

普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材



新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材(修订版)

总主编 戴炜栋

# 西方文化导论

## Western Culture: An Introduction

教师用书

叶胜年 徐在中 刘银景 / 编



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编者 / 叶胜年 徐在中 刘银景

顾问 / Glen Phillips



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## 总 序

我国英语专业本科教学与学科建设,伴随着我国改革开放的步伐,得到了长足的发展和提升。回顾这 30 多年英语专业教学改革和发展的历程,无论是英语专业教学大纲的制订、颁布、实施和修订,还是四、八级考试的开发与推行,以及多项英语教学改革项目的开拓,无不是围绕英语专业的学科建设和人才培养而进行的,正如《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》提出的英语专业的培养目标,即培养“具有扎实的英语语言基础和广博的文化知识并能熟练地运用英语在外事、教育、经贸、文化、科技、军事等部门从事翻译、教学、管理、研究等工作的复合型英语人才”。为促进英语专业本科建设的发展和教学质量的提高,外语专业教学指导委员会还实施了“新世纪教育质量改革工程”,包括推行“十五”、“十一五”国家级教材规划和外语专业国家精品课程评审,从各个教学环节加强对外语教学质量的宏观监控,从而确保为我国的经济建设输送大量的优秀人才。

跨入新世纪,英语专业的建设面临新的形势和任务:经济全球化、科技一体化、文化多元化、信息网络化的发展趋势加快,世界各国之间的竞争日趋激烈,这对我国英语专业本科教学理念和培养目标提出了新的挑战;大学英语教学改革如火如荼;数字化、网络化等多媒体教学辅助手段在外语教学中广泛应用和不断发展;英语专业本科教育的改革和学科建设也呈现出多样化的趋势,翻译专业、商务英语专业相继诞生——这些变化和发展无疑对英语专业的学科定位、人才培养以及教材建设提出了新的、更高的要求。

上海外语教育出版社(简称外教社)在新世纪之初约请了全国 30 余所著名高校百余位英语教育专家,对面向新世纪的英语专业本科生教材建设进行了深入、全面、广泛和具有前瞻性的研讨,成功地推出了理念新颖、特色明显、体系完备的“新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材”,并被列入“十五”国家级规划教材,以其前瞻性、先进性和创新性等特点受到全国众多使用院校的广泛好评。

面对快速发展的英语专业本科教育,如何保证专业的教学质量,培养具有国际视野和创新能力的英语专业人才,是国家、社会、高校教师共同关注的问题,也是教材编写者和教材出版者关心和重视的问题。



作为教学改革的一个重要组成部分,优质教材的编写和出版对学科建设的推动和人才培养的作用是有目共睹的。外教社为满足教学和学科发展的需要,与教材编写者们一起,力图全方位、大幅度修订并扩充原有的“新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材”,以打造英语专业教材建设完整的学科体系。为此,外教社邀请了全国几十所知名高校 40 余位著名英语教育专家,根据英语专业学科发展的新趋势,围绕梳理现有课程、优化教材品种和结构、改进教学方法和手段、强化学生自主学习能力的培养、有效提高教学质量等问题开展了专题研究,并在教材编写与出版中予以体现。

修订后的教材仍保持原有的专业技能、专业知识、文化知识和相关专业四大板块,品种包括基础技能、语言学、文学、文化、人文科学、测试、教学法等,总数逾 200 种,几乎涵盖了当前我国高校英语专业所开设的全部课程,并充分考虑到我国英语教育的地区差异和不同院校英语专业的特点,提供更多的选择。教材编写深入浅出,内容反映了各个学科领域的最新研究成果;在编写宗旨上,除了帮助学生打下扎实的语言基本功外,着力培养学生分析问题、解决问题的能力,提高学生的思辨能力和人文、科学素养,培养健康向上的人生观,使学生真正成为我国新时代所需要的英语专门人才。

系列教材修订版编写委员会仍由我国英语界的知名专家学者组成,其中多数是在各个领域颇有建树的专家,不少是高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会的委员,总体上代表了中国英语教育的发展方向和水平。

