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**Review of Matthew Dillon & Lynda Garland, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Socrates (c. 800-399 BC)*. 2nd ed.**

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# Bryn Mawr Classical Review

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**Matthew Dillon, Lynda Garland, *Ancient Greece: Social and Historical Documents from Archaic Times to the Death of Socrates (c. 800-399 BC)*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2000. Pp. xvi, 543. ISBN 0-415-21755-5 (pb). \$29.99.**

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**Reviewed by Vanessa B. Gorman, Department of History, University of Nebraska-Lincoln ( [ygorman1@unl.edu](mailto:ygorman1@unl.edu) )**

Word count: 704 words

Dillon and Garland have revised their collection of ancient Greek documents in this second edition. As with the first edition, the present sourcebook is intended primarily for use by undergraduate students and secondarily for the "reader interested in further study" (p. xi), presumably the Greekless scholar. The work is divided into fourteen chapters roughly by chronology and topic, with anywhere from four to fifteen subdivisions within the chapters. The individual entries are each given a discrete number carried over from the first edition, as well as an introduction that includes background information and references to secondary sources pertinent to the passage.

For this new edition, a few new documents have been added in the body of the text. Most can be characterized as additional passages selected from long-known sources such as Thucydides, but there are one or two newly discovered sources as well. All additions are placed in subsections within the numbering system so as to preserve the enumeration of the first edition.

The principal change is the addition of two crucial chapters. Chapter Thirteen adds much-needed passages about women's roles, family life, and sexuality in all contexts from the legal sphere to the public performance of drama. Chapter Fourteen offers the mandatory introduction to the ancient sources and Greek history writing that is needed to make the rest of the book comprehensible. Here the introductory material is more extended, whereas the passages are themselves restricted to historiographical and self-reflective statements by the various authors. One feels that this chapter ought to have been placed at the beginning of the volume and significantly expanded beyond the twenty-one pages it receives (the shortest chapter in the book).

In general, this sourcebook is well and thoughtfully produced and is invaluable as a primary text for a survey of Greek history. The student aids are well-chosen to be helpful: maps, a timeline, family trees, a glossary, some useful definitions (rather, explanations of months, tribes, weights and measures, and epigraphical symbols), an extensive

bibliography (pp. 464-519) of secondary sources arranged by chapter, a general index, and an index of passages. The passages are themselves cleanly translated into good, colloquial English. The integration of secondary sources and explanatory background in the introductions is well cast for students both to understand what is before them and to guide them on a path to further study on a given topic.

On the other hand, the text is first and foremost a political history of Greece. The late addition of the chapter on sexuality and the family is one indication of this focus (one wonders how it could have been omitted in the first place, considering the title of the volume). Of the fourteen chapters in this second edition, only three concentrate on social issues: in addition to the new chapter, there are others on religion and on labor (primarily serfs and slaves). Other chapters include social material, but, on the whole, the student using this text will have a very limited exposure to the Greek world beyond the politics and wars of traditional history books.

My other principal complaint about the volume is that the primary sources are broken up excessively in order to fit neatly under the artificially-imposed topic at hand. For example, instead of being offered as one continuous passage, the seven paragraphs of Hdt. 1.59-66 are broken into ten discrete passages, all in the same chapter. The Ps.-Aristotle *Athenaion Politeia* is broken into forty-nine passages scattered in eight different chapters. I prefer a sourcebook, like the University of Chicago Readings in Western Civilization series, that has longer continuous pieces to one in which the texts are broken into pieces to fit within topical constraints, because my students comprehend ancient writings better when they have more context and fewer abrupt shifts in author and genre.

This volume, then, is not the book to use in order to augment a culture or a literature class. However, the individual passages are translated into very readable text and the integration of references to modern scholarship is extremely beneficial. All in all, this volume is the perfect sourcebook for the instructor seeking a wide variety of ancient sources keyed into the political history of the Greeks, with a few digressions into social issues.