

Walking in Greece

Reading List

The Oxford History of Greece & the Hellenistic World

by John Boardman (Editor), Jasper Griffin (Editor), Oswyn Murray (Editor)

From the epic poems of Homer to the glittering art and architecture of Greece's Golden Age, to the influential Roman systems of law and leadership, the classical Greek world established the foundations of our culture as well as many of its most enduring achievements.

Now, in this vivid volume, readers can embrace the spirit of the classical world, from the eighth to the first centuries B.C., a period unparalleled in history for its brilliance in literature, philosophy, and the visual arts. This work also treats the Hellenization of the Middle East by the monarchies established in the area conquered by Alexander the Great. The editors, all celebrated classicists, intersperse chapters on political and social history with sections on literature, philosophy, and the arts, and reinforce the historical framework with maps and historical charts. Moreover, the contributors--thirty of the world's leading scholars--present the latest in modern scholarship through masterpieces of wit, brevity, and style. Together with hundreds of excellent illustrations, these entries provide both a provocative and entertaining window into our classical heritage.

The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece

by Josiah Ober

Lord Byron described Greece as great, fallen, and immortal, a characterization more apt than he knew. Through most of its long history, Greece was poor. But in the classical era, Greece was densely populated and highly urbanized. Many surprisingly healthy Greeks lived in remarkably big houses and worked for high wages at specialized occupations. Middle-class spending drove sustained economic growth and classical wealth produced a stunning cultural efflorescence lasting hundreds of years.

Why did Greece reach such heights in the classical period--and why only then? And how, after "the Greek miracle" had endured for centuries, did the Macedonians defeat the Greeks, seemingly bringing an end to their glory? Drawing on a massive body of newly available data and employing novel approaches to evidence, Josiah Ober offers a major new history of classical Greece and an unprecedented account of its rise and fall.

Ober argues that Greece's rise was no miracle but rather the result of political breakthroughs and economic development. The extraordinary emergence of citizen-centered city-states transformed Greece into a society that defeated the mighty Persian Empire. Yet Philip and Alexander of Macedon were able to beat the Greeks in the Battle of Chaeronea in 338 BCE, a victory made possible by the Macedonians' appropriation of Greek innovations. After Alexander's death, battle-hardened warlords fought ruthlessly over the remnants of his empire. But Greek cities remained populous and wealthy, their economy and culture surviving to be passed on to the Romans--and to us.

A compelling narrative filled with uncanny modern parallels, this is a book for anyone interested in how great civilizations are born and die.

Modern Greece: What Everyone Needs to Know

by Stathis Kalyvas

When Greece's economic troubles began to threaten the stability of the European Union in 2010, the nation found itself in the center of a whirlwind of international finger-pointing. In the years prior, Greece appeared to be politically secure and economically healthy. Upon its emergence in the center of the European economic maelstrom, however, observers and critics cited a century of economic hurdles, dictatorships, revolutions, and more reasons as to why their current crisis was understandable, if not predictable. The ancient birthplace of democracy and countless artistic, literary, philosophical, and scientific developments had struggled to catch-up to its economically-thriving neighbors in Western Europe for years and quickly became the most seriously economically-troubled European country following a fiscal nosedive beginning in 2008. When the deficit and unemployment skyrocketed, the resulting austerity measures triggered widespread social unrest.

The entire world turned its focus toward the troubled nation, waiting for the possibility of a Greek exit from the European Monetary Union and its potential to unravel the entire Union, with other weaker members heading for the exit as well. The effects of Greece's crisis are also tied up in the global arguments about austerity, with many viewing it as necessary medicine, and still others seeing austerity as an intellectually bankrupt approach to fiscal policy that only further damages weak economies.

In *Modern Greece: What Everyone Needs to Know®*, Stathis Kalyvas, an eminent scholar of conflict, Europe, and Greece combines the most up-to-date economic and political-science findings on the current Greek crisis with a discussion of Greece's history. Tracing the nation's development from the early nineteenth century to the present, the informative question-and answer format covers key episodes including the independence movement of the early nineteenth century, the massive ethnic cleansing in Turkey and Greece following World War I, the German occupation in World War II, the following brutal civil war, the conflict with Turkey over Cyprus, the military coup of 1967, democracy at long last, and the country's entry into the European Union.

