

LATE CLASSICAL PERIOD

404 TO 338 B.C.

THIRTY TYRANTS IN ATHENS TO BATTLE OF CHAERONEA

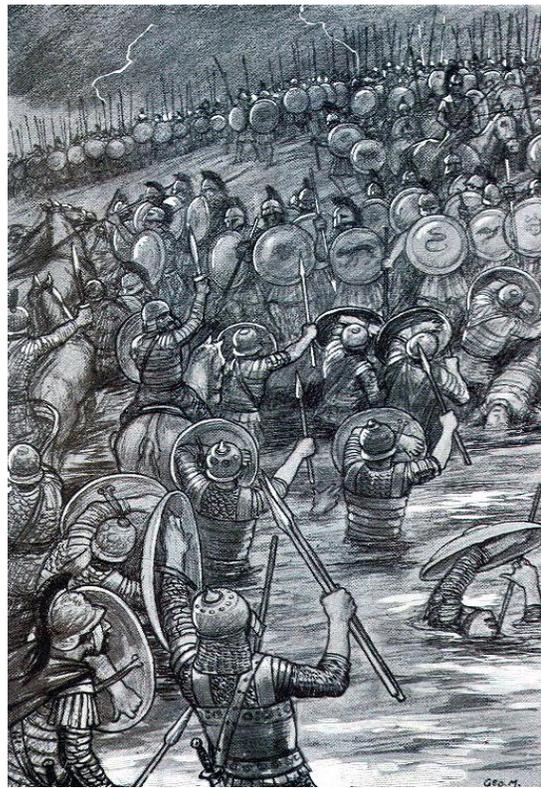
ERA SUMMARY – LATE CLASSICAL

After the defeat of Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War, Sparta became the undisputed first power among the Greek city-states. The walls of Athens were pulled down and the Spartan general [Lysander](#) appointed thirty men who were loyal to Sparta to run the city. The leaders were called the "thirty tyrants" and they put many of their political opponents, including [Socrates](#) to death. [Plato](#) was a student of Socrates and witnessed these oppressions and they greatly influenced his later writings.

The period immediately after the Peloponnesian war is called the "Spartan Hegemony" because, although Sparta did not collect tribute, it allowed only governments which were friendly to Sparta to exist throughout Greece. The major figure of this period was [Agesilaus](#), a brave and noble Spartan king who came very near to freeing all of the Greek Colonies in Asia Minor before he was recalled to deal with a political crisis at home. While Agesilaus was off fighting Persians in the east, the Spartan government had fallen into a great deal of trouble. The spoils from the successful wars had done much to corrupt Sparta; there was intrigue and infighting and wars with [Corinth](#) and [Thebes](#).

These problems combined with a significantly reduced population led to the disaster the *Battle of Leuctra* in 371 BC. Only 33 years after they prevailed in the [Peloponnesian War](#), the Spartans suffered a humiliating defeat against Thebes, the first major land battle that the Spartans had lost to another Greek city-state in 500 years. Sparta never recovered its mystique. The spoils of victory had done more to damage Sparta in a generation than any enemy had been able to do in half a millennium.

The rise of Thebes as a dominant power in Greece was unprecedented. Although always a large and prosperous city it had never had particularly talented military leaders until the rise of [Epaminondas](#) and [Pelopidas](#). Under their leadership, Thebes achieved a military predominance over most of Greece and provided a real check to Sparta's influence. The battle of Leuctra



TIMOLEON AT THE BATTLE OF CRIMESUS

revealed Epaminondas as a military genius of first rank, and his subsequent diplomatic victories also showed his talent as a statesman. The period of Theban influence however, did not survive the death of Epaminondas in 362 BC. Sparta was humiliated, Thebes was leaderless, and no great power arose to provide dominant leadership to Greece. The fortunes of Athens eventually improved, but it never recovered its former predominance, and it was not prepared to resist the Macedonian threat when it did arise.

