

# **GREECE GOES TO PIECES**

*A Mini-Historical Musical  
Written and Composed  
By Gawen Robinson*

## **Script/Song Book**

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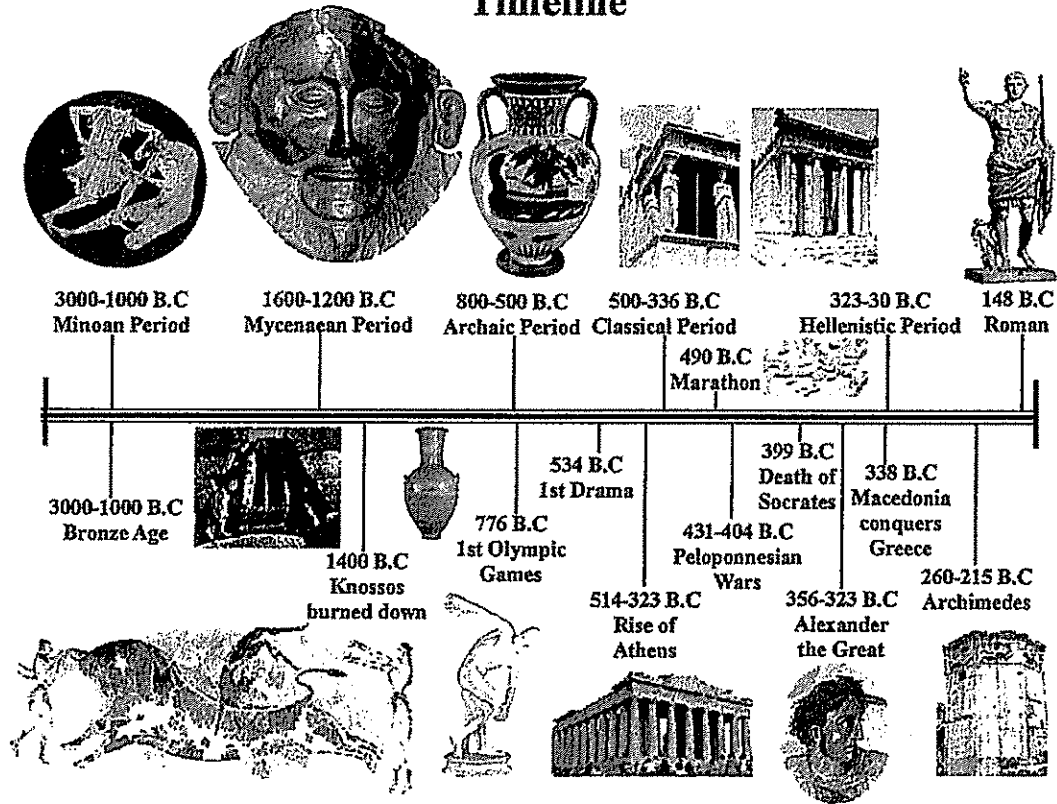
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# A BACKGROUND TO ANCIENT GREECE

## Timeline



## Background

Greece consists of a mountainous mainland surrounded by hundreds of small islands in the Aegean and Ionian seas. The earliest Greek civilization developed on the island of Crete around 4000 years ago, it is known as the Minoan civilization after King Minos who ruled from the Palace of Knossos. By around 1700 BC Crete had suffered a number of natural disasters including several major earthquakes and in 1450 BC the Mycenaean from the mainland took control. Many famous Greek legends centre upon these two civilizations and many myths are based partly upon fact such as the Trojan wars (thought to have taken place around 1250 BC). From 1200 BC until 800 BC Greece entered a period of struggle and decline known as the 'Dark Ages'. This was followed by a period of great economic and social recovery called the 'Archaic Period' (800 BC - 500 BC) in which the first Olympic games were held (776 BC), the Greek alphabet was created and Homer created his great poems 'The Iliad' and 'The Odyssey'. Greece was now divided up into a number of city States the largest and most prosperous being that of Athens as Greece moved into a golden period encompassing most of its greatest achievements in the "Classical Age" (500 - 336 BC).

## Classical Culture

In 508 BC, Athens introduced a new system of law called **democracy**. This was quickly adopted by other city states and became the catalyst of a new era of enlightenment and achievement. The focus of this cultured civilization centred upon Athens and in almost every walk of life, the world moved forward.



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## Historical Musicals

The aim of this "historical musical" is to provide a learning tool which brings the past to life using music, history and drama. Children learn more while they are having fun so the scripts and songs are geared equally toward entertainment and historical accuracy. This project is, first and foremost, a resource which can be adapted to your own needs. It can be just as valuable as a classroom tool as a full scale musical production. Please feel free to add anything else you may have studied or learned to enhance the play making it unique to your own production and pupils.

## The Plot

The story is set in Athens around the year 400 BC. It is centred around an ordinary pot maker called Peta. We are shown a selection of Peta's pots as he introduces us to many of the famous scholars in Athens around this time such as Socrates, Plato, Hippocrates and Aristophanes. Despite its wealth and splendour, Athens is going through a bad time. The Athenians have recently been defeated by the joint Spartan and Persian armies (404 BC) and now reluctantly, after years of superiority, have to put up with foreign interference. The Spartans are very different in nature to the Athenians, they are warriors and have little time for culture and philosophy, so there is a tension in the streets between the two sides. Anxious to find out what is in store for their great civilisation, Socrates, Plato and Hippocrates set off to see the great 'Oracle at Delphi'. The Pythia tells them to seek advice from Zeus himself at the great statue in Olympus where they will discover their destiny.