系列教材完整的学科体系、先进的编写理念、权威的编者队伍,再次得到教育部的认可,荣列“普通高等教育‘十一五’国家级规划教材”。我深信,这套教材一定会促进学生语言技能、专业知识、学科素养和创新能力的培养,填补现行教材某些空白,为培养高素质的英语专业人才奠定坚实的基础。

**戴炜栋**

教育部高校外语专业教学指导委员会主任委员  
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# 前 言

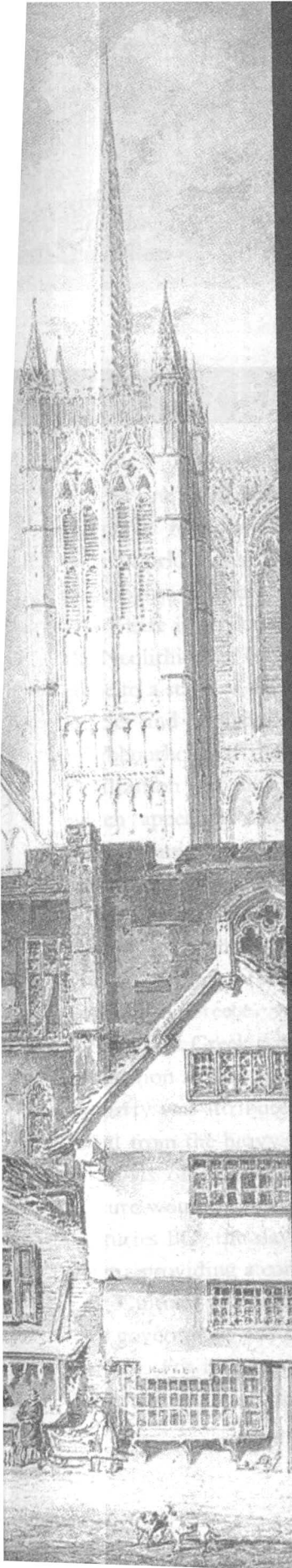
本书作为《西方文化导论》的辅助教材,主要提供该书各章的社会、文化历史背景,以及英语语言和文化方面的注解与阐释,并为讨论题提供参考答案,帮助使用者从宏观和微观两方面进一步加深对课本的理解。教师也可借用其中的内容来充实和提高自己,或者利用这个机会思考新的教学方法。所谓“教育人者先受教育”的道理就在于此。因此,使用这本书不是对个人进取的放弃,而是对个人心智的进步提出了新的挑战。

本书按照《西方文化导论》的章节顺序编排,每章分为背景简述、内容介绍、文化术语、讨论题解答和章节检测五部分。使用本书时可以根据实际情况而定,既可以完全参照使用,也可以适当做些变动,甚至仅仅作为参考。

本书由叶胜年、徐在中和刘银景三人编写,其中刘银景负责1-4章、叶胜年负责5-6章、徐在中负责7-12章的初稿编写,叶胜年负责修改和定稿。英文部分还请了澳大利亚伊迪斯·考文大学的Glen Phillips教授作最终的润色,在此对其无私的帮助谨表由衷的谢意。

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# Chapter 1

## Culture in Ancient Greece

### I. An Account of Background

As one of the splendid achievements in human history, ancient Greek culture provided the major foundation of Western culture and ultimately made a powerful impact on the entire world in terms of the development of human civilization, such as those in politics, philosophy, science, arts and literature.

There is no doubt that Greek culture benefited from its long prehistory, dated back to the Neolithic Age (about 4000 BC). By its Bronze Age (about 2800 BC), Greek culture had come to a stage of substantial development in view of its ability to produce useful tools and articles and weapons in bronze, as were evidenced by the unearthed artifacts in the neighbourhood of the Aegean Sea. The Aegean Civilization or the Stone and Bronze Age Civilization was thus shaped and included Cretan Civilization and Mycenaean Civilization, which appeared subsequently, with a high level of cultural development, as was demonstrated in its architecture, art and crafts as well as the pictographic script (Linear A and Linear B) which had been used widely.

