

Course Introduction

MIDTERM - October 22nd

Who were the Greeks?

- Found in The Mediterranean
- Not a unified country, but culturally similar
- To be “Greek”, spoke the same language.
- Unified in beliefs, different versions of myths, but many gods and heroes in common.
 - “Homer and Hesiod”
- The term Greek comes from what the Romans called them upon first contact

The Stone Age

- Hesiod’s Ages of Humanity
 - Gold
 - Silver
 - Bronze
 - Heroes
 - Iron
- Divisions of the Prehistoric Past
 - Stone Age
 - Paleolithic (30 000-13 000 BCE)
 - Mesolithic (10 500 - 9000 BCE)
 - Neolithic (9000 - 3600 BCE)
 - Chalcolithic (Copper/Stone age - 3600-3100 BCE)
 - Bronze Age (3100-1180 BCE)
 - Iron Age (1180-600 BCE)

In the Ice Age, the Mediterranean was dry, but as the environment/climate changed it warmed and the ice retreated. Homo Sapiens 38 000 years ago.

- ❖ Paleolithic Greece (30 000 - 8 300 BCE) - Franchthi Cave
 - The people were nomadic hunters and gatherers
 - No evidence of inhabitation of the cave in the winter
- ❖ The Mesolithic Period (8 300 - 6000 BCE)
 - The warmer, wetter climate lead to a forested Greece
 - New fauna (elk, wild boar, deer - forest animals to hunt)
 - As the water rose, The Cycladic Islands were born
 - New foods
 - Fish and seafood appear in diet (travel by sea)
 - Lentils and barley and nuts
 - Forest animals are hunted

- New Tools - microliths (small stone, fish hooks)
- Obsidian and Andesite - chemical differences in stone, shows the Greeks were able to travel/sail around the islands
- People started burying the dead
- ❖ The Neolithic Period (6000 - 3000 BCE)
 - Drastic changes that may symbolize the arrival of new people from the east
 - Domesticated sheep and goats
 - Domesticated wheat, barley, and lentils
 - Increase in number of grinding stones
 - Bladelets of chert and obsidian from sickles to cut grain
 - Pottery appears
 - Store grain and food
 - People live outside as well as inside caves year round
 - People begin to be buried with grave goods (belief of afterlife)
 - Farming changes lifeways (places value on land. need to protect land/crops/animals)
 - Sesklo in Thessaly
 - Earliest Neolithic culture/village (c. 7500-4400BCE)
 - Stone foundations, open courtyard, outer wall 1m thick
 - Houses made with stone foundation, and mudbrick wall
 - Pottery - geometric patterns, reminiscent of woven patterns in basketry
 - Dimini in Thessaly
 - Large courtyard in front of “Megaron”
 - Similar in organization to the Bronze Age palaces
 - Some scholars think it is evidence for hierarchy with a “chieftain”, but others think this indicates a public, possibly ritual, use for the complex
 - Pottery - painted or incised. Geometric shapes. Curvilinear designs.
 - Secondary Products Revolution
 - Sheep - wool. Spindle whorls and loom weights. The vertical loom.
 - Oxen - pull ploughs. Ard plough.
 - Dairy/milk - cows.
 - Textile designs in pottery - implies weaving even though material does not keep
- ❖ Consequences of Sedentism
 - Craft Specialization (trade)
 - Agricultural Surplus
 - Population Growth
 - Social Stratification
- ❖ The Final Neolithic Period (Chalcolithic 4000-3000 BCE)

- Neolithic village with communal workspace becomes cooking and working in private houses
- Wealth in some burials suggests both long-distance trade and social stratification

Summary

1. Trade and seafaring begin in Mesolithic (obsidian is proof)
2. Earliest burials are in the Mesolithic (Franchthi Cave)
3. Farming begins in Neolithic
4. Pottery production also begins in Neolithic
5. Secondary products “revolution” means animals used for more than meat
6. Sedentism creates population growth and agricultural surplus
7. Land becomes a personal possession and is valuable
8. By Final Neolithic/Chalcolithic period communal spaces become private and we see differential wealth (social stratification)