## The Cast

**Peta:** An ordinary pot maker

### A Greek Family

**Mother:**

**Father:**

**Son:**

**Daughter:**

### Athenians and Spartans

**Spartans:** 1, 2 & 3,

**Athenians:** 1, 2, 3, & 4

### Theseus and the Minotaur

**King Minos:**

**Ariadne:** *(His daughter)*.

**Aegeus:** *(King of Athens)*.

**Theseus:** *(his son)*.

**Goddess Athena:**

**Minotaur:** *(half man, half Bull)*.

**Greek Chorus:** *(as many as you like)*.

### Scholars & Philosophers

**Aristophanes:** *(a playwright)*.

**Socrates:** *(elderly Philosopher)*.

**Plato:** *(Young Philosopher)*.

**Hippocrates:** *(Doctor)*.

### Oracle at Delphi

**Priest:**

**Pythia:** *(middle aged woman)*

**Citizens:** 1, 2, 3, & 4.

### Olympic Games

**Xenophon:** *(historian, non speaking)*.

**Thucydides:** *(historian, non speaking)*.

**Wrestlers, Athletes etc.**

### Temple of Zeus

**Zeus** *(Chief God)*.

# MUSIC... OVERTURE INTO GREECE WENT TO PIECES

**Verse 1.** I'll tell you the story of Ancient Greece,  
It happened a long time ago.  
The land was in turmoil after years of peace.  
The Persian armies were now in sight,  
Attacking Athens with all their might.

**Chorus.** Greece went to pieces over the Persian war  
The odds were stacked against them.  
Just like Odysseus a thousand years before,  
who conquered all he saw,  
the Grecian heroes rose once more.

**Verse 2.** Now Greece was divided into city-states,  
Athens and Sparta controlled their fate.  
The two were great rivals but in times of hate,  
They fought together to defend their land.  
Athens was stronger than the Persians planned.

**Chorus.** Greece went to pieces over the Persian war  
The odds were stacked against them.  
Just like Odysseus a thousand years before,  
who conquered all he saw,  
the Grecian heroes rose once more. *(Chorus repeat)*



Godess Athena (or Athene)

#### Athens and the Persian wars.

Around 800 BC Athens still comprised of a few villages under the shadow of the Acropolis, yet 300 years later it was the most powerful city in Europe. Athens takes it's name from Athena, the Goddess of war and wisdom. The cult of Athena was adopted in this city when an olive tree (*her sign*) grew on it's acropolis. Athens faced a great threat from the Persian armies between 546-467 BC. In 490 BC, under King Darius, the Persians finally looked certain of victory when Spartan failed to come to the Athenian's aid because of a sacred festival to the God Apollo. Despite overwhelming odds, however, the Athenians won a famous victory at Marathon losing just 192 men to the Persians' 6,400. Ten years later the city was eventually destroyed by the Persians but it was later rebuilt to even greater splendour with the Parthenon constructed in memory of the heroes of Marathon.

## SCENE 1 ... ON THE STEPS OF THE ACROPOLIS

*(On the steps of the Acropolis in Athens, a potter named Peta sets out his stall. He is doing his very best to encourage people to enter).*



**Peta:** Ah, welcome my friends. Come on inside.

*(Peta leads us into his stall. There are many painted vases, pots and plates).*

Come on, don't be shy! *(He points to all his pots and vases)*  
Enter and take a look at all these wonderful pots and vases.....  
Pardon? Why? You ask, well my friends, these aren't just ornaments and decorations, each vase tells a tale and every pot is a living storybook.... What's that? You don't believe me? Well just come inside and see for yourselves.

*(A couple with 2 children enter his market stall and start looking around, the father is very enthusiastic).*

**Father:** Oh I do like this one of Perseus and the Medusa !

**Mother:** No, I think it might be a little frightening for the children dear.

**Son:** Wow ! Hey mum, can we have this one with the Minotaur on ?

**Mother:** I really don't know what you see in all those monsters.

**Son:** But Mum !

**Mother:** I'm sorry but that's the end of it !

*(To her husband who is studying a pot).*

And will you stop staring at that those rude pictures!!

**Father:** It's only the Goddess Aphrodite dear.  
It's educational !

**Mother:** It's not going on my table, that's for sure.

**Daughter:** Wow, look at this one of Hercules, he's a hunk !

**Mother:** Yes, it is rather fetching isn't it?

**Peta:** *(To the audience)* Come on in.  
There's something for everyone in Peta's stall.

MUSIC Z ..... ΠΕΤΑ ΠΟΤΤΕΡ

**Verse 1.** Long before computers or the television,  
Way before the cinema and satellite dishes,  
People looked at pictures stored inside their kitchens  
Painted on pots !

**Verse 2.** Long before the Beano brought us Denis's capers,  
Way before the radio and the Sunday papers,  
people got their stories from the local pot makers...  
Here's the plot !

**Chorus.** Peta Potter picked the perfect spot  
upon the top of the Acropolis  
and people peer upon the pots that  
Peta paints and put them on their shopping lists.

and Pericles, it's said, would proudly  
purchase precious pots that peta painted.  
Perfect portraits of Apollo  
posed in such positions people fainted.

*(Repeat Chorus twice, gradually getting faster).*

**Verse 3.** Buy your favourite hero in a gripping fable.  
Hercules would look good on your dining room table.  
Why not buy the whole set if your pocket is able,  
Get the lot ! ..... Collect the pots !

**Verse 4.** You could have a set of Gods in your collection  
Even though it might look odd on closer inspection.  
Worshipping your dishes doesn't look too fetching.  
Maybe not !

*(Repeat Chorus 4 times, gradually getting faster).*



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