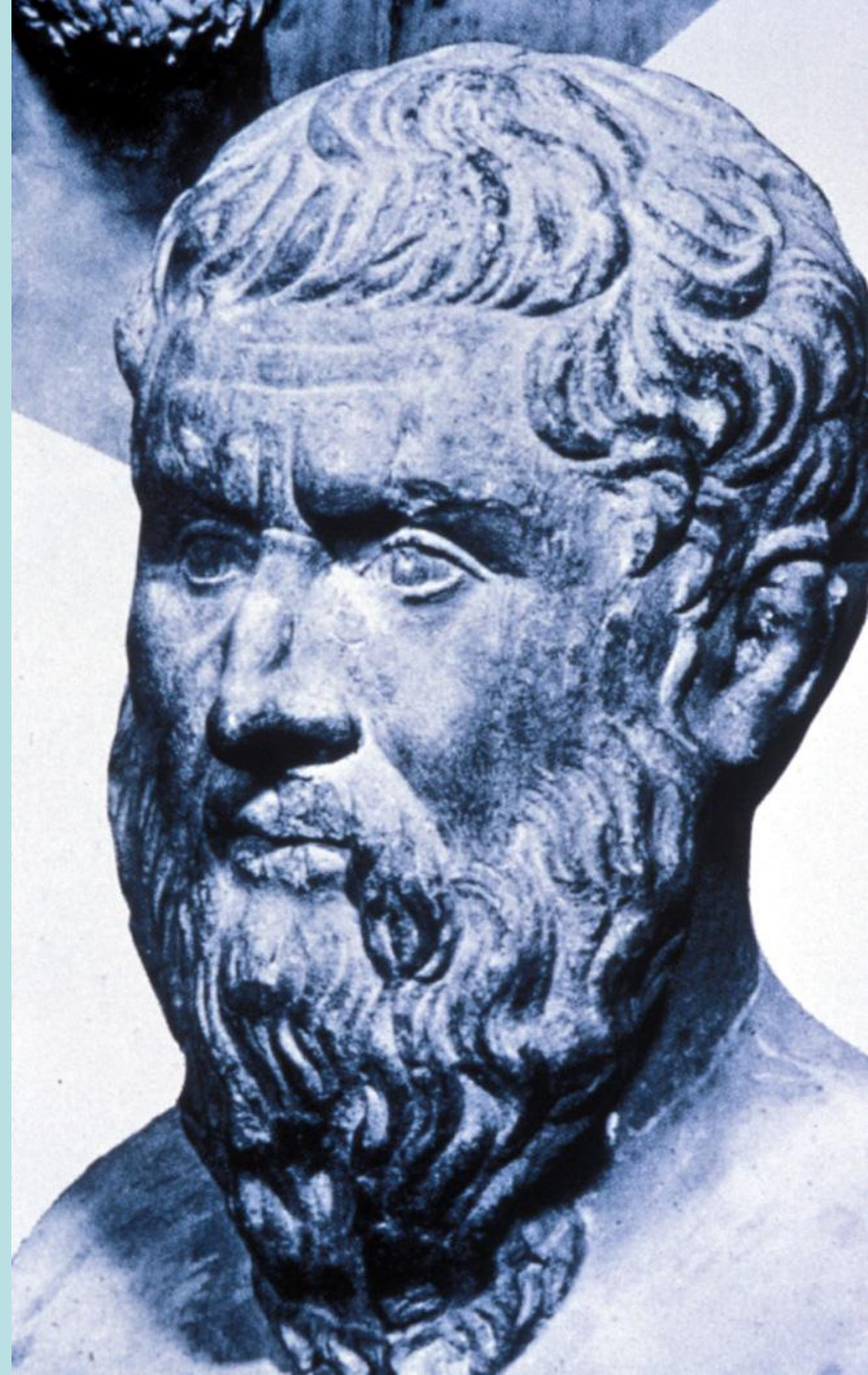
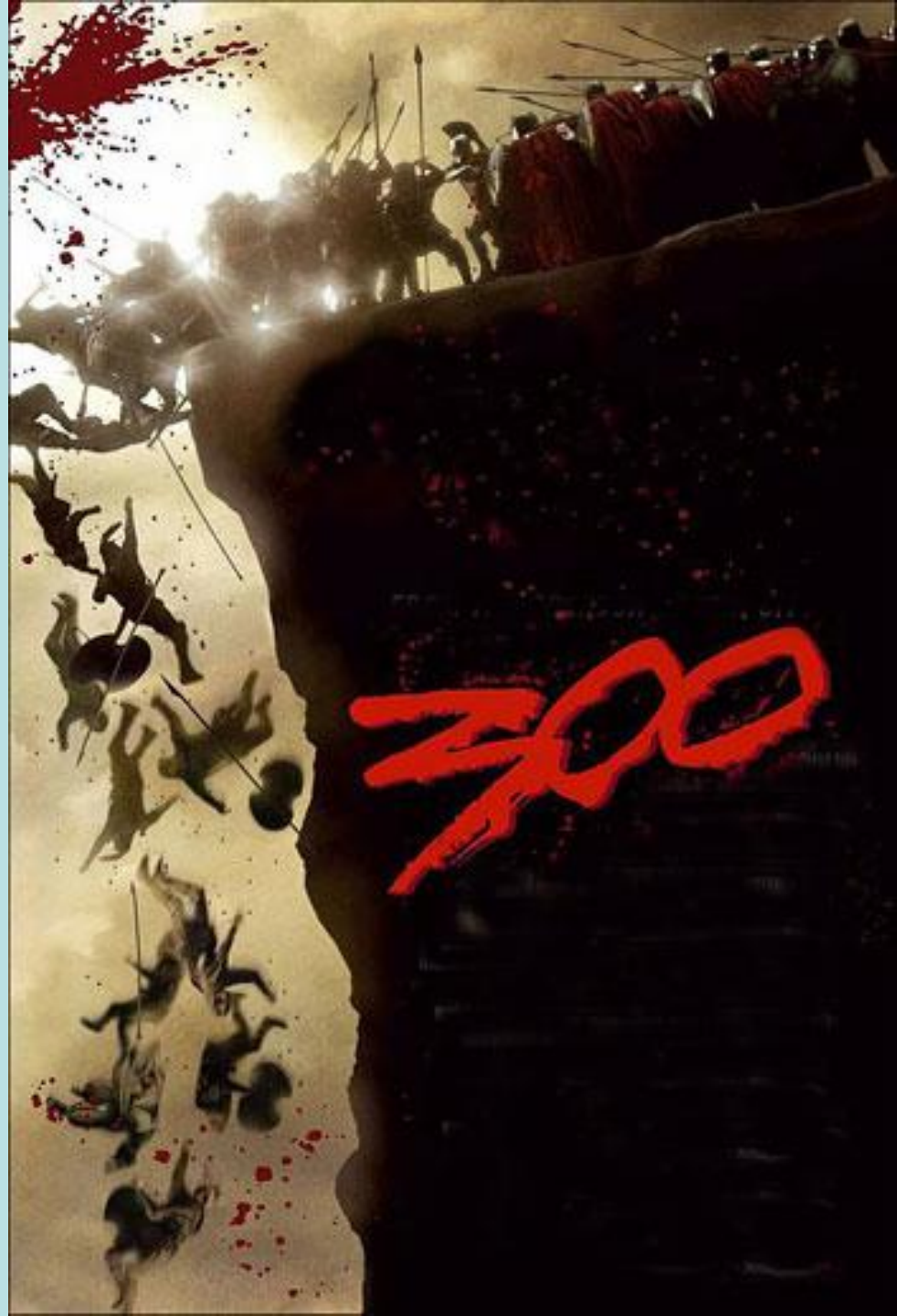


Herodotus the First Historian

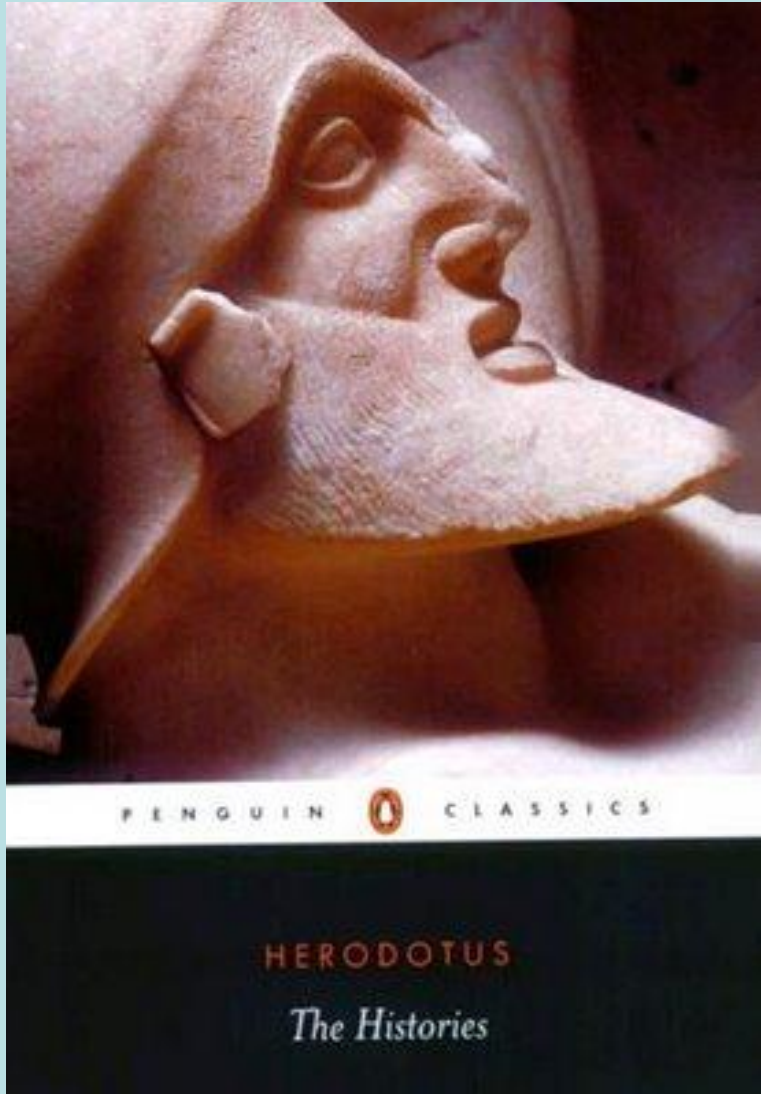
- **Herodotus** is the first true historian known in Western Civilization
- he lived during the **Classical Age** of Greece (the fifth century BCE)



Herodotus History
and the story of the 300 Spartans



Herodotus and the Persian Wars



- he wrote *The Histories* which are now divided into nine “Books”
- *Historia*(in) Greek means “inquiry, investigation”
- Greek word *historia* comes from a base which means "to question, make an inquiry, investigate." The plural of *historia* in Greek is *historiai* and that is the Greek name of Herodotus' masterpiece, literally
- "The Questions “



- **The Histories, a lengthy investigation of the Persian Wars (490-479 BCE), the epic struggle between the much smaller Greek city-states of the West and their foe to the East, the enormous Persian Empire**
- **the nature of his *Histories***
- **a jumble of fact and fable**
- **like a parent telling bedtime stories**
- **modern historians (in the Victorian period) dubbed him the “Father of History and Lies”**

Herodotus **asked people about their recollections** of times gone by, the traditional tales they'd heard from their parents, grandparents and elders, and using those data, he **attempted to formulate a coherent** picture of the past.

“These are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, which he publishes in the hope of thereby preserving from decay the remembrance of what men have done, and of preventing the great and wonderful actions of the Greeks and the barbarians from losing their meed of glory; and withal to put on record what were their grounds of feud.”

Halicarnassus – Bodrum Turkey

Herodotus' life

- born ca. 485 BCE at Halicarnassus (Ionia)
- was a merchant and traveler
- spent some time in Athens
- died ca. 425 BCE at the Athenian colony of Thurii

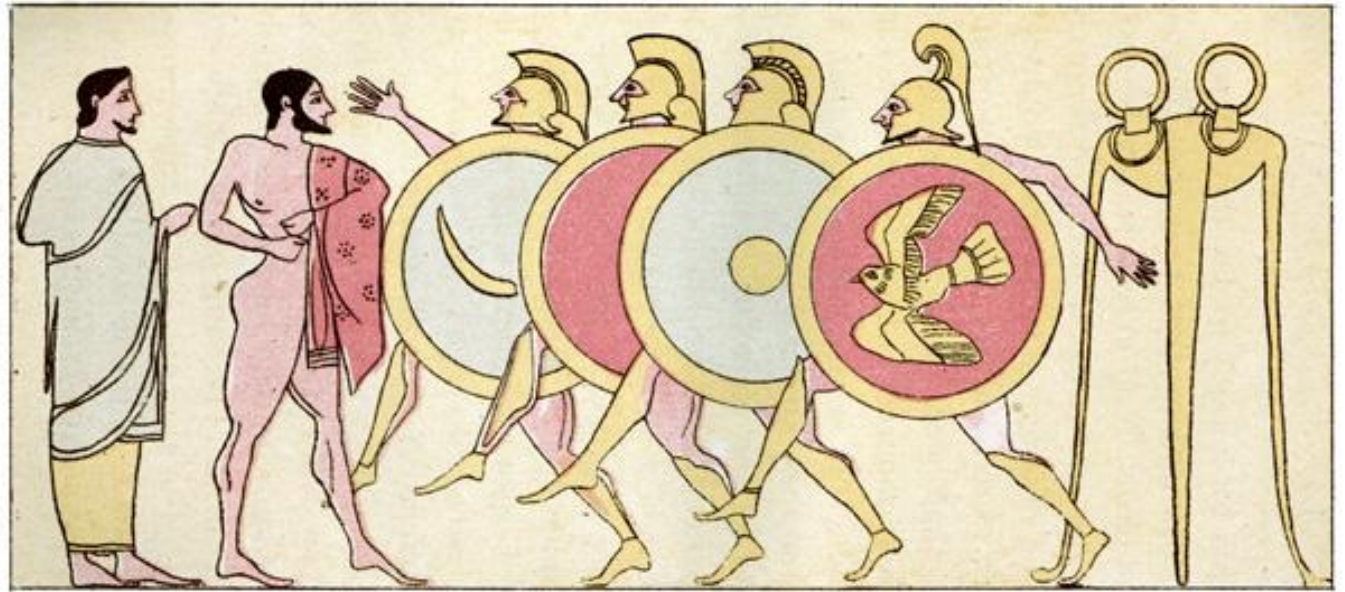


- he was an “oral historian”
- he **talked to people about what they remembered** in the past
- or what their elders had told them
- then he collected the stories
- often **uncritical of conflicting accounts**
- little attempt to sift fact from fiction

- the more lurid and sensational the story, the more he seems apt to include it—but especially if it plays into one of his particular fancies, that is. . .
- anything which proves the **Delphic oracle is never wrong** or involves **women who are tall and beautiful** or exposes the **sexual perversity of foreigners**.
- To many historians of our age, such themes and tone do not betoken a serious and professional approach to the study of the past;
- they are, rather, the **casual ramblings of a raconteur**.



