

- DISCOVERING THE GREEKS -  
*Classics 10, Fall 2021*



# Why Discover the Greeks? Three Proposals

**1) In discovering the Greeks, the Greeks discover us.**

ΑΒΓΔΕΖΗΘΙΚΛΜΝΞΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩ



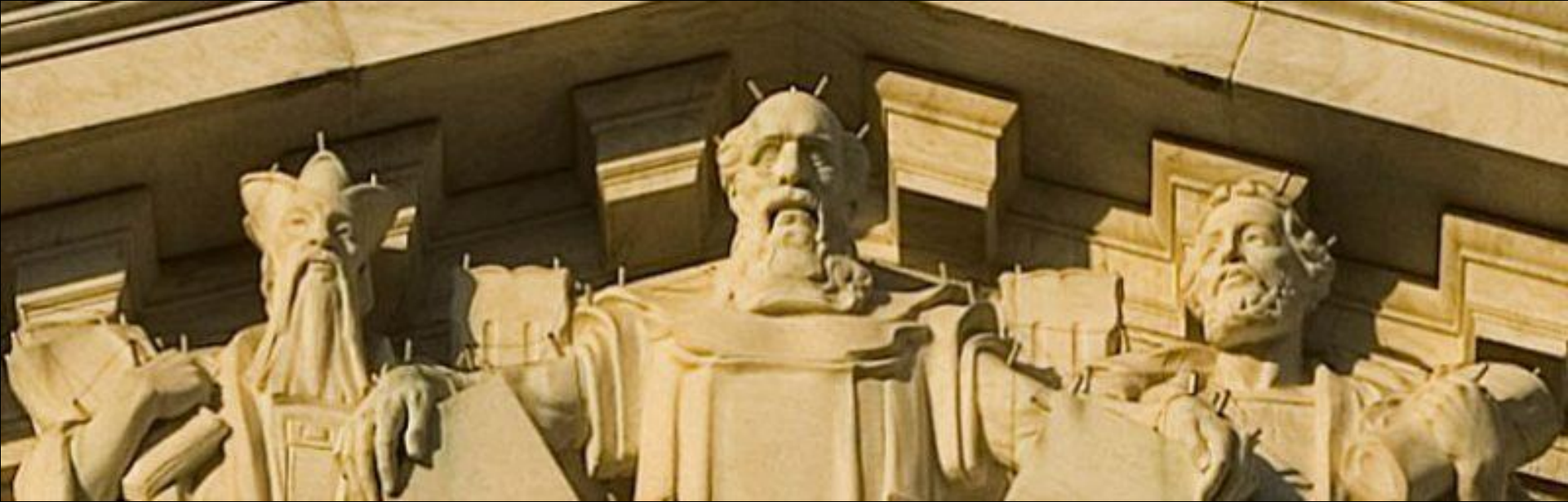
# αβγδεζηθικλμνξοπρστυφχψω

- Syllabus: from the Greek *sittuba* (“label”), which was *misread* by monks as *silluba*
- Idea: from *idein*, “to see”
- Biology: *bios* + *logos*, “life” + “study”
- Pharmacy: from *pharmakon*, “potions, drugs”
- Democracy: “the people’s power”
- Zoë: “life”
- Sophia: “wisdom”





Pediment Sculptures of US Supreme Court  
Building, Washington, D.C.



Confucius

Solon

Moses

# Idiot

*idiôtês* (ἰδιώτης) =

- a private person
- someone disengaged from public or civic life

GREEK DICTIONARY MEANING  
OF

**IDIOT**

MAN WHO DID NOT  
VOTE



We discover the Greeks asking questions, and in turn the Greeks “discover us” in the midst of our own questions:

- What is justice, and who determines it? (see *Iliad*)
- What is the meaning of home? Is there such thing as a noble lie? (see *Odyssey*)
- What is beauty, and is it merely a nicety or is it *essential* to life? (see Minoan and Mycenaean art)
- What is the purpose of education? (see Aristophanes' *Clouds*)
- What defines citizenship? Who gets to be a citizen? (see Sophocles' *Antigone*)
- What defines a nation or people? (see Herodotus's *Histories*)
- Does religion make us sane or crazy? (see Euripides' *Bacchae*)
- What is the good life? (see Plato's *Apology*, or really any of the texts we read)





“Mausoleum” of Halicarnassus, tomb built for Mausolus, circa (“around”) 350 BCE







# A philosophy of buildings?

“Tell me, Mausolus” says Diogenes [a philosopher], “why are you so proud and why do you expect to be honored more than the rest of us?”

“Because,” replies Mausolus, “I was handsome and tall and victorious in war. **But most of all because I have lying over me a gigantic monument such as no other dead person has,** adorned in the finest way with statues of horses and men carved most realistically from the best marble.”

(from Lucian, *Dialogues of the Dead*, 2<sup>nd</sup> C CE)

*(continued)*

Diogenes: “Well, Mausolus, your tomb may give the people of Halicarnassus something to boast about to tourists, **but I can’t see what benefit *you* get from it, unless you’re claiming that you have a heavier burden to bear than the rest of us**, being weighed down by so much stone.”

