

**THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD
IN THE ANTIQUITY AND IN THE
MIDDLE AGES**

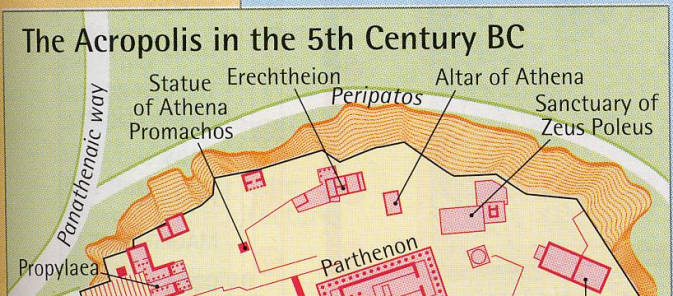
BOOK P 30 TO 94

THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD IN
THE ANTIQUITY: ATHENS 'S
INFLUENCE

I/ Athens was well integrated in the Greek world

A/Location

WORD BOX
Athens ['æθɪnz]
The Acropolis [ə'krɒpəlɪs]
The Parthenon ['pɑːθənɒn]
The Panathenaia [ˌpænəθe'næjə]
The Peloponnese ['peləpəniːs]



City of Athens

A/ Location

North

Northern

Northward

South

Southern

Southward

East

Eastern
Oriental

Eastward

West

Western
Occidental

Westward

A/ Location

Athens was located in the South of Greece, in the Aegean Sea.

Athens was the biggest city of Greece : it was 2500 SqKm large (The Pyrénées- Atlantiques are 7600SqKm).

Indeed, we can notice It's not a simple dot on the map but it is colored, so it shows its big size

Around Athens's city center, there was a wide territory called THE ATTICA

So It was highly populated : 250 000 people lived there

It had many resources and played a major part in trade

B/ Athens's power

Athens won a war against the Persian empire in 480 BC (The Medic wars) thanks to its powerful fleet.

Athens was a maritime power. We can say (that) there was a real Athenian THALASSOCRACY

So, after this victory, the **DELIAN League** was formed.

It was a **coalition** of Greek cities which asked protection to Athens

But it was not a free help.

Athens asked the cities to pay a tribute in return and the money was kept in a small island called Delos.

