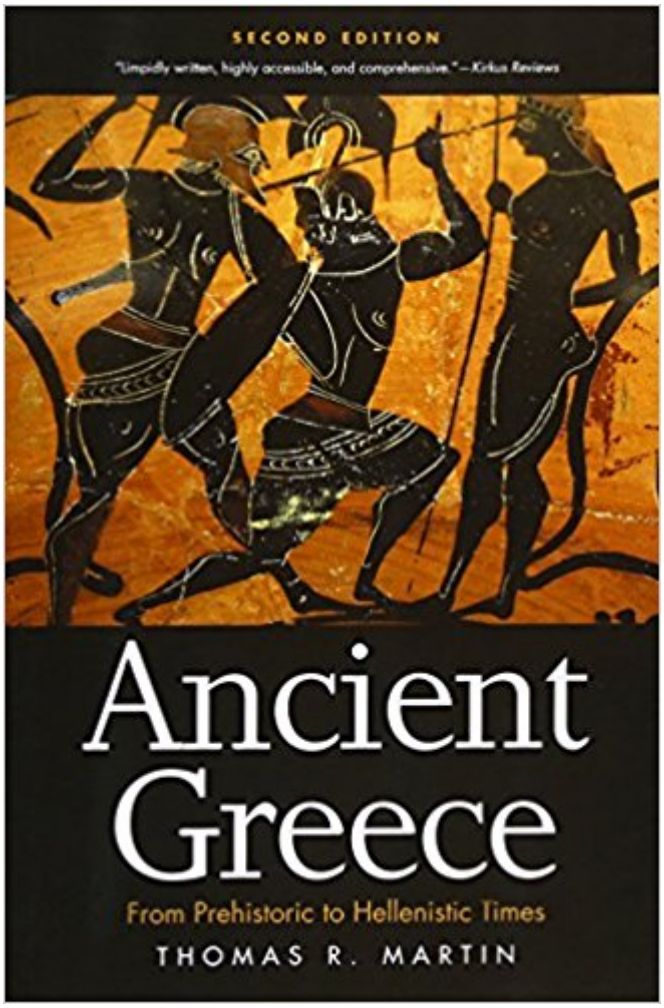
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Ancient Greece: From Prehistoric To Hellenistic Times, Second Edition



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Synopsis

In this compact yet comprehensive history of ancient Greece, Thomas R. Martin brings alive Greek civilization from its Stone Age roots to the fourth century B.C. Focusing on the development of the Greek city-state and the society, culture, and architecture of Athens in its Golden Age, Martin integrates political, military, social, and cultural history in a book that will appeal to students and general readers alike.Ã Â Now in its second edition, this classic work now features new maps and illustrations, a new introduction, and updates throughout.Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A limpidly written, highly accessible, and comprehensive history of Greece and its civilizations from prehistory through the collapse of Alexander the GreatÃ¢â ¬â„¢s empire. . . . A highly readable account of ancient Greece, particularly useful as an introductory or review text for the student or the general reader.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Kirkus ReviewsÃ Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A polished and informative work that will be useful for general readers and students.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •Daniel Tompkins, Temple University

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Customer Reviews

Praise for Ancient Greece, first edition: "In this survey of ancient Greek history and civilization, Martin skillfully blends social, cultural, political, and military data to create a panoramic view of the Greek world. Novices will find the work both comprehensible and entertaining."Ã¢â ¬â •Library JournalÃ Â "A limpidly written, highly accessible, and comprehensive history of Greece and its civilizations from prehistory through the collapse of Alexander the Great's empire. . . . A highly readable account of ancient Greece, particularly useful as an introductory or review text for the student or the general reader."Ã¢â ¬â •Kirkus ReviewsÃ Â "This comprehensive coverage of

ancient Greece begins with Stone Age prehistory and moves to coverage of Greek society and politics. It can easily appeal to any general reader with a cursory interest in Greek history, exploring how the people lived and developed their society."Ã¢â ¬â •Midwest Book ReviewÃ Â "Photographs and maps enhance this solid first lesson about the ancients."Ã¢â ¬â •BooklistÃ Â "This is a superb introduction to the Greek world for beginning students, precise and stimulating without overwhelming students with too many details."Ã¢â ¬â •David Graf, University of Miami

Thomas R. Martin is professor of Classics at the College of the Holy Cross. His publications include Herodotus and Sima Qian: The First Great Historians of Greece and China, Ancient Rome, and, as co-author, The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures.

