

The Threshold Of Democracy Athens In 403 B C

Reacting To The Past

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The Radical Greek Idea
Athenian Democracy at War
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the threshold of democracy re creates the intellectual dynamics of one of the most formative periods in western history in the wake of athenian military defeat and rebellion advocates of democracy have reopened the assembly but stability remains elusive as members of the assembly players must contend with divisive issues like citizenship elections remilitarization and dissent foremost among the troublemakers socrates

a biography of greek statesman pericles focusing on the creation of greek democracy in his time

the authors of this book argue that post war fiscal and monetary policies in the u s are prone to more frequent and more destabilizing domestic and international financial crises so in the aftermath of the one that erupted in 2008 they propose that now we are sleepwalking into another which under the prevailing institutional circumstances could develop into a worldwide financial armageddon thinking ahead of such a calamity this book presents for the first time a model of democratic governance with privately produced money based on the case of athen in classical times and explains why if it is conceived as a benchmark for reference and adaptation it may provide an effective way out from the dreadful predicament that state managed fiat money holds for the stability

of western type democracies and the international financial system as the u s today athens at that time reached the apex of its military economic political cultural and scientific influence in the world but athens triumphed through different approaches to democracy and fundamentally different fiscal and monetary policies than the u s thus the readers will have the opportunity to learn about these differences and appreciate the potential they offer for confronting the challenges contemporary democracies face under the leadership of the u s the book will find audiences among academics university students and researchers across a wide range of fields and subfields as well as legislators fiscal and monetary policy makers and economic and financial consultants

when does democracy work well and why is democracy the best form of government these questions are of supreme importance today as the united states seeks to promote its democratic values abroad democracy and knowledge is the first book to look to ancient athens to explain how and why directly democratic government by the people produces wealth power and security combining a history of athens with contemporary theories of collective action and rational choice developed by economists and political scientists josiah ober examines athenian democracy s unique contribution to the ancient greek city state s remarkable success and demonstrates the valuable lessons athenian political practices hold for us today he argues that the key to athens s success lay in how the city state managed and organized the aggregation and distribution of knowledge among its citizens ober explores the institutional contexts of democratic knowledge management including the use of social networks for collecting information publicity for building common knowledge and open access for lowering transaction costs he explains why a government s attempt to dam the flow of information makes democracy stumble democratic participation and deliberation consume state resources and social energy yet as ober shows the benefits of a well designed democracy far outweigh its costs understanding how democracy can lead to prosperity and security is among the most pressing political challenges of modern times democracy and knowledge reveals how ancient greek politics can help us transcend the democratic dilemmas that confront the world today

includes pictures includes ancient accounts of athenian democracy by aristotle plutarch and others includes footnotes online resources and a bibliography for further reading includes a table of contents in today s modern world every political regime even the most authoritarian or repressive describes itself as democracy or a democratic people s republic the concept of rule by the people on behalf of the people has come to be accepted as the norm and very few would overtly espouse the cause of dictatorship absolute monarchy or oligarchy as the most desirable political system upon which to base the government of any country it is also generally accepted that democracy as a political ideology began in greece specifically in athens in the 7th century b c and reached its zenith in the 5th century under the leadership of pericles dating an exact starting point is impossible but at the beginning of the 7th century b c solon inaugurated a series of reforms that began the movement away from rule by individuals or tyrants and by the end of that century the reforms of cleisthenes provided the basis of the athenian democratic system that culminated in the radical institutions introduced by ephialtes and pericles in the 5th century the result was the first and possibly only truly participative democratic state of course not every inhabitant of athens enjoyed the right to vote only full citizens could do that and they represented approximately 30 of athens s male population numbering between 30 000 and 60 000 during athens golden age and declining rapidly throughout the peoloponnesian war the remainder was made up of metics and slaves who vastly outnumbered free citizens and indeed almost all other slave populations in hellas a fact which the athenians often conveniently chose to forget when singing the praises of their democracy there is a very strong indication that foreign chattel slaves were an utter necessity to athens