“Are you and I equal then?” asks Mausolus.

[Diogenes]: “No. Mausolus will groan when he recalls things on earth that he *thought* brought him happiness. He will talk of a tomb, while Diogenes does not even know if he has a tomb. Nor does he care. Diogenes has left to future generations an account that he lived the life of a good person, an account that is loftier than your memorial, and built on surer foundations.”

# Why Discover the Greeks? Three Proposals

- 1) In discovering the Greeks, the Greeks discover us.
- 2) **No one has ever discovered the Greeks the way *you* will.**











Cy Twombly,  
*Anaduomenê* (“Aphrodite  
Arising”)  
1982

(Personal photo taken by Prof.  
Kirkland in Athens, Greece,  
June 2017)

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



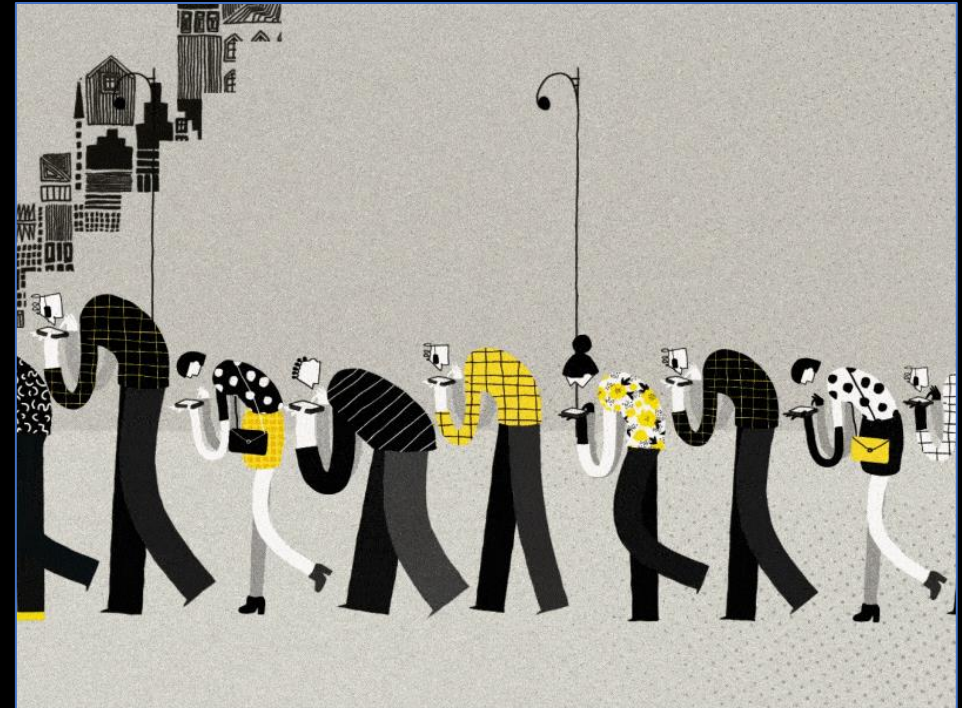
# Why Discover the Greeks?

## Three Proposals:

- 1) In discovering the Greeks, the Greeks discover us.
- 2) No one has ever discovered the Greeks the way *you* will.
- 3) The Greeks are curious.

# Polypragmōn

- Poly (“much,” “many”) + pragma (“matter, thing, issue”)
- = “Super busy”
- “Restless” (applied by comic playwrights to the Athenians)
- “all up in your business” (applied to Socrates)
- Overly curious (applied to Herodotus)



Homer, *Odyssey* 1.1-5, trans. Lattimore  
(modified)

Tell me, Muse, of the man of many (polytropon)  
ways,  
a man who much (polla) wandered,  
after he had sacked Troy's sacred citadel.  
Many (pollōn) were they whose cities he saw,  
whose minds he learned of,  
Many (polla) the pains he suffered in his spirit on  
the wide sea,  
struggling for his own life and the homecoming of  
his companions.

# Pragmatics (from *pragma*, “thing, matter”)

- BCE and CE = BC and AD, respectively
- Hellenic/Hellas = Greek/Greece
- One challenge of evidence: often not contemporaneous (example: Homer (if he existed), writing poems perhaps around 800 or 700 BCE but referring to events that happened around 500 years prior. Or Plutarch, writing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> C CE about things that occurred in the 5<sup>th</sup> BCE.
- Perspective of the evidence (elite, male, not only reflective of the world but actively shaping it)
- Spelling (see Syllabus)
- Teaching Assistants (TA's)



## SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

As with any course, the amount of reading varies by week. To help you plan your week, I have indicated the total number of pages you are asked to read, inclusive of textbook and ancient sources. I divide the readings between those you should prepare before lecture and those you must prepare for section (i.e., by Wednesday or Thursday, depending on your section time).