- **Main thrust:**
- to tell the story of the **Persians Wars** (490 & 481-479 BCE)
- but Books 1-4 about background: Lydia, Egypt, etc.
- only in **Book 5** does Herodotus finally get to the Persian Wars







the first narrative in *The Histories* focuses on a **palace scandal** that took place more than a century before the Persian Wars.

Set in **Lydia** (an ancient state in western Asia Minor), it tells the tale of how the Lydian monarchy changed from the family of the reigning king

Candaules—whose roots, according to Herodotus, could be traced all the way back to the mythological hero Hercules—

and came into the hands of his servant **Gyges**. A cocktail of fact and fancy, with ample helpings of sex and violence

William Etty 1787-1849

The ring of Gyges - Plato

A man named Gyges who lived in Lydia, an area in modern was a shepherd for the king of that land.

One day, there was an earthquake while Gyges was out in the fields, and he noticed that a new cave had opened up in a rock face.

When he went in to see what was there, he noticed a gold ring on the finger of a former king who had been buried in the cave.

He took the ring away with him and soon discovered that it allowed the wearer to become invisible.

In J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, like the ring of Gyges, the One Ring grants the power of invisibility, and corrupts the character of those who possess it.

Bilbo finds the ring of power



The Persians

- originally a tribe from the highlands of Iran
- –**Cyrus (II) the Great (ca. 550 BCE)**
- conquered and assimilated the Medes
- the Greeks confused Persians/Medes
- conquered Babylon; freed the Hebrews

- **By 546 BCE**, Cyrus had defeated Croesus, the Lydian king of fabled wealth, and had secured control of the **Aegean coast of Asia Minor**, Armenia, and the Greek colonies along the Levant.
- Moving east, he took **Parthia and Bactria**.
- He besieged and captured **Babylon in 539** and **released the Jews** who had been held captive there, thus earning his immortalization in the Book of Isaiah.
- When **he died in 529**, Cyrus's kingdom extended as far east as the Hindu Kush in present-day Afghanistan.





Cyrus was succeeded by his son Cambyses (II) in 530 BCE
Cambyses conquered Egypt but he was crazy and vicious
This negative picture may be the result Herodotus' Persian sources who disliked Cambyses. Assassinated in 522 BCE





■ Persian homeland, c. 550 B.C.
■ Persian Empire under Darius I, 490 B.C.

0 200 400 miles
0 200 400 kilometers



The Persian Empire

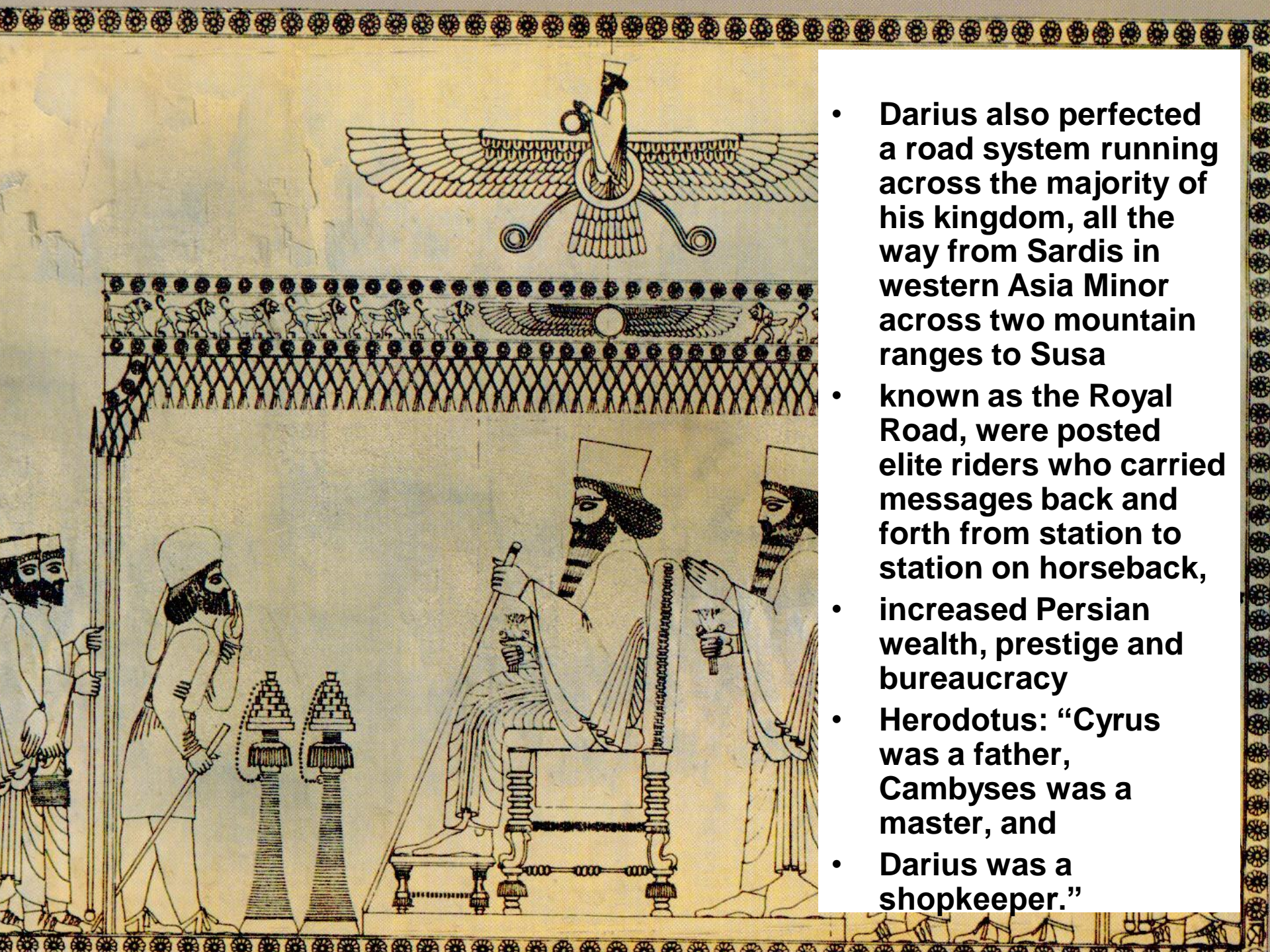
- Cambyses' brother-in-law **Darius** took the throne
- consolidated Persia
- created **satrapies**, run by **satraps**
- built the **Royal Road**



In another attempt to consolidate his state and government, Darius also sponsored a new religion, **Zoroastrianism**, which had already begun to rise in popularity before he came to power.

At the heart of this belief-system lay a core of myths which feature a cosmic battle between the forces of light and dark.

The religion, then, called on worshipers to assist the principal god of light, Ahura-Mazda, in his struggle to defeat the forces of darkness.



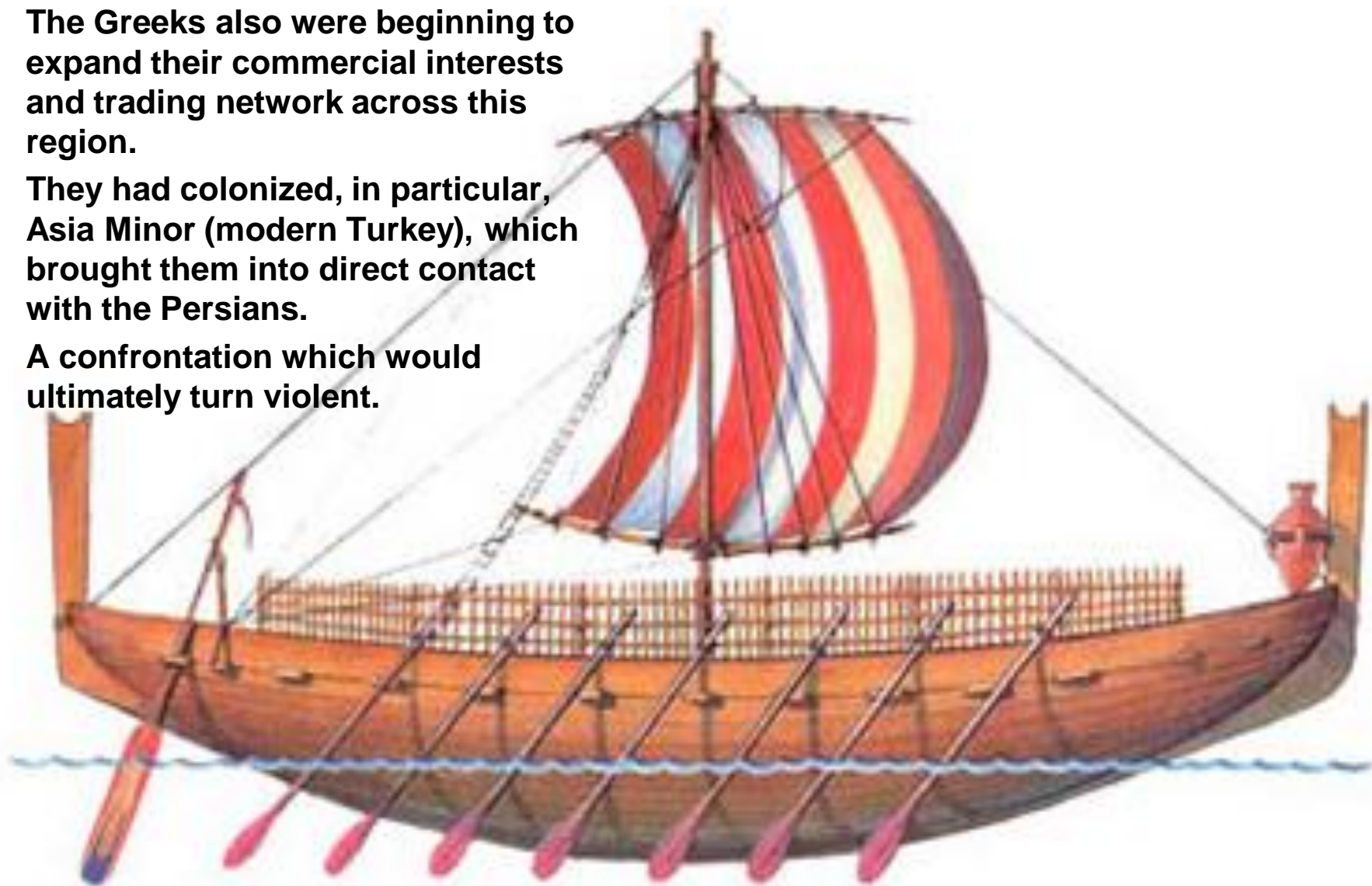
- Darius also perfected a road system running across the majority of his kingdom, all the way from Sardis in western Asia Minor across two mountain ranges to Susa
- known as the Royal Road, were posted elite riders who carried messages back and forth from station to station on horseback,
- increased Persian wealth, prestige and bureaucracy
- Herodotus: “Cyrus was a father, Cambyses was a master, and
- Darius was a shopkeeper.”

The Ionian Revolution

- in the mid-sixth century BCE, a new sort of thinking arises in Ionia
- the Ionian philosophers
- search for origins and basic elements: water, air, earth, fire
- Pythagoreans: numbers
- earliest attested non-religious explanation of the natural world



- **Until their defeat by the Assyrians, the Phoenicians had controlled the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea**
- **The Greeks also were beginning to expand their commercial interests and trading network across this region.**
- **They had colonized, in particular, Asia Minor (modern Turkey), which brought them into direct contact with the Persians.**
- **A confrontation which would ultimately turn violent.**



The Ionian Revolution

- Philosophical revolution leads to political revolution
- Aristagoras of Miletus: enlightened tyrant who forces the expulsion of other Ionian tyrants in 499 BCE
- forms Ionian League of free states
- having just expelled their tyrant, Athens (Athenians) join this league and send five ships from Attica