economy and though they did not serve as fleet rowers as they would have done in rome they still carried out the myriad of unpleasant and demeaning jobs which allowed athenian citizens the free time to actively participate in the city's politics in many ways without slaves there would have been no democracy in athens women also had vastly inferior rights in athens than those of many other poleis chiefly sparta and were virtually regarded as the property of their fathers brothers and husbands women enjoyed no political rights and precious few legal ones they were forced into arranged marriages at an extremely young age and they were even fed differently from their brothers while growing up leading to an average mortality age that was extremely lower than that of men of comparable social class ironically between 322 b c and the 19th century athenian democracy was almost totally forgotten if there was any mention of democracy in athens at all it was in reference to so called but largely mythical notions of solonian democracy as recorded in plutarch's life of solon or aristotle's politics at the beginning of the 19th century scholars such as august boeckh began the evaluation and study of democratic athenian institutions and inscriptions and the writings of thucydides and demosthenes among others were used to re-construct those democratic bodies and to gain an understanding of their workings later in the century academics particularly george grote provided new insights into the athenian democratic processes and today there is a much fuller understanding of what contributed to athenian political life that said the questions of how and why athens came to develop the political system it did remain a major area of academic contention athenian democracy the history of the world's first democracy in ancient athens looks at the history of the democratic government athens formed as well as its legacy

a new bold radical idea emerged in ancient athens in 508 bce the concept that the people could rule themselves democracy today is equated with good just government but in ancient greece it still had a lot to prove the athenians embraced democracy in its purest form direct democracy in which each citizen participated in all the decisions of the state they had no representatives rather they voted directly on all the laws and measures considered by the government the question was could it work the athenian democracy had plenty of chances to prove itself it had to deal with the persian wars wars with sparta and its allies and the rise of philip and alexander the great it had to govern a great empire and manage a growing society bent on high achievement perhaps the greatest proof of democracy's merits was that from it came the golden age of athens which gave the world so many of its intellectual and cultural foundations joel farrell's recounting of the development and challenges of athenian democracy is peopled by some of the greatest leaders any democracy has produced as well as some of its worst demagogues athenian government was sometimes wise and sometimes foolish but usually effective it teaches us much about the potential of democracy in our time and the challenges that any democratic society must face

studies all four branches of the athenian armed forces to show how they helped make democratic athens a superpower

this book is the first in depth study of the classical athenian public sphere it examines how public opinion was created by impromptu theatrics and by gossip and how it flowed into and out of the civic institutions athenians did not have hookah bars or coffee shops but they did socialize in symposia gymnasias and workshops and above all in the agora these represented the athenian street an informal political space that was seen as qualitatively different from the institutional space of the assembly the council and the courts where elite orators held sway the book explores how athenians of all sorts such as politicians slaves and philosophers sought to exploit the resources of the street in pursuit of their aims

a companion to greek democracy and the roman republic offers a comparative approach to examining ancient greek and roman participatory communities explores various aspects of participatory communities through pairs of chapters one greek one roman to highlight comparisons between cultures examines the types of relationships that sustained participatory communities the challenges they faced and how they responded sheds new light on participatory contexts using diverse methodological approaches brings an international array of scholars into dialogue with each other

the public aspects of the lives of athenian citizens c 450 to 322 bc are assessed to establish the nature and extent of citizen participation in the governing democracy of that period