Written by one of the most brilliant political scientists in the academy, Modern Greece is the go-to resource for understanding both the current crisis and the historical events that brought the country to where it is today.

Greece: A Short History of a Long Story, 7,000 BCE to the Present

by Carol G. Thomas

Greece: A Short History of a Long Story presents a comprehensive overview of the history of Greece by exploring the continuity of Greek culture from its Neolithic origins to the modern era.

- ~ Tells the story of Greece through individual personalities that inhabited various periods in the lengthy sweep of Greek history
 - ~ Uses an approach based on recent research that includes DNA analysis and analyses of archaeological materials
 - ~ Explores ways in which the nature of Greek culture was continually reshaped over time
 - ~ Features illustrations that portray the people of different eras in Greek history along with maps that demonstrate the physical sphere of Greece and major events in each of the periods
-

Meteora: The History of the Famous Greek Landmark that Houses Eastern Orthodox Monasteries

by Charles River Editors

The Tower of Babel is arguably among the most well-known allegories of the Old Testament. As told by the Book of Genesis, the story revolves around a post-flood batch of Noah's descendants who dwelled in Babylon's Mesopotami, a city erected by King Nimrod. The population multiplied rapidly over the years, and the city's inhabitants fostered the growth of their culture and enhancing the infrastructure of their territories, made easier by the existence of only one common language.

Naturally, the pride of the Mesopotamian residents burgeoned, but their contentment, poisoned by their greed and ambition, began to decline. The only way to prevail over this slump, believed a particularly enterprising group of individuals, was to construct a colossal ziggurat (a "rectangular, stepped tower") that would ascend past the clouds and into the heavens. With this tower, they intended to "make a name for" mankind and the untouchable abilities of mere mortals, thereby severing their relationship with God their Creator for good.

According to the Bible, God was far from impressed, and to add insult to injury, the architects behind this attempt deliberately opted for man-made materials, such as brick and tar, rather than stone, timber, and other natural building blocks gifted to them by God. The overblown pomposity and conceit of His subjects had to be ceased at once, lest they stray further away from Him. Thus, as the

people slept, God reached down and scooped up handfuls of the slumbering Mesopotamians and strewed them across the continents, creating 70 different nations and tribes. When they awoke, the bewildered residents of the newly birthed nations were speaking in different tongues. With the architects scattered around the globe and now unable to understand one another, construction of the partially built ziggurat came screeching to a halt. It was later dubbed the "Tower of Babel," or the "Tower of Confusion." This miserable monument, which served as a haunting reminder of man's subservience to God, was continuously marred by fire and battered by the elements over the years until it eventually crumbled back into the earth.

Close to 1,850 miles to the west of Babylon, roughly 3,000 years later, yet another group of mere mortals set out on a daring, but seemingly fragile quest to build their homes in a place that - at the very least - symbolically neighbored the Kingdom of God. Evidently, these mortals had earned the Lord's blessings, for there, a smattering of their descendants remain to this day.

Contrary to the builders of Babel, these God-fearing venturers constructed these dwellings with the purpose of wholly devoting their lives to the Lord. More admirable yet, these dwellings were not lofty towers that took dozens of years to assemble, nor were they built atop solid ground; instead, they ranged from small huts to compact complexes perilously perched atop and embedded into the nooks and fissures of stone mountains. This forest of jagged stone pillar, which looms over gorgeous valleys and a lush, densely forested stretch of land, is none other than Meteora, situated in the quaint town of Kalabaka in the northwestern part of Thessaly, Greece.

Meteora: The History of the Famous Greek Landmark that Houses Eastern Orthodox Monasteries looks at the unique place and what life has been like there since the monasteries were built there. Along with pictures depicting important people, places, and events, you will learn about Meteora like never before.

Greek Mythology: A Traveller's Guide from Mount Olympus to Troy

by David Stuttard

The Greek myths have a universal appeal, reaching far beyond the time and physical place in which they were created. In this book, the reader is taken on a tour of 22 destinations in Greece and Turkey, from Mount Olympus to Homer's Hades, recounting the tales from Greek mythology and the history associated with each.