Miletus Theater and Temple of Athena



500-499 BCE

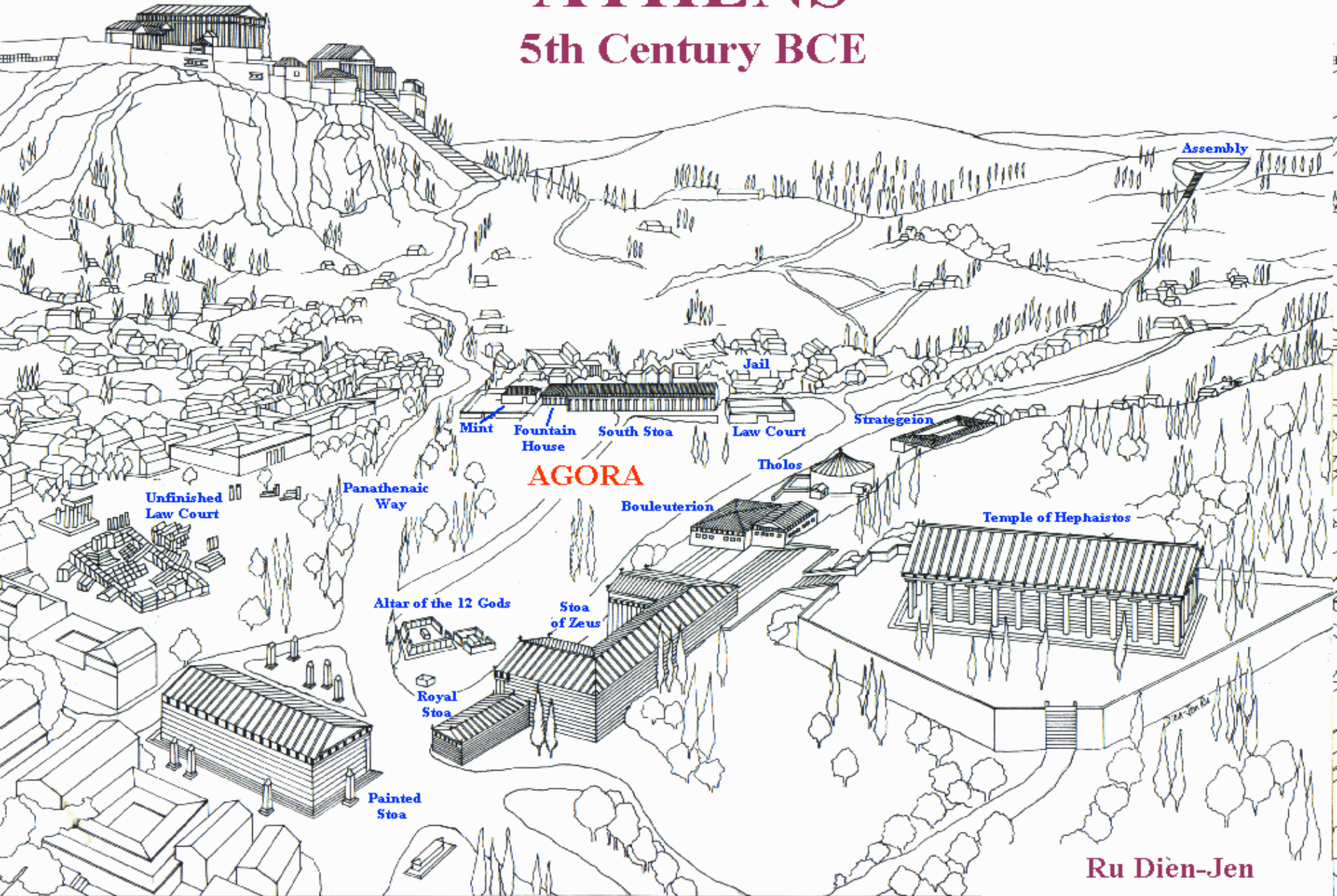
1. the Athenians were somehow at the heart of it all.
2. Infected like many Greek city-states by the Ionian revolutionary bug, they had ousted their ruler, a tyrant named Hippias, the decade before (510 BCE).

ACROPOLIS

Parthenon

ATHENS

5th Century BCE



Assembly

Jail

Mint

Fountain House

South Stoa

Law Court

Strategion

AGORA

Tholos

Unfinished Law Court

Panathenaic Way

Bouleuterion

Temple of Hephaistos

Altar of the 12 Gods

Stoa of Zeus

Royal Stoa

Painted Stoa

Ru Dien-Jen

The Ionian League



- The forces of the Ionian League march against Sardis (capital of Lydia) and “liberate” it
- but in the ensuing celebration, the Ionians burn the city down
- the Lydians call in Darius and the Persians to oust the Ionian League
- to even the score, the Persians burn down Miletus in Ionia (493 BCE)

- Soon thereafter in a battle near the Ionian city of Ephesus, the Persian army defeated the Ionian League and forced it to disband.
- **Aristagoras** left the rebellion in disgust and fled to northern Greece where he was **assassinated**.
- Miletus is razed to the ground



The Ionian Revolution

- the results of the Ionian Revolution
- it did *not* produce any new democracy democratia: “mob-rule”
- The new thinkers (philosophers) fled Ionia for the west (Greece and Italy)
- It gave Darius an excuse to attack Athens for sending ships
- Darius needed to have a military victory to add to his institutional and economic achievements as king





Battle of Marathon

Darius had two routes to invade Greece, one by land and one by sea.

He chose them both and in 492 BC began his expedition.

However, his first attempt failed because a terrible storm destroyed his fleet.

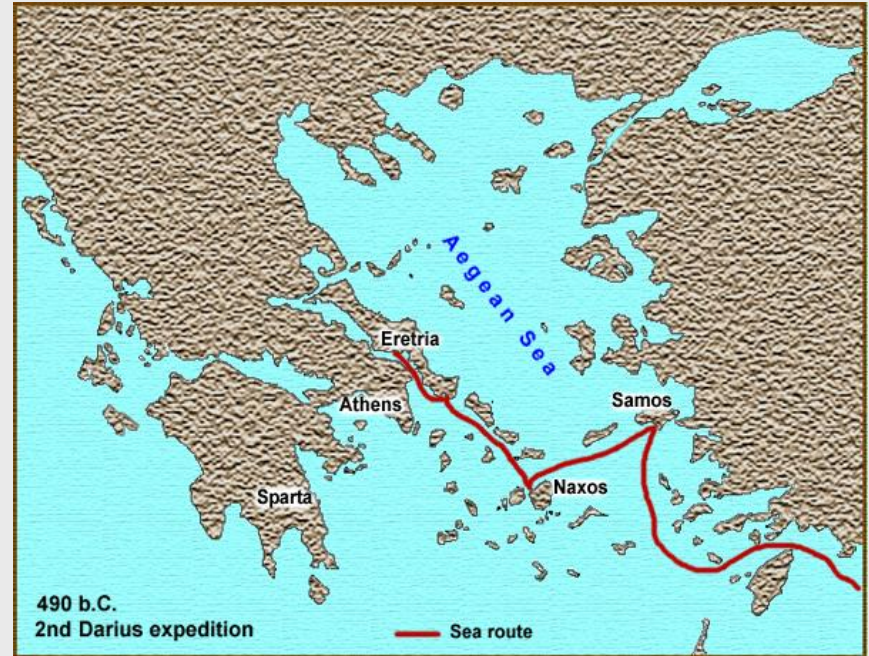


2 years later 2nd attempt 490 BC

During the two year interval he sent **heralds** to the Greek city-states.

The heralds, as was the custom, asked for **"earth and water"** as a token of submission.

Many of the Greek city-states acquiesced but many did not, including the two most important, **Sparta and Athens**.



The Persian fleet conveying a force of infantry and cavalry sailed across the Aegean Sea in late August or early September of 490 BC.



"earth and water"



Eretria does not submit

- The city was sacked, its buildings destroyed and its inhabitants who survived the massacre that followed were taken prisoners.
- This was in retaliation for the part that Eretria played in assisting Athens in the destruction of Sardis in the Ionian rebellion.
- This was a clear indication to the Athenians that theirs would be the same fate.



Athena from the Temple of Appollo destroyed by the Persians at Eretria

The Persian army sailed from Eretria to the Marathon Bay and landed there, about twenty five and a half miles from Athens.

**Spartans do not come to help
Plataians come with 1000 men**



Athens was eternally grateful for that brave act of the Plataians. Together they would face the Medes and their conquerors, the Persians. No one had been able to stand up against them in the past.

The Greek's army doctrine was of an offensive nature. Their main weapon, the long, heavy spear, their heavy armament (helmet, shield, breastplate, greaves) and their battle formation, the phalanx, favored close combat. The Greeks used neither bow nor cavalry at this time.



Miltiades attacked at dawn. The Athenians charged at a run.

The Persians waited, not really believing that any one could run that far and still fight well. They routed the Greek weak center and charged up the valley. The Greeks retreated, pulling the Persians forward and extending their lines. Then the Greek wings fell upon the Persian flanks while the center suddenly stood firm.



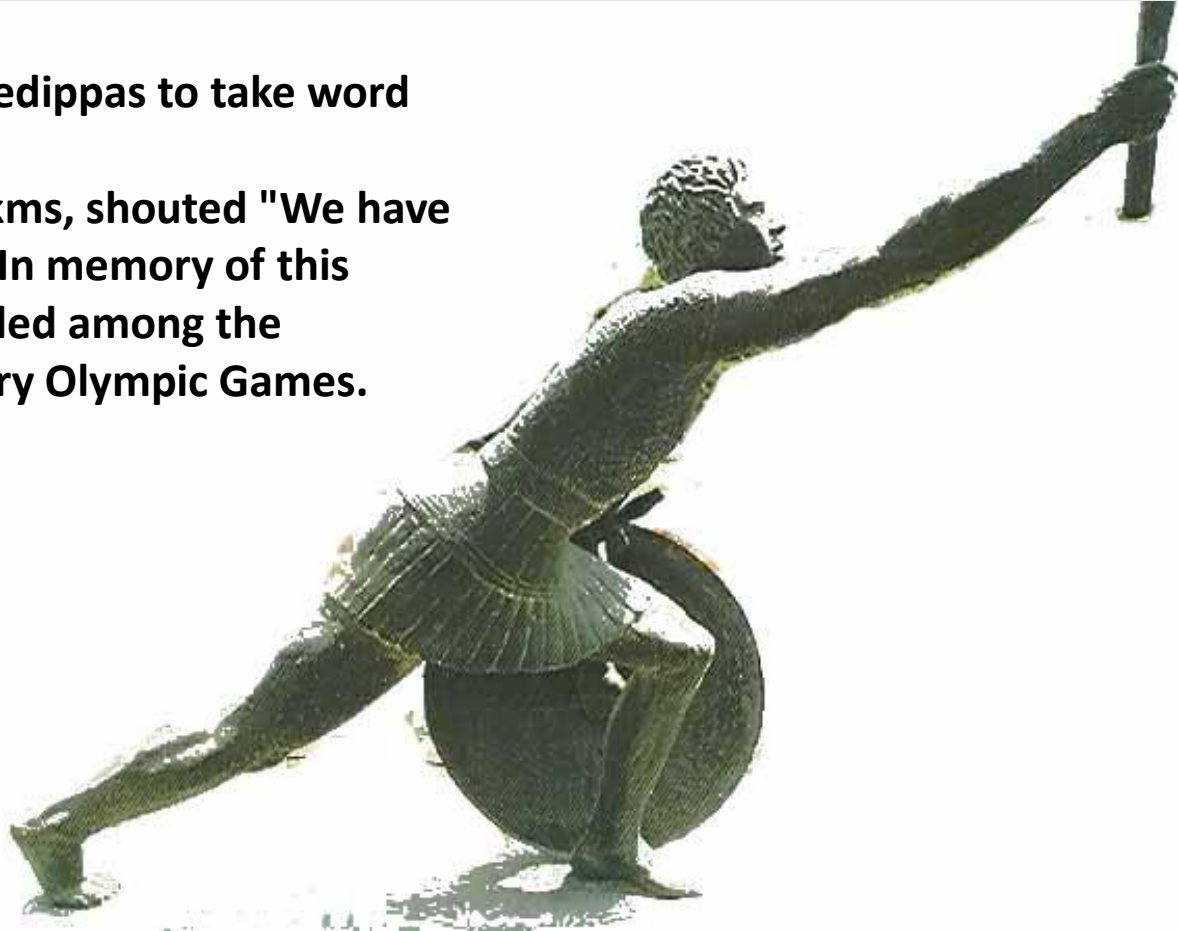
The Athenians had won at Marathon but they certainly had not destroyed the Persian army.

They had made plans before the battle that if they won, they would get word back to Athens as soon as possible because they knew that the Persian fleet was sure to sail around Attica and attempt to take the city while it was undefended.

The citizens were to man the walls and make it appear that Athens was strongly defended.

Miltiades sent a young soldier Phaedippas to take word back to Athens.

He ran the entire distance, 42.192 kms, shouted "We have won!" and fell dead of exhaustion. In memory of this event the Marathon Run was included among the contests since the first contemporary Olympic Games.



The true story of Phaedippas and the Olympic games

- Was there an ancient tradition about Pheidippides?
- On the basis of the surviving ancient historical sources, **no one ever ran from Marathon to Athens.**
- Herodotus wrote about a Pheidippides a long-distance runner who was charged by his fellow Athenians to run from **Athens to Sparta, a distance of about 245 km, in order to persuade the Spartans to join Athens** in the fight against the invading Persian army.
- Pheidippides arrived in Sparta the following day, a phenomenal feat of endurance running
- The Spartans were in the **midst of the celebration of an important religious festival, the Carneia**, and could not possibly take any action before the full moon.
- Thus, despite the heroic run by Pheidippides, the Spartans were of no use in helping the Athenians defeat the Persians at Marathon in 490 BC.

the young men and women dance, wearing fancy 'basket-hats', at a vintaging festival held in honour of Apollo Karneia. A pillar inscribed *Karneios* is on the far left.

Date: around 400

The vase was found in the Spartan 'colony' Taras



So why do we now have the tradition of a Pheidippides who ran from Marathon to Athens, and what does this distance, of some **26 miles or 42 km**, have to do with the modern marathon race that has been part of the Olympic Games since 1896?

And also what does the **Olympic Torch** have to do with the ancient Olympics? Nothing whatsoever.

The concept of the **Olympic Torch** only goes back to **1936**, to the **Berlin Olympics** held in Hitler's Germany.

