

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-61556-3 - The Greek City States: A Source Book, Second Edition

P. J. Rhodes

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The Greek City States

A SOURCE BOOK

Political activity and political thinking began in the *poleis* (cities) and other states of ancient Greece, and terms such as tyranny, aristocracy, oligarchy, democracy and politics itself are Greek words for concepts first discussed in Greece. This book presents in translation a selection of texts illustrating the formal mechanisms and informal working of the Greek states in all their variety, from the state described by Homer out of which the classical Greeks believed their states had developed, through the archaic period which saw the rise and fall of tyrants and the gradual broadening of citizen bodies, to the classical period of the fifth and fourth centuries, and beyond that to the hellenistic and Roman periods in which the Greeks tried to preserve their way of life in a world of great powers. For this second edition the book has been thoroughly revised and three new chapters added.

P. J. RHODES is Honorary Professor and Emeritus Professor of Ancient History at the University of Durham. His numerous publications in the field of Greek history include *A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia*, *The Decrees of the Greek States* (with D. M. Lewis), *Greek Historical Inscriptions, 404–323 BC* (with R. Osborne) and *A History of the Classical Greek World, 478–323 BC*.

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Preface to the First Edition

The Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote that ‘man is by nature a political animal’, that is, one for whom life can best be lived in *poleis*, or city states (*Politics*, I. 1253 A 2–3, III. 1278 B 19). The purpose of this book is to present the world of the Greek city states, through a selection of ancient texts in translation, to students of ancient Greece and to students of political institutions. Its primary concern is with how the various states were governed, though a few texts of a more theoretical nature are included; it is not intended as a source book for narrative history, though inevitably it includes some texts of importance to students of narrative history.

It is not always certain what the correct reading of an ancient text should be (cf. p. 8). I have translated what I believe to be the correct readings, occasionally but not systematically mentioning alternatives which may be encountered: some texts have to be identified by reference to particular modern editions, but these editions are cited for purposes of identification only, and I have felt free to diverge from them at points where I believe them to be mistaken.

The translations are all my own. I have consulted other translations intermittently, so when my version is identical with another this will be due sometimes to coincidence, sometimes to my finding in the other version an expression on which I could not improve. By kind permission of the original publishers, for the Aristotelian *Athenian Constitution* I have reused the translation which I made for Penguin Classics, and for a few fourth-century inscriptions I have reused the translations which I made for *Greek Historical Inscriptions, 359–323 BC*, in the LACTOR Series published by the London Association of Classical Teachers (in each case the treatment of technical terms has been modified to conform to the style adopted for this book).

The Greek alphabet differs from ours, and the rendering of Greek words and names in our alphabet presents problems. For proper names, and the more familiar words printed in roman type, I have used anglicised or latinised forms (boeotarchs, Corinth, rather than boiotarchoi, Korinthos); for the less familiar words printed in italics I have used more directly transliterated forms. The reader who knows no Greek need not worry about pronunciation: continental vowel values are authentic, but are not always used when a Greek word or name is incorporated in an English sentence; the one important rule is that the letter *e* after a consonant is used always to form a new syllable, never to modify the vowel before the consonant. (The English word *time* is of one syllable; the Greek word *time* is of two, and its authentic pronunciation can be represented approximately in English spelling as *tee-meh*.)

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The indexes double as glossaries, and provide some information not provided elsewhere in this book. There and elsewhere, reference to a passage (e.g. **141**) includes the introduction to that passage. Dates (except of modern publications) are BC unless stated to be AD.

I am grateful to Mr R. Stoneman and the rest of the staff of the publishers and the printers; to Mr H. Tudor of the Department of Politics in the University of Durham, for reading a first draft and making valuable suggestions; to the University of Durham, for financial support; and to the President and Fellows of Wolfson College, Oxford, for electing me to a visiting fellowship in 1984.

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Preface to Second Edition

I am grateful to Dr M. L. Sharp of Cambridge University Press for inviting me to prepare a second edition of this book, and to Routledge (as successors to Croom Helm) and to the University of Oklahoma Press for making that possible by returning my rights in the book to me.

The book originated in a request from Mr R. Stoneman, then of Croom Helm, that I should compile a source book on 'Greek political systems'. In revising it I had in any case wanted not only to correct a few errors and to do some updating but also to make a clearer typographical distinction between the ancient texts and my editorial material than was possible in the first edition, and to add some further texts; and further changes in presentation and additions to the texts were suggested by the publisher's advisers. The upshot is that in this edition all the material in the first edition has been retained, but the texts are now numbered in a single sequence; in Chapter Five what was a section on 'citizens, metics and slaves' has become a section on 'citizens, foreigners and slaves', with a few additional texts; there are new chapters on women and children, on economic life and on religion (though there is some material on all of these dispersed through the other chapters); and the chapter on the Hellenistic and Roman periods has been enlarged with a section showing 'variations on a theme' (though there was more material on these periods in the first edition than one hasty reviewer supposed).

I thank all those who have been involved in any way with the production of this edition. In particular, to those thanked before for allowing me to use (with modifications) translations of my own published elsewhere, I must now add Oxbow Books as successors to Aris and Phillips, for some translations from my editions of Thucydides, II, III and IV. 1 – V. 24, and Oxford University Press and Prof. R. Osborne, for fourth-century inscriptions from Rhodes and Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions, 404–323 BC*.

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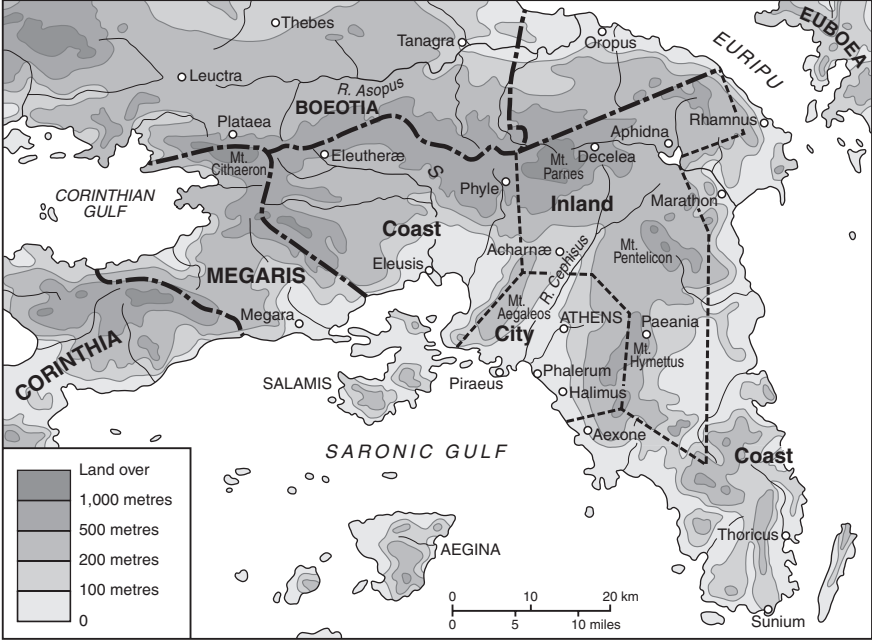
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Map 1 The Greek World.



Map 2 Attica.