### Zero Week (Sept. 23-24): The Greeks Discover Us

*Suggested Reading:* McInerney, *Ancient Greece: A New History*, pp. 15-31 (hereafter Mc)

### Week 1 (Sept. 27 – Oct. 1): History without Words? – 128 pages (48 pages of poetry)

Lecture Reading: Mon. **Mc 15-61** [Ch. 2]; Wed./Fri. **Mc 63-95** [Ch. 3]

Section Reading (by Wed./Thurs.): *Essential Homer*, pp. 1-19 (*Iliad* 1); pp. 175-88 (*Iliad* 18); pp. 205-221 (*Iliad* 22)

M Sept. 27 – The Big Bang: The Case of the Minoans

W Sept. 29 – The Mycenaeans

F Oct. 1 – Homer + Mycenaeans: Facts and Fictions

Questions to Consider:

- How should we interpret the social and political structures of Minoan and Mycenaean cultures? What are the advantages and limitations of the evidence?
- Discuss the role(s) of decorated objects in Minoan and Mycenaean culture. Is it appropriate to call these items “art”? Why or why not?

## Mycenaean culture?

### **Week 2 (Oct. 4 – Oct. 8): Homer as the Internet – 106 total pages**

Lecture Reading: Wed. **Mc 97-123** [Ch. 4]; Fri. **Mc 125-47** [Ch. 5]

Section Reading (by Thursday): ***Essential Homer* pp. 241-54** (*Odyssey* 1); **pp. 269-84** (*Odyssey* 5); **pp. 437-65** (*Odyssey* 22-23)

M Oct. 4 – Homer as the Internet

W Oct. 6 – The Iron Age

F Oct. 8 – The (Strange?) Case of Sparta

#### Questions to Consider:

- Was Homer real? Does it matter? Discuss the relationship between Homer and “history.” What are the consequences of thinking about “Homer” as a tradition rather than as one person?
- Compare your readings of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Discuss the role of women and of family, and how the poems represent the human cost of war. How are the worlds of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* the same, and how do they differ?
- How would you characterize the nature of Greek identity in the Iron Age? Consider the role(s) of colonization.
- What are the limitations in the evidence for interpreting ancient Sparta? What is distinctive about Sparta, including gender roles, and why does this distinctiveness matter?

### **Week 3 (Oct. 11 – Oct. 15): Where Shall Wisdom Be Found? – 78 total pages**

Lecture Reading: Mon. or Wed. **Mc 149-69** [Ch. 6]; Fri. **Select Lyric Poems** [PDF on CCLE]

Section Reading: **Herodotus pp. 13-17** (= “Croesus and Solon”); **Plutarch *Life of Solon*** [PDF on CCLE]

**BOOKS.**

**Greek Terms:** “Greek Terms” are listed in a Google Doc on CCLE. The Greek Terms bank narrows down the number of terms from McInerney that you are expected to know. In general, it is a good idea to check the terms each week and to be sure you are keeping up. Flashcards for the terms live on CCLE under each relevant Week (note: these flashcards are from the textbook publisher and include terms beyond those that you must know for this course). Start learning early; don’t let the terms overwhelm you just before an exam.

**Important Dates:** Please note these dates now so they don’t surprise you later:

**Mini-Essay:** Friday, October 22, 11:59 pm

**Mid-Term:** Friday, November 5, 11:00 am

**Essay:** Monday, November 22, 11:59 pm

**Final Exam:** Wednesday, December 8, from 8:00 – 11:00 am

# Books, BruinCast, and Slides

- Buy the books, new or used, in proper editions.
  - McInerney fine to purchase e-book.
  - Others *preferred* in paperback, but e-book fine if price better.
- BruinCast will *usually* be uploaded within a few hours of class, though on some occasions (including today) there may be a delay of a few days.
- Slides: I upload all slides shown in lecture to CCLE *after* lecture, usually the same day. I do not upload my notes, so you should attend lecture or catch up on BruinCast if you are sick.



# Important Dates

- **Mini-Essay:** Friday, October 22, 11:59 pm
- **Mid-Term:** Friday, November 5, 11:00 am
- **Essay:** Monday, November 22, 11:59 pm
- **Final Exam:** Wednesday, December 8, from 8:00 – 11:00 am

# Advice for Doing Well in this Course

1. Keep up with the reading, both primary and secondary.
2. Keep up with the Greek Terms (Google Doc on CCLE). Flashcards available on CCLE, too.
3. Attend lecture. Attend and participate in discussion section. Lectures do not simply rehash reading. Discussion sections do not simply rehash lectures.
4. Review the slides and BruinCast videos posted to CCLE.
5. Identify something that you *like* each week. Take some ownership over the material.
6. Take pleasure in the reading. Have fun!

# Mental and Physical Health

Please take care of yourselves and each other. And please rely on campus resources if you are feeling unwell in body or mind. Follow the Covid protocols.

Lectern conversations: let's exit outdoors!

The ancient Greeks  
are pretty cool.  
Take it from me: I'm  
a centaur!