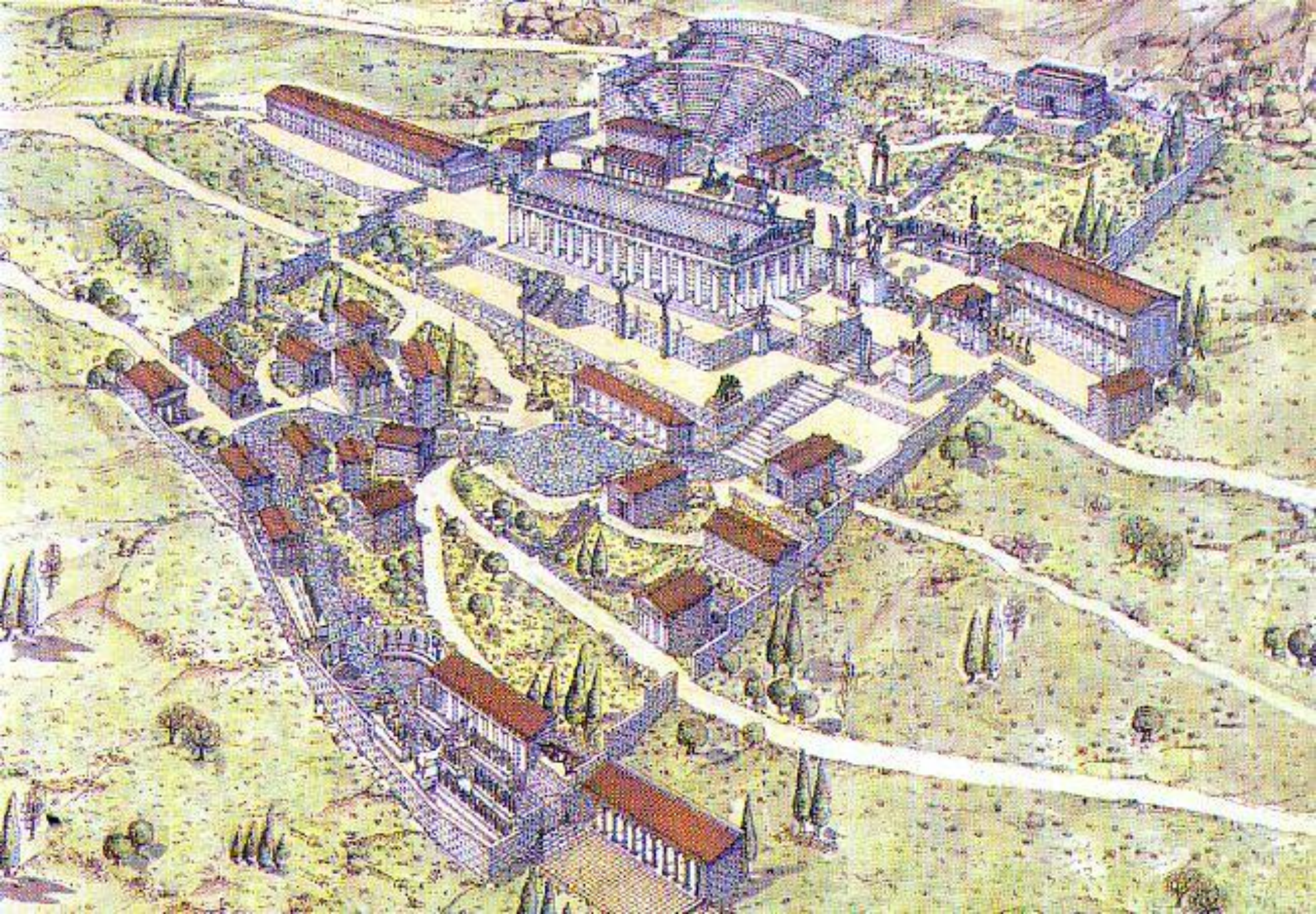
And what about the length of a marathon run?

According to Prof. Stephen Miller, in his new book on Ancient Greek Athletics (Yale University Press, 2004), the canonical distance of **42.2 kilo metres, or 26 miles 385 yards**, was established only in the **1908 Olympics**, held in **London**. It represents not the distance from Marathon to Athens but the **distance from Windsor Castle to the Olympic stadium in London**.





- **The Greek writer Lucian, active in the mid-second century AD, produced a series of satires and parodies on the writing of history.**
- His True History contains **nothing of any historical value whatsoever**, but he had a great time making fun of the serious writers of his day.
- Lucian is the author of a short work whose title can be translated something like **"On those who fell while presenting a message of greeting"**. From the title alone we can tell that this theme, of an individual who expired during the course of duty, had become a popular literary subject by the second century AD.
- Lucian tells the following tale: **"Philippides the hemerodromos, reporting the victory from Marathon to the archons, Who were seated anxiously awaiting the result of the battle, said, , rejoice, we have won,' and saying this, died at the same time as his report, expiring with the salutation."**
- So the story is a mixture of myth and satire with a bit of 20th century nationalism no basis in History at all.
- Makes you wonder about other History stories.



Delphi: reconstruction



The Oracle at Delphi

The Pythia (Gr. Πυθία) was the priestess presiding over the Oracle of Apollo at Delphi, located on the slopes of Mount Parnassus.

The Pythia was widely credited with giving **prophecies inspired by Apollo**, giving her a prominence unusual for a woman in male-dominated ancient Greece. The Delphic oracle was established in the **8th century BC**. Its last recorded response was given in **393 AD**, when the emperor **Theodosius I** ordered pagan temples to cease operation.

During this period the Delphic Oracle was the most **prestigious and authoritative oracle** in the Greek world.



Aegeus, a mythical king of Athens, consults the Pythia, who sits on a tripod.

An inscription on the cup identifies the Pythia as **Themis**.

Tondo of an **Attic red-figure kylix**, This is the only contemporary image of the Pythia.

by the Kodros painter, ca. 440-430 BC, now in the Berlin Museum (Berlin Mus. 2538).

The name of the **Pythia derived from Pytho**, which in myth was the original name of Delphi. The Greeks derived this place-name from the verb pythein (πύθειν, "to rot"), used of the **decomposition of the body of the monstrous serpent Python after she was slain by Apollo**.

It is often said that the Pythia delivered oracles in a **frenzied state** induced by **vapors rising from the ground**, and that she spoke gibberish which priests reshaped into the enigmatic prophecies preserved in Greek literature.

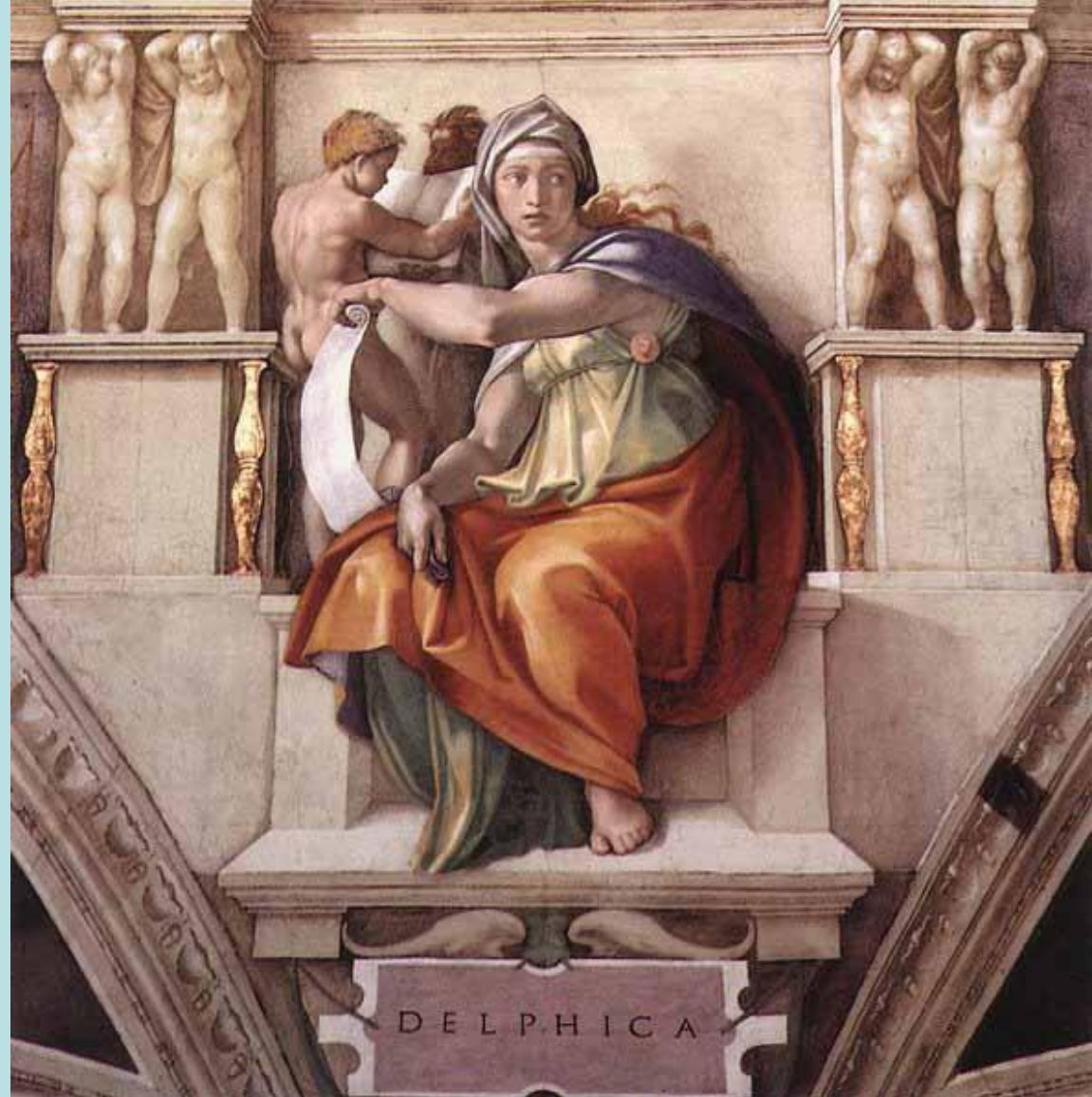
Origins of the Oracle

One late explanation, which is first related by the 1st century BC writer, **Diodorus Siculus**, tells of a goat herder called **Kouretas**, who noticed one day that one of his **goats**, who fell into a crack in the earth was behaving strangely.

On entering the chasm, he found himself filled with a divine presence and could **see outside of the present into the past and the future**.



- According to earlier myths, the office of the oracle was initially held by the goddesses Themis and Phoebé, and that the site was sacred first to Gaia.
- Subsequently it was held sacred to Poseidon, the "Earth-shaker" god of earthquakes, a later offspring of Gaia.
- During the Greek Dark Age, from the 11th to the 9th century BC, the arrival of a new god of prophecy, saw the temple being seized by Apollo who expelled the twin guardian serpents of Gaia.



Excited by his discovery he shared it with nearby villagers. Many started visiting the site, until one of them was killed by the experience. From then, **only young girls were allowed to approach the chasm** and then in conditions regulated by a guild of priests and priestesses.



Diodorus also explained how initially, the Pythia was a **young virgin**, but one consultant notes, “ Echecrates the Thessalian, having arrived at the shrine and beheld the virgin who uttered the oracle, became **enamored of her because of her beauty**, carried her away and **violated her**; and the Delphians because of this deplorable occurrence passed a law that in the future a virgin could no longer prophesy, but that **an elderly woman ... would declare the oracles and she would be dressed in the costume of a virgin** as a sort of reminder of the prophetess of olden times. ”

Science and the Sibyl

There have been occasional attempts to find a scientific explanation for the Sibyl's behavior.

Most commonly, these refer to Plutarch's observation that the Pythia's oracular powers appeared to be linked to **vapors from the Castalian Spring** that surrounded her, together with the observation that **sessions of prophecy would either take place in, or be preceded by a visit to, an enclosed chamber at the base of the temple.**

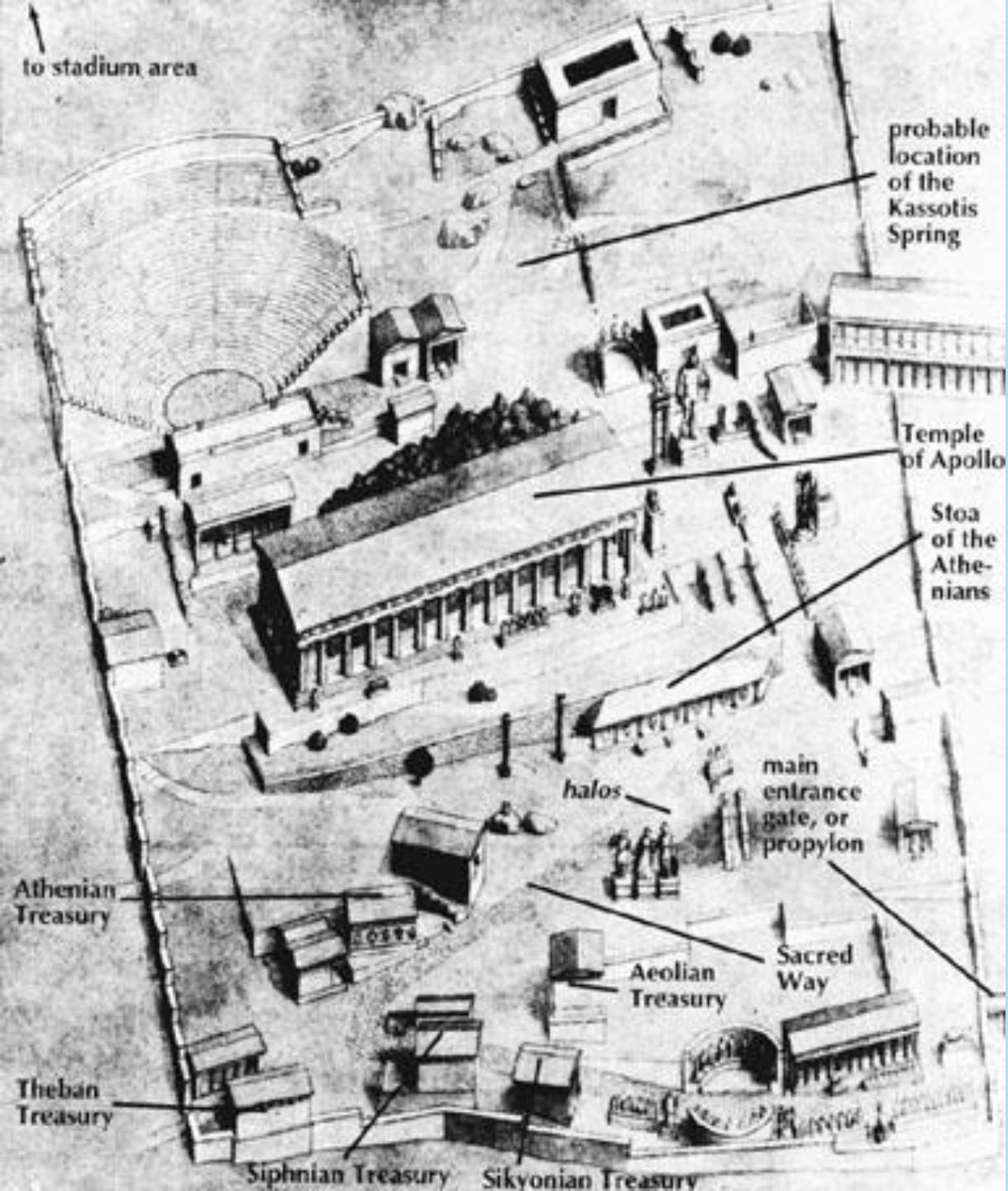


- It has been suggested that these vapors may have been **hallucinogenic gases.**
- In 2001 evidence of the presence of **ethylene, a potential hallucinogen,** was found in the temple's local geology and nearby springs.
- Inhalation of ethylene in an enclosed space might well have exposed the Sibyl to sufficiently high concentrations of the narcotic gas to induce a euphoric or trance-like state.

