



## Lesson 127

### Second Half of 2023 Summary

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  - *The Supreme Supermajority*
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  - *Abortion Rights After Dobbs*
- **Lesson 124 – September 3, 2023**
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In this lesson, we are going to review all of the lessons that we went over in the second half of the year.

## Lesson 122 – July 2, 2023

### *The Supreme Supermajority*

In July we looked at what the Supreme Court is doing (lesson 122: *The Supreme Supermajority*). The Supreme Court has nine justices, and thanks to Donald Trump and Mitch McConnell it is now 6-3 in favor of conservatism. We saw how Trump appointed Neil Gorsuch in 2017, Brett Kavanaugh in 2018, and Amy Coney Barrett in 2020, all of whom are conservative. The Court is usually 5-4, but with this supermajority the conservative viewpoint usually wins. We then explored a concept that some conservative justices hold to: originalism. Originalism is the belief that documents from the founding of the United States (specifically the Constitution) should be read and interpreted like the founders meant them to be. Those who oppose this view believe that the Constitution needs to be applied to our time and circumstances - while originalists would say that is bringing your own opinions into the law. Next, we looked at six Supreme Court cases that were ruled on this year. *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)* was a case that has been going on for a long time although it was not ruled on until now. A family was suing the EPA because they tried to tell them they couldn't build a house on their land because they were building too close to a lake. All nine justices ruled in favor of the family, saying they were allowed to build wherever they wanted on their land. But five conservative justices (excluding Kavanaugh) also put regulations on the EPA, hindering the areas under its protection. *Moore v. Harper* was about a new map of the political districts that were drawn in North Carolina (both because it got another Representative in the 2020 election, and also because of the census happens every 10 years); Democrats argued that it was gerrymandered. Another concept was at play here: the Independent state legislature doctrine (ISLD). This says that state legislatures are solely in charge of their states elections, so since the North Carolina Legislature had drawn the map, they argued that technically no court could tell them to change it. But the Supreme Court ruled otherwise: it told North Carolina to fix their maps, undermining ISLD. This was a 6-3 ruling where the liberals sided with Roberts, Kavanaugh and Barrett. Next, we looked at *Allen v. Milligan* which was similar to the previous one - it was also about gerrymandering, but in the state of Alabama. The Court ruled that this was, in fact, a case of gerrymandering in a 5-4 decision (where the liberals were joined by Roberts and Kavanaugh). *Gonzalez v. Google* and *Twitter v. Taamneh* were two cases that were decided together. In both, the families of the victims of terrorist attacks had sued these big tech companies for aiding the terrorist because they used social media to reach people. The Supreme Court was unanimous in siding with the tech companies. *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis* was a case on free speech and LGBTQ+ rights. In Colorado a wedding website company put a disclaimer on their website saying they wouldn't do business with homosexual couples; posting things like this is illegal in the state so the company sued. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the company saying they had a right to free speech; it was a 6-3 conservative majority. The last case we looked at in YPG lesson 122 was *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and fellows of Harvard University*. This was a case on using affirmative action in education. A group of Asian Americans sued Harvard for not accepting them saying it was because of affirmative action. Affirmative action in education means that institutions can take someone's race into consideration when admitting people to make sure that they are diverse. But the Supreme Court ruled against it making affirmative action illegal with the conservative majority: 6-3. As we can see, although sometimes the Court doesn't rule in the conservatives' favor, the conservative supermajority still has a lot of power and does use it to further their ideology.

## A Conservative Court and Originalism

### 6-3 Majority

Because of Trump's actions when he was president, the Supreme Court now has 6 conservatives and 3 liberals. This gives the conservatives a supermajority which means they effectively control the Supreme court

### Originalism

Originalism is a belief that documents should be read and understood literally, without putting them in context with the modern climate. The conservative Supreme Court justices support this belief.

## This Year's Major Cases

### Allen v. Milligan

The outcome: Alabama, which gerrymandered its districts, has to redraw them to be more fair.

### Twitter v. Taamneh and

### Google v. Gonzalez

The outcome: big tech companies won't be held responsible for the promotion of terrorism on their platforms.

### Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency

The outcome: the EPA's power to regulate water pollution was limited.

### Moore v. Harper

The outcome: voting rights will mostly stay the same. An attempt to give state legislatures full control over elections failed.