After the Dorian invasion, Greece was further divided into a number of tribes before they were organized into the city states. In the Heroic Age, Greece began an era of sea voyages, which offered her opportunities for the growth of commerce and colonization. Gradually, Greece, with its developing trade and navigation, moved into full operation. The ancient Greek economy heavily depended on slave labour, the most popular resource for production at that time, and laid the foundation for the success of Greek culture, whose property was attributed to the cultural participation of many talented people who had been freed from the heavy work later taken up by thousands upon thousands of slaves engaged in all kinds of manual and mental employment. Consequently, as Engels observed, Greek culture would have been impossible without the development of slavery. In the 5th – 4th centuries BC, the slave-based democracy politics in Athens reached its peak during Pericles' reign, providing a comparatively free environment for the development of Greek culture.

Cultural prosperity was also owed to sound administration by the city government. The city government was efficient enough to raise large amounts of fund to promote their own culture. For instance, many magnificent buildings rose up in Athens, such as the Parthenon and the Temple of Hephaestus. The government often rewarded writers and artists who did

well in literature, music and sport. Due to the development of culture and sport, various talents were in great demand, and candidates were mostly enlisted from ordinary people, some even originally slaves, and their talents were cultivated with care and devotion in association with education which had begun to be popular. More respect for learning was evoked among ordinary people. Such an intellectual climate hence led to the emergence of quite a number of famous philosophers, artists and historians who made their remarkable contributions to Greek Civilization.

Meanwhile cultural exchanges with other nations were commonplace. While thousands of foreign merchants were attracted to Greece, more and more local people went abroad. Opening to the outside world helped the Greek people broaden their views and increase their knowledge. They learnt from advanced cultures from other nations. The Greek language was thus improved by borrowing from ancient Egyptian and Carthaginian languages. The Greeks introduced some exotic cultures into their own cultural system, as was witnessed in their art, architecture, sculpture and murals. These would bring them a world reputation later on.

Overall, it is generally acknowledged that the ancient Greek society and culture experienced rapid development and made remarkable achievements due to the talent and hardworking spirit manifested in their persistent pursuit of a better tomorrow for their sea-surrounded and mountainous homeland. Additionally, a reasonable social system and lifestyle based on a slave-supported democracy not only helped Athens impose an enduring dominance on the Greek city state union and even the neighbouring area of the Mediterranean, but also passed large amounts of cultural heritage to later generations.

## II. An Analysis of Main Ideas

### 1. 古希腊文明

素有西方文明源头之称的希腊文明起源于爱琴海一带的克里特文明和迈锡尼文明。克里特文明始于公元前 2600 年前的新石器时代,是古代世界最具特色的文明之一。处于奴隶社会的迈锡尼文明则深受克里特文明的影响,对其既有吸收又有超越。公元前 1450 - 1400 年,迈锡尼文明取代克里特文明。大约在公元前 12 世纪,为特洛伊战争所累的迈锡尼被多利亚人所灭,迈锡尼文明也随之消失,希腊由此步入长达 300 余年的“黑暗时期”。自公元前 8 世纪开始,铁器被广泛使用,海上贸易日益繁荣,经济急速发展,新城邦相继建立,以雅典为中心的希腊城邦文明得以形成。政治上新城邦通常由代表奴隶主阶级的贵族进行统治,但是由于经济的进一步发展,一些代表城邦新富——奴隶主工商阶级——利益的僭主们,如庇西斯特拉图和克里斯梯尼,在工商利益集团的支持下夺取了世袭的贵族政权而成为统治者,实行维护新兴工商业奴隶主利益的政策,并限制和约束贵族们的权力。其中,德拉科、梭伦、庇西斯特拉图和克里斯梯尼都是较为著名的僭主。在“僭主政治”之后,出现了工商业奴隶主的寡头政治和民主政治。

