

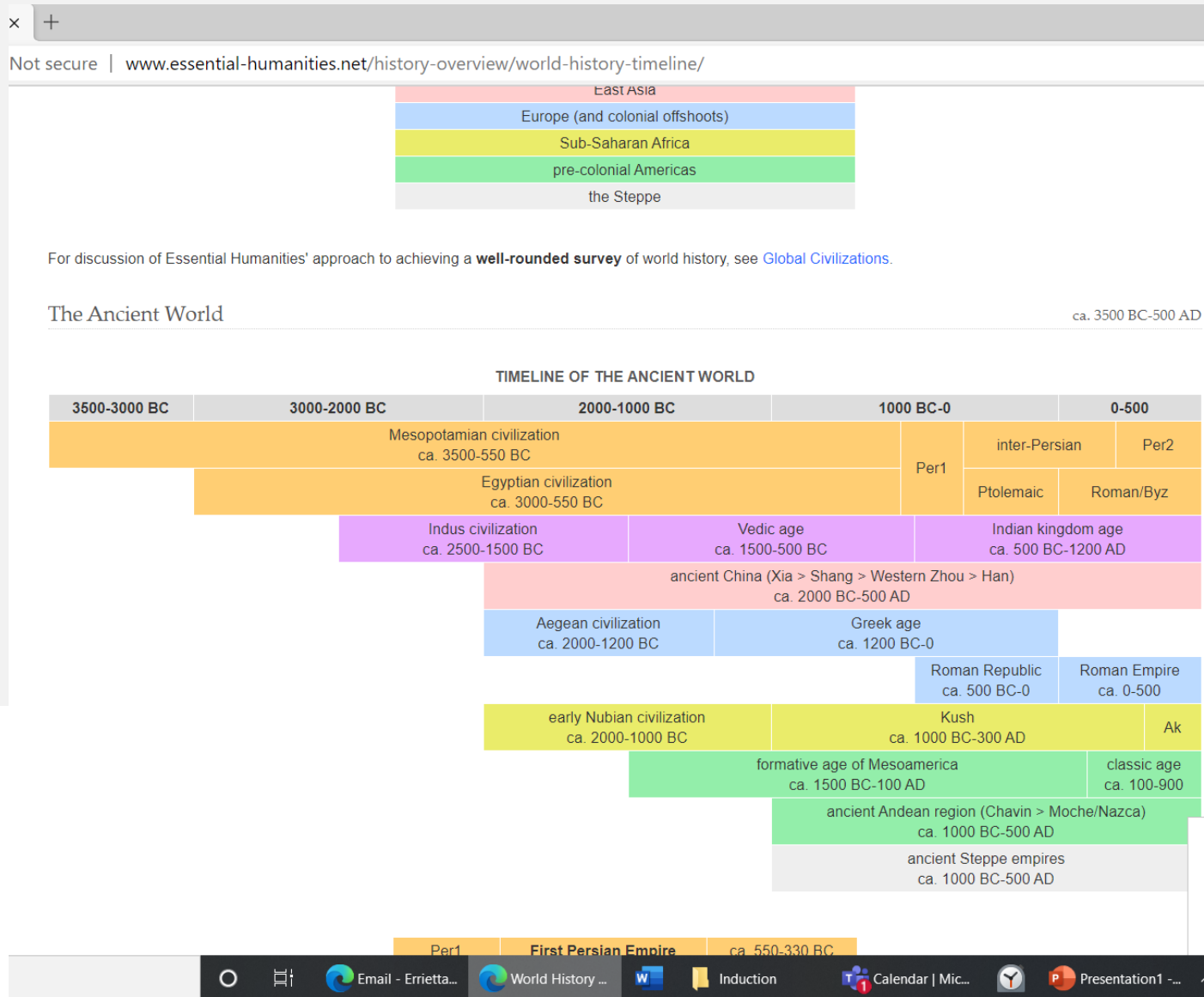


PathWays to Evil

Ancient World: Introduction

The Mediterranean and the Near East

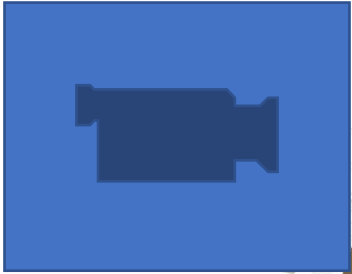




Basic Chronology

How do you imagine the ancient world?

