Greek Civilization

The Classic Period

Beginning of Greek Civilization

- Around 3000 BC people began to settle in Greece
- Most of them came from central Europe
- It was the land of tall mountains, tiny river valleys and narrow plains.
- From almost every where they can see the deep blue of Mediterranean Sea.
- The blue sea and constant sunshine must have seemed like a perfect place to live for the people who had come from colder, rainier lands of north.
- Around 1000 BC Greek culture grew up from this mixing of many groups of people.
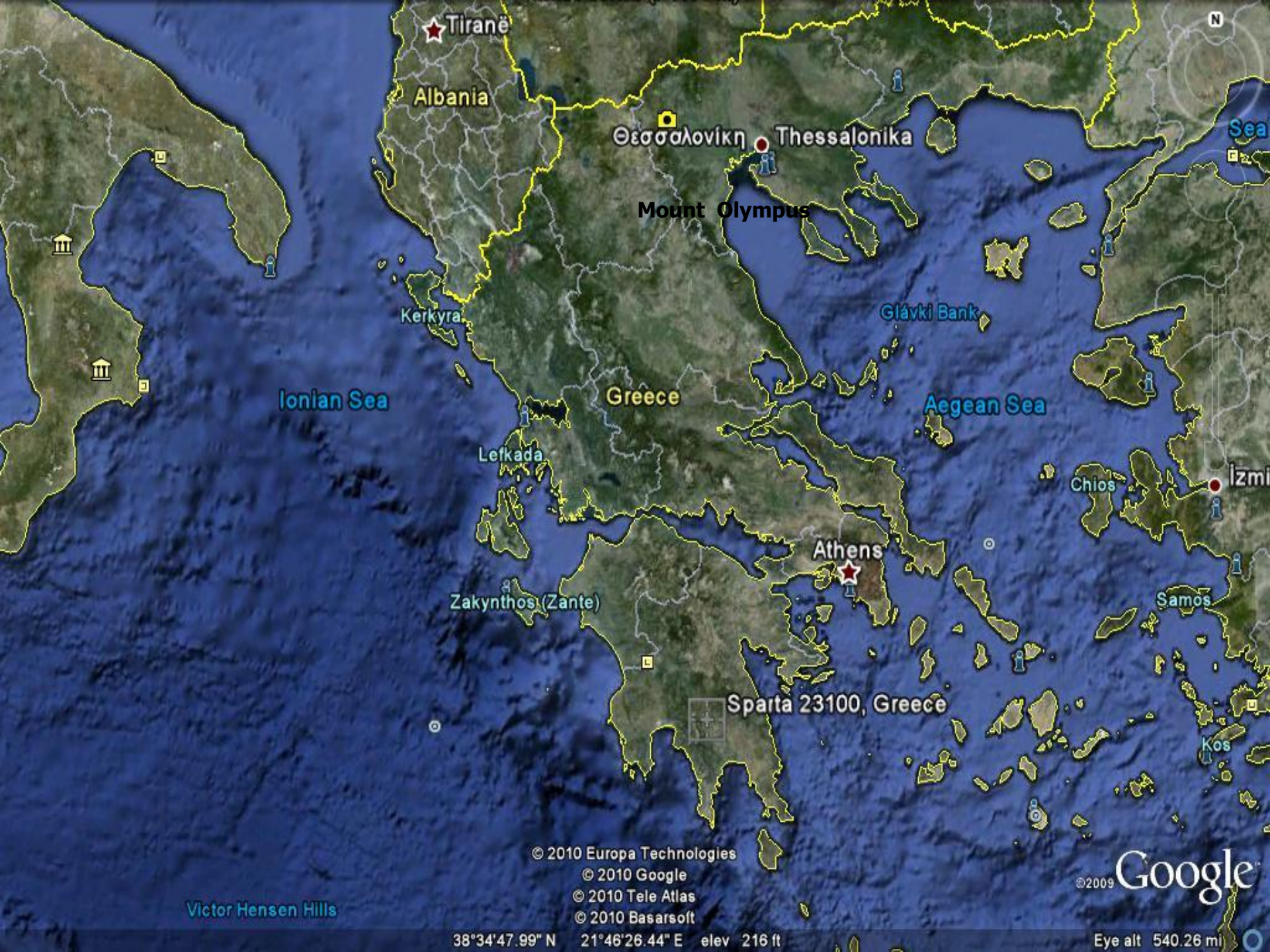
In Honor of The gods

