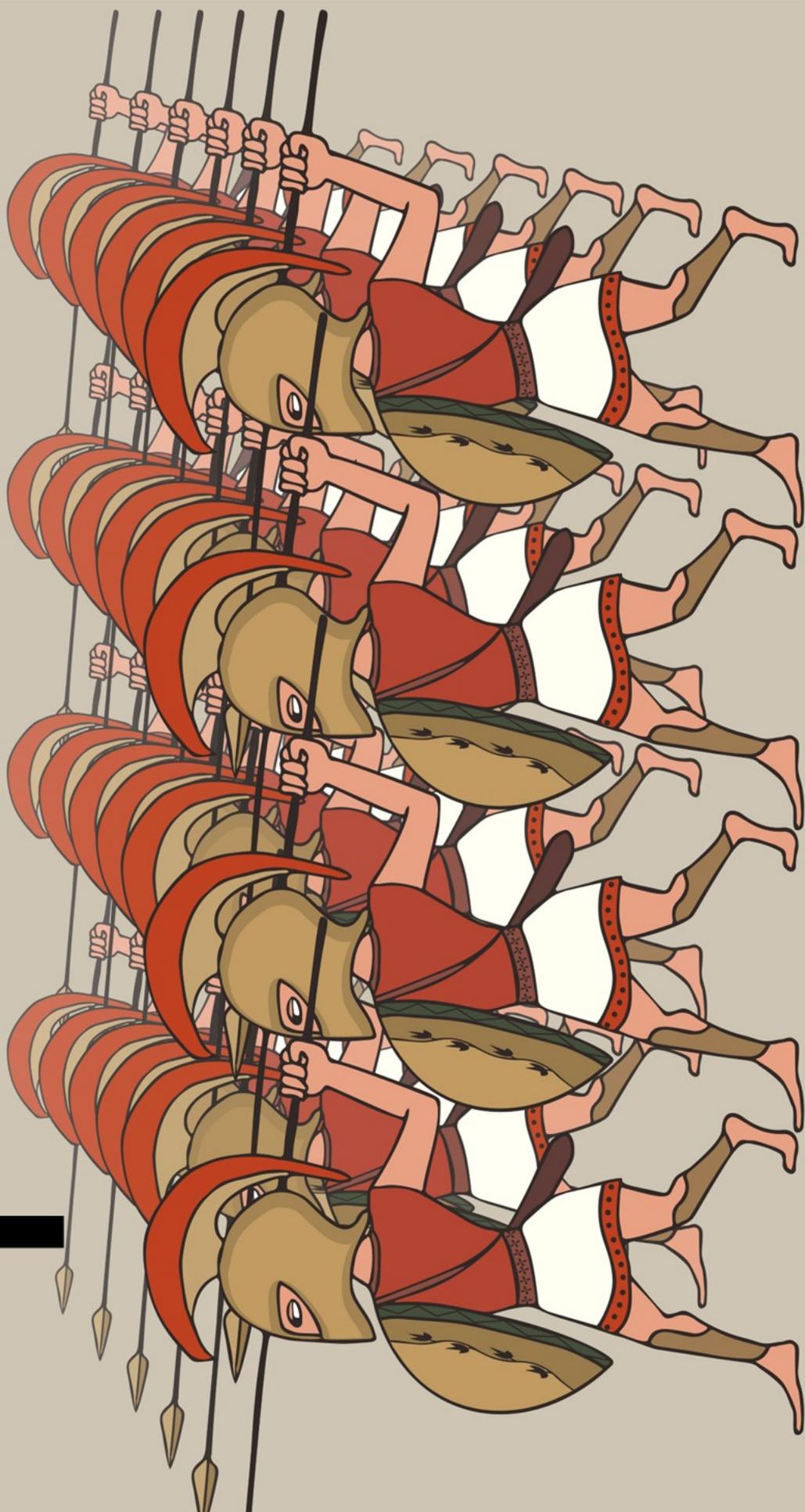


phalanx



hoplite

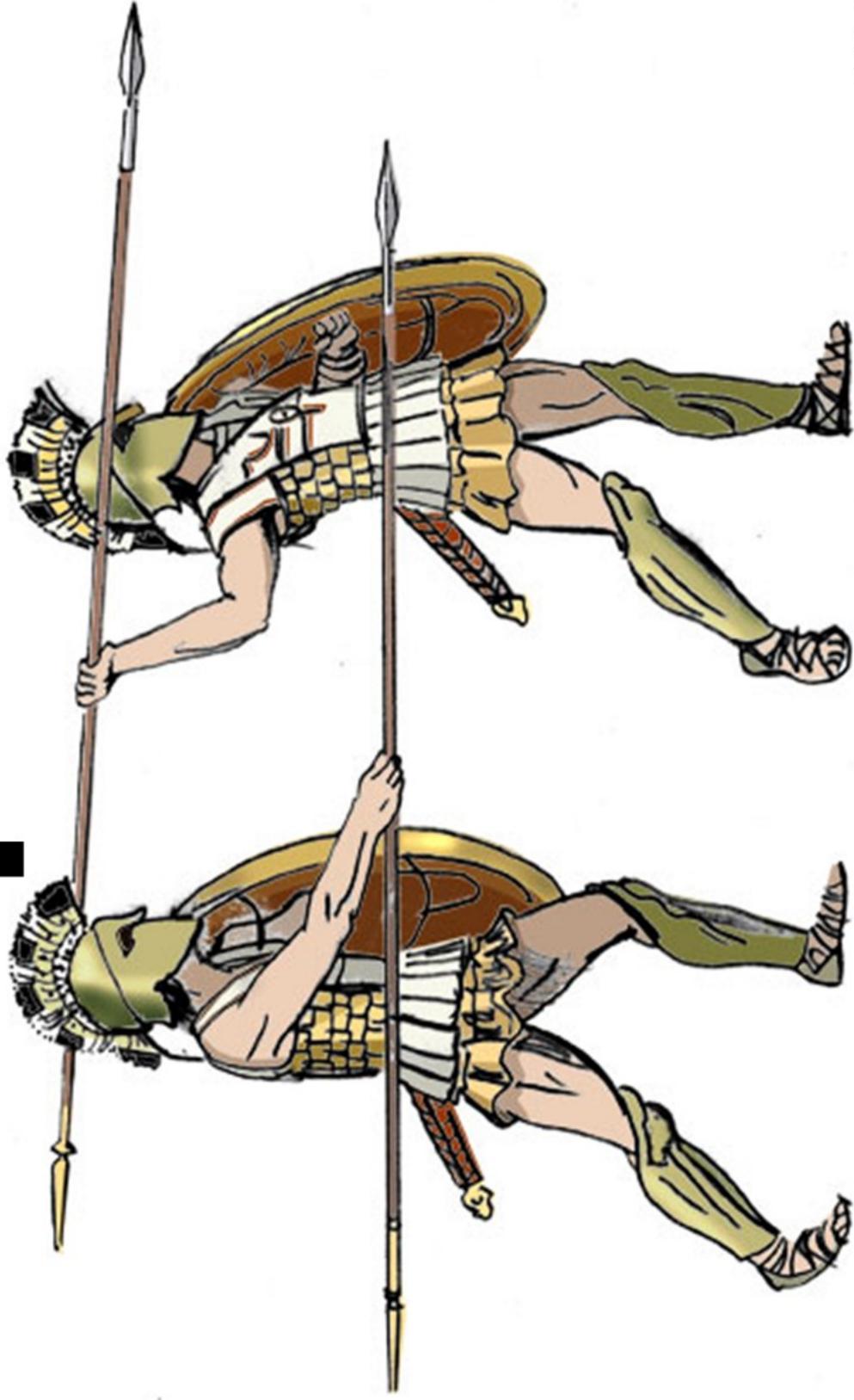


IMAGE 1 - THE BATTLE OF MARATHON



IMAGE 2 - THE BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE



IMAGE 3 - BATTLE OF SALAMIS

Battle of Salamis, fought between an alliance of Greek city-states and the Persian Empire in September 480 BC; The death of the Persian admiral Ariabignes (a brother of Xerxes) early in the battle.



Image Analysis Discussion Questions

IMAGE 1 - THE BATTLE OF MARATHON

1. What do you notice first? Describe what else you see.
2. What is the physical setting?
3. What is happening in the image?
4. Can you tell the difference between the two armies? Can you predict the victor of this battle? What makes you think that?

