

5.1- Cultures o the Mountains and Sea

Geography Shapes Greek Life

The Sea – The Aegean, Ionian and Black Sea were important transportation routes which linked most parts of Greece. Sea travel and trade connected Greece with most other societies and were important because Greece lacked natural resources such as timber, precious metals and usable farmland.

The Land – $\frac{3}{4}$ of Greece was covered in mountains which divided land into a number of different regions. Instead of a single government the Greeks developed small, independent communities within each little valley. Greece was never able to support a large population with very little farmland or fresh water for irrigation.

The Climate – moderate temperatures supported and outdoor life and men spent much of their leisure time at outdoor public events. They often met outdoors to discuss public issues, exchange news and take an active part in civic life.

Epics of Homer

Wrote the Iliad, celebrating heroic deeds.

5.2 – Warring City-States

Polis – a political unit in ancient Greece

At the **agora** (marketplace) or the **acropolis** (fortified hilltop) citizens would gather to discuss city government

Greek Political Structures – refer to page 128 in your textbook

Tyrants – unlike today tyrants were generally not considered harsh or cruel they were looked upon as leaders who would work for the interests of the ordinary people.

Athens Builds a Limited Democracy

Democracy means rule by the people

Draco

- built a legal code based on the idea that all Athenians rich and poor were equal under the law
- dealt very harshly with criminals, making death the punishment for practically every crime
- also practiced debt-slavery – debtors worked as slaves to repay debts

Solon

- outlawed debt slavery, because he believed that no citizen should own another citizen
- organized all Athenian citizens into four social classes according to wealth
- only members of the top three classes could participate in the Athenian assembly
- introduced the legal concept that any citizen could bring charges against wrongdoers

Cleisthenes

- broke up the power of the nobility by organizing citizens into ten groups based on where they lived rather than on their wealth
- created the Council of Five Hundred which proposed laws and counseled the assembly
- council members were chosen by lot or at random among citizens
- women, slaves and foreigners were excluded from citizenship and had few rights

Athenian Education

- the sons of wealthy families received education in reading, grammar, poetry, history, mathematics, music, logic, public speaking and athletics
- girls did not attend school but were educated at home in child-rearing, weaving cloth, preparing meals and managing the household

Sparta

- Spartan social order consisted of at least three groups, first citizens descended from the original inhabitants of the region who owned the land. Second a group of non-citizens who were free and worked in commerce and industry. The third group was made up of **helots** at the bottom of society – they who worked as slaves in the fields or as house servants. Helots were captured from other regions.
- Spartan government was run by Spartan citizens, which made up a Council of Elders, elected officials who carried out the laws and two Kings who ruled over Sparta's military forces

Spartan Daily Life

- taught to put service to Sparta before everything – even love of family
- all forms of individual expression were discouraged
- Spartans did not value the arts, literature or intellectual pursuits
- Men served in the army until the age of 60
- Daily life centered on military training
- Encouraged to steal food
- Girls received some military training, wrestled and played sports
- Women had considerable freedom especially when running the family estates when their husbands were on active military service

The Persian Wars

- danger of a helot revolt led Sparta to become a military state
- struggles between rich and poor led Athens to become a democracy
- both Sparta and Athens were in danger of a Persian invasion

A New Kind of Army

- Iron replaces bronze
- Only the rich could afford bronze weapons and so it was only the rich who served in the army
- Now that iron was more common and therefore cheaper ordinary citizens, merchants, artisans and small landowners could also become foot soldiers in the army
- These foot soldiers were called **hoplites** and when they stood side by side holding a spear in one hand and a shield in the other they formed a fearsome force called the **phalanx**