- Greeks everywhere worshiped same gods.
- The most important of the gods were Zeus who ruled both gods and people.
- The Greek people believed that their gods admired strength and courage.
- So young men were trained in athletics from age of seven.
- Ancient Greeks thought that women should not be athletes. Even so some cities like Sparta in southern Greece trained girls too.
- The best athletes showed their skills at festivals held in the honor of various gods.
- Some of the most important festivals of ancient Greece involved athletic competition, such as the Olympic Games, which were held in honour of Zeus, and the Pythian Games, held at Delphi in honour of Apollo.

In Honor of The gods

- **One festival in Athens, held to honor Dionysos, involved a competition between playwrights. This led to the creation of some of the best known plays from ancient Greece**
- **The most important was Olympic games held every fourth year in the honor of Zeus in south western Greece for five days.**
- **Festivals were an important part of the year. In Athens almost half of the year was taken up with festivals to the gods. It was important to honor the correct gods at certain times of year.**

Mount Olympus and Zeus
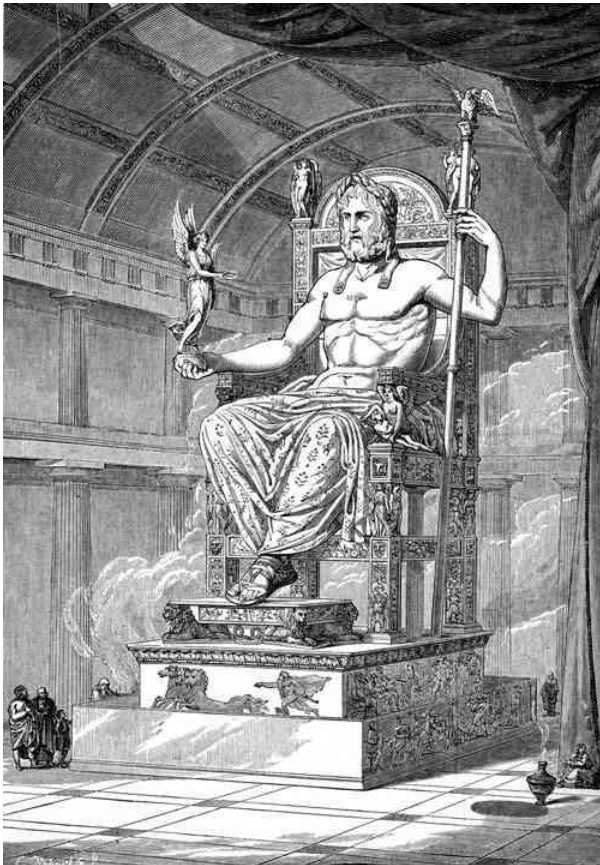
Emergence of Democracy

- Rule by one man
- Rule by nobles
- A call for change
- Rule by tyrants
- Rule by citizens