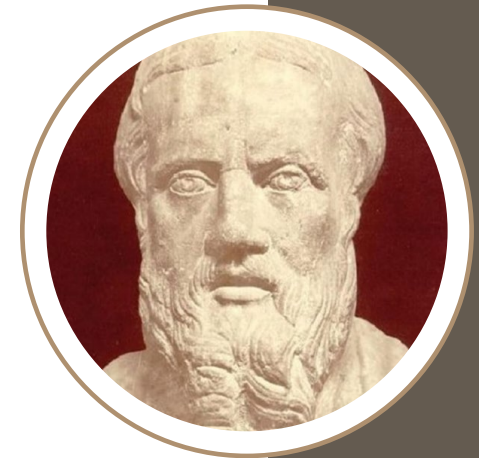




- [7.133] King Xerxes had sent no heralds either to Athens or Sparta to ask earth and water, for a reason which I will now relate. **When Darius some time before sent messengers for the same purpose, they were thrown, at Athens, into the pit of punishment, at Sparta into a well, and bidden to take therefrom earth and water for themselves, and carry it to their king.** On this account Xerxes did not send to ask them. What calamity came upon the Athenians to punish them for their treatment of the heralds I cannot say, unless it were the laying waste of their city and territory; but that I believe was not on account of this crime. [7.134] **On the Lacedaemonians, however, the wrath of Talthybius, Agamemnon's herald, fell with violence.** Talthybius has a temple at Sparta; and his descendants, who are called Talthybiadae, still live there, and have the privilege of being the only persons who discharge the office of herald. When therefore the Spartans had done the deed of which we speak, the victims at their sacrifices failed to give good tokens; and this failure lasted for a very long time. Then the Spartans were troubled; and, regarding what had befallen them as a grievous calamity, they held frequent assemblies of the people, and made proclamation through the town, "Was any Lacedaemonian willing to give his life for Sparta?" **Upon this two Spartans, Sperthias, the son Aneristus, and Bulis, the son of Nicolaus, both men of noble birth, and among the wealthiest in the place, came forward and freely offered themselves as an atonement to Xerxes for the heralds of Darius slain at Sparta. So the Spartans sent them away to the Medes to undergo death.** [7.135] Nor is the courage which these men hereby displayed alone worthy of wonder; but so likewise are the following speeches which were made by them. On their road to Susa they presented themselves before Hydarnes. ...
- [7.136] And afterwards, when they were come to Susa into the king's presence, and the guards ordered them to fall down and do obeisance, and went so far as to use force to compel them, they refused, and said they would never do any such thing, even were their heads thrust down to the ground; for it was not their custom to worship men, and they had not come to Persia for that purpose. So they fought off the ceremony; and having done so, addressed the king in words much like the following:- **"O king of the Medes! the Lacedaemonians have sent us hither, in the place of those heralds of thine who were slain in Sparta, to make atonement to thee on their account."** Then Xerxes answered with true greatness of soul "that he would not act like the Lacedaemonians, who, by killing the heralds, had broken the laws which all men hold in common. As he had blamed such conduct in them, he would never be guilty of it himself. And besides, he did not wish, by putting the two men to death, to free the Lacedaemonians from the stain of their former outrage."
- [7.137] This conduct on the part of the Spartans caused the anger of Talthybius to cease for a while, notwithstanding that Sperthias and Bulis returned home alive. But many years afterwards it awoke once more, as the Lacedaemonians themselves declare, during the war between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians. Hdt 7.133-7 (excerpts)

Herodotus

- C485-424 BCE.
- Wrote after the Persian Wars.
- 1st historian = Father of History.
- Born in Halikarnassos.
- This is the display of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that things done by man **not be forgotten in time**, and that great and marvelous deeds, **some displayed by the Hellenes, some by the barbarians**, not lose their glory, including among others what was the cause of their waging war on each other. Herodotos 1.1





Commonly recognised laws of war

- Envoys are inviolate
- Sworn peace treaties must be adhered to
- War has to be formally declared
- Cessation of war must be declared and agreed
- The dead are inviolate



