

Documenting Greek Civilization

A) Sappho was a female poet in ancient Greece. Copies of her poems were also found in Egypt.

I love delicacy,
and for me Love has the sun's splendor and beauty.
The stars about the bright moon in their turn hide their bright faces when she,
at about her full,
lights up all earth with silver.
That man seems to me peer of gods,
who sits in thy presence,
and hears close to him thy sweet speech and lovely laughter;
that indeed makes my heart flutter.

B) Homer, one of the world's earliest poets wrote the Illiad and Odyssey about the Trojan War (1250 BC) between Greece and Asian Minor:

"While the Achaians were arming with Achilles, Zeus commanded Themis to summon the gods to assembly on Mount Olypis. She hastened over heaven and earth to do his bidding and they all came."

"When Achilles appeared after his long absence, and the Trojans saw him sweep into the field with gleaming armour like a very god of war, their knees trembled beneath them in dismay, and for a long time the Achaians carried all before them."

C) Herodotus, one of the world's earliest historians wrote about a war between Greece and Persia:

"They withdrew into the narrow necks of the pass...Here they resisted to the last, with their swords, if they had them, and if not with their hands and teeth, until the Persians finally overwhelmed them.

D) Pericles, a leader of ancient Athens gave a speech explaining Athenian government:

"Our system of government is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law. When it is a question of putting one person before another in position of public responsibility, what counts is not membership in a particular class but the actual ability which the man possesses."