- From the **entrance of the site**, continuing up the slope almost to the temple itself, is a large number of **votive statues**, and **numerous treasuries**.
- These were built by the various states - those overseas as well as those on the mainland - to commemorate victories and to thank the oracle for advice important to those victories.
- The most impressive is the now-restored **Treasury of Athens**, built to commemorate the Athenians' victory at the Battle of Marathon.
- The Athenians had previously been given the advice by the oracle to put their faith in their **"wooden walls"** - taking this advice to mean their navy, they won a famous battle at Salamis.

Another impressive treasury that exists on the site was dedicated by the city of **Siphnos**, who had amassed great wealth from their **silver and gold mines** and so they dedicated the Siphnian Treasury





Site plan at Delphi



- The **Tholos at the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia** is a circular building that was constructed between 380 and 360 B.C. It consisted of 20 Doric columns arranged with an exterior diameter of 14.76 meters, with 10 Corinthian columns in the interior.
- The Tholos is located approximately a half-mile (800 m) from the main ruins at Delphi. Three of the Doric columns have been restored, making it the most popular site at Delphi for **tourists to take photographs**.

The 480's: Between the Wars

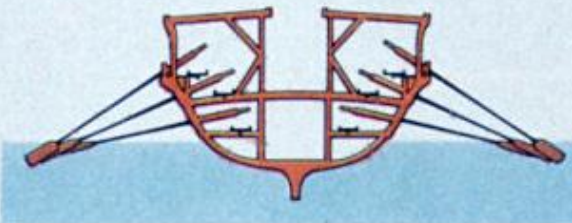
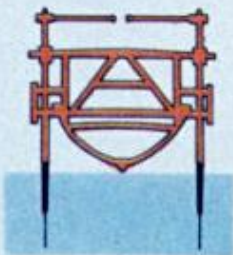
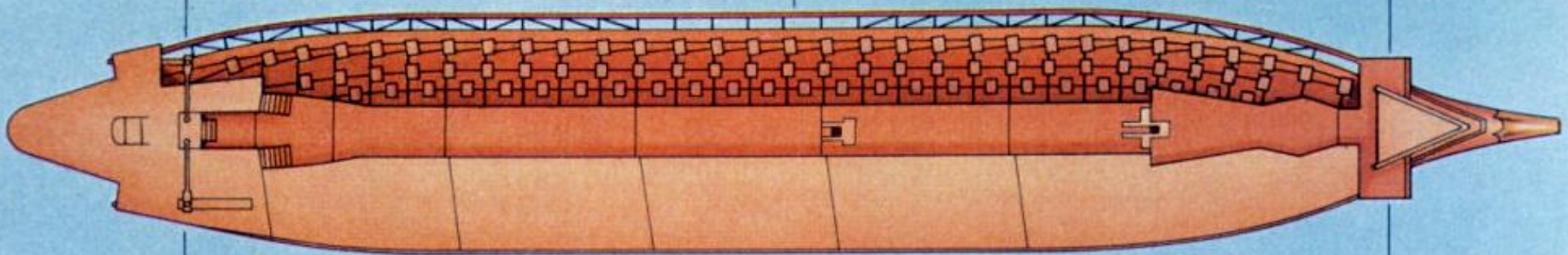
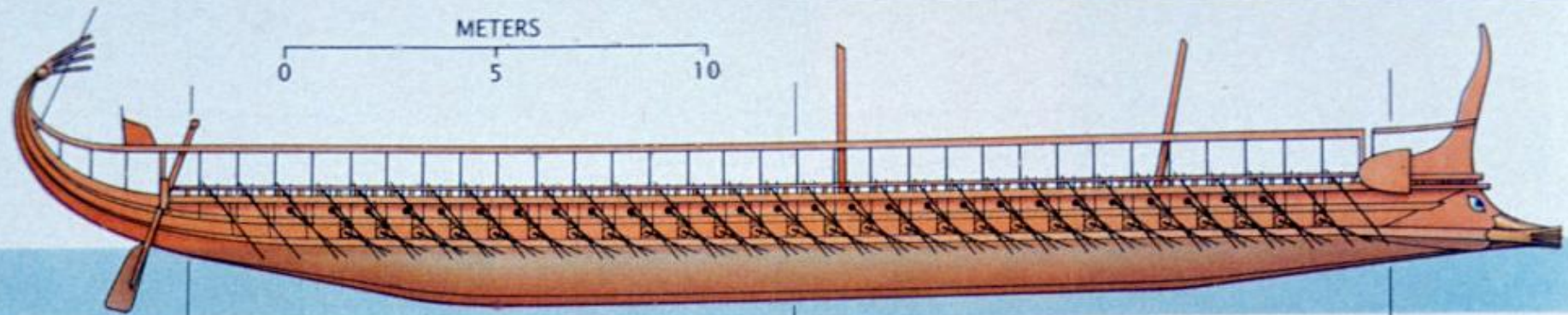
- in Greece, the rise of Themistocles
- uses **ostracism** ostraca (“wastepaper”)
- in Persia, Darius dies and his son Xerxes takes the throne (486-465 BCE)
- revolt in Egypt suppressed (483 BCE)
- **plans to attack Greece and avenge his father Darius**
- the Persian expeditionary force numbers
- over five million people



Back in Greece, the **Athenians discover a huge vein of silver in the Laurian mines** (SE of Athens)

Themistocles convinces the Athenian assembly to build a fleet of triremes (“three [decks of] oars”)





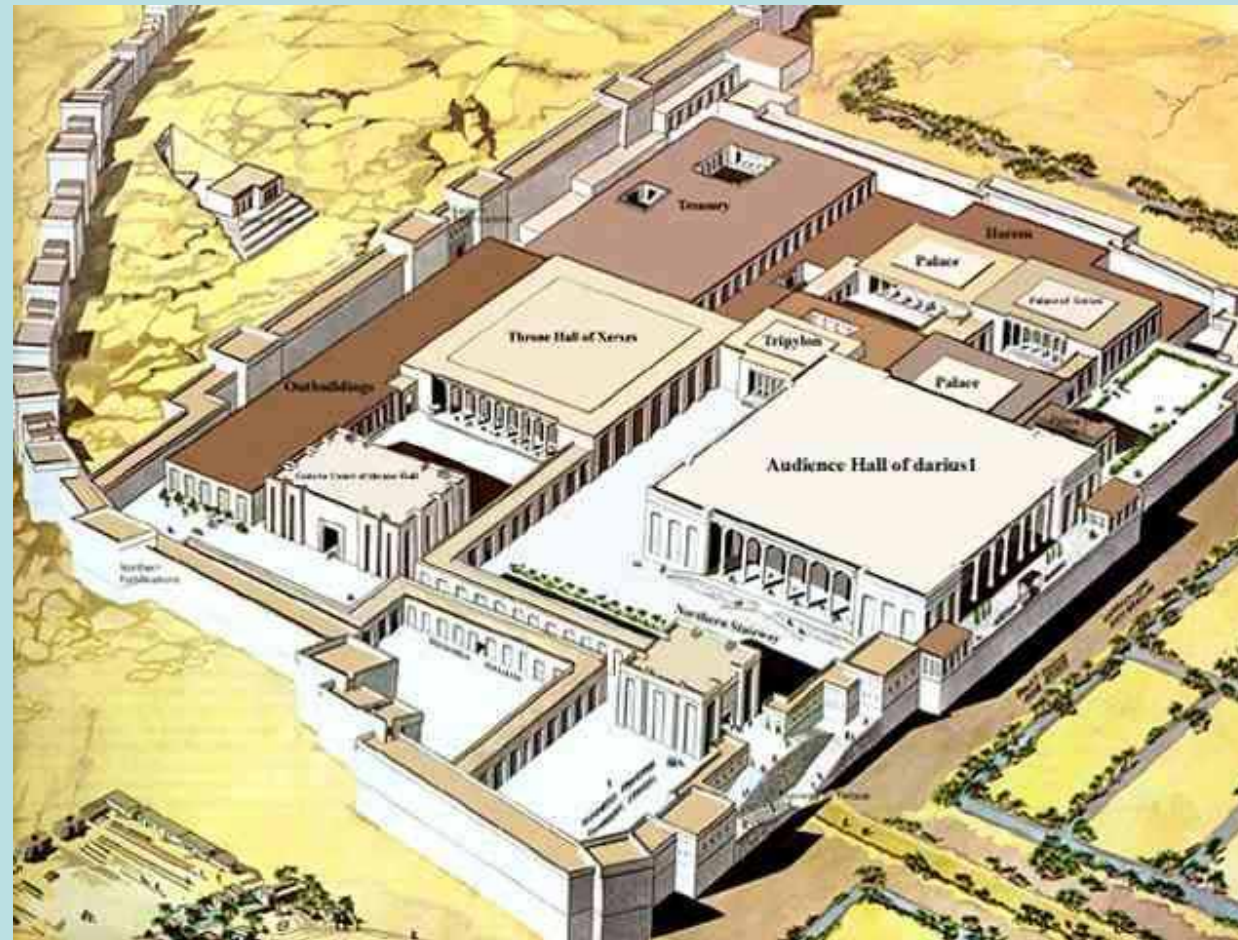
SIDE, TOP AND SECTION VIEWS of *Olympias* are shown in these scale drawings. The 170 rowers were arranged in three files on each side: 31 in the top bank and 27 in each of the two lower banks. The six files are arranged in a V shape, with the lowest

bank farthest inboard and the top one farthest outboard. The pivots for the topmost oars were placed on outriggers. The seats of the rowers in the top and bottom files were angled a few degrees inboard, so that all the oar tips were evenly spaced.

Xerxes came to power in 486 BC, rising from the ranks of the Persian half of the empire.

- From his predecessor, Darius the Mede, he inherited a desire to spread the empire into Greece.
- There were three imperial palaces: **Ecbatana** was the original capital in Media,
- **Persepolis** was the newer capital farther south in modern Iran

- While the old captured Babylon was used at times, the latter Medo-Persian Emperors favored **Susa** (or Shushan), in the old Elamite territory.
- It was this latter palace which Xerxes had decorated extravagantly, with jewels inlaid in the floor, gold and silver furniture, and so forth.
- **It is here where the drama of Esther takes place.**





- In the story, **Ahasuerus (Xerxes)** is married to **Vashti**
- whom he puts aside after he asks her to appear "before the king with the crown royal, to **show the people and the princes her beauty**:"
- for she was fair to look on", and she refuses.
- **Mordecai's cousin Hadassah** is selected from the candidates to be Ahasuerus's new wife and **assumes the "throne name"** of Esther.

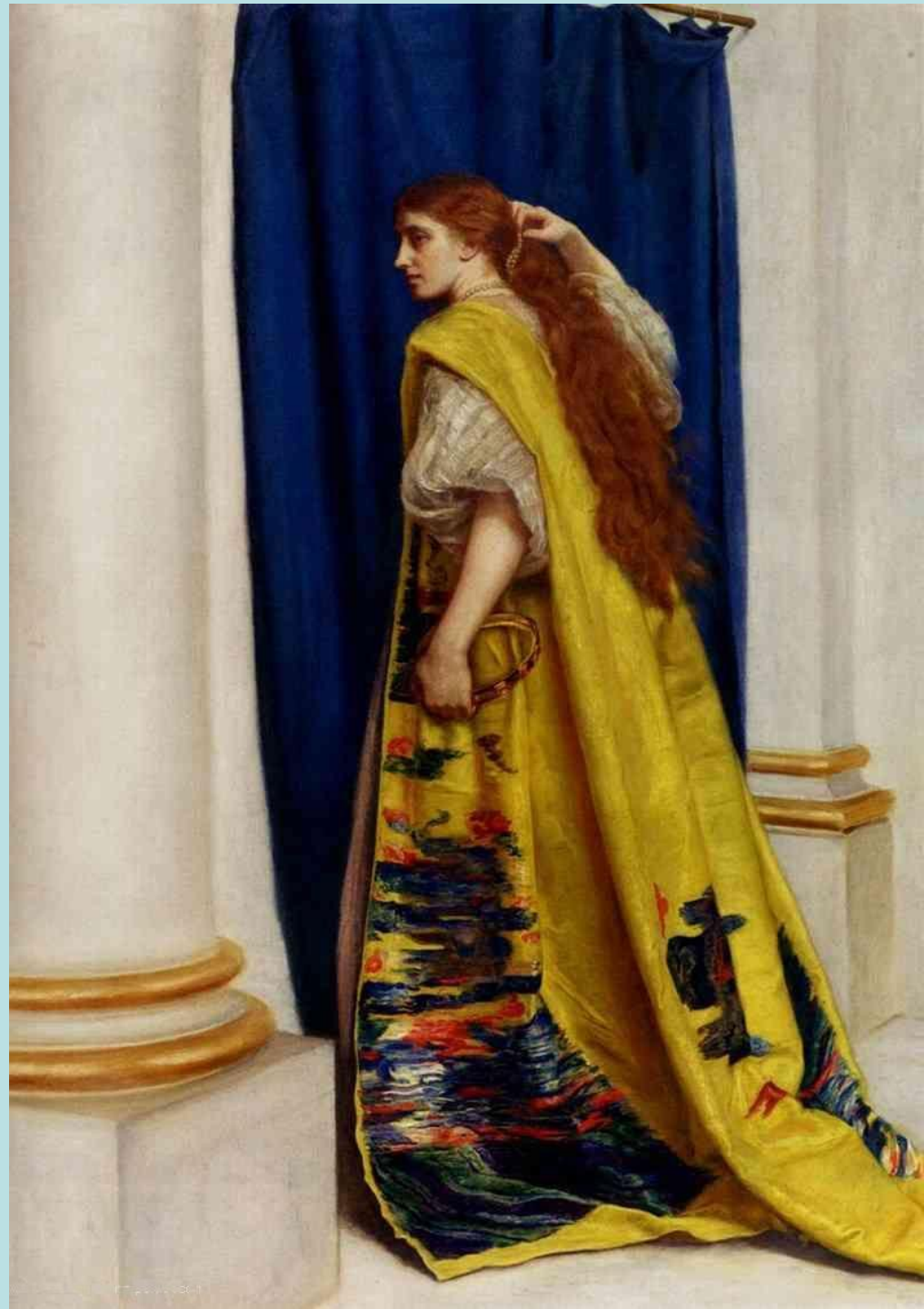


1. **The King's prime minister Haman** (an Agagite) and Haman's wife Zeresh plot to have **Ahasuerus kill all the Jews**, without knowing that Esther is Jewish.
2. **Esther saves the day for her people**: at the risk of endangering her own safety, she warns Ahasuerus of Haman's plot to kill all the Jews.
3. **Haman and his sons are hanged** on the fifty cubit gallows he had had built for Mordecai, and Mordecai becomes prime minister in Haman's place.
4. However, Ahasuerus's edict decreeing the murder of the Jews cannot be rescinded, so he issues another edict **allowing the Jews to take up arms and fight to kill their enemies**, which they do, killing 75,000 men, in addition to women and children.