Towns in Ancient Greece

- **T**here were hundreds of Greek city-states, or polis.
- Many were small communities, supporting no more than a thousand individuals, and without the means to construct impressive public buildings.
- At the other extreme is the city of Athens, the best known and by far the largest polis.
- In between these, archaeology has recovered well-built towns of more modest size, such as Corinth and Sparta on the Peloponnesus, Miletus and Priene in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey), and Olynthus in northern Greece.
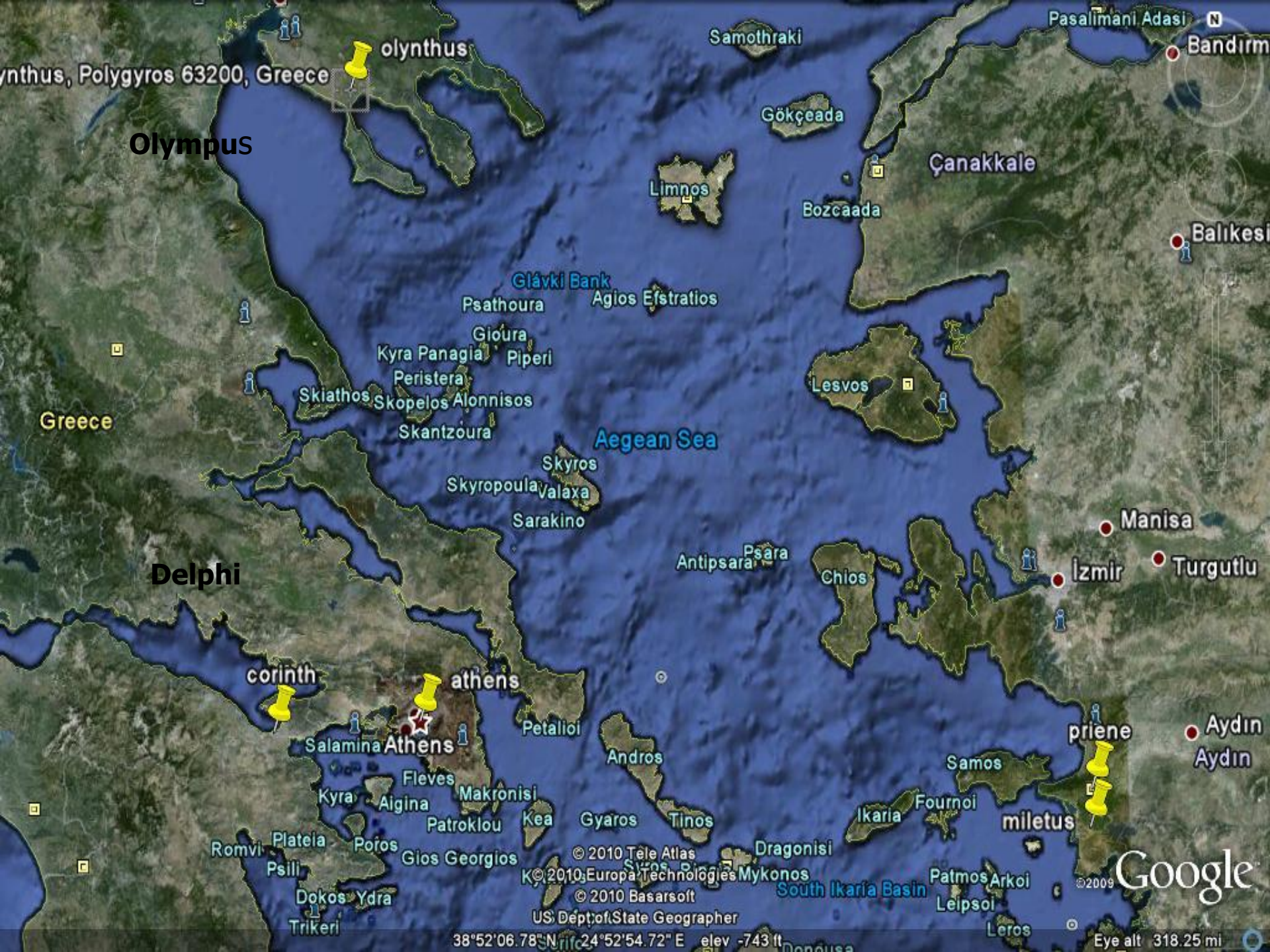
Periods in History of Ancient Greece

- The Archaic period (750-500 BC)
- The Classical period (500-323 BC)
- The Hellenistic period (323-146 BC)
- The Roman Greece (146 BC-330 AD)

Alexander's Empire
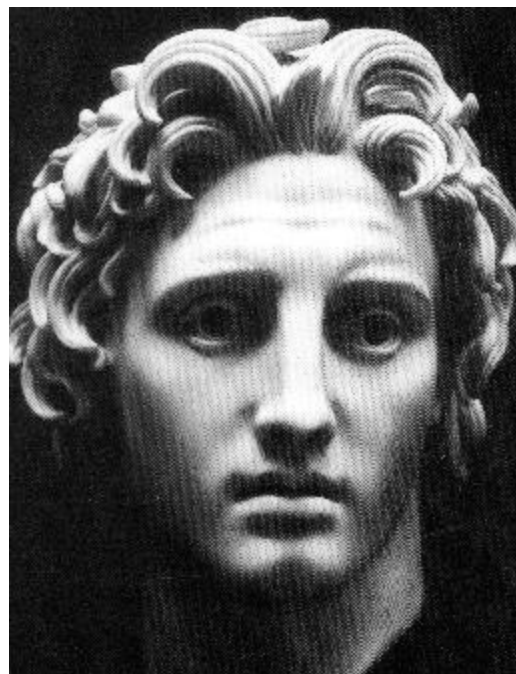
Town Planning in Ancient Greece

- Old Classical times show little evidence of deliberate urban planning.

