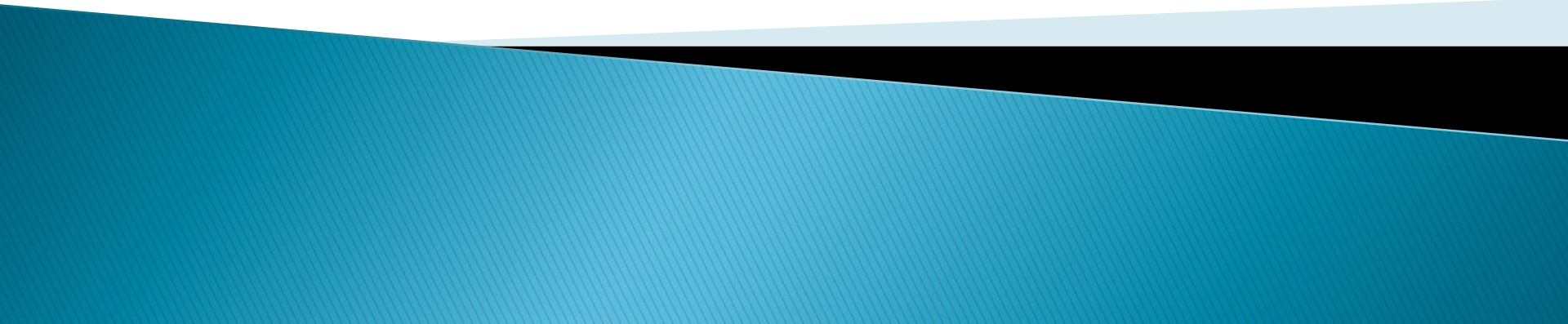


Sparta: An extraordinary Polis

Lecture 2: Geography



The Greek World



This map illustrates the geographical features of ancient Greece and its surroundings. Key elements include:

