

Helping you choose books for children



opening extract from

Greece in Spectacular Cross-section

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GREECE

in spectacular cross-section



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Our journey

I'm Neleus, aged almost 12, and I've just returned from the fantastic journey shown on this map. My father, the grain merchant Aristagoras, took me and my younger brother Periander ('Peri', who is 10) to Athens. Dad had important business to sort out there. We then sailed to Delphi, where we consulted the world-famous oracle. Finally the gods decided our family's future in a wrestling match at the Olympic Games. Cool trip, eh?

Artemis
The virgin deity Artemis was the goddess of hunting, animals and children. Her temple at Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.

DAY 32
The theatre of Dionysus
This famous theatre nestles beneath the city's Acropolis, on which stands the mighty Parthenon, the temple of Athena.

DAY 29
The Agora at Athens
The open space at the heart of the city, surrounded by important public buildings, commonly serves as a market place.

DAY 13
The streets of Athens
Animals and people of every description throng the streets of the largest city in Greece.



The Athenian calendar
Greece was divided into 12 months, twelve cycles of the Moon of 29 or 30 days each. A month was divided into three 'decads' of 10 days each: a waxing decad (Moon getting larger), a middle decad (Moon nearly full or full), and a waning decad (Moon getting smaller).

Our story is set in 486 BC and starts in the month of **THARGELION** (roughly in June) and moves through **SAPHROSION** (July) to **FRADIMBATION** (August).

ΘΑΡΓΗΛΙΩΝ

ΣΑΦΡΟΦΟΡΙΩΝ

ΕΚΑΤΟΜΒΑΙΩΝ

The Greek alphabet, with the corresponding English letters, is shown on page 28.

DAY 12
Piræus
The town of three harbours is Athens' main port, 6.5 kilometres southwest of the capital.

DAY 1
Miletus
The journey starts here, in the leading city of Ionia, which is also one of Athens' main allies.



DAY 50
Delphi
The temple of Apollo, from which the god issues his famous prophetic utterances, is on the southern slopes of Mount Parnassus.

DAY 71
Olympia
Here the greatest of all athletic games have been held in honour of Zeus every four years for 340 years.

Heracles in Nemea
Made mad by the goddess Hera, the Greek hero Heracles (the Roman Hercules) killed his own children. As a punishment he had to perform 12 near-impossible labours. He began by strangling the invulnerable Nemean Lion.

DAY 8
Larissa
The output of the region's vine and olive crops helps make Athens the richest city-state in Greece.

DAY 4
Delos
This island, fondly under Athenian control, is said to be the birthplace of the god Apollo and his twin under Artemis.