"**One Night With The King**" chronicles the life of the young Jewish girl, **Hadassah**, who goes on to become the **Biblical Esther, the Queen of Persia**, and saves the Jewish nation from annihilation at the hands of its arch enemy while winning the heart of the fiercely handsome King Xerxes



**Esther: John Everett
Millais 1865**





The same Xerxes from two different points of view



- **By 480 BC, Xerxes had built up an enormous army of some one hundred fifty thousand men and a navy of six hundred ships. Peoples from many little-known nations in the vast empire of Xerxes joined in the army of the Great King to invade little Greece.**



King Louise
Assurbanipal



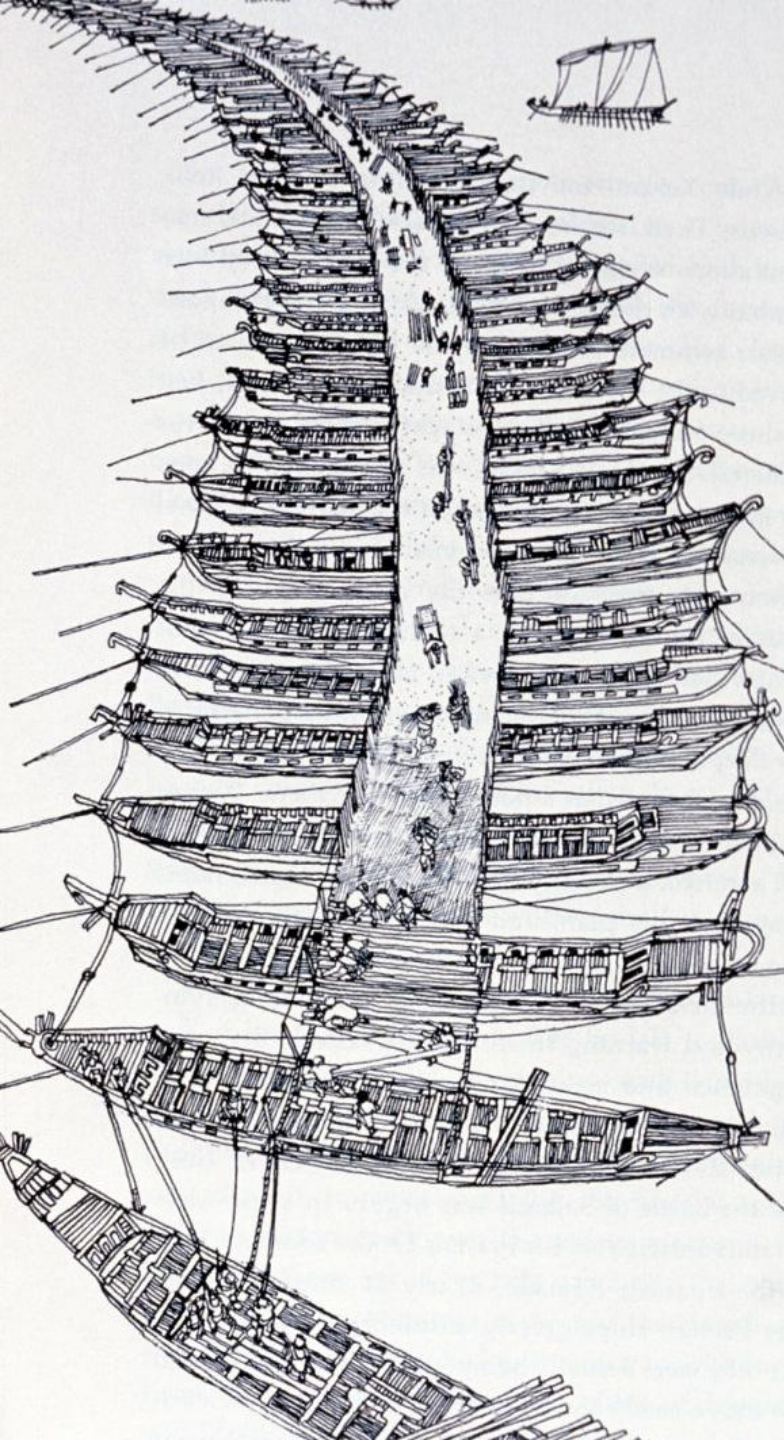
PERSIAN
IMMORTAL

BATTLE
DRESS



The Second Persian War (481-479 BCE)

- –Xerxes attacks by land and sea
- –crosses the **Hellespont** by building a boat-bridge
- the first one is destroyed by strong winds and currents
- Xerxes has the Hellespont cursed and whipped
- –northern Greeks let him pass



In May of the next year (480 BCE), Xerxes and his immense army left Sardis and headed north to the **Hellespont** (the straits between Europe and Asia).

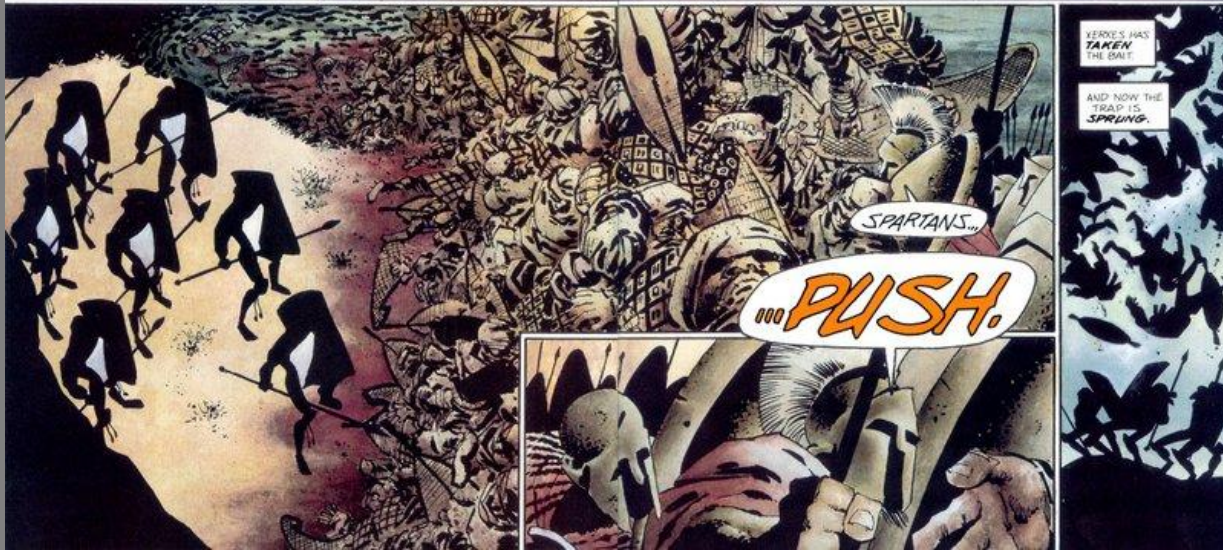
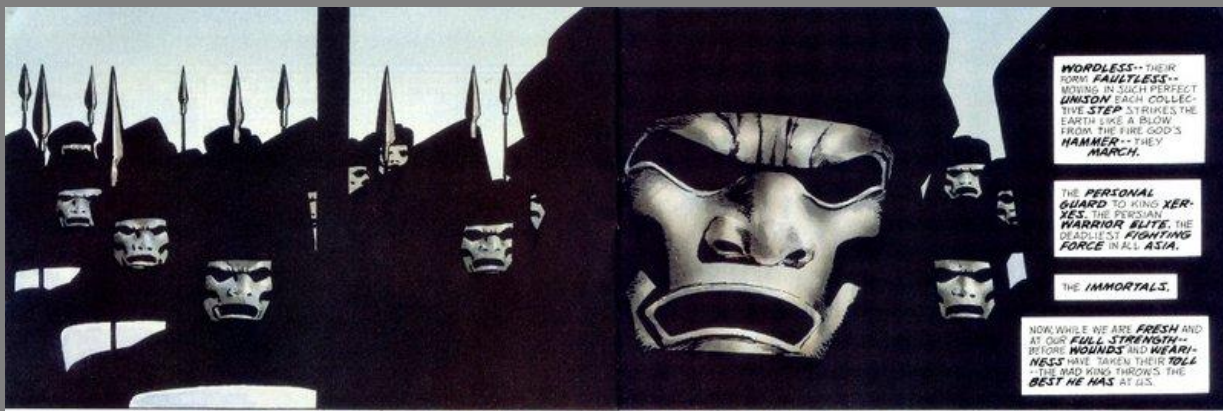
There, the Persian navy joined the King and, in order to facilitate the crossing, Xerxes' engineers had huge ropes constructed which they used to tie old ships together in a straight line across the narrow waters.

Then they built a road over the top of these ships, in Herodotus' words, "paving the sea."

- Given the dual nature of this expedition moving both by sea and land, the Persian army at one point along their journey south had no choice but to follow an inlet which led them to a narrow pass called



Thermopylae—literally "the Hot Gates" because there were hot springs in the surrounding cliffs—an area the Greeks knew well



Xerxes drives his forces south

–The Battle of Thermopylae(480 BCE): Leonidas and 300 Spartans hold off the whole Persian army

–Thebes “medizes”

–Xerxes captures and burns Athens

- in particular, the wooden temple of Athena on the Acropolis

When the Persians saw that force was not going to prevail, they resorted to treachery. From a traitorous native who knew the terrain, they learned about a trail that wound around the pass. Xerxes' elite guard—they were called "The Immortals" because, whenever one died, another immediately replaced him—followed this turncoat to the other end of the pass and led a surprise attack on the Greeks' rear guard.

After **Leonidas**, the Spartan king in charge of the Greek forces at Thermopylae, saw that he and his men had been caught in a trap, he dismissed everyone except for three hundred of his best fighters, all Spartan volunteers who chose to stay with their king and forestall the Persian advance as long as they could, while the rest of the Greek army withdrew to Athens.



Ephialtes the traitor



- With nothing to lose at this point, knowing full well they were going to die, Leonidas and his three-hundred Spartans advanced out of the protection of the narrow pass and, because they were superb warriors—Spartans like Leonidas spent most of their lives training for combat—they inflicted heavy losses on the Persians. When at last they retreated, exhausted from continuous fighting, the Persian army closed in on them, and the Spartans died fighting to a man.





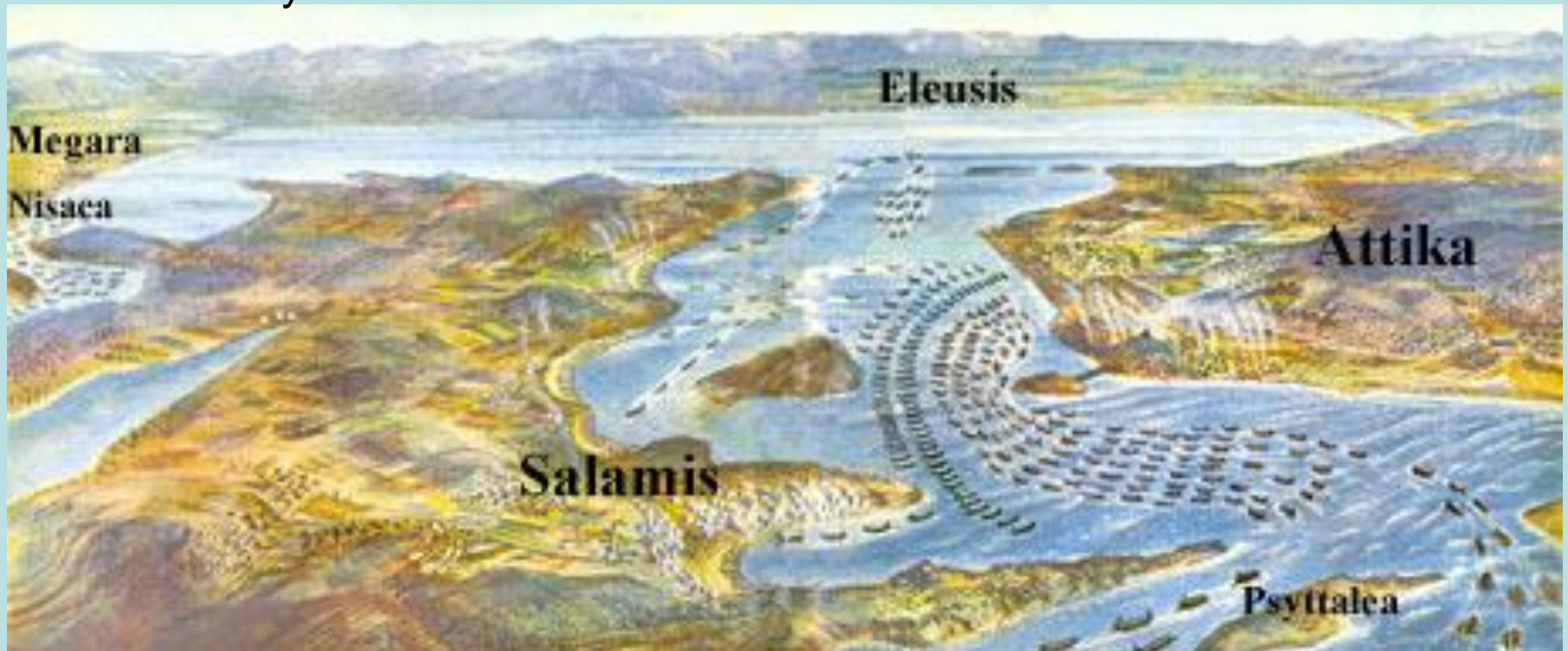
The Greek poet Simonides composed an epitaph of unparalleled simplicity and beauty to honor these valiant warriors:

Go, stranger, and tell the Spartans that here we fell, obedient to their commands.