- the *agora* or temple precincts show care in the placement of buildings relative to each other, but for the most part town growth was piecemeal over the years, with additions made as needs demanded.

- New cities, however, replaced older towns such as those that were destroyed by the Persian advances (early 5th century BCE) or that for one reason or another no longer served the needs of a growing population.

The Humble City

- Greek city was a maze of wandering unpaved lanes lacking in drainage and sanitation in early years
- Water was carried from local wells
- Waste was disposed off in streets
- Public buildings were few and simple
- Common assembly place was an open air podium
- Most towns were surrounded by protection walls
- There was little distinction between the dwellings of well to do citizens and less privileged fellowmen.

City Functional Zones

Acropolis

- Similar to citadel of Mesopotamia
- Temples, store houses, administrave buildings
- Seat of power
- Place of retreat

Agora

- Province of citizens
- Place of public meetings, education and social interaction and judicial matters
- Market place of the city

City Functional Zones

- Stoas Protected space for shops and walking
- The architecture was simple: an open colonnade with a blank back wall, many with an inner colonnade, frequently with closed rooms ("shops") at the rear.
- Bouleterion the building which house the council of citizen
- The bouleterion could take any shape, but most common was a small theater placed in a rectangular building.
- The bouleterion at Priene (200BC) was a square with seats on 3 sides, holding 600-700 people, roofed.
- Miletus (175-164BC) arranged in a semi-circle, seating 1200 people.

Bouleterion and Stoas
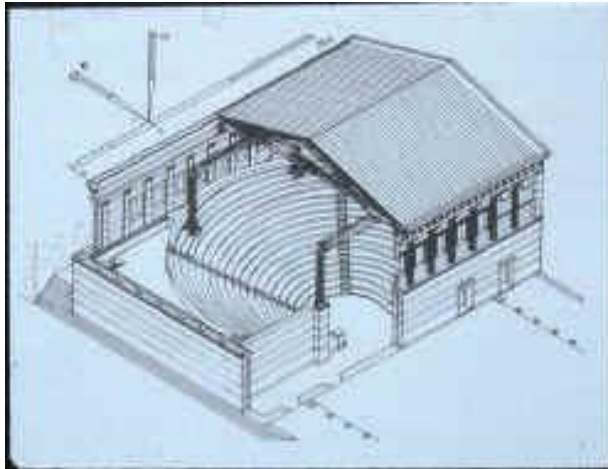
City Functional Zones

- Religious shrines can be found anywhere and everywhere in a Greek town, and temples, elegant buildings with their porches and surrounding colonnades, are a common sight especially in the *agora*.

- Fountain-houses were sought out on a hot day, shade trees were planted along the thoroughfares.

- Everywhere there were statues of heroes, gods, and ordinary (but important) people, to catch the eye and inspire reflection.

- Gymnasia and the stadion were located wherever the terrain is suitable, often at the outskirts of town. There the young men of the town received their education both in intellectual matters and in athletics.

City Functional Zones

- An open theater was located where the landscape was suitable. The best spot was natural hollow for the central "stage," enclosed by slopes where spectator seating can be arranged.

- Dramatic performances are seen here for entertainment, but its size may also make the theater the preferred spot for larger town gatherings.

- Residential districts that made up the greatest portion of the town around the *agora*. They seem ordinary and all too familiar, with narrow streets and alleys fronted by modest private homes huddled together, with little or none of the grandeur displayed in the more public areas.

- Temple or sanctuary of the town's favored deity can be found, whether high on the *acropolis* or elsewhere,

Contribution of Hippodamos

- Even in Classical times, the invention of formal planning was attributed to one man, Hippodamos of Miletus, who was born at the very end of the 6th century BC.

- It is certain that Hippodamos helped to design the new harbor town of Piraeus, which served as a commercial port for Athens

- Further inland. Hippodamus' name is frequently associated with other orthogonally planned towns, such as Olynthus, Priene, and Miletus.

- His direct involvement in these cases remains unproven, but his name remains permanently associated with this type of plan that we call "Hippodamian."