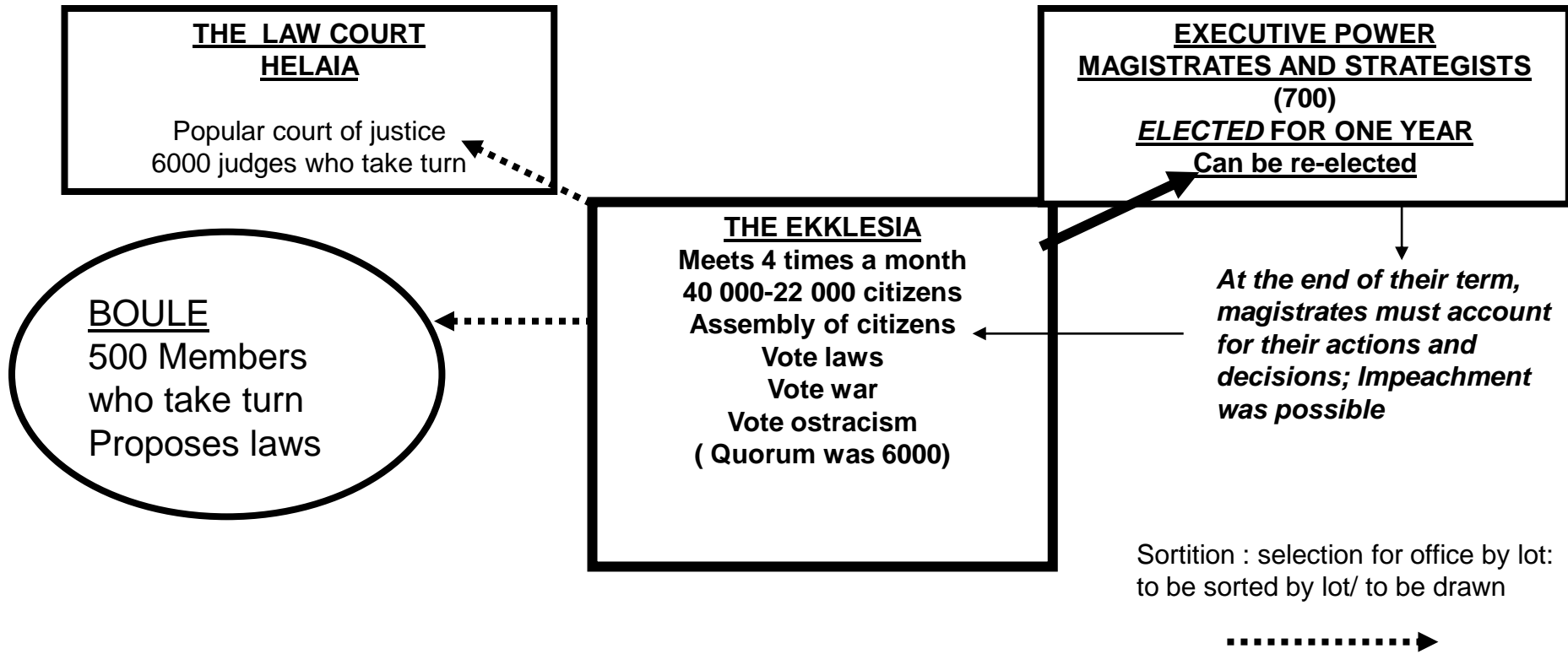
So, Athens was also very rich/wealthy

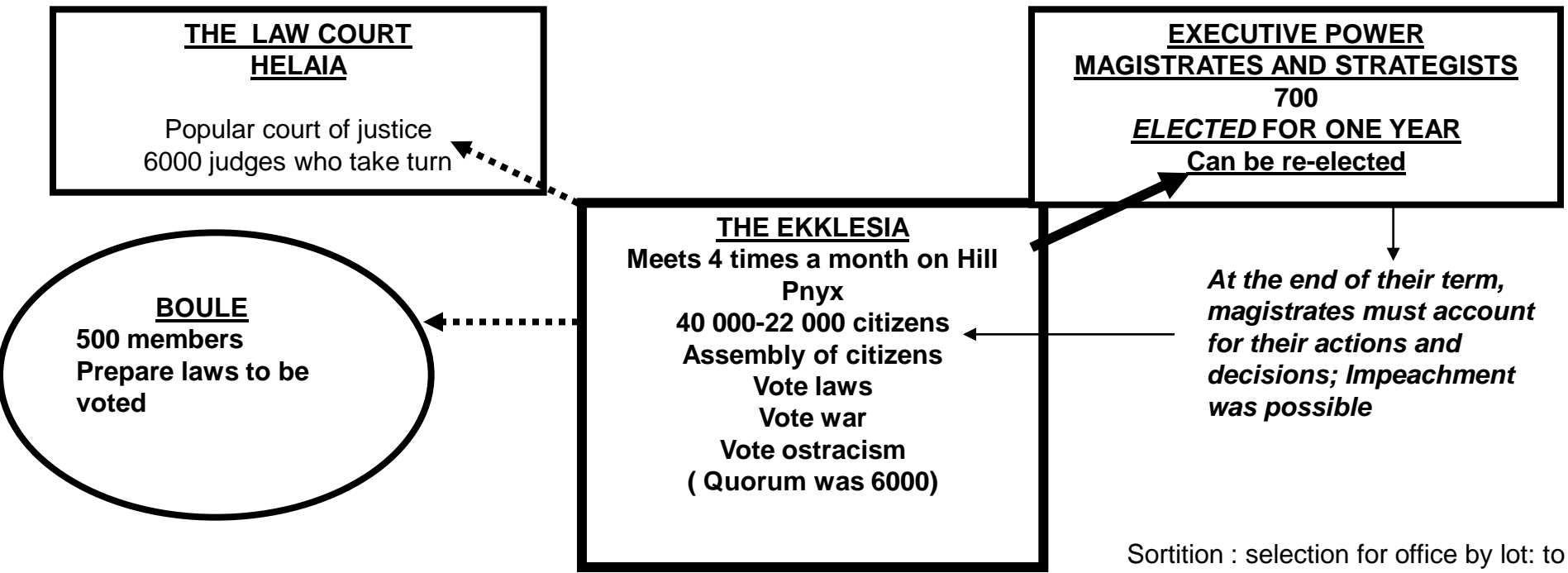
Athens was a huge economic and military power.