Athens is burned to the ground by vengeful Xerxes

- With Thermopylae behind him, nothing much stood between the king and the city he so hated, in fact, nothing at all after Thebes "medized," the **only remaining Greek city-state of any significance blocking his passage south.**
- Xerxes could now **fulfill his father's mission to capture Athens and, with that, avenge the Ionians' destruction of Sardis,** Darius' humiliation at Marathon and the many insults his dignity and divinity had suffered at the hands of these insufferable Greeks who resisted reason and the fate everyone knew was theirs.
- And so he did, with vicious **anger—he seized Athens, which the Greeks had evacuated, and torched most of the city, including the old wooden Temple of Athena** on the Acropolis (an up cropping of rock at the center of the city).
- Watching Athens burn must have given him a great sense of satisfaction. But sequestered and crowded on an island nearby, the Athenians saw it, too, and now had their own reason for revenge.

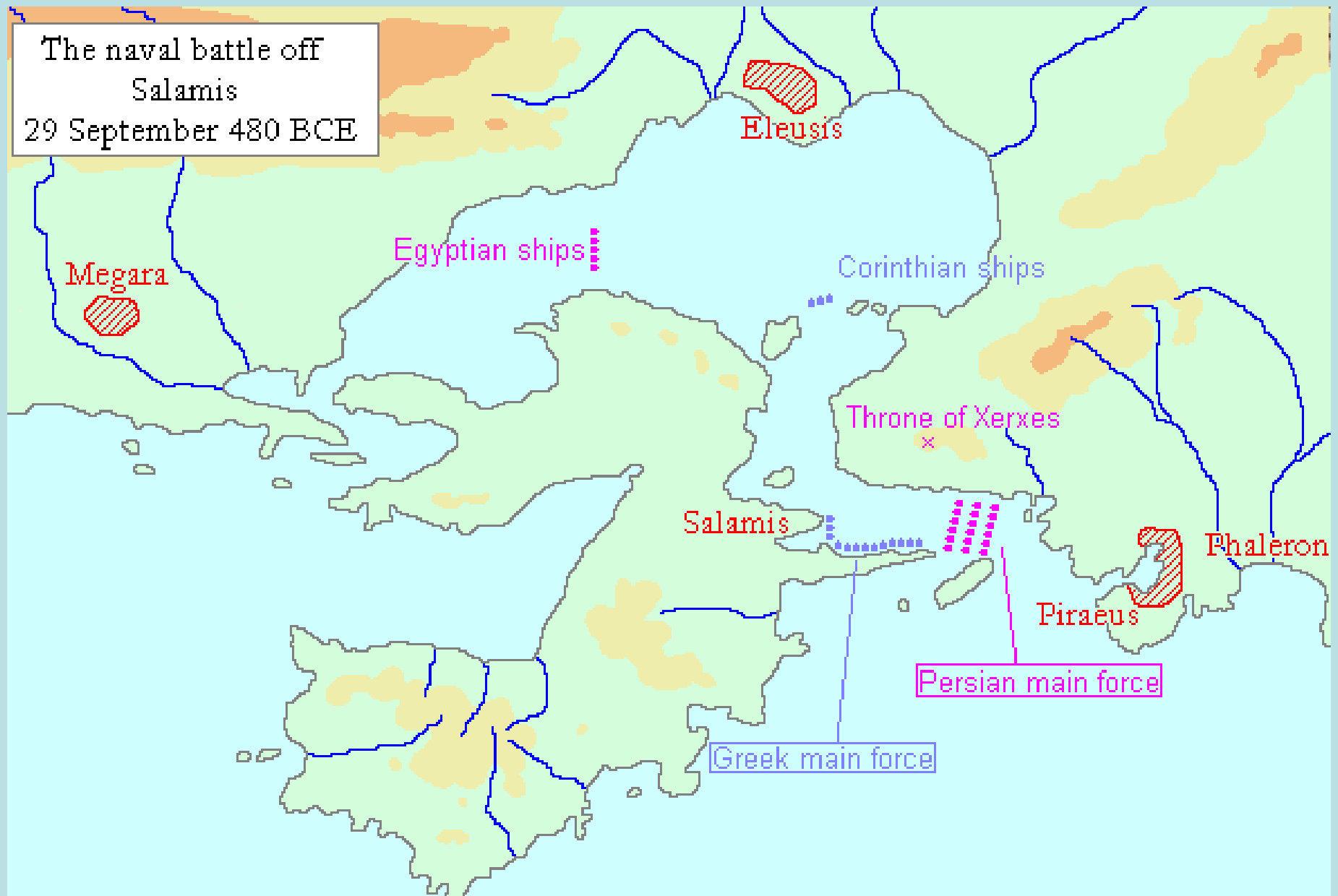
the Greeks, though exiled from their homes, held one high card: since Xerxes was eager to resolve this conflict quickly, **they could pick the time and place of the final confrontation.** They decided to assemble the **full complement of their sea forces near the island of Salamis** close to Athens and face the Persian navy in the straits between the island and the mainland. Either **entrance to the Bay of Salamis is narrow, which would force the Persian ships to break formation as they entered.** That would give the Greeks' **smaller, faster triremes a better chance** of defeating the Persian fleet since they didn't have to meet it all at once.



- Believing that, when the Greeks finally saw for themselves how badly they were outnumbered, they would buckle under and retreat, **Xerxes put his finest squadron of Egyptian battleships at the far end of the bay to block the Greek ships in—he** assumed, of course, he wouldn't need them in the fighting—and then set up a throne on the cliffs overlooking the bay from which he could watch the battle.
- From that commanding view, he ordered his navy to advance into the narrows. When **the Greeks saw this and realized what the king's strategy was, they gave him what he expected**, the tableau of a fleet retreating in panic, and began backing up into the bay.
- At this, the vanguard of the Persian navy broke formation to give chase, which was exactly what the Greeks wanted. **They turned their triremes around abruptly—triremes are especially good at this maneuver—and closed in on the Persian cruisers.**



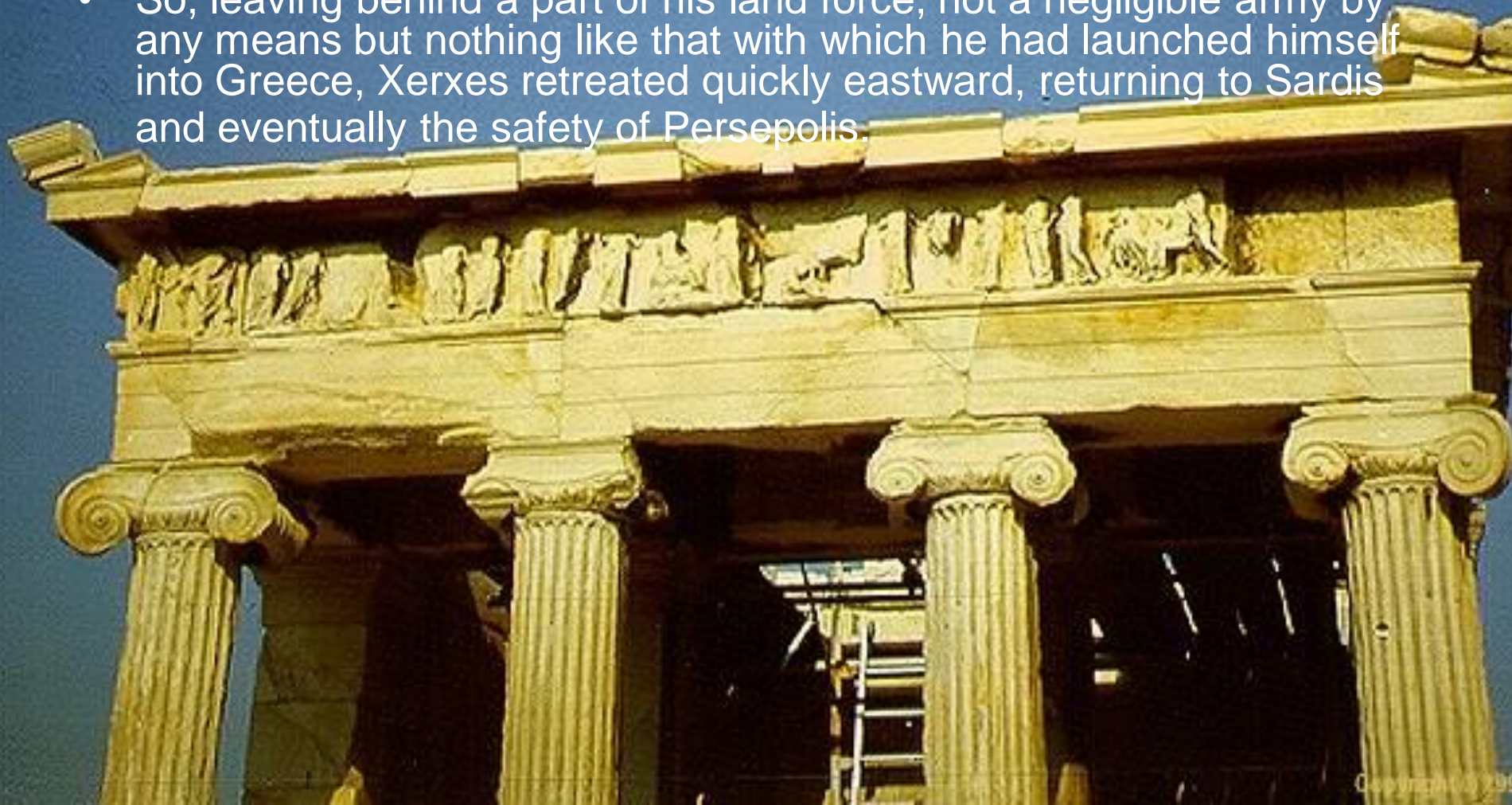
The naval battle off
Salamis
29 September 480 BCE



• Thus, the **Battle of Salamis** began. As ship after ship from the king's armada passed through the straits into the bay, entering only a few at a time because that's all that could fit, the Greeks picked them off. Still worse for the Persians, **those ships which saw the trap and tried to turned around and escape ran headlong into their fellow galleys entering the bay.** More than one Persian ship was rammed and sunk by one of its own comrades. So many of Xerxes' men drowned in the waters around Salamis that day, that for **weeks, even months after the battle, Persian bodies were washing up on the shores around Athens.**



- But even after suffering such a massacre, the Persians' forces still outnumbered those of the Greeks, by as much as three to one.
- Xerxes, however, had had enough of these western upstarts and, afraid that they might take the offensive and try to prevent his return to Persia, he ordered the Persian navy to retreat to Asia Minor.
- After all, for a conqueror whose reach exceeds his grasp, more danger lies at home than abroad.
- So, leaving behind a part of his land force, not a negligible army by any means but nothing like that with which he had launched himself into Greece, Xerxes retreated quickly eastward, returning to Sardis and eventually the safety of Persepolis.



In the king's stead, one of his generals Mardonius stayed behind in Greece to command the remaining Persian army.

He and his forces withdrew from Athens and wintered in Thebes, the safer, "medized" city of the north.



The frieze of the Temple of Athena Nike depicts the Battle of Plataea, the victory of the Greeks over the Persians in 479 BC., a historical, not mythological, art motif. Four of the original 14 slabs are now on display in the British Museum

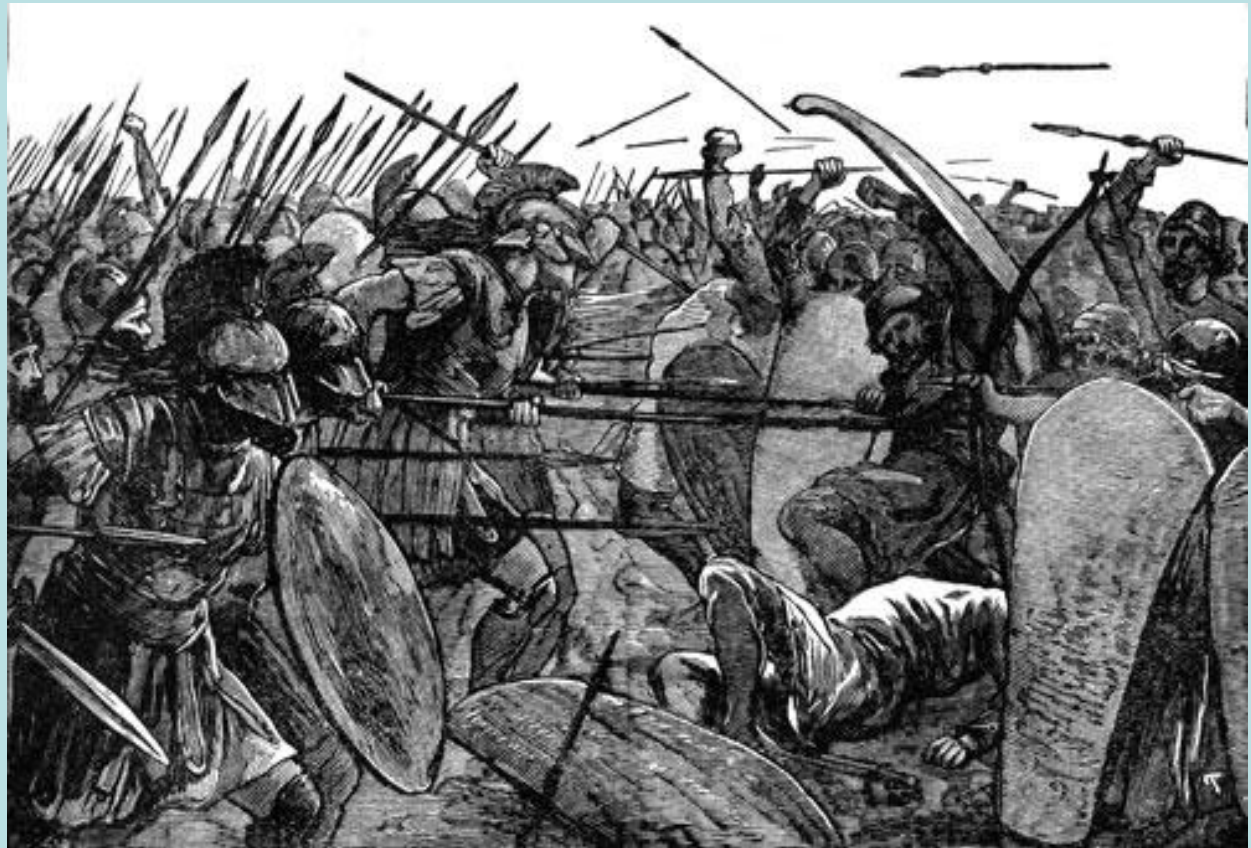
When the fighting season opened in the spring of the next year (479 BCE), the Persians prepared to mount yet another assault on Athens.

