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Greece in Spectacular Cross-section

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published by

Oxford Unversity Press

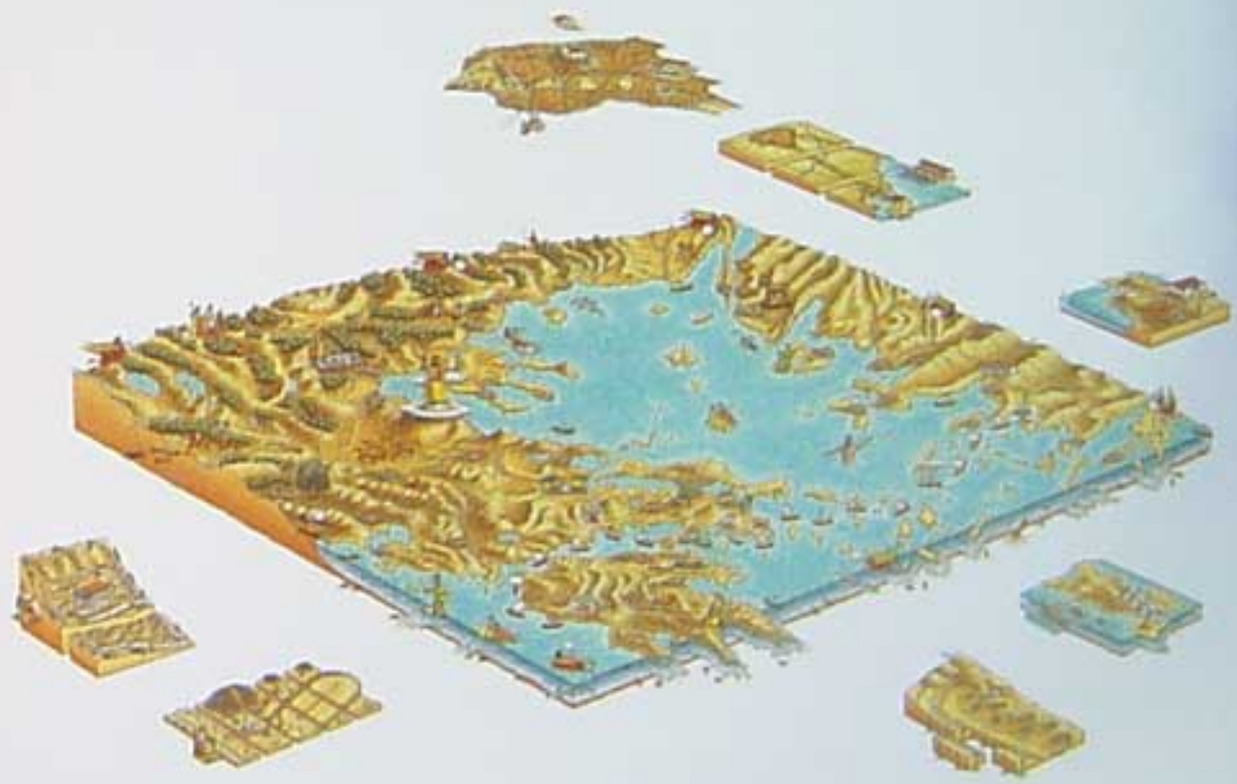
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STEPHEN BIESTY

GREECE

in spectacular cross-section



Text by Stewart Ross

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OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Our journey

I'm Neleus, aged almost 12, and I've just returned from the fantastic journey shown on this map. My father, the grain merchant Aristagoras, took me and my younger brother Periander ('Peri', who is 10) to Athens. Dad had important business to sort out there. We then sailed to Delphi, where we consulted the world-famous oracle. Finally, the gods decided our family's future in a wrestling match at the Olympic Games.
Cool trip, eh?

Artemis
The virgin deity Artemis was the goddess of hunting, animals and childbirth. Her temple at Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.

DAY 32
The theatre of Dionysus
This famous theatre nestles beneath the city's Acropolis, on which stands the mighty Parthenon, the temple of Athene.

DAY 29
The Agora at Athens
The open space at the heart of the city, surrounded by important public buildings, commonly serves as a market place.

DAY 13
The streets of Athens
Animals and people of every description throng the streets of the largest city in Greece.

WAXING DECAD | MIDDLE DECAD | WANING DECAD

The Athenian calendar
A year was divided into 12 months, cycles of the Moon of 29 or 30 days each. A month was divided into three 'decads' of 10 days each: a waxing decad (Moon growing larger), a middle decad (Moon nearly full or full), and a waning decad (Moon getting smaller).

Our story is set in 436 BCE and starts in the month of THARGELION (mid-May to June)

and moves through SKIROPHORION (July)

to HEKATOMBAION (August).

ΘΑΡΓΗΛΙΩΝ
ΣΚΙΡΟΦΟΡΙΩΝ
ΕΚΑΤΟΜΒΑΙΩΝ

The Greek alphabet, with the corresponding English letters, is shown on page 28.