### 303 Creative LLC v. Elenis

The outcome: a website design company was allowed to refuse LGBTQ+ customers, which essentially gives businesses the right to discriminate based on the owner's beliefs.

### Students for Fair Admissions v.

### UNC & Harvard

The outcome: Affirmative Action (a method used to promote diversity in education and employment by considering a person's race) is now illegal.

## Lesson 123 – August 6, 2023

### ***Abortion Rights After Dobbs***

Lesson 123, *Abortion Rights after Dobbs*, was presented and published on August 6, 2023. In lesson 123, we began by refreshing ourselves on the Dobbs v. Jackson decision. In 2018, Mississippi passed a law that banned abortion in the state after 15 weeks. After years of lawsuits, the case was taken up by the Supreme Court, and on June 24, 2022, the court ruled that abortion was not a constitutional right. Once the Supreme Court ruled that abortion wasn't a constitutional right, many trigger laws went into effect to ban abortion. Thirteen states had trigger laws in place that would ban abortion once it was officially unconstitutional. Nine states (some overlap with the 13) had trigger laws in place as far back as the 1970s. After talking about Roe v. Wade being overturned and abortion being banned, in lesson 123 we next looked at abortion pills. The two primary abortion pills are Mifepristone and Misoprostol. Since they were approved, the FDA has been slowly lowering the restrictions on them, such as extending their deadline of use from seven weeks of pregnancy to ten weeks. These pills are used in more than half of abortions in the United States, as they have a 97% efficiency. Unfortunately, after Dobbs v. Jackson, red states began to ban these two pills. In 13 states they are nearly completely banned. Luckily, blue states such as New York are taking action to ensure the pills are available when they can. In July of 2023, the FDA approved a pill called Norgestrel. It's not an abortion pill, rather, its goal is to prevent pregnancy in the first place. What makes this pill unique is that it's the first of its kind that doesn't need to be prescribed. It can simply be purchased over the counter. The director of the FDA says that the pill will be available for millions of people in the United States. Moving on, in the next section of lesson 123, we discussed the state of women's health. Many abortion clinics have been forced to shut down in the states where abortion is banned. This is because their main source of income was performing abortions, but if they can no longer do that, they won't make enough money to stay open. Abortion doesn't even need to be directly banned for a clinic to close - if the abortion laws aren't clear, the clinic will close because doctors don't want to risk going to jail. Some clinics move locations to where abortion is allowed, which often forces people to drive 10 hours to get an abortion. Aside from clinics closing, another result of the reversal of the Dobbs v. Jackson decision is problem pregnancies. Although many states where abortion is banned make an exception where it's legal to get an abortion if the life of the mother or child is at risk, this doesn't solve all the problems. For example, if a baby is growing incorrectly, an abortion would be illegal since technically nobody's life is at risk. Lastly, in lesson 123, we looked at the Sunday law test. The test at the Sunday law is centered around equality, so understanding the controversies around abortion, and being on the side that supports it (abortion) is very important to pass the test.

## Decision and Laws



In a 6-3 ruling, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Dobbs, overturning Roe v. Wade



States had trigger laws in place since the 70's that would go into effect if and when Roe v. Wade was overturned.

## Old and New Pills



Abortion pills allowed abortions to be performed safely at home and be up to 95% effective



In many states, the abortion pill is still available but in others it is completely banned



The FDA approved a contraceptive pill that can just be purchased over the counter- the first of its kind

## The State of Women's Health



Many abortion clinics are closing because the laws make it nearly impossible to provide abortions legally



Some pregnancies don't fall under being unsafe yet the better option might have been an abortion

## The Sunday Law Test



Gender equality is the test for our time, and abortion is an issue that falls under that category