希腊文明在伯里克利时期达到顶峰,此后开始日渐衰落,其间爆发了两次影响深远的战争。一次是希腊和波斯战争(公元前499-449年),它为希腊的逐渐兴起和繁荣奠定了基础。另一次是雅典和斯巴达之间的内战,即伯罗奔尼撒战争(公元前431-404年),它导致希腊城邦进入由盛转衰的时期。在公元前4世纪后期,希腊被马其顿征服。到公元前146年,希腊半岛和爱琴海地区全被并入罗马帝国的版图。希腊文化在亚历山大的东征中得以传播,进入了“希腊化时期”。从此,希腊文化开始走向世界,为哺育西方文明奠定了基础。

## 2. 文化成就

### 希腊神话

希腊神话源于多神教的传说,形成于荷马时代。希腊神话包括神的故事和英雄传说两部分。神的故事包括旧神系统和新神系统(奥林匹斯神系)。英雄传说都以特洛伊木马记和伊阿宋为中心创作而成。较为著名的神话有特洛伊战争、阿特柔斯家族、底比斯缔造者卡德摩斯家族、金羊毛、赫拉克勒斯和忒修斯的传说、俄迪普斯、七英雄远征底比斯、奥德赛等。希腊神话的突出特点是“神人同形”。主要的神灵有主神宙斯和其妻赫拉、太阳神阿波罗、雅典的保护神雅典娜,以及爱神厄洛斯、酒神狄俄尼索斯、战神阿瑞斯等。

### 希腊哲学

希腊哲学是希腊文化的重要组成部分,它的巨大影响贯穿于西方哲学和社会思想整个发展过程。在其早期就形成了关于唯物论、唯心论和辩证法等重要哲学概念。

最早的唯物主义哲学家是米利都的泰利斯,他认为世界起源于水。这种观点具有否定“神创论”的进步意义。哲学家阿那克西曼德认为万物之源为“无限”,一切事物都是矛盾的、对立的,如干湿、冷热等。哲学家赫拉克里特认为火为本原,万物皆运动。哲学家德模克里特则发展了他的老师留伯基的原子理论说,认为整个物质世界是由微小的、不可再分的原子构成。唯心主义论者提出了针锋相对的观点。公元前6世纪,希腊数学家毕达哥拉斯认为“数字即万物”,“数字是认识世界的关键”。希腊诡辩学派哲学家普罗塔哥拉古认为“人乃衡量一切事物的标准”。

希腊哲学当中最具影响力的哲学家是苏格拉底、柏拉图和亚里士多德。

苏格拉底(公元前470-399年)相貌平平,但以善辩而著称,后来因被诬陷引诱青年、亵渎神圣而被迫服毒自杀。苏格拉底不看重物质财富,而注重探究伦理上的意义。他提出了如“中庸”、“友谊”、“勇气”等概念,但是并没有给出标准答案。他强调人应该追求知识,无知是罪恶之源。他还是最早提倡德行与知识相结合的哲学家。

柏拉图(公元前427-347年)出生于贵族之家,是苏格拉底的学生。苏格拉底死后,他深受打击。他曾先后到埃及、小亚细亚、西西里等地四处游历,后来在雅典建立了世界首个西方高等学府——阿卡德美学园。他的哲学思想包括伦理和形而上学两部分。他提出了影响后世的“理念论”,认为理念必须从理性中获得,善是最高理念,居于其他理念之上。他的著作多以对话形式写成,流传后世的著作约25篇,其中有些是伪作。在早期著作中主要有《申辩篇》、《普罗塔哥拉篇》(或《智者》)、《高尔吉亚篇》(或《论修辞》)、《曼诺篇》(或《论道德》)、《斐多篇》(或《论灵魂》)、《会饮篇》(或《论善》)。其中最具影响力的著作是《理想国》。