IMAGE 2 - THE BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE

1. What do you notice first? Describe what else you see.
2. What is the physical setting?
3. What is happening in the image?
4. What emotions are being felt by the soldiers in this image?

IMAGE 3 - BATTLE OF SALAMIS

1. What do you notice first? Describe what else you see.
2. What is the physical setting?
3. What is happening in the image?
4. Does this image show clear bias? If so, towards what or whom? What evidence supports your conclusion?

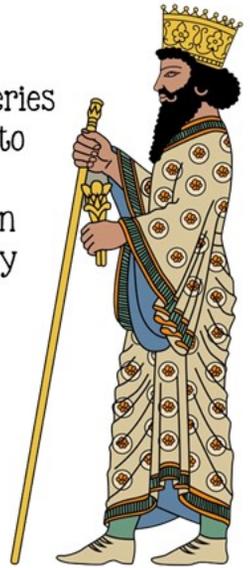
What did you learn by examining these images? How do they compare to each other?

The Persian Wars

Conflict Begins

The Persian Wars are considered a turning point in the history of Greece. This series of wars fought between Persia and the Greek states lasted 50 years (from 499 BC to 449 BC) and helped Greece become a more unified society and allowed for Greek civilization to prosper. The most famous battles of the Persian Wars were fought on mainland Greece. However, the conflict began across the Aegean Sea in present-day Turkey, when the Greek colonies of Ionia revolted against the Persians, who controlled the area. This event, known as the Ionian Revolt, lasted from 499 BC to 494 BC.

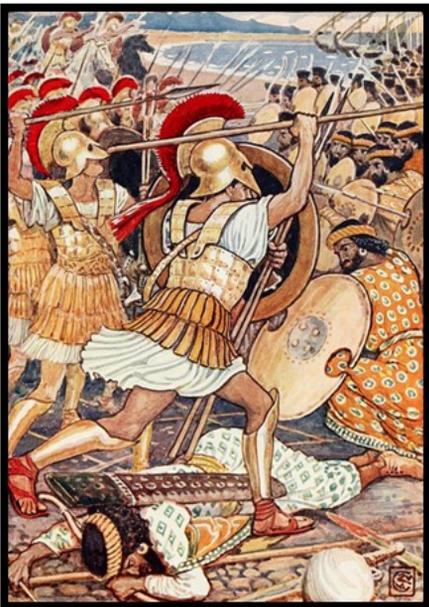
Athens, wanting to help its fellow Greeks, sent ships to the Ionians. But they were no match for the Persian fleet of 600 ships, and the Greeks sustained heavy losses, left with only 11 ships. With control of much of the surrounding area and anger at Athens for helping the Ionians, Persian King Darius I set his sights on the Athens and the rest of Greek Peninsula.



The Battle of Marathon

In 490 BCE, Darius I launched his first attack against the Greek mainland. The Athenian forces, under the command of the Greek General Miltiades, numbered 10,000 while Persian army was said to number 100,000.

Severely outnumbered Miltiades had to think quickly and gain an advantage, and the Athenians did have some. The first was their battle tactic known as the **Hoplite Phalanx**. The Hoplite Phalanx was a formation in which the hoplites (soldiers) lined up in ranks in close order. The hoplites would lock their shields together, and the first few ranks of soldiers would project their spears over the first rank of shields. The phalanx, therefore, presented a shield wall and a mass of spear points to the enemy, making frontal assaults very difficult. The second advantage was Greece's geography, which the Greeks would later use to their benefit by surrounding the Persian forces and pushing them back to the sea.



In order to gain the advantage Miltiades made a bold decision, and did something completely unexpected, especially considering the Greeks' terrible odds. This decision was that he decided to attack. Miltiades ordered his soldiers to split up and surround the Persian forces. The unsuspecting Persian army was met with the force of the Greek hoplites. Unable to break through the wall created by the Greek hoplites, Persian troops were forced to fall back to the sea. The Persians escaped to their ships with a loss of 6,400 soldiers. The Athenians lost only 192 soldiers, showcasing the power of the Hoplite Phalanx.

