



PELOPONESSOS 1500 to 500 BC:

After the collapse of the Minoan Kingdom in Crete, Peloponnesos became the heartland of Ancient Greece emerging as the next place in the world where events of global historical significance occurred: i.e.: the beginning of trade wars, the beginning of emigration and colonization [Greek Diaspora], the birth of the Olympics; Sparta rises as a strict military state!

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TROJAN WAR: Apotheosis of the War Hero



Agamemnon was the world's first ever war coalition builder. In the 11th century BC, with no cell phones, nor satellite dishes, miraculously, he was able to convince the heads of the city-states of Greece and even Ethiopia and other countries to invade Asia for the first ever World War.

Imagine 1000 ships from Aulis by the island of Evboia sailing through the Aegean islands toward Troy with Agamemnon the King of Mykines as the **Commander in Chief** of war heroes Achilles, Patroklos, Ajax, Diomedes, Odysseus, *et al.* The pretext for the war was the abduction of Helen, the Queen of Sparta, by Paris, a Prince of Troy. [This is like saying that USA is going to wage a war against Greece because Paris Latsis, a prince of the shipping kingdom of Greece, abducted from Hollywood, their queen of...?, Paris Hilton; well, strangers things have happened in history!].

Not unlike the current Iraq War that is being fought to keep precious oil flowing through the Hormutz Straights of the Persian Gulf, the Trojan War, too, was a pragmatic venture to control the flow of essential wheat and other precious goods from the resource-rich Pontos region of Ευξεινος Ποντος [Black Sea, today] through the Hellespont Straits [nowadays Dardanelles of Turkey]. [Peloponnesos is mainly steep mountains that are not suited for agriculture, one of the main reasons most Peloponnesians left to earn a living elsewhere, from ancient times till now]. The strategic location and regional supremacy of Troy was an obstacle to Agamemnon's ambitious hegemony!

The Trojan War lasted 10 years. Troy was vanquished and its riches were acquired. Interestingly enough, the Trojan War was eventually won by an idea from Odysseus, the King of the island of Ithaca. The price for the war was heavy, however. Peloponnesos went into darkness that lasted 4 centuries. At the end, Sparta began to emerge as a strict military state, invading the rest of the peninsula, thus forcing the other cities to emigrate and form colonies in Italy, Turkey and elsewhere in the Mediterranean, the beginning of the Greek Diaspora. It was Athens that rose as the center of global achievements in the 5th century BC, of which we will write in our next issue.



Peloponnesos took its name from its first ruler, Pelops, the progenitor of the House of Atreus, the family dynasty that was as famous in the ancient world as the Bush family is today. The story is convoluted so I will jump to the genealogy that is pertinent to the events of global significance. Atreus had 2 sons. Agamemnon became the King of Mykines, where he built a palace with its monumental cyclopean walls and the distinct Lion Gate. The other son Menelaos became governor of Sparta. Menelaos married Helen, the most beautiful woman of ancient Greece.

Agamemnon married the elder sister of Helen, Clytemnestra, who ended up murdering Agamemnon upon his return from Troy to avenge the sacrifice of their daughter Iphigenia for the sake of the war. Here let me stop and urge you to read the Iliad of Homer, the greatest poem of love and war, or one of the many books on Greek mythology, and for sure the enthralling trilogy of Aeschylus "Oresteia" that includes 3 plays, "Agamemnon", "the Libation Bearers" "the Eumenides". Oresteia cites what happens after the war when the son of Agamemnon Orestes avenges the death of his father and moves the capital to Argos. Mykines goes into darkness and never rises again to prominence after the Trojan debacle.

The Solution to Pollution is ...; Apotheosis of the Olympic Hero

Hercules was the greatest hero of Greece and of mankind because not only he was the strongest man on earth but also because of his other traits. One of his most admirable qualities was his willingness to confess his sins and atone for them. Unlike the war heroes, he did not carry a sword but a club [ροπαλο].



Hercules was born in Thebes but came humbly to Peloponessus to serve as a slave to King Eurystheus of Mykines as penance for killing unwittingly his music teacher. Eurystheus devised an ingenious series of 12 tasks for him. They are known as the 12 Labors of Hercules. Interestingly enough, 5 of the 12 renowned feats of Hercules took place in Peloponessus. The one I am indebted to professionally was his 5th Labor.

King Augeus of Elis [Ηλιδα; Iliida] in western Peloponessus had thousands of cattle but had never cleaned the feedlot; the manure piled into a soaring stinging mount. He demanded that the problem be solved in one day, as not to interfere with an important Olympic sports event. Hercules diverted the flow of two streams from the mythical river Pinios into the stables diluting the wastes and flushing the mount **away**, the science behind our flushing toilets. Hercules declared triumphantly “**THE SOLUTION TO POLLUTION IS ... DILUTION**”!

The volume and nature of wastes from growing human population and industrial discharges have increased exponentially since the time of Hercules while the amount of **air**, the quantity of **soil**, and the volume of **water** of the Earth remained the same, so to achieve the dilution we have to use what I call the **3 Rs**: **Reduce**, **Reuse**, **Recycle**!

Hercules stayed in Elis, a city that became the training center for the **Olympic Games** in nearby Olympia starting officially in **776 BC**. Hercules was an Olympian Hero.

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