亚里士多德(公元前384-322年)出生于医生家庭,师从柏拉图,被马克思和恩格斯誉

为“古代史上最伟大的思想家和最博学的人”。亚里士多德继承了柏拉图的哲学观念，同时也摆脱了柏拉图的形而上思想的束缚，更加关注实际问题。他的著作涵盖了多个领域，据说有 400 余篇。在修辞和逻辑学领域，他的著作包括《修辞学》、《范畴篇》、《诠释篇》、《前分析篇》、《后分析篇》、《论题篇》、《辩谬篇》。物理学著作有《物理学》和论文《论产生和毁灭》及《论天》。生物学著作有《动物的重要构成》、《动物的成长》和《动物史》。亚里士多德的政治观点主要体现在《政治学》中。该著作显示了他作为奴隶主的保守立场，也显示了与柏拉图的不同之处。他的批评著作《诗学》宣称所有的艺术都是建立于“模仿”之上，并提出了悲剧和喜剧的区分标准，因此被视为现代艺术和文学理论的开篇之作。

古希腊哲学在达到以柏拉图和亚里士多德为代表的光辉顶点后，通过他们的学生得到了进一步的继承和传播，形成几个派别，柏拉图的追随者被称为学院派，亚里士多德的信徒们则被称作逍遥学派；后来又出现了其他哲学流派，包括斯多噶派、伊壁鸠鲁派、犬儒派和怀疑主义派等等。这些流派更加关注个人的精神状况和伦理道德，有些脱离社会的倾向。

### 希腊文学

希腊文学成就主要表现在史诗、抒情诗和戏剧等方面。

希腊史诗通常指盲诗人荷马搜集并记录的两部长篇叙事诗《伊利亚特》和《奥德赛》。

抒情诗是希腊文学的又一成就，重要的诗人有卡利马科斯、阿波罗尼奥斯、利科夫龙。据说卡利马科斯写了约 800 册，但仅有一首长诗《颂歌》流传后世。另一位著名诗人狄奥克里塔创造了田园诗，作品有《希拉库斯妇女》、《美惠三女神》和《女巫》。诗人阿拉托的作品《物象》非常有名，为六音步诗，达千余行。抒情诗的另一流派是科学诗，代表诗人是坎得，现存六音步诗。最有名的诗人是萨福和品达：前者以爱情诗而著称，大多被焚毁，存世不多；后者是希腊田园诗诗人，尤以颂歌而著称。

希腊戏剧起源于节日庆典和礼仪。随着公元前 490 - 480 年以雅典为首的希腊军队大败波斯侵略者，希腊进入了一个全新的时代，其诗歌和戏剧蓬勃发展，取得了丰硕成果。这一时期最有名的是悲剧作家埃斯库罗斯、索福克勒斯、欧里庇德斯和喜剧作家阿里斯托芬。据传，埃斯库罗斯创作了 70 至 90 部悲剧，但是仅存七部：《被缚的普罗米修斯》、《波斯人》、《七勇攻忒拜》、《乞援女》、《阿伽门农》、《祭奠者》、《欧墨尼得斯》。索福克勒斯的作品有《俄狄浦斯王》、《厄勒克特拉》和《安提戈涅》。欧里庇德斯的戏剧主要以妇女为题材，如《安德洛玛刻》、《美狄亚》和《特洛伊妇女》，被称作第一位写“问题剧”的作家。阿里斯托芬的作品充满了尖锐的政治批判和辛辣的嘲讽。在《骑士》中，阿里斯托芬对克勒翁（雅典当时的统治者）的冷嘲热讽在雅典城内引发了许多人对国家事务的关注。

### 希腊史学

古希腊有许多历史学家，最著名的是希罗多德和修昔底德。希罗多德（公元前 484 - 425 年）被称作“历史之父”，他所著的西方首部史学著作《历史》较为客观地记载了希腊和波斯的战争。修昔底德（公元前 460 - 395 年）被誉为古希腊最好的历史学家之一，其作品《伯罗奔尼撒战争史》观点公平，文字简洁，结构合理。此外历史学家萨摩斯的作品具有生动活泼和丰富多彩的风格。他与人合著的《亚历山大的历史》生动地记载了亚历山大征服各国的过程和征服后各种动荡的社会局面。有关亚历山大的许多历史记载大多已流失。亚历山大时期的史学家波利比奥斯著有《历史》，共计 40 册，涵盖了罗马 53 年的发展历程，但大部分已遗失。