DAY 12
Piraeus
The 'town of three harbours' is Athens' main port, 6.5 kilometres southwest of the capital.

DAY 1
Miletus
The journey starts here, in the leading city of Ionia, which is also one of Athens' main allies.

Athens
Amazons, female warriors
Troy
Trojan horse
Lesbos, a centre of the arts
Samos, birthplace of the mathematician Pythagoras
Eurus, the east wind
Ephesus
Naxos, famous for its marble
Notus, the south wind
nymph or naiad, a spirit of nature
Boreas, the north wind
canal dug through the Athos peninsular by the Persian king Xerxes
shepherd with his flock
woodcutters near Amphipolis, a vital Greek frontier post
Zeus on Mount Olympus
lion mosaic at Pella, capital of Macedonia
mountain bandits
Tricca, famous for its fine horses
ALGEAN SEA
Corinth, a great trading city
the poet Sappho's home island
Thebes
hunting
Dodona, site of an oracle of Zeus
Zeus' sacred oak at Dodona, founded as a sanctuary by a black dove
Zephyrus, the west wind
Thermopylae
Rhaka, birthplace of Odysseus, hero of Homer's Odyssey
Marathon
battle of Salamis
paved route for dragging ships across the Isthmus of Corinth
Lacedaim
Sparta, Athens' great rival
Heracles
Epidaurus, a centre for healing with a famous theatre
fountain gift of the sea

DAY 50
Delphi
The temple of Apollo, from which the god issues his famous prophetic utterances, is on the southern slopes of Mount Parnassus.

DAY 71
Olympia
Here the greatest of all athletic games have been held in honour of Zeus every four years for 340 years.

Heracles in Nemea
Made mad by the goddess Hera, the Greek hero Heracles (the Roman Hercules) killed his own children. As a punishment he had to perform 12 near-impossible labours. He began by strangling the invulnerable Nemean lion.

DAY 4
Delos
This island, firmly under Athenian control, is said to be the birthplace of the god Apollo and his twin sister Artemis.

DAY 8
Laurion
The output of the region's vast silver mines helps make Athens the richest city-state in Greece.

At home in Miletus

We didn't sleep much the night before we left. Dad had a noisy farewell party – he was in a good mood because he'd just heard from Aspasia. She's the Milesian girlfriend of Pericles, a really important Athenian politician. Her letter said Pericles would help dad in the Athenian courts. After packing, Peri and I argued for hours about the Milesian wrestler Thrasyboulos. Peri reckoned 'Boulos' was certain to win the Olympics. I wasn't so sure.

women
City life for respectable Greek women was very limited. They had few rights and were expected to spend most of their time doing tedious work indoors. Women living in the countryside were far less restricted.

weaving
Spinning wool into threads and then weaving the threads into cloth on a loom is women's work. It takes place on the first floor, the area of the house largely reserved for women and children.

terracotta roof tiles

lamp lighter slave

Nefersis

Peri

sick child with pet ducks

cheese

dried fruit

onions

herbs

household altar

mud brick

provisions for the voyage

bread making

evening supper

bucket toilet

slave sneaking a drink of wine

Penelope

guest given a floral crown

terracotta hip bath

olive oil used as soap

Nefersis' mother with her keys at her waist

bundles of spun thread

Helen

making flat loaves

warehouses

Aristagoras' ship

rubber sloping dressing wall

shish!
A slave asks the musicians to enter quietly. They are holding reed pipes (sounding a bit like a modern oboe), a stringed lyre and a tambourine.

wine served from cooler

wine and water mixed

Aristagoras

couch

table for food and drink

slave washing a guest's feet

healthy diet
Home-made bread, fresh fish and meat, vegetables and fruit – the diet in Nefersis' household is very healthy. It is less so for poorer people, who rely heavily on bread at every meal.

symposium
Guests arrive late for Aristagoras' farewell symposium – an all-male drinking party. The guests are entertained by poets, musicians, dancers and a philosopher, but the principal purpose of the gathering is to drink and make conversation.

more wine!
A slave struggles with an amphora (large jar) of wine. The Greeks' favourite drink is normally drunk strong, mixed with water. The best wine is said to come from the island of Chios.

slave and guard dog

well

philosopher trying in vain to get people's attention

mosaic floor of the dining area

philosophy and science
The Greeks were proud of their great philosophers. Thinkers such as Socrates (469–399 BC), Plato (c. 429–347), Aristotle (384–322) and Archimedes (c. 287–212) laid the foundations of much of modern science and learning.

game of knucklebones
Children join in to flick bone dogs into the target bowl.

Dionysus
The god of wine and parties was usually accompanied by leaping satyrs (woodland spirits). Athens' leading drama festival, the spring Dionysia, was held in his honour.

children's fun
Children had toys like hoops, rattles, and dolls made of cloth or pottery. Some had a pet dog or even a weasel! Ball games were popular, as was knucklebones – catching beans on the back of your hand.