Law of the gods

- Yes, since it was not Zeus that published me that edict, and since not of that kind are the laws which Justice who dwells with the gods below established among men. Nor did I think that your decrees were of such force, that a mortal could override the unwritten [455] and unfailing statutes given us by the gods. For their life is not of today or yesterday, but for all time, and no man knows when they were first put forth. Not for fear of any man's pride was I about to owe a penalty to the gods for breaking these. [460] Die I must, that I knew well (how could I not?) . That is true even without your edicts. But if I am to die before my time, I count that a gain. When anyone lives as I do, surrounded by evils, how can he not carry off gain by dying? [465] So for me to meet this doom is a grief of no account. **But if I had endured that my mother's son should in death lie an unburied corpse, that would have grieved me.** Yet for this, I am not grieved. And if my present actions are foolish in your sight, [470] it may be that it is a fool who accuses me of folly. Sophocles Antigone 449-461



What is missing?

At least according to our expectations of war?



Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, 75 U.N.T.S. 135, *entered into force* Oct. 21, 1950.

- In the case of armed conflict not of an international character occurring in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties, each party to the conflict shall be bound to apply, as a minimum, the following provisions:
- 1. Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances **be treated humanely**, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria.
- To this end the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever with respect to the above-mentioned persons:
 - (a) Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;
 - (b) Taking of hostages;
 - (c) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment;
 - (d) The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples.
- 2. The wounded and sick shall be collected and cared for.
- An impartial humanitarian body, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, may offer its services to the Parties to the conflict.

The Periclean Strategy

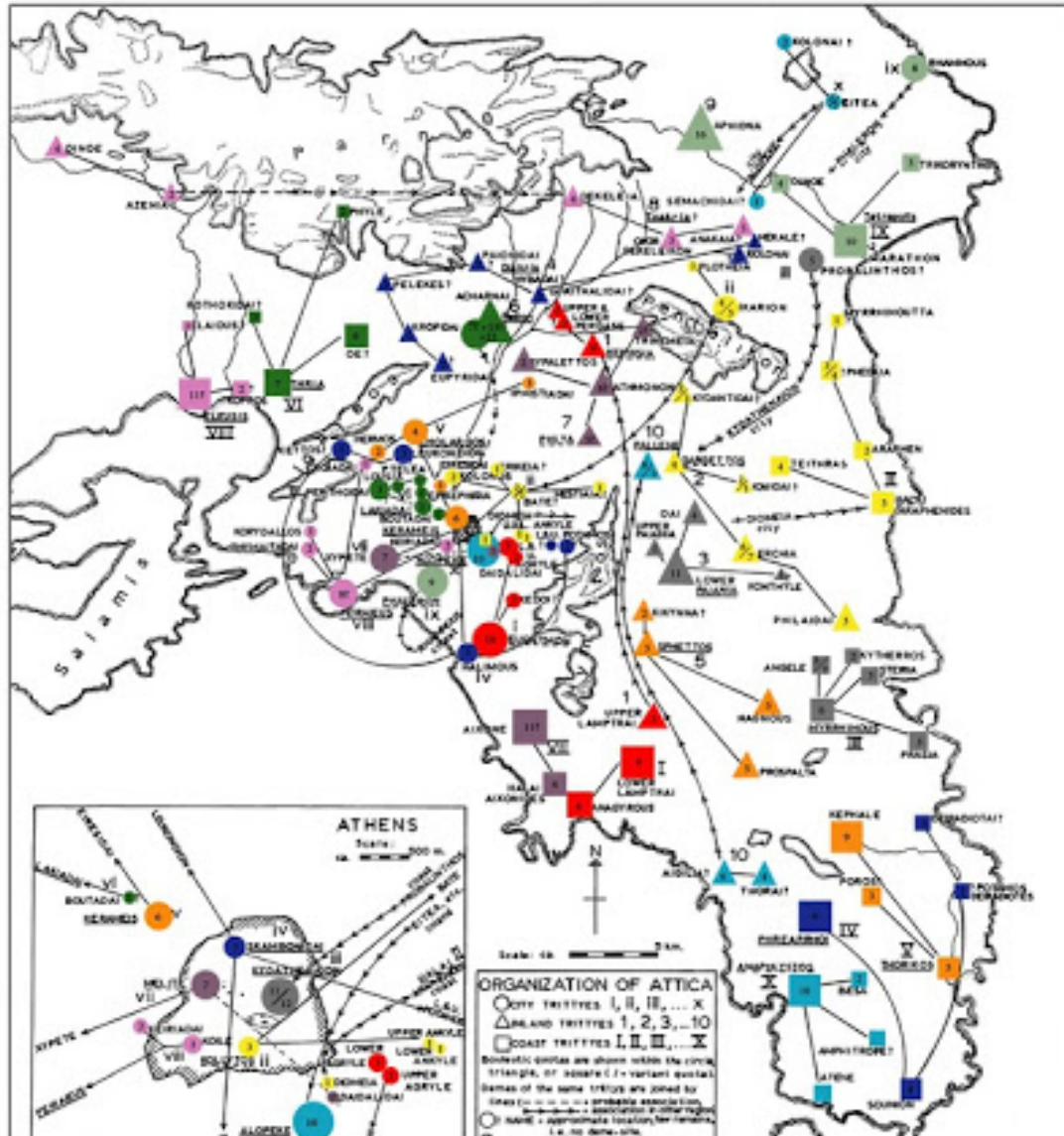
- While the Peloponnesians were still mustering at the Isthmus, or on the march before they invaded Attica, Pericles, son of Xanthippus, one of the ten generals of the Athenians, finding that the invasion was to take place, conceived the idea that ... He also gave the citizens some advice on their present affairs in the same strain as before. They were to prepare for the war, and to carry in their property from the country. They were not to go out to battle, but to come into the city and guard it, and get ready their fleet, in which their real strength lay. They were also to keep a tight rein on their allies--the strength of Athens being derived from the money brought in by their payments, and success in war depending principally upon conduct and capital. Thucydides 2.13