除了哲学家和思想家以外，还有一些学者在政治领域也做出了贡献。他们的代表人物是伊索克拉底和色诺芬。伊索克拉底提倡缓和富人和穷人之间的关系，主张在全体希腊人

当中建立一种类似兄弟姐妹的关系,实行泛希腊主义的政策。他的著作包括《全希腊盛会献词》、《论和平》、《论雅典最高法庭》、《致腓力书》、《泛雅典娜节献词》等。他们的思想和主张促进了希腊社会与文化的整体发展。

### 艺术和科学

希腊艺术流传下来的除雕塑和壁画之外,还有矗立在雅典和其他地方的建筑物。这些建筑、雕塑和绘画都对理解希腊艺术的伟大成就具有重要意义。著名的雅典建筑大师和雕塑家菲迪亚斯负责设计和装修了雅典著名建筑帕台农神庙,即雅典娜的多利安神庙。雕刻家米伦、波利克里托斯的作品以高雅、简洁、宁静和华丽著称。希腊绘画的发展过程经历了三个阶段。第一阶段是公元前5世纪前半叶,主要是简单表现典型的神话场景。第二阶段是公元前5世纪后半叶,利用神话主题展现物体的美。第三阶段始于公元前4世纪,在雅典、爱奥尼亚和其他城邦出现了许多绘画流派和各种绘画风格。

希腊在科技方面也有不少成就,不但建立和发展了传统地理学,而且在天文、数学和物理等学科都取得了一系列引人注目的成果。例如:希帕卡斯(约公元前160-125年)发明了观测天象的天文仪,绘制出已知最早的星象图;在公元前2世纪发现了昼夜平分点,这对以后日历的改进帮助很大。他提出的“地心说”为托勒密的“地心宇宙论”奠定了基础。著名数学家欧几里得(约公元前330-275年)创建了平面几何学,其著作《几何原理》作为经典教材,一直沿用至今。阿基米德(公元前287-212年)作为数学家,计算出了圆周率;作为物理学家,发现了浮力产生的原因和计算方法,以及球体表面和体积之间的关系。

## III. Interpretation of Cultural Terms

1. **ostracism:** In ancient Greece, when a citizen was considered dangerous to the state, he would be banished for a certain amount of years as a punishment. The decision for the punishment was made by popular votes. (陶片放逐制)
2. **Thebes:** A Mycenaean city state, located in east-central Greece, northwest of Athens. It was at the height of power and splendour in the 4th century BC. In 336 BC it came into the rule of Alexander the Great. (底比斯)
3. **Sparta:** An ancient Greek city-state of Dorian Greeks in the southeast Peloponnesus, widely known for its military power, which reached its peak in the 6th century BC when Sparta defeated Athens in the Peloponnesian Wars (460 - 404 BC) and then became the leader of the union of Greek city states before it was toppled by the Thebans in 371 BC. (斯巴达)
4. **Justinian I (Justinian the Great):** The emperor of Byzantium who resisted the Persian aggression at the eastern frontier of his empire and then re-occupied the former Roman territories in Africa, Italy and Spain. Eastern Orthodox Christians worshipped him as a saint. (查士丁尼一世)
5. **Cleon:** One of the Athenian political and military leaders during the Peloponnesian War. He was the first prominent example of the commercial class who was considered as a warmonger and a demagogue by his contemporaries. (克里昂)