Contribution of Hippodamos

- Hippodamus arranged the buildings and the streets of Miletus around 450 BC such that the winds from the mountains and the sea close to Miletus could flow optimal through the city and provide a cooling during the hot summer.

- Hippodamus first applied to his home city the grid plan which he had developed on inspiration from geometrically designed settlements, and that later many cities were laid out according to this plan.

- Miletus, which is a fine example of the grid plan, comprises houses on blocks created by streets and side streets crossing at right angles, with public buildings in the city centre.

- This plan retained in the Hellenistic period, however in the Roman period it began to deteriorate gradually and inevitably.
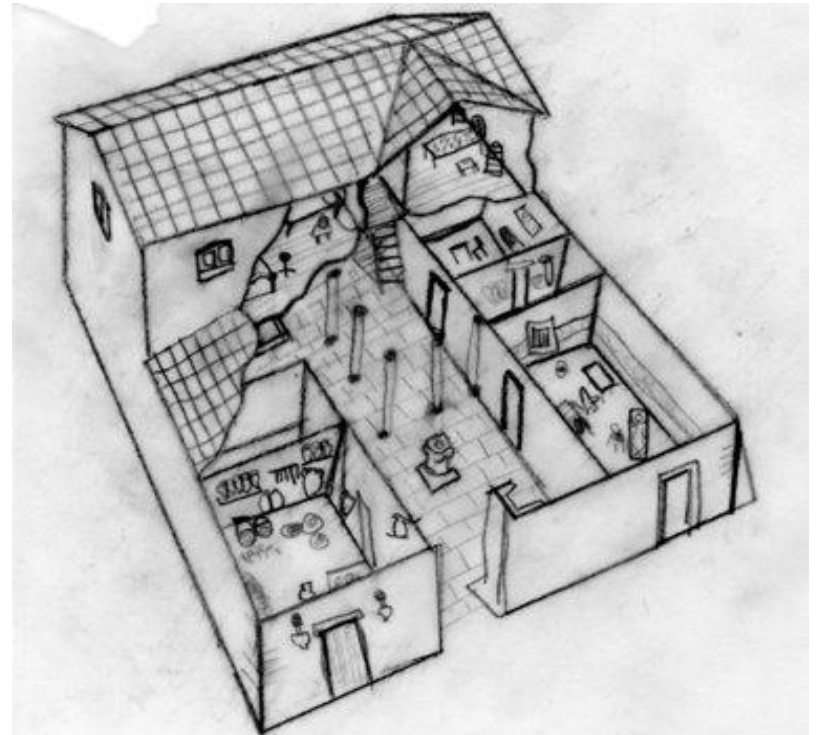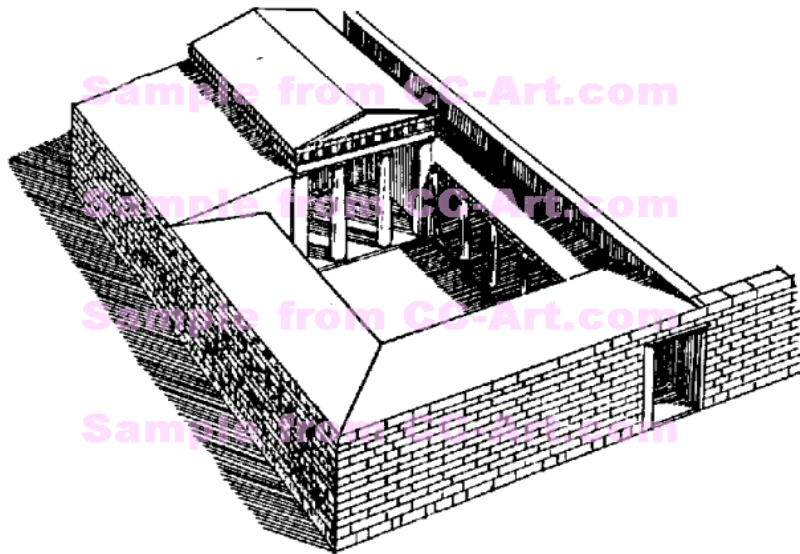
Miletus and Priene
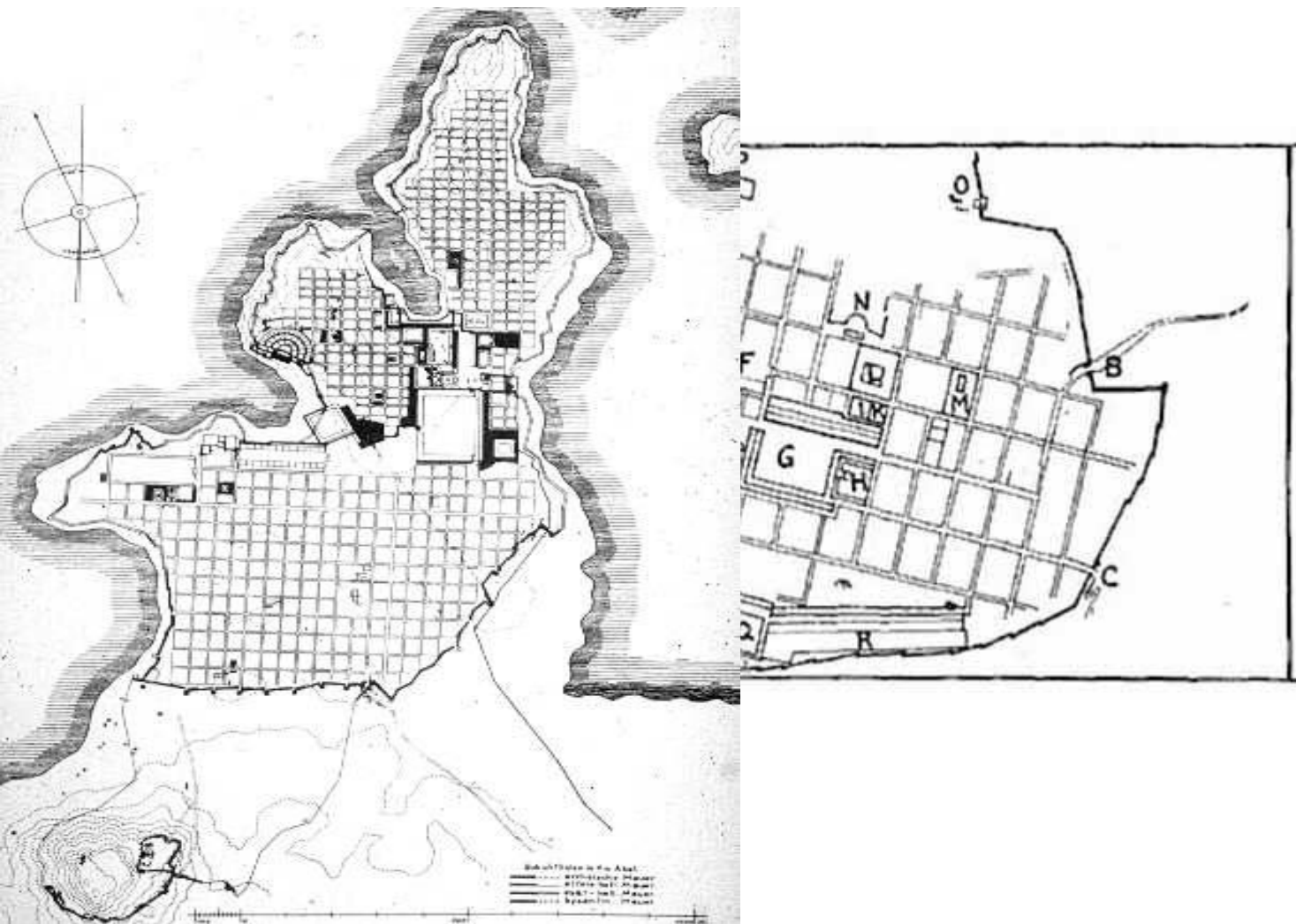
Dwelling Patterns

- Greeks did not give high priority to domestic comfort
- Houses were usually single storey or occasionally two to three storey
- Houses were set in terraced form along narrow streets made of wood and sun dried bricks
- Well-to-do had comfortable apartments of bricks or stones with tiled roofs

Greek Houses

Dwelling Patterns

- Design and layout of dwellings differed in various parts of Greek world
- Most favored form was rooms surrounding an inner courtyard
- Principle room occupied the south facing side to trap winter sun
- Kitchen and slave quarters to the opposite side
- Women apartments on the first floor to give domestic privacy but unattractive street scene
- Water supply was often short in summer and limited to rain water
- Street paving and drainage was haphazard and sewerage system was primitive or nonexistent

Street Patterns

- The houses, shops and buildings other than public buildings were seldom set out in accordance with any recognizable pattern of streets or open spaces

- Hippodamos introduced rectangular street pattern in Greek cities.