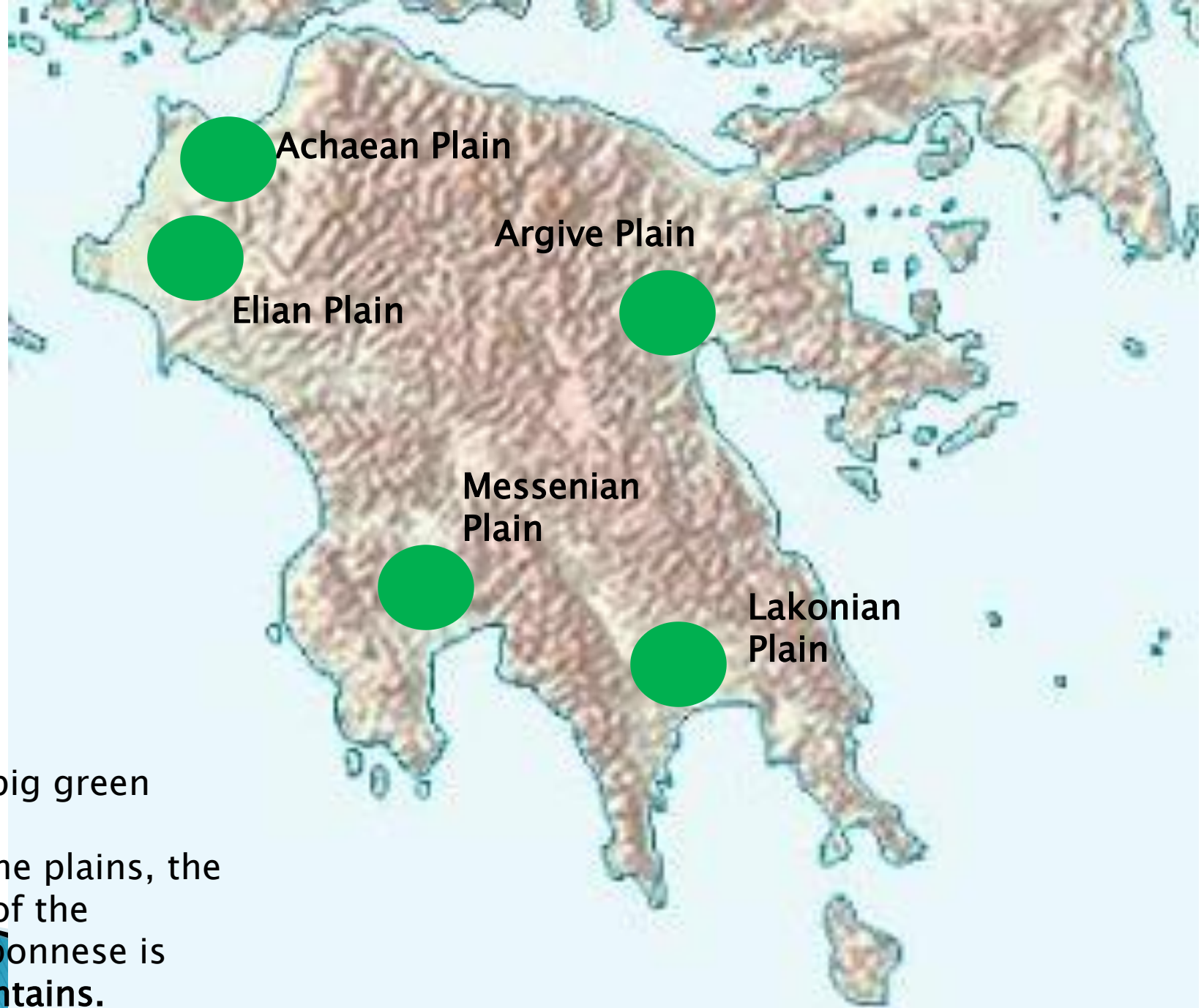
- Mountains:** Pindus Mons, Olympos Mons, Haemus Mons, Rhodope Mons, and Athos Mons.
- Rivers:** Danuvius, Hebrus, Axios, Peneios, and Maeander.
- Straits and Seas:** Bosphorus, Propontis, Hellespontus, Aegeum Mare, Myrtoum Mare, and Creticum Mare.
- Islands:** Numerous islands are labeled, including Corcyra, Ithaca, Cephallenia, Zacynthus, Euboea, Chios, Samos, Ikaria, Delos, Paros, Naxos, Melos, Thera, Rhodes, and Kydonia.
- Cities and Towns:** Major centers like Athenae, Corinthus, Megara, Thebae, Argos, Sparta, Messene, Olympia, Elis, Patra, Thermon, Delphi, Chalcis, Euboea, Demetrias, Larissa, Beroia, Pella, Amphipolis, Philippopolis, Scupi, Naissus, Oescus, Novae, Marcianopolis, Odessus, Byzantium/Constantinopolis, Nicomedia, Nicaea, Cyzicus, Ilium/Troia, Pergamum, Mytilene, Smyrna, Sardis, Ephesus, Priene, Halicarnassus, Xanthus, and Hierapytna.
- Other Features:** The map also shows the Isonium Mons and the Creta (Crete) island.

The title 'INTERNUM MARE' is prominently displayed at the bottom of the map.

I N T E R N U M M A R E







The big green dots are the plains, the rest of the Peloponnese is mountains.