6. **Pericles:** 495 – 429 BC, a famous and influential Athenian leader. He was called “the first citizen of Athens” by Thucydides, a historian. His reign (461 – 429 BC) was known as the “Age of Pericles”. He promoted literature and arts and built many buildings. For this reason, Athens became the educational and cultural centre of ancient Greece. Furthermore, Pericles made contribution to the Athenian democracy. (伯利克里)
7. **Mount Olympus:** A high mountain in Greece, well-known for the “home of the gods” in Greek mythology. The deities who are said to dwell on this mountain are ruled by Zeus, including his wife, his brothers, his sisters and his children. (奥林匹斯山)
8. **Thespis:** He was thought as a singer of dithyrambs by Aristotle. He won a great reputation for important innovations and reformation in Greek drama. Today it is a general term for an actor. In some literature, he was depicted as the first well-known actor in written plays on stage, and he introduced the first principal actor in addition to chorus. His great contribution to drama is that he initiated Greek tragedy as we know today. (泰斯庇斯)
9. **Ptolemy:** An Egyptian dynasty ruled by Macedonian kings from 323 BC to 30 BC. The Ptolemies lasted the long period from Ptolemy I (367 – 283 BC), who had been a general in Alexander the Great’s army and then became the king of Egypt as Alexander’s successor (323 – 285 BC), to Ptolemy XV (47 – 30 BC), who shared the throne (44 – 30 BC) with his mother, Cleopatra. (托勒密)
10. **The Battle of Cnidus:** The naval battle which happened in 394 BC between the joint Athenian-Persian fleet and the Spartan fleet. Finally the Spartan fleet was defeated owing to lack of experience, thus breaking Sparta’s dream of naval supremacy. After this battle the anti-Spartan union was strengthened and ended the Spartan hegemony during the Corinthian War. (奈达斯战役)
11. **Myron:** 480 – 440 BC, a Greek sculptor who was born in Eleutheræ and lived in Athens. He was considered the first to achieve lifelike representation in art. He was well known for his bronze sculpture of athletes in action. However, nowadays only two of his works are left, including *The Group of Athena and Marsyas* and *Discobolus* (discus thrower). (米隆)
12. **Polyclitus:** A noted Greek bronze sculptor in the 5th and the early 4th centuries BC. He belonged to the school of Argos. His works included the colossal gold and ivory statue, a famous bronze nude male known as *Doryphoros* (spear-carrier) and other statues *Discobolus* (discus-bearer) and *Diadumenos* (diadem-wearer). Under the influence of Polyclitus and Phidias, the classical Greek style was created and shaped, modelled on Polykleitos’ school which lasted for about three generations as the earliest one in Greek sculpture history. (波利克里托斯)

## IV. Reference Answers to the Questions

### 1. Give a brief account of the major achievements of Greek culture, such as those in religion, philosophy, literature and science.

Greek religion really took shape during the Homeric Age, and featured polytheism with gods taking human form and feeling. Greek religion made a great contribution to Greek literature, philosophy and art. It was an important origin of Greek mythology which was fully developed by the religious tales of the Homeric epic and thus affected the later development of all kinds of Greek culture.

Greek philosophy started with Thales (640 – 547 BC), who believed that the material world originated in water. His philosophy was of materialism. He was followed by Pythagoras, a mathematician who assumed that the key to the understanding of the world was numbers, on the position of the spokesman for idealism. The core Greek philosophers were Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Socrates had scant regard for material wealth, but was keen on probing into the definition of some ethical and behavioral issues, such as “friendship” and “courage”. Plato established the Academy — the first Greek institution of higher learning. His contributions included his theory of idea and his argument on “republic” which was supposed to embrace his ideals about a future state where humans could enjoy a happy life. Aristotle was also a learned man and his works covered wide-ranging areas. His reputation as a philosopher largely depended on his argument on metaphysics in which he tried to achieve a compromise between matter and divinity.

Literary representation centred round the two epic poems of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, lyrical poetry by Sappho and Pindar, and drama by Aeschylus, Euripides and Aristophanes. Their works combined Greek myths and social life and won much appreciation and enthusiasm from the public.

In science the mathematician Euclid established plane geometry and Archimedes discovered the ratio of radius of a circle and the relationship between the volume and surface of a sphere.