As Mardonius advanced, once again the Athenians were forced to withdraw from Attica.

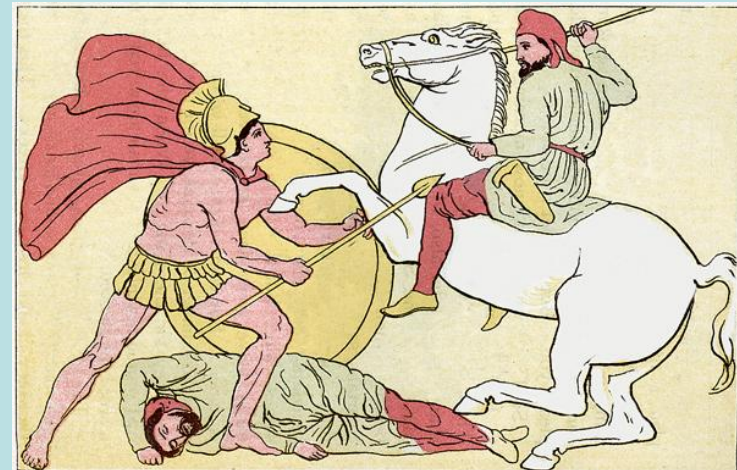
- Plataea was a small town between Thebes and Athens—but in this confrontation the Persians miscalculated yet once more. Misconstruing one of the Greek army's movements to the rear as a retreat, Mardonius ordered his troops to attack uphill, which put them at a considerable disadvantage.
- After a hard fight, the Persian line eventually collapsed, and Mardonius died bravely leading his forces himself.

•What remained of the Xerxes' army fled home to Persia by any means it could.

•The Greeks rejoiced by besieging Thebes, capturing it and killing everyone who'd "medized," .



- V. Conclusion: Herodotus and the Persian Wars
- The Persian Wars mark an important turning point not only in Greek history but, indeed, in the course of all European civilization. First and foremost, because of its **victory Greece was saved from the threat of external rule and could develop on its own.**
- Handed this independence, the Greeks chose to follow a path which forever changed the course of modern life.
- Without their success in this conflict, they would, no doubt, never have had the liberty, means or conviction to invent, discover or create all they did: not just history but philosophy, science, drama, art, architecture, indeed most of the cornerstones of modern civilization.



The Greek theatre or Greek drama is a theatrical tradition that flourished in ancient Greece between c. 550 and c. 220 BC



Theatre at Priene, Turkey - Orchestra Detail



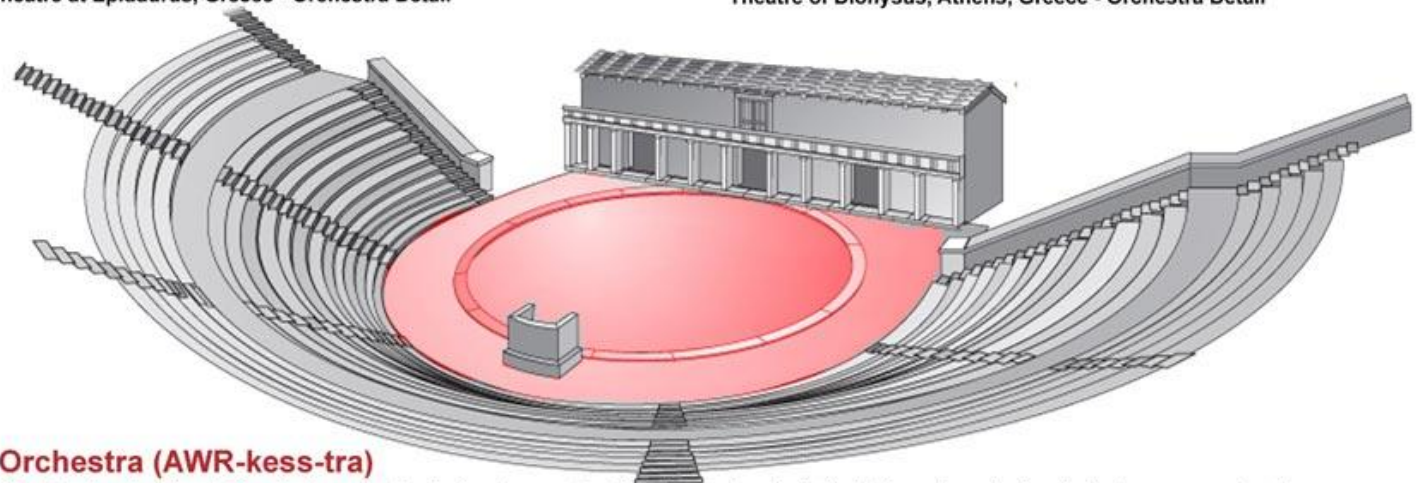
Theatre at Delphi, Greece - Orchestra Detail



Theatre at Epidaurus, Greece - Orchestra Detail



Theatre of Dionysus, Athens, Greece - Orchestra Detail



Orchestra (AWR-kess-tra)

(Greek: dancing place) Circular in early Greek theatre construction, horseshoe in Hellenistic; and semi-circular in Roman constructions, the orchestra was the space between the audience and the stage; primary chorus performance space in Greek theatre; also adapted for use as an arena for Roman "spectacle entertainment"

After the Great Destruction by the Persians in 480 BC, the town and acropolis were rebuilt, and theatre became formalized and an even more major part of Athenian culture and civic pride.

This century is normally regarded as the **Golden Age of Greek drama**. The **centrepiece of the annual Dionysia**,

which took place **once in winter and once in spring**, was a competition between three tragic playwrights at the Theatre of Dionysus.

Each submitted **three tragedies**, plus a **satyr play** (a comic, burlesque version of a mythological subject).

Beginning in a first competition in 486

BC, each playwright also submitted a **comedy**.

Tragedy (late 6th century BC), comedy (~486 BC), and satyr plays were some of the theatrical forms to emerge in the world.



Tragedy is a Greek word meaning 'Goat song'

Greek theatre was originally a religious rite honoring **Dionysus**. Lord of wine and revelry.

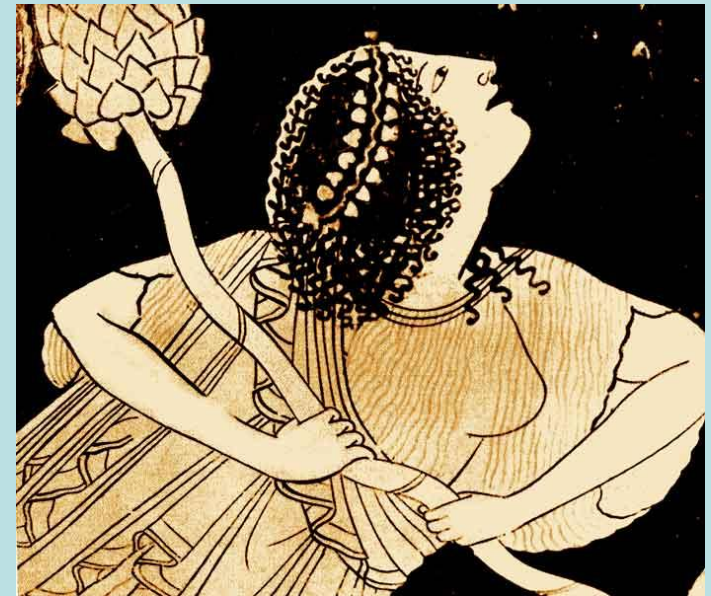
Maenads were female worshippers of Dionysus, The word literally translates as "raving ones".

They were known as wild, insane women who could not be reasoned with.

The mysteries of Dionysus inspired the women to ecstatic frenzy; they indulged in copious amounts of violence, bloodletting, sex and self-intoxication and mutilation.

They were usually pictured as crowned with vine leaves, clothed in fawn skins and carrying the thyrsus, and dancing with the wild abandonment of complete union with primeval nature.

Ecstatic maenad with thyrsus attributed to Kleophrades, c. 500 - 490 BC



In Greek mythology, a thyrsus (thyrsos) was a giant fennel staff covered with ivy vines and leaves and topped with a pine cone. It was a sacred instrument at religious rituals and fetes.



**A Maenad uses the
Thyrsus against a
Satyr, Euphronios
Painter, Berlin Museum**



In Euripides' play, "The Bacchae", Theban Maenads murdered King Pentheus after he banned the worship of Dionysus

because the Maenads denied Pentheus' divinity. Dionysus, Pentheus' cousin, himself lured Pentheus to the woods, where the Maenads tore him apart and his corpse was mutilated by his own mother, Agave - culminating when she tears off his head, believing it to be that of a lion.



Although there were many playwrights in this era, only the work of **four playwrights has survived** in the form of complete plays. All are from Athens.

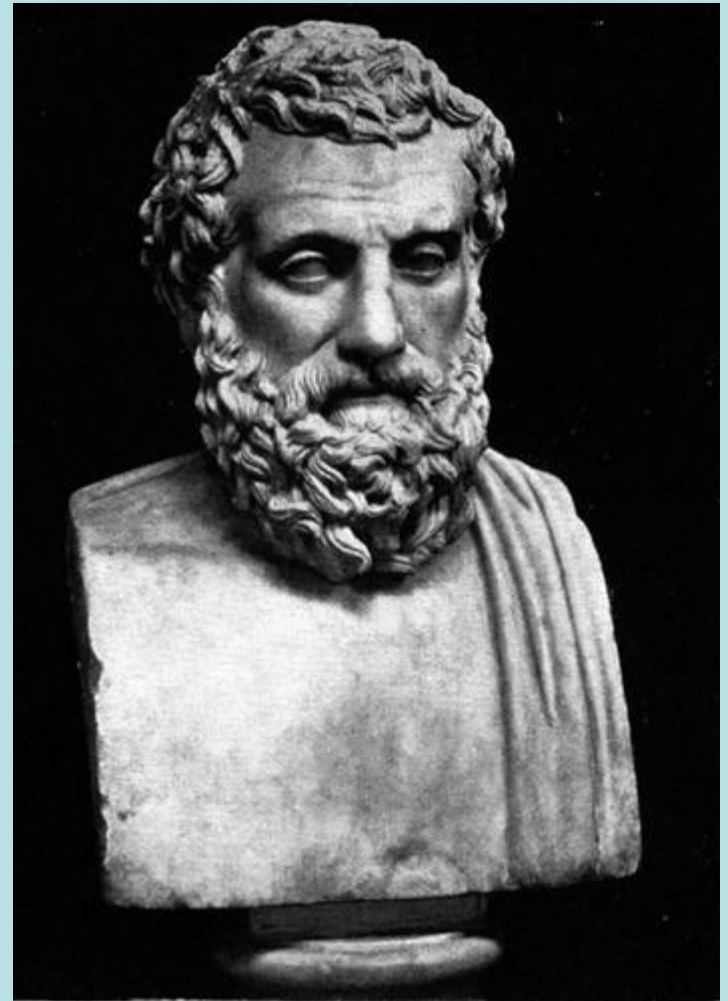
These playwrights are the **tragedians Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, and the comic writer Aristophanes.**

Their plays, along with some secondary sources such as Aristotle, are the basis of what is known about Greek theatre. Much remains unknown about theatre.

Melpomene Muse of tragedy contemplates a theatrical mask



- Aristotle claimed that **Aeschylus** added the second actor, and
- that **Sophocles** added the third actor. Apparently the Greek
- playwrights never put more than **three actors on stage**, except in
- very small roles (such as Pylades in Electra). **No women**
- appeared on stage; female roles were played by men. Violence was
- also never shown on stage. When somebody was about to die, they
- would take that person to the back to "kill" them and
- bring them back "dead." The other people near the stage
- were the **chorus which consisted of about 4-8** people who would stand
- in the back wearing black.



Sophocles (c. 495 - 406 B.C.)

Comedy and Tragedy masks

The theatres were so large it was difficult to convey mood and feeling to distant spectators. **The masks were used to show the emotions of the characters** in a play, and also to allow actors to **switch between roles** and play characters of a **different gender**. The earliest plays were called Satyrs; they were parodies of myths. Their style was much like what we know as Burlesque.



The actors in these plays that had tragic roles wore a boot called a **cothurnus** that elevated them above the other actors. The actors with comedic roles only wore a **thin soled shoe called a sock**.

In order to play female roles, actors wore a “**prosterneda**” (a wooden structure in front of the chest, to imitate female breasts) and “**progastreda**” in front of the belly.

Melpomene is the **muse of tragedy** and is often depicted holding the tragic mask and wearing cothurnus. **Thalia** is the muse of comedy and is similarly associated with the mask of comedy and comic’s socks. Some people refer to the masks as “**Sock and Buskin.**”





Altar built in 334 BC by the choregos *Lysikrates* of Kikynna, son of Lysitheides.

To commemorate the victor of the annual dramatic festival at the theater of Dionysos