Messenia **Lakonia**



**Main Rivers in
Lakonia and
Messenia**

The Evrotas Valley



The Evrotas River near Brontama



The River Pamisos



http://farm1.static.flickr.com/136/318388681_70513f3636.jpg



Waterfalls at the River Nedha

<http://www.iridaresort.gr/photos/nedha-fall.jpg>



**Main Mountains
In Lakonia and
Messenia**

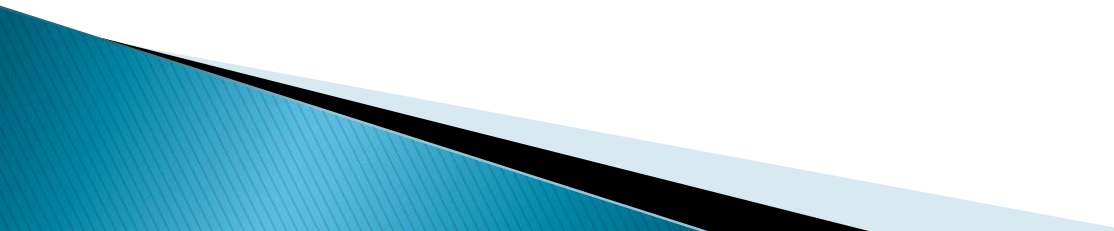


Taygetos Mountain

View of
Taygetos
From modern
Sparti



Lakonia and Lacedaimon

- ▶ The terms Sparta, Lakonia and Lacedaimon are **not interchangeable**.
 - ▶ Lakonia is the area east of Mt. Taygetos.
 - ▶ Lakonia is **not a state, Sparta is**.
 - ▶ Lacedaimon is the state including Messenia.
- 



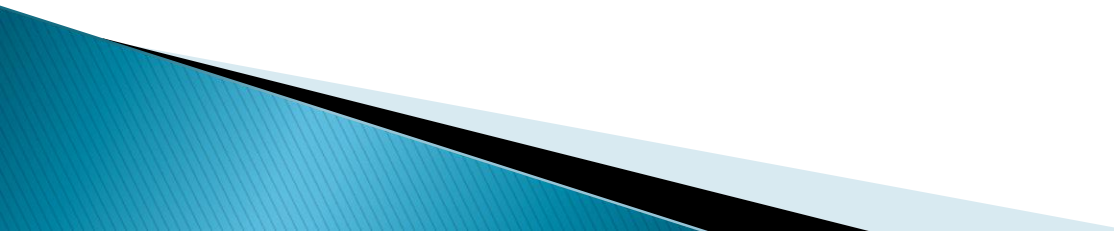
Messenia Lakonia

Lacedaimon

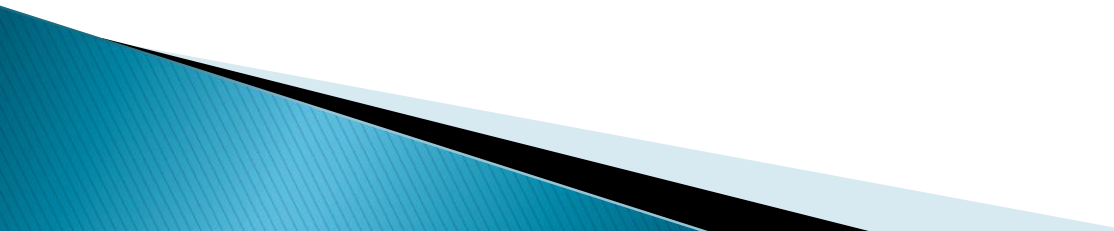
The area of Lacedaimon

- ▶ These figures relate to the period after 545 BCE.
- ▶ Area: $8,500 \text{ km}^2 = 2,100,395 \text{ acres}$
- ▶ Lacedaimon was the largest single political entity in the Greek world. Its nearest rival, Athens, had merely $2,500 \text{ km}^2 (=617,763 \text{ acres})$

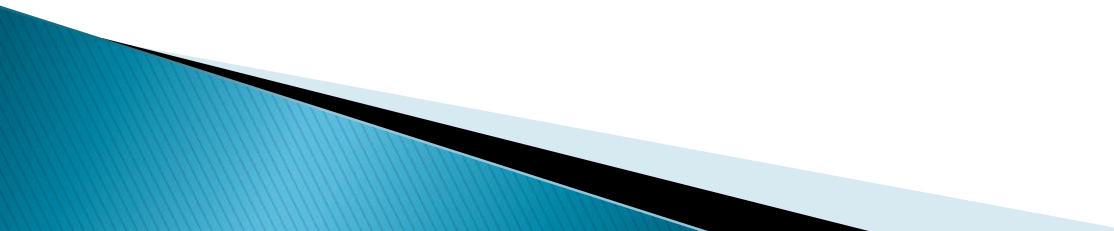
Thucydides 1.10.2

- ▶ For I suppose if Lacedaemon were to become desolate, and the temples and the foundations of the public buildings were left, that as time went on there would be a strong disposition with posterity to refuse to accept her fame as a true exponent of her power. And yet they occupy **two-fifths of Peloponnese and lead the whole, not to speak of their numerous allies without.**
- 

