



# GOLDEN AGE OF HELLENISM 376 TO 776 AO

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*Ancient Greeks measured time by Olympiads.*

*So 0 year is 776 BC when the first ever Olympics were held in Elis.*

*The current year 2006 is 288 in the ancient Greek Calendar.*

*The period we cover in this issue is 400 BC that is 376 AO to the start of the Christian Calendar, i.e., 776 AO.*

*The Muslims calendar starts with founding of Islam by Prophet Mohamed in 622 AD so 2006 is 1384. For Jews, it is 5766.*

## MATURING OF THE HELLENIC ETHOS

After the unraveling of the Athenian hegemony in 404 BC [372 AO] by Sparta with massive military aid from Prince Cyrus [*Κυρος*] of Persia, Thebes challenges and humbles Sparta [371 BC], but it is **Macedonia**, through the genius of **King Philip**, which rises as the next global hegemon spearheading the unification of the thousands of Greek city states into a **Hellas Commonwealth** for the propagation of **HELLENIC ETHOS**, culture and Greek assertiveness in world affairs.

Despite the humiliating defeats of Persian imperialism in the battles of Marathon in 490, Salamis in 480 and at Plataea in 479 BC, Persia continues to interfere in the politics of Greece but through **proxies**. Prince Cyrus finances the Spartan navy that becomes strong enough to challenge and defeat the navy of Athens marking the end of the **Peloponnesian War**. Athens preparations for the Peloponnesian War are done with casualness and swagger, prompted by economic objectives rather than strategic considerations. NATO-like alliances that Pericles built crumple because of the belligerent actions of the businessmen and demagogues who get themselves elected to leadership posts after the death of the incomparable Solon in 429 from the plague epidemic.

## XENOΦΩΝΤΟΣ ΑΝΑΒΑΣΙΣ

The most fascinating historical reporting of the period between the collapse of Athens and the rise of Macedonia is that of historian **Xenophon**. He relates in engrossing details the march in 400 BC of 13,000 Greek unemployed soldiers hired by Cyrus, a pretender to the throne of Persia, to fight his brother Emperor Artaxerxes II. The Greeks defeat the more than 100,000 Persians, but Cyrus is killed in the act of wounding his brother leaving the Greek mercenaries hapless. The Spartan General and major officers of the Greek expeditionary force are trapped into a “**peace**” meeting where they are murdered. Xenophon, an Athenian reporter **embedded with the Greeks** in the march to **Mesopotamia**, is elected to lead the Greek soldiers back home through the unhardened rough mountains of **Kurdistan** and **Armenia**.

After a long march, the Greeks reach Euxinos Pontos [the *Black Sea*] near Trapezus, where the survivors ex-claim *Θαλαττα, Θαλαττα* [“*the Sea, the Sea*”]. It is a captivating saga with elaborate description of geography, names of tribes and their propensities, hidden mountain passes, hints for food foraging, etc, all that one would need to know when invading the territory. King **Alexander the Great** and his intelligence officers use the books of Xenophon for the Macedonian advance into the region in 334 BC. The origin and end of that fascinating Asian juggernaut is the focus of this issue of **Greek Ethos**! Enjoy!

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