## Lesson 124 – September 3, 2023

### ***The Effects of Climate Change***

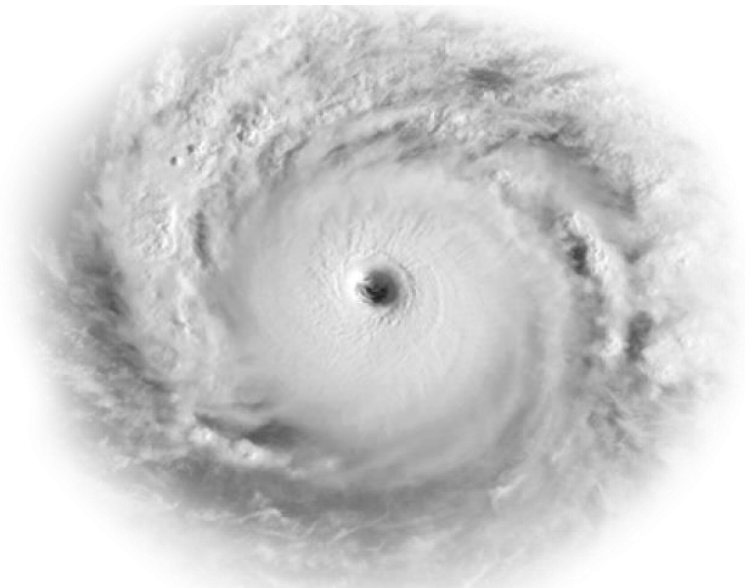
We know that Climate Change is a big problem that we face today, and in lesson 124 (*The Effects of Climate Change*) we looked at some recent natural disasters that illustrate this point. First, we looked at Canada, it had an unprecedented fire season this year: at one point over 1,000 fires were burning. This season was made worse because of climate change: droughts and high temperatures. A whole lot of smoke was also produced, beating Canada's previous record; in midsummer that smoke made it all the way to the United States and even to Europe. There were also fires in Chile where over 1 million acres burned and several people lost their lives. Then there were the fires in Maui (one of the Hawaiian Islands) where over 100 people died. This year we have also faced heat waves which are becoming more and more common because of climate change. Heat waves are very dangerous and thousands of people die from heat related illnesses every year. This has been an issue all over the world, in countries like Spain, China, Greece, and Mexico. These aren't the only types of natural disasters that are happening now: this year we are also in an El Nino (which scientists believe are happening more frequently because of climate change), and that has affected many natural weather patterns. For example, in India their monsoon season was much drier thanks to the El Nino, and that affects many things like their crops. Then there was also hurricane Hillary that hit Baja California and the state of California: climate change just doesn't make things hotter or dryer, but it also makes weather patterns more extreme. This hurricane was unexpected and uncommon and two people even lost their lives in Mexico. Countries like Sudan are also facing extreme flooding: hundreds of thousands of people have been displaced and thousands of acres of crops have been destroyed - all thanks to climate change. Humans aren't the only organisms affected by climate change: in this lesson we gave the example of Emperor penguins. Thanks to global warming, Antarctica's sea ice has been melting earlier than usual and last year scientists recorded that in a majority of the colonies they were observing no chicks survived. They believe that if this doesn't stop Emperor penguins will go extinct. Lastly, we looked at the court case *Held vs. State of Montana*; in this case some children in Montana sued the government claiming that they had a right to a clean and safe environment. The Supreme Court of Montana ruled in favor of the children. Climate change is a current problem, and as we can see it is affecting people (and animals) around the globe.

## Fires and Extreme Heat

Thanks to Climate change making many parts of the world hotter and dryer, Canada is facing an unprecedented Wildfire season, the Hawaiian island of Maui had the deadliest US Wildfire in over a century, and many parts of Europe and Asia like (Spain, Greece, and China) are experiencing record heatwaves.



## High Winds and Water



Climate change is also affecting weather phenomenon that deal with water.

We saw how the El Nino we are currently experiencing has been strengthened by global warming. It is causing India's monsoon season to be too dry.

