

Introduction to Greece, Homer, and the Humanities

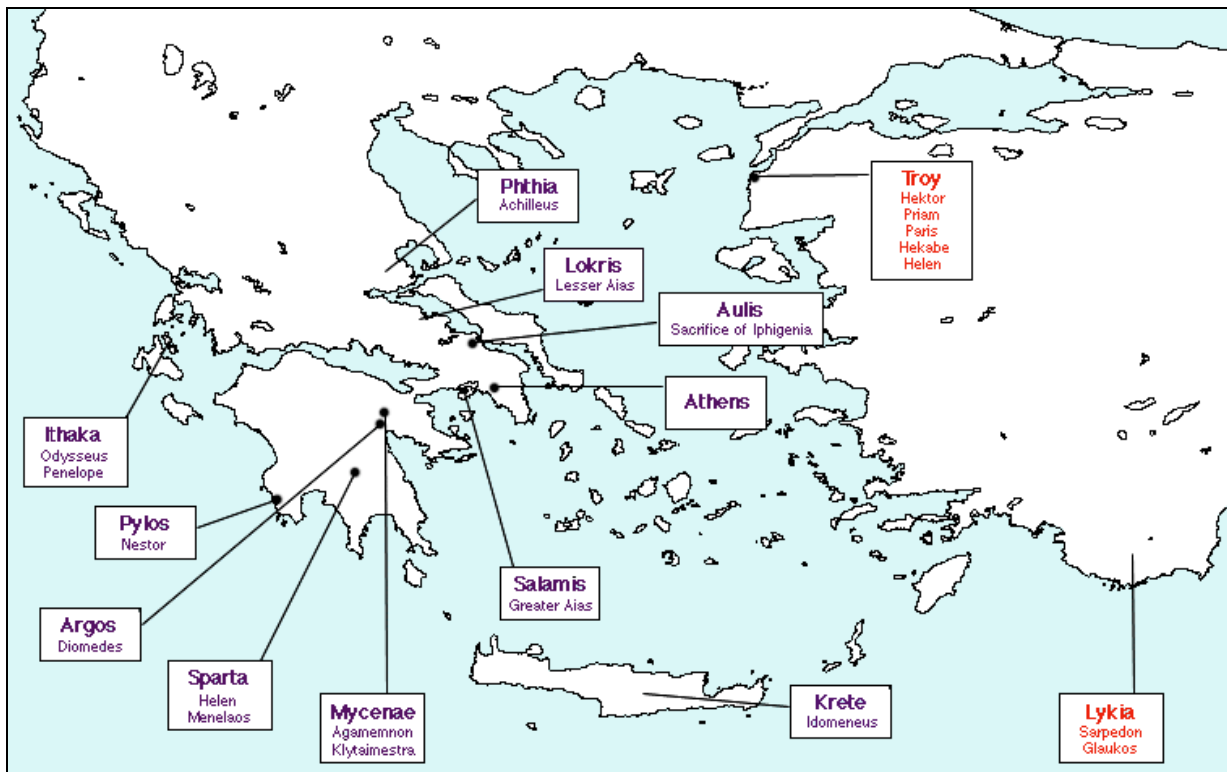
I. Lecture Outline

- A. Introduction to the Humanities: Why am I here?
- B. Introduction to the Greeks
  1. Theme of the lecture: the ancient Greeks are strange.
  2. Why are we studying the Greeks?
  3. Opening lines of the *Iliad*.
  4. Space and Time in Ancient Greece: map and timeline.
- C. Introduction to Homer
  1. The beginning of the *Iliad*: Some initial questions.
  2. Important issues to keep an eye on.
  3. What can the *Iliad* tell us about the Greeks?
  4. What can the *Iliad* and Achilles' wrath tell us about human existence?

II. The opening line of the *Iliad*

Μῆνιν	ἴειδε	θεά	Πηληϊάδεω	Ἀχιλλεύου
mê nin	a ei de	the a	Pê lê i a deô	A chi lê os
wrath	sing	goddess	of Peleus' son	Achilleus

III. Map of the Homeric World



## Basic Chronology of Ancient Greece

(all dates BCE; authors/ works studied this semester in **bold**)

### BRONZE AGE (3000-1150)

c. 1650-1200	Mycenaean Civilization
c. 1250-1220	"The Trojan War"
c. 1200-1150	Collapse of Mycenaean Civilization

### DARK AGE (1100-850)

c. 1050-950	Greek colonization of Asia Minor (western coast of Turkey)
c. 900	Beginning of the rise of the <i>polis</i> (city-state)

### ARCHAIC PERIOD (800-490)

c. 800-700	Rise of the aristocracies
776	Olympic Games established
c. 750	Greek colonization of Southern Italy and Sicily begins
c. 720	<b>Homer, <i>Iliad</i></b>
c. 700	<b>Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> ; Hesiod, <i>Theogony and Works and Days</i></b>
c. 680	<b>Archilochus</b> (lyric poet)
c. 650	Greek colonization around the Black Sea begins
621	Draco's code of law in Athens
c. 600	<b>Sappho</b> (lyric poet); Thales (philosopher)
594-593	Archonship of Solon in Athens
545-510	Tyranny of the Peisistratids in Athens
533	Thespis wins first tragedy competition at Athens
508	Cleisthenes reforms the Athenian Constitution

### CLASSICAL PERIOD (490-323)

490-479	Persian War
458	<b>Aeschylus, <i>Oresteia</i></b>
461-429	Pericles dominant in Athenian politics; the "Periclean Age"
c. 450-420	<b>Herodotus</b> composes his <i>Histories</i> of the Persian War.
447	<b>Parthenon</b> begun in Athens
441	<b>Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i></b>
431-404	Peloponnesian War (Athens and allies vs. Sparta and allies)
429	Pericles dies
429?	<b>Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i></b>
c. 424-400	<b>Thucydides</b> writes the <i>History of the Peloponnesian War</i>
411	<b>Aristophanes, <i>Lysistrata</i></b>
405	<b>Euripides, <i>Bacchae</i></b>
404	Athens loses Peloponnesian War to Sparta
399	Trial and death of Socrates
c. 399-347	<b>Plato</b> writes his philosophical dialogues
335-323	<b>Aristotle</b> writes his philosophical treatises