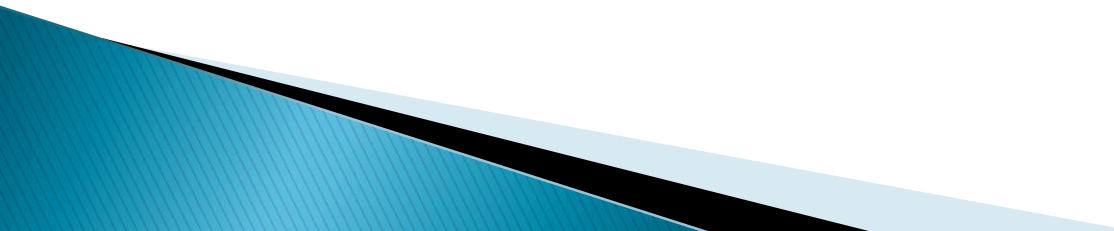
The Climate

- ▶ The climate in the eastern Mediterranean and particularly in Greece is one of constant fluctuation.
 - ▶ Climatic factors influence agriculture and hence the wealth of a community and its ability to feed itself, as well as produce surplus for trade.
- 

The Climate in Lakonia

- ▶ Mean temperature in July: 27° C
 - ▶ Mean temperature in January: 8.8° C
 - ▶ Mean rainfall 81.66 cm
 - ▶ Average number of rain-days: 87 pa
 - ▶ Annual drought season: 2 months (July and August)
 - ▶ Wind power: Force 7–8 Beaufort scale (meltemi season).
- 

The influence of the mountains

- ▶ Lakonia receives more rainfall per year than most areas in southern Greece.
 - ▶ The drought season is often alleviated by rainstorms.
 - ▶ Mt Taygetos and Mt Parnon are responsible for the updraughts that bring more rain.
- 

Cape Maleas

- ▶ Cape Maleas along with Cape Caphereas in Euboea and the Athos peninsula in the Chalcidice are considered the most important marine hazards in the Aegean Sea.
- ▶ Ships, even today, will go to considerable lengths to avoid sailing the cape, especially when the wind is strong.

Cape Maleas



Herodotus 7.168

- ▶ As for the Corcyraeans, their answer to the envoys and their acts were as I will show. The men who had gone to Sicily sought their aid too, using the same arguments which they had used with Gelon. The Corcyraeans straightaway promised to send help and protection, declaring that they would not allow Hellas to perish, for if she should fall, the very next day would certainly see them also enslaved. They would accordingly have to help to the best of their ability. [2]Now this answer seemed fair enough, but when the time came for sending help, their minds changed. They manned sixty ships and put out to sea, making for the coast of the Peloponnese. There, however, they anchored off Pylos and Taenarus in the Lacedaemonian territory, waiting like the others to see which way the war should incline. ... [4]They were, however, also ready with an excuse which they could make to the Greeks, and in the end they made it; when the Greeks blamed them for sending no help, they said that they had manned sixty triremes, **but that they could not round Malea because of the Etesian winds.** It was for this reason, they said, that they could not arrive at Salamis; it was not cowardliness which made them late for the sea-fight. With such a plea they put the Greeks off.

Follow-up Reading

- ▶ Cartledge, Paul. *Sparta and Lakonia : A Regional History, 1300–362 BCE*, London, 2002, pp.3–40
- ▶ Pausanias *Periegesis* Book 3
- ▶ This reading can be found online; links can be found in the follow-up reading links for this lecture on Moodle.

Questions?