



# The Rise of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet

*Marek Wecowski*

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## **The Rise of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet** Marek Wecowski

In *The Rise of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet*, Wecowski offers a comprehensive account of the origins of the symposion and its close relationship with the rise of the Greek city-state or polis. Broadly defined as a culture-oriented aristocratic banquet, the symposion—which literally means 'drinking together'—was a nocturnal wine party held by Greek aristocrats from Homer to Alexander the Great. Its distinctive feature was the crucial importance of

diverse cultural competitions, including improvising convivial poetry, among the guests. Cultural skills and abilities were a prerequisite in order for one to be included in elite drinking circles, and, as such, the symposion served as a forum for the natural selection of Greek aristocracy.

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