Macedonia was a semi-barbaric country north of Greece that had never been considered as fully civilized by the great city-states of the Greek mainland. [Philip of Macedonia](#), however, spent his youth as a hostage in Thebes under the great Epaminondas. There he had learned the best of Greek military strategies and became a great admirer of Greek culture. He ascended to the throne of Macedonia in 359 and spent the early part of his reign reforming the Macedonian military, expanding his power, and promoting Greek culture. His first military dealings with Greece involved the [Sacred War](#) during which he generously defended the interests of the Oracle at Delphi against a band of marauding Phocians. Once this foothold was made, he used statesmanship and diplomacy to gain ascendancy over many weaker Greek allies until Athens and Thebes, at the behest of the Athenian orator [Demosthenes](#) finally recognized the threat. When Philip finally met their combined forces in 338 BC at the *Battle of Chaeronea*, the Greeks were soundly thrashed, and Athens fell under the Macedonian Yoke. Philip was however, an admirer the Greeks and granted them many freedoms, but little power. Greek culture and philosophy continued to thrive in Athens for many years afterward, but the political autonomy on mainland Greece was gone forever.

Just as mainland Greece was losing its independence, the island of Sicily was preparing to overthrow [Dionysius the Younger](#), a tyrant whose family had reigned in Syracuse for two generations. The tyrants of Syracuse were notoriously oppressive and paranoid, although the younger Dionysus made pretensions of high culture and was a patron of the arts. He even hired the great philosopher Plato as a private tutor for several years, but that episode did not end well. Eventually, [Timoleon](#), a native of Corinth, became the great hero of the [Sicilian Wars](#), when he overthrew the tyrant of Syracuse, fought off invaders from Carthage, and established an independent Greek republic in Syracuse that thrived for over 100 years, until it was conquered by Rome.

CHARACTERS – LATE CLASSICAL

RETREAT OF THE 10,000

Xenophon	430–357 BC	Historian who led Greek army out of Persia, in retreat of the Ten Thousand.
Cyrus the Younger	d. 401 BC	Plotted to kill his brother Artaxerxes, and assume the Persian throne.
Clearchus	d. 401 BC	Spartan mercenary who commanded the 'Ten Thousand' Greeks at Cunaxa. Treacherously killed by Tissaphernes.
Tissaphernes	d. 395 BC	Persian Satrap of Asia Minor during Peloponnesian War. Allied with Sparta.
Artaxerxes Mnemon	d. 358 BC	King of Persia during the retreat of the Ten Thousand.

SPARTA-THEBES RIVALRY

Agesilaus	444–360 BC	Leader of Sparta after the Peloponnesian War. Campaigned in Asia Minor and warred with Thebes.
Pelopidas	410–364 BC	Helped to liberate Thebes. Leader of the "Sacred Band" of Theban Warriors.
Epaminondas	418–362 BC	Greatest General of his age. Defeated the Spartans at the <i>Battle of Leuctra</i> , and made Thebes predominant.

SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY

Plato	427–347 BC	Writer of moral philosophy. Well known for 'Dialogues'. Student of Socrates.
Aristotle	384–322 BC	Renowned scientist and philosopher. Cataloged all types of knowledge. Tutor to Alexander the Great.
Diogenes	412–323 BC	Cynic Philosopher.

TYRANTS IN SICILY

Dionysius the Elder	430–367 BC	From humble origins, arose to become Tyrant of the city of Syracuse.
Damon and Pythias	~ 380 BC	Story of Damon and Pythias celebrates trusted friendship and willingness to die for one another.
Dionysius the Younger	397–343 BC	Continued tyrannical reign in Syracuse after the death of his father; student of Plato, overthrown by Dion.
Dion	409–354 BC	Brother-in-law of the Tyrant Dionysius of Syracuse; helped to overthrow him.
Timoleon	d. 337 BC	Liberated the entire island of Syracuse from Tyrants and Carthaginians.

RISE OF MACEDONIA

Phocion	402–318 BC	Athenian statesmen who tried to avoid war between Athens and Macedonia. Sometimes opposed Demosthenes.
Philip of Macedonia	382–336 BC	Used statesmanship as well as military force to bring Greece under sway of Macedonia.
Demosthenes	385–322 BC	One of Greece's greatest orators. Spoke against Philip and the Macedonians.