how and why did the western tradition of political theorizing arise in athens during the late fifth and fourth centuries b c by interweaving intellectual history with political philosophy and literary analysis josiah ober argues that the tradition originated in a high stakes debate about democracy since elite greek intellectuals tended to assume that ordinary men were incapable of ruling themselves the longevity and resilience of athenian popular rule presented a problem how to explain the apparent success of a regime irrationally based on the inherent wisdom and practical efficacy of decisions made by non elite citizens the problem became acute after two oligarchic coups d tat in the late fifth century b c the generosity and statesmanship that democrats showed after regaining political power contrasted starkly with the oligarchs violence and corruption since it was no longer self evident that better men meant better government critics of democracy sought new arguments to explain the relationship among politics ethics and morality ober offers fresh readings of the political works of thucydides plato and aristotle among others by placing them in the context of a competitive community of dissident writers these thinkers struggled against both democratic ideology and intellectual rivals to articulate the best and most influential criticism of popular rule the competitive athenian environment stimulated a century of brilliant literary and conceptual innovation through ober s re creation of an ancient intellectual milieu early western political thought emerges not just as a footnote to plato but as a dissident commentary on the first western democracy

athens democracy developed during the sixth and fifth centuries and continued into the fourth athens defeat by macedon in 322 began a series of alternations between democracy and oligarchy the democracy was inseparably bound up with the ideals of liberty and equality the rule of law and the direct government of the people by the people liberty means above all freedom of speech the right to be heard in the public assembly and the right to speak one s mind in private equality meant the equal right of male citizens perhaps 60 000 in the fifth century 30 000 in the fourth to participate in the government of the state and the administration of the law disapproved of as a mob rule until the nineteenth century the institutions of athenian democracy have become an inspiration for modern democratic politics and political philosophy p j rhodes s reader focuses on the political institutions political activity history and nature of athenian democracy and introduces some of the best british american german and french scholarship on its origins theory and practice part i is devoted to political institutions citizenship the assembly the law courts and capital punishment part ii explores aspects of political activity the demagogues and their relationship with the assembly the maneuverings of the politicians competitive festivals and the separation of public from private life part iii looks at three crucial points in the development of the democracy the reforms of solon cleisthenes and ephialtes part iv considers what it was in greek life that led to the development of democracy some of the authors adopt broad brush approaches to major questions others analyze a particular body of evidence in detail use is made of archeology comparison with other societies the location of festivals in

their civic context and the need to penetrate behind what the classical athenians made of their past

this 1999 book discusses the ways performance is central to the practice and ideology of athenian democracy

innovative and engaging the threshold of democracy athens in 403 b c explores the intellectual dynamics of democracy by recreating the historical context that shaped its evolution part of the reacting to the past series this text consists of elaborate games in which students are assigned roles informed by classic texts set in particular moments of intellectual and social ferment issues of the time are sorted out by a polity fractured into radical and moderate democrats oligarchs and socratics among others

athens is often considered to have been the birth place of democracy but there were many democracies in greece during the archaic and classical periods and this is a study of the other democratic states robinson begins by discussing ancient and modern definitions of democracy he then examines greek terminology investigates the evidence for other early democratic states and draws conclusions about its emergence

this book invites readers to join in a fresh and extensive investigation of one of ancient greece s greatest inventions democratic government provides an accessible up to date survey of vital issues in greek democracy covers democracy s origins growth and essential nature raises questions of continuing interest combines ancient texts in translation and recent scholarly articles invites the reader into a process of historical investigation contains maps a glossary and an index

this book asks an important question often ignored by ancient historians and political scientists alike why did athenian democracy work as well and for as long as it did josiah ober seeks the answer by analyzing the sociology of athenian politics and the nature of communication between elite and nonelite citizens after a preliminary survey of the development of the athenian constitution he focuses on the role of political and legal rhetoric as jurymen and assemblymen the citizen masses of athens retained important powers and elite athenian politicians and litigants needed to address these large bodies of ordinary citizens in terms understandable and acceptable to the audience this book probes the social strategies behind the rhetorical tactics employed by elite speakers a close reading of the speeches exposes both egalitarian and elitist elements in athenian popular ideology ober demonstrates that the vocabulary of public speech constituted a democratic discourse that allowed the athenians to resolve contradictions between the ideal of political equality and the reality of social inequality his radical reevaluation of leadership and political power in classical athens restores key elements of the social and ideological context of the first western democracy

eleven essays on athenian democracy written and published between 1983 and 1993

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