Abandoning Attika

- The Athenians listened to his advice, and began to carry in their wives and children from the country, and all their household furniture, even to the woodwork of their houses which they took down. Their sheep and cattle they sent over to Euboea and the adjacent islands. [2] But they found it hard to move, as most of them had been always used to live in the country. ... XVI. The Athenians thus long lived scattered over Attika in independent townships. ...[2] Deep was their trouble and discontent at abandoning their houses and the hereditary temples of the ancient constitution, and at having to change their habits of life and to bid farewell to what each regarded as his native city. Thucydides 2.14&2.16





A Greek invasion narrative

- Meanwhile the army of the Peloponnesians was advancing. The first town they came to in Attica was Oenoe, where they were to enter the country. Sitting down before it, they prepared to assault the wall with engines and otherwise. [2] Oenoe, standing upon the Athenian and Boeotian border, was of course a walled town, and was used as a fortress by the Athenians in time of war. So the Peloponnesians prepared for their assault, and wasted some valuable time before the place. [3] This delay brought the gravest censure upon Archidamus. Even during the levying of the war he had gained credit for weakness and Athenian sympathies by the half measures he had advocated; and after the army had assembled he had further injured himself in public estimation by his loitering at the Isthmus and the slowness with which the rest of the march had been conducted. But all this was as nothing to the delay at Oenoe. [4] During this interval the Athenians were carrying in their property; and it was the belief of the Peloponnesians that a quick advance would have found everything still out, had it not been for his procrastination. [5] Such was the feeling of the army towards Archidamus during the siege. But he, it is said, expected that the Athenians would shrink from letting their land be wasted, and would make their submission while it was still uninjured; and this was why he waited. Thuc. 2.18



Ravaging the land

- But when they saw the army at Acharnae, barely seven miles from Athens, they lost all patience. The territory of Athens was being ravaged before the very eyes of the Athenians, a sight which the young men had never seen before and the old only in the Median wars; and it was naturally thought a grievous insult, and the determination was universal, especially among the young men, to sally forth and stop it. [3] Knots were formed in the streets and engaged in hot discussion; for if the proposed sally was warmly recommended, it was also in some cases opposed. Oracles of the most various import were recited by the collectors, and found eager listeners in one or other of the disputants. Foremost in pressing for the sally were the Acharnians, as constituting no small part of the army of the state, and as it was their land that was being ravaged. Thuc. 2.21

Thucydides

- Writing in the 5th century, but later than Herodotus
- Wrote The History of the Peloponnesian War.
- Writing about more recent events
- Writing about events he was involved in.
- Narrower focus to his work
- Less fantastical elements

