



The Ancient Greeks

Moses I. Finley

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Los griegos de la Antigüedad constituye un ordenado friso por el que discurren los aspectos más significativos de la vida en la Grecia clásica. Desde el período arcaico hasta el esplendor del período helenístico, el libro traza un panorama de imágenes a menudo desconocidas de la organización de las ciudades-Estado, la religión, la ciencia, la filosofía, la literatura o las artes visuales de aquella civilización. El autor, Moses Finley (1912-1986), prestigioso especialista de la Universidad de Cambridge, ha unido la erudición a la claridad expositiva, logrando una obra llena de color y de vida que satisfará tanto al lector interesado como al estudiante que busque una primera aproximación al tema.

The Ancient Greeks Details

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Micah says

From the absurd attitude that took ancient Greece as some kind of harmonious "ideal," some have shifted to the attitude that it was a rather worthless and uninteresting period, because of slavery, for example. Few stop to consider whether slavery of some kind isn't part of today's social system, and whether today's intellectuals aren't just as "aristocratic" as those of ancient Athens (without being on the philosophical level of a Plato or an Aristotle, obviously).

In any case, abhorrent as some of ancient Greece's institutions and values were, there's no denying it was a fascinating time and that for a brief moment the autonomous poleis, with their assemblies, councils and magistrates invented a curious way of life, one that did not quite do away with typical Greek "stasis" or civil strife between "the few" and "the many," the upper and lower classes, but did find strange, contradictory balances, and in the process produced political, cultural and intellectual forms that remain impressive.

Finley does his best to interpret the paradoxes and fill in the many gaps in knowledge. From archaic Greece to the Hellenistic period, he hits the highlights and his explanations seem mostly sound.

Erik Graff says

Impressively concise but solid review of Greek history until the Macedonian conquest. For me, having read quite a bit on the subject, this was a refresher as regards the basic facts and interesting as regards Finley's informed but cautious takes on those facts. I think, however, that it would also serve as a readable introduction to the topic.

David says

An excellence source for me.

John Sidwell says

An accessible and engaging introduction to ancient Greece.

Carole B says

A good, basic introduction to Greek culture, a nice review.

Luke Echo says

Finley finds a nice balance between detail and significance in this short little introduction. It really filled in a few contextual gaps for me being more familiar with Ancient Greek Philosophy than Ancient Greek History or sociology.

Ade Bailey says

Picked this up in a market on a whim but glad I did. My knowledge of ancient Greece is sketchy to say the least, restricted to philosophy and plays. This is a short, punchy book, intertwining themes rather than giving linear chunks of facts. I'm pleasantly surprised that a scholar of ancient Greece is not a dry writer, but quite pithy, witty at times, and not averse to idiomatic asides comparing ancient Greeks with modern westerners.

About half way through this short book, only reading a short section at a time. The first half ends with the decline of the *polis*, then goes on to look in subsequent chapters at specifics such as literature, philosophy, science, popular attitudes, concluding with an overview of the conventionally termed Hellenistic Age.

Tiffany says

I would recommend this for people who already have a decent knowledge of Ancient Greece.

The book had great organization - a nice survey of all aspects of ancient Greek life.

However, I only took one basic course in Western Civilization, about 6 years ago in college, and I had a hard time reading the sections of this book that discussed politics and warfare among Greece and other civilizations in the region. The author has a nice writing style, but he often makes casual references, without much explanation, to historical events or people or geography that I sadly cannot recall from my slim prior historical reading.

That being said, the book was a good level of reading for me in the subject areas that I had read more about previously, like theater, poetry, the visual arts, and philosophy. It offered more advanced historical analysis into those areas that I already had a basic foundation in, which I really enjoyed.

Jim says

A Forced Read for a Class...it was the most hideously boring book I've had the horror of casting my eyes upon. This book is so fucking bad, I would recommend Captain Smackass to read it for a laugh.
