

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History

SEMESTER I YEAR 1975-76

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
303	History of Greek Civilization	Mr. Edson

COURSE DESCRIPTION

History 303 (Semester I) and 304 (Semester II) together are designed to be a history of the ancient Greeks from early times down to the eve of the intervention of the Roman republic in the eastern Mediterranean. These two courses combined are designated as a "History of Greek Civilization" because never in their independent history were the Greeks politically unified. Ancient Greek history is therefore not the history of a single state, like Roman, French, English or American history, but is rather the history of a way of life, a culture, and thus would resemble, for example, "European" history.

The emphasis in these courses is on institutional, social and political history. The achievements of the Greeks in literature, art, science and philosophy are so considerable that each of them is, very justifiably, a subject of university instruction in its own right. These achievements can therefore only be touched upon in a general history of the ancient Greeks primarily in order to illustrate, and illuminate, the main developments.

The first semester of the two-semester sequence is called the "Greek City" because the city-state or polis was the institutional and social structure which produced one of the great cultures the world has known and one from which our own culture is directly descended.

History 303 is divided into three parts corresponding to the material covered up to the six-week, twelve-week, and the final examinations.

Part One examines the main features of the development of Greek civilization from early times to around 500 B.C. After a view of the geography of Greek lands, the prehistoric and Bronze Age cultures of Greece are examined. Then there follows the obscure period from about 1100 to 800 B.C. which saw the transition from bronze to iron and the emergence of the basic Greek social groupings and institutional forms. Next, the general features of the political development of the Greek cities and the extensive overseas expansion of the Greeks and the effects of that expansion are studied. Part One concludes with a description of the culture of the so-called "Archaic Age".

Part Two seeks to examine Greece regionally: northern and central Greece, the Greek cities on the coast of Anatolia, the states of southern Greece with special emphasis on Sparta, and a detailed examination of the earlier history of Athens, the first important democracy in history, and the state which was to give Greek culture its classic form. Finally, the Iranian peoples, the Persian empire and the confrontation of the Persians and the Greeks is described.

Part Three is devoted to the classic age of the Greek city-states, the period from the defeat of the Persians by the Greeks to the surrender of Athens to Sparta. This is the age of the rise of radical democracy in Athens and the

creation of the Athenian maritime empire -democratic imperialism- and the increasing rivalry between Athens and Sparta. The structure of the Athenian democracy is examined in detail as well as the social and economic bases for that structure. The cultural climate of the classic age is scrutinized with particular emphasis on the social and institutional background of the cultural achievement. Part Three concludes with the "Peleponnesian War", the catastrophe which led to the breakdown of the Greek state system, and that movement of the intellectual emancipation associated with the so-called "sophists".

#### WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS

There will be a six-week, a twelve-week and a final examination for those students taking the course for 3 credits. The fourth credit will be a term paper.

#### GRADING SYSTEM

The grades will be distributed as follows:

six-week exam = 30%; twelve-week exam = 30%; final exam = 40%

#### REQUIRED READINGS

A list of the readings will be provided at a later time.