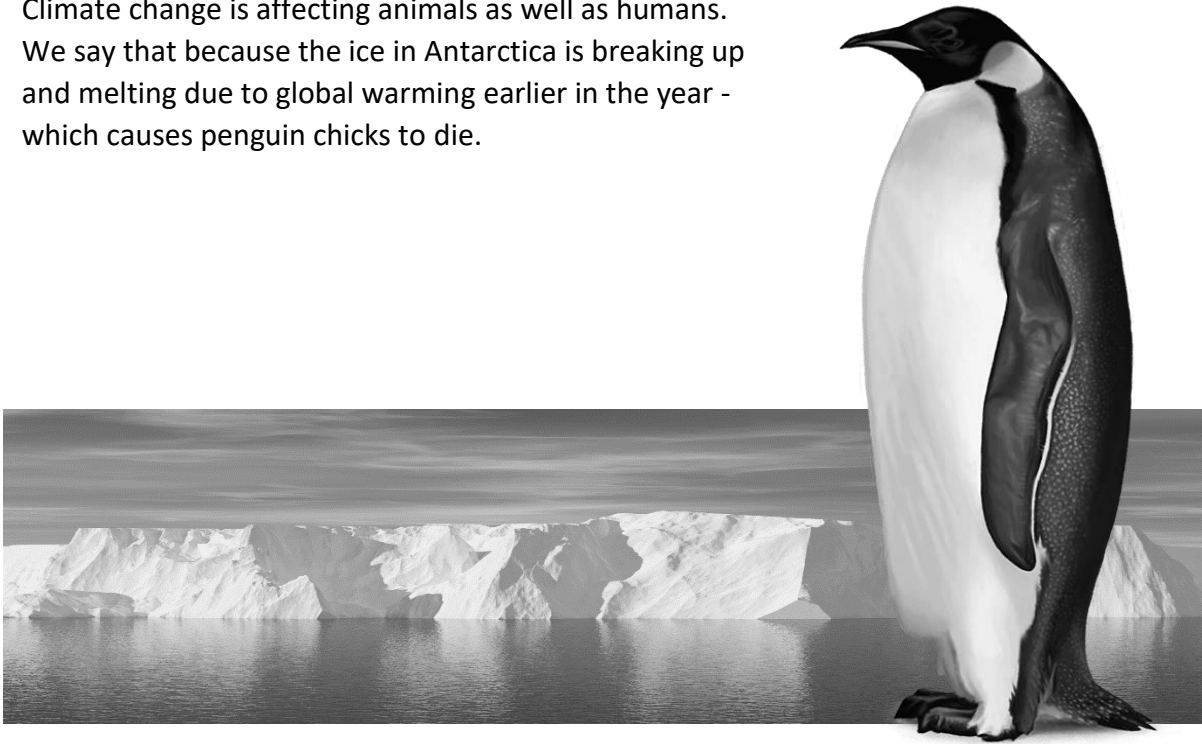
The West coast of Central and North America was hit by a hurricane/ tropical storm for the first time in decades.

A big part of South Sudan is under water - leading to problems with their food supply.



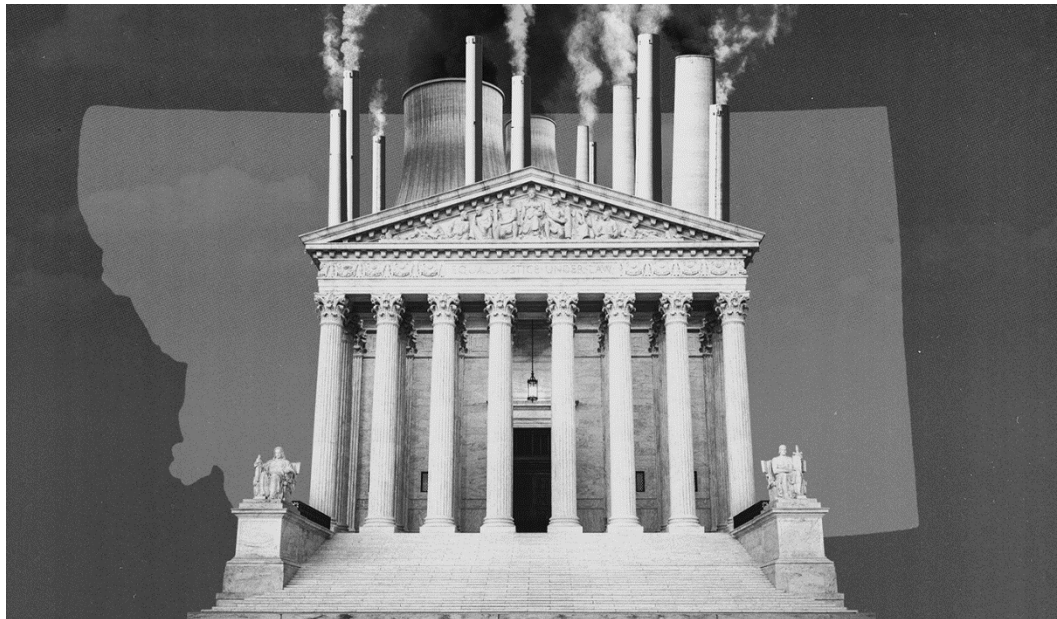
## Animals in Danger

Climate change is affecting animals as well as humans. We say that because the ice in Antarctica is breaking up and melting due to global warming earlier in the year - which causes penguin chicks to die.