The Battle of Marathon is one of the most important battles in Greek history. Had Athens been defeated, Greece would have eventually come under Persian control, and the future accomplishments of the Greeks may have been lost.

The Persian Wars

The Battle of Thermopylae

Although the Battle of Marathon was a success for the Greeks, it was not the end of their conflict with the Persians. Ten years later (480 BCE) when Darius's son Xerxes (ZURK-seas) became king, the Persians launched another invasion against the Greeks. This time, they were determined to win, bringing an army of several hundred thousand and a navy of 600 ships. Xerxes demanded that the Greek city-states submit to him without resistance, and many did, including Thebes.

However, the Athenians and Spartans vowed resistance. Thirty-one Greek city-states united under the leadership of Sparta and King Leonidas to form a force of a few thousand. Faced with the large Persian army, the Greeks made a stand at Thermopylae, with steep mountains on one side and a cliff on the other. The Greeks hoped to stop the Persians, as only a small portion could fit through the pass at one time.



As Xerxes approached Thermopylae, he thought his superior numbers would easily pass the small Greek force. To his surprise, the Greeks did not retreat, and after five days, he decided to send troops in. They soon came back, defeated, and asked for reinforcements. So, Xerxes did the obvious and sent more men, only to have more killed and wounded. Even his expert soldiers, were no match for the Hoplite Phalanx and its shields that covered the Spartans from knees to chin. The geography also worked exactly as the Greeks had hoped. The Persians could not attack from left or right in the narrow pass, they were forced to attack from the front, the Hoplites strongest attack point. As the legend goes, Xerxes continued to send waves of attackers, and each time they turned back, defeated.

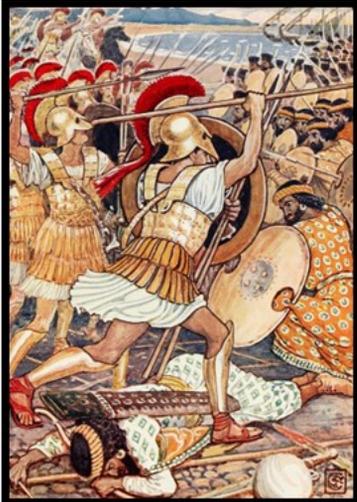
Finally, after a couple days, a Greek spy told Xerxes about a passage that would lead the Persian troops behind the Spartans. Meanwhile, not knowing how much longer they could hold the Persians, Leonidas ordered the rest of the Greeks to retreat, leaving him with his 300 Spartan soldiers. The Persians and Spartans met in a decisive battle, resulting in a Persian victory and the death of King Leonidas and his men. However, by bravely letting the other Greek forces retreat, Leonidas gave the Athenians enough time to evacuate Athens and prepare for the inevitable Persian attack.

The Battle of Salamis

In this battle, the Greeks, under the strategic leadership of Themistocles, faced a massive Persian fleet. Despite being outnumbered, the Greeks used their knowledge of the local waters to their advantage. Themistocles employed a strategy of luring the Persians into the narrow straits, where their numerical advantage would be nullified. The Greek triremes, agile and maneuverable warships, engaged the larger and slower Persian vessels, ramming and disabling them. The confined space of the straits limited the Persian fleet's ability to maneuver, rendering their numerical superiority ineffective.

The Battle of Salamis ended in a decisive victory for the Greeks, as they managed to sink or disable a significant portion of the Persian fleet. The battle not only halted the Persian advance but also boosted Greek morale, demonstrating their ability to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds. It was a turning point in the Persian War, as it marked the decline of Persian naval power and paved the way for further Greek successes in subsequent battles.

BATTLE OF MARATHON



People involved and location

Description of event

BATTLE OF THERMOPYLAE



People involved and location

Description of event

BATTLE OF SALAMIS



People involved and location

Description of event

Impact of Persian Wars on Greece

The Persian Wars

Directions: Write a dialogue between a Greek and a Persian soldier discussing the significance the Persian War. Your dialogue needs to contain the following vocabulary terms and key events or people: hoplite, phalanx, Darius I, Xerxes, Miltiades, Marathon, Thermopylae, Salamis, Themistocles, or Leonidas.