At home in Miletus

DAY 1

ΘΑΡΓΗΛΙΩΝ

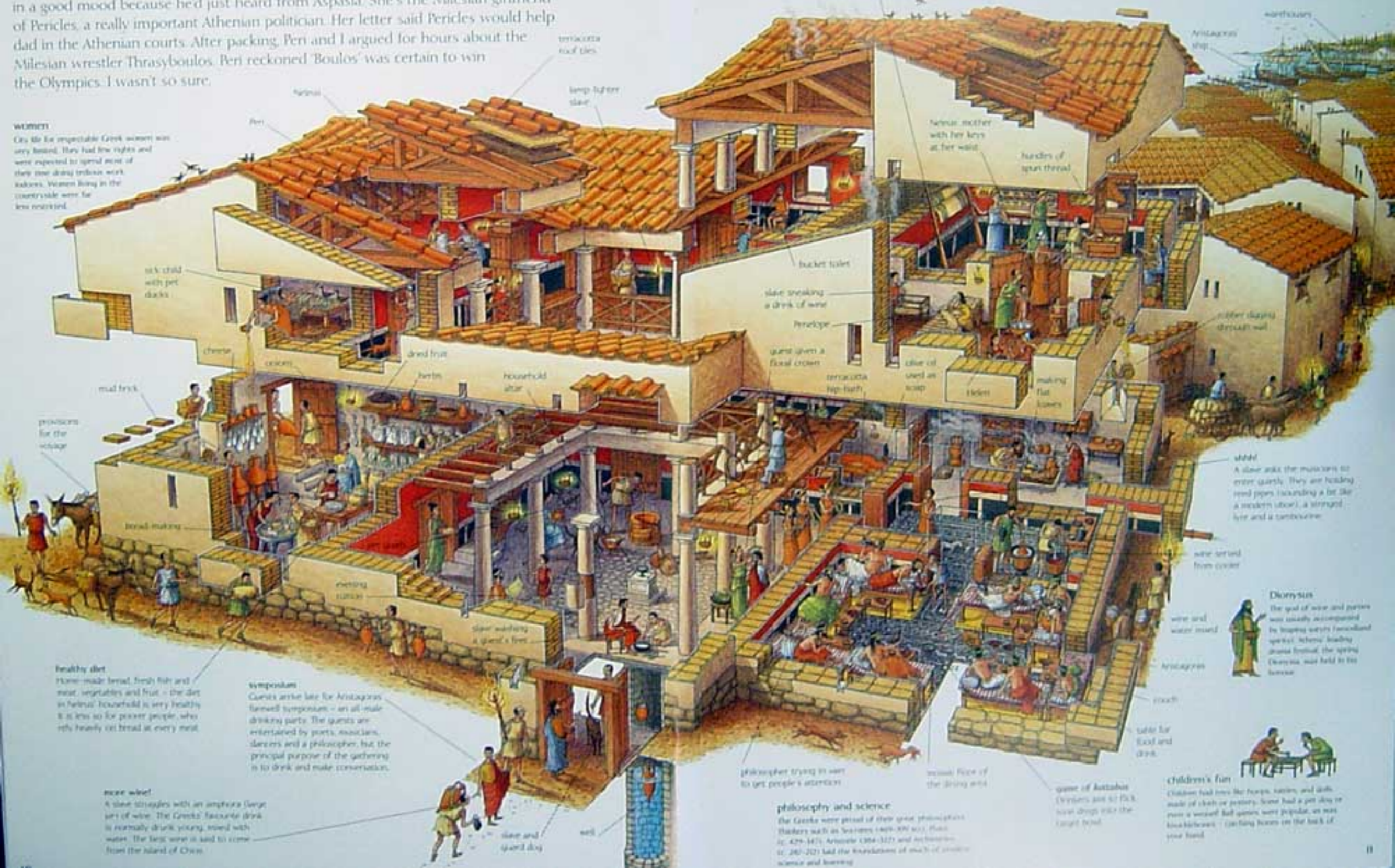


wringing
Spinning wool into threads and then
wringing the threads into cloth on a loom
is women's work. It takes place on the
first floor, the area of the house largely
reserved for women
and children.

We didn't sleep much the night before we left. Dad had a noisy farewell party – he was in a good mood because he'd just heard from Aspasia. She's the Milesian girlfriend of Pericles, a really important Athenian politician. Her letter said Pericles would help dad in the Athenian courts. After packing, Peri and I argued for hours about the Milesian wrestler Thrasyboulos. Peri reckoned 'Boulos' was certain to win the Olympics. I wasn't so sure.

WOMEN

City life for respectable Greek women was very limited. They had few rights and were expected to spend most of their time doing tedious work indoors. Women living in the countryside were far less restricted.



terracotta roof tiles

lamp-lighter slave

heavenly mother with her keys at her waist

handles of spun thread

old child with pet ducks

bucket toilet

slave sneaking a drink of wine

Periclepe

guest given a floral crown

olive oil used as soap

making flat loaves

mud brick

provisions for the voyage

bread-making

healthy diet

more wine!

symposium

philosopher trying to win to get people's attention

philosophy and science

The Greeks were proud of their great philosophers. Thinkers such as Socrates (470-399 BC), Plato (c. 429-347), Aristotle (384-322) and Archimedes (c. 287-212) laid the foundations of much of modern science and learning.

shovel

A slave asks the musicians to enter guests. They are holding reed pipes (including a bar like a modern oboe), a stringed lyre and a tambourine.

wine served from cooler

wine and water mixed

Antisthenes

crutch

table for food and drink

children's fun

Children had toys like hoops, balls, and dolls made of clay or pottery. Some had a pet dog or even a weasel! Ball games were popular, as was dice-betting – gambling houses on the back of your hand.

Dionysus
The god of wine and parties was usually accompanied by his followers, the satyrs. Satyrs had a pig's face and a pointed ear. The spring festival, the Dionysia, was held in his honor.