TIMELINE – LATE CLASSICAL

- 404 Pro-Spartan government of the "Thirty Tyrants" oppresses popular Athenian leaders.
- 403 Thrasybulus, leader of the exiled Athenian democrats, overthrows the Thirty Tyrants.
- 401-399 Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greek soldiers from the heart of Persia, recorded by Xenophon.
- 401 Cyrus the Younger is killed, during a rebellion against Artaxerxes at the ***Battle of Cunaxa***.
- 399 Socrates is condemned to death for "impiety and corruption of youth."
- 393 Long walls of Athens are rebuilt.
- 387 Disastrous "Peace of Antalcidas" treaty ends the Corinthian War.
- 386 Dionysius the Elder comes to power as the tyrant of Syracuse.
- 385 Plato founds his Academy in Athens.
- 382 Spartans capture citadel at Thebes, install a puppet government.
- 379 Theban rebels, led by Pelopidas overthrow the pro-Spartan government.
- 373-363 Boeotian Wars destroys Spartan hegemony over Greece.
- 371 **Theban general Epaminondas routes the Spartans at the *Battle of Leuctra*.**
- 364 Pelopidas is killed while fighting Alexander, despot of Phera.
- 362 Death of Epaminondas at the *Battle of Mantinea* ends Theban supremacy.
- 367 Dionysius the Younger succeeds to power in Syracuse, after the death of his father.
- 357 Dion, an exiled minister, raises a fleet and overthrows of Syracuse.
- 357-356 Athenian Social War disrupts Athens' effort to rebuild its empire.
- 355-352 Philip of Macedonia begins meddling in Greek affairs, by getting involved in the Sacred War.
- 338-335 Macedonian Conquest of Greece
- 338 **Philip of Macedonia defeats Athens and Thebes at the *Battle of Chaeronea*.**
- 336 Philip of Macedonia is assassinated at a wedding.
- 335 **Thebes is besieged and destroyed by Alexander after it rebels from Macedonia.**
- 345-340 Third Carthaginian Invasion of Sicily
- 340 Timoleon drives Carthage out of Sicily at *Battle of Crimesus*.

RECOMMENDED READING – LATE CLASSICAL

CORE READING ASSIGNMENTS *

Haaren - <u>Famous Men of Greece</u>	<u>Xenophon</u> to <u>Epaminondas and Pelopidas</u> (2)
Guerber - <u>The Story of the Greeks</u>	<u>Overthrow of Thirty Tyrants</u> to <u>Philip Masters Greece</u> (23)
Macgregor - <u>The Story of Greece</u>	<u>March of the Ten Thousand</u> to <u>The Sacred War</u> (12)

SUPPLEMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Lemon - <u>Stories from Greek History</u>	<i>entire book</i>
Weston – <u>Plutarch's Lives</u>	<u>Pelopidas</u> to <u>Philopoemen</u> (4)
Shaw - <u>Stories of the Ancient Greeks</u>	<u>Retreat of the Ten Thousand</u> to <u>The Wise Man Who Lipped</u> (8)
Tappan - <u>Story of the Greek People</u>	<u>When Sparta Ruled</u> to <u>Philip of Macedonia</u> (3)
Harding - <u>Greek Gods and Heroes</u>	<u>Epaminondas in Thebes</u> to <u>Philip and Demosthenes</u> (2)
Younghusband - <u>Retreat of the Ten Thousand</u>	<i>entire book</i>
Morris - <u>Historical Tales - Greek</u>	<u>Retreat of the Ten Thousand</u> to <u>The Sacred War</u> (5)
Church - <u>Greek Life and Story</u>	<u>The Wisest of Men</u> to <u>The One Hero of Thebes</u> (4)
Church - <u>Helmet and Spear</u>	<u>The Lord of Syracuse</u> to <u>The Fight on the River</u> (5)

ALSO RECOMMENDED

Gould - <u>Children's Plutarch - Greeks</u>	<u>In Old Persia</u> to <u>The Man Who Saved Sicily</u> (6)
Kaufman - <u>Young Folks Plutarch</u>	<u>Artaxerxes</u> to <u>Timoleon</u> (6)
Church - <u>Callias - The Fall of Athens</u>	<i>entire book</i>

* Level I and II Study Questions are based on **Core Reading Assignments**.