Roots of European Civilisations

Lectures 2 – 3

Classic Greece and Hellenistic Era
Around 1100 B.C. - Doric invasion
Destruction of Mycenae Greece
Beginning of Dark Age in Greece
Since around VIII c. B.C.
   - resurrection of Greek culture
Greek expansion in Mediterranean:
   - Coasts of Black Sea,
   - Sicily
   - Southern Italy (Magna Graecia - Megalê Hellas)
   - Southern Gaul – Massalia
Greek world before Persian Wars
Main achievements of Classical Period Greece

- Polis
- Concept of democracy
- Concept of barbarism
- Philosophy
- Historiography
Mainland Greece was divided into many little states called polis (poleis)

This term, at the beginning referring to city, later meant body of citizens.
Characteristic of a polis

- All adult citizens (only males) were supposed to participate in *agora* – a meeting that decided about all public matters of a polis
- Foreigners were not citizens even after many years – they were so called *metoikos*.
- All citizens were suppose to serve in the polis' army
Democracy

- The best known example of polis is Athens.
- Athens' political system in its “golden age” was democracy.
- However, ancient Greek's understanding of democracy was different than today, main differences were:
  - Direct rules of citizens
  - Lack of distinction between public and private life.

Pericles – Athenian politician
Greeks and Barbarians

- Word barbarians (barbaroi) originates from onomatopoeia “bar bar” - meaning non understandable speech.
- For Greeks all non Greeks were barbarians.
- In spite of their bond with particular polises Greeks were aware of their common culture.
- Greeks considered barbarians slaves to their rulers unlike their own race.

Sanctuary in Delphi
Greeks and Barbarians

- Persian War makes a symbol of a conflict between free Greeks and barbaric slaves of the East.
- 480 – 479 B.C. II Persian War

Greek Hoplite of V c. B.C.
Grecy i barbarzyńcy

- Drugi perski wojna był kontynuacją poprzedniej wojny.
- Persy prowadzono przez króla Xerxesa.
- Grecy zjednoczeni pod leadershipem Spart Mykalogiada, wokół 480 roku p.n.e., na trzech bohaterach: Thermopylae, Platae i Salamina.

Mapa przedstawia topografię bojów pod Thermopylami, Platae i Salaminą.
Thermopylae

- Army of Xerxes was about 500000 people strength (Herodotus writes even about 5 million), his fleet numbered 1200 trier (main battle ship) and 3000 smaller vessels.
- Greek armies numbered (at their peak) 40000 Hoplites and 70000 light infantry, their fleet numbered 400 trier and 400 smaller vessels.

Greek warrior - Leonidas?
Thermopylae

- As a defence point Thermopylae Pass was chosen.
- At the same time naval operations at Artemisium.
- In time to prevent Persians' advance only 6000 – 7000 Greeks managed to arrive (including 300 Spartans) under king Leonidas.
- The pass which was only 1,5 km wide was strenghten by a stone wall.
- At the battle about 20000 Persians died.
- Ephialtes the Malian betrayed Greeks by showing Xerxes
Thermopylae

• When he learned about the treason Leonidas send most of his troops back.
• Spartans, Thebans and Thespian stayed to continue fight
• In face of defeat Thebans surrendered, Spartans and Thespian fought to death.
• After the war, in Thermopylae pass a monument was risen with following epitaph: „Go tell the world, you passerby That here, by Spartan law, we lie”
Leonidas at Thermopylae – picture of Jacques David.
Salamis and Platea

- After Battle of Thermopylae Athens were sacked.
- Xerxes lost the sea battle of Salamis, which enabled for successful defence of Corinthian Pass as well as demoralized Xerxes.
- In 479 B.C. Greeks took revenge for Thermopylae. In Battle of Platea c 250000 Persians were killed.
- II Persian War is a symbol of free people successfully defending against oppressor.
Culture

- V c. B.C. Is a “Golden Age” of Classical Greece
- The Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC) marked the period

Temple in Segesta
Historiography

- Herodotus 485-425 „Dzieje”
- Thucydides 460 – 400 „Peloponesian War”
- These authors are considered the fathers of modern historiography.
Philosophy

- Ancient Greece
- Socrates was the first great philosopher we know more about.
- However he was not the only one.
Plato

- Plato lived in 427 – 347 B.C.
- He founded so called Academy
Aristotle

- Aristotle lived in 384 – 322 B.C.
- He studied undr Plato
- He founded Lyceum (from Likeion where it was founded) called also Peripatetic school
- In years 343-342 B.C. He was a teacher of Alexander the Great
Alexander the Great

- After Peloponnesian War Sparta dominated but was soon defeated by Thebes.
- In 338 B.C. At the Battle of Cheronea, King Philip of Macedon defeated Greek cities.
- In 336 B.C. After Philip's murder, his son Alexander became King.
In years 334 -323 B.C. Alexander conquered Persia and arrived to India.
Empire of Alexander the Great

- Conquest of Persian Empire – three battles:
  - Battle of the Granicus 334 B.C.
  - Battle of Issus 333 B.C.
  - Battle of Gaugamela 331 B.C.
- Alexander founded over 70 cities including Alexandria in Egypt
- In 323 B.C. Alexander dies in Babylon aged 33.
Hellenistic Period