## Climate change and the Court

In August, some youth in the state of Montana sued the state saying that their right to a clean environment has been violated because of human caused climate change.

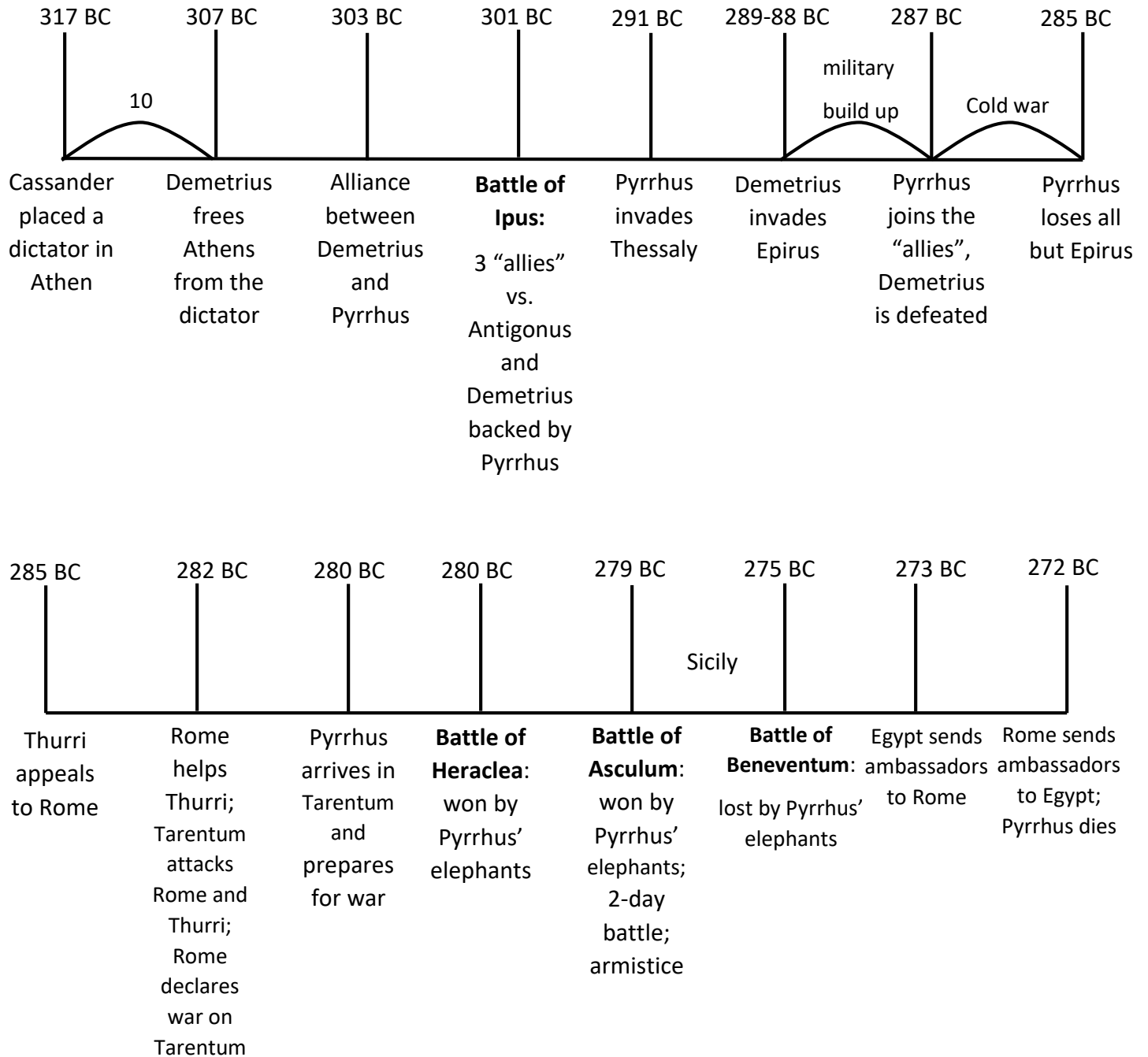


## Lesson 125 – October 1, 2023

### ***Revisiting the Diadochi Wars***

Lesson 125, *Revisiting the Diadochi Wars*, was presented and published on October 1, 2023. In lesson 125 we first looked at Pyrrhus' actions in Macedonia. In 317 BC, a general called Cassander took control of the city Athens in Macedon. He put Demetrius of Phaleron in charge of the city, who ruled for 10 years. In 307 BC, 10 years later, another general Demetrius of Macedon, placed Athens under siege and overthrew Demetrius Phaleron. Cassander got mad and formed an alliance with three other generals: Lysimachus, Ptolemy Soter, and Seleucus Nicator, against Demetrius, they four became "the allies". In 303 BC, a general called Pyrrhus, who ruled Epirus, went into alliance with Demetrius, and Demetrius' father Antigonus. In 301 BC, the battle of Ipsus took place. On one side there was Antigonus, Demetrius, and Pyrrhus, and on the other side was Lysimachus, Seleucus, and most of Cassander's army (Ptolemy wasn't there). The battle was ultimately won by the allies, and Antigonus was killed. In 298 BC, Cassander died, and after a series of events, Demetrius took control of his territory. In 291 BC, Demetrius was besieging Thebes when Pyrrhus decided to invade Thessaly, which cut off Demetrius from supplies. Demetrius and his army went to confront Pyrrhus but Pyrrhus didn't want to fight, so he went back to Epirus, allowing Demetrius to finish his siege. From 289-288 BC, Demetrius invaded Epirus. He was mad that Pyrrhus had cut him off from supplies when he was besieging Thebes, and also their relationship had been wearing down in general. From 288-287 BC, Demetrius went to Athens and began building a large army. Lysimachus, Seleucus, and Ptolemy didn't want Demetrius to become any more powerful, so they convinced Pyrrhus to join their alliance. In 287 BC, Lysimachus and Pyrrhus defeated Demetrius, and Seleucus was