### 2. What do you think of the influence Greek culture has exerted on Western Civilization as a whole? Give examples.

Greek culture is often termed the cradle of Western Civilization and has had an enormous impact on Western culture. The specific contributions are found in the areas of philosophy, politics, literature, art, science and architecture. Greek politics was one of the greatest influences on Western Civilization. The Greeks were the first to successfully create a government based on the consensus of the people and thus provided a foundation for Western democracy.

The second significant influence was that of philosophy. The Socratic idea about ethics and knowledge helped Westerners care more for the effect of knowledge and value of morality, both of which give sound guidance to people to improve and change the world outside themselves, i. e. human society and the natural world.

Later generations of Westerners have benefited a lot from Greek culture, such as painting, sculpture, architecture, drama, poetry and historical works. Classicism had Greek culture as one of the crucial sources, which helped Westerners so much that they ascribed the origin of the Renaissance to it. This changed the intellectual conditions of the later medieval period and opened the way to the modern era in the West.

### **3. Say something about the significance of Greek culture in terms of its contribution to the West by referring to other cultures like that of China.**

Greek culture has made great contribution to the establishment and development of Western Civilization. The achievements of ancient Greek culture, which covered myth, philosophy, literature, science and architecture, were of great significance to Westerners. It was produced in a relatively peaceful and encouraging environment, which provided some resemblance to the emerging period of Chinese culture in the same era.

As we all know, Greek cultural prosperity in the ancient time was inseparable from its socially open and democratic system and custom, in spite of its popular employment of slavery labor. Such political and social tendencies were passed down and accepted by later civilizations and societies either via cultural heritage or the intentional imitation by the successors during the changes of political regimes.

Chinese culture had a period similar to Greek culture, when its vigorous development culminated during the Spring-Autumn Period. The ordinary Chinese people and intellectuals of the time were comparatively free to express and exchange their ideas, since the country was not yet unified into a centralized empire and most of the kings of the numerous states were busy with their domestic cares to secure their own power over their states. Some of the important ideas of the time were passed to neighboring countries like Korea, Japan and Vietnam. These included Confucianism and Buddhism, which were popularly accepted and worshipped as important ideologies or religions and shaped social structure and intellectual development within a pretty long period. They emphasized the superiority of monarch, male and written knowledge, while ignoring ordinary people, women and the uneducated. The limited freedom allowed to Chinese scholars was precious for Chinese intellectual development which produced some important ideological schools and created a solid foundation for later development of Chinese culture. So it was the case with Greek culture. In this sense one could say the two cultures served as the basis for the beginning of the two ancient civilizations which exerted immense influence upon other countries, and both cultures worked as stimulants to the regional or even worldwide development of human civilizations.



A. Multiple choice

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the major conditions of Western culture and makes a powerful impact on the development of human civilization.
  - A. Ancient European culture
  - B. Ancient Greek culture
  - C. Ancient Chinese culture
  - D. Ancient Egyptian culture
2. Greek culture can be dated back to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. Neolithic Age
  - B. Bronze Age
  - C. Stone and Bronze Age
  - D. Old Stone Age
3. \_\_\_\_\_ was called “the first citizen of Athens” by Thucydides and in his reign the slave-based democracy politics in Athens reached its peak.
  - A. Justinian I
  - B. Cleon
  - C. Pericles
  - D. Ptolemy
4. Herodotus, father of Greek history, focused on describing the war between \_\_\_\_\_ in his book, *The Histories*.
  - A. Thebes and Sparta
  - B. Persia and Syracuse
  - C. Athens and Sparta
  - D. Greeks and Persians
5. \_\_\_\_\_ established the Academy — the first Greek institution of higher learning.
  - A. Plato
  - B. Socrates
  - C. Aristotle
  - D. Heraclitus

B. True or false

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The play *Oedipus at Colonus* was written by Aristophanes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Greek philosophy started with Aristotle.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The famous bronze sculpture of athlete, *Discobolos*, was created by Myron.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Euclid discovered the ratio of radius of a circle and the relationship between the volume and surface of a sphere.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The chief Greek philosophers are Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.