Having read this book fifteen years ago in 1998, and now reading it again in 2013 I am struck at how clear the prose is and how easy it is to understand Martin’s ideas. This was the book that ignited my love of ancient history and led me to focus on ancient history during my undergraduate years - even going so far as to write an honors thesis on late antiquity.The subject matter of Ancient Greece remains relevant to our modern world, whether people wish to believe it or not during this revisionist period that seeks to equalize all periods and cultures. In reading about the Ancient Greeks, we see the nucleus of our own current world (In the West). Martin does an excellent job of writing a brief, accessible survey of the period. Beginning with the Mycenaeans and the Minoans he chronologically surveys ancient Greek history down to the Hellenistic period, that dazzling period in ancient history when cross-cultural fermentation unleashed a world of advances that form the basis for many parts of our modern world. Martin discusses ideas and dissects culture particularly well throughout the book. And because so much of what we know comes from the literature that has survived, there is a of analysis of the literature. If you enjoy Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, Aristophanes, Sappho, Sophocles, Euripedes, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, etc. you get the idea, then you will enjoy the glimpses that Martin gives you of the writings and what those writings say about the period the authors lived in.Due to the nature of our sources, Martin focuses more on later period than on earlier periods. That is to be expected. In addition to the excellent survey, Martin also offers a great bibliography for the reader who is interested in exploring the world of the Ancient Greeks in more details. Because this book was published in 1996 and updated in 2000, it doesn’t discuss a lot of the recent scholarship on the period (In particular if you’re a fan of the Peloponnesian War then Kagan’s tetraology on the war is a great resource -Ã Â The Outbreak of the Peloponnesian War (A New History of the Peloponnesian War)Ã Â). Still, if you have an interest in the period and haven’t

read much before, this is a great place to begin.

Thomas R. Martin has quietly established himself as one of my favorite historians to read. My primary interest in history is Medieval Europe, but I felt that I needed to better understand the bookends that are the Classical and Modern periods of European history to complement my studies of Medieval history. Martin's books have been an incredible help to me in quickly gaining a grasp of the history and accomplishments of Ancient Greece.In a short amount of space, Martin covers the history of Greece from paleolithic through Hellenistic times. Despite the brevity of his work, he is able to weave together a satisfying narrative that meets the needs of anyone looking for an introduction to Ancient Greek history without having to read multiple volumes. It is a great branching off point for further study of individual periods of Greek history (Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic) if one is interested. What makes Martin's work a success is his ability to organize vast amounts of information and tell history in a way that is compelling while remaining objective, honest, and free from superfluous language. I particularly enjoyed Martin's discussion of the early history of Greece from the Paleolithic through the Bronze Age (including the Minoan and Mycenean civilizations) and into Archaic Greece. The reader is truly able to see the development of Greek civilization and establishment of key features, such as the polis (city-state), that would come to dominate the Classical period. Even if one is primarily interested in Classical Greece, Martin's account remains interesting and informative from beginning to end and I highly recommend it.For those who are interested in the time periods covered towards the end of this book, I would also recommend Martin and Christopher Blackwell's "Alexander the Great: The Story of an Ancient Life" and Michael Grant's "From Alexander to Cleopatra: The Hellenistic World." It seems Martin has also published an account of Ancient Roman history recently entitledÃ Â Ancient Rome: From Romulus to Justinian" which I look forward to reading.

Thomas Martin's book "Ancient Greece" is an absolutely fantastic book if you're interested in getting an overview of ancient Greece, how it started and progressed and why people are interested in studying about it. At just over 200 pages of text, Martin somehow manages to cover a huge amount of information, yet keep it extremely interesting. The only shortcoming is that in my paperback edition the pictures are all crummy black and white and grainy. Additionally, all the images are grouped together, so the images aren't there when you read the associated section in the text.I'm not sure where you are coming from, but I had just read the Odyssey and the Iliad and wanted an overview in order to understand these texts better as well as snoop around for other texts to read.

Mission accomplished, Herodotus' "Histories" and then Hesiod's "Works and Days", staying clear of Thucydides because it just seems too difficult to read.Included in the text, as the book begins, is a description of the geographic characteristics of Greece and how that led to the development of individual, strong Greek city-states. Additionally, we hear about the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations. The Hellenistic period, which occurs after Alexander the Great unified much of the old Persian Empire (and probably more) with the Greek "homeland" seems like it gets short shrift compared with the Classical or Golden eras, though you get just enough information to a) get excited about those areas and b) get leads for other areas to investigate.

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