able to capture him later. From 287-285 BC, Lysimachus waged a cold war on Pyrrhus. Since Pyrrhus was given control of Macedon, when Demetrius' land was split up, Lysimachus made the Macedonians doubt if Pyrrhus was a good leader since he wasn't a Macedonian. In 285 BC, Macedon turned against Pyrrhus and went to Lysimachus, leaving Pyrrhus with his original kingdom - Epirus. In the second half of lesson 125, we studied Pyrrhus' actions in Italy. In 285 BC, over in Italy, where were small Greek cities. One of those cities was Thurri. Thurri was being attacked so they called for Rome, a powerful nation in Italy, for help. In 282 BC, Rome came to Thurri and expelled the attackers, but in doing so, they sailed into the Bay of Tarentum, which broke a treaty they had with another Greek city Tarentum. Tarentum responded by destroying Rome's ships, so Rome declared war on them. Tarentum knew that they couldn't win a fight against Rome, so they asked Pyrrhus for help. In 280 BC, Pyrrhus arrived and began to prepare for war. The same year, in 280 BC, the first battle between Rome and Pyrrhus took place - the Battle of Heraclea. Rome was defeated because Pyrrhus used his war elephants, and since the Romans had never seen elephants before, they were terrified and lost the battle. In 279 BC, the battle of Asculum took place. This time, Rome brought anti-elephant carts to help them win against Pyrrhus, but Pyrrhus' soldiers were able to take control of the carts and win the battle, once again. The final battle between Rome and Pyrrhus took place in 275 BC, this was the battle of Beneventum. Pyrrhus was defeated by his own elephants, who turned around and trampled his own army - giving Rome the victory. After Rome defeated Pyrrhus, the world recognized them as a powerful nation since Pyrrhus had been one the most powerful generals, so in 273 BC, Egypt sent ambassadors to Rome so they could be friends. In 272 BC, Rome sent ambassadors back to Egypt. Also in 272 BC, Pyrrhus was killed. He was fighting in the city of Argos when he got hit in the head with a tile, which knocked him out, allowing him to be easily killed by a soldier.

