



The Ambitions of Curiosity: Understanding the World in Ancient Greece and China (Ideas in Context)

G. E. R. Lloyd

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In *The Ambitions of Curiosity*, G.E.R. Lloyd explores the origins and growth of systematic inquiry in Greece, China, and Mesopotamia. It asks such questions as what factors stimulated or inhibited this development? Whose interests were served? Who set the agenda? What was the role of the state in sponsoring, supporting or blocking research, in such areas as historiography, natural philosophy, medical research, astronomy, technology in all those fields. How were each of those fields defined and developed in different ancient societies? How did truly innovative thinkers persuade their own contemporaries to accept their work? Three of the main themes elaborated are, first, the different routes those developments took in China, Greece and Mesopotamia; second, the unexpected results of many research efforts; and third, the tensions between state control and individual innovation and the different ways they were resolved-- problems that remain in scientific research today. G.E.R. Lloyd is Chair of the East Asian History of Science Trust and Emeritus Professor of Ancient Philosophy and Science at the University of Cambridge. He has authored and edited numerous books including *Greek Thought* (Harvard, 2000) and *Hippocratic Writings* (Viking, 1984). He is a Fellow of the British Academy and an Honorary Foreign Member of the American Academy of Art and Sciences.

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