But, It was also a model for other cities because of its unusual political system

II/ An unprecedented political system: the Athenian democracy

A/ The Athenian constitution





The legislative power belonged to :

the Boule and Ekklesia

Because: they prepared laws and voted laws

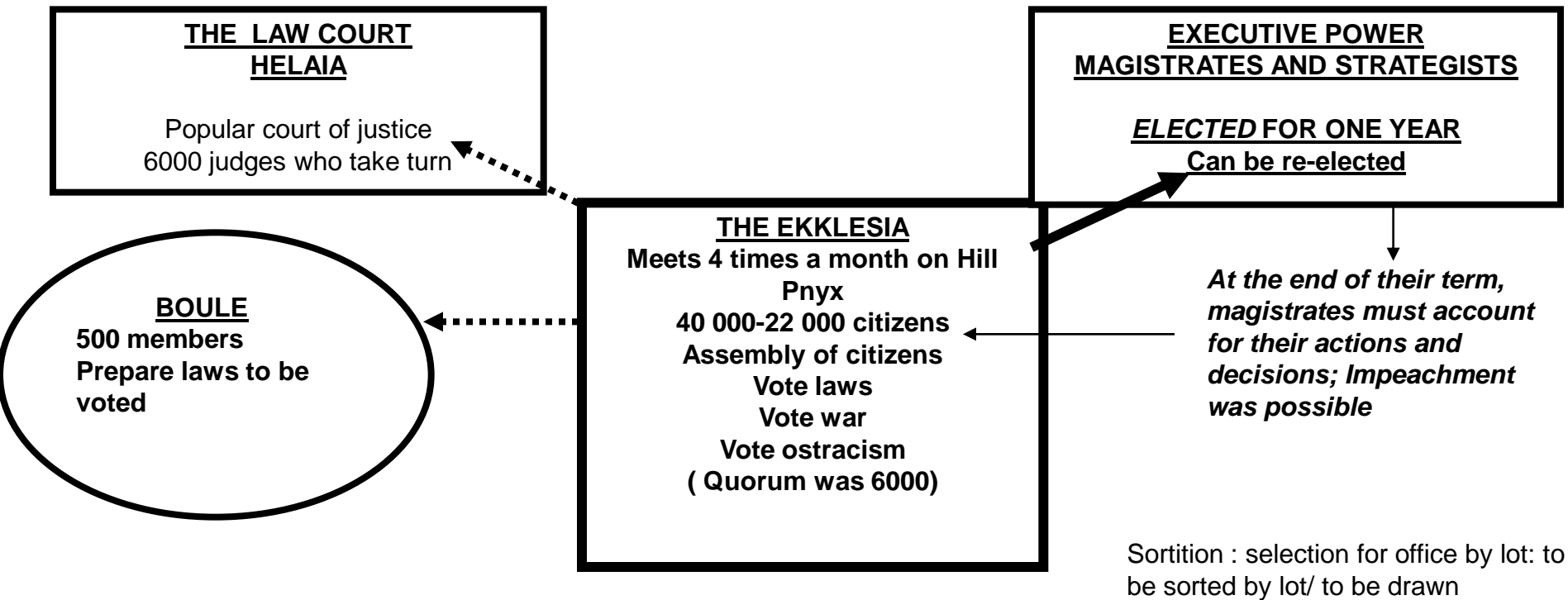
The executive power belonged to :

Magistrates and strategists

Because: they enforced laws

The judiciary power belonged to : The Law court / Helaia

Because: they judged people



How were people chosen for a political role?

2 options: sortition or election

What can be said about the good sides and drawbacks of these methods?:

Sortition is dangerous but the fairest way

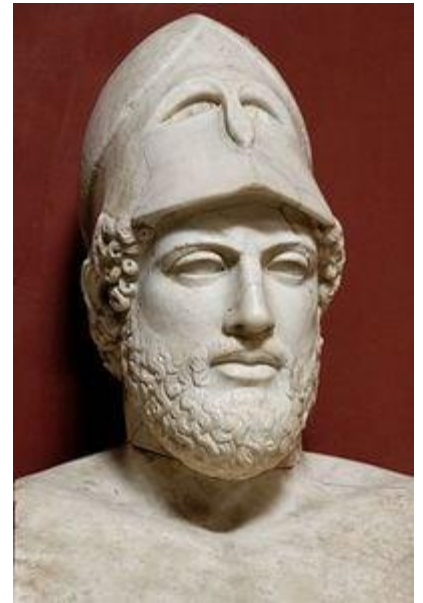
Election is a democratic way but only the richest can do a political campaign

B/Pericles, the founding father of the Athenian democracy

He was a strategist from 461 to 429 BC

He worked to make Athens a great and fair democracy.