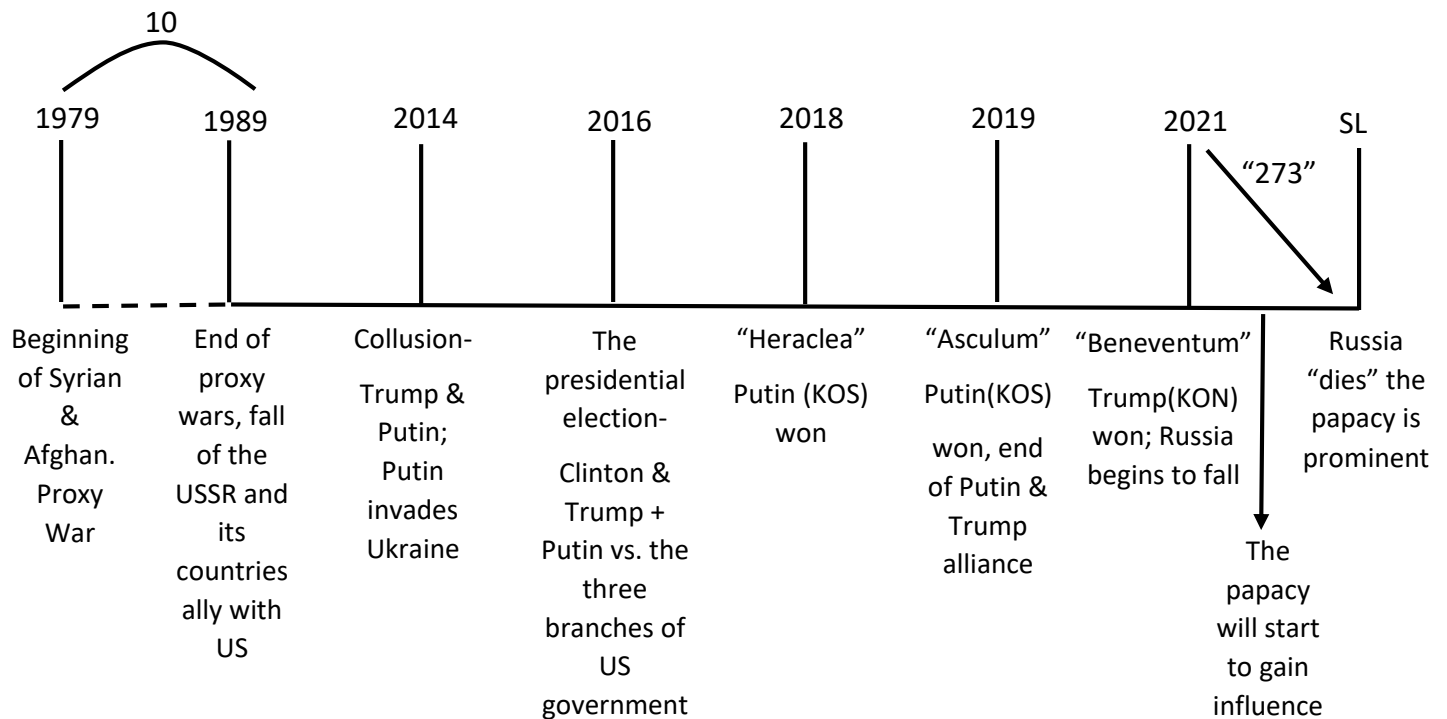
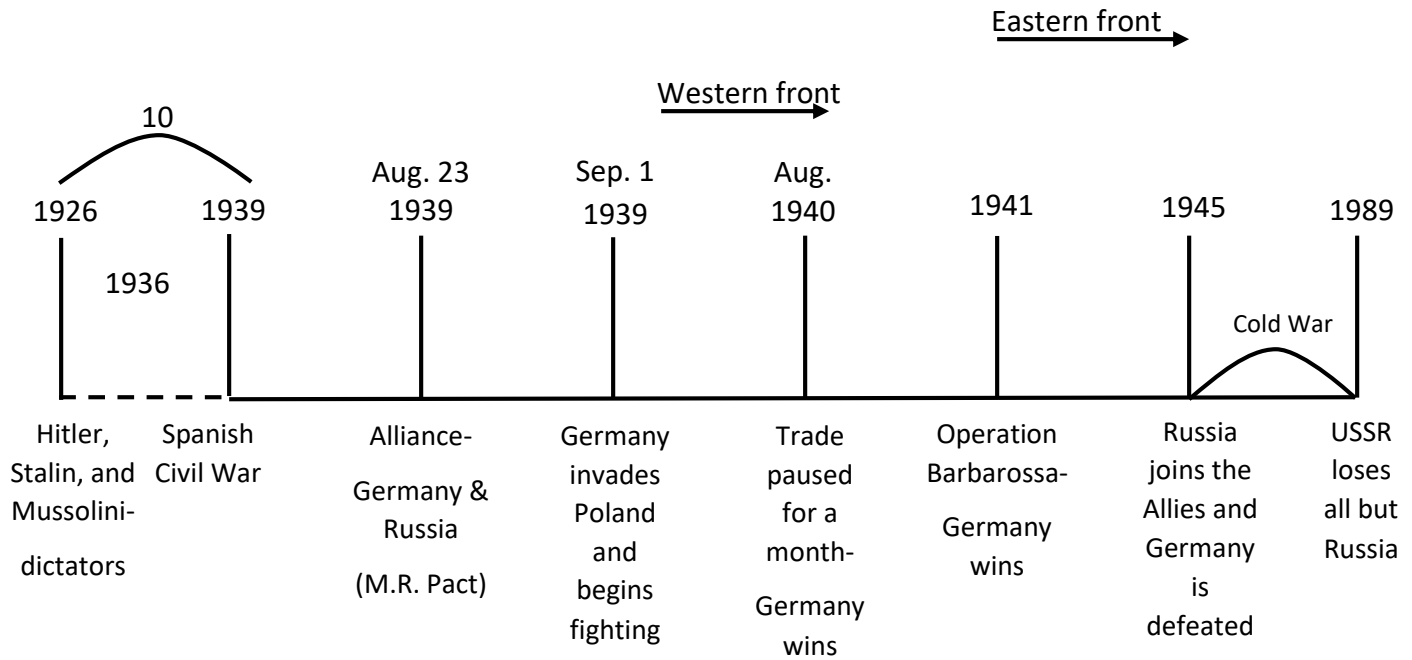
## Fourth Diadochi War



