



Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric to Hellenistic Times (Yale Nota Bene)

By Thomas R. Martin

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Using primary sources the political, military, social, cultural and religious histories of Ancient Greece are covered. There are relevant time lines, maps, plans and photographs. Particular attention is also given to the society, literature and architecture in its golden age.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

In this survey of ancient Greek history and civilization, Martin (classics, Coll. of Holy Cross) skillfully blends social, cultural, political, and military data to create a panoramic view of the Greek world. He moves chronologically from prehistory through the end of the Hellenistic era to 30 B.C. His work serves two purposes: it acts as a companion piece to the software database Perseus: Interactive Sources and Studies on Ancient Greece (Yale Univ., 1996, rev. ed.), to which the author contributed material, and it serves as an introductory text for anyone interested in classical studies. Novices will find the work both comprehensible and entertaining. For readers interested in pursuing topics such as the philosophy of Plato or the Peloponnesian War, Martin includes an annotated section of suggested readings that is quite helpful. This abundantly illustrated work is recommended for libraries housing the Perseus program and especially for public libraries whose classical sections consist of a handful of Michael Grant titles and dog-eared copies of Edith Hamilton's *The Greek Way*.?Rose M. Cichy, Osterhout Free Lib., Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

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From [Booklist](#)

Free of suffocating scholasticism, this stolid narrative is well suited for a small library needing an overview of ancient Greece. Naturally, Martin writes most about the more fully researched periods, the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., encompassing the Persian Wars, the Peloponnesian War, and the subsequent Macedonian conquest of an enervated Greek civilization. But he starts with the earliest habitation of Hellas, as well as archaeology can discern it through Stone Age remnants. Cautiously noting how problematic interpreting fragmentary evidence can be, for example in inferring social structure, Martin proceeds to describe the earliest widespread Greek cultures, the Minoan and Mycenaean. Emerging from the dark time into which they collapsed was the famous Homeric Age, when the two epic poems were put into writing. A summary of them, and of the other principal literary works of Greece, stud the political developments Martin steadily recounts: Athenian democracy is capably introduced to new readers. Photographs and maps enhance this solid first lesson about the ancients. *Gilbert Taylor*

From Kirkus Reviews

A limpidly written, highly accessible, and comprehensive history of Greece and its civilizations from prehistory through the collapse of Alexander the Great's empire. In brisk fashion, Martin (Classics/Holy Cross Coll.) narrates the highlights of what little is known about the Stone Age in Greece, the prehistoric Minoan civilization on the island of Crete, the rise of Mycenaean culture, and the Dark Age that looms as a lacuna between approximately 1200 b.c., when Mycenae mysteriously collapsed, and about 750 b.c., when Greece's Archaic Age began. In the Archaic Age, Martin relates, the foundations of life during the classical period were laid: the institution of slavery, which spurred the growth of a leisure class; the emergence of city-states; the establishment of laws; and the development of various types of polity all contributed to both the creative culture and the political tensions that characterized Greece during later eras. Although broadly discussing political, military, and social history, Martin emphasizes the cultural achievements of Athenian civilization during the Golden Age and the impact of the horrendous 27-year Peloponnesian War, which sapped the military strength of Athens and effectively finished the city as a power. Martin also traces the rise of the mercurial Alexander the Great and the rapid creation of his magnificent, far-flung, and ephemeral empire and its disintegration after Alexander's death in 323 b.c. into numerous kingdoms, culturally diverse but all with a Hellenistic flavor. This concise but wide-ranging narrative takes us up to the death of Cleopatra VII, the last Hellenistic monarch of Egypt, in 30 b.c., and the emergence of Rome as the dominant

Mediterranean power. A highly readable account of ancient Greece, particularly useful as an introductory or review text for the student or the general reader. -- *Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

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