- After Alexander's death his empire crumbles.
Hellenistic Kingdoms

- Ptolemaic Egypt (capital city: Alexandria)
- Seleucid Empire (capital city: Seleucia on Tigris/ Antioch)
- Macedonia (Pella)
- Pergamum
- Rhodos
- Pontus
- Syracuse
- Greco-Bactrian Kingdom
- Indo-Greek Kingdom
Hellenistic Kingdoms
Heritage of Hellenistic period

- Spread of Greek culture from Italy to India (Ai Khanoum city in modern Afghanistan)
- Contacts with different cultures and civilisations – rise of new ideas
- Greek art reaches its final form – inspiring Rome and modern Europe

Venus de Milo
Hellenistic world.

- Hellenami stali się nie tylko Grecy czy Macedończycy ale wszyscy żyjący w kulturze helleńskiej.
- Hellenistic cities – huge metropolis of hundreds thousand of inhabitants (largest city of classical Greece had c. 30000 inhabitants)

Nike of Samothrace
Alexandria – one of greatest cities of Antiquity

- Founded by Alexander the Great in 332/331 B.C.
- Capital of Ptolomaic Egypt
- At the time of Octavian Augustus it had c. 1000000 inhabitants
- Location of Library of Alexandria
- Location of one of “world wonders” - “Lighthouse of Alexandria on Pharos”
Alexandria as metropolis

• Alexandria was an important political, administrative and cultural centre..
• City was fabulously decorated by buildings, thousands of monuments.
• Main streets were 30 (60) m wide, bordered by colonnades.
Royal Library of Alexandria

- Royal Library of Alexandria:
  - Had about 700000 scrolls
  - Tried to collect all existing books.
- Museaum (Mouseion) in Alexandria – first in history public financed institution dedicated to studies and research
Alexandria – city of many cultures

- Alexandria was a trading centre with contacts even in India
- It was divided into three districts: Greek, Jewish and Egyptian
- Jewish sacred books was translated into Greek (koine) – so called Septuagint.
- New god was created – Serapes – combining Greek and Egyptian elements.
1 c. B.C. Manuscript of Septuagint
Serapeum

- Temple of Serapes – symbol of paganism for early Christians

Ruins and foundation plaque of Ptolemy III
Culture of Hellenistic period

- New philosophy (seeking for happiness - eudaimonia):
  - Epicurus and his garden
  - Zeno of Citium and Chrysippus in "Stoa Poikile"
  - Pyrrho and skepticism
- Development of science – according to Lucio Russo – understood in modern way

Mosaic from Aleksandria
Hellenistic Art

- For a long time Hellenistic period was considered as inferior in art – a transition time between Classical Greece and Roman times.
- Today this period is perceived as a time of incredible development of culture.
Hellenistic Art – sculpture

- Rzeźba hellenistyczna próbuje pokazać ruch – w przeciwieństwie do dzieł wcześniejszych

Two copies of Athena from Parthenon and a sculpture of Diana killing a deer from Delos
Hellenistic Art – sculpture
We do have little remains of Greek panel painting. Some Roman frescos and mosaics are considered to be copies of famous artworks. The best Hellenistic painters were Apelles and Protogenes. Possibly a copy of Alexander the Great portrait by Apelles.
Fresco from Pompeii depicting Aphrodite Anadyomene. Probably a copy of Apelles work showing mistress of Alexander the Great Pancaspe
Literature

- In Alexandria and Pergamum textual studies were made.
- Critical editions of Homeric text were published.
- Literature is more self-aware and often uses references to earlier works.
- Also more emphasis is placed on individual characters motivation.

Piece of papyri with Menander's „Sicyonios” from Egypt and a mosaic depicting one of this authors plays.
Hellenistic science

- Euclid of Alexandria – geometry
- Archimedes of Syracuse – mathematician and engineer
- Eratosthenes – calculate the circumference of the Earth
- Herophilos – physician (nerves: motoric and sensory, blood vessels, brain etc.)
- Aristarchus of Samos – heliocentric astronomy
- Hipparch – dynamics and gravity theories
- Ktesibios – engineer

Archimedes screw
Hellenistic science

- Hellenistic rulers tried to reach upper hand in technological race
- Pergamum had second biggest library in the Greek world. When the Ptolemies of Egypt refused to export any more papyrus to Pergamum, King Eumenes II commanded that an alternative source be found. This led to the production of parchment (charta pergamena), which is made out of a thin sheet of sheep or goat skin.
Hellenistic science

Ktesibios' clepsydra (water clock) and water organ
Hellenistic science

“Give me a place to stand on, and I will move the Earth.” - Archimedes.
Hellenistic science at war

Palintonon – Greek catapult

Archimedes “Heat Rays”
Hellenistic science at war

“The Claw of Archimedes”
machine for rising and sinking ships
Seven Wonders of the World

- Great Pyramid of Giza
- Hanging Gardens of Semiramis,
- Temple of Artemis at Ephesus
- Statue of Zeus at Olympia
- Mausoleum of Maussollos at Halicarnassus
- Colossus of Rhodes
- Lighthouse of Alexandria
Thank you for attention