## Lesson 126 – November 5, 2023

### *Revisiting World War II*

In lesson 126, titled *Revisiting World War II*, we looked at the history of World War II and how it lined up with previous histories and our history. We started by looking at 1929 when the Lateran Treaty was signed by Mussolini, Hitler's party became one of the largest in Germany, and Stalin removed all of his opponents. This was when they all became dictators. 1929 was also the beginning of the ten-year period that ended in 1939 when the Spanish Civil War ended. We line that ten years up with the ten years between 1979 and 1989 and between 317 BC and 307 BC. Secondly, we looked at August 23, 1939 which is when the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was signed. The Pact had two different parts- the secret part involving the map being drawn to be split land between Germany and the Soviet Union, the kings of the North and South, respectively. We lined this up with 2014 where we marked the collusion between Donald Trump and Putin, the kings of the North and South, respectively. We also lined it up with 303 BC when Demetrius (the king of the North) and Pyrrhus (the king of the South) went into alliance. Plus, we lined it up with 282 BC when Rome declares war on Tarentum after going into alliance with Thurri. Thirdly, we looked at September 1, 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. Due to the Pact, the USSR was backing Germany who was then fighting against Poland, France, and Britain - the three allies, beginning the second World War. We lined this up with 2016 when it was Trump backed by Russia against the three branches of government, 301 BC when it was Demetrius backed by Pyrrhus against the three allies, and 280 BC when Pyrrhus begins to prepare for war against Rome. Fourthly, we looked at August 1940. This was when Russia suspended trade with Germany because they were getting too powerful. We lined this up with 2018, the battle of Heraclea, 291 BC when Pyrrhus invaded Thessaly, and 280 BC which was the actual battle of Heraclea which Pyrrhus won due to his elephants. Next, we looked at June 22, 1941 which was Operation Barbarossa, which officially cut ties between the USSR and Germany. We lined this up with 2019, the battle of Asculum, 289-288 BC when Demetrius invaded Epirus, and 279 BC when Pyrrhus won the battle of Asculum because of his elephants again. Then, we looked at 1945, which was the end of World War II and the start of the Cold War because there were two remaining super powers: Russia and the United States. We lined this up with 2021 when we see Russia going down as a super power, 287 BC when Pyrrhus joins the allies and Demetrius is defeated, and 275 BC which is when Pyrrhus is defeated by Rome in the battle of Beneventum. Lastly, we looked at 1989, which was the end of the Cold War and the USSR, the king of the South, as a super power. We lined this up with the Sunday Law which is the end of Russia in our history, 285 BC when Pyrrhus, the king of the South, loses everything but his country, and 272 BC when Pyrrhus dies.



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Link to YPG Zoom meetings which are at 10:00am Pacific Time on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sundays of the month:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87170293849>