Building Regulations

- There is reference to laws restricting buildings from encroachments upon the streets and prohibitation against the projection of upper floors beyond the first floor walls.

- Windows were not permitted to open directly upon the street and water drains were not allowed to empty into the streets.

- The Greeks towns demonstrated a conscious effort to improve the environment for the whole people.

Gymnasia's and Palaestrae

- Democratic rulers of city estates showed great concerns for physical well being by providing palaestrae and gymnasia where wrestlers and swimmers can meet socially and take exercise and training.

- Citizens can develop good physique irrespective of status or wealth

- Theaters were also an important part of civic life in Greece

Gymnasia's, Palaestrae & Theatre
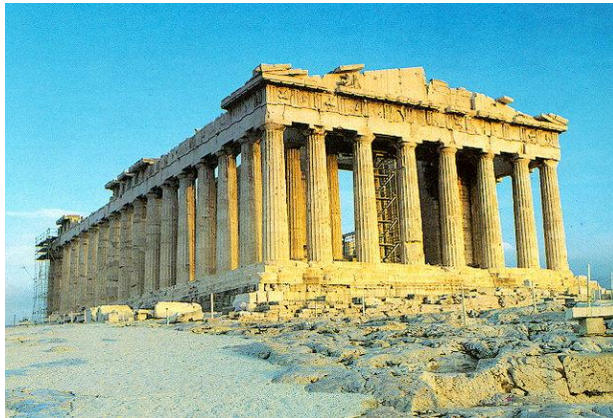
Gymnasia's and Palaestrae

- Primarily an athletic complex, but much more than that.
- Gymnasia became social, political, and cultural centers.
- The gymnasium was seen as the primary institution of a Greek city, the necessary and sufficient characteristic of a polis.
- Many cities had more than one--normally they were state-built and state-operated, but occasionally a gymnasium might be built by a group.
- The palaistra was a wrestling ground.
- Sometimes this was part of a gymnasium, sometimes a separate building.
- Originally the gymnasium was probably just a section of the agora, but later it became a separate building.

The Hellenistic City

- The Greeks were conquered by mighty armies but their culture dominated the conqueror.
- Greek influence spread thought the Mediterranean sea and Hellenistic period brought new city building patterned after great work of Greeks
- Old cities flourished and new cities found. Paragon, Alexandria, Syracuse, and Candhar grew large and populous
- The city became the scene of luxury, ruddy with display of empire
- Magnificent public buildings added to the agora
- The assembly retained its traditional place among monumental structures
- Gardens and parks were introduced
- Fine royal villas were built and distinction grew more apparent

Size of Greek Cities

- Aristotle insisted on the existence of a minimum population, as well as a maximum size, in both cases without specific numbers. In treating size, Aristotle gives emphasis on the public function of cities: "It is vital that the citizens know one another". He was also worried about the problems of security when cities become too large. "

- Plato states that the ideal republic would have 5,040 citizens, i.e., heads of households. This figure implies an optimum size population of about 20,000 people. He linked his optimum size of city to the need for communications among citizens. "The city must remain sufficiently small to permit the holding of public meetings with all of the citizens present."

- Hippodamos favored 10,000 free citizens which would amount 40,000 total population.

- Greek city-states of the ancient world did in fact remain limited in size. Athens was the largest Greek city-state, approaching a population of approximately 430,000 by the end of fourth century BC.

- The other Greek city-states rarely had populations as many as 40,000 people. As a general rule, as soon as a city approached a population of 20,000 to 30,000, it decided to found a new city rather than to continue the original city's development.

Other Features of Greek Civilization

- Trade
- Employment
- Banking
- Science and technology
- Literature and theatre
- Transportation: According to Aristotle, transportation was an important consideration for urban planning. First, a city should be so configured so as to permit military aid to all parts of the city-state's territory. Second, the city should be able to provide transport of foodstuffs and wood for buildings, as well as materials for manufacturing.