



Athens: A Portrait of the City in Its Golden Age

Christian Meier

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A lively and accessible history of Athens's rise to greatness, from one of the foremost classical historians.

The definitive account of Athens in the age of Pericles, Christian Meier's gripping study begins with the Greek triumph over Persia at the Battle of Salamis, one of the most significant military victories in history. Meier shows how that victory decisively established Athens's military dominance in the Mediterranean and made possible its rise to preeminence in almost every field of human endeavor--commerce, science, philosophy, art, architecture, and literature. Within seventy-five years, Athens had become the most original and innovative civilization the ancient world ever produced.

With elegant narrative style, Meier traces the birth of democracy and the flourishing of Greek culture in the fifth century B.C., as well as Athens' slow decline and defeat in the Peloponnesian War. The great figures--from politicians and generals like Themistocles and Alcibiades to the philosophers Socrates and Plato--emerge as flesh-and-blood human beings, firmly rooted in their times and places. This is history in the tradition of Simon Schama and Barbara Tuchman--learned, accessible, and beautifully written.

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