Let's work on the description he made of this system



The Greek historian Thucydides recounted the story of the Peloponnesian War during which Pericles pronounced the funeral oration for the Athenian soldiers who fell during the war

Our system of government does not copy the institutions of our neighbours. It's more the case of our being a model to other than of our imitating anyone else.

Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hand 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 someone before someone else in position of public responsibility, what counts is not membership of a particular class, but the actual ability that the man possesses. No one as long as he has it in him to be in the service of the state, is kept in political obscurity because of poverty.
(...)**

From: Thucydides, " the Peloponnesian War" Book II. Translated by rex Warner, Penguin books, 1954.

1- Identify the document

TO PRESENT A DOCUMENT YOU NEED TO TELL MORE ABOUT:

-The author:

Periclès made/delivered the speech. But it is quoted by Thucydide

-The nature:

Extract from a speech

-The topic/the/subject: What does it deal with?

It deals with the features/characteristics of Athens's democracy

-The date: When was it made? When did the events mentioned occur.

5th Century BC

-The context: what happened at the time?

Athen was a powerful city and dominated Greece. It enforced the first democracy in history

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2-Why is Athens a democracy?

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2-Why is Athens a democracy?

"Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hand not of a minority but of the whole people."

ATHENIANS HAD THE POWER

BUT (what he does not say in the text)

LIMITED NUMBER OF CITIZENS : 40,000 first then 22,000 as your mother's father had to be Athenian too

WOMEN DID NOT COUNT

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3- According to this text, was it a fair system?

everyone is equal before the law

ISONOMY -HELAIA

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SORTITION AT RANDOM : ABILITY OR RANDOM?

No one as long as he has it in him to be in the service of the state, is kept in political obscurity because of poverty. (...)

MISTHOS

BUT he does not say (that):

VOTING CAMPAIGN REQUIRED EDUCATION AND MONEY
TO BE A MAGISTRATE

C/ Criticisms towards the democracy

“Then, the moment I’m inside the Court House, I forget all of my promises and let my anger subside from all that begging and I sit and listen to all sorts of voices from those who want to be found innocent. And there you will hear all sorts of excuses. Is there any piece of flattery that does not give a juror sweet pleasure? Some blubber on about their poverty. Talk about exaggerations! They pile on upon what they’ve got all sorts of other dreadful circumstances, so much so that they make their troubles look greater than mine! Some entertain us with myths, others tell us funny stories from Aesop and others again, perform all sorts of funny acts to make me laugh and forget my anger. And if, after all that, we jurors don’t change our mind, the man will roll out his children, one by one, holding both girl and boy by the arm. Then their father comes and, with trembling knees, he begs me –as if I were a god!- to give him the verdict of innocence. “Please sir, if you love the sound of a lamb, of my young boy here, pity us.

Ah, but I’ve forgotten the sweetest benefit of them all! And I get this when I come home with my payment, because everyone welcomes me at the front door and goes after my money.

Well, then, isn’t this authority of mine as great as that of Zeus?”

Extracted from Aristophanes' wasps (422 bc). Philocleon who speaks is a judge in the Helaia

What are here the main criticismzs towards the Athenian
democracy?

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What is here the main criticism towards the Athenian democracy?

The judge seems to make fun of the scenes he attends. **(Is there any piece of flattery that does not give a juror sweet pleasure?)**

He does not seem to take his job seriously **(as if I were a god!-) (isn't this authority of mine as great as that of Zeus?)** or he becomes really too big headed!

He seems to enjoy his « power » and the money it brings. **! (And I get this when I come home with my payment, because everyone welcomes me at the front door and goes after my money.)**

It shows (that) some abused power in this political system

So, to sum up, we can say there were two sorts of criticisms:

Social criticisms

There were social classes in Athens and money was an issue to have political power: citizens were not equal

Political criticisms

There was a limited number of citizens (40 000 -22 000)

It was hard to become a citizen (right of blood)

Sometimes politicians abused the system using their power for their own interest or to bribe or dominate the people

This is called **demagoguery**

CONCLUSION

So Athens was really a powerful city which left a print in the Mediterranean because it was a military power and a wealthy city.

On top of this, its political system became a model.

However, this power was not flawless
Athens was defeated by Sparta in the
Peloponnesian War at the end of the 5th Century
BC.

The democracy did not survive and Athens's
power vanished

MIND MAP TO REVIEW

